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US Bombs Syria in Retaliation to Alleged Chemical Attack, A World of War Column by Will Porter

Trump gave in to pressures that his predecessor was able to resist in 2013.

In response to allegations of the [use of chemical weapons](#) by the Syrian government in the country's ongoing civil war, President Trump has ordered a series of airstrikes on Syrian targets in what could be an [overture to regime change](#).

The strikes were carried out late Thursday night, hours after Russian deputy Ambassador Vladimir Safronkov warned of "negative consequences" if the administration chose to go through with prior threats. Though the Russians were [informed](#) of the strike in advance, this small gesture likely will not mitigate the [damage](#) done to US-Russian relations by the attack.

"We describe that attack as a flagrant violation of international law and an act of aggression," Safronkov said at an emergency session of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Friday.

This takes place just one week after the Trump administration [announced](#) that it would no longer seek to remove Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from power, claiming that the Obama administration missed the opportunity to do so. "There is a bit of political reality with respect to where we are now, and where we were in the last administration," Press Secretary Sean Spicer said at a briefing, adding that the US goal in Syria is now to defeat the Islamic State.

That didn't last long, as we're back again to the same mad scheme to overthrow the Syrian government. The prior administration flirted with the idea, but never fully it carried out—and for good reason. America's recent record with regime change is dismal, with the violent consequences of the US-led regime changes in Iraq and Libya still grinding on today.

The Obama administration, of course, *did* for some time arm and train Syrian rebels in an effort to hasten Assad's defeat, but never carried out a full-scale assault on the regime. This became especially difficult after direct Russian involvement began in the conflict in 2015, risking a confrontation between the world's two largest nuclear powers.

At one particularly crucial moment in the summer of 2013, however, President Obama did precisely what Trump just failed to do: he waited.

After a chemical weapons attack on rebel-held areas in Ghouta, a suburb east of Damascus, a chorus of outrage erupted from all quarters of respectable society to demand action against Assad. Obama had set down a "[red line](#)" in a 2012 speech, one year to the day before the Ghouta attack, which warned Assad that the use of chemical or biological weapons would trigger direct US action in Syria. That ultimatum contributed to the pressure exerted on the president in the wake of the attack.

John Kerry, then Secretary of State, in a speech soon after the incident claimed absolute certainty of the Assad regime's guilt. Kerry uttered the words "[We know...](#)" no less than 35 times in that speech—but he *didn't* know! Later revelations would cast serious doubts on the Assad regime's responsibility for the attack.

Carla del Ponte, a former Swiss attorney-general and member of the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria, [told](#) Swiss TV three months before the Ghouta attack that there were "strong, concrete suspicions but not yet incontrovertible proof" that the rebels were responsible for chemical weapons attacks in Syria, specifically the use of sarin gas.

Sarin was also allegedly used in the recent April 4 chemical attack in the town of Khan Sheikhun which prompted US retaliation Thursday.

Investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, in [two pieces](#) published in the *London Review of Books*, gives substantial evidence to suggest that the rebels carried out the Ghouta attack in order to cross Obama's "red line" and trigger US intervention against Assad. First, the conclusions of American intelligence agencies:

"In the months before the attack, the American intelligence agencies produced a series of highly classified reports, culminating in a formal Operations Order – a planning document that precedes a ground invasion – citing evidence that the al-Nusra Front, a jihadi group affiliated with al-Qaida, had mastered the mechanics of creating sarin and was capable of manufacturing it in quantity."

Hersh cites a high-level intelligence officer who said the attack "was not the result of the current regime" in Syria. (**CONTINUED ON PG. 3**)

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Another former senior intelligence official said that the Obama administration actually altered information “to enable the president and his advisers to make intelligence retrieved days after the attack look as if it had been picked up and analyzed in real time.”

A chemical weapons expert formerly of the Iraqi military, Ziyaad Tariq Ahmed, was also known by US intelligence to be affiliated with the al-Nusra Front rebel group and to be operating in Ghouta at the time, according to Hersh's [reporting](#). Tariq was regarded a high-profile target by the American military, and was suspected to be involved in the production of sarin.

Moreover, in spring of 2013, US intelligence learned that the Turkish government was working with al-Nusra, the Syrian al-Qaeda affiliate, to develop a chemical weapons capability. “Stepping up Turkey’s role in spring 2013 was seen as the key to its problems there,” another retired intelligence official told Hersh. “Erdoğan’s hope was to instigate an event that would force the US to cross the red line,” the former official said, referring to a rebel chemical attack which would be blamed on the regime. This would not be the first time Turkey would have considered covert intervention in Syria. In March of 2014 a leaked [recording](#) was publicized wherein high-level Turkish officials, including Turkey’s foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, are heard discussing an idea to stage an attack on the Tomb of Suleyman Shah, a shrine in Syria which by treaty is Turkish territory.

The staged attack would justify an escalation in Turkish involvement in the Syrian war. “We’re going to portray this [as] al-Qaeda,” Feridun Sinirlioğlu, a Turkish diplomat, said in the recordings ([translation](#) of the transcript). “There’s no distress there if it’s a matter regarding al-Qaeda. And if it comes to defending Suleiman Shah Tomb, that’s a matter of protecting our land.”

While the Obama administration maintained Assad's culpability in the Ghouta attack, instead of ordering military retaliation Obama struck a deal with Assad, brokered by the Russians, for Syria to hand over its entire chemical weapons stockpile. This was [completed](#) in the summer of 2014 to the [satisfaction](#) of the State Department. Until the April 4 gas attack, all indications were that Syria no longer possessed such weapons.

The former president's decision not to bomb may have had something to do with the ultimately flimsy case against Assad for the Ghouta attack. Then director of national intelligence James Clapper once even interrupted the president's daily intelligence briefing to tell him the Syrian intel was “[not a slam dunk](#)” (a [reference](#) to George Tenet, CIA director under the Bush administration, who vouched for faulty intelligence in the lead up to the Iraq War).

Obama, despite his public claims to the contrary, at some point may have concluded he simply did not have the evidence that would justify full-scale military action in Syria.

President Trump is now asserting the same level of certainty regarding the recent chemical attack that was put forth by the Obama administration in 2013. “There can be no dispute that Syria used banned chemical weapons,” Trump said at a briefing after the incident.

We’ve heard this before— not only in relation to Syria—and in this case the administration barely waited 48 hours before launching a bombing raid in retaliation, hardly enough time to conduct a thorough investigation. By April 6, the United Nations was still finalizing the [decision](#) to even *begin* a probe into the attack.

While the perpetrator of the sarin strike is yet unknown, there are at least some plausible reasons to be skeptical about Assad's responsibility.

Former CIA and DIA officer Phil Giraldi claims to have military and intelligence sources on the ground in Syria who tell him the Assad regime did not carry out the April 4 attack. “Apparently the intelligence on this is very clear,” Giraldi told radio host Scott Horton in an [interview](#). “People in both the [Central Intelligence] Agency and in the military who are aware of the intelligence are freaking out about this.”

Giraldi's sources say the Syrian military struck a cache of sarin gas controlled by the rebels in the town of Khan Sheikhun, an account also put forward by the Russians. “There was indeed an attack, but it was an attack with conventional weapons, with a bomb,” Giraldi said.

Another strange aspect of this incident is its timing. Assad would seemingly have little incentive to carry out such an attack just as the US announced its intention to abandon plans for regime change. Some commentators have suggested Assad was “testing” the Trump administration with a provocative act, but this seems a reckless gamble from which little could be gained.

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(*CONTINUED FROM P. 3*) Overall, the war in Syria has been [going well](#) for Assad, raising additional questions about motive. What tactical or strategic benefit could the use of chemical agents have for the regime at this point?

Fortunately, some lawmakers are voicing [skepticism](#) toward the administration's quick rush to judgment about the April 4 sarin attack, and some of Giraldi's sources said they would like to come forward publicly with what they know, but that may not be enough to prevent further military action against the Syrian regime.

At Friday's emergency UNSC session, Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley said more strikes were still on the table. "We are prepared to do more, but we hope it will not be necessary," Haley said. The Pentagon also said it was [investigating](#) the possibility of Russian complicity in the gas attack, ratcheting up tensions yet further.

In a dark irony, at least [nine civilians](#), including children, were killed in Thursday's attack, a barrage of nearly 60 Tomahawk missiles. It is a stark illustration of the futility of "humanitarian" intervention, where civilians must die for the sake of their own protection.

Welcome to the fifth term of the Bush administration; the swamp is here to stay.

[Will Porter is an independent journalist and contributor at antiwar.com]

THE MEDIA CHEERLEADERS OF WAR, BY MIKE MORRIS

If you're lucky enough to avoid television, you wouldn't have to bear the mainstream media's unrelenting, daily cheerleading for war. While it's all awful, garbage reporting, the Fox News barrage embodies the macho, hyper-masculinity of the military, and heartlessly adjust their voices to an enthusiastic tone of war when they get excited about the thought of ravaging others' lives.

They speak of the next war as if it's inevitable (and with states it is), and all we can do is prepare for it. War, to them, is a given—a cause everyone should be behind. They promote it like it's as simple as an upcoming anticipated victory by the local football team. They show bombings, dying children, maps of airfields they claim harbor enemy weapons, and try to get average citizens on board with their war-hype to get us sort of psychologically on the same page of world events.

Constant nuclear scares with North Korea are aired; Russophobia continues tension with our old Cold War enemy; alternative news sources like Wikileaks (and this one?) are "non-state hostile intelligence services" (according to Pompeo), and exposing state-crimes is painted as treasonous. Overall, endless fear mongering reigns throughout their programming, naming off every make-believe boogymen to justify their own existence.

They fervently speak of how weak and vulnerable the enemy is, and what a cakewalk it would be to stomp all over them; or how cool their war-toys are, showing off battleships cruising in looped videos, and the awesome powers of their state vs. the others, who would be "obliterated", "crushed", or "annihilated", or some other exaggerated word were they to face off with the U.S.A.

It's completely unashamed American exceptionalism. It's just fine when we bomb someone – and "we" is the whole mistaken view that the people are the same as "their" government – and it is terrorism when they do it. They're [Hannity] shouting, "America's Back!", "America's Back!" Apparently wars of aggression, intervening hegemonically around the world, inserting the Empire into every nook and cranny of the globe, etc., is "American." Would they know, as its so-called representatives, that if anything is "American" it would be non-interventionism, maintaining a peaceful civilian life, free-trade with other nations, opposition to standing armies, resistance to taxation, etc?

Pundits waste time arguing who's biased and who isn't, when *none of them are biased for liberty*. They're all statist of different stripes, disagreeing only on the minutiae of government operations, but proposing no principled opposition to its foundation. The State is taken for granted; "democracy" is a must-spread.

