

self-interest of each capitalist to enforce payment of debts and policies of fair exchange.

This type of society management is obviously very idealistic and looks good on paper, but is a different matter entirely in practice. Though the ideal situation would be to have a government of authority that commands respect and obedience by the consent of the general public, in many instances this is not feasible. Man's unlimited desires can often be easily fulfilled through unethical or immoral practices. It is good to say the market will take care of the fraudulent businessmen, but with the immense population in the world today, there is always a sucker who can be taken in by a catchy slogan and a smooth line. Though it is true that welfare, social security, labor unions and other such socialistic practices would not be needed in a truly free society, there must be a respected group of individuals with power enough to protect the rights of individuals guaranteed by freedom from persons who could easily escape the natural punishment of the market.

In a more practical sense, it is necessary to grant government the power to control natural monopolies of location. The utilities and road construction are two important examples. Competition in the water or sewer industry would cause innumerable problems by using up land, which is an essential part of individual freedom, for many companies and intricate systems of pipes. In the sense of pure convenience, government organized systems of transportation would enable producers to send their products to the consumers in an efficient and expedient manner.

### Least Government

"That government is best that governs least" is still a good basis on which to judge social management. In the structuring of a new government, man must be careful to limit the power given to the ruling institution. In fulfilling his desires with the least possible amount of exertion man will, according to his nature, fight for his survival by serving his own interest. In pursuing his self interest he will improve the conditions of his neighbors or workers, not because he is concerned, but because he is inspired by the profit motive. His incentive to produce and distribute, however, can become a dangerous infringement on the rights of others. In his attempts to find the easiest way he may resort to immoral or unethical practices, from which the average citizen needs protection. Government, in some form, must exist preferably as combination of power and authority. It must be the product of the individuals over whom it will rule and determined by the laws of human nature with the power to protect the individual rights and freedoms implied by man's rational ability to choose.

## from the editor's notebook

### A PARABLE

*In an age when New York Times' columnist Russel Baker can note, without fear of contradiction, that "economics" is probably the ugliest if not the most boring word in the English language, I find myself wildly excited in anticipation of the sort of entertaining novels (with a land value theme) that Henry George Foundation Trustee Newcomb's offer of publishing assistance will draw.*

*Cynics might say "economics" and "entertainment" are mutually exclusive. I hold the two are a strange but attainable mix, and I offer the following parable as proof. It is pure fiction; any resemblance of its characters to persons living or dead is purely coincidental and entertaining.*

... And it came to pass that in the eighth month the Grand Vizer teleported himself into the hearts and homes of the populace, and told them: "Let there be cold..." for 90 days, anyway, "... for what our market aspect needs is a good shot in the arm."

And the populace heard him, and pardoned the expression, and were confused. But they surveyed their winter gear, and finding it suitable they all agreed that they would use neither more heating oil nor less, and that they would look forward to the day when the cold would wane.

All of them agreed, that is all but George, the Plumber (who insisted that some of the populace had more fuel than they needed, while others had too little), and Ajax, from the Grand Vizer's cabinet (who had been promised more fuel only moments before the broadcast).

Now the Grand Vizer appointed his nine-headed watchdog, named Task Force, to make sure that no one was over-oiled. And this placated the Plumber somewhat. However, he and Ajax-from-the-cabinet had been long-time adversaries, because some years earlier (the exact circumstances are uncertain), Ajax had complained that the Plumber was getting too strong, and too dirty, and he was having to clean up his mess too often. Still seething from this insult, the Plumber announced that if Ajax were given the oil he was so loudly demanding, he, the Plumber, would "gum up his works."

The Grand Vizer was a fair man (not to be confused with mediocre) and also clever. He knew that if Ajax left him it would be one more good man down the drain. So he told Ajax that instead of more fuel, he would let him use his winter house in Southern California for the duration of the "freeze." The winter house was

not only situated in a warm climate, it was constructed primarily of insulated glass, and would keep him sufficiently warm and mollified.

Ajax considered this offer, and agreed—if he were allowed to sit on the Grand Vizer's throne which was housed there. The Grand Vizer happily agreed, since the throne was of bamboo, a cheap Japanese import which he bought before the fuel shortage.

That Ajax was nestled comfortably in the rattan throne did not sit well with the Plumber, George, who had already found this business of compensating goods and services quite taxing.

He gathered his minions, who chartered a plane, boarded it, and flew it straight into the heart of the winter house. The result was a lot of noise, a lot of wasted fuel, and a lot of broken glass. Ajax spent the rest of the freeze scouring the countryside for another boss.

The moral? When it is cold out, people who live in glass houses shouldn't stow thrones.

### Letters

Sir:

I wonder what the Henry George School of Social Science is coming to? What do you call this H.G. News received here today? No explanation as to why the format change? Only one signed article. No statement of policy. Smaller type. You must be kidding with this sheet. No letters to the editor?

Carl Shaw

Westpoint, N.Y.

A subscriber of twenty years

Sir:

The slate of fall courses at the School is a great surprise, and not too soon in coming. That the ideals of Henry George will finally be linked to current events and trauma is gratifying to someone like me who has been the recipient of a thousand questioning glances when I mention that man's name in discussions. I am proud to note that the faculty is expanding to include some of the most outstanding educators in the area, like Mr. Netzer, and some career people who, if anyone, can explain how to survive in New York City.

Sir:

The current dispute among the Mets, the Mayor, and the Yankees makes me wonder if you'd even be wise to buy center field at Shea Stadium.

Carol Coleman  
New York, N.Y.