

# **GOOD GOVERNMENT: HOPE OR ILLUSION?**

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## **Profile of LeFevre**

Robert LeFevre is one of the most influential libertarian theoreticians and authors on the West coast. It is said that he is mainly responsible for motivating the first major student libertarian movement in California in the late 1960's. It was LeFevre's presence at the libertarian Long Beach 1969 Conference that inspired student leaders across California to rally behind LeFevre's Rampart College and libertarianism. (Professor Ludwig von Mises was the keynote speaker at the Long Beach Conference.)

Born in Gooding, Idaho, in 1911, LeFevre's life-long love was the theater. He attended Hamline University in St. Paul to achieve that dream, but never graduated even though Hamline waived LeFevre's freshman English requirement because of his ability. Hamline University told LeFevre that the combination of courses he wanted to take would not get him a degree. LeFevre replied by saying he wanted an education instead.

In years following his college days, he took jobs ranging from newsboy to door-to-door salesman. When the United States entered World War II, LeFevre joined the Army Air Force for four years. LeFevre had no real interest in the military although he was over the draft age at the time enlisted. Publicly, he has said that he joined the Army because it was "the only proper procedure." He served on year on General Lee's occupation staff in Paris.

After the war, LeFevre re-entered the real estate business and soon came face to face with government restrictions. Everywhere he turned, from the real estate business to apartment owner to restaurateur, LeFevre confronted government harassment. At one time, the city wanted him to install a dry standpipe for the attachment of fire hoses. Soon he discovered that only one

man was authorized by the city government to build them, and the price was anything but inexpensive.

In another instance, the office of Price Administration accused him of rent-gouging. At the time, LeFevre charged \$25 a month for two-room, furnished apartments with utilities, and wanted to raise the rent to \$30 a month. The increase was to cover tax increases. "When the government raises taxes," LeFevre said, "that's not a gouge, but when you try to earn money so you can pay your taxes, that's a gouge."

In 1948, LeFevre went into semi-retirement for one year to study economics and political philosophy. After discovering that government couldn't do anything that people couldn't do by themselves, he decided to do something. LeFevre turned to politics believing that the solution was to elect "good" people into office. He ran for Congress in the 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District as a Republican. Since California at the time permitted cross-filing in primary elections, LeFevre lost to Democrat Sam Yorty and fellow Republican Jack Hardy.

Turned off to politics, he worked for the United Taxpayers of California until he landed a job with WQAM in Miami. Later he became the news director for WFTL-TV in Fort Lauderdale.

In 1954 he became the editorial writer for the Colorado Springs Gazette which was part of the Freedom chain newspapers owned by the Hoiles family in Santa Ana, California. A few years later he became its editor.

Remaining with the newspaper for 10 years, LeFevre started the Freedom School in 1965, as in his words, "a part time hobby." The school was located at the base of the wooded foothills of Colorado's Rampart Range near Larkspur, Colorado. With his second wife Loy and his four children, they renovated three uninhabitable old cabins. Eventually, they expanded to 14 dude - ranch - style log buildings with 526 acres.

The land was sold in 1966 and the operation moved to downtown Santa Ana, California. Since the move, Rampart College increasingly became the center of the West Coast libertarian movement. Students operated many of Rampart College's ventures, which included a newsletter, a large, short-lived magazine named *Pine Tree*, seminars, publishing pamphlets and books, and sponsoring conferences like the Left-Right Festival of Liberation at USC in February, 1970. It attracted hundreds of dropouts from both the Left and Right, including such speakers as Karl Hess, Carl Oglesby, Phillip Abbott Luce, Dr. F. A. Harper, Lowell Ponte, Dr. John Hospers as well as Robert LeFevre. Organized by Dana Rohrabacher, Shawn Steel, Jean Berkman (Doug Kennell) and others with assistance from Rampart College, USC Libertarian Conferences are still being held today.\*

By 1973 Sy Leon, author of *None of the Above*, became the new president of Rampart College. LeFevre retired to write books and publish his quarterly *LeFevre's Journal*.

LeFevre is the author of *This Bread is Mine*, *The Nature of Man and His Government*, *The Philosophy of Ownership*, *Lift Her Up, Tenderly*, and a small booklet entitled *The Libertarian*.

Unfortunately, Rampart College closed its doors in late 1975.

\*Rampart College worked closely with the California Libertarian Alliance during all of the USC Conferences held prior to its closure.

## **Introduction by Prof. Devon Showley**

I wondered where this remarkable person had been hiding. Bob is a dynamic speaker and fortunately many of us had a chance to hear him again last month as he spoke at the libertarian conference (Future of Freedom Conference, 1977) at USC and again he gave us another really beautiful talk! I would have to use the word inspirational to describe it.

I never had the chance myself to be in a class that Bob has taught and that is my loss. I noticed that among those who have been in his classes, there is some sort of apotheosis that takes place. You become more than a mere mortal, Bob; so I am going to have to take a class from you sometime.

I had a chance to be in Bob's home a few years ago. I remember two things about this; one, the really genuine warmth and hospitality that he and Loy extended to everyone there. It was beautiful evening. Really beautiful. And another thing I remember were the books. There were over 10,000 books along the balcony circling the living room.

Bob has a rich and varied background. He has a skeleton in his closet also. We won't hold this against him. I found out last month that he ran for Congress as a Republican many years ago. But no one is perfect.

Bob is also sort of minority with our minority libertarian movement. He is an "autarchist." I hesitate to use labels but I believe this is the proper word. For those of you who are not familiar with it, I am sure you will know more about it before the evening is over.

He has done television, radio and newspaper work all over the United States. I suppose most of us have known of him through Rampart College in Santa Ana where he did much of his educational work. Currently, he is giving one week seminars all over the country. In fact, he is booked up at least a year in advance. I know that there is one place where he hasn't spoken recently and I know he would like to, and that is right here in Southern California.

I also would like to mention his new book—*The Power of Congress*. In addition to his writing, Bob publishes *LeFevre's Journal*. I am sure many of you are already on his mailing list. The caption on the masthead of *LeFevre's Journal* states that it "is published every quarter approximately in Orange, California. It is not for sale, but it is supplied to those who are dedicated to human liberty and those who are dedicated make it possible.

Bob LeFevre—

## **GOOD GOVERNMENT: HOPE OR ILLUSION?**

**By Robert LeFevre**

Thank you very much, and good evening ladies and gentlemen. This is a great pleasure for me.

In talking with the distinguished gentleman who just introduced me, he said one of the things he likes about me is that I have a sense of humor. Gosh, I

hope that holds true tonight! I don't feel particularly humorous. But it may be that things will be funnier...before I get through.

Anyway, the topic this evening, as I presume you know from the numerous blurbs that went out about it, is "Good Government: Hope or Illusion?" It is in that area that I want to concentrate my remarks.

