

The Chasm

The Future Is Calling (Part One)

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INTRODUCTION

G. Edward Griffin is a writer and documentary film producer with many successful titles to his credit. Listed in *Who's Who in America*, he is well known because of his talent for researching difficult topics and presenting them in clear terms that all can understand. He has dealt with such diverse subjects as archaeology and ancient Earth history, the Federal Reserve System and international banking, terrorism, internal subversion, the history of taxation, U.S. foreign policy, the science and politics of cancer therapy, the Supreme Court, and the United Nations. His better-known works include *The Creature from Jekyll Island*, *World without Cancer*, *The Discovery of Noah's Ark*, *Moles in High Places*, *The Open Gates of Troy*, *No Place to Hide*, *The Capitalist Conspiracy*, *More Deadly than War*, *The Grand Design*, *The Great Prison Break*, and *The Fearful Master*.

Mr. Griffin is a graduate of the University of Michigan where he majored in speech and communications. In preparation for writing his book on the Federal Reserve System, he enrolled in the College for Financial Planning located in Denver, Colorado. His goal was not to become a professional financial planner but to better understand the real world of investments and money markets. He obtained his CFP designation (Certified Financial Planner) in 1989.

Mr. Griffin is a recipient of the coveted Telly Award for excellence in television production, the creator of the *Reality Zone Audio Archives*, and is President of American Media, a publishing and video production company in Southern California. He has served on the board of directors of The National Health Federation and The International Association of Cancer Victors and Friends and is Founder and President of The Cancer Cure Foundation. He is the founder and president of Freedom Force International.

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OVERVIEW

Thank you, Richard, and thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen. What a terrific introduction that was; but, in all honesty, I must tell you that it *greatly* exaggerates the importance of my work. I should know. I wrote it.

The dangerous thing about platform introductions is that they tend to create unrealistic expectations. You have just been led to anticipate that, somehow, I am going to make a complex subject easy to understand. Well, that's quite a billing. I hope I can live up to that expectation today; but it remains to be seen if I can really do that with this topic: *The War on Terrorism*. How can anyone make that easy to understand? There are so many issues and so much confusion. I feel like the proverbial mosquito in a nudist camp. I know what I have to do. I just don't know where to begin.

There is a well-known rule in public speaking that applies to complex topics. It is: First, tell them what you're going to tell them. Then tell them. And, finally, tell them what

you told them. I'm going to follow that rule today, and I will begin by making a statement that I have carefully crafted to be as shocking as possible. That's primarily because I want you to remember it. When I tell you what I'm going to tell you, I know that, for many of you, it will sound absurd, and you'll think I have gone completely out of my mind. Then, for the main body of my presentation, I will tell you what I told you by presenting facts to prove that everything I said is true. And, finally, at the end, I will tell you what I told you by repeating my opening statement; and, by then hopefully, it will no longer seem absurd.

What I am going to tell you is this: Although it is commonly believed that the War on Terrorism is a noble effort to defend freedom, in reality, it has little to do with terrorism and even less to do with the defense of freedom. There are other agendas at work; agendas that are far less praiseworthy; agendas that, in fact, are just the opposite of what we are told. The purpose of this presentation is to prove that, what is unfolding today is, *not* a war on terrorism to defend freedom, but *a war on freedom that requires the defense of terrorism*.

That is what I'm going to tell you today, and you are probably wondering how anyone in his right mind could think he could prove such a statement as that. So let's get right to it; and the first thing we must do is confront the word *proof*. What is proof? There is no such thing as absolute proof. There is only evidence. Proof may be defined as sufficient evidence to convince the observer that a particular hypothesis is true. The same evidence that is convincing to one person may not convince another. In that event, the case is proved to the first person but not to the second one who still needs more evidence. So, when we speak of proof, we are really talking about evidence.

It's my intent to tell you what I told you by developing the case slowly and methodically; to show motive and opportunity; to introduce eyewitnesses and the testimony of experts. In other words, I will provide evidence – upon evidence – upon evidence until the mountain is so high that even the most reluctant skeptic must conclude that the case has been proved.

Where do we find this evidence? The first place to look is in history. The past is the key to the present, and we can never fully understand where we are today unless we know what path we traveled to get here. It was Will Durant who said: "Those who know nothing about history are doomed forever to repeat it."

Are we doomed to repeat history in the war on terrorism? If we continue to follow the circular path we are now taking, I believe that we are. But to find out if that is true, we need to go back in time. So, I invite you to join me, now, in my time machine. We are going to splash around in history for a while and look at some great events and huge mistakes to see if there are parallels, any lessons to be learned for today. I must warn you: it will seem that we are lost in time. We are going to go here and there, and then jump back further, and then forward in time, and we will be examining issues that may make you wonder "What on earth has this to do with today?" But I can assure you, when we reach the end of our journey, you will see that everything we cover has a direct relevance to today and, in particular, to the war on terrorism.

THE HIDDEN AGENDA

Now that we are in our time machine, we turn the dial to the year 1954 and, suddenly, we find ourselves in the plush offices of the Ford Foundation in New York City. There are two men seated at a large, Mahogany desk, and they are talking. They cannot see or hear us, but we can see them very well. One of these men is Rowan Gaither, who was the

President of the Ford Foundation at that time. The other is Mr. Norman Dodd, the chief investigator for what was called the Congressional Committee to Investigate Tax Exempt Foundations. The Ford Foundation was one of those, so he is there as part of his Congressional responsibilities.

In 1982, I met Mr. Dodd in his home state of Virginia where, at the time, I had a television crew gathering interviews for a documentary film. I previously had read his testimony and realized how important it was; so, when our crew had open time, I called him on the telephone and asked if he would be willing to make a statement before our cameras, and he said, "Of course." I'm glad we obtained the interview when we did, because Dodd was advanced in years, and it wasn't long afterward that he passed away. We were very fortunate to capture his story in his own words. What we now are witnessing from our time machine was confirmed in minute detail twenty years later and preserved on video.

We are now in the year 1954, and we hear Mr. Gaither say to Mr. Dodd, "Would you be interested in knowing what we do here at the Ford Foundation?" And Mr. Dodd says, "Yes! That's exactly why I'm here. I would be very interested, sir." Then, without any prodding at all, Gaither says, "Mr. Dodd, we operate in response to directives, the substance of which is that we shall use our grant making power to alter life in the United States so that it can be comfortably merged with the Soviet Union."

Dodd almost falls off of his chair when he hears that. Then he says to Gaither, "Well, sir, you can do anything you please with your grant making powers, but don't you think you have an obligation to make a disclosure to the American people? You enjoy tax exemption, which means you are indirectly subsidized by taxpayers, so, why don't you tell the Congress and the American people what you just told me?" And Gaither replies, "We would never dream of doing such a thing."

