

The Libertarian

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THE HEROIN TREATMENT ACT

"I am a drug addict, and have been on the methadone program for one complete year ... But if it were compulsory I would definitely not be on the program."

We received this letter last week. It touches on the practical reason why the proposed Heroin Treatment Act should be defeated: it will not work. No one can be forced to give up an addiction to anything - whether it be heroin, alcohol, cigarettes or food. The desire must come from within.

But this act is not just another example of well-meaning but impractical legislation. In the arbitrariness of its powers and the lack of concern for normal judicial procedures it is an extremely dangerous piece of legislation, entirely unfit for a free country.

Heroin addiction is a health problem, states the act. But no addiction, in and of itself, can be termed a health problem. At worst, addiction is a psychological problem. Is the act intended to treat those of us with psychological problems? The field becomes somewhat wider.

The act stipulates that anyone with this "health problem" must take part in a compulsory cure program. Read our opening paragraph again and ask yourself what happens to those who refuse.

Cutting a swath through judicial procedure, the act empowers police to incarcerate an individual without a formal trial before a judge and jury; and in all subsequent reviews and appeals of his case, requires him to prove his innocence (his "health"?). He is, in other words, guilty until he proves otherwise.

The Heroin Treatment Act is a vicious encroachment on the rights of every individual - heroin addict or not. It paves the way for future powers to lock up anyone who is regarded by our politicians as a troublemaker.

In the U.S.S.R. such people are termed "mentally ill"; here, we propose to call them drug addicts. The parallel is surely too obvious to miss.

THE LIBERTARIAN FOUNDATION: PROGRESS REPORT

If the reception given to libertarian ideas by the province of B.C. in the past month is any indication, this country is ready for radical political changes. Here are some of the highlights since the last report.

On the Educational Front

Progress has been made in taking libertarian ideas to the students and teachers. Thanks to the efforts of Stew Foreman, an article on the Foundation will be appearing in a forthcoming issue of the B.C. Teachers' Federation magazine. The article focuses on the need to teach students to think for themselves by presenting all sides of any issue, so that meaningful conclusions can be reached.

The U.B.C. Libertarian Society is now meeting

regularly with the Foundation to plan for the Fall. Activities discussed include: ten evening seminars; two debates; noon-hour films; a book table with libertarian literature; and a series of lectures on libertarian philosophy. Details will be worked out over the summer, so that a real impact is made on "Clubs' Day" in early September.

Marco Den Ouden, a part-time student at Simon Fraser University and a long-time libertarian, is very willing to help promote libertarian activity on the campus. Events similar to those at U.B.C. are planned, and will be modified slightly to fit the trimester schedule.

The Foundation's educational activities have extended into the high schools. On June 1, Rick and Mike spoke to a class of Grade 11's in Burnaby. (We have discovered an enclave of 28 Ayn Rand fans in the Grade 11 classes in this one school. The debating during Social Studies classes has become so furious that the teacher is

IN THIS ISSUE:

Part One of Jerome F. Smith's Three-Part Article, "The War on Free Trade"

now reading *Atlas Shrugged* so that she knows what the class is talking about.)

Media Attention

We continue to interest the media. On April 27, Rick and Mike were invited back to the Ed Murphy Show on CJOR. They kept the lines hot for three hours and generated another 60 or 70 requests for information. As before, the callers were in favour of libertarian ideas.

Bob Wilson of CFUN taped an interview with Rick, for a five-minute segment on libertarianism and some of its applications. The date and time of airing are not yet known.

On May 3, Rick and Mike were invited on the Gary Bannerman Show on CKNW. Obviously, the Bannerman and Murphy shows have a different audience. We received 6 or 7 calls from the Bannerman show, including one rather negative call from a lady whose only comment was, "You FOOLS."

Better results came after Rick was seen on BCTV on the Noon News. Broadcaster Jim Hart interviewed Rick for six minutes and was very objective, if not sympathetic, in his approach. The short clip was seen live in the province and generated 25 or 30 interested inquiries.