They speak of how innovative and advanced "we" are; the wasteful, wonderful things done with the property stolen from us; the refashioning of our money into bombs and bullets. One talking head at Fox, Greg Gutfeld, had the audacity to call the recent Afghanistan cave-bombings "beautiful." It's truly sickening to see these people get-off on war, as they clearly do, and to know that millions tune in to follow their take on foreign military activity. Any American rebelliousness has been replaced by unquestioned allegiance to the State. They say things like "we're going to find you, kill you, you can't hide, run." This militarized-talk is even used by local police departments, like the Lake County Sheriff's Office... (*CONTINUED ON P. 5*)

...has done in a recent video threatening drug users in Florida, which subsequently went viral for its showing of force fit for a police state.

Smaller local papers like the *Gazette* get in on it too. They report on events such as the Space Symposium last month and are completely comfortable pushing the same fallacious narratives as the statist and warmongers. As the *Gazette*'s Tom Roeder reports at the Space Symposium, "locals were buzzing about...how they could offer a financial boom in Colorado Springs." Here come the economic fallacies used to support the idea that taxing people and redistributing the funds to unprofitable "private" military-industrial companies "creates jobs" and makes us richer. So full of it they are.

The American Empire – if it ever *hasn't* been – looks to be ramping-up for war. Trump is showing that he's willing to make use of the military, as can be expected when you give a government monopoly powers over "defense," and that he has less tolerance for America's supposed enemies than his predecessor.

After dropping the largest non-nuclear conventional weapon in the U.S. arsenal—dubbed "the mother of all bombs" (MOAB)—for the first time on the already war-torn Afghanistan in what was said to be a persuasive demonstration to the regime controlling the northern part of the Korean Peninsula, President Trump said, to paraphrase, that "North Korea is a problem...and will be taken care of."

The exceptionalism is flagrant: "North Korea is a prison camp," but America must have no people locked in cages; Assad gassed his own people, but forget about U.S. use of Agent Orange or other chemicals; *they* killed a few babies, but forgot about the number of women and children killed by Americans in the past decade across the Middle East. Need I say more? We're given names, pictures, and stories about the fallen American soldiers to invoke anger; the foreigners remain the nameless, of lesser value than the American lives lost in the alleged "fight for freedom."

It's the U.S. Government committing these atrocities, not the American people—the hapless taxpayer who is forced to participate in wars he finds unjust. What we're seeing is the "blowback" of U.S. foreign policy: the creation of terrorists around the world, others who are tired of being punked around by the U.S., etc. The only way out of the mess is to stop military-interventionism around the world, but such remains their solution to preserving the Empire's reach and domination.

The deep state appears in panic that the public isn't buying into their lies anymore. The new CIA Director, Mike Pompeo, nominated by Trump, spoke to reaffirm that the CIA is *not* an agency that engages in its own agenda, such as foreign regime change, but one that has the American people's interests in mind; they should have their hearts too, because they're the good guys.

As Pompeo blasts Julian Assange in his first speech (against free-speech) to the public as CIA Director, saying he is "not the slightest bit interested in improving civil liberties or enhancing personal freedom," *as if they are*, seemingly everyone's an enemy of the State. They're trying hard to maintain an image different than the popular, accurate depictions of these agencies as unchecked, legalized murderers. He tells us, "regardless of what you see on the silver screen, we do not pursue covert action on a whim without approval..."

"I know there will always be skeptics and we need to build trust in them," Pompeo said, also citing the Office of Inspector General as something that reigns them in. But we all know, there are no "checks and balances" in government. The once relatively-limited executive branch has become a "murder dispensary," as my friend Pete calls it, intent on operating outside of the system that supposedly imposes boundaries on their power.

Pompeo, like others, thinks we're doing these things in the "national interest," "just doing our jobs." They appear concerned their credibility is being damaged, knowing they exist solely because the people tolerate it, so paint the Mannings, Assanges, and Snowdens of the world as traitors deserving of capital punishment.

But there is some hope. Evidenced by the comment sections of local police departments across the country, the tides might be turning on their unchecked legitimacy as monopolists who have a special right to rule us. People that aren't even ideologically motivated libertarians who hold specific principles of liberty can be seen denouncing their crimes through their own common sense logic toward the absurdities of caging men for any number of laws growing on the books daily.

Governments rule by fear and must instill that fear in their subjects to stay afloat—since all states require at least passive public approval. Hence the fearful reaction of "but without government..." as a seemingly natural reflex among the slaves. Peaceniks long for a day when government struggles to maintain its perceived essentiality among the public. To some extent, it's happening.

IS MORALITY ABSOLUTE OR RELATIVE?, ARTICLE BY "GNED THE GNOME"

Religious conservatives and liberals often argue over whether morality is absolute (universal) or relative. Conservatives believe that morality can only come from their favorite religion, which must be accepted 100% or else the world degenerates into hopeless global immorality and chaos, which then justifies the conservatives' use of force to "save" civilization. Many liberals believe that there are no objective or universal moral principles, that anything goes and it's all a matter of individual choice. This justifies anything, including the conservatives' paranoia, reinforcing the vicious circle.

How do we resolve these conflicting positions and avoid falling into more worldwide holy war?

Very simple - as often happens, both sides are partially right. There is a very small absolute core of Universal Common Law aka Natural Law aka Objective Law, which consists of the *musts* (actually the *must nots*). The rest of the various "moral" principles proposed by different religions, cultures, nations, etc. are all relative and are just a matter of cultural beliefs and norms; these are only *shoulds*, not *musts*. Conservatives don't know the difference; they can't even distinguish between God's Law (the *musts*) and man's law (the *shoulds*). They think that to save the world they must convert everyone at gunpoint and force them to follow all the laws of their religion. In forcing their *shoulds* (their laws) upon everyone else, they are violating the *musts* (God's Law). They are thus supporting "Satan" (coercion) and rejecting God.

Liberals simply need to learn that there are some things (like stealing) which are inherently and objectively wrong (the *must nots*), regardless of what people think. This should be easy for them to agree to in exchange for no longer having anyone's *shoulds* imposed upon them.

So, what are these absolute, universal core principles of Universal Common Law, the *musts*?

1. The Non-Aggression Principle (NAP): Do not initiate force or fraud upon anyone else's person or property.
2. The Equal Rights Principle (ERP): We all have equal Inherent Rights, no privileged classes, no Divine Right of Kings.
3. The Individual Sovereignty Principle (ISP): We each have the right to do whatever we want as long as we do not violate NAP or ERP; and, individuals create organizations (including governments) and endow them with specified limited privileges, not the other way around; such organizations do NOT have Inherent Rights.

Inherent Rights can only be Negative Rights, not Positive Rights. That is, you are not obligated to do anything good for me, but you must not do anything bad to me. Positive Rights must be obtained by consent as Contract Rights, e.g. by purchase, barter, or other arrangement. Thus, the right to Life can only be properly understood as a Negative Right - I cannot force you to provide me with food, health insurance, shelter, or anything else I need to live; I can only insist that you must not murder me.

That's the gist of it. Much more detail is at <http://nap.nfshost.com> and there's an email link for comments, feedback, etc. There's room for improvement, so I'd really appreciate constructive suggestions by those who really understand and agree with these Principles. Thank you.

["Gned the Gnome" is an activist in the libertarian/patriot community in Colorado Springs and Texas.]

***"THE RIGHT TO PRIVATE PROPERTY IS AN INDISPUTABLY VALID, ABSOLUTE PRINCIPLE OF ETHICS AND THE BASIS FOR CONTINUOUS 'OPTIMAL' ECONOMIC PROGRESS. TO RISE FROM THE RUINS OF SOCIALISM AND OVERCOME THE STAGNATION OF THE WESTERN WELFARE STATES, NOTHING WILL SUFFICE BUT THE UNCOMPROMISING PRIVATIZATION OF ALL SOCIALIZED, THAT IS, GOVERNMENT, PROPERTY AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONTRACTUAL SOCIETY BASED ON THE RECOGNITION OF THE ABSOLUTENESS OF PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS."* - HANS-HERMANN HOPPE**

TAXATION MEANS WAR, BY MIKE MORRIS

Well, not war in the sense that the people are finally fed up with their compulsory contributions to the death-cult that is the U.S. Government, but in that aggressively-appropriated tax-funds are likely to go toward further aggressive uses.

Giving an institution built on aggression and invasion of property rights the sole legal authority to steal, which is accurately the definition of the State—a territorial monopolist of force—will lead to an expansion and concentration of power, as we have witnessed in this failed, though perhaps noble, utopian American experiment in “limited-government.”

As Murray Rothbard has said, “government is inherently inflationary.” Give government all the guns, and they will point them at you. Give central banks the power to make money with their monopoly over it, and they will do just that.

If all our taxes were paid directly from our checks, or better yet, a check you had to write to the government at the end of the year, it’s unlikely that our tolerance would be as high as they’ve gotten away with anyway. Therefore they utilize the old trick of inflation to get us with the more insidious and illusory inflation-tax, where rather than needing to tax us from income withholding, they create money from thin air and steal resources from the economy anyway for themselves.

Money is no exception to the laws of supply and demand though, in which an increase in the supply (the definition of inflation) will lower the price of money. An increase in money units thus raises money-prices, i.e., lowers the purchasing power of money in regard to other goods and services in the economy.

The U.S. government is now unrestrained in how much resources it wishes to rob from the private markets, of which production is for consumer needs, and redirect and divert those resources toward building up the war machine.

It is the very purpose of taxation to produce things (for government purposes) that we otherwise might not voluntarily fund, such as Trump’s call to increase the U.S. nuclear arsenal, of which I believe a fraction of the supply could obliterate mankind.

One rejection of a market for defense is that it would be provided in insufficient quantity. We must have a State to decree, violently, what it is we must pay for our own protection. Only collectivists who believe production should be in the name of “society”, i.e., for the State’s ends, would anyone wish to take away the ends of individual’s subjective preferences. Stating that no one would supply these people with as much resources, i.e., million-dollar tomahawk cruise missiles, if not coerced is an argument against statism.

Others are foolish enough to say things like “we should be able to choose where our tax dollars go”, without realizing, precisely, that achieving this would be no taxation whatever; everyone decides, voluntarily, how they wish to use their property; the engage in the..

..democracy of the market; “voting with their dollars”, so to speak.

Thus, it’s much easier to make war when you can externalize the costs onto the taxpaying public; much harder when the losses are your own. Hence why a stateless society would mean less, not more, war. It is the difference between conjectural bandit gangs and the absolute genocides and prolonged conflicts seen between states.

As anyone should be able to see at this point, the DOD is an outright gang of aggression. It should have been called the Department of Offense long ago.

Creating enemies are the world, refugee crises, etc., all serve to make us *insecure*; the plundering of resources, and “lost” money by the Pentagon make us poorer; the military’s consumption of capital, yet production of nothing in return for those resources, serves to make us poorer as a whole.

