

attempt to force his own subjective opinion of value upon others. The market can exist—and exchange can thrive—only as other persons (the market) decide how much they will offer in exchange for my offering. Under this concept, contracts must be mutually acceptable without any intervention of force whatsoever.

PRINCIPLE NO. 4

Coercive strikes cannot be logically rationalized on the grounds of balancing the low bargaining power of workers with the great economic power of large corporations. In discussing the validity of this principle, let us assume that government is performing its function of exercising collectively the right of all citizens to the defense of their lives and livelihood; let us assume that government is restraining and penalizing all fraud, all violence, all predatory practices; let us assume that government has given to corporations no special privileges in the form of tariffs, subsidies, and the like. Under these assumptions, it follows that no citizen nor any aggregation of citizens could exercise coercion over any other citizen or citizens. Monopoly would have no way of manifesting itself. *The market would be free*, for anyone could compete if he so desired. The government—the police force—would always be available to prevent skulduggery and the use of violence.

In such a circumstance, the largest corporation could exercise no more economic power over my employment than could

the one-man-owner of a grocery store. Either could offer me a job on whatever terms he laid down. I could accept or refuse the offer of either one. And I could bargain with one as easily as with the other.

Persons holding this concept would be rid of the erroneous and damaging theory that employers have economic power or bargaining power not possessed by individuals who have services to offer. We would no longer rationalize and justify the very real coercive power of most present-day unions as a means to offset or balance the presumed power of anyone who has developed an enterprise to the point where he needs more hands than his own.

In summary, it would appear that the citizens of this country have only one real alternative to the present arrangement whereby a labor leader is able, at will, to choke the economy until his demands are met. (The proposal to “cure” the disease by making it general—that is, to use force and continue the trend toward an all-powerful government with serfs instead of citizens, as in Russia—can hardly be called an alternative.) The only reasonable choice is to free the market. This would deny to anyone any special privilege from government. It would permit a tremendous release of human energy and would result in higher production and more goods and more services for all.

The free market is the only system of economic justice known to man.