

that imparts the values of the existing society.

Radio, TV, and culture are under the Minister of Education, and writers and artists are dependent on the state. The private newspapers do not oppose the state's propagandistic use of education and the media. The editor of the largest newspaper says: "News must be used to change society and influence people. If it is objective, and designed only to inform, then it is conservative."

Since it is the socialists' aim to push the country further to the left, leftist dissent is encouraged. In effect, the Swedish "new left" is a dupe of the state which encourages leftists to discover social imperfections because each discovery justifies an increase in the state power to correct the imperfection.

The state's institutional machinery for

enforcing a leftist opinion on the country is complete, but the prevalence of leftist opinion does not seem to be dependent on the state's enforcement mechanisms. This should not surprise us. A similar uniformity of liberal-left opinion in American universities, communications, and culture is not a product of state policy. This suggests that liberty is a function of the content of ideas and that emphasis on institutions can be misleading.

If people do not believe in liberty, then democratic institutions will not uphold liberty. This is the problem in Sweden. The liberals who are technically in opposition to the socialists *share* their values. Says the editor of a liberal newspaper: "Given the choice between welfare and liberty, I would choose welfare every time."

This might explain the disquieting fact that in Sweden empirical evidence carries

no weight in the battle between the welfare state and the free society. According to Huntford, the elimination of poverty and slums and the implementation of all the "advanced" ideas have been accompanied by a 250% increase in crime, the highest juvenile delinquency rate in Western Europe, and a suicide rate twice that of the United States. By the time experience refutes one social welfare theory, it is already associated with the old order and more radical theories supplant it.

Huntford thinks that Swedish totalitarianism results from a traditional submissiveness to authority and the absence of liberal ideas. But the social reconstruction and perfection of society are precisely liberal ideas. In implementing their programs Swedish ideologues have experienced excitement and personal fulfillment, but the social costs of these private satisfactions are the destruction of liberty and a bored society. □

viewpoint

PRIVACY, OR THE "RIGHT TO KNOW"?

We are being deluged with confusing and competing claims of alleged "rights", and as usual if we don't have clear-cut standards to decide between the claims, we are hopelessly at sea without a rudder. In particular, there is a host of competing claims about "the right to privacy" vs. the "right to know." For example, there is government wiretapping of private individuals; do they have the right of privacy or does the government, presumably as surrogate for the public, have the right to know? And if, as civil libertarians, we decide for privacy, then, counter the conservatives, what about Presidential documents or the Pentagon papers? Don't the President and his aides have the "right of confidentiality" overriding the public's right to know? And what of newsmen? Should they have the right to protect their sources, or may they be forced to spill the beans to appropriate arms of government? In the brief but intense flurry on behalf of the secretly plea-bargaining Mr. Agnew, another newsman question was raised: the alleged sanctity of grand jury proceedings and the search for "leaks" vs. the right of a free press. And come to think of it, weren't the infamous "plumbers" simply "plugging leaks"? Privacy; freedom of the press; the right to know; where in the world do rights lie?

Dr. Rothbard's viewpoint appears in this column every third month, alternating with the viewpoints of Tibor Machan and David Brudnoy.

Libertarians are particularly well equipped to resolve questions of "rights"; for what we say is keep your eye on the rights of private property. The rights of private property must be kept sacrosanct. Given this, we can say quite flatly that no one has "the right to know" anyone else's private business; I might *like* to know what goes on behind my neighbor's closed doors, but neither I nor anyone else has the right to invade his domain by coercion to try to find out, whether it is myself as an individual, the press, the public, or the government. *Ergo*: all bugging, burglary, wiretapping, and opening of the mail are criminal invasions of private property and should be outlawed. So much for the governmental buggers. What about newsmen? The crucial point about newsmen and the press is that they are private citizens, and therefore their activities (if themselves not invasive) must not be interfered with, by any person or by any arm of government. The newsman should have the right to remain silent about his sources, and so also should a lawyer, a physician, an accountant, a psychiatrist, or *anybody else*. Even if I am merely an economist or just a private citizen, I should be able to keep silent about private communications from my friends or acquaintances. In short: extend the "privilege" and "shield" laws to everyone!