A STRATEGY TO CONTROL THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

The question that arises in Mr. Dodd's mind is: How would it be possible for anyone to think that they could alter life in the United States so it could be comfortably merged with the Soviet Union and, by implication, with other nations of the world? What an absurd thought that would be – especially in 1954. That would require the abandonment of American concepts of justice, traditions of liberty, national sovereignty, cultural identity, constitutional protections, and political independence, to name just a few. Yet, these men were deadly serious about it. They were not focused on the question of *if* this could be done. Their only question was *how* to do it? What would it *take* to change American attitudes? What would it *take* to convince them to abandon their heritage in exchange for global union?

The answer was provided by another powerful and prestigious tax-exempt foundation, the Carnegie Endowment Fund for International Peace. When Dodd visited that organization and began asking about their activities, the President said, "Mr. Dodd, you have a lot of questions. It would be very tedious and time consuming for us to answer them all, so I have a counter proposal. Why don't you send a member of your staff to our facilities, and we will open our minute books from the very first meeting of the Carnegie Fund, and your staff can go through them and copy whatever you find there. Then you will know everything we are doing."

Again, Mr. Dodd was totally amazed. He observed that the President was newly appointed and probably had never actually read the minutes himself. So Dodd accepted the

offer and sent a member of his staff to the Carnegie Endowment facilities. Her name was Mrs. Catherine Casey who, by the way, was hostile to the activity of the Congressional Committee. Political opponents of the Committee had placed her on the staff to be a watchdog and a damper on the operation. Her attitude was: "What could possibly be wrong with tax-exempt foundations? They do so much good." So, that was the view of Mrs. Casey when she went to the boardroom of the Carnegie Foundation. She took her Dictaphone machine with her (they used mechanically inscribed belts in those days) and recorded, word for word, many of the key passages from the minutes of this organization, starting with the very first meeting. What she found was so shocking, Mr. Dodd said she almost lost her mind. She became ineffective in her work after that and had to be given another assignment.

This is what those minutes revealed: From the very beginning, the members of the board discussed how to alter life in the United States; how to change the attitudes of Americans to give up their traditional principles and concepts of government and be more receptive to what they call the *collectivist* model of society. I will talk more about what the word *collectivist* means in a moment, but those who wrote the documents we will be quoting use that word often and they have a clear understanding of what it means. At the Carnegie Foundation board meetings, they discussed this question in a very scholarly fashion. After many months of deliberation, they came to the conclusion that, out of all of the options available for altering political and social attitudes, there was only *one* that was historically dependable. That option was *war*. In times of war, they reasoned, only then would people be willing to give up things they cherish in return for the desperate need and desire for security against a deadly enemy. And so the Carnegie Endowment Fund for International *Peace* declared in its minutes that it must do whatever it can to bring the United States into *war*.

They also said there were other actions needed, and these were their exact words: "We must control education in the United States." They realized that was a pretty big order, so they teamed up with the Rockefeller Foundation and the Guggenheim Foundation to pool their financial resources to control education in America – in particular, to control the teaching of history. They assigned those areas of responsibility that involved issues relating to domestic affairs to the Rockefeller Foundation, and those issues relating to international affairs were taken on as the responsibility of the Carnegie Endowment.

Their first goal was to rewrite the history books, and they discussed at great length how to do that. They approached some of the more prominent historians of the time and presented to them the proposal that they rewrite history to favor the concept of collectivism, but they were turned down flat. Then they decided – and, again, these are their own words, "We must create our own stable of historians."

They selected twenty candidates at the university level who were seeking doctorates in American History. Then they went to the Guggenheim Foundation and said, "Would you grant fellowships to candidates selected by us, who are of the right frame of mind, those who see the value of collectivism as we do? Would you help them to obtain their doctorates so we can then propel them into positions of prominence and leadership in the academic world?" And the answer was "Yes."

So they gathered a list of young men who were seeking their doctorate degrees. They interviewed them, analyzed their attitudes, and chose the twenty they thought were best suited for their purpose. They sent them to London for a briefing. (In a moment I will explain why London is so significant.) At this meeting, they were told what would be

expected if and when they win the doctorates they were seeking. They were told they would have to view history, write history, and teach history from the perspective that collectivism was a positive force in the world and was the wave of the future.

Now let's go to the words of Mr. Dodd, himself, as he described this event before our cameras in 1982. He said:

This group of twenty historians eventually formed the nucleus of the American Historical Association. Then toward the end of the 1920's the Endowment grants to the American Historical Association \$400,000 [a huge amount of money in those days] for a study of history in a manner that points to what this country can look forward to in the future. That culminates in a seven-volume study, the last volume of which is a summary of the contents of the other six. And the essence of the last volume is, the future of this country belongs to collectivism, administered with characteristic American efficiency.¹

Now we must turn off our time machine for a few moments and deal with this word *collectivism*. You are going to hear it a lot. Especially if you delve into the historical papers of the individuals and groups we are discussing, you will find them using that word over and over. Although most people have only a vague concept of what it means, the advocates of collectivism have a very clear understanding of it, so let's deal with that now.

THE CHASM: TWO ETHICS THAT DIVIDE THE WESTERN WORLD

There are many words commonly used today to describe political attitudes. We are told that there are conservatives, liberals, libertarians, progressives, right-wingers, left-wingers, socialists, communists, Trotskyites, Maoists, Fascists, Nazis; and if that isn't confusing enough, now we have *neo* conservatives, *neo* Nazis, and *neo* everything else. When we are asked what our political orientation is, we are expected to choose from one of these words. If we don't have a strong political opinion or if we're afraid of making a bad choice, then we play it safe and say we are moderates – adding yet one more word to the list.

Social mores and religious beliefs sometimes divide along the Left-Right political axis. In the United States, the Democrat Party is home for the Left, while the Republican Party is home for the Right. Those on the Left are more likely to embrace life styles that those on the Right would consider improper or even sinful. Those on the Right are more likely to be church-going members of an organized religion. But these are not definitive values, because there is a great deal of overlap. Republicans smoke pot. Democrats go to church. Social or religious values cannot be included in any meaningful definition of these groups.

Not one person in a thousand can clearly define the ideology that any of these words represent. They are used, primarily, as labels to impart an aura of either goodness or badness, depending on who uses the words and what *emotions* they trigger in their minds. Most political debates sound like they originate at the tower of Babel. Everyone is speaking a different language. The words may sound familiar, but speakers and listeners each have their own private definitions.

¹ The complete transcript of Mr. Dodd's testimony may be downloaded at no charge from the web site of Freedom Force International, www.freedom-force.org. The video from which this was taken is entitled *The Hidden Agenda* and may be obtained from The Reality Zone web site, www.realityzone.com.

