A Binder?

Would you like a binder in which to file *The Freeman* so that all copies are handy for reference purposes? We have a new multi-blade binder to hold 12 issues, dark blue, very substantial, attractively lettered, for $2.25 delivered.

The President and the Student

"I am a student at a small college in Michigan. In the next few months, I will be engaged in several debates and panel discussions on subjects regarding our freedom and government control. I found one of your publications, *The Freeman,* in our president's trash can and find same the best source yet of current information and ideas. Kindly, sir, send me a gift subscription to your publications as my funds are extremely limited (I have a family of three kiddies and no GI bill)."

And the Twain Shall Meet

"My wife and I are over 80 and definitely retired but much interested in people and the future of our Country. She is way to the Left and I am way to the Right but we manage to live together in peace. I have been unable to induce her to read any of the literature you are sending me but last Fall she inadvertently picked up a copy of *Ideas on Liberty* and I found she had underlined many things in it and proclaimed to me that it was wonderful. So you have some evidence now that the literature you have been sending me is doing good."

Quite a Library

For some years I had a hand in contending against California radical movements, and by educational methods. But the methods were those of negation—proving this or that Utopian scheme to be wrong. However, as we would rid ourselves of one scheme, new schemes would emerge. It was something like proving only that the world wasn't flat. Get that done, and there remained the chore of proving that it wasn't a cube, rhombus, prism, or any one of other forms that shape could take. Then someone proved the world to be round and thus got rid of the whole kaboodle of fallacies about its shape. The principle, it seemed, applied to this area as well. Programs of negation, even though educational in nature, proved to be inadequate. Needed was a positive approach—proof of the efficacy of man in free, private, competitive, voluntarily cooperative effort, with government limited to restraining violence, fraud, and the like. From where, only a decade ago, was such a positive philosophy issuing? I, at least, couldn't find such a source. Indeed, did there exist a literature which *consistently* portrayed the free market, private property, limited government rationale? Anyway, during these past ten years, FEE has issued quite a literature—not yet adequate, to be sure—cast mostly in the positive, and useful to those who desire to learn the alternative to statism. Just off the press is a printed list of all that FEE has available.

One in 10,000?

Guesses like this are wild. Maybe it's one in 1,000 or only one in 100,000 who really understands the underlying meaning of our Constitution. I rarely find such a person. Yet, unless the revolutionary idea of limited, servant government is embraced and mentally digested, an idea the Constitution aimed to implement into our way of life, there simply is no obstacle at all to unlimited government, socialism, communism. *The Constitution of the United States* by James Mussatti, Study Guide by Thomas J. Shelly, published by D. Van Nostrand and sponsored by FEE, is designed for classroom and discussion group use but is of value to anyone, regardless of how versed in these basic American principles. Available paper-bound for $2.00, clothbound for $3.50.

The Festschrift

This month, Ludwig von Mises, certainly one of the world's top economists, celebrates the 50th anniversary of his doctorate. To honor the occasion, there has been in preparation for two years a volume of essays, *On Freedom and Free Enterprise.* Nineteen authors from South Africa, U.S.A., Switzerland, Italy, Mexico, and France – ranging from Mises' most famous pupil, Friedrich A. von Hayek, to the well-known Henry Hazlitt—grace its chapters. This volume, 347 pages, does not classify as light or popular reading, but it is good fare for those who admire the works of Mises. Price: $3.50.

On Being Too Extreme

The president of one large corporation that does not support FEE offers this explanation: "You folks at the Foundation are too extreme. Why, you even write critiques of compulsory Social Security. It is here to stay."

Now, this president does not personally believe in compulsory Social Security. But if he consistently follows the excuse he offers, he is counseling that there is no rectification of error; that mankind is eternally committed to living with every mistake that has its day as national policy. If he says he doesn't mean this, then we must ask: "Is not calling attention to error the first step in erasing it? And, if not, what is?" Or, if our critic counsels delay until a time more propitious, just what is to bring about such a time except a general doubt? And, can doubt be general—short of raising doubt? Not to raise doubt when error is evident is like not calling attention to a fire when the blaze begins.

Criticism That Is Helpful

A socialist of international fame inadvertently got on FEE's mailing list—back in '46. After reading one of our publications, he returned the reply card with, "Drop my name. You are a bunch of rogues." Less amusing are the prominent "free enterprisers" who drop, not merely their names, but their financial support, and for exactly the same reason—we haven't any state socialism in us at all. Criticism directed at our not being sufficiently socialistic is to no avail and without influence. The criticisms we encourage and value, and which do influence us, are those which demonstrate how more competently to explain free market or libertarian points. Our attitude summarized is: Impervious to the jibes of the socialists; sensitive to any teaching which helps to restore man's faith in what he can accomplish by acting freely and without compulsion.

Testing!

Textbooks on economics and related subjects are heavily loaded on the side of collectivism. Yet, little is accomplished by complaining about this situation. Any useful action must consist of making better textbooks available. Producing new textbooks is a slow, laborious, expensive undertaking. An experimental project of ours consists of writing and printing study guides for excellent existing books that otherwise would not find their way to classroom use. Some time ago, we began a series of offerings to about 21,000 high school principals and superintendents. The first was *Understanding Our Free Economy* with Study Guide. Requests: 1,750. The second was *Essays on Liberty, Vol. I,* with Study Guide. Requests: 1,775. The third was *Economics in One Lesson* with Study Guide. Requests: 2,862. The fourth, *The Mainspring of Human Progress* with Study Guide, was offered in early January. Requests: more than 4,000 and still going! It appears that material of our philosophy, carefully and thoughtfully prepared, earns an increasing confidence with many educators.

What's Right and What's Wrong

". . . I am so thankful that you fellows at Irvington seem far more interested in what's right and what's wrong than in who's a communist and who isn't."

The above is but another way of expressing what we on the staff often say to each other: "Let us try to emphasize the libertarian philosophy rather than axe away at our adversaries." I recall, five years ago, listening to a distinguished Frenchman explain how wonderfully their antisocialistic program was faring. "Why," he exclaimed, "even the socialists are laughing at the folly of their own acts." "How much socialism is being repealed?" asked I. And, he confessed, "None!" The reason is simple. French folks, by and large, were unaware of the alternative—the free market philosophy. The French libertarians had employed the fruitless tactic of all anti and no pro.

More on Right and Wrong

There are but few thieves among us. While any good economist knows that thievery isn't an economical way of satisfying desires, it isn't the economic argument that accounts for the few thieves. Most people reject stealing, not because of economic, but because of moral persuasions. Most of us profoundly believe that thievery is downright evil, and it's this conviction that keeps us on the path of rectitude.

Good economists can, and some do, demonstrate that legal thievery—"from each according to his ability, to each according to his need," by the force of government—is not an economical way of satisfying desires. In spite of these demonstrations, spoliation, legal thievery, socialism, communism—call these devices what you will—go on apace. The economic argument by itself will not stop this devastation. If and when it is stopped, it will be by reason of an