First of all, I would like to utter a word of warning. Please, ladies and gentlemen, in my remarks I am seeking a cerebral, and not an emotive, reaction. What I mean to say is "don't get mad." I am going to say some things that tend, I suppose, to be a little inflammatory, but I don't mean to inflame. I mean, instead, to engender thoughtful consideration. I think this is the prime need today.

We Americans seem to be bent on doing something, but very few of us are bent on thinking through what needs to be done. We're a little bit like the famous general who was so patriotic that when he heard the bugle call he raced from his tent, leaped on his horse and rode off in all directions. We're a little bit like that. We want to do things, rather than think them through.

Now I am going to talk about government. And if I do inspire you to action, make it thoughtful action. Let's think through what we are going to do first. My presentation tonight is not intended to get you to march out of here to burn the Post Office or something of that sort. I hope that is understood.

The second thing I had better do is to define for you what I mean by "government." The word "government" means so many different things to so many different people that I am not always sure I'm being understood when I use the word. So I want to be sure that we are in communication on this point.

Many people, for example, equate government with almost any kind of organization. And so, if they hear me say "I don't think we need any government," they think they heard me say, "We don't have to organize"—human beings don't have to organize. Well, that's NOT what I mean.

I think it is a natural thing for human beings to organize. I think it is true that no one of us has enough brains or enough time or enough energy to put the pieces together that we have to put together, if we are going to live and live in relative comfort and happiness in this troubled world. So I am not at all opposed to organization.

However, there are two kinds of organizations, just as there are two kinds of human relationships. There are organizations which are coercive in character and organizations which are voluntary by character, just as there are relationships between persons in the same categories. And by the way, those are the only categories we have.

The relationship that you have with another is either a voluntary or a coercive one. What else is there? That's all there are. So when it comes to organizations it's the same thing. There are two kinds of organizations: coercive and voluntary. What else have you got?

I do not mean for you to relate the word "government" to organization. And it is my position, of course, that when it comes to motivating people to perform well that the carrot is always superior to the stick. I think that when we use coercion to get something done what tends to happen is that people will do only enough to prevent punishment. However, when there is a long, and often a visionary dream of carrots before one, there is almost no limit to what one will attempt to do in order to increase his supply of carrots. I am using the terms

"carrot" and "stick" with the assumption that you are familiar with the old cliché and know what I mean.

So the thing I object to about government isn't its organizational feature. Organization has to be accomplished. It is the coercive nature of government organization.

My argument is that we can organize better without coercion. People don't like to be coerced; they resent being pushed around. And in consequence, they do not perform as well under coercion as they will perform if they are left alone and inspired, encouraged by an offer of carrots.

## **THE FAMILY**

Now, in speaking of organizations, I want to get to specifics. I would like to stipulate that there are three types of organizations that are basic to our species. We are going to have them regardless of what government says about them, and, I might say, government has said all kinds of things down through the ages about these organizations. These organizations are such that they provide the essential law and order that we must have. Now let me expand that one before going on.

Many times when I use the term "government" people think that I mean law and order. And so, if they hear me say "We don't need government," they think I mean we don't need law and order. Well this is probably what makes me an "autarchist" rather than an anarchist. I think we need law and order. You see, I am dedicated to the idea of lawful and orderly procedures. And because of that I have to stand against government. Because government doesn't provide either law or order, as I am going to show you.

The first and fundamental organization that human beings put together—and we have done this since human beings appeared on this planet so far as I know—for want of a better term. I am going to call "the family." I am not referring necessarily to the current legally recognized, and often abused, situation which we call monogamy. This particular arrangement is not what I am talking about: I am talking about something that could be termed "genetic necessity." It just happens that our species arrived on this planet with two genders. I have been informed that there may be more, but there are at least the basic two. Now, I don't know if that is the best design—male and female. I wasn't consulted. This sexual division was working before I appeared and we're stuck with it. But I have news for you. The boys and girls will get together. You can relax: we are going to have families. Now that is what I mean by a natural non-coercive organization. There are going to be men and women who voluntarily get together because they are men and women. We call this "genetic necessity." It's going to happen people. Relax. Be free. It's going to happen. I am not suggesting indiscriminate happenings, but boys and girls will get together.

I might say that at times in the past certain governments had decreed that certain males in a given territory are required by law, by what they called law, to be married to certain women in another area as of a certain year. You know what has happened in those cases, historically? The men flee the territory. It isn't that they don't plan to have families. It's that they plan to have their own families: when and with whom they please. And the government can go fly a kite.

Then there have been times when the government has declared that people of this particular cast or class cannot marry at all. What do you think happens?

They get married, when they feel like it with whom they choose. Governments constantly intrude; they constantly try to tell you that you can do certain things and that you must not do other things. But when it comes down to genetic necessity, you know what we do. We thumb our noses at government and do as we please. And we are going to continue to do that. We have always done it. That's the first type of organization — the family, based on genetic necessity.

## **BUSINESS**

The second type of organization, ladies and gentlemen, for want of a better term, I am going to call "business," or "enterprise." Why do we have that? We happen to live on a planet in which all resources are in scarce supply. There isn't enough to go around. And that means that for us to have the things we need so that we can stay alive and stay alive with some degree of happiness and comfort, it takes more than the effort of one person. We have to get together and put the pieces together so that we can have enough to eat, clothing to wear, and buildings to meet in and microphones and all of this nonsense, etc., etc. It takes a putting together of the resources in the hands of people who organize for this purpose or, quite frankly, we would all starve to death.

Don't tell me that you can build something like this (LeFevre picks up the microphone). I don't know whose this is, but, you know, it is a very delicate, complicated instrument. You cannot produce it without organization. The people who put this instrument together had to have some kind of blueprint to follow. They had to draw up all kinds of diagrams, understand circuitry, build all kinds of tools. That takes careful planning, careful organization, people of great skills. And I am only talking about one little item here. There are thousands of things in this room that have been put together the same way...by human beings volunteering their skills, their energies, their time to put things together so that all of us can have more and better things. This is how we stay alive, and this is how we improve our standard of living. That is what I mean by "business,"

Business is certainly something that is carefully organized. And it is organized under rules which you can call laws, if you like. For business organization works that way.

If I want to buy an automobile, for example, I don't want to buy an automobile that was put together by haphazard workmen who went to work when they felt like it and did whatever they felt like doing while they were there. I want to have an automobile put together under very rigid, quality control specifications so that when that automobile comes out it will have been engineered to the peak of efficiency. And if the one I buy isn't, I'm going to scream my head off. I want one that's good. And, ladies and gentlemen, so do you.

That takes organization. It takes people disciplining themselves, learning how to work together. This is not one of these "Oh, let's just go have some fun and in the process make a car." You don't do that. You work at it and it's hard. But then you get something that is worthwhile. That's the second type of organization. And, ladies and gentlemen, we're going to have that regardless of government. It's called "the business" and it's based on what can be called "economic necessity."

I don't say that it is necessarily a happy thing. I'm saying it is necessary. Just as I don't know that the man-woman relationship is always a happy thing.

