

ifications. In this manner we will liberate as many minds as will open to our own keys.

One example of exploration: Many of my hours are spent in air travel. Is my seat companion a socialist or what? Striking up a conversation is easy enough. And just as easy is to converse in such a manner that he or she cannot help asking, within a few minutes, "What, pray tell, do you do?" His or her reaction to my brief answer will instantly reveal to me whether or not he or she has any interest in freedom. If negative, I return to my reading or writing; if affirmative, I'll have a new worker in the vineyard when the plane touches down.

This unobtrusive type of exploration lends itself to any number of adaptations. It is productive as well as good exercise. Further, it is fun. Have a try at it. You may liberate someone. If you do, count on it, you'll have made one of the best friends, ever. And you will have struck another blow for freedom!

**T**here are thousands of earnest, skillful persons at work in the libertarian vineyard. There would be tens of thousands—perhaps a million or two—were it not for the destructive influence of discouragement.

Some, having delivered themselves of a speech or an essay or a slice from their bank balance, "fold their tents" if the millennium they seek doesn't appear immediately. There are others of a tougher breed who labor and spend for years before exclaiming, "Oh, what's the use!" These no-longer-working, discouraged people are encountered everywhere, at all levels of society, and constitute liberty's vast inactive army of might-have-beens.

There is an antidote to discouragement; it is to realize the delayed-action nature of ideas. The impact of an idea, even where it penetrates deepest, is seldom noticeable. The work of an idea is done in a dimension the naked eye does not see.

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Ideas which will eventually remove political plunder and other forms of authoritarianism must first undergo an invisible social diffusion and ripening; they have to mature in numberless minds; and no observable manifestation is possible until they reach some unpredictable pressure—until they achieve a bursting point. Who can see an idea maturing in the mind of an unknown person? Even in the mind of a friend? Even in one's own mind? Ideas do much of their work in quiet privacy.

Imagine an opaque cup held empty at eye level so added contents could not be seen. Add drops of water, one at a time. The first drop has no visible effect, nor the 100th, nor the 1,000th, nor even the 4,800th drop. But drop number 4,801 will cause the cup to overflow.

Now, most of us have faith that drops of water would eventually bring a cup to overflowing even though we might not see the water level rising. This same principle of simple addition applies to ideas. But, more, there is another force at work. Ideas do not just accumulate; they also grow by some kind of a vitality of their own. Thus, we have reasonable grounds for our faith that persistency in idea propagation will eventually cause a reversal of the present drift into government interventionism, and that this process is at work even during those long stretches of time when little if any outward effect can be observed.

If each individual within his own orbit—friends and working associates—were to read and examine the ideas on liberty espoused in *The Freeman* and various books in FEE's "Literature of Freedom" catalogue, many of them would exclaim, "Why, that's what I believe." Yet, among them all, how many can explain attractively and persuasively why they believe as they do?

Why not become a wellspring of the freedom philosophy yourself, that is, make these aids to private property, free exchange, limited government thinking available to those within your own circle of acquaintance? At the very least, why not have a personal command of these many facts and ideas?



President