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WHY I AM NOT A PATRIOT, ARTICLE BY STEVE LONG

This July, we will once again see American flags waving and people rallying and celebrating the anniversary of the date that a group of colonists declared independence from the British Empire. Not unlike other statist holidays such as Memorial Day or Veterans Day, Independence Day is a day where people all over the country and expected to be patriotic and drool over how great "their" country is. Everybody expects you, on this day specifically, to be, first and foremost, a patriot. I cannot claim to be a patriot.

What is a patriot, exactly? Simply stated, a patriot is a person that vigorously loves and supports their country and its government without question. Essentially, it is nation worship.

First off, why would anybody love and support something without question? That is dangerous thinking.

I do not understand the smugness or sense of unwarranted pride that comes from where you were born. I don't see how a person can be so boastful about something as arbitrary as where they were coincidentally birthed. Okay, you were born in America. So what? How can a person express some sort of sense of accomplishment about something they had no control over?

And how can a person feel some sort of sensation of superiority over other nations? This nationalist exceptionalism is unjustified and narcissistic. The idea that you are a better person that lives inside one set of imaginary lines than a person that lives inside another set of imaginary lines is absurd and, if I'm being perfectly honest, a bit comical. "Look! I live over here so I'm better than you!" If this is what being a patriot is, please, leave me out of it.

I do not support anything without question, especially not a geographical area inside a set of invented borders.

I do not pledge allegiance to the flag. It's a flag; it's nothing special; it's a piece of cloth. If you're ignorant enough to swear loyalty to a piece of flag, you might as well wake up every morning and pray to your socks. Aside from that, even if it is a symbol of what America "stands for" why would you pledge unswerving devotion to it? What does America stand for anyway? Don't see freedom because America jumped off the liberty boat years ago. Democracy? No thanks; I'm not into mob rule. Justice? That's a laugh. Talk about justice to the families of the hundreds of innocent people that are killed every year by America's thug force. Nope, America doesn't stand for anything worth standing for so there is no reason to devote yourself to that cause.

I also do not get all choked up when the national anthem is played. It's just a song; it's nothing to get terribly excited over. It's not even a good song as far as songs go. And why do they have to play it at every

single sporting event? It is terribly annoying. I'm there to watch a game, not to spend my time standing up, putting my hand over my heart and facing that piece of cloth that everyone likes to deify. To be perfectly honest however, when this shit show happens I *do* stand up. I will even remove my hat. I do not, however, put my hand over my heart and sing my praises to statism. The standing up, the removing my hat if I'm wearing one. I don't do that out of respect for the flag or for the country. I don't even do that out of respect for the others around me that have been indoctrinated into believing that this whole farce is mandatory. I do it because where I live, if I don't do it, it's highly likely that I will get the shit kicked out of me. I wouldn't even have time to explain why I'm refusing to take part in their charade of madness before I end up getting accosted and ultimately thrown out of the venue.

Call it subversive or call it whatever you want but I am not a patriot. Patriotism leads to national exceptionalism and national exceptionalism ultimately leads to blind loyalty. It leads to a citizenry that believes in everything its government does without questioning it. Of course "*my*" government doesn't do the bad things those other ones do. It leads to the acceptance of infinite wars to "preserve freedom" or to "protect American interests abroad", when the real reason behind them is never revealed and completely unknown to the public except for the minority of people that have a brain and think for themselves.

So, come this 4th of July, go ahead and wave your flags. Go ahead and light off your fireworks. Go watch your parades. But when you wake up the next morning with any sense of guilt, remember that greeting that morning with a statism hangover might not be worth all the pomp and splendor of our country's birthday.

{Steve Long is contributing from Oklahoma}

LIBERATION THROUGH DECENTRALIZATION, ARTICLE BY NON FACIES FURTUM

In many areas of our lives, we see a trend towards decentralization. As it turns out, decentralization promises to set us free from much woe. It not only empowers the individual directly, but also diminishes the ability of those with ill-will to take advantage of or abuse individuals. (Cont. pg. 3)

Perhaps the most important affair which decentralization is currently affecting is currency. Though in the past, societies often used several currencies concurrently, many of which were not government created, recent history has seen the world dominated by central banking and fiat currency. This reality has had many dire outcomes, both social and economic in nature. Central banks in control of fiat currencies can freely manipulate the value of their currencies, as they can print as much as they want, and manipulate the money supply in other ways. With the advent of crypto-currencies such as bitcoin, whose intrinsic value comes in the form of their encryption, money is once again being decentralized and given real value. There is far less risk of economic catastrophe arising out of the perils of unsound money, and when governments are unable to freely manipulate a nation's currency, they are much more at the whims of reality. Historically, wars ended most often when a nation ran out of money to fight it. It is not a coincidence that with the advent of central banking came total war, expansionist socialist states, society draining welfare states, and a general trend away from freedom in many places. Central banking, in a similar manner to public schooling, was just one more step towards the ultimate consolidation of power by governments.

There is no quantitative easing possible with bitcoin. Bitcoin ownership cannot be consolidated in the hands of the state. When one does not depend on a group of violent thieves like the state for the legal ability to earn a living, one is much safer, and this is the true value of bitcoin, and other private crypto-currencies.

Schemes of production are also enjoying this decentralization trend. 3-D printing is a powerful tool which both makes it easier for the average person to fabricate pre-existing useful or retailable items themselves, and allows people to create new products which did not previously exist. 3-D printers simultaneously decrease the reliance most people have on large companies, which risk corruption by the state, for many common practical goods, and increase the ability of people to create independently, and prototype and produce cheaply.

In the future, it is quite possible that we will have a society in which families produce much of what they need at home, more free from state regulation than today.

Whereas producers nowadays must comply with ridiculous levels of regulation which always make products more expensive, and often of a lower quality, a populace which is capable of producing on its own will do so cheaply and at maximal efficiency.

With sites such as Etsy existing as platforms for people to sell what they produce at home or on a small scale, it also becomes very easy for a great deal of free competition to arise. When many small producers sell their goods on one platform, it is difficult for them to gain any advantage over each other unless they are actually making better products or selling them at better prices. Essentially, platforms like these help to make competition more perfect, and get us away from the monopolistic reality which we currently inhabit. This is good for everybody, as prices of goods decrease while quality increases when competition thrives.