If the service of defense was beholden to market forces, like profit and loss, supply and demand, etc., rather than being a coercive monopoly and provision of the State, then there’s much greater chance that people would find it intolerable and cancel their support and membership for it. Such is not a possibility under the State to boycott it.

As of now, hapless taxpayers like myself, who are threatened with violence and cages should we resist funding their wars, are unable to discontinue payments once we see how the “defense” department uses such funds. I won’t even begin to list the atrocities of the U.S. Military. Needless to say they are many.

Reports on the recent strike in Syria, killing children, for instance, would not be condoned (at least by me), and less likely conducted, security were private.

So, being horrified upon seeing children being sprayed with water after being attacked with chemical weapons, as the news dramatically showed, and with a narrative all ready to go that it was President Bashar-al Assad against his own people (think: the accusations of Saddam Hussein and WMDs which justified the Iraq invasion in 2003; or the instant blame on Osama Bin Laden for the September, 11th attacks which he denied), Trump called in an airstrike which is already reporting civilian casualties, including children.

The same disgusting, vile, warmongering neocons - from Sean Hannity, Bill O’Reilly, John McCain, etc. - have been on the tube since I was a teen now. Hannity exclaims proudly that “America’s back”, to refer to the President shedding blood; an old pastime tradition of his predecessors, I suppose. I guess Obama’s 26,000+ bombs-dropped in 2016 wasn’t good enough for the warhawks; “we” need to step up our game and spread the our military hegemony even further.

The supposed Party of “small government” is about growing the military, and has been for some time. There is no more anti-war, anti-New Deal “Old Right”, but they’ve accepted the whole government package at this point, from Social Security to the socialist military.

As long as there are states, and territorially large ones at that which have more resources to exploit, there will be a tendency to make war and limit liberties.

Of course we must ask: why do states get to go ungoverned? Why do they get to be anarchists but not us? Thus, the logical conclusion of centralization in general is to have a world government. If one doesn't find that terrifying, and the end of humanity (though, some environmentalists might think it will be the protection of Earth at last), then I have no words for you. And if they don't think we should have a world government, why do they stop at national borders in their decentralization? Why not decentralize as far as possible, down to the individual?

The centralization of power needs to be reversed for a total decentralization. Anyone on board with that, if not accepting anarchist conclusions, is an ally in the ideological battle to beat back the rise of statism. Starting with regions, onward to cities and neighborhoods, we could achieve individual liberty.

As our columnist Will Porter believes, and is the position of many prominent libertarians, war is the primary issue to oppose as it is in war which the State goes stronger and domestic liberties are taken away at home, and in which a reversal in the post-war peacetime almost never comes; it even gives us the centrally-planned state like the programs of the New Deal seen in the interwar period, or the post-9/11 surveillance state we live in today.

So while I meant taxation means war in the sense that people who are able to tax will build powerful militaries with the funds, and use this armies to stand over us, taxation should mean war on our end too: that we resist the slavery that is taxation and stop aiding, though involuntarily, the crimes of the U.S. government.

If the service of defense was beholden to market forces, like profit and loss, supply and demand, etc., rather than being a coercive monopoly and provision of the State, then there's much greater chance that people would find aggression intolerable, and the aggressors would be out of business.

I'd submit that all defense spending would be just that in a market for security: *defense* spending. With a State such as the U.S., it's always preparation for another blunder overseas.

While it's true we need to secure property rights as a prerequisite for economic prosperity and personal liberty, it does not logically follow that it must be monopolistic. We see where this has gone: from a "limited government" experiment to the biggest State the world has ever seen; an Empire of unprecedented, epic proportions that threatens the world-over, including its own citizens. We see today, a century that was dominated by the casual-correlated existence of central-banking and total-war; one that replaced gold, a restraint on their revenue-growth, with permanently-depreciated paper-monies states use to expand their budgets, debts, and military excursions.

[Mike Morris makes The Voluntaryist happen]

[QUESTIONS TO A PRAXEOLOGIST]

THE VOLUNTARYIST: What is the significance of emphasizing that our subjective preferences are ordinal and not cardinal?

JESSICA CARSWELL: It means that you can't make interpersonal utility comparisons and therefore can't objectively prove that any forced exchange or redistribution is for the "common good". To do that, you'd have to be able to measure total utility: i.e. utility gained minus utility lost. To measure, utility would have to be cardinal.

It also explains why people exchange. Because each party ranks the goods or services received more than the goods given up. Which has implications on where prices come from - that it's subjective value, not some "objective" or inherent value that set prices.

The fact that you can't make interpersonal utility comparisons is basically the case against the state in its entirety. Even if you want it to do "good" things through violent intervention/redistribution, you can't prove objectively that these things are "good" overall.

You might personally believe that it's "moral" to steal from the very rich to help the very poor, or to violate someone's rights to some small extent to prevent a severely bad outcome (e.g. borrowing a gun against a person's will to prevent a mass murder). But you can't prove objectively or scientifically that by doing so you are achieving a common good outcome. These are win-lose cases and you can't objectively measure the win against the lose to ascertain whether you have a positive net outcome.

THE VOLUNTARYIST: Beautiful response which basically refutes socialism and the labor theory of value in short order. So, to get it straight, viewing rankings as cardinal would allow for a sort of utilitarian common-good justification for theft in seeing Person A valued his 1st-ranked preference only 1.1x more than the 2nd, and so therefore it would be just and moral, and not a loss of "social utility", then, to transfer this to Person B who supposedly values it more, and therefore this is why preferences must be seen as ordinal - 1st, 2nd, 3rd - as opposed to 1st being valued 1.5x more than the 2nd, and so forth? Is that a way to put it?

JESSICA CARSWELL: Yeah basically cardinal utility would allow for some kind of objective measurement. Ordinal does not.

It's not an assumption. Preferences *are* ordinal.

COLLECTIVIST COMRADES
MARCH THE SPRINGS, MIKE
MORRIS

Since Trump has taken office, socialists of all types have taken to the streets of the Springs for various causes. Among the accurate military - megachurch - ultra-conservative - image Colorado Springs retains can be found ponds of leftism, too.

A few groups in town are Colorado Springs Socialists, comprised of revolutionary Marxists; Colorado Springs Antifa, the “anarcho communists” who associate with them; Unite Colorado Springs, the progressives; and Showing Up for Racial Justice; etc.

They’re mad too, but one must be careful as such groups often offer as a solution many of the *causes* to our very problems: statism. Their idea of justice, as well as the conception of liberty, for any of these groups is opposite the libertarian conception of both; and is that of having the [positive] “right” to other people’s property, rather than to be *free from* such aggression. “Justice” is when we *aren’t* free to exclude people from our property (discriminate) and our private lives as we see fit; or when people are punished for the non-crime of tax-evasion; liberty is when “rights are guarantees” to other people’s property (as Bernie Sanders puts it) to be provided by government, rather than the freedom *from* giving up your property to government. Freedom is slavery — you know the rest.

They hopelessly ask for justice from a monopolist state, which economic theory tells us will rise in price and deteriorate in quality over time. Like Keynesian central bankers attempt with economic magic tricks, they ask of statism something it will never deliver.

They can’t be trusted with these words. “Progress” is when there’s *more* violations of property rights than last year; when there are *more* taxes, *more* regulations, and *more* crony government. Additionally, “social-justice” exceeds questioning the State in importance.

It is no wonder we are in conflict: millions of many preferences are forced to accept the rule of one centralized government. But we’ve almost forgotten that’s why. “Social justice” issues, that place transgender bathrooms rights above criticizing the more heinous actions of states, shows the problem.

Just as the anti-immigration crowd wants to use *government* to restrict immigration when it’s in that government’s interest to come at the expense of nations, cultures, tribes, families, and destroy liberty, most remain proponents of *more* government.

Since the “*Hands Off Syria*” protest put on by *Unite CS* was pertinent to the issue of Trump bombing Syria, we decided to go down too, wishing to join the anti-war chorus, ourselves holding signs reading “the U.S. Government is a death cult.” Rather than talk to us, we were instead immediately treated as enemies.

A few voluntarists including myself were standing ahead of the protesters before they crossed the street, who were made up in large part by covered-faced “anarcho communists” waving their black and red flag. We kept our message simple, which one would think they’d have found unobjectionable.

They however were instantly triggered upon seeing us, eerily giving up their sheep-like group-chant to frame us as “fascists” (which defined by them is anything they don’t like, which is everything). “*Good-night, alt-right!*”, they repeated to drown-out anything we had to say, somehow equating us as fascists for holding a “taxation is theft” sign, to which they shoved us for when verbalizing. Would they know National Socialism *was* socialism, and not capitalism, which is a *lack of political authority*?

The tension was the sentiment of the population, also seen in punk subculture: national socialism bad, *international* socialism good. Che Guevara and Hammer and Sickles are acceptable and cool; Hitler paraphernalia and we stomp your skull in. (Many “Antifa” are punks).

I am not apologizing for the former, but pointing out the double standard. While our utmost cause is individual liberty, nationalism is preferable to communism or a world government; many countries *are* preferable to a single, global one. They think Bernie Sanders’ are preferable to Ron Paul’s, though.

An [online manual](#) on forming a local Antifa group says “most activists are anarchist, although a few are Maoist...the movement is predominantly Marxist.” Maoists!? That’s too funny to even rebut. But we, the people who want collectivists to leave us alone, are the fascists, right? Got it.

Funny the “anti-fascist anarchists” hang out with the *socialists* in an “alliance of the left in Colorado Springs”, as the Colorado Springs Socialists have called for. If a democrat’s idea for what they want to do to a population are for those under a specific state’s territory (as Bernie Sanders is not offering free education to the world), and not those outside it, how is this not *national* socialism? The New Deal, widely hailed and cited as a leftist success against the market they think caused the Depression, was essentially America’s National Socialism, i.e., fascism. At best, the U.S. is a severely hampered market economy; at worst, it’s fascist. We agree. But it certainly isn’t the bastion of capitalism it’s thought to be, as they repeatedly speak of it as.

While there is the recent rise of the so-called “alt-Right” upon Trump’s entry, who even claim libertarianism at times, there appears a resurgence of the radical, discontent, violent anti-capitalist left, no longer contained to the big cities known for it. Though Trump supporters and right-wing socialism should be found intolerable too, they appear as well intolerant and hostile to any ideas outside their own, though holding no real principles; and despite maintaining the contrary as an inclusive, diverse bunch. As with us, they persistently demonstrate their unwillingness to engage in reasonable argumentation, opting for yelling things instead.

Though our confrontation lasted only a minute, and we briefly found common ground against the Syrian bombing, the purpose of their march, the leftists have once again shown their adversity to being reasonable, principled people. You'd think anarcho-socialists would be serious about an alliance with anti-statists, but they opt to ally with statists over voluntaryists who would actually give them the worker-coops they dream of. If the anti-war Left is back post-Obama, then libertarians might be open to an alliance on those grounds. But the emotional left doesn't wish to debate; "you don't debate fascists, you smash them", they would say.