It has been my experience that, once the definitions are commonly understood, most of the disagreements come to an end. To the amazement of those who thought they were bitter ideological opponents, they often find they are actually in basic agreement. So, to deal with this word, *collectivism*, our first order of business is to throw out the garbage. If we are to make sense of the political agendas that dominate our planet today, we must not allow our thinking to be contaminated by the emotional load of the old vocabulary

It may surprise you to learn that most of the great political debates of our time – at least in the Western world – can be divided into just two viewpoints. All of the rest is fluff. Typically, they focus on whether or not a particular action should be taken; but the real conflict is not about the merits of the action; it is about the principles, the ethical code that justifies or forbids that action. It is a contest between the ethics of *collectivism* on the one hand and *individualism* on the other. Those are words that have meaning, and they describe a philosophical chasm that divides the entire Western world.¹

The one thing that is common to both collectivists and individualists is that the vast majority of them are well intentioned. They want the best life possible for their families, for their countrymen, and for mankind. They want prosperity and justice for their fellow man. Where they disagree is how to bring those things about.

I have studied collectivist literature for over forty-five years; and, after a while, I realized there were certain recurring themes, what I consider to be the five pillars of collectivism. If they are turned upside down, they also are the five pillars of individualism. In other words, there are five major concepts of social and political relationships; and, within each of them, collectivists and individualists have opposite viewpoints.

1. THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The first of these has to do with the nature of human rights. Collectivists and individualists both agree that human rights are important, but they differ over *how* important compared to other values and especially over the origin of those rights.

Rights are not tangible entities that can be viewed or measured. They are abstract concepts held in the human mind. They are whatever men agree they are at a given time and place. Their nature has changed with the evolution of civilization. Today, they vary widely from culture to culture. One culture may accept that rights are granted by rulers who derive authority from God. Another culture may claim that rights are granted by God directly to the people. In other cultures, rights are perceived as a claim to the material possessions of others. People living in tribal or military dictatorships don't spend much time even thinking about rights because they have no expectation of ever having them. Some primitive cultures don't even have a word for rights.

Because of the great diversity in the concept of human rights, they cannot be defined to everyone's satisfaction. However, that does not mean they cannot be defined to *our* satisfaction. We do not have to insist that those in other cultures agree with us; but, if we

¹ In the Middle East and parts of Africa and Asia, there is a third ethic called *theocracy*, a form of government that combines church and state and compels citizens to accept a particular religious doctrine. That was common throughout early European Christendom and it appeared even in some of the colonies of the United States. It survives in today's world in the form of Islam and it has millions of advocates. Any comprehensive view of political ideology must include theocracy, but time does not permit such scope in this presentation. For those interested in the author's larger view, including theocracy, there is a summary called *Which Path for Mankind?* attached to the end of this essay.

wish to live in a culture to *our* liking, one in which we have the optimum amount of personal freedom, then we must be serious about a preferred definition of human rights. If we have no concept of what rights *should* be, then it is likely we will live under a definition not to our liking.

The first thing to understand as we work toward a useful definition of rights is that their *source* determines their *nature*. This will be covered in greater detail further along, but the concept needs to be stated here. If we can agree on the source of rights, then we will have little difficulty agreeing on their nature. For example, if a security guard is hired by a gated community to protect the property of its residents, the nature of the guard's activity must be limited to the activities that the residents themselves are entitled to perform. That means the guard may patrol the community and, if necessary, physically deter burglaries and crimes of aggressive violence. But the guard is not authorized to compel the residents to send their children to bed by 10 PM or donate to the Red Cross. Why not? Because the residents are the source of the authority; the nature of the authority cannot include any act that is denied to the source; and the residents have no right to compel their neighbors in these matters.

RIGHTS ARE BORN ON THE BATTLEFIELD

In societies that have been sheltered for many generations from war and revolution, it is easy to forget that rights are derived from military power. That is their ultimate source. Initially, rights must be earned on the battlefield. They may be handed to the next generation as a gift, but they always are purchased on the battlefield. The Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution is a classic example. The men who drafted that document were able to do so only because they represented the colonists who defeated the armies of Great Britain. Had they lost the War of Independence, they would have had no opportunity to write a Bill of Rights or anything else except letters of farewell before their execution.

Unfortunately, Mao Zedong was right when he said that political power grows from the barrel of a gun. He could just as well have said rights. A man may declare that he has a right to do such and such derived from law or from a constitution or even from God; but, in the presence of an enemy or a criminal or a tyrant with a gun to his head, he has no power to exercise his proclaimed right. Rights are always based on power. If we lose our ability or willingness to physically defend our rights, we will lose them.

Now we come to the chasm between collectivists and individualists. If rights are earned on the battlefield, we may assume they belong to the winners, but who are they? Do governments win wars or do the people? If governments win wars and people merely serve them as in medieval times, then governments hold the rights and are entitled to grant or deny them to the people. On the other hand, if people win wars and governments merely serve them in this matter, then the people hold rights and are entitled to grant or deny them to governments. If our task is to define rights as we think they *should* be in a free society, we must choose between these two concepts. Individualists choose the concept that rights come from the people and governments are the servants. Collectivists choose the concept that rights come from governments and people are the servants. Individualists are nervous about that assumption because, if the state has the power to *grant* rights, it also has the power to take them away, and that concept is incompatible with personal liberty.

The view of individualism was expressed clearly in the United States Declaration of Independence, which says:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men....

Nothing could be clearer than that. The dictionary tells us that inalienable (spelled differently in colonial times) means “not to be transferred to another.” The assumption is that rights are the innate possession of the people. The purpose of government is, not to *grant* rights, but to *secure* them and protect them.

By contrast, all collectivist political systems embrace the opposite view that rights are granted by the state. That includes the Nazis, Fascists, and Communists. It is also a tenet of the United Nations. Article Four of the UN Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights says:

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, in the enjoyment of those rights provided by the State ... the State may subject such rights only to such limitations as are determined by law.

I repeat: If we accept that the state has the power to *grant* rights, then we must also agree it has the power to *take them away*. Notice the wording of the UN Covenant. After proclaiming that rights are provided by the state, it then says that those rights may be subject to limitations “as are determined by law.” In other words, the collectivists at the UN presume to grant us our rights and, when they are ready to take them away, all they have to do is pass a law authorizing it.

Compare that with the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution. It says Congress shall make *no* law restricting the rights of freedom of speech, or religion, peaceful assembly, the right to bear arms, and so forth – not *except as determined by law*, but *no* law. The Constitution embodies the ethic of individualism. The UN embodies the ethic of collectivism, and what a difference that makes.

THE ORIGIN OF STATE POWER

The second concept that divides collectivism from individualism has to do with the origin of state power. As stated previously, individualists believe that a just government derives its power, not from conquest and subjugation, but from the people. That means the state cannot have any legitimate powers unless they are given to it by its citizens. Another way of putting it is that governments may do only those things that their citizens also have a right to do. If individuals don't have the right to perform a certain act, then they can't grant that power to their elected representatives. They can't delegate what they don't have. It makes no matter how many of them there may be. If none of them have a specified power to delegate, then a million of them don't have it either.

Let us use an extreme example. Let us assume that a ship has been sunk in a storm, and three exhausted men are struggling for survival in the sea. Suddenly, they come upon a life-buoy ring. The ring is designed only to keep one person afloat; but, with careful cooperation between them, it can keep two of them afloat. However, when the third man grasps the ring, it becomes useless, and all three, once again, are at the mercy of the sea. They try taking turns: one treading while two hold on to the ring; but after a few hours, none of them have strength to continue. The grim truth gradually becomes clear. Unless one of them is cut loose from the group, all three will drown. What, then, should these men do?