Crowdfunding sites such as Patreon enable people to donate and support exactly the type of media and content creators that they want to listen to. In this realm, no longer is there a gargantuan state censoring expression and colluding with equally gargantuan MSM outlets to set the narrative which must not be questioned. There are far more creators who each do their own thing, there is no longer any need to pick and choose from a set of a few vaguely different versions of the same status-quo, bland, unthinking news or entertainment sources. When there is no control by the government, which commits much evil in the world, over expression, especially on important topics often pertaining to that evil, people are actually able to make it known. When people do not depend on the 'okay' from government to produce their news stories or articles, they will be honest about what the government does, and will speak against the status quo when they realize there is something better.

In a decentralized society and marketplace, man becomes much freer. The options and possibilities in terms of ideas to engage with, products to create, and ways to support one's self approach limitlessness. Decentralization makes hell for a government intent on shackling the minds of its serfs to a false and manipulative narrative, in more ways than one. All freedom lovers ought to embrace and take advantage of this trend towards decentralization.

**WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM CRUSOE ON AN ISLAND, A STAGECOACH, AND YOUR FAVORITE MEAL: A
REVIEW OF *MAN, ECONOMY, AND STATE*, CHAPTER ONE, ARTICLE BY SCOTT ALBRIGHT**
[This is the beginning of what will be a 12-part series on Rothbard's economic treatise]

After finishing chapter one of *Man, Economy and State*, by Murray Rothbard, the two prominent concepts that I learned more about are those of marginal utility and time preference.

Murray Rothbard elaborates on isolationist economics to elucidate upon the discovery of economic principles that are derived from the actions of Robinson Crusoe (a fictional character used for illustrative purposes) who is stranded on an island.

To simplify the matter, Rothbard uses two goods that Robinson desires as his most highly valued ends, that of consuming berries and leisure. If Robinson can pick 20 berries an hour and works 10 hours a day, he can consume 200 berries a day and 14 hours of leisure.

If he decides to construct a stick, so that he can pick the berries more efficiently, increasing both his total output of berries and output per unit of time (say, per hour), he can only do this at the expense of forgoing some of his production and consumption of berries, and allocating time to produce the stick. This means that he must lower his time preferences, preferring to save some of his berries for the time period that he will be constructing the stick, in that he will either have to pick more than he normally consumes, to have for the production of the stick, or to eat less of it than he normally does, or a combination of both.

Either way, this simple isolationist story elucidates on the principle of capital accumulation in society and what is logically necessary for its accumulation; the exercise of foresight, restraint of appetites, anticipation of future demand, and a lowering of time preferences, foregoing and delaying the consumption of some goods and/or leisure in order that you can consume more in the future, hence the saying that "savings is delayed consumption." It does show us fundamental principles of human action and allows us to build upon them, starting at the individual level and moving towards society.

"The restriction of consumption is called saving, and the transfer of labor and land to the formation of capital goods is called investment." [1] This is (in this story) what can free up time for either more berries, leisure, or another good, say, shelter, clothing, or building a fire.

Whether Crusoe pursues the production of this stick will be determined by his value scale. Does he enjoy the work involved in picking berries? How much leisure does he desire to consume, how many more berries, what other goods does he prefer?

"Thus, for each person and type of labor performed, the balancing of the marginal utility of the product of prospective units of effort as against the marginal disutility of effort will include the satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the work itself, in addition to the evaluation of the final product and of the leisure forgone." [2] In other words, the marginal utility of what Crusoe will obtain by producing the stick (say, the ability to pick 50 berries an hour instead of 20) will have to be higher than the value of what he gave up in order to produce it (say, 10 hours worth of a combination of leisure and berry picking) or else he will not produce the stick.

Another way to analogously explain these concepts, from both a producer and a consumer point of view, is by using a stagecoach and a favorite meal respectively.

Rothbard explains how as the supply of a good increases, its marginal utility decreases, and vice versa. "*The greater the supply of a good, the lower the marginal utility; the smaller the supply, the higher the marginal utility.*" [3]

From a producer standpoint, with a stagecoach, the first horse that you use will bring you the most utility in enabling you to travel. The second horse will increase your utility by increasing power, speed (at least average), ease of traveling (as the two horses share the load instead of one), but it will not bring you as much utility as the first horse, for without the first horse you can't travel at all but with it you can travel, so you go from stationary to moving, zero to one, so to speak. The third horse will bring more utility but less than the second one did, and so on.

Eventually you will get to a point where an additional horse is not worth the investment because the increased utility is not worth the increased cost of upkeep of horse (feeding, allowing rest for, upkeep of, etc.) This will be a point where the marginal cost of employing an additional horse is higher than the marginal utility you receive from the horse.

From a consumer standpoint, eating your favorite meal brings you satisfaction, utility, psychic profit, etc. But eating a second helping of your favorite meal would not bring you as much utility as the first, and so on with a third helping, fourth, etc. Being satiated, full and bloated, having to throw up, or needing to sleep it off like a bear in hibernation afterwards is one way of your body telling you this physiologically.

In most cases, the rancher will use the extra horses not needed on the stagecoach for leisurely horseback riding, racing, breeding to sell offspring, etc. There may be exchange value for a good, value in direct use, or speculative value in the hopes that one can sell a good for a higher price in the future (we will discuss these concepts in later chapter reviews). For the consumer, most will consume another good or service after being full from their favorite dish to serve their other important needs and wants, unless they live to eat!

You can apply this to entrepreneurs and consumers in general. Businesses aren't going to hire more and more workers just for the sake of saying "we created more jobs"; the marginal product/output of each additional employee must be worth the additional cost. And consumers tend mostly to not just consume any given good insatiably, as they have other wants to satisfy other than hunger, and human wants are ever changing and inexhaustible.

Isolationist economics can teach us very much, as silly as it may seem to entertain the thoughts of. The next chapter review will be on direct exchange, with goods and services involved and without means of currency.

[Scott Albright holds a B.A. in economics, likes to workout, read, and enjoys watching The Walking Dead]

[1] Rothbard, Murray. *Man, Economy and State with Power and Market*, p. 48, Ludwig von Mises Institute, Scholar's Edition, 2009; [2] *Ibid*, p. 45; [3] *Ibid*, p.27

BASTIAT, A FINE POLITICAL ECONOMIST,

ARTICLE BY MIKE MORRIS

Upon throwing around the idea of breaking down chapters of Frédéric Bastiat's *Economic Harmonies* to advance the cause of liberty, which we have begun to do here, published as Hegemony and Spontaneity by Scott Albright (and continued in this issue), I decided to pick up the book and read its first chapter in order to follow along the series of summaries he will be offering. Though not to trample on his work, it inspired me to make a few mentions on this chapter too, on *Natural and Artificial Organization* as Bastiat saw it, which offers many insights in a short twenty pages. Not to jump the gun; I'm going to read and learn as Scott Albright condenses. But Bastiat gives us a lot to think about.

