

PLAIN TALK *by Jerome Joachim*

Looking at the future in a conflict torn world is a dismal business. With almost everyone looking to government, as he would to an indulgent parent, the outlook is not encouraging. The only ray of hope lies in the fact that at least some of the people realize that this reliance on government is the cause, not the remedy, for what ails us. Perhaps knowledge may yet save us.



Ludwig Von Mises in his book *Omnipotent Government* demonstrates how totalitarian governments, after abolishing the world's free markets, necessarily resort to force in trading with other nations. Lacking the competitive bidding which a free market provides, these governments are largely in the same position as would be the residents of an isolated island if there were only two of them. If Resident A raised a surplus of potatoes he might trade these potatoes on an even basis for Resident B's corn. But if he were stronger than Resident B he would probably decide that he should have *all* of B's corn in exchange for one bushel of his potatoes and he would feed the balance of the potatoes to his hogs. Thus he would have corn, potatoes and pork while B would have very little of anything until he could develop a defense to A's strength.

As nations regulate the production and exchange of goods to a greater and greater degree they must and do engender the seeds that result in constant strife and conflict.

America and the entire world is abandoning the free market in favor of government controls. Tariff restrictions in the world and internal restrictions developed in Germany from Bismark's time made the need for strong leadership in Germany seem imperative and resulted in the rise of Hitler. Stalin's complete control of Russia and her satellites makes free trade be-

tween individuals impossible and creates the conditions most conducive to war.

As governments increase their power to regulate production and distribution, so develops the inevitability of international strife. Gerald W. Johnson in his book *Incredible Tales* calls the period between 1918 and 1941 the "Long Armistice" and the period from 1945 to the beginning of our cold war with Russia the "Short Armistice." It is his opinion that this world will be at war constantly until men again deprive governments of the power to regulate international trade.

Many who give such questions thought agree that constant war will be the fate of most of those now living—unless the human race is diminished—via the atom bomb—to the point where men are too weak to fight—or until such time as men realize that government force must not be used to deprive producers of their products. Furthermore governments must not let others forcibly so deprive producers.

Governments should function only to prevent men from using force against each other for the purpose of stealing the production of others. Today governments function largely for the purpose of distributing, by force, that which men produce as those in power want such goods distributed.

And so the little man continues to argue for rent control, for price regulation, for farm parities, for protective tariffs and for countless acts by his government which will enable him to take by the force of law, that which he can not procure through his greater efforts. And to the extent that he is successful in causing his government to so "steal" in his behalf, is he creating the conditions that make his ultimate fate on this planet less and less inviting.