Second Public Meeting

The Foundation held its second public meeting at the Rembrandt Hotel on Jun 6. About 100 people attended, purchasing books and subscriptions to *The Libertarian*.

Alan Oas, a long-time Toastmaster and speech contest winner, started the meeting with a humorous take-off of political speeches, revealing the latest government "freebie", the Free Lunch Incentives Program (FLIP). Despite its element of parody, the speech bore a striking resemblance to those given by your average politician, according to members of the audience.

Alan was followed by a half-hour film, "Man's Material Welfare", featuring Rich DeVos, President of Amway Corporation. The film demonstrated in practical terms why the free enterprise system must work better than a controlled and regulated society. Rick elaborated on the film and handled the question-and-answer session that followed, and Mike wrapped up the meeting with a call to arms stressing the need for all concerned Canadians to stand up and defend the system that has enabled us to produce so much.

Coffee was served, books were sold and everyone stayed for an hour or two to talk about some of the ideas that were covered.

Coffee Parties

Coffee parties have turned out to be a great success. They have been too numerous to discuss individually, but here are some of the highlights.

The audiences have ranged in age from 17 to 70, and support comes from all ages. The format has been similar from session to session. One of our supporters asks some friends to his or her home in the evening to listen to a couple of libertarians. We start off by giving a short, informal speech on the Foundation and our objectives, followed by a period of questions and discussions on libertarian ideas. Generally the participants are new to the ideas and many of the questions are repetitive from night to night. (Who will look after the poor? How will the police be paid for?) The evening typically ends with informal discussions and book sales to interested parties. Our hosts seem to outdo themselves when it comes to hospitality, for which Mike and Rick are very appreciative.

If you are interested in hosting a coffee party for the Foundation, please contact the office and set up a time and place.

Outside Speaking Engagements

The Vancouver Optimists Club — The Thursday noon meeting on May 18 featured Mike Little speaking on the subject of "Defending Capitalism". Mike impressed the audience with both the content and style of his speech. He was invited back to speak at a date to be decided later.

A Night in Chilliwack — On May 17, Rick, Mike and Bill Buckler, Jr. were the guests of Ed and Ricki Schroeder, who put together a meeting in Chilliwack. Rick spoke on the philosophy and objectives of the Foundation and handled the questions that followed. The attendees proved to be a strong prospect for support for both the Foundation and long term political action. Already some of the participants are preparing future speaking engagements in the schools and clubs of the Chilliwack-Sardis area. Once again the enthusiasm and friendliness of our hosts and new acquaintances made the evening well worth our efforts.

Visitors and Phone Calls

Public awareness of the Foundation is on the increase if our office activity is any indication. Inquiries for more information have depleted our stock and reprints and re-orders are necessary. We are delighted to receive the many visits to our office from new supporters. Often we are pressed to find places for everyone to sit. Drop in any time for a chat or browse through our book selection.

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WEEKEND IN WASHINGTON

On the weekend of May 12-14 a group of Vancouver libertarians attended the Pacific Northwest Libertarian Conference in Seattle. Sponsored by the Washington State Libertarian Party, the conference gave many local libertarians their first opportunity to attend a formal gathering of libertarian activists. Friday evening combined finance and fun, with a seminar devoted to hard money and investment advice followed by a party in honour of the W.S.L.P.'s fifth birthday.

Saturday began with a General Session devoted to short speeches given by luminaries of the National L.P., including the vice-presidential candidate in the 1976 presidential election, Dave Berglund, and the National Director of the L.P., Chris Hockey. The afternoon was given over to a series of workshops on skills such as dealing with the media, fund-raising and organizing in the community and nationwide.

Saturday's two high spots were a luncheon at which Murray Rothbard, historian, economist and author (*For a New Liberty; Man, Economy and State; Power and Market*, etc.) gave a talk entitled "Our Economic Future: A Libertarian Perspective", and a reception and banquet honouring the state and national committee members of the L.P.

The banquet gave everyone a chance to meet and discuss philosophy, tactics, platform, etc. with many of the people who have been working tirelessly for the libertarian cause for many years.

Sunday's agenda consisted of an open meeting of the Libertarian Party National Committee and a brunch given by the Association of Libertarian Feminists.