Most people would say that two of the men would be justified in overpowering the third and casting him off. The right of self-survival is paramount. Taking the life of another, terrible as such an act would be, is morally justified if it is necessary to save your own life. That certainly is true for individual action, but what about collective action? Where do two men get the right to gang up on one man?

The collectivist answers that two men have a greater right to life because they outnumber the third one. It's a question of mathematics: *The greatest good for the greatest number*. That makes the group more important than the individual and it justifies two men forcing one man away from the ring. There is a certain logic to this argument but, if we further simplify the example, we will see that, although the action may be correct, it is justified by the wrong reasoning.

Let us assume, now, that there are only *two* survivors – so we eliminate the concept of the group – and let us also assume that the ring will support only one swimmer, not two. Under these conditions, it would be similar to facing an enemy in battle. You must kill or be killed. Only one can survive. We are dealing now with the competing right of self-survival for each individual, and there is no mythological group to confuse the issue. Under this extreme condition, it is clear that each person would have the right to do whatever he can to preserve his own life, even if it leads to the death of another. Some may argue that it would be better to sacrifice one's life for a stranger, but few would argue that *not* to do so would be wrong. So, when the conditions are simplified to their barest essentials, we see that the right to deny life to others comes from the *individual's* right to protect his *own* life. It does not need the so-called group to ordain it.

In the original case of three survivors, the justification for denying life to one of them does not come from a majority vote but from their *individual and separate* right of self-survival. In other words, either of them, acting alone, would be justified in this action. They are not empowered by the group. When we hire police to protect our community, we are merely asking them to do what we, ourselves, have a right to do. Using physical force to protect our lives, liberty, and property is a legitimate function of government, because that power is derived from the people as *individuals*. It does not arise from the group.¹

Here's one more example – a lot less extreme but far more typical of what actually goes on every day in legislative bodies. If government officials decide one day that no one should work on Sunday, and even assuming the community generally supports their decision, where would they get the authority to use the police power of the state to enforce such a decree? Individual citizens don't have the right to compel their neighbors not to work, so they can't delegate that right to their government. Where, then, would the state get the authority? The answer is that it would come from itself; it would be self-generated. It would be similar to the divine right of ancient monarchies in which it was assumed that governments represent the power and the will of God. In more modern times, most governments don't even pretend to have God as their authority, they just rely on swat teams and armies, and anyone who objects is eliminated.

When governments claim to derive their authority from any source other than the governed, it always leads to the destruction of liberty. Preventing men from working on

¹ The related question of a right to use deadly force to protect the lives of *others* is reviewed in Part Four in connection with the White House order to shoot down hijacked airliners if they pose a threat to ground populations.

Sunday would not seem to be a great threat to freedom, but once the principle is established, it opens the door for more edicts, and more, and more until freedom is gone. If we accept that the state or any group has the right to do things that individuals alone do not have the right to do, then we have unwittingly endorsed the concept that rights are *not* intrinsic to the individual and that they, in fact, *do* originate with the state. Once we accept that, we are on the road to tyranny.

Collectivists are not concerned over such picky issues. They believe that governments do, in fact, have powers that are greater than those of their citizens, and the source of those powers, they say, is, not the individuals within society, but society itself, the *group* to which individuals belong.

2. GROUP SUPREMACY

This is the third concept that divides collectivism from individualism. Collectivism is based on the belief that the group is more important than the individual. According to this view, the group is an entity of its own and it has rights of its own. Furthermore, those rights are more important than individual rights. Therefore, it is acceptable to sacrifice individuals if necessary for “the greater good of the greater number.” How many times have we heard that? Who can object to the loss of liberty if it is justified as necessary for the greater good of society? The ultimate group, of course, is the state. Therefore, the state is more important than individual citizens, and it is acceptable to sacrifice individuals, if necessary, for the benefit of the state. This concept is at the heart of all modern totalitarian systems built on the model of collectivism.

Individualists on the other hand say, “Wait a minute. Group? What is *group*? That’s just a word. You can’t touch a group. You can’t see a group. All you can touch and see are individuals. The word *group* is an abstraction and doesn’t exist as a tangible reality. It’s like the abstraction called *forest*. Forest doesn’t exist. Only trees exist. Forest is the concept of many trees. Likewise, the word *group* merely describes the abstract concept of many individuals. Only individuals are real and, therefore, there is no such thing as group rights. Only individuals have rights.

Just because there are many individuals in one group and only a few in another does not give a higher priority to the individuals in the larger group – even if you call it the *state*. A majority of voters do not have more rights than the minority. Rights are not derived from the power of numbers. They do not come from the group. They are *intrinsic* with each human being.

When someone argues that individuals must be sacrificed for the greater good of society, what they are really saying is that *some* individuals are to be sacrificed for the greater good of *other* individuals. The morality of collectivism is based on numbers. Anything may be done so long as the number of people benefiting supposedly is greater than the number of people being sacrificed. I say supposedly, because, in the real world, those who decide who is to be sacrificed don’t count fairly. Dictators always claim they represent the greater good of the greater number but, in reality, they and their support organizations usually comprise less than one percent of the population. The theory is that someone has to speak for the masses and represent their best interest, because they are too dumb to figure it out for themselves. So collectivist leaders, wise and virtuous as they are, make the decisions for them. It is possible to explain any atrocity or injustice as a necessary

measure for the greater good of society. Modern totalitarians always parade as humanitarians.

Because individualists do not accept group supremacy, collectivists often portray them as being selfish and insensitive to the needs of others. That theme is common in schools today. If a child is not willing to go along with the group, he is criticized as being socially disruptive and not a good “team player” or a good citizen. Those nice folks at the tax-exempt foundations had a lot to do with that. But individualism is not based on ego. It is based on principle. If you accept the premise that individuals may be sacrificed for the group, you have made a huge mistake on two counts. First, individuals are the *essence* of the group, which means the group is being sacrificed anyway, piece by piece. Secondly, the underlying principle is deadly. Today, the individual being sacrificed may be unknown to you or even someone you dislike. Tomorrow, it could be you. It takes but a moment’s reflection to realize that the greater good for the greater number is *not* achieved by sacrificing individuals but by *protecting* individuals. Society is best served by individualism, not collectivism.

REPUBLICS VS DEMOCRACIES

We are dealing here with one of the reasons people make a distinction between republics and democracies. In recent years, we have been taught to believe that a democracy is the ideal form of government. Supposedly, that is what was created by the American Constitution. But, if you read the documents and the speech transcripts of the men who *wrote* the Constitution, you find that they spoke very poorly of democracy. They said in plain words that a democracy was one of the worst possible forms of government. And so they created what they called a republic. That is why the word democracy doesn’t appear anywhere in the Constitution; and, when Americans pledge allegiance to the flag, it’s to the *republic* for which it stands, not the democracy. When Colonel Davy Crockett joined the Texas Revolution prior to the famous Battle of the Alamo, he refused to sign the oath of allegiance to the future government of Texas until the wording was changed to the future *republican* government of Texas.¹ The reason this is important is that the difference between a democracy and a republic is the difference between collectivism and individualism.

