

## **FREEDOM IS A LONELY STAR**

ONE TIME, IN AMERICA, there was a dream. It was a dream of man. Through the long night, through two thousand years of bondage, the dream was born. Out of agony and terror. Out of poverty and misery. Out of secret thoughts, in the heart of despair. Out of whispered words, in the shadow of death. Out of love, in an empire of hate. Children, chained to work carts. Women whipped through the streets. Men and women, and children too, burned alive in the public square, because they dared to think of freedom.

Lonely, and difficult, and dangerous, through ages and ages of night the star of freedom was born. Nursed with blood. Nurtured on agony. Carried, at length, to a new world, and planted there, in the fresh soil. Nourished, until it shone with an awesome light, a winged thing so high, so pure, so beautiful that it struck all the world with wonder. A dream of free men, working together in dignity and significance of honorable representatives, who cherished freedom and honor beyond their own interest and welfare. Of the inviolability of individual freedom, beyond kings and priests, beyond politicians and judges, beyond money or power or prestige. And all over the world men in tyranny and ignorance and oppression responded to that dream. "At last," they said, "at last."

Fragments of the dream come down to us now – "We hold that all men are born free and equal; and endowed...with certain inalienable rights, among which are the right to life, *liberty* and the pursuit of happiness." "I shall guard even my enemy from oppression." "Give me liberty or give me death." Fragments and strands, echoing emptily in empty hearts.

For the dream is dead now, or in a sleep that is like unto death. It has been sold out, denied and betrayed.

It has been sold out by cheap and venal politicians, by benevolent authoritarians, by "loyal" party men, by shrewd and greedy capitalists, by wise guys and smart guys that know all the answers. It has been sold out by the great middle class that prefers its false sense of security and false freedom, by the labor leaders that put power first, and the little man who prefers – at last with at least a decent reason – a full belly, or the promise of a full belly, to freedom turned dangerous and hungry.

It has been sold out by America, and for that reason the heart of America is sick, and the soul of America is dead. It is for this reason that we cannot instruct our children with a significant morality, or elect honorable men to office, or conduct our own affairs with a sense of dignity and significance. That dream itself was the soul of America in which there was no cause by man, no religion but man, and no goal but man. The betrayal of his dream is the one thing that man cannot forgive himself. The pompous oratory, the brave show, the frantic search for scapegoats and

traitors – all attempts to conceal from himself the thing that cannot be concealed, his cowardice, his failure.

Having failed freedom at home, we engaged in sick and fevered attempts to impose it abroad, with all the panoply of futility. Out of the First World War, national prohibition, the income tax, Mussolini, Franco, Hitler, and the benevolent dictatorship of the New Deal. Out of the Second, Stalin, the enslavement of sciences, and the suppression of freedoms in the Great Red Scare. After the Third, what will be left to suppress? Heroic Crusades for Freedom. Advances to the rear. For what? Survival? To what end? To the end that we must ape the enemy in order to defeat him on the grounds that *our* ends justify our means? To the very end, where all our freedoms are gone, the betrayers themselves betrayed, and freedom again rediscovered and reconsecrated in agony and blood? To what their end?

Perhaps we could face the world as conquerors, in the name of power and right, if we had the guts, which we do not. We could face the world as heroes if we had the courage of our own dream; which we do not. But as champions of freedom abroad who have sold out freedom at home, willing to sell out the freedom of anyone else where our own ends are served, we make a sorry show. Pretentious hypocrites, lacking even the shrewdness of a sound ego, we make ourselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world. And underneath the pretense: shame – the shame of the booby that has sold his dignity, his individuality for conformity, for money, for the prestige of the pigsty.

The principles of freedom are forever the same, but its issues are constantly shifting. George III is not the tyrant today, nor Madison the arch-reactionary, nor are we asked to surrender our liberties and persecute those who think differently because of the menace of Danton, Maurat and Robespierre. It is now safe to enshrine those persons whom once it would have been very dangerous to know – neither Washington, nor Jefferson, nor Henry nor Paine would have been “safe” or “secure” associations in the days of the revolutions.

Now there is a theory that our fathers fought and died for our freedom, and this bought it for us. So now there is no need for us to concern ourselves with that for which they paid with discomfort, hunger and blood. We can leave this to those who are hired or drafted to protect our liberty.

We are assured on every hand that we are a free people – in fact, we have it in writing. Our fathers were not content with such assurances, but rather, by act and deed, assured these freedoms for themselves. That is the difference.

We are a savage culture. Our emotions and our attitudes, our needs and our drives, are all savage. Our religions and our morals, societies and creeds, cults and taboos; all are those of the savage.

