

was also pointed out that donations for specific projects are often easier to obtain than contributions to the general Party funds. Direct mail followed by a telephone call was also suggested as an effective means of raising money.

Speeches were given on Friday night by libertarian dignitaries Dave Nolan, Tonie Nathan, Roger MacBride and Willis Stone. Nolan's talk was a rousing call to arms which emphasized the uniqueness of the libertarian political movement in history. This is the first time, he said, that both the will to fight for freedom and a sound understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of a free society have existed simultaneously. Nathan urged the Party to stay local in nature and not create a rigid bureaucratic structure. She also caused some controversy by suggesting to the anarchists in the Party that they use some other word to describe their political views. There is a difference, she said, between no government and the lawlessness that the word anarchy connotes.

MacBride, the gentleman from Virginia who put the LP on the map with his electoral vote last December, was given a long, standing ovation complete with banners reading "MacBride in '76". His speech ended with typically MacBrideian rhetoric: "... and when the tyranny that presently engulfs us falls, let it fall like Lucifer, never to rise again!" No less than sixteen speakers followed the major addresses in a

program that lasted until 2:00 a.m.

Tape recorded messages from LP Presidential candidate John Hospers and economist Murray Rothbard were played to the delegates Saturday morning. Hospers defended his campaign strategy of emphasizing economic issues rather than social liberties. Ultimately there can be no personal freedom without a free market place, Hospers contended.

Rothbard, speaking to those libertarians who are opposed to the use of the political process, commented that "we did not seek politics, it was thrust upon us by the state. It is absurd not to make use of the political machinery to roll back the state." Rothbard also noted that the excellent growth of the LP subsequent to the Presidential election and all of its attendant publicity is a good sign that we are here to stay.

Unquestionably the most dynamic personality at the Convention was the New York State's Free Libertarian Party's candidate for the Mayor of New York City, Fran Youngstein. Displaying a distinctly libertarian flair for politics, Youngstein campaigned continuously and at one point urged the large Canadian contingent to interfere with the internal affairs of the United States for a change by supporting her candidacy. The FLP had a large and impressive group at the Convention.

NOTES

The regular state party reports were eliminated this month due to the length of the Convention report . . . Bruce Evoy reports that a Canadian LP Convention may be held in **Ontario** this October . . . Considerable discussion took place concerning the libertarian-like parties in **Denmark** and **Norway** . . . Contributions to Youngstein's **New York City** mayoral campaign should be sent to the FLP at 15 West 38th St., New York, NY . . . John Goodson continues to receive wide media coverage on his **New Jersey** gubernatorial race . . . **Ohio** LP is publishing a souvenir program of the '73 Convention available for \$2 by writing to Glenn Schmid, 12143 Midpines Dr. #100, Cincinnati, Ohio 45241 . . . **Texas** LP (third largest in the nation) has donated \$50 to the Karl Bray defense fund and urges other state parties to do the same . . . There are now 34 state parties . . . **Tennessee** is the latest to form one . . . Winston Duke of **Illinois** and Bill Westmiller of **Michigan** were elected to the national Executive Committee . . . Ads for the LP will be carried in *COMMENTARY*, *HUMAN EVENTS*, and *ANALOGUE* . . . Please send information on state party activities along with photos to Reason Reports c/o LPC, P.O. Box 71383, Los Angeles, CA 90071.

Edward H. Crane, III

movies

• **HITLER: THE LAST 10 DAYS** seems more like a theater piece than a movie, and unfortunately it very quickly becomes theater of the absurd. Here is *Der Fuhrer*, trapped in a Berlin bunker with the Allies closing in, issuing battle orders to his vanishing army, fantasizing about a last-minute counterattack, and throwing temper tantrums at his surviving generals. Because most of the action takes place inside the bunker, a sense of isolation prevails, and the tragicomic goings-on bear little relation to what's happening in the occasionally-glimpsed outside world. Nor does the acting improve the film's credibility. Alec Guinness plays Hitler with all the shadings of paranoia, megalomania and despair that the role seems to call for; but he injects very little dynamism into the part, behaving more like a petulant bureaucrat than a

wounded tyrant. Perhaps this failure is due to the fact that the film is not allowed sufficient context to place Hitler's character in perspective. He is shown only in defeat, never in victory; hence he appears contemptible, but not dangerous. The dialogue is punctuated with British accents, which strike another blow at the film's shaky credibility. This is perhaps unavoidable (most of the actors are British), but annoying nonetheless. The script is serviceable, but never very suspenseful. All the incidents portrayed in the film are supposedly based on actual fact. If this is the case, then the last days of Germany in World War II were far less interesting than we have been led to believe. Rated "PG".