Though most widely known for *The Law*, a classic essay—the thesis being that once a government “perverts” the law, meant to protect *life, liberty, and property*, into instead a system of “plundering” each other's property, that it is no longer a legitimate law—that many cite as turning them on to a love of liberty, Bastiat was far more sophisticated than this. His specialty was putting these basic truths of the natural world into witty arguments to reveal the flaws of his adversaries.

Though as far as I know not offering anything necessarily original, he excelled at marketing liberty to the common man. Known in his writing style for wit and sarcasm, easily dispensing of absurdities in economics by asking rhetorical questions to the reader, he does an excellent job at conveying economics to the layman; a task we are still in great need of today. In this, he has done more than he knew for the present-day liberty movement, still living in our minds today.

Bastiat spent a lot of his time fighting the protectionists and socialists of his day, but there's a lot more that can be gathered from reading this mid-19th century writer, who died in 1850 while still attempting to crank out works to change the people's minds and inspire in them *liberty*. Though writing over a century-and-a-half ago, such powerful words would be just as sufficient today in refuting the claims of protectionists, such as of economic-nationalist Donald Trump and his proposals for tariffs on imported goods, as they were back then.

A notable example of his comedic delivery of economics is his famous petition of the candlestick makers to express the fallacies behind trade protectionism. He is writing on behalf of the industry of the candlestick makers, who have fierce competition, he says, and are in need help protecting their business. Their competitor is “*is none other than the sun*”; and the government should be “*so good as to pass a law requiring the closing of all windows, dormers, skylights, inside and outside shutters, curtains, casements, bull's-eyes, deadlights, and blinds.*” Of course, it's a joke; but so are their protectionist schemes.

And in addition, since then “*thousands of vessels will engage in whaling*”, they will “*in a short time...have a fleet capable of upholding the honour of France.*” Think, *Make America Great Again*: they think protectionist policies could bring back the glory of a once-great nation, apparently. As far as the Trump-era continuing these fallacies, and looking for excuses to defend to them, well, “*there is not a single one of them that you have not picked up from the musty old books of the advocates of free trade.*” These things have been refuted long ago, but persist nonetheless. He pointed out that their efforts to protect the producers runs into a problem: producers, in order to secure higher profits, contrary to the consumer's wishes of abundance, prefer scarcity. This is why they turn to government: to squash potential competitors who may drive down [their] prices.

But his emphasis always on the *unseen effects* of policies is one thing that made him exceptionally great.. As pertinent to the comment above, that of protecting domestic producers from foreign competition at the [unseen] expense of higher-prices for consumers; the latter being what producers favor while lower prices and abundance being what consumers favor. Trump and the like wouldn't want us to see that, now.

This is still what most non-economists, and even those mainstream ones, suffer from. For example, it's easy to see that the person who has a job under a raising of the minimum wage—a price fixing scheme that doesn't make anyone richer through such an arbitrary declaration—indeed has a higher *nominal* wage. But it's much harder to see that the person *unemployed* by such a law is without a wage whatever, i.e., earns *zero* an hour. Seattle is revealing this empirically, though logic is all that's needed to establish that the law will not and cannot work.

(cont. p. 7)

In other words, minimum wage laws don't raise *real wages*; they raise nominal wages for those who keep their jobs. Its supporters point only to the "seen" effects. But Bastiat saw right through such schemes intended to benefit one group of people at the expense of the forgotten others.

Or, what about how people believe military *spending* boosts the economy? Besides the fact that they're not producers of consumer goods, and exchange nothing for something (where all anyone sees is their act of spending money), it's almost as if no one can see that if military spending was cut and met with a corresponding tax break, that it's *this* which would be beneficial to the economy. The money would be put back in the hands of the people; and they would spend, save, or invest it according to their needs.

Bastiat also distinguished the social sciences, where men are conscious, acting beings with ends and goals they place a value on, from the physical sciences; and therefore, economics from the scientific method of the physical sciences, where the subject matter *isn't* purposeful human actors.

The empiricists of today might point to a scenario where the law (for an arbitrarily chosen minimum wage) was raised and unemployment *didn't* result; but this is only because of the *ceteris paribus* (all things equal) notion of economics, which is to say that, *if* all things are equal, which they are not, this is what the effect of said policy would be. In short, productivity, where wages come from, may have increased too. Or, for inflation, prices don't necessarily rise equally; the demand for money may have increased too, negating the rise in supply. Other factors are always at play, but the logic applies nevertheless.

Economic laws are necessarily *qualitative*, i.e., "if-then" propositions, and not quantitative as many expect of economists (e.g. "predict exactly the amount which will result from X."), and done under this notion of all things equal. Therefore, empiricism is an improper method for economics and doesn't refute economic logic. If the economic law turns out unsound in practice then one needs to rework their logic, not conduct more experiments. It is impossible to make quantitative laws in economics, where subjective human actors are the subjects of study, i.e., their preferences change, the future is uncertain, etc.

Being inspired by the early French economist Jean-Baptiste Say, as Bastiat had been, surely helped him out a lot. *Say*, who was a sort of proto-praxeologist, knew economic truths could

be derived through logical deduction that aren't subject to "testing" or experimentation, unlike that of today where many a positivists have taken over the economic science and turned it into an empirical and approximate study. They have come to think that, as in the physical sciences, that men are like stones or atoms: easily manipulated in a social experiment.

Bastiat knew too that principles, or natural laws in human action, could be established. Economics was not a mere guessing-game subject to later validation, but a *science* of cause and effect. Others like to think there aren't real laws in economics, that governments can usurp them, or that they're really subject to experimentation first in order to find out. This is not so; they're logical laws.