But we are savages who have assumed the pretense of civilization, and this is our greatest disaster. This miserable pretense has closed at once both possibilities of stabilizing our culture. The one, or the non-pretentious savage outlet, would allow us the expression of our savage needs and

drives in a set of acceptable mores and expectations. The other, an acceptance of our savagery together with an aspiration to true civilization, might allow us to face and know ourselves, and in the slow, painful laboratory where all natural process are wrought, in time effect some upward change.

But in our blindness to our savagery we are trapped – we refuse to see the facts until it is too late – until in our private lives the impossible attention undoes our fairest hopes and fondest dreams, and in the public scene the idiot and criminal nations play holocaust with all our world. And now, as by a joke of the gods, a power that is sublime has been put in the hands of our most ruthless criminals and our most appalling idiots. It thus becomes clear that we must stoon choose openly the most abysmal savagery without the least vestige of further pretense, or we must renounce savagery to an undreamed of degree. And in this renunciation we must accept two propositions of true civilizations: the individuality of the individual, and the absolute necessity for a world state.

No conceivable conquest, save the conquest of the individual of an by himself, can assure us against destruction in the conflicts to come. And if this conquest cannot be total, it must be sufficient to produce the requisite number of adequate and civilized individuals.

At present, I cannot conceive of a workable world state, and I know that it cannot be conceived and ordered in a world of savages. But I can conceive that individuals, sufficiently evolved, and working towards the understanding, knowledge, and self-control that defines freedom, could achieve this. It can only be done by free men, and these men must be equally free of the pretense and self-deception, and the success and conformity cults that have made our society culture a slough of despond. The inane and illogical restrictions that repress all individuality and creative spirit, the savage cruelty and hostility to ourselves and our fellows, the terror and guilt that ride us like nightmares, must be understood and relieved.

That such an undertaking would be popular is hardly to be believed. That it would succeed in one generation, or ten, is perhaps too much to expect. But it is the only way. The wars, revolutions, crimes, the social and economic disorders and inequalities, which the ignorant regard as causes in themselves, are only the manifestations of the savage fact behind the civilized pretense – outbursts made more furious by evasions and repression. I know of no other answer than to cry a last crusade, a crusade for freedom, for the freedom to know and be ourselves before it is forever too late. If there is a hope, that hope is in man, and it is only in free men that the hope can be realized.

It is my aim to offer an examination of pretenses whereby they can no longer be concealed by institutions and names, and a definition of freedom that will, once and for all, place it beyond equivocation and deceit.

The conditioned reflex response of the standard ego is formulated in terms of the cross, the flag, the home, the church, the school God, mothers and American womanhood. These things have a purely reflexive value, without any rationale whatsoever. No standard ego has ever examined them; it would be heretical to do so. He simply responds. Behind these mechanical values, the necessities of life are met with rationalization processes that are often almost sublime. The crooked business and political deals, murder and pillage, seductions, rapes and visits to prostitutes are all conducted by the man who isn't there, in another world whose doors are guarded by the most marvelous network of hypocrisy, pretense and downright lying ever invented by the mind of man.

Occasionally some venturesome soul, dissatisfied with the standard ego formulations, breaks out and wanders around in reality awhile, until he is frightened back into the dream again or guided back by some psychiatrist.

The first view of truth is terror – the knowledge is as old as time – all the myths show it. From alcoholism to paranoid psychosis, from the mildest neurotic syndrome to schizophrenia, the escape from the terror of the true self and the true world. Dalua and Dermot, Pan and Persephone, Mayan and Mixitli, Janicot and Jehovah, each showed a visage of horror before the true face – the total truth – was revealed. Truth, in short, is not for fools and cowards, but for this the will that acts, the wisdom that knows, and the courage that dares the first terrible impact.

Beyond the fanged serpent are the immortal meadows, behind the skull face lie the stars. Only the free man shall pass that portal, and walk out into the total world that is eternity.

In a world where a precocious romance is set above reality – where He is a God and She is a Goddess in a springtime, where all endings are happy, plain John Smith and Mary Jones have short shrift. Morality cannot endure the comparison – a clumsy overture, a cold in the nose, an unexpected monthly ruins the enchantment, and the movies assure us that our mate, odious comparison, is somehow a miserable exception to the gold rule.

But whether we seek the dream in an escape from reality, or whether we cynically deny it, we are equally damned. True marriage, that rare estate, is as close to paradise as humanity can come. But it cannot be attained only by keeping the vision of beauty constantly before us and by transmitting, by constant effort and courage, by faith and love, the hard matters of reality into the shape of the beloved dream. And that marriage attained is the garden of paradise, whereof happy children are the “fruit.”

It is not easily come to – it is possible only to courage, to maturity, to intelligence and high idealism. But it can be attained, “and if it can it must,” for that marriage is the sure foundation of a free world.