MURRAY N. ROTHBARD



Private citizens, therefore, should have the right to be inviolate in their persons, their homes, and their properties. But doesn't the public have *any* "right to know"? Yes, they do, in *one* area only: the area of government and government officials. For government officials are *not* private citizens. They live off coerced tax money, and they have enormous powers of coercion over people at home and abroad. Government is inherently a massive agency for invasion of private property, and therefore *government officials* have not rights but duties, particularly duties to the long-suffering taxpayers to tell them what is going on. In short, the public has a right to know *everything* about the affairs of government; for government officials, from the President and the Pentagon on down, there should be no right to privacy or

Nuclear War, Can It Happen?

Back in the fifties, great numbers of Americans were concerned about the possibility of nuclear war. Many people built fallout shelters and stockpiled food. Today, things are different. If there is one thing just about everybody is agreed on, it is the impossibility of nuclear war. "The Russians," it is said, "Would have nothing to gain from destroying the U.S."

Unfortunately, such logic seems to have escaped the Soviet rulers. The Soviet Union is presently pursuing the most massive military buildup the world has ever seen. And the configuration of Soviet forces is such that a first strike is implied. In case after case, weapons systems and deployment policies which seem quite senseless if we do *not* postulate a planned first strike are seen to be instantly understandable if we do make such a postulate. The Soviet SS-9 missile, for example, delivers a payload which is many times larger than would be needed to destroy even the world's largest city. Its only conceivable purpose is to destroy hardened U.S. missile silos.

Stop and think about that. *Its purpose is to destroy hardened U.S. missile silos.* There is no need to destroy our missile silos if they are empty, right? And if they are *not* empty, doesn't that imply that the Soviets are attacking first?

Not proof, you say? You are right. It isn't proof. It is merely one small piece of evidence. But as you look at more and more pieces of this particular jigsaw puzzle, it is very easy to get disturbed. When you put them all together, the theory that makes them fit is grim indeed. The theory: that the Soviet rulers are engaged in systematic preparations to launch a nuclear surprise attack against the United States.

Further, it looks as if attempts to avert such an outcome by persuading our "repre-

sentatives" in Washington to take action, are doomed to failure. If so, then our only hope lies in the actions which we take as *individuals*, to prepare for what is coming.

I believe that the indicated plan of action is as follows:

(1) If you are living in a major target area, move. (2) Prepare a retreat in an area far removed from target areas, fallout areas, and areas likely to attract refugees. (3) Locate your retreat in an area where you can expect to have libertarians for neighbors. If the U.S. ceases to exist, the only protection you will have will be your neighbors. If they are not libertarians, the government which they will set up will respect neither your right to life nor to property.

Such, in the form of a brief sketch, is the situation as I see it. Accordingly, I have purchased land in a location suitable to the establishment of retreats by libertarians. It goes without saying that such retreats would serve equally well in case of hyperinflation and economic collapse in this country. If you are interested in a more detailed presentation of this reasoning, so you can decide for yourself whether it has merit, use the form below to send for the RETREAT INFORMATION PACKAGE.

Please send RETREAT INFORMATION PACKAGE(S) at \$2 each, to:

Name

Address

City

State Zip.....

Make check or money order payable to:
Mitchell Jones, P.O. Box 12963, Austin,
Texas 78711

confidentiality whatever. And so: no bugging and no compulsory testimony for private citizens; but strip our rulers bare. Subpoena or leak their papers, their tapes, their private conspiracy

sessions, and so on. Subpoena and impeach! Let it be known henceforth that while private persons are inviolable, our governmental rulers are fair game.

But, you might be saying, this will terribly discourage *anyone* from assuming government office? Precisely! ☐



TAXPAYERS VS. THE IRS

1973 brought the struggle between citizens, trying to protect their hard-earned money, and the IRS, bent on taking much of it away, to new heights of intensity. With the full revelation of White House use of the IRS for harassing Administration "enemies" with special audits, for cracking down hard on "extremist" groups, favoring the President's 1972 campaign supporters, and placing political contact men within top echelon IRS ranks, millions of Americans received an unexpected consciousness-raising about the true nature of a system based on forced taxation.