• Few situations in life are more frustrating than a game whose rules change

in the middle. This is what our heroes—and I use the term loosely—face in **THE LAST OF SHEILA**, a fascinating clue-laden mystery yarn which is also a lethal send-up of various Hollywood types. An all-star cast is headed by James Coburn, as a sadistic producer who invites a group of unsuccessful movie colonists aboard his yacht for a week of fun and games. The name of the game is "rattle the skeletons," aimed at exposing a guilty secret in each guest's past. The game goes on its merry way for awhile, but just as the movie appears to become predictable, a sudden and unexpected murder yanks the film into a new course and a more deadly game. From here on, the movie picks up speed and interest, right up to the climax. All the major actors have juicy roles, and play them to the hilt. Richard Benjamin portrays a

REVIEWED BY
CHARLES BARR

hack writer and social climber, married to Joan Hackett, a rich heiress. Raquel Welch plays (naturally) a Hollywood star, married to her creepy manager, Ian McShane. James Mason is effective as an over-the-hill director, who has never done anything more notable than television commercials. Dyan Cannon is superb as a salty, acid-tongued, gossipy agent. Much of the drama takes place along the less-traveled areas of the French Riviera, and the location photography is excellent. The script by Stephen Sondheim and Anthony Perkins is tight and fast-moving, not wasting a second. Altogether, *THE LAST OF SHEILA* is a must for both mystery fans and devotees of old-fashioned Hollywood showmanship. Rated "PG".

- **GODSPELL** appears to be a dramatization of the Gospel according to St. Matthew as performed by The Monkees. Actually, the performers are talented young unknowns, veterans of *GODSPELL'S* earlier stage productions. The movie is remarkably faithful to the play in spirit and style, but in this case it's a mixed blessing. The low-comedy vaudeville atmosphere and the endless string of Christian parables do not mix well together, and anyone who takes religion seriously, pro or con, will likely be put off by the childish (as opposed to child-like) displays herein. The sheer silliness of the pasted-on Biblical dialogue and the nearly total lack of characterization combine to overwhelm the assembled talent. New York City provides the background for this carnival, apparently to make *GODSPELL* more "relevant," but instead this device makes the characters look even more foolish and out-of-place. The film's one asset is its musical sequences: the bright, cheerful tunes and imaginative choreography give the cast a chance to show how talented they really are. Thanks to composer Stephen Schwartz for this saving grace. Rated "G".

- Even Sam Peckinpah's most fervent admirers will be hard pressed to explain his romanticizing of a notorious outlaw in **PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID**. Kris Kristofferson does not play Billy as an all-out hero, by any means; but he is given a much more likeable character than the stone-faced, guilt-ridden Garrett, played by James Coburn. Billy seems to come across essentially as a free spirit, robbing for sport, killing only when necessary, and protecting the common folks against the evil big business interests that are taking over the west. Garrett, on the other hand, is portrayed as an ex-outlaw who has sold out to the railroad interests, and is now a U.S. Marshal out to destroy his former



Richard Benjamin encounters a dummy while searching for clues in *THE LAST OF SHEILA*.

partner-in-crime. Up to now, Peckinpah has attempted to challenge the prevailing mythology of the Old West, but here he panders to one of the most notorious myths of all: the Romantic Villain. His direction, too, shows a falling-off in quality from some of his previous films;

much of the footage is just plain dull, relieved only occasionally by gratuitous violence. Bob Dylan makes his film debut as Billy's scruffy sidekick. His acting is on a par with his singing: rough and unkempt. For this role, it's adequate. Rated "R".

YOUR POEM

*With you, I have been intimate,
permitting you my fingertips,
the inner ridge of my lip . . .
have I not? (Others have touched me—
like vines on a wall, growing be-
tween the cracks. Some have touched me
kindly) With you I have been power-
less. The hair upon your arms and chest
have held me, heard me whisper.
I have been gentle . . . have I
not? In every word and gesture.*

*As leaves against a dampened log,
your hands have known my body.
(Others have been that cannot be
again. They have no cracks to grow in)*

Wendy McElroy

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THE TWILIGHT OF GOLD.

By Melchior Palyi. Chicago: Henry Regnery. 1972. Pp. 365. \$15.

Published posthumously (Dr. Palyi died in 1970), *THE TWILIGHT OF GOLD* is not merely a treatise on gold and the gold standard but a crucially important contribution to the political and economic history of that turbulent period from 1914 to 1948—written by a man who was in a unique position to observe first-hand the events that led to the 1929 crash . . . and to the current international monetary chaos.