Police, like the military, are a necessary evil that requires constant surveillance and rigid control in order to keep them within the bounds of constitutional law and democratic procedure. In most large American cities, police are little more than agents of a corrupt political machine, acting as collectors and supervisors for organizing prostitution, gambling, dope and protection rackets. For these gangsters, the collection of revenue and the terrorization of opposition is of far greater importance than the suppression of crime. The police mind is usually of a sadistic and homicidal trend, and the office, as it now exists, offers an ideal opportunity for the expressions of the urge, and the ruthless punishment of symbolic scapegoats in the form of prostitutes, derelicts, Negroes, radicals, drunks, and other helpless and insignificant members of the nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The traditional American distrust and dislike of police stems from a remembrance of police states of Europe. But the modern American has abrogated, along with his other freedoms, his freedom from police interference in his private life, unwarranted search and seizure, wiretapping, suspension of constitutional immunity (the sole guarantee against intimidation and torture), and all the other trappings of a police state. His present resentment is about as mature, as courageous, and as effective as that of a small, broken-spirited boy against a brutal and tyrannical father. This gutless specimen is now engaged in selling out each liberty that someone else gained for him, as fast he can make the deal. He is buying security, protection, prosperity – the fine futile freedoms – and all the other gangsters goods at a bargain price. All that he pays is his right to call himself a man.

The methods by which politicians achieve their ultimate ambitions, that is, to become tyrants, are obvious, and exceedingly stale. But however old the trick, it seems that there is always a fresh crop of suckers. Foremost among the public plans and promises of Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin on their way to power were *not* the establishment of concentration camps. The murder and torture of free citizens, and the annihilation of all freedom.

As hard as it may seem to believe, by some sort of anachronistic plagiarisms these plans and promises included increased prosperity, fewer slums, social security, more jobs, and defense against enemies without and traitors within.

There were also among the foremost plans and promises of Sulla, Caesar, Robespierre and Napoleon. The bait is so old and obvious one suspects that repetition must have given it prestige. The first step is the discovery of an emergency. Any emergency will do – a depression, a plot, an enemy without, and enemy within, the second coming of Christ, witches – anything whatever which can be used to whip fear, hatred and hysteria for fever pitch.

The next step is the program to meet the emergency. Whatever the program may be, increase taxation is its inevitable first-born and best beloved. Taxation – that is, for the Great Cause – taxation to create bureaus which create bureaus that require taxation for the support of bureaus.

Taxation for the support of more politicians, police, charities, public works, et cetera. Taxation, in short, for anything and everything. Purely, of course, as a temporary measure. Ah, these temporary measures. How permanent they are. The Republican procedures of Rome were suspended, just temporarily, so that the politicians could fight a war and save the country in “this great and terrible emergency.” But somehow the emergency lasted through Sulla and Caesar, and Augustus, and Tiberius, and Caligula, and Claudius and Nero and in fact, clean through the collapse and final dissolution of the Roman state.

The next step is the discovery that the emergency is much worse than anyone thought. Revolution is on the verge, collapse is imminent, the world is going to end tomorrow.

So naturally we will *act now* and in order to do this it is necessary to have a dictatorship. Harsh word? Shall we say – organizations to meet the emergency temporarily, of course. The sophistries by which this putsch is justified, palliated, honey coated, are among the most ludicrous in the politician’s bag of tricks.

The church, for example, burnt heretics from motives of most terrible mercy. Since this was the only way to save their souls from hell, of course the church didn’t really kill, she only tried, convicted and sentenced to execution. The state did the dirty work, just to keep the church’s hands clean. Execution was by fire, because the church could not of course condone the shedding of blood.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is merely temporary – the state will gradually wither away like a snark hunter, leaving us all free as birds. Meanwhile it may be necessary to kill, torture and imprison a few million people, but whose fault is it if they get in the way of progress? Socialism – the greatest good of the greatest number – how can you argue against it? That only proves you are in the minority, in the wrong.

When the rights of labor interfere with the public good, the national need, the emergency – then to hell with their rights. What does the freedom of a few radical university professors, scientists, teachers, government workers matter when our country is in danger? Sign or be fired. And whose freedom tomorrow, fatheads, fools? Whose rights when the masks are down and the gloves off, and a spade is the thing you dig your grave with? When a man can be fired, hounded, persecuted, jailed in America for the opinions he holds, for his refusal to have his privacy violated, then it is time to publicly burn the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence, and call this country by its right name – a tyrant state.