The response of American taxpayers was overwhelming. The number of people filing no income tax returns, as well as the number filing incorrect returns, soared to record levels. The IRS officially estimates that 5 million potential taxpayers are now failing to file, saving themselves (or "costing the government") some \$6 billion per year. According to *U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT*, "tax experts outside the IRS say the agency actually is understating the problem . . . some put the real losses as high as five times that much, around \$30 billion per year." Former IRS Commissioner Johnnie M. Walters has been widely quoted as saying that the trend in nonfilings is "frightening." The IRS fears that the way things are going, Americans may soon regard taxes in much the same manner as do many Europeans and most Latin Americans: as something to be avoided whenever, and however, possible. Particularly disturbing to the IRS is the high incidence of nonfiling among "lawyers, doctors, accountants, and other professionals."

One reason for the increase in tax avoidance and incorrect filings is that it is easier to get away with it, as compared with prior years. The IRS's auditing staff has fallen, in absolute terms, to below the level of ten years ago, while the number of returns has soared. Further, some 3,000 agents have been diverted to enforcement of price controls, and others have been assigned to such new program

areas as revenue sharing and narcotics investigations. One result of these changes is that the chances of any return being audited are now only one in 55, compared with one in 18 ten years ago. A total of 1.8 million returns were audited last year, of which 1.3 million contained "errors." However, the vast majority of those taxpayers just paid the additional tax plus interest penalties; only 1,342 were prosecuted for tax evasion, and of these 68 were acquitted, 123 were convicted, 330 pleaded no contest, and 821 pleaded guilty. Only 334 of the guilty were imprisoned, with most of the others receiving some combination of fines and probation.

To help even the odds, the IRS is beefing up its computer systems and attempting to add more audit personnel. By 1977 the computer will provide "100% matching information documents," i.e., all information containing a given Social Security number (W-2 forms, Social Security records, etc.) will automatically be cross-checked. The IRS's Discriminant Function (DIF) computer program for spotting auditable returns continues to improve the quality of audits; in 1969 only 59% of the returns audited disclosed additional taxes due, but by 1972 the percentage had been increased to 68%.

While the odds keep changing, taxpayer organizations have begun gearing up for a new round of battles. Washington-based Tax Analysts and Advocates has filed suit under the Freedom of Information Act to require the IRS to publish some 30,000 letter rulings that it renders each year in answer to private inquiries, so that all taxpayers will have access to them (rather than only those with high-priced Washington lawyers). And in San Diego, the Association of Concerned Taxpayers has filed a class-action suit demanding that the 1974 tax return forms include warnings against possible self-incrimination. Since the tax forms can be used against the taxpayer in criminal proceedings, Mrs. Barbara Hutchinson points out, a taxpayer should be accorded the same rights as any other person under the Fifth Amendment.

This column reports trends in the advancement of individual liberty and the rediscovery of economic freedom. Readers are invited to submit material of potential interest.

As the bicentennial of the Boston Tea Party approaches, Americans seem to be gearing up appropriate forms of commemoration.

SOURCES:

- "IRS Chief Is Alarmed at Tax Evader Increase," UPI (Washington), 27 March 1973.
- "Auditing the IRS," *BUSINESS WEEK*, 1 September 1973, p. 64.
- "Incorrect Tax Returns at New High, IRS Says," AP (Washington), 5 September 1973.
- "Hidden Taxpayer Strike," *U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT*, 17 September 1973.
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- "1,342 Charged With Tax Evasion in Fiscal '73," AP (Washington), 21 October 1973.

ATTITUDES TOWARD FREEDOM

A large-scale survey of the attitudes of college faculty and students toward freedom and free enterprise has found that some 80% believe that "the government has no right to interfere with a person's actions (moral or immoral) so long as these actions do not endanger the life, liberty, or property of others." This apparent strongly libertarian viewpoint was not borne out by the remainder of the survey, however. In fact, concludes World Research, Inc., the best way to describe the overall results is that "confusion reigns among college students, as well as their professors, when it comes to beliefs about government and freedom."

Carrying the conclusion further, Karl Keating, student spokesman for the Campus Studies Institute Division of WRI said, "Apparently there is a strong belief among students and professors that the government should not interfere in their own personal lives, but they do not object to government interference in other people's personal lives."

Despite the 80% support for government nonintervention, the survey found that:

52% believe it is the proper function of government to legislate that which is for the individual's own good;

69% believe that today's most important social problems are most likely to be solved by government intervention;