

In an Ideal Nation

Every person should be free

- *to pursue his ambition to the full extent of his abilities, regardless of race or creed or family background.*
- *to associate with whom he pleases for any reason he pleases, even if someone else thinks it's a stupid reason.*
- *to worship God in his own way, even if it isn't "orthodox."*
- *to choose his own trade and to apply for any job he wants — and to quit his job if he doesn't like it or if he gets a better offer.*
- *to go into business for himself, be his own boss, and set his own hours of work — even if it's only three hours a week.*
- *to use his honestly acquired property or savings in his own way — spend it foolishly, invest it wisely, or even give it away.*
- *to offer his services or products for sale on his own terms, even if he loses money on the deal.*
- *to buy or not to buy any service or product offered for sale, even if the refusal displeases the seller.*
- *to disagree with any other person, even when the majority is on the side of the other person.*
- *to study and learn whatever strikes his fancy, as long as it seems to him worth the cost and effort of studying and learning it.*
- *to do as he pleases in general, as long as he doesn't infringe the equal right and opportunity of every other person to do as he pleases.*

The above, in a nutshell, is the way of life that the libertarian philosophy commends. It is the way of individual liberty, of the free market, of private property, of government limited to securing these rights equally for all.

Written by Leonard E. Read, November 1954.

(The above was originally titled, "In an Ideal America". I changed it for universality.)