How can we cope with these predators, politicians and their moronic dupes? We can examine their emergencies, for what they are worth. Predators are not confined to one party or one nation. There is always the real need to be well armed, well informed and well prepared against *all* enemies of freedom. Well meaning fools, appalled by the predators within, clamor to throw down

their arms and welcome the predators without. This is plain suicide, but the fear of predators without can also drive fools to the same suicide within. Arms and armies are necessary, but it also necessary to watch them, to control them, and to keep them subservient to the private citizens whom they serve.

We can reduce political sophistries to their basic elements, and examine them in the light of reason and necessity. Politicians need some graft – some excitement, some opportunity for hysteria; it is their life blood. A certain degree of criminality and psychosis goes with the breed. But easily, easily, gentlemen. Within limits, and under control.

Taxation, however, is a major root of the politician's power, and it is here that he can best be regulated. The first new limit on potential power must be the abolition of confiscatory taxation, and of punitive taxation in all forms. Taxation should exist for the sole purpose of raising reasonable revenue, and must in no case exceed a fixed and minimum percentage of income, profit, value, or sales. The moment it does, it becomes a weapon of dictatorship superseding and replacing due process of law.

Taxation must be open, not hidden and secret. The process of withholding taxes from wages is a violation of individual and corporate rights, a dodge to dupe employees into blaming employers for the piratical raids of government on income. The income tax itself was the opening wedge in a conspiracy to build a vast politico-economic empire, wielding an absolute control over the income, business and private life of every citizen. Augmented by social security and old age and a multitude of hidden taxes, its success is now reasonable apparent to all except the chronic paupers and welfare dupes that are its dubious beneficiaries. Its such fun to soak the rich. But not so much fun when a rich man, from a tax standpoint, is anyone with an income over fifty dollars a month. Let the common man pay his taxes in the open and he will soon see that his "security," at that price, could be sold by any insurance company, engraved on tablets of pure gold, at a handsome profit.

Any successful confidence fame must be played in stages; the sucker is not hooked all at once. The first issue must be one in which we all believe, the first victim someone we all hate. A rich man, a radical, and atheist, a Negro, a Jew – some no good bastard. *We* are all together, on the other side, until we take the bait. Then *we* are on the hook, and it is too late. The Nazi party was the government, the government makes the law, and good citizens always obey the law. Q.E.D. concentration camps = good government. That is the lesson of history, fresh, this time from Germany. One day it may be very well said of us also, "it is too bad they could not learn." On the basis of the present trend, I would give this country fifteen years, at the outside, to turn into something that that is in essence a socialist or a fascist state.

History is curious. A few of the right men might stop it – the old dream still burns in America, if deep down and dimly. But they have not yet appeared.

The advent of psychoanalytical sciences and the publication of the Kinsey Report have indicated a true state of culture morals previously unsuspected in western history. The impact of these events on society is a moment comparable to that of nuclear physics and the advent of the atomic bomb. The significance of these revolutionary findings in the field of morals has not yet reached the point of practical application in terms of large scale individual and social adjustment. Confusion in regard to proper and significant attitudes and behavior appears to have reached an all-time high.

In addition to the tremendous burdens of self control imposed by culture and civilization, man now sees himself restricted by moral concepts which now appear savage, pretentious and archaic. In the face of ever-increasing social complexity, this burden becomes intolerable and he is tempted to throw the whole thing over at the first clean opportunity. This danger is particularly great because of lack of discrimination between what is essential and what is superfluous in the field of morals. The need for cooperation and renunciation exists as never before; as a corollary, the need for freedom and individuality, wherever these are possible, is of the same magnitude. It is in the field of sexual morals that unnecessary restrictions are most severe, and it is in this field that a process of revision and liberation can go furthest, and serve the most immediate purpose.

It would be of little value, and perhaps almost a disservice, to further demonstrate the barbarous nature and the failure of western sex morals, to develop a further philosophy of sexual freedom and stay at that. This would only serve to increase the awareness of frustration and unhappiness, without indicating any way out of the morass. In addition, it is necessary to clearly show a practical, individual solution to the moral problem, and that is the object of our work.

And you, man, put off this longing for your mother, put away these childish things and come into your manhood. She is not won by small devices and petty conceits, nor by crying, nor by beating on the chest, nor by roses or by gold, but by the clean, bright steel of the sword of freedom. Freedom of yourself, in yourself.

If you have manhood she will look to you for guidance, if you have courage she will find security with you, and if you have freedom she will come with you to liberty in all the spheres. On these three points you will win and hold her and not otherwise, the woman whom your manhood desires.

And from this marriage and not otherwise will come the children who will make a new world, the redeemers of prophecy, the conquerors of darkness and fear.

And this and not otherwise, in freedom, in love, in brotherhood and in the marriage of true minds, will we come finally, unobstructed, to the stars.