They couldn't converse with us for one minute without being ridiculous. They're consumed by necessarily superficial issues, like race, gender, equality, etc., which although of importance, don't strike at the root of our problems.

The funniest chant hurled our way was that "capitalism has killed millions." (Nevermind the 100 million of communist regimes) When asked "how?", we were met with a firm "fuck you!"

I don't know how the capitalism that we don't have can kill people. Again, I think they mean *statism*. It's governments that murder and lay waste, not "capitalism" (though they think the two are one and the same). The term is democide: death by government. See: 20th Century.

After they passed, others standing around thanked us for offering them arguments and responses, and for remaining non-violent throughout their surrounding show of force and designation of us as Nazis.

If there is an alliance to be had among voluntaryists and those calling themselves "Antifa", who are supposedly for "voluntary socialism", I'm not seeing it on their part. The political-Right is undoubtedly authoritarian (the neocons wants war right now!), forever praising military and apologizing for police for putting the boot in on us, a lot of our ideological opposition, and protest-street-level violence, still comes from the Left.

I personally don't care if an aggression-based doctrine is left or right-wing. Maybe some do? The nationalist Right and the Marxist Left are both foes of liberty in my mind, as they have been before.

The anarcho-communist despises private property more than the State (incorrectly seeing the two as one and the same), and for this reason they're directly opposed to anarcho-libertarians. They seem to hate the State only because they think it's capitalist.

To contrast our ideas (*no one has a right to aggress against another*) with theirs (rights as positive), the uncontroversial libertarian position is straightforward: It is the philosophy that (1) you own yourself, your body; that (2) as such you have the right to own physical property which you homesteaded, produced, exchanged for, or originally appropriated (and this is where property rights come from); and therefore (3) the economic right to trade titles to property and live a life free of aggression. That's what liberty is. No statist, nor "anarcho" communist, may rightfully deprive you of these human-property rights.

But apparently liberty is too much for the collectivist to understand. "Human rights are *property rights*", another sign we held. Everything else is aggression and slavery. Again, though, we're the "fascists."

Fascism is statist. There is no libertarian-fascist alliance. If this charge were true I take part unwittingly. I follow principles, not people; and it's the principles of liberty I hold with conviction. What guiding, universal, eternal principles do they have? I know of none.

We libertarians don't want to be paying for their wars *either*. If only we could convince socialists that no one should be forced to pay for *anything*, even if they deem it a good cause, then we'd be on the same page.

They think they're fringe, and against the mainstream, but they're not. Marxist are not outliers; they're in the safe-zone among the masses duped into "democratic socialism" in the universities.

CSS appear made up of white, well-dressed hipsters that are better off than most, likely hailing from huge homes, who meet in private bars and restaurants to hold their comrade gatherings denouncing private property and bourgeois culture. They come from UCCS, from what is probably a subsidized "education." They indulge in all the things they supposedly oppose. 23 different bars to go to is fine, but 23 different deodorants is too many. Hopefully while white college-kid socialists push their message, others are losing faith in socialism.

I would reckon that, being more individualistic, and less heard-like as are they, libertarians are simply not as organized as the leftists are. Their voice in the street has no doubt been a loud one.

Democracy's divisiveness has us arguing over petty, secondary issues rather than to become united against the State. The March for Trump's Tax Return, hosted by *Unite CS*, illustrates the simplicity of their struggles. How about, instead of asking Trump to reveal his taxes, we stage a *tax rebellion*? Or the "March For Science" which proposes continued subsidies, and ignoring *economic science*. How about: March for Economic Freedom?

Both parties to these petty street battles give further justification for the rise of statism; and liberty loses, just how they want it. The increased social conflict witnessed today is caused by government, which both sides necessarily advocate for.

The Left doesn't want to live under Trump; the Right doesn't want to live with Leftists. Neither should have to. The libertarian solution is to decentralize; to get a political divorce and go our separate ways.

I can't help think "privatize all property", and end the politicization of our lives, when I see our streets have devolved into shouting matches between people who could be trading goods and services instead. I confess: when I see socialized police, Trump supporters, and leftist Antifa-types all hanging out on "public property", I don't know who I hate more.

— WHAT IS VOLUNTARYISM? —

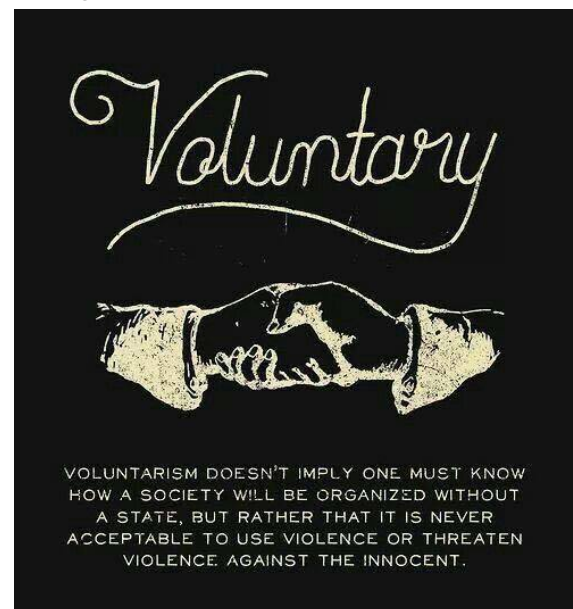
[Voluntaryism is a political philosophy which states that the initiation of violence against people or property, i.e. aggression, is never morally justified, and recognizes that such aggression is the very foundation of the State. In each issue we will look to the philosophy's adherents to answer the question "What is Voluntaryism?"]

The English lexicon is filled with words that end in -ism: Capitalism, socialism, communism, fascism, and statism are but a few. The suffix, "ism," refers to a doctrine, belief system, or ideology, and in the cases above refers to politico-economic systems. Of those five, perhaps "statism" is the least familiar due to its relatively new appearance in the glossary of popular culture. Just as capitalism is the opposite of communism, voluntaryism is the opposite of statism. A statist, or one who subscribes to statism, holds to the worldview that the State, which is that institution with the monopoly over the legitimate use of force and violence, is necessary. Voluntaryists challenge this assumption, proposing instead that, given the opportunity, all services and goods can be produced, exchanged, and consumed by voluntary means.

If you believe economic transactions are already voluntary, consider this: Federal Reserve Notes (i.e. the U.S. dollar) constitute half of every economic transaction, and the same federal government that granted the Federal Reserve a monopoly over the dollar requires individuals to enter into a contract with it and its Internal Revenue Service if we wish to sell or purchase labor. That is to say, try working over the table, legitimately, without paying your taxes. You cannot do it, at least not for long and without consequence. The basic assumption of statism is that government, in some shape or form, is necessary to provide public goods and services. Statists will usually argue that, at the very least, government is needed to provide for roads, education, and a common defense. The U.S. Constitution aside, if these goods and services are valuable, then there will be a demand for them, and if there is a demand, then entrepreneurs will rise to meet that demand. So, for what do we need government?

Voluntaryism is the belief that human beings can and should base our societies on the non-aggression principle, which states that force, violence, and coercion can never be initiated legitimately (and the same goes for fraud). Religious and spiritual teachings throughout history and across the world support this belief. Kindergarteners are taught to not hit and to not take things that do not belong to them. Voluntaryism is not utopian, it is based on common sense and a basic ethic that can be understood by everyone: Every individual should be free to live a life without the fear of violence and theft. What is government if not an institution based upon violence and theft? To operate, it requires revenue, but it is unproductive. The taxes funding its operation are taken with the threat of violence, and those same taxes are often used to fund violent, destructive operations. Voluntaryism promotes peaceful, productive relations, and, for reasons stated above, is preferable to other politico-economic ideologies in that dispute resolutions do not come at the barrel of a gun, but rather are achieved through mutually agreed upon contracts that fully cognizant, rational human beings voluntarily agree to and abide by (or else).

[Richard Ellefritz, PhD, Visiting Assistant Professor, Oklahoma State University, Sociology Department, Murray 413]



WILSON'S WAR AND ITS LEGACY,

ESSAY BY WILL PORTER

It has been nearly a century since the end of the First World War. While the conflict receives less attention and glamorization in Hollywood and popular culture than its successor, it is arguably the most significant event of the twentieth century, setting the stage for a myriad of other conflicts and upheavals in the years following the war. In Europe, the Middle East, East Asia, and Africa, the Great War would have far-reaching consequences that continue to shape the modern world. Woodrow Wilson—in the form of the direct and indirect consequences of his actions as president, as well as his broader ideological influence—owns a legacy of warfare and militarism that afflicts our country to this day.

J.P. Morgan and Other Pro-War Business Interests

Wilson won the 1916 presidential election on a platform of neutrality in the war that was then raging in Europe, a position reflected in American public opinion at the time. Indeed, Wilson maintained a position of non-intervention for some time, declaring in a 1914 message to Congress that the United States “must be neutral in fact as well as in name” and “impartial in thought as well as in action” in the war. “It is a war with which we have nothing to do, whose causes cannot touch us,” he said in another speech just after the conflict began.

This would not last, however, as Wilson betrayed his promises and entered the war in 1917. A combination of Wilson's own partiality to the British, the Lusitania incident, pressures from a coterie of influential pro-war businessmen, and the advice of Wilson's closest advisor, “Colonial” Edward Mandell House, would all contribute to the president's decision to enter the war. Among the most influential of those wealthy business interests was J.P. Morgan—the corporate financier, industrialist, and railroad magnate—and his numerous partners and associates. Morgan's influence would be significant in crafting U.S. foreign policy during the First World War.

Wilson himself had personal connections to the Morgan empire, sitting on the board of the Morgan-controlled Mutual Life Insurance Company, and had received favors from the wealthy financier and others in the Morgan ambit. William Gibbs McAdoo, Wilson's son-in-law who would later serve as his Treasury Secretary, was bailed out by Morgan as a failing businessman in New York. With Morgan's help, McAdoo would be set up as president of the Hudson and Manhattan railway until his appointment in the Wilson administration. A main sponsor of Wilson's election campaign, moreover, was George W. Harvey, head of the Morgan-financed Harpers and Brothers Publishing Company (Rothbard 17).

At a time of major decline in America's highly subsidized railroad industry, Morgan's several dozen railroad companies were beginning to lose money. This slump may have provided the impetus for Morgan to get involved in the war effort, as it offered great potential for financial gain. Soon after the war began, Morgan would secure his position as the monopoly underwriter for French and British war bonds in the United States, and became the

fiscal agent for the Bank of England, the British central bank. Morgan was also heavily involved in financing American munitions, and would become the chief organizer of French and British war purchases. Between 1915 and 1917, J.P. Morgan's export department negotiated over \$3 billion in contracts to the two Allied nations (Rothbard 18).

