

eat it, or share it with your family or a friend. Or you can give part of the wheat to the miller in payment for his labor; the part you give him, in the form of wages, is his because he gave you labor in exchange. Or you sell half the bushel of wheat for money, which you exchange for butter to go with the bread. Or you put the money in the bank so that you can have something else later on, when you want it.

In other words, your ownership entitles you to use your judgment as to what you will do with the product of your labor — consume it, give it away, sell it, save it. Freedom of disposition is the substance of property rights.

FREEDOM OF DISPOSITION

INTERFERENCE with this freedom of disposition is, in the final analysis, interference with your right to life. At least, that is your reaction to such interference, for you describe such interference with a word that expresses a deep emotion: You call it "robbery." What's more, if you find that this robbery persists, if you are regularly deprived of the fruits of your labor, you lose interest in laboring. The only reason you work is to satisfy your desires; and if experience shows that despite your efforts your

desires go unsatisfied, you become stingy about laboring. You become a "poor" producer.

Suppose the freedom of disposition is taken away from you entirely. That is, you become a slave; you have no right of property. Whatever you produce is taken by somebody else; and though a good part of it is returned to you, in the way of sustenance, medical care, housing, you cannot under the law dispose of your output; if you try to, you become the legal "robber." Your concern in production wanes and you develop an attitude toward laboring that is called a "slave" psychology. Your interest in yourself also drops because you sense that without the right of property you are not much different from the other living things in the barn. The clergyman may tell you you are a man, with a soul; but you sense that without the right of property you are somewhat less of a man than the one who can dispose of your production as he wills. If you are a human, how human are you?

It is silly, then, to prate of human rights being superior to property rights, because the right of ownership is traceable to the right to life, which is certainly inherent in the human being. Property rights are in fact human rights.