Hungarian-born Palyi became chief economist of the Deutsche Bank in 1928, then the largest bank in continental Europe, and was later managing director of the bank's Institute for Monetary Research from 1931 to 1933. An advocate of individual rights and freedom, Palyi could not have survived in Nazi Germany—and when Hitler rose to power, Palyi came to the United States and served as visiting professor at three universities, Chicago, Northwestern, and Wisconsin.

TWILIGHT OF GOLD, typical of Palyi's writings, is the antithesis of "conventional wisdom" in economics and demolishes a number of well-established misconceptions—e.g., that the convertible gold standard is too inflexible because it does not provide enough "liquidity," or that it ties a country's monetary system to the ups and downs of gold mining.

Under a convertible gold standard, says Palyi, the world for most of the 19th century and up to 1914 "was a world of almost nominal taxes, a world in which virtual freedom of enterprise, competition, and highly flexible wage-price structures prevailed—one in which private property and contractual agreements were enforced . . . Above all, it was a world of *real* growth, at an average annual rate of 3% during the six decades before 1914, with rising living standards for the masses."

There were various warts and flaws and abuses in the gold standard, of course, and Palyi discusses them; but he stresses that everyone—economists, sociologists, politicians, and even avowed Marxists—fully recognized the virtues of the gold standard because they realized that, if nothing else, it made wars very difficult and very brief: governments did not have the necessary funds (i.e., gold) to finance military expenditures.

WORLD WAR I CASUALTY

Germany, however, under the influence of Bismark, was already a welfare-warfare state by 1914; and when World War I exploded, the gold standard was its first casualty. The governments of the warring nations, says Palyi, discovered that they could conscript the central banks into the service of their treasuries to provide them with "cash" and to manage the national debt.

The disastrous precedent had thus been set. From then on, central banks lost their independence, and economic and monetary science became the whore of politics.

When the war ended, everyone wanted to return to the gold standard. But political considerations now loomed larger than economic; and every nation, in a tragic reversal of cause-and-effect, lost sight of the benefits of the international division of labor and made the immediate goal of domestic prosperity more important than a sound financial system. The general feeling was:

"If governments could raise and spend billions to finance the war, why should they not be able to use their power to assure greater postwar prosperity?"

Well, they did try. By turning to the printing presses; by refusing to dismantle the vastly bloated (and uneconomic) agricultural and industrial productive capacity that had been built at home to meet the exigencies of the war, and that could be sustained only through subsidies and import restrictions once the excessive wartime demand had ended; by thus wrecking the international division of labor; and finally, by making currencies inconvertible into gold.

LOST "RIGHT TO VOTE"

Before that time, any citizen distressed at his government's financial irresponsibility could protect his savings against inflation by converting paper money or bank deposits into gold, says economist Donald Kemmerer in his preface to Palyi's book. When currencies became inconvertible, "a citizen lost his right to vote 'no confidence,' a ballot he could

formerly cast *any day*, not just on election day, to warn government to live within the income it was willing to raise by taxes."

Paradoxically, citizens of most nations lost this right at a time when politicians of all stripes were rhapsodizing about "democracy."

Americans, as the freest people on earth, were the last to lose that right. By that time, the crash had already occurred, thanks to the inflationary policies unleashed by most governments in the 1920's and to the speculative excesses that go hand-in-hand with inflation.

The gold standard was replaced with the "gold exchange standard"—a hybrid system which involved the use of some key currency as a substitute for and supplement to gold in settling balance-of-payment differences among nations. This hybrid gold-and-paper standard failed miserably in 1931—and then again in 1971.

Where do we go from here?

Those same nations that witnessed the successive collapses of a hybrid paper-and-gold system, are now informing us that a new hybrid system—this one—consisting of paper and "paper-gold" (alias, Special Drawing Rights)—will do the trick. The mystic notion that wealth is created by issuing billions of little pieces of paper with the portrait of some national hero on it, is now sweeping the world.

Gold is now in a period of twilight, says Palyi, and nations are officially rejecting it—*while actually attempting to accumulate as much gold as possible*. Why? To fight the Commies, the Japs, or the Martians. I was not always a pacifist. However, after reading Palyi's book, anyone will be seriously considering whether *any* war is worth its cost of human lives and spiritual and material values. As things stand, we haven't yet paid the full price of World War I.

Eugene Guccione is senior editor of ENGINEERING & MINING JOURNAL, and director of the COMMITTEE FOR MONETARY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION.