

Quid Est Veritas

Continued from page A12

Rand, along with Adam Smith, would say being a good consumer in and of itself makes you a good citizen; maybe, perhaps the business of America will always be business. Reich's point, namely we cannot expect corporations to perform civic functions. General Motor's goal should be to make and sell cars, not to save the rain forest.

In addition to promoting commerce, the citizen in each one of us should demand government take an active role. Professional baseball would never exist without talented players, but it also could not exist without equally talented umpires. In the same vein, businessmen are entitled to make money, but society has a duty to enforce certain rules to ensure the economic game is played fairly. After all, the purpose of a democracy is to accomplish ends we cannot achieve as individuals, which is not possible if profits are the only concern.

One needs look no further for proof of this than our own state which, if you believe the latest statistics, is "the richest in the country." Now, as a proud Marylander I will admit that much of the economic success of our state is due to consumerism - i.e. commercial profits - but in addition, it is worth noting much of our economic success has resulted from "citizen "based initia-

tives. There can be little doubt that over time our ability to maintain good schools, modern roads and health and environmental standards has played a huge role in our economic success.

But while our state's consumer side has undeniably benefited from citizen-minded policies, there is still much to be done. No matter what Governor O'Malley says, sooner or later our state is going to have to build another Bay Bridge (maybe two). In many states (i.e. California) community college tuition is practically free. Why not do the same here? Free tuition through the sophomore year of college would give us a huge boost in meeting the challenges of the 21st Century.

Finally let's provide a comprehensive health care plan for all Marylanders -no one can consume anything if they are sick.

So, the question for this month is: Are you more inclined to be a consumer or a citizen?

I'll admit it, Any Rand and my daughter were right — selfishness is indeed a part of who we are. But while both might call me stupid and naïve, I also believe that caring for one's fellow man should also be an indelible part of the human condition.

