ing with those of the authoritarian persuasion. Meanwhile, he lost his championship status among libertarian idealists. By failing to reveal in this instance what his best thinking dictated as right, he proved to be highly impractical. He stooped to less than his best and, by so doing, lessened the force of his ideal and the possibility of moving toward it.

The second example concerns the economist who confessed that in his report on wage and price controls he had "hedged on rent control." When asked why he hedged, knowing full well that rent control is wrong, he explained, "My report is as strong as the Board of Directors will approve."

Here again is a deviation from righteousness, motivated by the notion that one has, first of all, the duty to second-guess how others will react. Contemplate what takes place in such an instance: the economist's instruction, instead of originating with his own excellent mind, came from an inferior source.

Clearly, rent control is wrong. But who can ever declare against it if what he writes or says must give no offense to those who think it is right? Are fallacies ever exposed by those who believe in them, or by those who imitate such believers?

Here is my third example: "Yes, of course, I agree that protectionism is unsound — wrong to the core. While it's all right for you and other theorists to openly espouse its abolition forthwith, I must, in my position, take a stand for its *gradual* removal."

Note what this libertarian's conscience dictates as right; but also note that he refuses to publicly follow his own conscience *all the way*. His deviation, I insist, is a concession to socialism. By what possible logic can one expect to do away with an unsound practice by arguing for its continuance, be it ever so brief? No one will say that thievery should be removed gradually; nor should anyone find fault with the instantaneous restoration of a man's moral right to exchange with whom he pleases. It is true, of course, that the relatively few "beneficiaries" of protection would suddenly lose their rigged markets, that is, henceforward their sales would be governed by consumer freedom of choice. Is such abruptness to be deplored? Why not immediately restore justice to millions of consumers instead of prolonging a special privilege for the few?

Reflect on this: Those who advocate the *gradual removal* of special privilege are masterminding the lives of others no less than those who advocate the *gradual imposition* of socialism. To advocate the *gradual cessation* of any wrong pays respect to the evil practice and keeps it in existence.[1]

Thinking of the sudden abolition of any one of countless socialistic practices always conjures up the fear that chaos would ensue. The record speaks strongly to the contrary, as in the case of the instantaneous abrogation of the National Industrial Recovery Act in 1935 by the Supreme Court. With the removal of restraints, the nation's energies were released.[2] All business indexes displayed an upward trend!

FEW ERRORS are more grave than for "practical" men to leave the ideal in the hands of "theorists." Put good theory into practice and it works! But it is not practical to pay lip service to good ideas and then practice inferior ones. A man becomes truly practical when he sides with sound theory, that is, when he strives to be rigorously righteous in thought and deed.

It can safely be said that every step toward an ideal throughout history has had its origin in an accurate reflection of what some individual's highest conscience revealed to him as good and

[1] The Agricultural Act of 1948 had as its aim gradually reducing government's intervention into agriculture. Yet, we find agriculture more plagued by government today than it was in 1948.

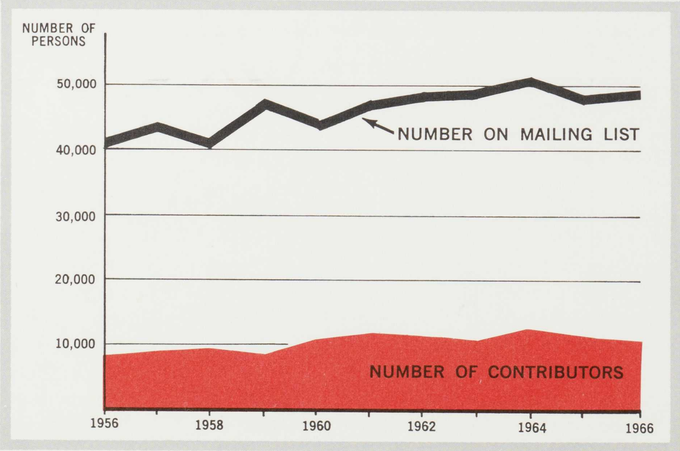
[2] "*Prompt* lowering of the tariffs . . . would have led to a radical revival, an almost explosive revival. . . . There was no reason to fear *even temporarily adverse effects* from a drastic downward revision of the tariff. . . ." (Italics mine) Excerpted from *Economics and the Public Welfare* by Dr. Benjamin M. Anderson, one of America's most distinguished business economists. (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1949), pp. 304-5.

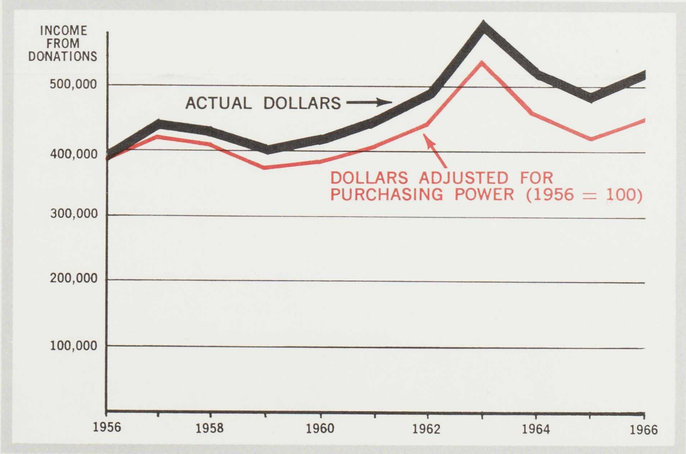
HOW FEE IS DOING

■ Our objective is an improved understanding and practice of freedom. There may be a few straws in the wind as to how well we're doing. But the best measuring stick is your own judgment. ■ For those who are interested, here are the trends in numbers and dollars.

Bear in mind that the numbers as well as the dollars reflect a voluntary response to our efforts. ■ Numberwise, anyone may receive THE FREEMAN and NOTES FROM FEE for the asking. ■ Dollarwise, anyone may contribute if, and as much as, he wishes.

Note that 20 to 25 per cent of those who ask to be on FEE's mailing list eventually become contributors — in amounts sufficient to finance the others. And they do this on **their own initiative.** FEE's only other revenue is from the sale of books.





Holding one's own financially, when socialism is on the rampage, is a victory of sorts. But you can see the growing spread between actual dollars and what they will purchase. This inflationary spread reflects the practice of fallacies, and the failure to practice the principles of freedom which FEE attempts to explain.