As usual the Conference gave all those present a chance to spend at least a weekend with others who recognize and uphold the concept of liberty and who are fighting to take that idea to the public. Enough adrenalin flowed to make facing the Trudeaus and Carters of the world a little easier for another year. Don't miss a chance to attend similar conferences and conventions.

B C. RAILWAY: A POLITICAL PIPEDREAM

by Philip Mills

While the politicians in both Ottawa and Victoria chatter backwards and forwards over the fate of the debt-ridden B.C. Railway, let us look at the facts.

Millions of tax dollars have been squandered by government fortune hunters dreaming of the power and the glory of tapping the resource riches of the north. Government rail extensions were launched without comprehensive research and consultation on potentials, routes or returns. As a result, the schemes have failed miserably to the point where today's taxpayers have been saddled with a monumental debt for the rest of their lives.

A royal commission into BCR affairs has established that every B.C. worker is paying \$125 yearly to prop up the railway's sagging finances and to meet a projected annual operating deficit of \$70 million. The forecast for 1981 soars to a colossal \$160 million, or \$300 for each worker.

The great northward charge via the Fort Nelson and Dease Lake extensions has proved a costly and tragic mistake; we are now being forced to finance the results of the shallow visions of political leaders. The only beneficiaries are the lumber companies who enjoy unrealistically low freight rates at the taxpayers' expense.

If obliged to pay the true transportation cost, the forestry and mining companies have argued that their viability would be threatened and with it, B.C.'s economy. But the key to that problem's solution lies in testimony presented by the Mining Association of B.C., which declared that companies could run their own rail system — if the provincial government would abolish taxes. And it's worth remembering that trucking firms have suggested they would expand their operations should BCR trim its costly activities.

Would the withdrawal of government from the railway business cause that great a hardship, bearing in mind the multi-million-dollar bureaucratic and political blunders of the past?

A glance at the history of U.S. railways shows that rail systems with the worst records were ones that received the most government aid. The railways that proved the most efficient and economical were ones which neither received nor asked for government assistance.

In a 20-year period, three U.S. transcontinental railways were built with government help, and all three wound up in bankruptcy courts. But James Jerome Hill built his Great Northern rail line between the Great Lakes and Puget Sound with no

(continued on page 5)

THE WAR ON FREE TRADE

(An article in three parts*)

by Jerome F. Smith

I FREE TRADE AND PROSPERITY — OR WAR

"The unprecedented world prosperity we have enjoyed since World War II is very largely a direct consequence of the dramatic increase in world trade — spreading the benefits of specialization and the division of labour across nation-state borders and creating a 'world market economy' to a degree that had never existed before. This great expansion of world trade has been possible because of three inter-related and complementary conditions: (1) stable exchange rates, (2) negotiated reductions in tariffs and other trade restrictions, (3) the rise of multinational manufacturing and trading companies."

I wrote the above in April, 1973, which turned out to be the exact month the 1973-75 inflationary recession began. Since then, a weak and fragmented "recovery" has been manipulated at great cost: the world's supply of paper dollars (and most other currencies) has been inflated over 50%, and the dollar and most other currencies have fallen to half their 1973 value in terms of gold and silver (i.e., gold and silver prices have doubled). The first prerequisite for conditions of prosperity, stable exchange rates, has been absent for five years.

". . . the most vicious trade war since the thirties"

Another unsurprising consequence of floating (sinking) currencies, also predicted in 1973, has been a disruption of international trade patterns and, with that, a resurgence of protectionist polemics and policies. Today, we are in the early stages of the most vicious trade war since the debacle of the thirties.

The second prerequisite to world prosperity, that money and goods be allowed to travel unhampered between nations, is quickly being wiped out by hasty nationalistic trade decrees as officials of the world's major trading nations jockey for positions in an emerging all-out trade war. The battle lines are being drawn: it's the European Economic Community (EEC) versus the United States; it's the EEC versus Japan; it's the United States versus everybody. There also are frequent skirmishes and occasional battles within the EEC.