In December of 1914, the National Security League (NSL) was established, a nonprofit institution that, in addition to denouncing opponents of the war as “traitors” and “spies,” advocated U.S. entry into the war, conscription, and a large military buildup. Headed up by a who's-who of establishment business interests, the NSL would be influential in lobbying Wilson to get involved in the conflict. The NSL's leading figures included Morgan partners George W. Perkins and Robert Bacon; Simon and Daniel Guggenheim of the wealthy copper family; Henry Clay Frick of Carnegie Steel; munitions producer T. Coleman DuPont; Judge Gary of U.S. Steel; Henry L. Stimson, a protégé of Eli Root, Morgan's personal attorney; former president Theodore Roosevelt; and, of course, J.P. Morgan himself (Rothbard 20).

The aforementioned Edward House, who was not really a colonel and who never held any official position in the Wilson administration, also helped greatly to guide Wilson into the war. House, an Anglophile and Wilson's most intimate confidant, even advised British Prime Minister Arthur Balfour to exaggerate England's difficulties in the war in order to put pressure on Wilson to enter the conflict (Rothbard 21). “Secretly defying the President, House uncritically supported Britain's war effort,” wrote historian Justus Doenecke in his book *Nothing Less Than War: A New History of America's Entry Into World War I*. “More significantly, he committed his nation, under certain conditions, to enter the conflict on the Allied side” (Doenecke 302).

Making the World Safe for Democracy?

The First World War was a horrifying display of mass murder and human suffering, an early demonstration of the destructive potential of modern weaponry. In the first three months of the war, Britain's army was nearly wiped out. The German and British governments kept their casualty figures under wraps; they were too excessive to share with the public (Zinn 78).

In one battle during the summer of 1916, British General Douglas Haig ordered 11 divisions, or around 110,000 men, to leave their trenches and storm the German line. Twenty-thousand men were killed in that offensive, and 40,000 wounded. In early 1917, Haig would be promoted to Field Marshall (Zinn 79).

By the spring of 1916, the French military was plagued by mutinies; the soldiers were no longer willing to fight and die en masse. Out of 112 divisions, mutinies would occur in 68 of them (Zinn 80).

The battles of the Somme and Verdun, each resulting in nearly 1 million casualties, perhaps best illustrate the colossal waste of life and wealth of this war. This should...

...have been the only reason necessary to keep American boys out of the conflict, but Wilson effectively chose to serve big business and British imperial interests over those of the American people.

The president would devise a rationale for the war based on the protection of democracy and freedom, but this cannot stand up to the most basic scrutiny. Most of the Allied powers—among them Britain, France, Russia, and Belgium—were, in fact, *not* democracies, but repressive imperial and colonial states, many with poor human rights records. Belgium's King Leopold II, for example, instituted a reign of terror in the Congo that killed up to 8 million Congolese, nearly half of the country's population.

"[I]n a very real sense Africa is a prime cause of this terrible overturning of civilization which we have lived to see," wrote sociologist and historian W.E.B. Du Bois in a May 1915 article in the *Atlantic Monthly* (Zinn 82). Du Bois explained that the war had its roots in the imperial ambitions of both the Allied and Central Powers. This was no war for democracy.

Moreover, even the United States at this time was not a paragon of freedom, especially after America's entry into the conflict. In direct violation of the U.S. constitution, harsh measures were taken against opponents of the war.

Some conscientious objectors were deemed "insincere" by a Board of Inquiry established by then Secretary of War, Newton Baker, and military tribunals sentenced 17 to death, 142 to life in prison, and 345 to forced labor in penal camps (Shenk 62).

In June of 1917, Congress passed the Espionage Act. The law ostensibly prohibited spying, but it contained a clause which threatened to impose up to 20 years in prison upon "Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty in the military or naval forces [...] or shall willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the U.S...." (Zinn 85).

Two months after the bill was signed into law, a man named Charles Schenck was arrested in Philadelphia for distributing pamphlets that criticized the war and conscription, describing them as unconstitutional and "a monstrous deed against humanity in the interests of the financiers of Wall Street." Schenck was sentenced to only six months in jail, but others would face much harsher penalties (Zinn 85).

In 1918, socialist leader Eugene Debs was also arrested on the basis of the Espionage Act for speaking out against the war. "Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder," Debs said in the speech that got him arrested. "And that is war in a nutshell. The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles..." (Zinn 87).

Debs was sentenced to 10 years in prison, but would serve 32 months before he was pardoned by President Warren Harding in 1921. In the meantime, Debs ran for president from his cell as "Prisoner 9653" and received nearly 1 million votes.

Some 2,000 people would be prosecuted under the Espionage Act, 900 of them imprisoned (Zinn 88). *The New York Times* and other prominent American newspapers helped to repress wartime dissent, urging readers to report seditious speech to the government (Zinn 90).

Anarchist writer and speaker Emma Goldman sums up the absurdity of the idea that America could wage a war for the sake of democracy:

"Verily, poor as we are in democracy how can we give of it to the world? [...] [A] democracy conceived in the military servitude of the masses, in their economic enslavement, and nurtured in their tears and blood, is not a democracy at all. It is despotism..." (Zinn 93).

Goldman would be arrested for her opposition to the draft, and she was ultimately deported to Russia in 1919.

A Chain of Events

With the help of Edward House, a committee of scholars and historians known as "the Inquiry" was secretly established in late 1917 to craft the post-war settlement in Europe. The Inquiry's recommendations shaped the Versailles Treaty, which would impose economy-wrecking war reparations and dismember the territories of the Central Powers (Rothbard 22).

Economist and historian Murray Rothbard summarizes the far-reaching consequences of U.S. intervention in the Great War and the Versailles Treaty:

"American entry into World War I in April 1917 prevented negotiated peace between the warring powers, and drove the Allies forward into a peace of unconditional surrender and dismemberment, a peace which, as we have seen, set the stage for World War II. American entry thus cost countless lives on both sides, caused chaos and disruption throughout Central and Eastern Europe at war's end, and the consequent rise of Bolshevism, fascism, and Nazism to power in Europe. In this way, Woodrow Wilson's decision to enter the war may have been the single most fateful action of the twentieth century, causing untold and unending misery and destruction. But Morgan profits were expanded and assured" (Rothbard 23).

For several years before American involvement, neither side had any obvious advantage; the conflict was stalemated (Powell). Without U.S. intervention, it is possible, even likely, that the warring powers would have been forced into negotiation. Instead, the consequences of a decisive Allied victory not only created the ideal political and economic conditions in Germany for the rise of the Nazi Party, but also planted the seeds for upheaval in the Middle East with the establishment of the French and British Mandates and the territory-divvying Sykes-Picot agreement.

The Nazis came to power in 1933 and within a few years the Second World War was on, which, in brief, would result in an empowered Soviet Union. That would be the impetus for the next series of American wars and interventions: the Cold War.

Despite its moniker, the Cold War was very hot. Beginning in 1949 in Syria, the U.S. government embarked on a decades-long crusade of covert regime change operations for the sake of fighting communism (i.e. for "democracy") and other geopolitical objectives. From 1949 to the fall of the U.S.S.R., the U.S. carried out or attempted no less than 40 regime change operations abroad, often resulting in years of violence and political turmoil in the affected countries. China from 1949 to the early 1960s; Albania from 1949–1953; Iran in 1953; Guatemala in 1954; Costa Rica in the mid-1950s; Syria (again) from 1956–1957; Egypt in 1957; Indonesia from 1957–1958; Iraq in 1963; North Vietnam from 1945–1973; Cambodia from...

...1955–1970; Laos in 1958, 1959, and 1960; Ecuador from 1960–1963. The list goes on and on, and it continues to grow (Blum).

Indeed, the Cold War stopped in 1991, but the Cold Warriors didn't. One particularly war-happy group is known as the "neoconservatives," a movement originally comprised of former anti-Stalin leftists and Trotskyites-turned-conservative. Self-fancied "hard Wilsonians," the neocons have pushed for virtually every recent American war or intervention in the Middle East and elsewhere since the end of the Cold War. They intend, at least nominally, to spread U.S.-style democracy to the target countries, a Wilsonian project through and through.

The next string of conflicts was kicked off with the 1991 Gulf War in Iraq. President Bill Clinton would keep that war on a simmer with sanctions and intermittent bombing until it was drastically re-escalated by the Bush administration in 2003, possibly the biggest foreign policy blunder in American history. Bush invaded Iraq in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, after the declaration of the "War on Terror." Unlike prior conflicts, this is not a war with a single country or with a defined military objective; the War on Terror is global, perpetual and ubiquitous.

The Terror War has spread into at least Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Mali, and continues to expand in the Middle East and Africa. President Barack Obama bombed at least seven countries during his two terms, heavily assisted Saudi Arabia in its ongoing slaughter in Yemen, armed rebels in Syria who fight alongside al-Qaeda and other Islamist militants, and led a NATO regime change operation in

Libya that's thrown the country into chaos. As Commander in Chief, Obama dropped 26,000 bombs in 2016 alone. The United States maintains hundreds of overseas military bases and continues to spend an ever-greater portion of GDP on its military, already more than the world's next seven largest military budgets combined. These trends appear set to continue.

Obama embraced a foreign policy outlook that is a close cousin of neoconservatism: liberal interventionism. It, like its cousin, is markedly Wilsonian, but it is perhaps a "softer" variety.

As we have seen in this rapid sweep through the twentieth century, Woodrow Wilson's decision to intervene in World War I would unfold into nearly 100 years of unbroken war. While America arguably began its imperial project with the Spanish-American War of 1898, it was Wilson who provided the ideological rationale for unbridled militarism and interventionism. Wilsonianism set American foreign policy down the path to Empire.

The centennial of America's entrance into WWI has come and gone, but we have failed to internalize its lessons. As world leaders continue to joust for geopolitical superiority, massive conflict looms large over hotspots such as Syria, the South China Sea and Ukraine. We can only hope that, sooner or later, those in positions of power will recognize the futility and destructiveness of perpetual war. If they don't, it may ultimately spell the downfall of our civilization. Among many others, Woodrow Wilson will be one to blame. *[Will Porter is an independent journalist and contributor at antiwar.com; this essay originally a term paper for 20th Century History Class]*

THE BASICS OF SELF-OWNERSHIP, *LIBERTY 101* COLUMN BY J.C. SIMPSON

Last month we established the foundation of liberty. Negative liberty with its "freedom from oppressive force," including such liberties as speech, assembly, religion, and defense, and positive liberty with its interventionist policies that infringe upon the negative liberties of others. In last month's column, *Liberty 101: What is Liberty*, it is noted that negative liberties are born out of self-determination, or as what has become known in libertarian circles as self-ownership.

Self-ownership has a long history in philosophy and has been explored from nearly every category of thought. Nearly everywhere philosophy believes in maximizing the sovereignty of the individual, but where most diverge from each other is the ownership of property, but that is an argument for a different day.

