

## Book: Government should guarantee self-expression

Imputed Rights: *An Essay in Christian Social Theory*. by Robert V. Andelson. University of Georgia Press, Athens, Georgia. 1971.

Could freedom be "an end in itself?" No, cogently argues Professor Robert V. Andelson in a thoroughly-reasoned, well-written book on human rights. "Personal fulfillment requires that freedom be directed toward an object that transcends the self," namely, God. Without such direction, freedom has no meaning.

Does man, *qua* man, possess rights automatically, as argued by many humanists? No, answers Andelson. However, "in spite of man's total depravity he still possesses rights by virtue of the image of God." Thus preaches Calvin, and Andelson accepts the thesis. Furthermore, although "strictly speaking, only the elect may be said to possess rights 'de jure' . . . rights accrue 'de facto' also to the non-elect. This is because there is no absolute, objective human means of determining who are elect and who are not. Hence, rights must be attributed to all who accept their correlative obligations . . ." Thus the title: "Imputed Rights." (Apart from God, emphasizes the noted Russian philosopher Berdyaev, rights are meaningless, and Andelson agrees, although he disputes Berdyaev's claim that religious rights should be zealously safeguarded while "other rights" could be encroached upon by the state.)

Is the Henry George philosophy obsolete? No, replies the author. "This 'simple and sovereign remedy' is not a pipe dream. While it has nowhere been applied in toto, it has had sufficient application to confound the dire predictions of its adversaries and to vindicate the commendations of its firends."

Is the United Nations, as it is envisioned by liberals, the answer to the world's ills? No, declares Professor Andelson. "Only a Hobbesian would be willing to exchange the anarchy of competing national sovereignties for the leviathan of world sovereignty . . . Not until the covenant is *internally* embraced can it become the basis of an authentic world community . . ."

Are freedom and order antithetical? Again, no. It is a "false analysis" to consider the two contradictory.

Does the end justify the means? There are times, indicates our author, when "reciprocal freedom is an end which hallows any means required for its defense —" although he urges (for each circumstance where this may appear necessary) a "prayerful and diligent contextual study and consideration."

The book itself, as was stated in the beginning of this review, is a thoroughly — reasoned text. It is scholarly, serious, well-meaning, timely, and extremely fascinating to students of political, economic, and religious philosophies. Even

though the reviewer disagrees with several of the author's contentions, the book is a much-needed analysis.

Those who are familiar with the Geor-gist teachings are aware of George's stress on the theory of human rights. How foreign it is to the average college student (or teacher) who today accepts the thesis that rights are privileges "conferred" upon the populace by an all-powerful state!

It is Andelson's contention that the function of government is to guarantee the right of self-expression. All other rights are dependent upon such basic, primary, right. Andelson is emphatic in his philosophy: "The only legitimate goal of any nation as a political unit is that of insuring the reciprocal freedom of its citizens to pursue goals of their own choosing." (Freedom is, of course, necessary, according to the author, so that each person may worship God and recognize the reciprocal freedoms of his fellow-citizens.)

The Calvinist view, even though it is as pessimistic about man as is the Lutheran view, does not stress blind obedience to the state but, on the contrary, *limits* the power of the state. "And when the expanding state, forgetful of its proper task of guaranteeing rights, engulfs whole spheres of service it is extending the bor-

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### Book (continued from preceding page)

ders of the Realm of Caesar at the expense of the territory of the Realm of Spirit." ("For the use of coercion," says Andelson elsewhere, "other than to guarantee rights, is an infringement upon rights, . . ." Thus, drunkenness, gluttony, sex abuse, perversion, and other moral violations are not, "in themselves," grounds for state interference.)

The second half of the book deals with the specific "rights" (although, our author informs us, basically all rights are "one"). Such rights, all to be "protected" by the government, are the rights to 1)

physical integrity, 2) freedom of expression, 3) freedom to pursue an occupation of one's choice (but *not* the "right to work"), 4) ownership of labor products (but *not* private ownership of land and natural resources. "They were not created by human labor . . . And regardless of how innocently bought and sold, how toilsomely acquired, or how ancient its pedigree, every existing land title will be found to be spurious if traced to its origin.")

Government exists to protect individual rights, not to perpetuate privilege,

dispense welfare, cause wars, or regulate morals. This is the theme of the second half of the book.

The reviewer recommends perusal of Professor Andelson's definitive volume on human rights. No follower of Henry George should be unacquainted with this additional advocacy of human dignity and the rights of man. For to read Andelson's book is to appreciate George the more.

Jack Schwartzman