

defensive violence is the best principle to follow. I now believe it is. But when I study the lives of Christ, Gandhi, and others who seemed to endorse a policy of turning the other cheek and of not using violence even for defense, I prefer not to become too dogmatic on the subject. Their moral policies appear to have been quite effective.

Whether or not I am justified in my endorsement of defensive violence, this much is certain: I cannot logically claim to favor freedom when I am *initiating* violence or the threat of violence—legal or illegal—to force any person to conform to my ideas, beliefs, or viewpoints. Thus, come what may, I will never knowingly and deliberately initiate violence against my fellow man. I have too much respect for him (and for myself) to do such a thing.

If what my neighbor is doing with himself and his own property appears wrong or illogical to me, then it would seem certain that what I am doing with myself and my property appears equally wrong or illogical to him. Thus we have the choice between neither one's molesting the other, or fighting it out to determine who shall conform to whom. I choose to follow the course of freedom, to take the first and necessary and logical step toward a relationship of mutual non-molestation.

An Epilogue

HERE FOLLOWS what seems to me a most encouraging thought for those among us who despair of liberty.

Freedom will never disappear completely and forever—in Russia or anywhere else. The popular, one-way, “individualistic” concept of freedom will at least serve to prevent that. Since no person wants others to molest *him*, almost every person will rebel against molestation somewhere along the line, even though he may foolishly continue to molest others while he is rebelling against those who are molesting him.

At one time or another, the people of all nations have rebelled against excessive molestation from their own governments. This is as true of the United States as it is of Russia.

These rebellions sometimes bring an increased degree of freedom—that is, a decreased degree of molestation—for a while. Then the rebels, not fully understanding that freedom is a condition of reciprocal non-molestation, seem inevitably to begin to initiate the same sort of laws against which they themselves rebelled.

They rebel against a tea tax, and then put a tax on tea! They rebel against price controls, tariffs, and other restraints on trade;