In self-ownership man is sovereign. He holds control over his person and the actions he takes with his person within this realm of ownership. He is able to enter into contracts with consenting parties without an arbitrary third party ruling on this decision. As long as he does not violate the negative liberties of others, man is free to explore his boundaries.

Without self-ownership, we cannot enjoy the fruits of liberty. We are at the whims of a centralized authority who decides which of our rights we get to keep. Without the principle of self-ownership, we are nothing but slaves.

***DOG PARK AUTHORITARIANISM, ARTICLE BY
THE DENVER LIBERTARIAN, NICK WEBER***

Nestled at the foot of the Colorado Rocky Mountains, a small community, Evergreen, is under siege.

An authoritarian regime has done the unthinkable act of shutting down a dog park. "By shutting this dog park you are ruining our community with authoritarianism." "You have created an authoritarian regime in closing this dog park. You have constructed whatever numbers you need to support your decision."

These are actual quotes overheard at recent county commissioner meetings. They may seem a bit overboard on the surface, but digging deeper into the heart of the matter, they are quite telling. Not so much for all those poor dogs who have nowhere to roam freely and the alleged breakup of the community fabric, but for shedding light on the folly of public (and public-private) ownership.

A quick recap the situation: Citing widespread loss of native vegetation, soil erosion, degradation of the stream channel, poor water quality due to elevated E.Coli levels, lack of compliance from park visitors, and parking related safety concerns along Stagecoach Blvd, Jefferson County Open Space has closed the park indefinitely as of April 4, 2017.

The Elk Meadow Off-leash Dog Park near Evergreen, CO encompasses 107 acres and showcases one of the follies of public ownership: when everyone owns it, no one owns it. The "don't worry, someone else will clean it up" mentality stems from a lack of personal responsibility, namely, cleaning up after your dog and holding others accountable. If the park was a free-market entity, the park owner would have a vested interest in keeping the park clean and maintaining a sustainable and safe environment for the customers. The long-term sustainability and success of the dog park business itself would require continual upkeep and responsible environmental stewardship, the alternative being shuttering the park due to lack of business, resulting in a total loss. Imagine the ensuing lawsuits that would stem from a private company being responsible for increased E.coli levels downstream from its business location, one can predict the faux outrage directed at that greedy corporation.

With public ownership, who pays to reclaim the park? Who pays when the park pollutes adjacent properties? Everyone, and no one. Jeffco Open Space has indicated it could take up to three years to reclaim the park. That type of business model only flies when your business is subsidized by the taxpayer.

The popular progressive groupthink of "this park is an essential part of the community fabric, so it needs to stay," is a common argument from park go-ers. This argument falls apart when we consider the gross negligence that lead to the park closure in the first place. How can it be good for the community if contamination abounds?

Additionally, some have claimed mismanagement of the park including a lack of signage about rules and regulations, a lack of parking and limited availability of poop pickup bags contributed to the closure. Lack of signage and no poop bags? Treat the park as if it was your own backyard and bring your own bags, no signs needed. The lack of attention of everyday park go-ers to proactively address the problems facing the park is obvious: no one cared until the threat of closure was imminent.

There is an elephant in the room regarding public ownership that extends far beyond the reaches of a simple dog park closure: that is the monopoly of ultimate decision making given to Jeffco Open Space. As Austrian school economist and libertarian philosopher Hans Hermann Hoppe cogently summarized: There is no appeal above and beyond the state and the state is the ultimate arbiter and judge in every case of conflict (The Great Fiction, 2012). The commissioner meetings that are open to the public are nothing more than political theater, giving the illusion of influence and oversight by the people. Jeffco Open Space was founded as a land conservation organization by vote in 1972 to preserve open space though a one-half of one percent sales tax and once enshrined, has never been removed; the authority never questioned. Remember those quotes at the beginning of the article? The ruling has struck a nerve with some folks, but the issue isn't the dog park itself, it is the fear of the power and authority ceded to Jeffco Open Space.

The public dog park situation writ large is the conundrum of our current political debate. Many are fine with power when it works in their favor and view it as tyrannical when it does not. Perhaps power itself is the true enemy. *[Nick Weber is a husband and father of two and a dog owner. He works in the Architecture and Construction industry in Denver, CO. You can follow him on Twitter: @DenLibertarian]*

[Thanks for the article, Nick. I found this quote by Ludwig von Mises, pertinent to the problem of property that is not privately owned: "If land is not owned by anybody...it is utilized without any regard to the disadvantages resulting. Those who are in a position to appropriate to themselves the returns...do not bother about the later effects of their mode of exploitation. For them the erosion of the soil, the depletion of the exhaustible resources and other impairments of the future utilization are external costs not entering into their calculation of input and output." Thanks, - The Voluntarist]

**"IF YOU RUN YOUR OWN BUSINESS AND ARE STILL
PAYING IRS TAXES, WE CAN LEGALLY REDUCE TAXES,
EVEN SOCIAL SECURITY, WITHOUT RISKY S-CORP'S.
WE ALSO SOLVED THE EMPLOYEE VS. CONTRACTOR
PROBLEM. RMP+VOLUNTARIST@POBox.COM OR
VOICE MESSAGE 214-853-4673."**

[Continuing in the series is another segment of "Anatomy of the State," by Murray Rothbard. Here he distinguishes the two mutually-exclusive ways of acquiring property]

— WHAT THE STATE IS —

Man is born naked into the world, and needing to use his mind to learn how to take the resources given him by nature, and to transform them (for example, by investment in "capital") into shapes and forms and places where the resources can be used for the satisfaction of his wants and the advancement of his standard of living. The only way by which man can do this is by the use of his mind and energy to transform resources ("production") and to exchange these products for products created by others. Man has found that, through the process of voluntary, mutual exchange, the productivity and hence, the living standards of all participants in exchange may increase enormously. The only "natural" course for man to survive and to attain wealth, therefore, is by using his mind and energy to engage in the production-and-exchange process. He does this, first, by finding natural resources, and then by transforming them (by "mixing his labor" with them, as Locke puts it), to make them his individual property, and then by exchanging this property for the similarly obtained property of others. The social path dictated by the requirements of man's nature, therefore, is the path of "property rights" and the "free market" of gift or exchange of such rights. Through this path, men have learned how to avoid the "jungle" methods of fighting over scarce resources so that A can only acquire them at the expense of B and, instead, to multiply those resources enormously in peaceful and harmonious production and exchange.

The great German sociologist Franz Oppenheimer pointed out that there are two mutually exclusive ways of acquiring wealth; one, the above way of production and exchange, he called the "economic means." The other way is simpler in that it does not require productivity; it is the way of seizure of another's goods or services by the use of force and violence. This is the method of one-sided confiscation, of theft of the property of others. This is the method which Oppenheimer termed "the political means" to wealth. It should be clear that the peaceful use of reason and energy in production is the "natural" path for man: the means for his survival and prosperity on this earth. It should be equally clear that the coercive, exploitative means is contrary to natural law; it is parasitic, for instead of adding to production, it subtracts from it. The "political means" siphons production off to a parasitic and destructive individual or group; and this siphoning not only subtracts from the number producing, but also lowers the producer's incentive to produce beyond his own subsistence. In the long run, the robber destroys his own subsistence by dwindling or eliminating the source of his own supply. But not only that; even in the short-run, the predator is acting contrary to his own true nature as a man.

We are now in a position to answer more fully the question: what is the State? The State, in the words of Oppenheimer, is the "organization of the political means"; it is the systematization of the predatory process over a given territory. For crime, at best, is sporadic and uncertain; the parasitism is ephemeral, and the coercive, parasitic lifeline may be cut off at any time by the resistance of the victims. The State provides a legal, orderly, systematic channel for the predation of private property; it renders certain, secure, and relatively "peaceful" the lifeline of the parasitic caste in society. Since production must always precede predation, the free market is anterior to the State. The State has never been created by a "social contract"; it has always been born in conquest and exploitation. The classic paradigm was a conquering tribe pausing in its time-honored method of looting and murdering a conquered tribe, to realize that the timespan of plunder would be longer and more secure, and the situation more pleasant, if the conquered tribe were allowed to live and produce, with the conquerors settling among them as rulers exacting a steady annual tribute. One method of the birth of a State may be illustrated as follows: in the hills of southern "Ruritania," a bandit group manages to obtain physical control over the territory, and finally the bandit chieftain proclaims himself "King of the sovereign and independent government of South Ruritania"; and, if he and his men have the force to maintain this rule for a while, lo and behold! a new State has joined the "family of nations," and the former bandit leaders have been transformed into the lawful nobility of the realm.

TO CALL, OR NOT TO CALL, THE POLICE

STORY BY JOEL AIGNER

Often as a Libertarian / Voluntaryist / Anarchist / Abolitionist / Agorist / {insert newest label here} I'm often the pretty confident about how to conduct my life without relying on the mechanisms of The State. Instead of calling the cops if I think my home might be getting broke into, I really on an arsenal of firearms and the knowledge on how to use them. Instead of Obamacare, I eat healthy, exercise and manage my stress levels. Instead of relying on Public School to teach my son what he needs to know I have compiled our own reading list and make sure we devote blocks of time almost everyday to digesting the books therein. That said, this past week I broke protocol when I called the cops on someone.

It was early Thursday afternoon, which was coincidentally 4/20. I work in the cannabis industry and was on the way to check in a with a business associate in South Denver before heading to Civic Center Park in downtown Denver for the festivities. As I merged onto I-25 from downtown Colorado Springs I ended up behind a brown Subaru, just a few years older than my own, being driven by a young man with spectacles, much like myself.

(cont. Pg. 17)

For a moment, I thought “reminds me of myself, maybe he’s also on his way to Denver for 4/20”. Just as I thought that, he swerves quite erratically to the left, with the center of his vehicle over the line separating the lane from the shoulder of the interstate, only to remain hovering over the line for a few seconds until slowly but unmistakably drifting to the right only to do the same thing over the line separating the left from the right lane. It basically reminded me of skating a long half-pipe and doing grinds on either side. In other words, driving like a super drunk asshole. At first I thought “well maybe he dropped something”, but alas this kind of behavior continued past many exits and frankly after 5 miles or so, I started to get concerned, not only for my safety and his, but for the other cars or folks with whom we were sharing the road. I don’t know if he was drunk, dabbled out, epileptic, sleepy or what, but he was driving like a drunk driver in a DARE commercial from the 80’s. To me, being an Anarchist, means not aggressing against people’s free will, bodies, free or property and this dude seemed as if he’s about to wreck havoc on all three when he collides with any of the densely packed vehicles on the busy interstate (yes holiday 4/20 traffic is totally a thing). Images of a fiery wreck, dead people and ruined lives start to run amok in my head. This was obviously a problem and I started going through the inventory of possible solutions.

