But most people don't connect their present comparative affluence with the operation of the market. They don't see the complex chains of causes and effects that make them the beneficiaries of the machine's productivity. They are like people who have become so accustomed to having electric power that they don't even think of it. Since it has worked so well, and never needed repair, people have forgotten where the underground conduits are, or how to repair the system if it should fail. Its silent efficiency has led them to take it for granted.

What impresses most people is not how good their lot is compared with workers in previous times (this they have never seen and know nothing about), but rather that some of the people today are better off than they are. They see their employer making more money than they do themselves; what they don't see are the risks he takes, the skill required to keep the factory humming and the ingenuity required in predicting future markets. They only see that he has more than they do, and they are filled with *envy*.

This tendency to envy others is, of course, played on to the hilt by government propaganda. The government needs a scapegoat, to divert attention from its own failures; and what more convenient scapegoat is there than the man of ability and independence who expands his plant, provides jobs, and makes profits? Such men are a thorn in the flesh to the state, so the state makes them the villains, thus diverting public attention from the true villain, the state itself. When the government succeeds in this, the people vote to take the successful man's wealth away from him, and his incentive to produce along with it. In some countries the envy goes so far that workers kidnap plant managers and burn factories, even if it means that they themselves thereby become unemployed.

Businessmen and the Market

Many businessmen are quite conscious of the values of the free market. Only when it operates can they produce, sell, exchange the products of their labor, and distribute these products efficiently. Many of them have started from scratch and become millionaires; others have started and gone bankrupt, either from bad luck or bad management. But they are society's risk-takers, and millions of them each year, given the opportunity, are willing to take the risk.

Yet the business community has been far from conspicuous in its defense of the free market.

(1) It isn't just that businessmen are a minority, easily outvoted at the polls—though many of them know what policies will lead to prosperity—but the majority of voters, hostile and envious, vote to put a further ball and chain around them with new taxation and regulation.

(2) It isn't just that they are inarticulate in defense of the market, though this is also true; to keep one's business going takes all one's time and effort, and to them their enterprise doesn't need defending.

(3) Nor is it simply that they're scared, though in today's climate they have every reason to be. If they speak out against the government, the EPA or OSHA or the other agencies that regulate them, these organizations bring the coercive machinery of the law down on them, slapping them with huge fines or closing them down.

The main reason, however, is that many businessmen themselves have sold out to the opposition. The self-made man takes many risks, and may struggle for years before he succeeds; but if he can cash in on the government largesse, taking money earned by other taxpayers to use for his own enterprise, he lessens those risks. So he succumbs to a policy of legalized plunder. Other businessmen, disapproving such practices, see him gaining by his dishonesty; after all they are paying taxes part of which go to keep *his* enterprise going at *their* expense; so if they can't lick him they join him, and lobby for special favors along with those they recently condemned for doing the same thing. Once men are permitted by law to stand at the public trough to receive favors, the practice spreads until almost everyone is corrupted; and those who refuse to be corrupted either go under or work at a tremendous disadvantage.

Educators and the Market

The sins of workers and businessmen against the free market system that made their affluence possible are those of omission; those of the educators are sins of commission. They are neither fearful nor indifferent; they are, in general, active enemies of the free market and the system of unimpeded supply and demand called capitalism.

So prevalent is the antimarket mentality among academicians that the results often approach the grotesque. Any young Ph.D. (at least in the humanities) who is a political conservative or libertarian must hide his views from his prospective employers, else he will fail to get the job. And if perchance he was appointed before his views were discovered, the promotions committee of the college or university that employs him is likely to deny him tenure; until that time, he must keep silent about his views. Enthusiasm for a candidate, no matter how intense, quickly palls when the candidate expresses the view that the size of the federal government (particularly the educational establishment) should be curtailed. Indeed, a large percentage of college professors seem