In a pure democracy, the majority rules; end of discussion. You might say, “What’s wrong with that?” Well, there could be *plenty* wrong with that. What about a lynch mob? There is only one person with a dissenting vote, and he is the guy at the end of the rope. That’s pure democracy in action.

“Ah, wait a minute,” you say. “The majority should rule. Yes, but not to the extent of denying the rights of the minority,” and, of course, you would be correct. That is precisely what a republic accomplishes. A republic is a government based on the principle of *limited* majority rule so that the minority – even a minority of one – will be protected from the whims and passions of the majority. Republics are often characterized by written constitutions that spell out the rules to make that possible. That was the function of the American Bill of Rights, which is nothing more than a list of things the government may not do. It says that Congress, even though it represents the majority, shall pass no law denying the minority their rights to free exercise of religion, freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, the right to bear arms, and other “unalienable” rights.

¹ “David Crockett: Parliamentarian,” by William Reed, *National Parliamentarian*, Vol. 64, Third Quarter, 2003, p. 30.

These limitations on majority rule are the essence of a republic, and they also are at the core of the ideology called individualism. And so here is another major difference between these two concepts: collectivism on the one hand, supporting any government action so long as it can be said to be for the greater good of the greater number; and individualism on the other hand, defending the rights of the minority against the passions and greed of the majority.

3. COERCION VS FREEDOM

The fourth concept that divides collectivism from individualism has to do with responsibilities and freedom of choice. We have spoken about the origin of rights, but there is a similar issue involving the origin of responsibilities. Rights and responsibilities go together. If you value the right to live your own life without others telling you what to do, then you must assume the responsibility to be independent, to provide for yourself without expecting others to take care of you. Rights and responsibilities are merely different sides of the same coin.

If only individuals have rights, then it follows that only individuals have responsibilities. If groups have rights, then groups also have responsibilities; and, therein, lies one of the greatest ideological challenges of our modern age.

Individualists are champions of individual rights. Therefore, they accept the principle of individual responsibility rather than group responsibility. They believe that everyone has a personal and direct obligation to provide, first for himself and his family, and then for others who may be in need. That does not mean they don't believe in helping each other. Just because I am an individualist does not mean I have to move my piano alone. It just means that I believe that moving it is my responsibility, not someone else's, and it's up to me to organize the voluntary assistance of others.

The collectivist, on the other hand, declares that individuals are *not* personally responsible for charity, for raising their own children, providing for aging parents, or even providing for themselves. These are group obligations of the state. The individualist expects to do it himself; the collectivist wants the government to do it for him: to provide employment and health care, a minimum wage, food, education, and a decent place to live. Collectivists are enamored by government. They worship government. They have a fixation on government as the ultimate group mechanism to solve all problems.

Individualists do not share that faith. They see government as the creator of more problems than it solves. They believe that freedom of choice will lead to the best solution of social and economic problems. Millions of ideas and efforts, each subject to trial and error and competition – in which the best solution becomes obvious by comparing its results to all others – that process will produce results that are far superior to what can be achieved by a group of politicians or a committee of so-called wise men.

By contrast, collectivists do not trust freedom. They are afraid of freedom. They are convinced that freedom may be all right in small matters such as what color socks you want to wear, but when it come to the important issues such as the money supply, banking practices, investments, insurance programs, health care, education, and so on, freedom will not work. These things, they say, simply must be controlled by the government. Otherwise there would be chaos.

There are two reasons for the popularity of that concept. One is that most of us have been educated in government schools, and that's what we were taught. The other reason is that government is the one group that can legally force everyone to participate. It has the power of taxation, backed by jails and force of arms to compel everyone to fall in line, and that is a very appealing concept to the intellectual who pictures himself as a social engineer.

Collectivists say, "We must force people to do what we think they should do, because they are too dumb to do it on their own. We, on the other hand, have been to school. We've read books. We are informed. We are smarter than those people out there. If we leave it to them, they are going to make terrible mistakes. So, it is up to us, the enlightened ones. We shall decide on behalf of society and we shall enforce our decisions by law so no one has any choice. That we should rule in this fashion is our obligation to mankind."

By contrast, individualists say, "We also think we are right and that the masses seldom do what we think they should do, but we don't believe in forcing anyone to comply with our will because, if we grant that principle, then others, representing larger groups than our own, could compel *us* to act as *they* decree, and that would be the end of our freedom."

The affinity between intellectual egotism and coercion was dramatically demonstrated by Canadian law professor, Alan Young, who wrote an editorial in the March 28, 2004 edition of the *Toronto Star*. His topic was "hate crimes," and his solution was a classic example of the collectivist mindset. He wrote:

The defining feature of the hate criminal is stupidity. It is a crime born of intellectual deficiency.... Criminal justice actually can do very little to combat stupidity.... The hate criminal probably needs rigorous deprogramming....

Just as some cancers require invasive surgery, the hate crime needs intrusive measures... The usual out-of-site, out-of-mind approach to modern punishment just won't work in this case. For crimes of supreme stupidity we need *Clockwork Orange* justice – strapping the hate criminal into a chair for an interminable period, and keeping his eyes wide-open with metal clamps so he cannot escape from an onslaught of cinematic imagery carefully designed to break his neurotic attachment to self-induced intellectual impairment.

In the context of hate crime, I do have some regrets that we have a constitutional prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment.¹

One of the quickest ways to spot a collectivist is to see how he reacts to public problems. No matter what bothers him in his daily routine – whether it's littering the highway, smoking in public, dressing indecently, bigotry, sending out junk mail – you name it, his immediate response is "There ought to be a law!" And, of course, the professionals in government who make a living from coercion are more than happy to cooperate. The consequence is that government just keeps growing and growing. It's a one-way street. Every year there are more and more laws and less and less freedom. Each law by itself seems relatively benign, justified by some convenience or for the greater good of the greater number, but the process continues *forever* until government is total and freedom is dead. Bit-by-bit, the people, themselves, become the solicitor of their own enslavement.

¹ "Hate Criminal Needs Deprogramming," by Alan Young, *Toronto Star*, March 28, 2004, p. F7.

THE ROBIN HOOD SYNDROME

A good example of this collectivist mindset is the use of government to perform acts of charity. Most people believe that we all have a responsibility to help others in need if we can, but what about those who disagree, those who couldn't care less about the needs of others? Should they be allowed to be selfish while we are so generous? The collectivist sees people like that as justification for the use of coercion, because the cause is so worthy. He sees himself as a modern Robin Hood, stealing from the rich but giving to the poor. Of course, not all of it gets to the poor. After all, Robin and his men have to eat and drink and be merry, and that doesn't come cheap. It takes a giant bureaucracy to administer a public charity, and the Robbing Hoods in government have become accustomed to a huge share of the loot, while the peasants – well, they're grateful for whatever they get. They don't care how much is consumed along the way. It was all stolen from someone else anyway.

