are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among them the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Or, as Bastiat later put it:

> We hold from God the gift which includes all others. This gift is life—physical, intellectual, and moral life.
>
> But life cannot maintain itself alone. The Creator of life has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving, developing, and perfecting it. In order that we may accomplish this, He has provided us with a collection of marvelous faculties. And He has put us in the midst of a variety of natural resources. By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course.
>
> Life, faculties, production—in other words, individuality, liberty, property—this is man. And in spite of the cunning of artful political leaders, these three gifts from God precede all human legislation, and are superior to it.
>
> Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place.[1]

One logical deduction from the premise that man's rights are endowments of the Creator is that each individual is an end in himself, that is, each person owes allegiance, above all else, to his Creator. No other person or set of persons, however organized, has any moral sanction to interfere with this Creator-man relationship; no person is warranted in compelling any human being to serve merely as a means to his own ends. When anyone violates this relationship, he is saying, in effect, "*I* am your god."

It follows from the above premise that man-made laws can be no more than codified social taboos or a set of prohibitions, for the purpose of preserving inviolate the Creator-man order. All true law finds its origin and its limitation in such rights of protection as inhere in each of us. How can we tell what these rights are? Merely ascertain if universality can be applied to them. Do I, for example, have a right to defend my life, livelihood, liberty against those who would take these from me? Only if the same right may rationally be conceded to everyone else. Can it be? Obviously, yes! Now, then, do I have a right to take the life, livelihood, liberty of another? Only if the right of murder, theft, slavery may rationally be conceded to everyone else. Can it be? Obviously, no!

It follows logically from this premise that government may properly do no more than perform the defensive function. All productive and creative actions are then freed of any man-restraint, flowing solely from the Creator-man order.

When an individual is liberated, he becomes aware of the miracles which come to pass once creative human energy has no organized, man-concocted force standing against it. An unwavering faith in free men expels any lingering, misplaced confidence in little men playing god.

The omnipotent state—authoritarianism—will not be liquidated except by liberated individuals. It is only they who go in search of freedom's answers. Until the time of liberation, they are no more teachable than a parakeet; they can repeat what they read or hear but they cannot *know*. If only liberated individuals can be of any help in reversing the trend away from freedom, it is important to take note of what brings about liberation.

Experience reveals no master key. Each mind has a unique lock. The keys presently in our possession may or may not fit. Said the student, "I have now been *liberated* for six months." I made inquiry of her mentor, "What did you say to cause the break-through?" In this instance it had to do with self-responsibility, pointing out that the state can no more assume the responsibility for one's welfare, security, prosperity than can a committee of baboons. Indeed, the responsibility for self is no more transferable than is breathing. Yet, people can be lulled into this false notion and, as a consequence, forego attention to self-responsibility, becoming purposeless and useless. But, unfortunately, this key will not fit the lock to most unopened minds.

One brilliant free market thinker confessed that he had been a socialist in high school, that a friend tirelessly labored with him until, finally, he saw the light. "What key did he use to unlock your mind?" I asked.

"George came to my home for dinner. I was showing him our new refrigerator. He asked me how I would allocate refrigerators, were it not for the price system. It was this recognition of the free market's allocation of scarce resources that triggered the change in me."

An outstanding worker for liberty acknowledged that he had finished college as a socialist. What proved to be the key to his mind? It was "Why the Worst Get on Top," a chapter in Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*.[2]

A Wichita business leader was liberated by an idea in Weaver's *Mainspring*.[3] How varied the keys!

Those who have been liberated can and do help one another—the educable aiding the educable! That we need more liberated individuals is self-evident; for among the non-liberated are, unquestionably, some of the greatest potential writers, thinkers, talkers of the freedom philosophy. But what can any of us do about it? How can we liberate them?

At the outset, it might be well to consider some of our limitations. The individual not yet liberated is no more educable as to the free market, private property, limited government philosophy than you or I are educable on subjects in which we have no interest. Thus, it is patently absurd to scold or rant at them, to be impatient, to regard them as not bright, to try poking our ideas down their necks. Such tactics will only send them scurrying.

The best counsel is to take it easy. First, we must recognize that most of the individuals among our personal contacts—be they ditch diggers or Ph.D.'s—have no aptitudes whatever for this subject. Might as well practice our wiles at the zoo!

Work naturally; make freely available such insights as you possess, but do not entertain any notions about setting someone else straight. Go only where called, *but qualify to be called*. The few within your orbit who are susceptible to the freedom philosophy will find you out. We need never worry about that, only about our own qual-

[1]Frederic Bastiat, *The Law*, translated by Dean Russell (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc., 1950), pp. 5-6.

[2]F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944).

[3]Henry Grady Weaver, *The Mainspring of Human Progress* (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc., 1953).

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