So I pondered my options, they were few. I could try and pull the gentleman over myself, but I had no flashing lights and me pointing a gun at him while yelling “pull over” is dumb for a multitude of reasons (the least of which not being that it makes no sense to shoot him, even if he refuses my request, as he will then be almost guaranteed to crash into a carload of innocents). Me following him and hoping that I could telekinetically keep him from crashing into the guardrail or other vehicles was about the best I could do without calling the so-called authorities. While I do have some faith in my ability to manifest reality, my faith in my ability to override whatever Karma/Dharma this apparently intoxicated guy was facing for whatever reason by prayer/magick alone wasn’t something I was willing to bet my life, or the life of others on. So guess what I did. Something I never do. Fucking Crikey. I called the cops.

Did I want to? No. Of the cops I am no fan. Having served some time and having been mistreated (but not as mistreated as some I saw) cops are not at the tops of my favorite list, as I recognize them to be institutional, extortion funded bullies. Would I have called a Privately Funded Security Force, such as a “Neighborhood Watch/Highway Patrol” if there was such a thing? YES! But at that moment, on that day, I couldn’t come up with a better option and was genuinely concerned that not only was this dude going to get himself killed but that he might take a car load or two of travelers with him. Some might argue that he was acting in a manner that displayed his disregard for the NAP, in that his carelessness could easily lead to the destruction of

someone’s property, injury to their person and/or death. Some might argue that it was a “Statist” move to call the cops as he hadn’t aggressed against anyone, yet. Honestly, I’m kind of stuck in the middle and on one hand am almost disappointed in myself for resorting to using the violence of the state to get someone to act in accordance with my wishes. On the other hand, if that guy crashed into a carload of kids on their way to 420, or a family in a minivan, or a construction worker on his way to a job site and I saw it coming but didn’t do anything about it, would I be complicit in helping this idiot driver in violating the NAP? At this point the question is less than rhetorical, I’m genuinely looking for input. There’s a part of me that feels as though I betrayed my principles of self-ownership by attempting to get the state involved. Then there’s the part of me that’s a parent that would have felt culpable should anyone else’s child had been killed by this dangerous dickhead of a driver, whom I recognized as potentially fatal yet did nothing about.

When I called the cops it was slightly after Monument (Northbound) on my way to Denver. I followed the guy all the way to South Denver to where he was still in front of me, driving like a shitfaced asshole, until I exited onto C-470 West (about 40 minutes) and no cops ever pulled him over and hopefully he didn’t kill anyone later. I recognize it to be the slipperiest of slopes when we argue for using the aggression of the state to prevent other perceived potential aggressions, but frankly I didn’t know what else to do. That said, was there a better way to handle it and how would it be handled in a world of Spontaneous Order?

Hopefully my confessional doesn’t completely kill my anarchist-cred in your eyes, but this experience presented a very real quandary that I hope we can use our intellects and imagination to address so as to identify effective stateless solutions to assure the free will, body and property of all is not aggressed against by intoxicated or reckless drivers. To your feedback I look forward. Gratitude in advance. One Love.

[Good story, Joel: (1) the police are monopolized, so as you pointed out, there are no alternatives; they’ve excluded all other competitors in security. Last time I called the police at employer-request they were absolutely worthless and I did all the work. We live in a coercive system and giving into it (like voting) isn’t unprincipled in my opinion. If the government nationalized food production I would still eat. (2), there’s nothing wrong with wishing to maintain order on the roads, and I always found it a beautiful example anyway of a spontaneous order that we all mostly make traffic work, not really because of police, who are really only out to loot us, but because we all for the most part want to get where we’re going. We don’t want reckless drivers; this doesn’t necessitate monopolized state-police, who in your case didn’t keep the roads safe, as they pretend to do. Most probably think we’re against such order, not seeing how non-state roads would have rules too. But really it’s “anarchy” to me out there already, just with a gang that cruises around and extorts us too for petty traffic violations. - The Voluntaryist]

HOW MODERN VACCINATION PRACTICES ARE DESTROYING TRUE “HERD IMMUNITY”, *HEALTH*

ARTICLE BY GRAHAM SMITH

Vaccines do not confer lifetime immunity. Any doctor worth his salt will tell you this, because it is common medical knowledge. Though the CDC (Center for Disease Control) website will tell you that individuals receiving the MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) vaccine are “considered protected for life,” a simple click on their very own link to vaccine package inserts will tell you otherwise. Here is a brief snippet taken directly from the MMR vaccine’s [package insert](#): *“Following vaccination, antibodies associated with protection can be measured by neutralization assays, HI, or ELISA (enzyme linked immunosorbent assay) tests. Neutralizing and ELISA antibodies to measles, mumps, and rubella viruses are still detectable in most individuals 11 to 13 years after primary vaccination.”*

What does this mean? It means that contrary to what the CDC website tells us—namely, that those vaccinated are considered “[protected for life](#)”—the MMR vaccine’s coverage lasts at most up to 13 years. The same is true for most other vaccines. The limited immunity, which I do not dispute does stave off disease for a time, from most vaccines tends to be around 10 years.

I think it is helpful to look at the relatively recent measles outbreak in Anaheim, California, at Disneyland. Many of the cases were adults, and at about half of them were immunized. Is this what the CDC considers “protected for life?”

Vaccine-conferred immunity is [relatively short-lived](#). “Booster shots” attempt to mimic natural repeated exposure to viruses and disease, but fall short due to the removal of antigens from circulation, and the fact that the immunity they confer is not life-long.

“Pro-vax” camps usually are quite vocal about the necessity of vaccines for the development and maintenance of herd immunity. Nothing could be further from the truth. What we see happening now is the population being systematically stripped of lifelong, wild measles/wild virus-conferred type immunity during childhood, and made vulnerable to acquiring these diseases later in life (when vaccine-induced “immunity” wears off) when they are much more dangerous. Measles, for example, is statistically a much more serious matter for a 25 year old than it is for a second grader, with the likelihood of [serious side effects](#) and death being markedly increased.

We also see, and perhaps most disturbingly, this “immuno-stripping” trend with infants. When a mother has had or been exposed to wild measles, her natural immunity is passed on to her infant child by way of breastfeeding. Because wild measles is now being made out to be a horrible bogeyman by the WHO [World Health Organization] and the CDC (the worldwide measles death tolls these groups cite are

mostly comprised of sick and malnourished children from third-world countries with poor sanitation, who would be killed by most any disease), scared people are running to vaccines to avoid getting sick. The problem is that what is actually happening is a systematic stripping of the world population of true, nature-conferred *herd immunity*.

What happens years down the line when the entire populace is vulnerable and weak, not possessing any natural or lifelong, wild-disease-conferred immunity? Well, we are ripe for the pickin’, so to speak, for an epidemic. We are also ready targets for any individual entity or government group that might wish to unleash disease upon us as a means of control. Don’t think they would? A cursory examination of history does not bode well for this type of optimism.

At the end of the day, individual self-ownership is all that matters. Regardless of your views on vaccines/vaccine practices, the only legitimate position for a Voluntarist on this matter is to respect the self-ownership of others. “But what if they threaten me by not receiving vaccines and potentially spreading them to me or my children, harming us, and thus violating the NAP?” To that I say:

First, forced injection is *always* a violation of individual self-ownership. Second, there is freedom to disassociate from “non-vaxxed” individuals. Third, and most important: the whole argument that vaccines can and do confer herd immunity in the first place is fatally flawed in that it claims (whether implicitly or explicitly) that vaccines can a.) offer lifelong immunity, and b.) that diseases like measles can always be 100% eradicated.

We know for a fact that vaccines do not confer lifelong immunity and also that even with very high vaccination rates, in our modern age of travel, there is always a potential for this or that virus to come creeping in from some other region. Even if the whole population of the world (aside from the immunocompromised and sickly) were vaccinated, we would still see diseases spreading from vaccine failure and lack of lifelong immunity, as well as the immunocompromised contracting and spreading disease.

As for me, when nutrition and sanitary requirements for healthy living are being met, I would rather bet on nature and my own immune system than a cocktail of chemicals injected directly into my bloodstream by state-sponsored entities (CDC, et al.) who have in the past purposely let poor black people in the southern US states contract [syphilis](#), [trashed relevant study data](#), and [admitted directly](#) that vaccines can cause damage to vulnerable elements in the population, and that pre-screening is not done to protect these predisposed populations, who are usually children.

[Graham Smith is contributing from Japan]

**A CONFUSED ANARCHIST?, BY
ROBERT CASTLE**

I recently had a debate with someone who seemed to advocate for anarchism over, believe it or not, whether private property exists. This may not seem worthy of attention to many of you, but one of the greatest issues for champions of liberty is often agreeing about such basic concepts. These absurdities within certain factions of the liberty movement must be dispelled so that we may move forward.

Daniel, the person in question whose articles about this subject can be found on his site *Politicoïd*, initially stated that “private property does not exist in an anarchist system.” This seems to suggest that after the abolition of the state, he believes that private property could not exist due to lack of a legal basis; however, upon inspecting his article, *The Myth of Private Property*, he makes it quite clear that he believes private property never existed at all, a notion even more absurd. Daniel, and apparently, many other anarchists, prefer to draw a distinction between private property and personal property, which he defines as “property which is in use by the person.”

He then proceeds to redefine Capitalism as “an economic system in which primary guardianship is maintained by a group of people, and primary guardianship of excesses of production is given to those same people.” Clearly, this definition is dancing around the concept of private property, as if a person could never own something they were not currently using. Under what Daniel considers to be Capitalism, someone who retires and hands over management of their lifelong business, perhaps a pottery store, to a trusted friend cannot maintain ownership and profit from this store once he or she relinquishes guardianship. This clearly violates the system we all know as Capitalism because it also prevents firm owners from growing their business and amassing large amounts of capital, as people clearly

do, regardless of government intervention or lack thereof. In fact, the free market would arguably allow for greater economic growth in absence of a government.

Yet, upon my correction that private property does indeed exist, Daniel responded with the example of a bike rental that is never returned. Common sense dictates that the bike is not rightfully owned by the bum who refuses to return it, even if it is now his “personal property.” He first implied that there was no way to recover the bike without a government. I explained that you could hire someone to recover it or do it yourself, forcefully if required. He then stated that because forceful retrieval of property is a violation of the non-aggression principle (defensive violence is *not*), it is thereby inconsistent with an anarchist society in which the NAP is “maintained.”

Realistic anarchists, unlike communists who entertain delusions about human nature, do not believe that without a government everyone will simply get along and violence or wrongdoing will never occur. Most would even believe force to be justifiable in retaliation, but never in *aggression*. True anarchists value freedom and liberty over the “security” of the state. While the non-aggression principle is an excellent philosophy, it does not prohibit retaliation, and the theft of our hypothetical bike is clearly an aggression. Using his “finders-keepers” logic of nobody owning what they are not using, theft must essentially be impossible. I suppose the government didn’t steal that 30% out of your paycheck after all because you weren’t using it at the time, right?