All the time-worn arguments against free trade are

again being trotted out; nationalistic shrieks such as "Cheap foreign labour is taking our jobs away!" are current in the press.

Nation-state officials, union leaders, inefficient producers and academics with vested interests have long tried to justify tariffs, but they all have failed. They have failed because any thoughtful analysis, which considers the overall effects on consumers, soon reveals the falseness of their arguments. Yet, while their arguments do not stand the light of logical examination, governments are increasingly responsive to their supplications.

"Bad moral principles cannot lead to good economic policy"

Stripped of its veneer of sham arguments, every trade barrier is an attack by the inefficient, high-cost unions and industrial leaders of one nation, through their political hacks, on the consumers of each of the trading nations affected.

The issue of tariffs and other trade restrictions is not only an economic issue, but a moral one as well, and bad moral principles cannot lead to good economic policy. By granting favours to groups here and there at the more-or-less hidden expense of others, a government grows strong and dictatorial. Tariffs have become just another of the handouts which nation-states can grant to the few at the expense of the many, increasing state power over all individuals, to everyone's detriment.

If major trading nations march further into the present trade war everyone will be defeated in the long run. The protectionist action of one nation-state (e.g., a devaluation, new tariffs or quotas, export subsidies, exchange controls) has an effect on its trading partners, followed by the feedback effects on its own economy and further reverberations back and forth as succeeding effects work themselves out. The net result is that trade in both directions is reduced from what it would otherwise have been. Not satisfied with the effects, each nation-state is apt to impose still more restrictions (and suffer still more repercussions) until — with enough perseverance — a deep global depression results.

"History shows that trade wars often lead to shooting wars"

This scenario will lead to severe depressions first in those industrial countries whose

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living is heavily dependent upon international trade — Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom being the major ones. As the barriers now being put up restrict trade, their incomes will fall, and their exports and imports to and from each other and to and from other countries generally will fall still further. Still more seriously, history shows that trade wars often lead to more brutal international and civil shooting wars.

Tariffs originated because early governments found imports the easiest goods to tax. Imports could be readily counted, weighed and taxed, for the simple reason that they entered the country through a limited number of points. Not only did government cash in on imports, but so did domestic producers of import-competing goods as their profits rose as a result of diminished competition and the higher domestic prices they could now charge.

Since manufacturers early in the last century also held the most concentrated and effective political power (as opposed to politically unorganized farmers, ranchers and consumers generally), tariffs on manufactured imports grew throughout most of the first sixty years of the last century. The major cause of the American Civil War was the long and justified complaint of the South that high protective tariffs on imported manufactured goods protected the industrial North while the agricultural South, having little industry of its own, was forced to pay for this "protection". (In the 1830's South Carolina almost seceded from the Union over just this point, and the Vice-President, John C. Calhoun, a South Carolinian, resigned his office.)

B.C. RAILWAY (from page 3)

government cash or land grants — and it proved financially sound.

Taxpayers in B.C. have been described as shareholders in connection with BCR. But it must be remembered that shareholders act of their own volition while taxpayers are forced to subscribe to whatever whim politicians can dream up.

If, therefore, BCR stays in the hands of the provincial government, the politicians will have declared that taxpayers must always be exposed to the expensive and grandiose fancies that led to the current fiscal dilemma. BCR will be locked into a position where it may never be profitable and will continue to drain the economy.

If, on the other hand, BCR were released, abandoned, or sold to the private sector, taxpayers would be at liberty to decide for themselves whether or not they wanted to invest in a railway.

"The trade war is now raging globally"

A trade war in Europe set the stage and helped to ignite World War I. And a world trade war during the 1930's was a precursor to World War II. In particular, it is easy to understand Japan's bitterness and desperation in the years before Pearl Harbor. Her great export then was raw silk, going mainly to the United States. With the depression's tariffs, this market collapsed. Japan turned more to a variety of other exports, including cotton and rayon goods. New barriers were raised, in the British Empire and elsewhere, against these. The West was denying Japan outlets for her goods and thus causing her great unemployment. One can see how small a step it is from a situation like this to open warfare. Truly, Frederic Bastiat spoke sterling wisdom when he put it over a century ago that "if goods don't cross borders, armies will."