The so-called charity of collectivism is a perversion of the Biblical story of the Good Samaritan who stopped along the highway to help a stranger who had been robbed and beaten. He even takes the victim to an inn and pays for his stay there until he recovers. Everyone approves of such acts of compassion and charity, but what would we think if the Samaritan had pointed his sword at the next traveler and threatened to kill him if he didn't also help? If that had happened, I doubt if the story would have made it into the *Bible*; because, at that point, the Samaritan would be no different than the original robber – who also might have had a virtuous motive. For all we know, he could have claimed that he was merely providing for his family and feeding his children. Most crimes are rationalized in this fashion, but they are crimes nevertheless. When coercion enters, charity leaves.¹

Individualists refuse to play this game. We expect everyone to be charitable, but we also believe that a person should be free *not* to be charitable if he doesn't want to. If he prefers to give to a different charity than the one we urge on him, if he prefers to give a smaller amount than what we think he should, or if he prefers not to give at all, we believe that we have no right to force him to our will. We may try to persuade him to do so; we may appeal to his conscience; and especially we may show the way by our own good example; but we reject any attempt to gang up on him, either by physically restraining him while we remove the money from his pockets or by using the ballot box to pass laws that will take his money through taxation. In either case, the principle is the same. It's called stealing.

Collectivists would have you believe that individualism is merely another word for selfishness, because individualists oppose welfare and other forms of coercive redistribution of wealth, but just the opposite is true. Individualists advocate true charity, which is the voluntary giving of their own money, while collectivists advocate the coercive giving of other people's money; which, of course, is why it is so popular.

One more example: The collectivist will say, "I think everyone should wear seatbelts. That just makes sense. People can be hurt if they don't wear seatbelts. So, let's pass a law and require everyone to wear them. If they don't, we'll put those dummies in jail." The individualist says, "I think everyone should wear seatbelts. People can be hurt in accidents if they don't wear them, but I don't believe in forcing anyone to do so. I believe in convincing

¹ Let's be clear on this. If we or our families really were starving, most of us *would* steal if that were the only way to obtain food. It would be motivated by our intrinsic right to life, but let's not call it virtuous charity. It would be raw survival.

them with logic and persuasion and good example, if I can, but I also believe in freedom of choice.”

One of the most popular slogans of Marxism is: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.” That’s the cornerstone of theoretical socialism, and it is a very appealing concept. A person hearing that slogan for the first time might say: “What’s wrong with that? Isn’t that the essence of charity and compassion toward those in need? What could possibly be wrong with giving according to your ability to others according to their need?” And the answer is, *nothing* is wrong with it – as far as it goes, but it is an incomplete concept. The unanswered question is *how* is this to be accomplished? Shall it be in freedom or through coercion?

I mentioned earlier that collectivists and individualists usually agree on objectives but disagree over means, and this is a classic example. The collectivist says, *take* it by force of law. The individualist says, *give* it through free will. The collectivist says, not enough people will respond unless they are forced. The individualist says, enough people will respond to achieve the task. Besides, the preservation of freedom is also important. The collectivist advocates legalized plunder in the name of a worthy cause, believing that the end justifies the means. The individualist advocates free will and true charity, believing that a worthy objective does not justify committing theft and surrendering freedom.

There is a story of a Bolshevik revolutionary who was standing on a soapbox speaking to a small crowd in Times Square. After describing the glories of socialism and communism, he said: “Come the revolution, everyone will eat peaches and cream.” A little old man at the back of the crowd yelled out: “I don’t like peaches and cream.” The Bolshevik thought about that for a moment and then replied: “Come the revolution, comrade, you *will* like peaches and cream.”

This, then, is the fourth difference between collectivism and individualism, and it is perhaps the most fundamental of them all: collectivists believe in coercion; individualists believe in freedom.

4. EQUALITY VS. INEQUALITY UNDER LAW

The fifth concept that divides collectivism from individualism has to do with the way people are treated under the law. Individualists believe that no two people are exactly alike, and each one is superior or inferior to others in many ways but, *under law*, they should all be treated equally. Collectivists believe that the law should treat people *unequally* in order to bring about desirable changes in society. They view the world as tragically imperfect. They see poverty and suffering and injustice and they conclude that something must be done to alter the forces that have produced these effects. They think of themselves as social engineers who have the wisdom to restructure society to a more humane and logical order. To do this, they must intervene in the affairs of men at all levels and redirect their activities according to a master plan. That means they must redistribute wealth and use the police power of the state to enforce prescribed behavior.

The consequence of this mindset can be seen everywhere in society today. Almost every country in the world has a tax system designed to treat people unequally depending on their income, their marital status, the number of children they have, their age, and the type of investments they may have. The purpose of this arrangement is to redistribute wealth, which means to favor some classes over others. In some cases, there are bizarre loopholes written into the tax laws just to favor one corporation or one politically influential group.

Other laws provide tax-exemption and subsidies to favored groups or corporations. Inequality is the whole purpose of these laws.

In the realm of social relationships, there are laws to establish racial quotas, gender quotas, affirmative-action initiatives, and to prohibit expressions of opinion that may be objectionable to some group or to the master planners. In all of these measures, there is an unequal application of the law based on what group or class you happen to be in or on what opinion you hold. We are told that all of this is necessary to accomplish a desirable change in society. Yet, after more than a hundred years of social engineering, there is not one place on the globe where collectivists can point with pride and show where their master plan has actually worked as they predicted. There have been many books written about the collectivist utopia, but they never materialized in the real world. Wherever collectivism has been applied, the results have been more poverty than before, more suffering than before, and certainly more injustice than before.

There is a better way. Individualism is based on the premise that all citizens should be equal under law, regardless of their national origin, race, religion, gender, education, economic status, life style, or political opinion. No class should be given preferential treatment, regardless of the merit or popularity of its cause. To favor one class over another is not equality under law.

5. PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

When all of these factors are considered together, we come to the sixth ideological division between collectivism and individualism. Collectivists believe that the proper role of government should be positive, that the state should take the initiative in all aspects of the affairs of men, that it should be aggressive, lead, and provide. It should be the great organizer of society.