It's necessary. These are the grim facts that face us on this particular planet before the STAR WARS take over.

Okay, so these are two of the basic organizations that we are going to have. Incidentally, government has gotten into the act on business. Well, you know that! But I mean in another way. Sometimes government has issued orders and even helped finance certain types of businesses which they wanted to encourage. You know what happens when they do that? Investors try to find some other place to put their money. If the government favors it, investors will be certain it's a loser.

And then sometimes the government comes out and says "We forbid you to produce this." You know what we do? We produce it anyway. We call it a "Black Market." A black market is just a free market driven underground by some silly regulation put out by a bureaucrat somewhere. That's all it is. Of course, we call it a criminal act because the government doesn't know the difference between a criminal and a free man. Both of them confuse the people in government.

### **THE FRATERNITY**

And then there is a third type of organization that arises out of the nature of man and the nature of the world in which we live. This third type is probably not as well known as the others. We are only today beginning to study it in depth. This organization, for want of a better name, I would like to call "the fraternity" or "the sorority," "the brotherhood," or "the club," if you'll pardon the term. What I am getting at is this. Human beings by their nature are fundamentally communicative creatures. Perhaps you haven't thought about that particularly.

From the moment of your birth and all through your life you are going to be engaged in an almost frantic effort to communicate with other people the unique fact of your own individual existence. There is no one else quite like you. You are unique. And you are very eager to let others know about that. It's fundamental with us; with every one of us. In consequence, we human beings have developed a vocal language. No, we have developed hundreds of vocal languages. We have written languages. We have a language of facial expression. We have a language of gesture. We have what we now call "body language" which we are only beginning to understand. Our posture, our stance, the things we wear, the places we go, the people we associate with—we employ all of these to constantly scream, "Look at me! I'm unique. Here I am! I exist in this one place in the universe and that's me!"

What is the result of this behavior? The result of this, ladies and gentlemen, is that I want to talk to people I can reach with whatever communicative talents I may have. How do I do that? In this world there are literally thousands of things that take our attention. And the consequence is, I find, that there are people who get together, for example, because they want to communicate about, say, yachting. So we have yacht clubs. And people like to communicate with others of similar interest. "Hey, look at me! I'm a yacht captain! I own a yacht." They want to talk to other people who have yachts because they have "yachts and yachts to talk about." Terrible! But it's what happens to me because my philosophy makes me happy.

There will be people who get together to organize the Boy Scouts or the Girl Scouts or the Women's Sewing Circle or the Chowder and Marching Society, if you like chowder and like to march, or they will even organize a libertarian club or some other thing. Why? Because these are people who communicate with you in the areas of your interest. How are these groups organized? Well, when you organize these clubs, many are organized under a charter—a constitution—if you'll pardon the expression, and many have by-laws. It's all spelled out. The dues are so much a month, a year, or whatever. It's all very carefully set down.

But, ladies and gentlemen, it's still a voluntary organization: nobody has to join it. You are not compelled to get in. And if you're in and you don't like it, you are not compelled to stay in. You can get out.

So what do we have? We have three basic types of organization: the family, the business, and the fraternity. Each is strictly voluntary. You get into them because you like them. You move into them, in other words, because there are plus factors in it for you. If you find that the plus factors you anticipated aren't there, then you leave. And it's up to you whether you stay or not.

Now, here's the interesting point. You and I spend about 98 percent of our time, our waking time, in the family, the business, or the fraternity. What else do we have? That's where we live. That's it. Aside from these, you're driving somewhere.

### **GOVERNMENT: BAD AND WORSE**

Now, what do you want a government for, a coercive one, when here are by-laws, rules, constitutions? We have everything arranged beautifully so everything fits together in an orderly fashion and it's all voluntary. It works beautifully. That's where we live.

So, ladies and gentlemen, when I say I don't think we need government, I hope you'll understand I'm not saying, "We don't need law and order." Of course we need law and order! I have to explain that a little more, because some of you are still looking a little doubtful. People, government doesn't provide law and order.

Law is always a derivative of reality. Reality binds us; that's law. Our job is to discover reality. We don't create reality; we discover it. You know we learn something is real? You kick it and it kicks back. Then you know. "Hey, that's a brick wall." You run into something, and it's real. Its reality is impressed upon you one way or another. That's what life is about: learning about reality. That's where law comes from.

Ladies and gentlemen, law leads to order. In the same way, for example, here is the law of having a meeting. It's not because I have anything to say about it, but because you cannot have a meeting unless you fulfill two requirements. You have to have an agreed upon time and place. Try to have a meeting sometime if you don't have a place to meet in or a time at which to meet.

So, that's the law of having a meeting. We didn't ask Congress to enact that. You don't enact those things; they just exist. We deal with reality. We have to. Well, then what does government do? Ladies and gentlemen, the government deals with legislation. That is not the same as law. What is legislation? It is the opinions, the subjective judgments, if you'll please, of a handful of people who write down what



they want other people to do. That's law? Come on! What has that got to do with reality? I mean some of these may be nice people. But they are putting down in writing, "I want those people over there to behave as I wish them to."

Let's be entirely fair. The people in government are at least as intelligent as we are. Though, one sometimes marvels. But let's give them the benefit of the doubt: they were human once. But, these people at least should be able to detect reality, let's say, as well as we can. Therefore, it is entirely possible that legislators could write a piece of legislation completely in harmony with reality. They could pass legislation which says, "We now make it law number...special law 21-12, (whatever), that all people in California wishing to have a meeting will have to first announce the time and place. That could be done. Such legislation could be passed. But, may I point out the obvious? This is a redundancy. You don't have to enact legislation to compel people to do what they're going to do anyway.

All right, what other kind of legislation can be enacted? Ladies and gentlemen, the only other kind is legislation that is contrary or other than natural law. It's either in harmony with reality or it's out of harmony with reality. What else is there? That's all there are. Things either correspond to reality or they do not.

Reality binds us. So what can the legislators do? They can enact legislation that corresponds to reality, which is a redundancy, a foolish expense. We are already bound. We don't need it. The only other kind of legislation possible would be contrary to reality. And that would be positively vicious.

So what do we have? You have two kinds of government—wasteful, redundant, unnecessary, which I would have to classify as bad. And then you have the other kind that is vicious. And that's worse. So we have two kinds of government: BAD and WORSE. What else is there? Nothing. It comes down to bad or worse.

## **FRUSTRATION AND DISORDER**

Now, what happens about order when government appears? The real reason for having a business, a family, or a fraternity is to engender orderly processes so we can work together in harmony towards mutually acceptable objectives. We put the things together so that will happen. It happens; it works for us. That's order. Now, what happens when government, as I am describing it, gets into the act with some of its legislative fiats? What happens when we are forced to do something we wouldn't do unless forced, or we are prevented by force from doing what we normally would do?