He correctly identified economics as the study, or science, of man acting with scarce means to attain subjectively valued ends, even using the phrase "human action" which was to become the title of Ludwig von Mises' *magnum opus*. Bastiat bases his analysis off of the action-axiom of economics, and even recognizes that a prerequisite to action is a felt uneasiness, in which he states, "*the satisfaction of wants and repugnance to suffering are the motives of human action.*"

What we might call central planners today, Bastiat called "system makers." These system-makers, i.e., those who want to change and mold man, had essentially only one means at their disposal in order to uproot the natural order around them, and this was *force*. Bastiat considered another option, universal consent, as possible too. But so long as there's just *one* anarchist, as Murray Rothbard once pointed out, then there isn't universal consent. Therefore, to achieve socialism rests upon *force*. Anyone wishing to upset the natural order — whereas man's natural theory of property is a private ethic, which is particularly pronounced in the U.S. — must compel men to do things outside of normal, self-interested ways.

Egalitarianism is not only undesirable, but it's unachievable; men are unique, subjective individuals. "*Force, then, is what the organizers need who would subject humanity to their experiments,*" he recognizes. And even then "*they will find that they still lack the power to distribute mankind into groups and classes, and to annihilate the general laws of property, exchange, inheritance, and family.*"

He knew, too, that these "system-makers" wished to turn mankind into one large social experiment, as they have successfully done today.

How ego-driven is it to believe man is malleable, and machinistic, to be shaped into a mold by his overlords? Here is where he was highly critical of Jean-Jacque Rousseau, the Francophone philosopher and author of *Contract Social* (the mythical idea of a “social contract”), who very much elevated the legislator-politician high above the rest of the people. Bastiat says of him that *“it is impossible to give an idea of the immense height at which Rousseau places his legislator above other men.”*

According to Bastiat, *“He [Rousseau] believed them to be quite incapable of forming for themselves good institutions. The intervention of a founder, a legislator, a father of nations, was therefore indispensable.”* Rousseau didn’t believe man could self-govern, but Bastiat believed man should be free to associate and contract with others how he sees fit. The idea of a “social contract” binding men together was and is a myth; an artificial social order.

In *The Law* he asks if there’s something special about these people versus the men that cannot be free: *“If the natural tendencies of mankind are so bad that it is not safe to permit people to be free, how is it that the tendencies of these organizers are always good? Do not the legislators and their appointed agents also belong to the human race? Or do they believe that they themselves are made of a finer clay than the rest of mankind?”*

He speaks in *Economic Harmonies* of this same problem: *“And if the tendencies of human nature are essentially perverse, where are the organizers of new social systems to place the fulcrum of that lever by which they hope to effect their changes? It must be somewhere beyond the limits of the present domain of humanity. Do they search for it in themselves – in their own minds and hearts? They are not gods yet; they are men, and tending, consequently, along with the whole human race, toward the fatal abyss. Shall they invoke the intervention of the state? The state also is composed of men. They must therefore prove that they form a distinct class, for whom the general laws of society are not intended, since it is their province to make these laws. Unless this be proved, the difficulty is not removed, it is not even diminished.”*

This argument of man being so bad that he must be ruled reigns today among those who don’t realize that the *people* doing it must be—men, like they are. Men can’t be free, but should have power, they reason.

In *Economic Harmonies* he also says that, *“society, such as they conceive it, will be directed by infallible men denuded of their motive of self-interest.”* This skepticism of man and the suggestion that he needs rulers remains the predominant view of our times. *“He who rejects liberty has no faith in human nature,”* he says. Those who have no faith in men inevitably wish to control him. But as Ludwig von Mises said of this problem, they do so at pain of contradiction, because *“If one rejects laissez faire on account of man’s fallibility and moral weakness, one must for the same reason also reject every kind of government action.”*

As for the alleged differences in Democrats and Republicans today, which are closely associated on the political spectrum but assumed to have vastly different policy proposals, Bastiat said of system-makers that *“The inventions are different – the inventors are alike.”* Does anyone really care what a thief spends your money on, welfare or warfare?

Where others saw a chaotic natural order that needed to be changed, Bastiat saw beauty and harmony in market forces. Self-interested individuals were not antagonistic to one another, but all helped to indirectly satisfy each other’s ends through a division of labor and cooperation. And as well, their self-interestedness doesn’t disappear once they land a seat in the government, which is in the business not of producing for others, but of expropriating property for their own gain. He saw, too, that exchange, when free and uncoerced, is mutually beneficial to both parties. We don’t need to be alike to get along. The division of labor allows men of difference to form a socio-economic order.

Unlike Karl Marx, who was hostile to the division of labor, seeing it as “alienating” the workers from their products, Bastiat saw clearly that it is only through a division of labor in which we’re able to be infinitely more productive than would be possible in a state of self-sufficiency, where man made everything for himself. The division of labor allows man to exert a lot less than what he gains. *“It is impossible not to be struck with the measureless disproportion between the enjoyments which this man derives from society and what he could obtain by his own unassisted exertions”,* says Bastiat. I alone could never make a car, probably not even shoes, or a shirt, but yet I get to enjoy these things.

And the division of labor is mutually beneficial too: *"Every individual member of society has absorbed millions of times more than he could himself produce; yet there is no mutual robbery."* And through the use of money in this division of labor, *"...the carpenter has paid, in services, for all the services others have rendered to him."* Everything a man can consume in a free market is utility he provided to someone else first.

This is the beauty of the economic system: people specialize in what they do best, and instead of direct barter or producing everything for ourselves, we indirectly exchange with money to get the goods and services we need. Otherwise, someone like an economist would have to hope to sell his services to a grocer for food in order to eat. That would be a hard find. Rather, he sells it for money; and he uses the money to fulfill his desires. There is no way to easily solve this double-coincidence of wants without money.

In another point, Bastiat sees that the capitalist is also a consumer too; and that he can't help but be one. Thus, since his demand curve is downward sloping too, i.e., the higher the price of something (mandatory wages, say) the less he'll purchase, the demand for labor will decrease too; and unemployment will result. Again, the empiricists might point to a case where X happened but Y didn't follow, but they're once again ignoring the qualitative, all things equal nature of economic laws.

Bastiat knew well the ingredients to economic prosperity and liberty: Private property rights, the division of labor, capital accumulation, and the freedom of exchange. When voluntary exchange is permitted, if rulers step out of the way, this is the means of achieving maximum benefit to all peoples integrated into the economic system. Such truths hold today, and will forever.

Economics being value-free though, doesn't state that the ends chosen by actors are good or bad, but just points out the formal fact that man acts. What is deduced from here makes up the whole of economics—diminishing marginal utility, the law of supply and demand, etc—that we ignore at our own peril. The State cannot suspend economic laws with legislation as is often imagined.

