BOOKS Number 4

"Liberals" and the Constitution

By HENRY PLOWDEEPER

The prevailing "liberal" philosophy in the United States, according to the author of this book, calls for public control of the means of production. This, he explains, would amount to governmental control of the means of livelihood of all citizens. What is supposed to be a new humanitarian approach to economic security thus turns out to be an ancient form of tyranny —the absence of freedom.

If private control of property is outlawed, then all citizens become dependent upon the government for food, shelter, and other needs. The government becomes the only employer. This subjects lawyers, judges, teachers, ministers—all citizens—to the will of the one person who governs.

Under the "liberal" policy of public control, any property owner or person of independent means must be looked upon as an enemy of the government. The author contends that this is precisely the philosophy of communism. Believers in communism look upon any owner of private property, anywhere in the world, as an enemy to be liquidated.

Since Russia is so widely accepted as the modern model for Communists, *"Liberals" and the Constitution* opens appropriately with an examination of the Russian Constitution. It may come as a surprise to some readers to discover how Stalin has deviated from Marxian theory. Stalin demands "from each according to ability," as did Marx, but Stalin's 1936 Constitution would redistribute the proceeds "to each according to his work." That is quite a capitalistic perversion of Marxian communism, which claimed that subjects should be supported according to their needs! This is not to condone Stalin's ruthless government nor to say that Russia has completely discarded communism. But it might explain in part how the Russian people are able to get along with their so-called communism. The capitalistic idea of material incentives for those who produce has been introduced as the mainspring of Russian production.

Other chapters of this book suggest that we in America take a hard look at what we're asking and allowing our own government to do in the way of controls over industry, threats to private property, suppression of minority opinions, and the subordination of the courts and the legislative branch of government to the executive. A government which acts according to the wishes of those who want more than they have, and which disregards the rights of individuals to the product of their efforts in the form of private property, offers an open door to communism rather than a protection against it.

The author's final warning is that no constitution nor bill of rights can guarantee freedom unless the people understand and subscribe to its real purpose—to limit the amount of governmental control over their lives. This requires that private property be protected, even from the government.

In addition to its provocative subject matter, *"Liberals" and the Constitution* offers the innovations of an author who is his own editor and publisher: Mr. H. E. Spitsbergen chose to "plow deeper."

PAUL L. POIROT, *of the Foundation staff*
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