Individualists believe that the proper function of government is negative and defensive. It is to protect, not to provide; for if the state is granted the power to provide for some, it must also be able to take from others, and once that power is granted, there are those who will seek it for their advantage. It always leads to legalized plunder and loss of freedom. If government is powerful enough to give us everything we want, it is also powerful enough to take from us everything we have. Therefore, the proper function of government is to protect the lives, liberty, and property of its citizens; nothing more.¹

¹ There is a third category of human action that is neither proper nor improper, neither defensive nor aggressive; activity that may be undertaken by the state for convenience – such as building roads and maintaining recreational parks – provided they are funded, not from general taxes, but by those who use them. Otherwise, some would benefit at the expense of others, and that would be coercive re-distribution of wealth. These activities would be permissible because they have a negligible impact on freedom. I am convinced they would be more efficiently run and offer better public service if owned and operated by private industry, but there is no merit in being argumentative on that question when much more burning issues are at stake. After freedom is secure, we will have the luxury to debate these finer points. Another example of an optional activity is the allocation of broadcast frequencies to radio and TV stations. Although this does not protect lives, liberty, or property, it is a matter of convenience to orderly communications. There is no threat to personal freedom so long as the authority to grant licenses is administered impartially and does not favor one class of citizens or one point of view over another. Another example of an optional government activity would be a law in Hawaii to prevent the importation of snakes. Most Hawaiians want such a law for their convenience. This is not a proper function of government because it does not protect the lives, liberty, or property of its citizens, but it is not improper either so long as it is administered so that the cost is borne equally by all. It could be argued that this *is* a proper function of government, because snakes could threaten domestic animals that are the property of its citizens, but that would be stretching the point. It is this kind of stretching of reason that demagogues use when they want to

THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

We hear a lot today about right-wingers versus left-wingers, but what do those terms really mean? For example, we are told that communists and socialists are at the extreme left, and the Nazis and Fascists are on the extreme right. Here we have the image of two powerful ideological adversaries pitted against each other, and the impression is that, somehow, they are opposites. But, what is the difference? They are not opposites at all. They are the same. The insignias may be different, but when you analyze communism and Nazism, they both embody the principles of socialism. Communists make no bones about socialism being their ideal, and the Nazi movement in Germany was actually called the National Socialist Party. Communists believe in *international* socialism, whereas Nazis advocate *national* socialism. Communists promote *class* hatred and *class* conflict to motivate the loyalty and blind obedience of their followers, whereas the Nazis use *race* conflict and *race* hatred to accomplish the same objective. Other than that, there is no difference between communism and Nazism. They are both the epitome of collectivism, and yet we are told they are, supposedly, at opposite ends of the spectrum!

There's only one thing that makes sense in constructing a political spectrum and that is to put zero government at one end of the line and 100% at the other. Now we have something we can comprehend. Those who believe in zero government are the anarchists, and those who believe in total government are the totalitarians. With that definition, we find that communism and Nazism are together at the same end. They are both totalitarian. Why? Because they are both based on the model of collectivism. Communism, Nazism, Fascism and socialism all gravitate toward bigger and bigger government, because that is the logical extension of their common ideology. Under collectivism, all problems are the responsibility of the state and must be solved by the state. The more problems there are, the more powerful the state must become. Once you get on that slippery slope, there is no place to stop until you reach all the way to the end of the scale, which is total government. Regardless of what name you give it, regardless of how you re-label it to make it seem new or different, *collectivism is totalitarianism*.

Actually, the straight-line concept of a political spectrum is somewhat misleading. It is really a circle. You can take that straight line with 100% government at one end and zero at the other, bend it around, and touch the ends at the top. Now it's a circle because, under anarchy, where there is no government, you have absolute rule by those with the biggest fists and the most powerful weapons. So, you jump from zero government to totalitarianism in a flash. They meet at the top. We are really dealing with a circle, and the only logical place for us to be is somewhere in the middle of the extremes. We need social and political organization, of course, but it must be built on individualism, an ideology with an affinity to that part of the spectrum with the *least* amount of government possible instead of collectivism with an affinity to the other end of the spectrum with the *most* amount of government possible. That government is best which governs least.

consolidate power. Almost any government action could be rationalized as an *indirect* protection of life, liberty, or property. The defense against word games of this kind is to stand firm against funding in any way that causes a shift of wealth from one group to another. That strips away the political advantage that motivates most of the collectivist schemes in the first place. Without the possibility of legalized plunder, most of the brain games will cease. Finally, when issues become murky, and it really is impossible to clearly see if an action is acceptable for government, there is always a rule of thumb that can be relied on to show the proper way: That government is best which governs least.

Now, we are ready to re-activate our time machine. The last images still linger before us. We still see the directors of the great tax-exempt foundations applying their vast financial resources to alter the attitudes of the American people so they will accept the merger of their nation with totalitarian regimes; and we still hear their words proclaiming that “the future of this country belongs to collectivism, administered with characteristic American efficiency.” It’s amazing, isn’t it, how much is contained in that one little word: *collectivism*.

- End of Part One -

WHICH PATH FOR MANKIND?

Four Models for Social Order © 2003 by G. Edward Griffin



For an enlarged view of this emblem, go to www.freedom-force.org/pdf/compass.pdf.

Model	3. Collectivism			4. Individualism
	2. Theocracy	Leninism	Rhodesism/Fabianism	
Adherents	Any advocate of government to coerce citizens to accept a religion (such as Islam and early Christendom)	Marxist/Leninists, Maoists, Communists, Trotskyites, National-Liberation and Proletarian-Revolution groups	Marxist/Fabians, Royal Inst. of Internat. Affairs, Rhodes Scholars, CFR, Trilateral Commission, Bilderbergers	Fascists and Nazis
Basis of morality (right vs. wrong)	The word of God as interpreted by those who rule	The greater good for the greater number as interpreted by rulers	The greater good for the greater number as interpreted by rulers	The greater good for the greater number as interpreted by rulers
Nature of rights	Man's only right is to serve God represented by rulers	Granted by the state; may be denied by the state	Granted by the state; may be denied by the state	Granted by the state; may be denied by the state
Who is supreme?	The state (holy man and ruling elite), claiming to represent God	The state (charismatic leader and ruling elite), claiming to represent the majority	The state (charismatic leader and ruling elite), claiming to represent the majority	The individual, claiming to represent only himself
Desirable ends	By coercion of law	By coercion of law	By coercion of law	By voluntary action
People treated	Unequally	Unequally	Unequally	Equally
Role of government	Enforce God's word as interpreted by ruling elite; no limit	Anything for greater good of greater number as decided by ruling elite; no limit	Anything for greater good of greater number as decided by ruling elite; no limit	Limited to protecting the lives, liberty and property of its citizens
Property	Privately owned but subject to confiscation by the rulers	Owned by the state; ruling elite enjoy use	Privately owned, controlled by state; exceptions for ruling elite	Privately owned with minimal state control; no exceptions
Means of production	Privately owned but subject to confiscation by the rulers	Owned and controlled by the state	Privately owned, controlled by the state; ruling elite enjoy competitive advantage	Privately owned, minimal state control, no advantage for political influence
Economic model	Plunder	State monopoly	Corporate monopoly enforced by the state	Free-market competition; minimal state interference
Charity	Responsibility of each individual; after plunder by rulers, little is left for charity	Responsibility of the state, usually required or administered by the state	Responsibility of the state, administered politically, paid by taxation	Responsibility of each individual, administered privately, paid voluntarily
Money	Issued by rulers with bullion backing at their discretion; usually little or no backing; causes inflation, a hidden tax	Christian theocracies did not oppose money with little or no backing; Islam adheres to 100% bullion-backed money	Issued by the state with bullion backing at its discretion; usually little or no backing; causes inflation, a hidden tax	Issued by the state, banks, or anyone else; that which is backed with bullion becomes money-of-choice; no inflation
Effect	Rulers are solvers of all important problems; totalitarian state accepted as norm; limited freedom, low productivity, scarcity	Rulers are God's agents to solve important problems; leads to totalitarian state, low limited freedom, low productivity, scarcity	The state is seen as solver of all important problems; leads to political corruption, totalitarianism, low productivity, scarcity	The state is seen as cause of more problems than it solves; limited state power leads to freedom, high productivity, abundance
Means of expansion	Organization, training, strategy and leadership for military conquest; brutally eliminate opponents	Organization, training, strategy & leadership to win converts, create religious conflict, and prepare for military conquest; brutally eliminate opponents,	Organization, training, strategy and leadership to dominate power centers; quietly capture government; use law and media to eliminate opponents	No previous plan but <i>should</i> be organizational strategy, training, and leadership in power centers; replace opponents; empower freedom