Well, ladies and gentlemen, I think psychiatry and psychology have reached a consensus in this area. That's unusual in itself, and should be noted. But the fact is that any person who is engaged in a perfectly proper pursuit and who knows within his own heart and mind that he is doing a perfectly proper thing suddenly confronts a bully who says to him, "I'm not going to let you do what you're doing: you are going to do what I want you to do, and I am not going to let you keep the money you earned. That's my money. You are only good enough to earn it; I know how to spend it better than you do." And when this force interferes with you, you experience what is called "frustration." That's the technical term. You're mad as hell. But to express it politely, you're frustrated.

What does frustration do? Well, when you are frustrated by someone larger than you are, and you cannot strike back at him, you sort of bottle up

your feelings. This creature has made you furious, but he is too big to attack. You know, you're facing King Kong. So, what do you do? You're pushed down, repressed, but you're seething inside. You don't like it. But this process repeats: it goes on. Again and again you find yourself frustrated. You get a job. Why? So that you can earn some money. Why? So that you can buy some of the things that you need to stay alive. You begin to have plans, dreams, things you want to achieve. And here is a 600-pound gorilla standing on your front doorstep telling you what you can and cannot do. You become frustrated.

Here's how it works. I'll just give you a quick and very graphic illustration. A man goes to work, a nice fellow. He feels good: he had a nice weekend. He starts doing his job, whatever it is. The boss comes in. And for no reason that this fellow can observe, the boss bawls him out. Maybe the boss had a bad weekend, whatever. This young fellow now experiences frustration. Of course he could tell the boss off, but he would probably lose his job. So he doesn't tell the boss off; he just sits there and takes it. Okay. The minute the boss's back is turned this fellow is seething and the emotional upheaval goes on until somebody comes in that has less authority than he has. He jumps him. He gets it out of his system and lays it on the next fellow. Well, he, too, has no recourse but to bottle it up. And finally when he goes home he walks in and there is his wife. She's smaller than he is. So he lights into her. And tells her what's what. And, you know, she doesn't want to get knocked down, so she bottles it up. But the kid comes in, so she lays it on the kid. And what can he do? He waits until the dog shows up and he kicks the dog. The dog yelps, runs down the street and bites the boss who lives in the next block. And that ties it together.

You have a self-perpetuating mechanism that continues to feed on itself until all of us get increasingly angry and distressed at what the government is doing. We feel absolutely helpless and shut out. And we don't know what we can do. That's one of the reasons why I cautioned you at the outset; please don't be angry. Our job is to think the problem through and to see what we can do about it. But let's think it through first. For tonight we are going to think. Later if you want to do something; that's something else again.

So I wanted you to understand. When I am talking about government, I'm not talking about law and order. I think we need law and order. I think we get law and order out of our voluntary organizations. I am now ready to define government for you. I would like to give you my definition.

Government is "a group of people who sell retributive justice to the inhabitants of a limited geographic area at monopolistic prices." I think you will find that's quite precise. I'll repeat it; some of you are taking it down. Government is "a group of people who sell retributive justice to the inhabitants of a limited geographic area at monopolistic prices."

Now. I want to give you the definition of politics, because politics is the thing that makes the government work. Politics is a method—some call it a science—some call it an art. It's neither one nor the other. It's a methodology. Politics is "the method employed in power structures by means of which a monopoly of coercion can be obtained and maintained." That's power. Now that means that the government I'm talking about is a group of people who sell retributive justice to the inhabitants of a limited geographic area through the method of getting and keeping a monopoly of coercion. That's what I'm talking about. And that's what we can do without in the interest of law and order.

## **NOBODY'S CHOICE**

Now, where did we ever get the idea that there is such a thing as "good government?" That is a contradiction in terms as ridiculous as "constructive rape." There is no such thing. So what we want to do is to take a look at government to see what it is, where it came from and how it got started. Oh, and this, also. I run into this so many times. People tell me one of the great privileges we have in choosing is choosing our own form of government. Of course, anybody who wants to can choose a government. There is nothing wrong with a person having a government. There is nothing wrong with a person having a government if he wants one.

Now I'm just going to put this to you. I am going to suggest that there isn't anybody in this room; there isn't anybody in this city; there isn't anybody in this state, in this nation, or in the world who has ever selected a government over him. Never! Now if you think I'm wrong, let me show you how easy it would be to have a government. I could go up to my good friend who introduced me and say, "Sir, I hereby appoint you as my government. I grant you the power to take whatever part of my earnings that you think you ought to have taken from me. I furnish you with a gun so that, if I resist, you can get it by force. If you feel that I'm hiding something in my house, you can kick my door down and come in and take it. If you think my wife is interfering, arrest her. Do whatever you please because I'm choosing you as my government." I can do that, if I can find someone who will agree to these terms and conditions.

That would be setting up a government of my choice. Have you ever done that? Can you think of anybody in his right mind ever having done that? Do you think anybody ever did it? People, you have been told that this happened in this country. That your forebears got together and did it. That is utter, unmitigated, uncollected garbage. It simply isn't true. It never happened. I am sorry if this is offending anybody. I don't mean to offend. I don't mean to make you angry. But, it is ridiculous. I wish I had time to get into it more fully.

Do you know how governments are established? I have made a list of the things that happen. Number one is by direct force and violence. That is basic. Governments all use force directly or indirectly, because governments employ politics and rely on a monopoly of coercion. So force is always there. Another procedure that some governments employ is that they convince a significant number of people in the territory over which they propose to rule that God has willed it. Therefore they are carrying out the orders from on high.

That's a very persuasive argument. Very few people want to defy God. And if you can, convince a significant number of people that God is behind you, you can become a God in their eyes.

Then there is another method that is used.

The argument is, that although when I'm your government I'm going to kick in your door, steal your property, abuse your friends and relatives, and take your money, if you don't let me do it, there is a guy bigger than I am on the other side of the hills. And he'll hurt you worse! So you had better take it from me because I'm a nice fellow. This argument is called the lesser of two evils.

Next you are told that your ancestors approved of government. You weren't around. But your ancestors did it and because your ancestors did it, you are

stuck with it. You leave no recourse but to do as your ancestors wanted you to do. That's a very interesting point of view.

And then, of course, this one is often heard. No matter how bad the government is, it's better than not having one. Because if you didn't have a government, you would have chaos. Now we are back to a point I have already tried to remove. The government doesn't provide law and order. It never did. It simply provides frustrations leading to disorder, legislation and so on.

And then we have this approach; the supposition that once you have a government your neighbors will be able to support you above and beyond your ability or willingness to support yourself. Government is endorsed for that reason.

And finally it is believed that the government will not do to you what you confidently want it to do to your neighbor.

### **PYRAMIDAL GOVERNMENT**

These are the reasons that you justify government and ask it to exist.

Now, when we got started with our noble experiments here in this country a number of years ago, we had been following the example of Great Britain to a large degree. And Great Britain, of course, had produced a government that was originally an unlimited monarchy. The king was at the top of the structure. And everybody else was down below. The king had total, unbridled power.