He thought he had found a profound counterexample to the idea that private property is either derived from homesteading or voluntary exchange in the case of Native Americans. He argued that, according to the previous example, the Native Americans still own their ancestral homeland that was forcefully acquired by European

settlers.

Even if we ignore the facts that we are discussing reparations for an aggression committed hundreds of years ago and the Native Americans’ descendants are many generations removed from the victims, this comparison to the bike situation is absurd. Perhaps the Native Americans of today would even be justified in forcefully retrieving their ancestral homeland through force, as it would be justified for the true owner of the bike, but only in anarchism would there be no government to prevent them from doing so. Even without a government to stop them, I doubt we would see Native American descendants armed and threatening to take back the land in question by force.

His rebuttal of these arguments was to claim that my argument was inconsistent without explaining why. I originally thought that he must be an anarcho-socialist or anarcho-communist, so I told him that capitalism is the economic system present in the *absence* of government, according to basic economic principles.

People do not require a government to determine what is their property and what is not. Daniel claimed that he embraces capitalism one tweet, only to correct me by saying that he is not a capitalist in another. Thus, I must unfortunately admit that due to his inability to clarify his position, I have no earthly idea what he believes other than that he does not believe in private property, as if it were the boogeyman. [Submitted by Robert Castle]

*[Libertarianism is often misconceived as being opposed to violence when we reject the *initiation* of such. But we’re not pacifists; we’re non-aggressionists. Force is very much needed to repel aggression, too. We oppose its monopolistic provision. This leads others to think defensive-violence, i.e., forming defense agreements among consenting parties, is inherently statist. Thanks, Robby. ~ The Voluntaryist]*

Is MANITOU SPRINGS LOSING ITS SOUL TO POLITICS?, ARTICLE BY PAOTIE DAWSON

Last spring, the city of Manitou Springs became embroiled in a controversial and ultimately failed zero tolerance policy that targeted anyone and everyone for the pettiest of offenses. How you walked and what you did on the sidewalks in the downtown district became the business of everyone, from the police to city politicians. Today, the politicization of everything in Manitou Springs continues with no end in sight.

In talking with long-time residents and natives of the city, they wish for a return to a time when folks helped one another, weren't so politicized with just about everything, and in general, were a kinder, nicer people. Frankly, after living in Manitou Springs for nearly a decade, I can easily visualize such a time and people in the city.

But today, politics has overtaken much of the city's core and is rotting its soul. Any and every imagined and real problem is now cause for politicization, especially in favor of city bureaucrats who are more akin to high priestesses in a governmental religion. An example: the failed parking enforcement program in Manitou Springs. Each time the city changes parking policies, it directly acknowledges previous policies have failed; rather than scrap the program, the city continues to tinker, tinker, and tinker with the program with little to show for results. City employees, meanwhile, have been given generous parking benefits with prime parking spaces behind City Hall. Tourists are expected to park in dirty, dark and seedy parking lots, and if not, they can choose to gamble in the downtown district with parking enforcement officers, parking kiosks that sometimes work, and worse.

Rather than encourage neighbors to work together and collaborate independently of the municipal government, city officials want neighbors to hate one another and to turn on each other so that any of the city's authority boards can play the role of arbitrary referee, picking winners and losers based on politics. This is best summarized as politics over people, a hallmark of the previously mentioned failed zero tolerance policy in which politicians sacrificed rational fact-finding in favor of catering to the loudest complainers, especially those who wanted the city to resolve their complaints.

Part of the problem can be directly traced to the city's bureaucrats and politicians who favor solutions that benefit the city's bureaucracy vs solving "community" problems. A community problem could be a street overrun with rocks and debris following a heavy rainstorm; folks get together to sweep the street, remove rocks, and get to know one another. This is a great way for neighbors to help neighbors and creates a healthy sense of community. But when the city government gets involved, it becomes less about neighbors and community, and more about complacency in the form of bureaucracy.

If the government does it, then nobody needs to do anything, right? If there are rocks and dirt on a street after a heavy rainstorm, the city has employees who clean the streets, right? Right! So do nothing! This is a tragic mistake too many folks today make. A healthy sense of a community does not start with bureaucracy but neighbors engaging neighbors, as with folks helping clean up their street. Another real-world example came in the form of a small groups of residents last summer who got together and walked the downtown district at night, acting as impartial observers and informal safety advocates. The current city administration abhors the very concept of neighbors helping neighbors, preferring politics that help politicians.

Manitou Springs is destroying its soul for the sake of politicizing everything. No longer do city officials and leaders encourage neighbors to work with neighbors to solve problems independent of government. No longer do city officials and leaders want to minimize the harms on people used to fund and legitimize their political solutions, as with the failed zero tolerance policy. But worse: city officials and politicians seem to have no desire to facilitate a community in which folks could leave their front doors unlocked without a care in the world, assured that their neighbors would keep a watchful eye if and when necessary.

Such a world is only a pipe dream if one obeys the bureaucrats. Neighbors helping neighbors. That's how it used to be done in Manitou Springs, and it how it should be once again. Folks don't need permission or oversight from local bureaucrats to solve local problems. More importantly, community is not government and their bureaucrats, never has been, and never will be.

It's time for Manitou Springs to revive its beautiful soul with a kinder, gentler sense of community — without the bureaucrats.

[Great local example of how politics causes antagonism among men than the peaceful cooperation it pretends to; and also how we forget to help one another, and even ourselves, when it's assumed the government is taking care of things. I always thought politics was especially unneeded in Manitou. Thanks, Paotie. ~The Voluntaryist]

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THE MUTUAL-EXCLUSIVITY OF FASCISM AND CAPITALISM, BY CHASE RACHELS

Fascism entails a high degree of both statism and socialism (no surprise as these go hand in hand). Thus, anarcho-capitalism is the antithesis of fascism on a purely political/economic scale. Ironically, Antifa has far more in common with fascism from this perspective than anarcho-capitalism.

The fundamental difference between right-wing socialism (fascism) and left-wing socialism (communism) is a cultural one. The former utilizes the State to effect ethnic homogeneity, hierarchies, and cultural conservatism. The latter employs the State to effect ethnic heterogeneity, egalitarianism (though in practice this never occurs), and libertinism/moral relativism.

Each of these entail a virtual abolition of private property rights in favor of State discretion, thus each are unequivocally socialist. The fact that fascist regimes allow former capitalists to maintain positions of *nominal* authority over certain industries does not alter their socialist nature. Such individuals are mere figureheads and puppets subject to the State's sole discretion. The fact that the State's loot (under fascism) is not distributed to the people equally also does not render it less socialist than the communist regime.

In truth, "private property" and "capitalism" belong nowhere in the definition of fascism.

On the other hand, anarcho-capitalism does not entail a cultural preference. Under this system, one may (or may not) pool his property with others to whatever degree he sees fit in order to establish communities which are either culturally "right", "left", or any combination thereof. The difference is that the individual property owners have final say over how their property is utilized, occupied, or employed and that they came to be owners by way of original appropriation/homesteading or voluntary exchange.

[Thanks for the thought, Chase. This comes amid accusations by the political-Left of their being a libertarian-fascist alliance, when the two are polar opposites. Fascism requires a State and is a collectivist ideology; libertarianism is an individualist one which sees the State as the negation of property rights. ~ The Voluntaryist]

THE FASCIST CREEP OF THE ALT-RIGHT, ARTICLE BY J.W.

Richard Spencer, an icon of the Alt-Right, is very good at not expressing his political program. The nitty-gritty of his desired political economy—what a government is, how it works, what it does, and why—is never explained. All I've gathered is that he thinks legitimacy, that social contract that recognizes governance as just, is rooted in collective agreement; rights exist when everybody decides what rights are who gets them. The institutional aspects of his ideology are unknown, at least to anybody outside his community of identitarians and tribalists, as they call themselves.

Spencer does describe vaguely the transitory period that would lead to his preferred political order, which he expresses through a view of human history as tragedy: social and political change, like the establishment of new states and governments, are rooted in violence. Right now, there's a downward trend toward the disintegration of the United States; eventually there will be disorder and something like a radical revolution or a civil war will occur. These are the conditions when an ethno-nationalist state, which Spencer has been prescribing superficially, could arise. How it will be unclear, because these conditions make a gray zone—what could happen, really? What might somebody do to get what they want? Who knows, but Spencer will want it to lead to a reinvention of the Roman Empire, or something like it.

Spencer claims the Alt-Right has a vision beyond the here and now, a discourse on utopia. But immediate, pragmatic concerns are important too. One foot must be in the future, the other in the present. Yet, Spencer leaves that future up to whoever reads Alt-Right fan fiction. Pending matters, like the socialization of health insurance and ridding affirmative action under Trump, are prioritized. Spencer doesn't dabble in the fantastical for the press.

It's obvious why Spencer takes this route. If he can play the angle of tragedy, he can evince a false modesty about the future. Then, he can pivot to the motivations that drive many to the Alt-Right: young, radical conservatives are disappointed with the Republican establishment; and they're fed up with the social justice warriors, the mainstream media, and the dominant political left who don't think their jokes about race, class, and gender are funny. They miss the days when off-colored humor wasn't a faux pas. They want the cultural homogeneity that gave them the status to undermine others with ease. Now that everybody is a racist for the smallest slight, like, say, admitting you'd rather live among people that resemble your demographic, they might as well take it further and pretend they are Nazis, cuz fuck you, liberals! That's the "real" reason Heil-gate occurred: they'll LARP as fascists to ruffle Progressives' feathers, but deep down they just care about Western Civilization. (cont. Pg. 22)

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(CONT. FROM PG. 21)

Spencer's strategy seems clear to me: gain support and build a base, then harness that collective power when the time comes to legitimize a new political order that, while not as vivid as historical Nazism, is still a program of white supremacy. It has a new, nefarious face. If you're called a Nazi, yet you provide no sincere ideological expression to indicate that—apart from “jokes” and dog whistles—then people won't think you're the thing that the Left and the Conservative Establishment call you. You can pretend it's all about the freedom to be an edgy patriot and populist.

I watched a conversation—not an interview—with Spencer and David Smith, a comedian and Rothbardian libertarian (look up “Richard Spencer - Part Of The Problem #219 [Full Video]”). There were two moments when Smith asked a question about Spencer's political economy, but Smith never got an honest answer, and, sadly, he didn't seek clarification. He stayed in Spencer's vagueness until a tangent came up, then took up his particular interests or common ground with Spencer (mainly, that concern with Leftist political correctness). This is unfortunate, because, as Smith states in the conversation, there's no such thing as bad publicity; and Spencer and the Alt-Right are getting more publicity and sympathy since the inauguration of Donald Trump.

This is the fascist creep: the rhetorical maneuvers and public misdirections that blind society to emergent authoritarianism. They're tyrants in the closet. [~J.W.]

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