INTRODUCTION TO THE CREED OF FREEDOM

There is nothing more common in history than for oppressed people to rise up against their masters and, at great cost in treasure and blood, throw off the old regime only to discover that they have replaced it with one that is just as bad or worse. That is because it is easy to know what we dislike about a political system but not so easy to agree on what would be better. For most of history, it has been the habit of men to focus on personalities rather than principles. They have thought that the problem was with the man who rules, not with the system that sustains him. So, they merely replace one despot for another, thinking that, somehow, the new one will be more wise and benevolent. Even if the new ruler has good intentions, he may be corrupted by the temptations of power; and, in those rare cases where he is not, he eventually is replaced by another who is not as self-restrained. As long as the system allows it, it is just a matter of time before a new despot will rise to power. To prevent that from happening, it is necessary to focus on the system itself, not on personalities. To do that, it is just as important to know what we are *for* as it is to know what we are *against*.

Even today, with so much talk about fighting to defend freedom, who can stand up and define what that means? For some, freedom means merely not being in jail. Who can define the essence of personal liberty? Who can look you in the eye and say: “This I believe, and I believe it for this reason and this reason and this reason also.” The world is dying for something to believe in, a statement of principles that leaves no room for misunderstanding; a creed that everyone of good faith toward their fellow human beings can accept with clarity of mind and strength of resolve. There is an old saying that if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. *The Creed of Freedom* that you are about to read is the rock-solid ground that will allow us to stand firm against all the political nostrums of our day, and those in the future as well.

The Creed of Freedom expresses the core ideology that binds the members of Freedom Force together. This is not like the platform of a political party that typically is a position statement on a long list of specific issues and which changes from year to year to accommodate the shifting winds of popular opinion. Instead, it is stated in terms of broad principles that do not change over time and that are not focused on specific issues at all. If these principles are followed, then most of the vexing political and social issues of the day can be quickly resolved in confidence that the resulting action will be consistent with justice and freedom.

Although I have authored the *Creed*, I cannot claim credit for it. Anyone familiar with the classical treatises on freedom will recognize that most of its concepts have been taken from the great thinkers and writers of the past. My role has been merely to read the literature, identify the concepts, organize them into logical sequence, and condense them into a single page.

THE CREED OF FREEDOM

INTRINSIC NATURE OF RIGHTS

I believe that only individuals have rights, not the collective group; that these rights are intrinsic to each individual, not granted by the state; for if the state has the power to grant them, it also has the power to deny them, and that is incompatible with personal liberty

I believe that a just government derives its power solely from the governed. Therefore, the state must never presume to do anything beyond what individual citizens also have the right to do. Otherwise, the state is a power unto itself and becomes the master instead of the servant of society.

SUPREMACY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

I believe that one of the greatest threats to freedom is to allow any group, no matter its numeric superiority, to deny the rights of the minority; and that one of the primary functions of just government is to protect each individual from the greed and passion of the majority.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

I believe that desirable social and economic objectives are better achieved by voluntary action than by coercion of law. I believe that social tranquility and brotherhood are better achieved by tolerance, persuasion, and the power of good example than by coercion of law. I believe that those in need are better served by charity, which is the giving of one's own money, than by welfare, which is the giving of other people's money through coercion of law.

EQUALITY UNDER LAW

I believe that all citizens should be equal under law, regardless of their national origin, race, religion, gender, education, economic status, life style, or political opinion. Likewise, no class should be given preferential treatment, regardless of the merit or popularity of its cause. To favor one class over another is not equality under law.

PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

I believe that the proper role of government is negative, not positive; defensive, not aggressive. It is to protect, not to provide; for if the state is granted the power to provide for some, it must also be able to take from others, and once that power is granted, there are those who will seek it for their advantage. It always leads to legalized plunder and loss of freedom. If government is powerful enough to give us everything we want, it is also powerful enough to take from us everything we have. Therefore, the proper function of government is to protect the lives, liberty, and property of its citizens; nothing more. That government is best which governs least.

THE THREE COMMANDMENTS OF FREEDOM

The Creed of Freedom is based on five principles. However, in day-to-day application, they can be reduced to just three general codes of conduct. I consider them to be The Three Commandments of Freedom:

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Do not sacrifice the rights of any individual or minority for the assumed rights of the group.

EQUALITY UNDER LAW

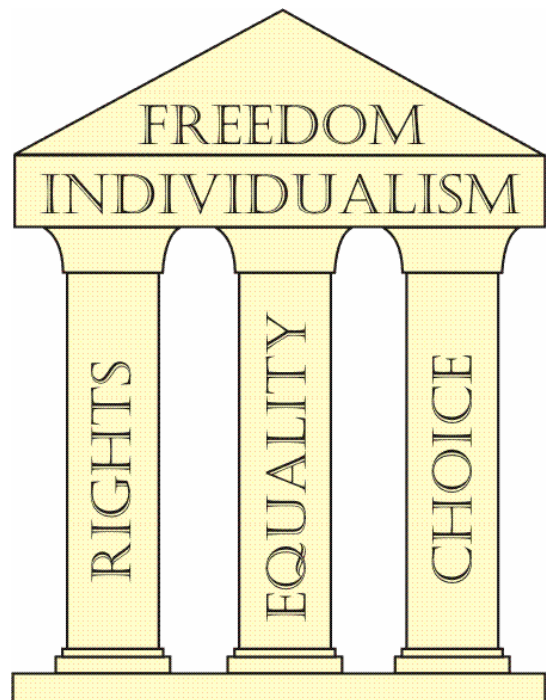
Do not endorse any law that does not apply to all citizens equally.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Do not use coercion for any purpose except to protect human life, liberty, or property.

THE THREE PILLARS OF FREEDOM

Another way of viewing these principles is to consider them as the three pillars of freedom. They are concepts that underlie the ideology of individualism, and individualism is the indispensable foundation of freedom.



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