Now, of course, all government is pyramidal in shape. There will be somebody at the top and everybody else will be less high in the pyramid.

Let me put this down. The first prerequisite, if you are going to have a government de facto, (That's the only kind that interests me; one that works. I'm not interested in governmental theories or all the various niceties frequently discussed.) is a ruler—someone at the top. Absolutely essential. And I don't know of anyone who said it better than Harry Truman. He said, "The buck stops here." There has to be somebody at that desk where the buck stops. That's the way governments work. This is the rule when it comes to making decisions. Somebody has to make the ultimate decision. And the fellow sitting at the top in a government, and I mean at the top, well, the buck can't go past him. He's at the apex. You have to have somebody in that position.

There has always been a certain belief fostered in this country that the way we arranged our government prevented having a man at the top as a ruler. I am going to deal with that so hang in there. I'll be at that point in a few minutes.

What happened, of course, back in the early days when we first began to have monarchs, the king was usually a nice young fellow. So we put him at the apex of the triangle and gave him power. We cheered him and the energy of our support revved up and became power in use. Once that topmost position was occupied by the ruler, then he began to crack the whip and power flowed from the top down. We put the king in an exalted position, but he was a nice fellow when we put him there. Then he began to rule. And he said, "I want her arrested. I want him eaten." And various other orders were given. And we carried out his wishes. Presently, we begin to say, "What happened to our king? You know, when we put him up there he was a nice guy. But now, he's hurting us." And we begin to conspire against him. And pretty soon we do one of two things. We either endured it until he died or we got rid of him one way or another. Sometimes we chased him off his throne and sometimes we killed him before he could get out the door. But we

got rid of him. In the meantime we placed another fellow in the wings because he has already assured us by saying, "I'm going to be a good king." We believed it. So we crowned him and relaxed and we said, "Now we have a good king."

Then the new king gets this power, you see. And he begins saying, "Pass this law...Arrest this fellow... Do this." And we finally say, "What happened to him?" So we get rid of him and get another king.

Age after age we did this with monarchs. When the monarch first was crowned we loved him. Then he began acting as a person would act if his mother barked. And finally we said, "Ah, the problem is not the man, the problem is the structure. We built it wrong. We shouldn't put anybody at the top. No one man has enough brains or wisdom to handle that accumulation of power." So we built an oligarchy.

An oligarchy means rule by a few. We would elect or appoint or shake dice for oligarchs. You get a bunch of anywhere from 3 to 60, you know, depending on the population you are trying to placate.

Then you put the bunch up there. And you say the beauty of this is that no one man will have all power. Everybody at that level has the same power as every other person. The first thing that happens when you get an oligarchy is that when they meet, one of them is chosen as chairman.

You have to have order. It's a necessity. The chairman picks up the gavel. The minute he picks up the gavel a little pimple of power forms over him. And as he uses the gavel, the power intensifies and the pimple becomes a boil. And he keeps on using it and the boil enlarges and becomes a carbuncle. And then you're back where you started, with one man as a ruler.

As a matter of fact, this has happened with every oligarchy we ever had. Every oligarchy has converted into one-man rule sooner or later, most of them into direct dictatorship. This is not because of the nature of man. It's because of the nature of the political method in structures of the type I am talking about. We have played around with this and the result was exactly the same as when we had a monarch—the accumulation of power in the hands of the man on the top, with power rolling down to oppress, intimidate, terrify and kill. Finally we say, "Oligarchy is no good. Let's get rid of that. Let's get something closer to the base." And we invented democracies and republics. And those are theoretically awfully cute things. Because the idea is that the people at the base are going to elect people at the next line and so on up the ladder; each stratum gets together and elects people at the next level and so on up, until you ascend into heaven. And then, of course, when you arrive at the top, you have a man who does the same thing again.

## **THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE**

Now when we came to the American experience, we said we wanted to avoid the errors of other democracies and republics. We were inspired by the British experience. Britain, as I mentioned earlier, had had an unlimited monarchy. And prior to the landings at Plymouth and Jamestown and so on, they had created a parliament. And the parliament, in effect, provided a second branch of government. They had the parliament, but they also had the king.

The British thought they were on the right track because when they went into the throne room and said, "Your majesty, how would you like to have a parliament over here that can check your actions?" And he said, "I don't like it at

all." And they said, "We're on the right track." And then they went over and talked to parliament and said, "How would you like it if every time you do something you still would have to get the king's approval?" They said, "That's terrible. We know enough to run the show." So they said, "Well, at last we are doing the right thing. Because now these two areas will check each other. And that will prevent the growth of this colossal structure with somebody on top."

When we got started in this country, we were inspired by the British experience. And we said, "If two points at the top are good, three would be better." So we decided to have an oligarchy of branches—executive, legislative and judicial. And each one, theoretically, would have the same power, and in consequence, we would have a limited government. And of course, whenever you ask these people, you say to the President, "What do you think of having Congress pass laws and the Supreme Court ruling on constitutionality?" The President would say, "That's terrible. I cannot run the country with my hands tied." Then you go to the legislative branch and ask them and they are always upset about the President and the Supreme Court. And you go to the Supreme Court, and you experience their dissatisfaction. So Americans rejoiced and said, "We've got a triple deal here, where each branch checks the other."

Do you know what has happened? I know you do.

(LeFevre picks up a book.)

I showed this down at USC a month ago, and I thought maybe you people would like to see it, too. This is the current issue of the "U.S. Government Organizational Manual." Government gets this out every year, and this is the latest edition.

In this single volume the federal government lists all of its functions. I want you to see what's in the volume. This is your government. That's what it says. The Constitution of the United States is here in the first part, together with the Amendments to date and a chart. See, they have a chart.

Then we go over here to what is called the "legislative branch," starting on page 25. Here is a listing of the officers of the Senate and the House, and a very well written description of how these two bodies function. Here are the charts. They always have charts. Then we have the "standing committees." See, they have the chairman of the standing committees. The chairman sits and the standing committee stands. Then we have the various standing committees explained.

Here, we have the names of the Senators identified by name, state and party affiliation. They're all here; by name, state and party affiliation. They're all here; this is current. Next we have the Representatives, by name, state, party and election district...all listed. And, of course, there are a lot of these. You have no idea how many salaries you pay. But here they are. Several pages of them.

Now we come to the architect of the Capitol. I know you are relieved to know that we have one. The architect of the Capitol, by the way his name is George M. White, is a bureau under the legislative branch. The architect reports directly to the legislature. And his job is to act as the agent of Congress in looking at the government buildings in Washington. That is what he does; he looks at the buildings.

Here's the United States Botanic Garden. That is another bureau under the legislature and the fellow heading that is George M. White. He's not a botanist, but he's an awfully nice fellow. This is called consolidation. We're reducing the size of government. And his function is to look at the gardens. So the

same man does both now: he looks at the buildings and he looks at the gardens, and it's all explained.

Next we have the General Accounting Office. Listed are the chief accountants and a description of how the office works, and the charts and the descriptions continue. This is also a legislative function, as you can see.