Five years ago I predicted the coming trade war; it has gained momentum regionally every year since that warning and is now raging globally. I now predict that if present trade war trends continue, they will lead to a shooting war before another five years pass.

Jerome F. Smith is editor of World Market Perspective and founder of Economic Research Counselors, Inc. One of the world's most highly respected authorities on silver investments, he is author of Silver Profits in the 70's and The Coming Currency Collapse: Understanding Runaway Inflation.

The beauty of floating BCR on the open market is that exposing it to the impartial laws of the marketplace would give it the ultimate free enterprise sanction: The right to fail.

Philip Mills is a professional journalist.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

July 11 — The Libertarian Foundation will be holding a public meeting to discuss "Tax Resistance and Liberty". Speakers will include Mike Little and Vancouver lawyer and tax resister Walter Boytinck. Keynote speaker for the evening will be Roger Lea MacBride, American presidential candidate in 1976 for the Libertarian Party. The time and place of the meeting will be announced shortly.

1981: THE YEAR OF THE UNDERDOG

by Michael Crosbie

Having financially survived five years in business in this topsy-turvy economic climate, I would like to thank all those who have played a major role in that survival — my wife, my mother-in-law, my customers and my employees

To the government, whether it be municipal, regional, provincial or federal, I'm willing to emit a bronx cheer accompanied by a gesture with two upraised fingers generally considered to be obscene. Why such defiance? Why such ingratitude? The answer is simple. Governments at all levels have intruded themselves into the marketplace as para-businessmen and through taxation and regulation have taken a stranglehold around the neck of every private businessman or woman.

Now, people in private business have to be a hardy breed. We have lots of heart attacks. We anger easily. We argue more often. We drink too much and our marriages invariably break up sooner than later. We employ lawyers, accountants, consultants, agents, advisors, efficiency experts, marketing analysts, jingle writers, advertising agencies and on and on. What for? To survive. To stay alive economically, and to be able to meet taxation deadlines imposed on us by the four levels of government. Governments that attack us like a human battering ram demanding their pound of flesh, their piece of the pie. My flesh, my pie.

How I despise their wastefulness. How I despise the degradation of grappling with the tentacles of the rampaging monster that is government today. It's not taxes as such that I mind paying. It's not even the laws or regulations that I'm obliged to obey that annoy me.

In a nutshell, it is the arrogant wastefulness of the piece of pie which the laws of this land oblige me to pay. My blood boils when I think of car salesmen, clerks and unemployed cooks sitting in a legislative building adorned with twenty-three carat gold bas-reliefs and allegorical frescoes, scratching their rears while they listen to some nit-wit instant cabinet minister's proposal to throw away another piece of your pie and mine.

In the past five years my business has grossed two million dollars. My office desk is a converted orange crate. A government desk is solid oak. My salary as president of a company employing thirty men and women is fifteen thousand dollars. I'm lucky though, compared with many other small-business people because our company bank account is seldom less than five figures — in the red. You see, I've learned to be deferential to

the important people in business life: the local bank manager, the tax-collector and the bailiff.

Why do I entitle this article *1981*? Let's examine the life of a one dollar bill taken from a wage earner's pay cheque that ends up in the cash register of a neighbourhood pub. The dollar bill has already been taxed twenty-five per cent federally and six per cent provincially, probably three per cent municipally, two or three per cent for unemployment or Canada Pension Insurance. The dollar is now, from a tax point of view, worth sixty-three cents as our wage earner hands it over in return for a bottle of his favourite brew. Right away the province gets another seven cents sales tax. Now we're down to fifty-seven cents. The fifty-seven cent dollar is now paid by the publican in wages. Off come federal, provincial and municipal taxes plus unemployment and pension contributions and the dollar is now worth perhaps twenty cents — until the cocktail waitress buys a bottle of brew after work. The province now gets another seven cents in liquor tax, and our erstwhile dollar is now worth thirteen cents. How unlucky can we be?