And here, Bastiat distinguished law from legislation too. Today, the former has been entirely conflated with the concept of law, which is meant to protect rights. There is no law in the public's mind anymore but the ones governments

scribble on paper and demand you to follow. They have become inextricable: to have law, you must have a State; and without a State there is no law. He says, *"There is a wide difference between a social organization founded on the general laws of human nature, and an artificial organization, invented, imagined – that takes no account of these laws, or repudiates and despises them – such an organization, in short, as many modern schools would impose upon us."* Political science was, to Bastiat, the discovery of these natural laws. In short, here, a planned order is inferior to a spontaneous order. Society must be built upon a natural order—on a natural law—or else it is an unsustainable one.

Bastiat appears to me truly ahead of his time, asserting moral and economic truths that are universal and eternal, and doing so with utmost confidence. He was a serious, if underrated, political economist of his time. To paraphrase what a friend once said, *"You never even really need to read Mises and Rothbard unless you want detailed economics, because Bastiat has it all."* He was right. Reviewing the first chapter of *Economic Harmonies* shows that others who are known as Austrian school economists today must have drawn directly from Bastiat. His insights, at times, are like reading anything contemporary Austrians would write.

Indeed, Henry Hazlitt was borrowing directly from Bastiat in his famous *Economics in One Lesson*, a classic exposition in economics that's widely popular, influential, and still much needed today. Hazlitt, too, had a way of pointing out the absurdities in the schemes to rig the economy through government intervention. The whole premise of Hazlitt's book, starting with "the broken window fallacy", is that the good economist, as Bastiat knew, must look further into the consequences of such policies to reveal not just which is seen, but that which is *unseen*.

The most basic example he used, building off Bastiat, is the idea, which many fail to grasp, that breaking windows can supposedly stimulate an economy since it will make work for the glass maker. But now, whereas he *already had a window*, he must put money towards something other than, say, investing further in his business. He had to replace, unnecessarily, what he already had. Why don't they see this?

The way Hazlitt put it, *"They had forgotten the potential third party involved, the tailor. They forgot him precisely because he will not now enter the scene."*

They will see the new window in the next day or two. They will never see the extra suit, precisely because it will never be made. They see only what is immediately visible to the eye.” (Economics in One Lesson)

Bastiat, like Hazlitt, was willing to take arguments to their *reductio ad absurdum* extreme to point out their problems. Obviously, if employees walked into work demanding a 100% pay raise tomorrow they would be promptly unemployed. But no less would this effect be apparent, though to a lesser degree, if it was raised 10%; someone would still be hurt by this policy, though many might refer to this as a needed “bump.” (So long as the minimum wage is *below* the free-market price for labor, as it often is, it has little effect).

Henry Hazlitt used the same arguments. If trains take jobs, why not have men lug coal sacks on their back? Is there some odd preference for work by the sweat of the brow? Those in public office are obsessed with “job creation” programs, missing that the purpose of employment and production is consumption. The jobs are not an end in themselves, but a means to that end. Of course, banning trains *could* create a lot of jobs, as could banning shovels. But what would they produce? The end goal is consumption; production is simply the means to reach this goal. Getting lost in the idea that “we need more jobs” misses that what we need more of is more *wealth*!

This bias is prevalent today among the business elite too—like Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, and Bill Gates—all which fear the robots “taking our jobs” and suggest a Universal Basic Income for the solution. Not so obviously, I guess, the UBI will only discourage production as it incentivizes people to *not* produce (and produced goods is the only way for there to be new purchasing power in the economy); it subsidizes those who seek non-work income of the welfare versus that of working. Unfortunately, these people are listened to. Like your Warren Buffets who have sway over the minds of others due to investment or businesses success, they will not buck the system they benefit from (among other things, Buffet benefits from the Fed’s deliberate inflation of assets prices; he owns assets).

While taxation affects *relative* production, meaning growth can still be had despite taxation, though relatively lessened, we can take this to its logical extreme to see that one-hundred percent taxation would immediately revert mankind to a subsistence standard of living.

Bastiat used it, and still today comedy can be an effective means of communication; but it could go either way. While the “taxation is theft” meme among the libertarian crowd went viral outside of it, there’s also the opposite side of the equation: that pop-culture is turning people onto *bad ideas*. The future depends on good ideas winning out, and with a resurgence in the attractiveness of socialism, the battle of ideas is far from over.

The socialists want to place everyone neatly into groups, but Bastiat though, as do I, thought “class” is just an arbitrary idea. There is no such entity “the working class” which socialists pretend to represent. He thus supported *methodological individualism* which is a huge part of what has come to be known as the Austrian school of economics: that groups do not act, but are made up of *individuals*. These collectivist metaphors are draped over bad economic policies to justify interventionism, such as in the name of “saving the nation”, or the “common good.”

Unlike how Marxism is pitched today in pop-culture, as cool and hip, Bastiat is actually fun. You won’t be let down. His logic is razor sharp; and his clarity and choice of words intriguing. While most economic writing, especially that of textbooks, might be considered dry and lifeless, Bastiat has the capability to bring the issues to life and help you understand them.

His words are not only a magnificent work in political economy; they’re a splendid work of literature in themselves. You’ll learn a lot more from him than the mainstream econometricians of today, who have turned economics into technical, incomprehensible, mathematical jargon that means little to nothing to the layman; and which has little to do with economics. Economics can be explained verbally, and here is where Bastiat shined at conveying these truths to his readers.

As Albright confided to me, “*I learned more on economics from Bastiat than I did in all of undergrad college. That’s both awesome and sad!*” How true: economics has been reduced to nothing, tucked away in business departments and treated as irrelevant today when it’s so essential it be resurrected. Bastiat is one of the antidotes to this problem. Pick him up; start with *The Law*; don’t forget his other works, too.

[Mike Morris publishes and edits The Front Range Voluntaryist to promote the principles of liberty in Colorado and beyond]

A CRITIQUE OF MIKE ADAMS ON BITCOIN “END GAME”, ARTICLE BY JIM DAVIDSON

*“I don't look at a man who's expert in one area as a specialist. I look at him as a rookie in ten other areas.” ~
Conor McGregor*

Recently, *Natural News* published [an essay](#) by Mike Adams about the end of Bitcoin.