And here we have the Government Printing Office. This is under the legislature. The names of the printers and how they work and a chart—the whole bit.

Then comes the Library of Congress, obviously Congressional, under the legislative branch, the names of the librarians; and here's the chart. It's all spelled out. Very carefully written.

Costs Accounting Standards Board. This is a new one. They just got it, and they are now accounting for the standards. Here it is. (LeFevre points to that section in the book.) And here is the index. It's so new it hasn't grown much. Just a few inches.

And here is the Office of Technology Assessment, which was born big! It's new, but it's quite big to start with.

And here's the Congressional Budget Office. And that's brand new. And that does it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to list all of the people in the legislative branch and to describe all they do, including every Senator and Congressman in the United States, it takes from page 25 to page 63, including the charts. This much of the book is devoted to the legislative branch.

Now we come to the judicial branch: the Supreme Court of the United States, with the names of the members and officers and a description of what they do. The lower courts are described. The judicial circuits are listed. (LeFevre pointing to a part of the book...) This is the Federal Appellate Court with the names of the judges and even their addresses. They haven't got their phone numbers, but they're all listed here so you can find them. Special courts are described, as is the United States Customs Court. This is described. And here's the Administrative Office of the United States Courts and the Federal Judicial Center, which is brand new. That terminates the judicial section. It takes from page 67 to page 79 to list all of the people and describe all of the functions of the judicial branch.

(LeFevre fans hundreds of pages of the book in front of the audience.) As you see, this is called a "limited government of checks and balances." What happened? The Executive Branch runs from page 83 to page 662. What happened is exactly what happened before.

We built this kind of structure, and we put three of these things on it. (LeFevre draws three closely fitted pyramids together on a blackboard and draws the middle pyramid larger and larger until it engulfs the two small pyramids.) And we said they will check each other. The result was that one of them got bigger and bigger and bigger, and you're back where you started. Why? Because, ladies and gentlemen, there is no such thing as "limited government," anymore than there is such a thing as "good government." That's impossible.

## **THE CONTRADICTION**

Now I doubt if anybody in his right mind would favor unlimited government. But when you favor government, that's what you're doing. Because government, by its very nature, is unlimited. You favor tyranny when you favor

government; though you don't know it. This is why I am constantly staggered by those who say they are libertarian and are trying to set up their own particular way of providing a "good government." It is a contradiction in terms. To say "unlimited government" is a redundancy and to say "limited government" is a contradiction. All you have to say is "government." And that takes care of the whole thing.

Ladies and gentlemen, with the passing of time, as historians begin writing what has transpired in our own time, we'll perhaps begin to learn that the entire Watergate episode that we are still on the fringes of, was probably little more than a power struggle in Washington—a struggle between the executive branch, the legislative, and the judicial branches. Certainly, you people unsophisticated enough to know that this is not the first time that someone in high office has been caught with his hand in the cookie jar.

We have had corruption in government since government started. In fact, I have often felt that the best administration we had was George Washington's. That, too, was corrupted, and it has been downhill since. But I wanted you to grasp the point that you can't have a government without a ruler. However you try to design the government, it's going to end up with a man at the top. Now he may not be the chief executive; he could be the chief justice. He could be the prime minister. He could be the chairman of the central committee. You can call him anything you wish. But if you are going to have a government de facto, you have to have a ruler.

### **SANCTION OF THE VICTIM**

Now ladies and gentlemen, let's take the next point. To have a government de facto, there must be more than a ruler. In addition, you have to obtain a very special reaction which I am going to give by its exact name. It is called "sanction." But it is a particular type of sanction. I am indebted to Ayn Rand for the phrase. She didn't use it quite as I am going to, but she said it better than I could have. She said it is "the sanction of the victim." And I want to make that point.

First before dealing with the sanction of the victim, let me sketch out a few of the characteristics that accompany all rulers sooner or later.

Whenever a person decides that he wishes to be a ruler, he develops certain psychological traits. In a few cases in history, ladies and gentlemen, we have had a man suddenly thrust into a position of rulership to which he did not aspire. When it happens, the same thing occurs, but there is a little lapse of time before you can detect it. But all rulers and would-be rulers have the same traits sooner or later.

What they develop, first of all, is an enormous self-confidence. They believe they are right. They believe that their opinions are objectively right. Their view is "The View." If you differ, you are in error. I might say, many of us have this characteristic to some degree. Most of us, by the time we get past the age of twelve or thirteen, are pretty sure we know what's what. So we all have that characteristic, but there is a very peculiar thing that happens to the psychology of the would-be ruler. Whereas most of us might feel very confident about the validity of our opinions, we also have a mediating feeling of weakness. Most of us find ourselves to consist of a bundle of good points and bad points, but we do detect failings in certain places. And if we are thinking as ordinary



people, we usually find that, while we think that we are right, we also feel that somehow we don't have the ability of convincing others of just how right we are. And that we feel inadequate while also feeling confident. This keeps us in balance.

But if you are a ruler or a would-be ruler, when you should have the feeling of inadequacy, you don't. What you have is a feeling that the reason you can't convince the other party is his fault, not yours. You're right, and he's wrong. He's not only wrong, but he's stupid. Because your position is absolutely right and he should see it. It's not your fault that you cannot explain it. It's his fault because he doesn't grasp it.

That leads to a very interesting phenomenon called sublimation. The ruler buries his feelings of inadequacy. He can't admit it, even to himself. This leads the ruler into a position where he attains what could be called "self-righteousness." If you don't agree with him, then he is justified in doing whatever is necessary to bring you into line. If he has to tax you, that's all right. If he has to fine you, that's all right. If he has to put you on the rack and torture you or whatever, it's quite all right.

The ruler is self-righteous. He has to be. The consequence is that he can order a country into war, plunge it into a series of atrocities, command assassinations, mayhem and destruction. Then he can go to bed and sleep like a baby with a clear conscience. Because he's right. And in the end the evil he does will all add up to good. So this is the characteristic that you find in rulers, sooner or later.

We had a case here in the United States, where a fellow became our top man and he had never planned on it. You know, the mantle was dropped on him. He never quite recovered. And you could see for the first few months that he (President Ford) was a little stunned by what had happened. But then the gleam began to appear in the eye. You have witnessed it. Anyway, that's the characteristic of the ruler: self-righteousness.

Let's return to the point I left in mid-air. You have to have sanction of the victim, as well as a ruler. And the sanction of the victim, ladies and gentlemen, is this: the government must have the approval of an enormous section of the entire population. I don't care what kind of government it is—democracy, dictatorship, anything at all—it doesn't matter. Obviously, any ruler or would-be ruler can get a following by promising goodies to people. He can say, "If you back me, I'll let you eat at my table, and there will always be crumbs that I can provide for my loyal followers." So people will line up behind him, and you have that type of sanction—the sanction or approval of those who are joyfully following this particular would-be leader.

