



Never forget the great Henry Hazlitt



By **THE EDITORIAL BOARD** | opinion@scng.com

PUBLISHED: November 28, 2025 at 8:00 AM PST

“When your money is taken by a thief, you get nothing in return. When your money is taken through taxes to support needless bureaucrats, precisely the same situation exists. We are lucky, indeed, if the needless bureaucrats are mere easy-going loafers. They are more likely today to be energetic reformers busily discouraging and disrupting production.”

So wrote the late Henry Hazlitt in his 1946 classic “Economics in One Lesson.”

How little things change.

Hazlitt was born on this date in 1894 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Today, we honor his memory.

Hazlitt was first and foremost a journalist. From working as an editorial writer at The New York Times and as a columnist through the Los Angeles Times Syndicate, Hazlitt wrote extensively on American political, economic and financial affairs. He authored numerous books on topics ranging from critiques of the welfare state to inflation.

Throughout his career, Hazlitt used his skills and experience as a writer and journalist to champion individual liberty, free markets and limited government.

As Hazlitt noted, free market capitalism has not only been “the great spur to improvement and innovation, the chief stimulant to research, the principal incentive to cost reduction, to the development of new and better products, and to improved efficiency of every kind,” but it’s fundamentally “a great system of social cooperation.”

It brings people together to make the best use of their resources, skills and capital. Goods and services are traded for the self-interested betterment of all parties involved. Over time, the net result of these transactions has been the broad lifting up of humanity out of poverty, and the creation of a broad “affluence that our ancestors did not dare to dream of,” as Hazlitt wrote in 1971.

The productive wonders of capitalism did that, not socialism, not communism, not feudalism, not welfarism. To Hazlitt’s point, the World Bank notes that global poverty dropped by 0.5% every year from 1950 to 1990 and by a full percentage point per year from 1990 through 2019.

Despite this, Hazlitt understood that societies predicated on free markets, private property rights and limited government were fragile, constantly threatened by the allure of socialist and redistributionist ideas.

Like many spoiled heirs of wealthy parents or grandparents, it is hard for those raised in relative affluence to appreciate how hard things were before and how much better things are thanks to the dynamic workings of capitalism.

Capitalism, Hazlitt wrote, “is so little understood, it is attacked by so many and intelligently defended by so few, that the outlook for its survival is dark.”

Hazlitt hoped to use his writings to educate the average person about the reality of capitalism and the pitfalls of intruding on it, and held on to hope that the public could be educated about how important it is to preserve capitalism and resist socialism.

“It may still be saved, but only if its merits come to be understood by the masses before it is too late. The world is now in a race between true economic education and catastrophe,” he wrote.

We encourage all who are interested to read his work and help share his critical defense of economic freedom.