There are some things that Adams writes which I believe are not true. He clearly believes that Bitcoin is a giant scam and will never be a useful tool in storing value outside the confiscatory banking system. I'm not really clear on what he thinks is a good system of money. Perhaps he loves the government fiat money, I simply don't know.

My own opinion is that Bitcoin is a very logical protocol that allows a distributed ledger to be maintained in a decentralised way. It has value because it is accepted by many merchants and individuals, and because it lacks a central authority that can inflate it and devalue it. It has issues because it lacks effective decision making authority, and because it clearly has scalability issues. (Ethereum, by the way, seems to have a good handle on scalability).

Adams suggests that kindergarten teachers are “throwing money at Bitcoin, believing they've discovered a magical source of unlimited wealth.” I did not find any evidence that any of the parties he quotes believes that Bitcoin is either magical or a source of unlimited wealth. All the quoted users indicate that they feel it is a hedge against issues with fiat money including inflation and government decrees seizing their bank accounts. Perhaps Adams prefers people simply obey the government and let central bankers plan their future enslavement.

Adams says that Bitcoin transactional costs have skyrocketed from \$16 per transaction to \$23.30 per transaction. That's false. The actual transaction processing fee depends on how the Bitcoin protocol evaluates recent transaction fees. Since December 2016, someone has been gaming that system by sending 750 BTC from one wallet to another every 5 seconds. Large transactions involve a higher transaction cost, so very small payments (I just made one of about 0.0311 BTC or US\$84) do not cost \$23.30 to send. A very tiny fee was charged by LocalBitcoins to facilitate my transaction.

Adams says, “...selling Bitcoin and exiting the market in a time of high trading volume will be increasingly expensive and difficult, with long delays on transactions that could require days or even weeks to be confirmed.” I believe that statement is completely false. Transactions offering zero fee or a very low fee of a few Satoshis were being ignored by the blockchain miners for days, but eventually were processed, before a recent fork that seems to have cured this difficulty, in my direct experience. All transactions are eventually processed, anyway. But people motivated to have a transaction processed within 10 minutes, and confirmed soon thereafter, can offer a transaction fee commensurate with their timing concerns – as any free market in the world, the BTC market knows how to manage the time value of money.

Adams writes, “Bitcoin will approach its 'end game' in the next decade when all Bitcoin mining permanently ceases due to the mathematical limit of 21 million Bitcoins in circulation. False. In fact, Bitcoin mining will continue forever, because the “mining” operation does not only find all the new bitcoins that can be mathematically brought into existence; it also finds all the new blocks that have transactions. Bitcoin miners have for years accepted transaction processing fees, and these are built into the protocol to provide an increasing amount of the total revenues for Bitcoin miners. Once all 21 million Bitcoin coins are mined, all miners will be mining only for transaction fees, and will continue to profit accordingly. By 2024, when Adams predicts a collapse in Bitcoin mining, 100% of mining fees will be found in transaction processing, and that has been built into the protocol from the beginning. Rather than turning all mining operations unprofitable, it will continue to be very profitable to use ASIC and other technologies to solve hashing functions.

Moreover, Bitcoin has for a very long time not been the only crypto-currency. Today it represents less than 46% of the total coinmarketcap.com value for the amount in circulation of all 745 blockchain currencies and 121 assets they follow in 4,046 markets – a large, growing, and very robust industry indeed. In the last 24 hours, well over US\$4.3 billion in transactions have been processed in all these currencies, which makes the crypto-currency economy as a whole have a “total economic activity” of nearly 1.6 trillion U.S. dollars.
(Cont. 12)

(Cont. from 11)

By way of comparison, Wikipedia lists countries by the size of their economy in annual "gross domestic product" [here](#): Canada is #10 at US\$1.53 trillion, making the cryptocurrency economy larger than all but 9 countries: The USA, China, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, India, Italy, and Brazil. Bitcoin remains a major part of this industry, and both the industry as a whole and Bitcoin itself continue to grow rapidly in number of users, number of companies and people accepting these types of money, number of transactions processed each day, and value of transactions processed.

Far from having "...a catastrophic end...mathematically engineered into the system," Bitcoin and similar currencies are designed to prevent central bankers from ruining everyone's life and putting everyone into debt peonage. While scepticism is always welcome, Adams simply fails to get and keep his facts straight.

Not everyone is an expert on everything. My own experiences with digital money date back to December 1998 when I was a very early user of e-gold and the Liberty Dollar. I've seen hundreds of digital currencies come and dozens go away for various reasons. I've known the principals of e-gold, GoldMoney, e-Bullion, Hayek Gold, SilentVault.com, and DigitalCash.to, personally and face-to-face, and have corresponded with many others in this industry. I understand the factors that motivated Satoshi Nakamoto to create Bitcoin back in 2008 with his white paper, and I understand the limitations and facts about its procedures. Also, I very strongly prefer the decentralised features of free market money to the idiocies that attend on government-issued fiat currencies.

For further reading, I recommend the Wikipedia overview on Bitcoin and FA Hayek's essays on the Denationalisation of Money, especially his third edition thereof published in 1990.

[Jim Davidson is an author, entrepreneur, and philanthropist. Find his book "Being Sovereign" on Amazon.com if you wish. He is also the author of Being Libertarian.]

WHAT IS VOLUNTARYISM?, BY STEVE FAZACKERLEY

[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 main principles are these:

1. Individuals own themselves, and are responsible for themselves. Not a group of other people, not the state. No one can own you but yourself. No one has a right to tell you how to live your life, or to demand that you live it for them.
2. Property rights: When a person works for the fruits of his or her own labor, only he or she has the complete rights to the fruits of his or her labor. If s/he wants to donate to a worthy cause, or to help others, that may be considered noble, but is not obligatory. But no one else has a "right" to anything but the fruits of their own labor.
3. The nonaggression principle: It is illegitimate and morally unacceptable to *initiate* the use of violence against another, for any reason. This does not mean that it is wrong to use violence in self-defense. People have the right to live their lives as they see fit, and may engage in any activity they choose, so long as they do no harm to others, or aggress against their property. This includes the right to engage in activities that may be harmful to themselves, so long as they do not affect others or cause negative externalities for others.
4. All human interaction should be voluntary. Coercion, threats, and the use of force or violence to compel someone to do anything is morally unacceptable and illegitimate.