But that won't give you a government. All that provides is a faction. Government is a very peculiar hybrid that not only has to have the approval of those who favor it, but also it has to win the approval of those who know the government is going to injure them. And they have to approve even their own injury. That's what is meant by "sanction of the victim."

You know you're going to be victimized, but you approve anyway. That's the hat trick. Until a government is able to win sanction of the victim, it cannot stand; because a government is more than just power alone. Power alone is the military and the military can always conquer, but conquering isn't the same as ruling. The government has to be able to win the sanction of the very people the government proposes to shaft.

## **THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS**

There are two tried and true methods which are employed to obtain sanction of the victim. I won't have to go into one of them in depth because I know you're familiar with it. It is the most widely used in this country. It is called "The Lesser of Two Evils." I have already mentioned it as one of the ways in which a government is established. In this country we have two major political parties, and we always have champions from both. Then each candidate will tell you that the other fellow is worse than he is. And you weigh the relative damage that is going to come from each, and you vote for the lesser of the evils. This is the way it is done, and I am sure you're aware of it. You've seen it.

This last time, this last presidential election, was probably not as good an illustration as we sometimes have had, by reason of the fact that Mr. Ford was not too well known, really, except you knew he was there. You couldn't get angry with him. I mean, we had a man who couldn't go down the stairs without difficulty. I mean, he was a nice fellow. Opposing him was a fellow from a peanut farm that you don't know anything about. And you can't really get angry with him either. So actually the race was close. And it just happened that the people who looked at Ford versus Carter (more of them, and only under, I think, two million was the differential) said, "Well, we pretty well know what Ford is going to do, but we aren't quite sure what Carter is going to do. After all, what could a guy from Georgia do?" And so they voted for Carter a little bit more than they did for Ford.

If you want a good example of the very thing I am talking about, go back to the prior election when Nixon went in by a landslide. Now, you know, the American public has never been enthusiastic about Mr. Nixon, but they voted for him overwhelmingly. Why did they do that? Well, you know why — a fellow named McGovern. In fact, Nixon didn't campaign; he didn't have to. He stayed in Washington. McGovern did the campaigning. Every time McGovern opened his mouth, he got votes for Nixon. Greatest ploy that Nixon could have had. In fact, Nixon was putting money into the McGovern campaign to keep McGovern from going down the tubes. It wasn't that people liked Nixon, but... "McGovern"... "Oh, not McGovern"... "Anybody but McGovern." This is how Nixon got the votes. This is the lesser of two evils, as we see it domestically.

## **INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

I don't know if this has occurred to you. We employ the same technique internationally. You may not have thought of that. But, ladies and gentlemen, the greatest asset that the American government has had for years has been the Russian government. Oh, yes. If, at any time, the American public stood up and acted a little bit independent, you know what happened? An American politician would say. "Now wait just a minute. If it weren't for us, the Russians would come in and they would impose communism on you. And do you know what would happen? When they imposed communism, you would be forced to work where they told you to, at a wage that they would decide, and you'd be drafted into their armies. And if you disobeyed, you'd be tried and sent to their prisons. Anything could happen. So, support us and we'll tell you where to work and what you are going to earn and draft you into our armies. And if you

disobey, we'll try you or we'll send you to jail or whatever, but it is better to be shafted by an American than a Russian."

Now, while we are doing that, the same thing is happening over in Russia. Brezhnev or Kosygin or whomever stands up and says. "Ah, do you hear those warmongering capitalists in America? You better not get fresh with us. We are Mother Russia. You support us because if it weren't for us, the American imperialists would be over here and they would impose capitalism on you. And you know what would happen? The big corporations would tell you where to work, and they would tell you how much you could earn, and they would compel you to do as they said. And they would draft you into their armies, and they would arrest you if you disobeyed, and punish you, and might even shoot you, so do as we say and we'll protect you from these capitalists." And the Russians say "Da, da. Don't let the Americans come in. That would be terrible. If we get shafted, let it be a Russian shaft."

Meantime, the two leaders put in a telephone system and talk to each other about the weather because they are in the same club.

Look back in history. It takes a powerful foe to build a powerful nation. Rome might never have attained its greatness had it not been for Carthage. Carthage posed a threat, the Romans were told. England might not have attained its greatness had it not been for Spain and, later, France. You have to have the opposition scare your people. Show them that, "If you don't take me, there's a guy nine-feet high coming over the hill, and he's going to do it to you worse than I will. So I'm going to do it to you, but I am your friend." That is the lesser of two evils.

## **DIVIDE AND CONQUER**

Then there is "divide and conquer." And if you don't quite see the application here, let us just briefly show it to you. The man who explained it better than anyone else, if you want to look it up, is a guy named Julius Caesar. You can read about it if you want to, but let me explain it briefly.

When the government uses "divide and conquer," it sows suspicion so that the people who would naturally tend to affiliate will distrust each other. Thus, they don't affiliate. The consequence is that everyone distrusts his neighbor. But everyone trusts the government. Let me just act it out for a moment to tell you what I mean.

We set up a government, and we elect somebody who now says, "I am your representative." I don't care what level of government he is from. He goes before a group of people such as this, and he says, "I represent everybody in this district. Do you people in this district have any problems? I'm in Washington (or wherever) to help. What problems do you have?"

Suppose that he gets in front of some people who have a water shortage. They will immediately say to him. "We've got to do something; we have a water shortage." And he will listen to everything they say, and he will respond. "You know, you're right. I can see your point. It's a good thing I represent you. I'm going to go back to Washington and see what I can do to get some legislation passed in your favor to make it rain or whatever has to be done." Now this same man or another and, people, it doesn't really matter — "Republican," "Democrat,"... whatever—it doesn't matter, the face of a politician has no

features. It's like an ad for Dristan." Nothing is there. (The advertisement for Dristan on television shows a human face without features.)

So this fellow stands in front of a group of people who happen to have a supply of water. And he says, "Do you people have any problems?" They say, "Do we ever. We're drowning." He says, "It's a good thing I came because I can see your problem, and I am going to go to Washington to see if I can enact some legislation to save your lives." They relax and say, "It's a good thing we have someone to represent us because we don't trust those people who want our water." And the people who want the water don't trust the people who have the water. And what happens? Now you have a schism. But both sides trust the government to solve the problem.

Take a quick look at what has happened to American society. In this country the workers do not trust the businessman; managers don't trust workers; and workers don't trust managers. There is a rift between them as wide as the Grand Canyon, which is absurd in itself, since both are on the same side serving customers. But there is a rift.

Both sides look to Washington to solve the problem. Each faction believes Washington is going to pass legislation in its favor. Washington is its friend. The rich don't trust the poor, the poor don't trust the rich. But both look to Washington to solve the problem. The South doesn't trust the North. North doesn't trust the South. But they both look to Washington to solve the problem. The Blacks don't trust the Whites. The Whites don't trust the Blacks. But both look to Washington to solve the problem. The Chicanos don't trust the Blacks. The Blacks don't trust the Chicanos. The Chicanos don't trust the Whites. The Whites don't trust the Chicanos. But they all look to Washington to solve the problem. The people who wear long hair don't trust those with short hair, and those with short hair don't trust those with long hair. But Washington will take care of everything.

