

the government and the citizen in radically new roles, with far-reaching effects on economic behavior, political practices, and individual character.

Consider, for example, the so-called *right to a job*. This is a fine-sounding phrase that evokes an emotional response. It creates a mental image of an unemployed worker and his family suffering hardship through no fault of their own. No one would deny the reality nor the seriousness of that, especially when the unemployed worker is multiplied by millions. To find the best remedy, however, is a difficult matter, and it is not made easier by the use of such misleading catchwords as the "right" to a job. One man's "right" to a job implies an obligation on the part of someone else to give him a job. Who has any such obligation?

An economy of private enterprise functions by means of voluntary contracts entered into for the sake of mutual advantage. Jobs arise from such contracts. The obligation to fulfill his contract is the only right any person can have to a job. Both sides of the contract have to be fulfilled. The employer's job—his side of the contract—is to anticipate what the consumers will want in the market place. His capacity to offer jobs to employees depends upon how well he understands the market pattern of consumer preferences. He has no

right of control over the market. There is a limit to his capacity to provide jobs. And in the final analysis, an employee's so-called *right to a job* is determined by what consumers think the product or service is worth to them.

As with the "right" to a job, so with the other so-called human rights. These are not rights in the constitutional sense of respect for privacy; they are, instead, social programs which the government has undertaken or has been asked to promote. These programs, unlike true rights, are selective, coercive, complex, and experimental. Hence, they need to be carefully considered each on its own merits with due regard to the serious threats they may involve to the real and basic human rights that have enabled free men to build a society with the highest level of material well-being ever achieved anywhere.

TRIPLE THREATS

On the economic side, the gravest threat is that productive enterprise will be so burdened and impeded by high taxes, prohibitions, red tape, and controls that industry will stagnate. Without the products of industry, social programs of any kind become empty promises. New political powers and functions increase the cost of government and drain manpower from