Life requires the use of scarce and rivalrous resources. Time, one's physical body, and all the resources required to live – including food, water, and shelter – are all in limited quantity; and because they are scarce and required to maintain one's life, they are also rivalrous. One person cannot use the same resource at the same time as another person. It follows then that disputes over these scarce and rivalrous resources will inevitably occur, and that an objective means of dispute resolution through argumentation is preferable to physical violence. In *The Economics and Ethics of Private Property*, Hans Hermann Hoppe writes:

"To be sure, people do not live on air and love alone. They need a smaller or greater number of other goods as well simply to survive – and only he who survives can sustain argumentation, let alone lead a comfortable life. With respect to all of these other goods norms are needed too, as it could come to conflicting evaluations regarding their use. In fact, any other norm now must be logically compatible with the nonaggression principle in order to be justified and, mutatis mutandis, every norm that could be shown to be incompatible with this principle would have to be considered invalid." [1]

The division of labor increases the available resources for all the individuals that participate in it. Since time is scarce and the specialization of certain tasks by some individuals allows others to specialize in other necessary tasks, thereby increasing the resources available, the division of labor allows all that contribute to reap the benefits of other people's increased production. So we all benefit from a division of labor by an increased supply of the resources needed to sustain life; and since the best way to avoid physical confrontations over the

availability of those goods is to engage in argumentation, then it is best to have a firm grasp on objective truth or valid claims in order to best obtain and defend the scarce and rivalrous resources needed to sustain one's life.

Hoppe explains further:

"The argument shows us that any truth claim, the claim connected with any proposition that it is true, objective or valid (all terms used synonymously here), is and must be raised and settled in the course of an argumentation. Since it cannot be disputed that this is so (one cannot communicate and argue that one cannot communicate and argue), and since it must be assumed that everyone knows what it means to claim something to be true (one cannot deny this statement without claiming its negation to be true), this very fact has been aptly called 'the a priori of communication and argumentation.' Arguing never consists of just free-floating propositions claiming to be true. Rather, argumentation is always an activity, too. However given that truth claims are raised and settled in argumentation and that argumentation, aside from whatever it is that is said in its course, is a practical affair, it follows that intersubjectively meaningful norms must exist – precisely those which make some action an argumentation – which have a special cognitive status in that they are the practical preconditions of objectivity and truth." [2]

This day and age, there are groups of people advocating violently silencing others because they cannot find the logical objective truth or reason necessary to convince others that their position is a valid one.

Initiating violence is clear evidence that one's position is either illogical or not a valid reasonable claim, for if the person had a valid true argument, they would surely present that argument rather than risk the possible loss of one's own scarce

resource (one's body, and time). To initiate violence is to risk loss of use of valuable resources, as well as access to the benefits of division of labor: for who would want to trust and trade with someone that has shown a proclivity for violence? The regressive people that lack the arguments to back their positions, and who have decided to resort to violently display their lack of reason, almost always try and hide their identity behind masks and bandanas. Rather than spend their time investigating the reason their positions are illogical or searching for a valid and true argument, these people decide to attempt to use violence and the threat of violence to silence those that espouse ideas that conflict with their narrative.

[Last month](#) in this publication, I wrote about some of the brave individuals that put their physical health on the line to protect the people that have logic, reason and truth behind their arguments, and considering the events on the GOP baseball field, they are as important as ever to civilization.

Civilization is defined as the process by which a society reaches an advanced stage of social development and organization. So civilization is recognizing and advocating argumentation ethics, as Hoppe explains:

"In order to recognize them, it is only necessary to call to mind three interrelated facts. First, that argumentation is not only a

cognitive but also a practical affair. Second, that argumentation, as a form of action, implies the use of the scarce resource of one's body. And third, that argumentation is a conflict-free way of interacting – not in the sense that there is always agreement on the things said, but in the sense that as long as argumentation is in progress, it is always possible to agree at least on the fact that there is disagreement about the validity of what has been said. This is only to say that a mutual recognition of each person's exclusive control over his own body must be assumed to exist as long as there is argumentation (note again that it is impossible to deny this and claim this denial to be true without implicitly having to admit its truth)."
[3]

Civilization is defended and advocated through argumentation, and given the increasing willingness of people today to ignore civilized discourse and attempt to regress to physical intimidation in order to obtain scarce and rivalrous resources, it is more important than ever to spend time developing logically valid reasons in support of one's actions, as well as supporting those people that present those arguments.

*[Matthew Dewey, CEO of RWDS Corp,
Arbital Tribunal at Murray's Market]*

[1] Hans Hermann Hoppe, *The Economics and Ethics of Private Property*, p. 319; [2] *Ibid.* p. 314-315; [3] *Ibid.* p. 317

**ON LEGISLATION: LIBERTY YIELDS,
GOVERNMENT GROWS, ARTICLE BY NICK
WEBER**

Often cloaked in flowery rhetoric and under a cleverly titled piece of legislation, political machinations roll on right before our eyes, subverting liberty and our personal freedoms while continually expanding government control.

Rarely via a massive takeover but rather incrementally, inch by inch, the following is the true story of how liberty disappears. Proposed legislation is often worded to instill confidence in the populace that our benevolent public servants are looking out for us and that they have our best interests at heart. As a populace we are all too easily distracted with the outrage story of the week, too eager to accept the talking points from whatever flavor of news is preferred,

(cont. from 14) ... and all too consumed with life to sit still and read beyond the headline. We indeed bear a portion of the blame. Deep within wordy legislation that is written in ALL CAPS, TO ENSURE FURTHER DIFFICULTY OF COMPREHENSION (see how annoying that is?) our representatives are writing contradictory legislation rife with loopholes that a complicit media conveniently ignores and a “can’t be bothered” populace intentionally avoids.

I’m reminded of a quote by Thomas B. Reed, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1889–1891: “One of the greatest delusions in the world is the hope that the evils in this world are to be cured by legislation.”

To be sure, Reed was no stalwart bastion for liberty; he gratuitously and intentionally expanded the power of the Speaker of the US House; he sought to all but eliminate any effect that the opposing party may have by carefully applying a myriad of existing House procedures. To wit, a second quote from Reed: “The best system is to have one party govern and the other party watch.” Ah; representative democracy.

Well over a hundred years on, congressional shenanigans rule the news cycles and the story lines predictably play out like bad sitcoms: be they sit-ins, legislation hidden deep in a basement that must be physically hunted down, or the ever popular “nuclear option.” Senate Confirmation paranoia; take your pick, it changes every week. Amid the chaos, flawed legislation is continually passed at all levels of government, often claiming to solve perceived problems.