We've even gotten to the place where the men don't trust the women. The women don't trust the men. But Washington is going to take care of that one, too. The kids don't trust their parents. The parents don't trust their kids. We have a nation that has been smashed into a thousand shards of what were once a single great people. And this is the method called "divide and conquer." We are suspicious of everybody in our block, but "Big Daddy" will look after us. He has a Band-Aid to fit. And will take care of any of your problems and whatever you need. That's all that is needed to destroy a people... to conquer...to make them abject and subservient. That's "divide and conquer."

We have used both of these methods in this country. So we have a ruler and the sanction of the victim. These are the two most important items.

### **ACHILLES' HEEL**

Let me point out one enormously important factor. This particular area is the government's Achilles' heel because, my dear friends, government cannot take sanction from you by force. That is impossible. The government can take your money: the government can take your property: it could even take your life—all of those are actions of force. But the government cannot take your sanction. That you have to give. But please realize, the government cannot stand without your sanction. You have a handle on the problem, if you care to use it. You can withdraw your sanction. And you can do it peacefully. You can do it effectively.

That doesn't mean running for Congress, as I did once. I had that idea once. The reason I am speaking as positively as I am here is because I had all the characteristics that I've described. I was going to get into government and straighten you all out. I was going to do it for your own good...if I had to kill you to do it. Certainly, I know. I've been there.

Sanction of the victim gives you the whip hand.

### **POINT OF CONTACT**

Let me offer one other idea.

There must be a "point of contact" between ruler and ruled, if you're going to have a government de facto. That is, a point where physical imposition is exerted by the government upon the governed. One of the great myths that we have is the belief that you and I are the government. Now, you and I are not the government. You and I are the "governed." The government is up here. (LeFevre points to the top of the pyramid drawn on the blackboard directly behind him.) And you and I are down here. (LeFevre points to the base of the pyramid.)

What has happened in this case is that by virtue of the democratic process, you have been conned into believing that voting means you're running the show. You're not. If you doubt that, you can prove it to yourself tonight. Go out of here to the nearest phone and call Mr. Carter and tell him you don't want any government benefits this year and you are not going to pay any taxes. You have decided not to patronize the goods and services of the government. And you would like him to take his sticky fingers out of your pocket. Then let me know what cell you're in so I can send you a postcard. You are not running anything, though you may have been told you are.

The system we have is essentially analogous to this. Imagine a penitentiary in which quadrennially the inmates elect their warden. That doesn't mean they're running the jail. They never get out of their cells.

Now, for a contact point to exist, the government has to perform a public act that is recognized by the people as being a kingly act. It ties back to this. The government has to establish publicly that it can obtain obedience. Let me see if I can make it clearer.

Today, the government concentrates in the field of taxation. Taking your money isn't absolutely essential. But, making you obey is. The government today has a monopoly in the field of money and credit. I know many people imagine that they could control the government if they didn't pay their taxes. My dear people, the government could declare all the money presently in circulation to be null and void and issue a new currency. You need your money, but the government needs your sanction; they are not the same. Because you and I need our money we often think that by refusing to pay taxes we could get the stranglehold on government. I think we are deluding ourselves if we think so. The government doesn't need your money; it needs your sanction.

### **RULING THE RULED**

Let me describe what I mean this way. If any of you are familiar with the writings of Lewis Baudin, who is viewed as the authoritative author concerning the Incas of Peru, you may be familiar with his study in which he shows that the chief of the Incas faced a real problem when it came to getting a tax from one village.

This village was so poor that it had absolutely zero surpluses. And that meant that if the chief of the Incas taxes them at all, someone in the village would die. And that is no way to keep a flock of sheep. If you start killing off the flock, you know you're a bad shepherd.

So the Incan chief had to figure out a way in which he could tax, or the people in that village would forget that he ruled them. That's the real point. Not the money, the obedience. And believe it or not, he finally figured out just such a tax. He ordered all of the villagers to sit down annually and search their persons for a flea. Fleas comprised the only surplus the village had. One flea was collected from each individual, shoved into the hollow stem of a quetzal feather and a fast runner took that feather down to Cusco, the capital city, and paid the tax for the village. By that process the people in the village were kept subservient. A public act had occurred in which the people bowed and did as they were told. Thus, the mythology was maintained, and government rule was maintained.

Knowledgeable individuals are rarely in a position to confront the government when a show of force is present. But each of us can withdraw his sanction by voluntary, peaceful and even legal means. There is nothing in the Constitution or in law that says you have to approve of it. All that is said is that you must obey. Nonetheless, the government is counting on your approval, for without it, they will be unable to rule. Thus, sanction is in your own hands. You can withdraw it any time you choose.

### **Back Cover:**

Robert LeFevre is one of the most powerful lecturers and authors in the United States. His lecture "Good Government: Hope or Illusion?" at Santa Ana College is a classic in wit and common sense which has made LeFevre almost a legend in his own time.

Never before has anyone defined the role of government so brutally precise. "Government is," LeFevre repeated twice to the audience, "a group of people who sell retributive justice to the inhabitants of a limited geographic area at monopolistic prices." LeFevre continued, "Politics is the method employed in the power structures by means of which a monopoly of coercion can be obtained and maintained...This is what we can do without in the interest of law and order."

Founder and former president of Rampart College, LeFevre constantly reminded his listeners that he is an "autarchist," and not an anarchist because he strongly supports law and order. And since government is usually unlawful and disorderly, LeFevre pointed out, the need for government has few merits if any.

As for good government, LeFevre contended that there is no such thing as good government. "That is a contradiction in terms as ridiculous as 'constructive rape.'"

LeFevre's "Good Government: Hope or Illusion?" is a must for any libertarian library.

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This booklet was re-published by Freeland Press, P.O. Box 22231, Carmel, CA 93922. Many of the ideas expressed in this booklet can be found in Robert LeFevre's magnum opus book, *Fundamentals of Liberty*, which is available at [www.lksamuels.com](http://www.lksamuels.com). Considered the definitive work on the nature of liberty, *The Fundamentals of Liberty* is a combination of over 25 years of work as a lecturer, author and president of Rampart College. The book took five years to complete and was finished only a few weeks before LeFevre's death in 1986.

Lawrence Samuels worked closely with Robert LeFevre, becoming the primary founder and later president of Rampart Institute under its 501(c)(3) tax-deductible status. His book *In Defense of Chaos: The Chaology of Politics, Economics and Human Action* was published in 2013 (available at [www.lksamuels.com](http://www.lksamuels.com)).



A lecture by Robert LeFevre at Rampart College in the mountains near Colorado Springs.

“Government is a disease masquerading as its own cure.”  
--Robert LeFevre