Now what does the government do with the eighty-seven cents, after just plain losing six cents (under the heading "Miscellaneous") leaving themselves eighty-one cents? They hire several hundred thousand civil servants who plot and dream up ways of squandering our money. They build ridiculously palatial offices to house their fellow schemers. They buy control of businesses they know nothing about. They buy limousines, airplanes, helicopters, and entertain lavishly, visiting politicians who are ripping off their own citizens in a similar manner. There you have it, thirteen cents for me, eighty-one cents for government.

Do you remember what happened in 1381? A tax rebellion spearheaded by a certain Mr. Wat Tyler. He led an army of irate taxpayers on Westminster to express their dissatisfaction with the tax policies of Richard II.

Now everybody loves a jubilee, a centennial, a bi-centennial. What do you say to a sextennial celebration in three years time to honour the unanointed saint of beleaguered taxpayers. What finer way to commemorate Wat Tyler's noble uprising than for every taxpaying citizen in the entire free world to withhold one day's income tax and use it to meet the expenses of marching to the seat of their government and rendering the loudest spittle-moistened bronx cheer ever heard. Excuse me there goes the telephone. I wonder if it's tapped?

Michael Crosbie is a widely travelled freelance writer, composer and conductor, presently living on Vancouver Island.

POINTS OF VIEW

by Richard F. Davison

"I read a few pages of that book, and it's very logical. But of course that's just his point of view."

The book was *The Law*, by Frederic Bastiat; the speaker was a fellow worker. I had not shown the book to him, and his comment was of no importance; his phraseology was. We both work as semiskilled labourers in the paper converting industry. As a libertarian, I proselytize at every opportunity. Another employee had read *The Law* at my invitation, and had in turn invited the speaker to read it.

His assessment of the content as "very logical" would be in accord with all those I know who have read the book; his assessment of the logic as a "point of view" would not.

Logic is a device of reasoning; if one builds on solid premises, employing logic, then the conclusions reached will also be solid. Opinion and "point of view" are synonymous; logic and "point of view" are contradictory. The one is based on provable statement, the other on opinion.

"Point of viewing" can be Costly

My associates and I might say that we desire a raise of one dollar per hour; and that from our point of view such a raise would be productive in that we would be happier, and could spend more money on consumer goods, thus creating employment. Our employer's opinion might be different. He might suggest that the increase in the price of our product could affect our competitive position — domestic and export. He might suggest that the potential loss of business could result in the loss of some jobs, and perhaps in the return on his investment being reduced to the point where such investment is no longer worthwhile. Then what? Perhaps the plant could close forever. It has happened exactly that way more times than I care to contemplate. Even less do I care to contemplate the closure of the plant where I work. Could it be prevented?

Surely the desires of the employer and the workers are the same. We both wish for the continuance of the business and its growth and profitability, without which, wage increases and other improvements are not possible. Market conditions, competitive position, return on investment, feasible wage rates and necessary profit levels are not matters of opinion. They are matters of fact; cold, hard, economic facts, quite divorced from opinion or point of view. That our employer may understand them, and we not, does not alter the facts. It instead suggests the crying need for those of us on the assembly line to learn and understand those facts. Difficult perhaps,

but not impossible; and critically important.

We working people vote; in union, provincial and federal elections. If we did understand economic reality, I wonder how many strike votes and contract rejection votes might end differently. Is there a politician in this province or this country who would receive our vote for dog-catcher? Would mob rule (majority rule) masquerading as freedom or democracy continue to be our choice? "Critically important"? A gross understatement.

A Meaningless Phrase

In matters requiring logic, reason and dispassionate thought, "point of view" has no valid meaning. Arguments will be raised that in the field of exchanges between men, and in discussing different economic systems, point of view is acceptable. Those fields are just as subject to physical law as the speed of sound, and are most emphatically not subject to point of view. Those who find it necessary to use the phrase in such matters have simply failed, or not bothered, to identify the relevant facts; and have ignored, or failed to discover, the thousands of pieces of evidence available to compare the efficacy of one system with another.

