

housing problems which the government has managed to create. We *must* have better housing! And this strange theory proceeds with the implication that if the individual isn't able to provide and subsidize a few hundred thousand new homes for others, then he *must* keep on delegating to government the responsibility for solving these problems which are the product of governmental interference with our lives. To accept that theory is to bow to tyranny without even struggling.

Limited Government

THE IDEA of limited government is that there is somewhere a stopping point to the inevitable governmental grasp for authority. In other words, there are certain things which ought to remain matters of individual responsibility. And if providing his own housing isn't such a personal responsibility, then on what grounds does any of us claim a right to be different and enjoy the privacy of his own home—his own property? If I advocate seizure of your property for what I claim to be in the common interest, why should I believe that you would still be interested in defending my property—or even my life? There is much dread that the individualism of competitive enterprise may lead to anarchy. But there is a worse form of anarchy—the anarchy of compulsory democratic

collectivism by which the majority rides rough shod over the last vestiges of individuality.

As Judge Van Orsdel has cautioned:

"It should be remembered that of the three fundamental principles which underlie government, and for which government exists, the protection of life, liberty and property, the chief of these is property, not that any amount of property is more valuable than the life or liberty of the citizen, but the history of civilization proves that, when the citizen is deprived of the free use and enjoyment of his property, anarchy and revolution follow, and life and liberty are without protection."⁸

There is no reason for any conscientious citizen to believe that the government of the United States gave him life or granted him liberty. Nor is it reasonable of him to believe that the government ought to give him a house or any other right to property, thereby denying the similar rights of all others. That an individual may possess the power to seize or to tear down the house of his neighbor does not mean that he has a right to do it. Such powers of criminal violence are relinquished by those who pledge allegiance to the government of the United States. That is the price of membership in any peaceful society. The authorized function of our government is to restrain those who might attempt to deal coercively with one another. The government was designed to be the defender, not the equalizer, of life and property.

If a human being is ingenious and industri-

⁸ 284 Federal Reports, 622.