

**TALKING TO MYSELF: THE
ONLY PERSON ON
EARTH I HAVE BEEN
COMISSIONED TO SAVE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649717996

Talking to Myself: The Only Person on Earth I Have Been Comissioned to Save by Leonard E. Read

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

LEONARD E. READ

**TALKING TO MYSELF: THE
ONLY PERSON ON
EARTH I HAVE BEEN
COMISSIONED TO SAVE**

Talking to myself

Leonard E. Read



The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc.
Irvington-on-Hudson, New York 10533 1970

THE AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER

Leonard E. Read, author of numerous articles, has written the following books:

Romance of Reality (o.p.)
Pattern for Revolt
Students of Liberty
Estudiantes de la Libertad
Outlook for Freedom (o.p.)
Government: An Ideal Concept
Gobierno Un Concito Ideal
Why Not Try Freedom?
¿Por Que No Ensayar la Libertad?
Elements of Libertarian Leadership
Anything That's Peaceful
Todo Por la Paz
The Free Market and Its Enemy
El Enemigo del Mercado Libre
Deeper Than You Think
Accent on the Right
The Coming Aristocracy
Let Freedom Reign

The Foundation for Economic Education is a nonpolitical, nonprofit, educational institution. Its Senior Staff and numerous writers are students as well as teachers of the free market, private ownership, limited government rationale. Sample copies of the Foundation's monthly study journal, *The Freeman*, are available on request.

Published October 1970

SBN 910614-25-3

Copyright 1970 by Leonard E. Read

Permission to reprint granted without special request

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

022845

300.8
R283

To my long-time staff associates

DR. PAUL L. POIROT

&

THE REV. EDMUND A. OPITZ

whose helpful scholarship and editing

I gratefully acknowledge

Contents

1. GO WHERE THE ACTION IS 1
Critics of self-improvement: "Go where the action is." Right! But where's the action? The vital difference between the techniques of destruction and those of creation. Achieving an essentially free society is a creative, not destructive, activity.
2. KNOW THEM BY THEIR CHEERS 5
A simple way to tell whether or not our society is on course: observe what we cheer, applaud, look at, read, buy, approve. We appear now to be off course.
3. TALKING TO MYSELF ABOUT EXCELLENCE 9
Excellence is self-achieved and can only be caught, not taught. I am the only part of society I have been commissioned to save. Magnetism, not competition, the driving force in moral and spiritual excellence. Some yardsticks and suggested aids.

4. **EDUCATION VERSUS PROPAGANDA** 19
 Education, not education, the true antonym of propaganda. Ingathering process compared to carbon copy procedures. The false notion that typical citizen cannot be trusted to his own judgment. Propaganda, as all statist schemes, rooted in arrogance. Witnesses cited.
5. **GETTING RESULTS—HERE AND NOW** 27
 Activist programs have only long-range prospects. Look to best thinkers for quickest results. Instead of shushing authoritarians, encourage their talk, thus bringing absurdities into open. Recommended attitudes for devotees of freedom philosophy.
6. **SINKING IN A SEA OF BUTS** 35
 The irrationality of those who say: "I agree in principle, *but* . . ." The fallacy of gradualism. The exemplar can admit no *buts*; that's commonplace, not exemplary.
7. **THE URGENCY ARGUMENT** 40
 The tendency to see error only in adversaries. Even the best libertarian thinkers give away the case for freedom when faced with "extraordinary circumstances." Urgency a poor excuse for acting; foresight needed. The limitations of police action. Voluntarism performs wonders when not pre-empted.
8. **WHY FREEDOM IS NOT TRUSTED** 48
 The present politico-economic hodgepodge mistaken for freedom. This error spawns defectors who seek remedies in statist schemes that lead to disaster. State inter-

vention in the creative realm reduces self-responsibility and moral stature of the individual.

9. WHEN FREEDOM
BECOMES SECOND NATURE 56

We know the answer to six times seven; no thinking is required; it is second nature and no longer a problem. Freedom concepts are new, not ingrained, and easily lost; we don't *know* them. Only when the facts and principles of freedom are second nature will freedom be secure.

10. GETTING TO KNOW BEANS 62

Coercive fixing of wage rates leads to mischief. The case for labor—physical, intellectual, spiritual—as a commodity. Let labor go to market as does a bag of beans. Instead of forcing wages down, competitive pricing gives everyone full value for services rendered.

11. GAMES WE PLAY WITH LABOR 71

Labor a prime and scarce factor of production, the essence of private property. A launched rocket is labor launched into outer space and oblivion—divestment rather than investment. We're on a divestment spree. Take-over of this resource by government and labor unions results in unlimited power positions, the control of which is avidly sought. Never trust more power to a friend than to an enemy.

12. THE DILEMMA OF VALUE 81

The peaceful way of determining value vs. the coercive way, that is, the labor or "objective" theory vs. the