To quote Ayn Rand, — "Reality exists". All the weeping and wailing and all the different points of view in the world will not budge reality one inch. Points of view of political theorists result in Utopias and "noble experiments" where statism abounds, as do slavery, starvation and pathetically low standards of living. Those countries where the standard of living and relative freedom are highest are the very countries where state control is least. Virtually every economic and social evil in this world results from trying to treat reality as a "point of view".

My wife and I may disagree on what colour to paint the bathroom. Do we have different points of view? No. We are simply disagreeing on a matter which correctly *is* subject to simple choice or preference. There are hundreds of such matters.

If you are standing on Grouse Mountain, and I on Burnaby Mountain, we have different points of view; then the phrase becomes meaningful.

I had not shown *The Law* to the speaker because I know him to be a collectivist who is able to deal only in points of view. Leaving aside Bastiat's references to God, his logic, as compelling and valid today as when written in 1850, can result in an assessment as "point of view" only from such people; people who feel that everything pertaining to man is a matter of opinion. Not from me.

Dick Davison works in the paper converting industry, writing in his spare time.

CREATING A MARKET FOR THE PRODUCT

by Helen Yeomans

In a free market, a business depends for success on its customers — on the willingness of numerous people to buy its product. However, recent activity by members of government and the public sector suggests that they have not yet grasped the relevance of this proposition to their own organizations - and to their products. They are currently engaged in pushing a product neither wanted nor needed by anyone.

Over the Victoria Day weekend, for example, the Minister of Highways announced on the radio that the change to metric doesn't mean that destinations are any further away.

I question whether there are more than a handful of people who seriously suppose that Victoria toppled into the Gulf last October, but Mr. Fraser evidently thought otherwise. Fearing widespread misunderstanding on the matter, he drove his point home: you can get to your destination in the same time as before *by driving at the same speed*.

Hard on the heels of this revelation came another, this time from the Post Office. In a merry, colourful brochure, Canada Post revealed that if you move house, "your old postal code stays behind with your old address." Is this a response to the spectacle of thousands of people struggling to get their postal

code out through the door and into the van? Somehow I doubt it.

There is at present no market for pronouncements of this kind. However, it is by no means certain that they will cease, if the parties concerned should happen to take a leaf from the private sector's book.

A company faced with no market for its product either goes out of business, or changes the product, or tries to educate the public to perceive a need for it.

The prospect of the first occurring is unlikely, and I must advise against expecting it at least for some considerable time.

But if politicians and bureaucrats are determined to offer on a regular basis a broad range of witless remarks (thus ruling out the second option) there is a distinct chance they may recognize the need to create a market for them.

I urge readers, therefore, to watch for the appearance in community colleges, night schools and the like, of any educational program entitled "Good Citizenship" (or words to that effect). I suspect it will comprise courses in Heightened Social Awareness, Advanced Health Techniques and Motor Skills; courses which might more accurately be entitled Vacant Stares, Shuffling Gaits and Dribble & Twitch. You may wish to think twice before enrolling.

BOOKS ... BOOKS ... BOOKS ... BOOKS

The Mainspring of Human Progress, by Henry Grady Weaver (\$1.75). "For six thousand years men died of hunger. Why don't we?" This is the basic question dealt with in *Mainspring*, but the attempt to find the answer leads into a wide range of subjects, such as:

- What is the greatest of all our modern inventions?
- Who invented zero (0) and why?
- Just what is the difference between a republic and a democracy?
- What is the one best way to pick a genius?
- What was the "best seller" in 1776?

In *Mainspring*, Mr. Weaver answers these and countless other questions with a bold, truly libertarian narrative, while taking the reader on a fascinat-

ing journey through history to trace and identify the source of human progress.

The Love of Liberty, by Leonard E. Read (\$5.75, hardback). Mr. Read, the founder of the Foundation for Economic Education, has written many books on liberty and the free market. This work, first published in 1975, is one of his best.

In the first chapter, Mr. Read states his purpose as being "to examine the following assumptions":

- (1) Liberty is impossible unless we know what it is;
- (2) liberty is impossible without limited government, and with unlimited government.

Mr. Read explores these assumptions in a way that demonstrates his deep understanding of, and reverence for, freedom.