

while rejecting the concept of hereditary rulers, they did not entirely reject the "Old World" idea that it is permissible for some persons to use the powers of government to aid them in controlling the actions and disposing of the production of other persons.

A discredited idea of freedom? Well, that same concept of freedom is still widely held throughout the United States today. The reasons advanced to defend the fact that some men have the authority to control the productive actions of other men have changed. And the modern way of taking and distributing the fruits of other people's labor is seldom called slavery. But the legal right of some men to control the productive activities of other men continues to exist as before. And the present-day tax of more than 80 per cent of some persons' incomes is probably a far greater percentage of their production than was ever withheld from any slave.

Is this present-day taking of other people's production legal? It is. But so was outright slavery once legal! Did that make it right? Let us hope that we Americans never delude ourselves into the belief that *right* is properly determined by a show of hands. For if we do, we are lost.

The extent and type of the legal controls over persons, and the degree of the taking of other people's production, have varied great-

ly throughout the history of the United States. But the overwhelming majority of the American people have always believed that freedom includes the right of some persons to use the legal authority of government to control the productive efforts and incomes of other persons.

Two Ideas of Liberty

ABRAHAM LINCOLN recognized this dilemma in 1864 when he stated: "The world has never had a good definition of the word liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in want of one. We all declare for liberty, but in using the same *word* we do not all mean the same *thing*. With some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men, and the product of other men's labor. Here are two, not only different, but incompatible things, called by the same name—liberty."

Both Lincoln and Jefferson Davis announced themselves for freedom. So did Stalin and Hitler. So do you and I and almost everyone else. And I have no reason to doubt that each is sincerely in favor of freedom—*his concept of freedom*.