This process is evidenced by three recent Colorado bills. These bills seek to expand and protect freedom of thought, expression and association, but all leave glaring loopholes for the government to *restrict* that which they are intending to protect.

This is not a new concept or concern, as Thomas Jefferson noted, “The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground.” Not that any piece of paper can truly bind anyone or guarantee anything: Constitution, legislation or otherwise, but I digress.

Signed into law on April 4, 2017, Senate Bill 17-062 is titled “Concerning the Right to Free Speech on Campuses of Public Institutions of Higher Education.” Sounds fantastic, no? Let’s dive right into this gem. From the legislation: “*An institution of higher education shall not impose restrictions on the time, place, and manner of student expression in a student forum unless the restrictions: (a) are reasonable.*” Full stop right there.

That is, verbatim, the extent of the first exception and this is of seminal importance: you cannot allow the government to infer. Ask yourself, what is reasonable in this particular political climate? What will be reasonable ten years from now? Codifying unconstrained power to an unelected bureaucrat to determine “reasonableness” is the epitome of legislative tyranny.

The second piece of legislation is House Bill 17-1331, titled: “Concerning Protecting Colorado Citizens Who are Engaged in an Act That is Protected by the Colorado Constitution from Outside Agencies.” Are you seeing a pattern with titles of the legislation yet? Everything is great if you read the title and go on about your daily business.

It is a succinct bill (this paragraph is longer than the actual bill text) that has not been passed, but is one that contradicts itself as soon as it gets started. From the definition portion of the bill: “*For purposes of this section, "Colorado Constitutional Right" means a right enumerated in the Colorado constitution that has not been declared unconstitutional by a federal or Colorado appellate court.*” (cont. p. 16)

So let's recap, your Colorado enumerated rights will not be infringed, so long as the almighty Federal judiciary hasn't deemed otherwise. So much for protecting citizens from outside agencies.

Finally, the aptly Orwellian "Election Watchers Bill," is summarily contradictory similar to the previous two. House Bill 17-1014 was signed into law on March 16, 2017 and is titled: "Concerning The Elimination Of The Criminal Penalty Imposed Upon An Elector For Disclosing The Contents of the Elector's Voted Ballot."

A quick backstory: during the 2016 General Election, some brave souls in Colorado were taking selfies with their ballots in the voting booth in defiance of leftover antiquated election laws, declaring such laws to be unconstitutional. This bill seeks to decriminalize the action and it starts off pretty well: *"any voter may show his or her voted ballot to any other person as long as the disclosure is not undertaken in furtherance of any election violation proscribed in this article."* Hooray! You say? Think again.

Bear with me for making you read this (I've truncated it for brevity) but, here is where they get sneaky, in the very next paragraph: *"The ability of a voter to disclose his or her voted ballot...is subject to the power of a county clerk and recorder to monitor activity...including placing reasonable restrictions on the use of photography in such settings or imposing other restrictions on activity in such settings as the county clerk and recorder finds necessary, to ensure the fair and efficient conduct of elections."* That's right, another unelected official will deem whether or not your actions are acceptable, as if they are some magical creature without impulses and prejudices.

In all three cases, the latter statements negate the former. So what's the point of the legislation?

The point is that you are not free. The government will tell you what you can and can't do. In fact, they have codified it; overruled your first amendment rights while you were focused on Trump and Russia, or Kathy Griffin, or the cultural appropriation of tacos by white restaurateurs. These bills have all the requisite talking points for the news cycles and grandstanding politicians seeking your vote: "We are protecting your right to free speech on campuses"; "You, Coloradoan, are protected from the overreach of the Trump Administration"; and, "You can now take a selfie in the voting booth!" Buried in the text, however, is the dirty power grab: government always seeks to expand control.

Numerous pages have been added to the Colorado statutes, codifying the government's ability to restrict *your* actions. All of these bills have bipartisan support. This is not left versus right; it is liberty versus tyranny. When the power to infer is in the government's hands, beware: it's never a problem until it's used against you.

[Nick Weber is a husband, father of two and loves sarcasm. You can follow him on Twitter:

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[Good one, Nick. The way to find out what a piece of legislation does is to read the title and safely assume the opposite. If it says it's a "jobs bill", it kills jobs; an "Affordable X Act", it raises prices; a "Patriot Act", a crime against the people; etc. Such are the follies of public law, and the need for a private, competitive, polycentric law. The production of legislation, i.e., not laws at all but government decrees, will inevitably expand and enlarge in a democracy until liberty is completely eroded. We don't need to "make" laws; the law of private property simply needs to be enforced, which the State is incapable of doing. ~The Front Range Voluntarist.]

CHOICE, OR PUBLIC EDUCATION?, ARTICLE
BY TERRY MCINTYRE

Government control of education is detrimental to our interests. A very high percentage of the population is directly educated by the government, and the few remaining "private" schools are so heavily influenced by government regulations and curriculum as to be nearly indistinguishable. And what do those schools teach in "civics" courses? Highly skewed versions of politics, history, and economics, where government actions are justified, and the choices made by free individuals are derided.

Suggest that parents should directly pay for the education of their minor children, and uproar ensues. It won't work, we are told, because (1) parents don't care; (2) parents can't afford it; and (3) parents are too ignorant to judge what is good or bad. James Tooley heard these three objections all over the world when he undertook to study a phenomenon which, he had been told repeatedly, did not even exist: free-market parent-funded schools for the poorest people in the world.

Well, behold, Tooley and his researchers located many thousands of such schools, almost all of which were not on the "official" lists and which, according to *government officials*, did not even exist. And those schools, on average, were about one grade level better than competing government schools. Their costs were lower; their teachers were more active and more engaged with students.

Of course, those schools still had to "teach to the test" because their students, to get into high school or university, had to do well on government-mandated tests. But the schools did one thing particularly well, which poor parents wanted, and governments did not: teach children to speak English in places where government policy was to teach only the local language.

As in the famous example of how to choose ice cream, where you're left with vanilla or chocolate, chosen by the voters or the government, parents voted directly with their own money for the kinds of schools they wanted. (You can read about this in Tooley's book *The Beautiful Tree*, and in research by James Tooley, Pauline Dixon, and others).

But government schools are not merely incompetent; their purposes are at odds with what parents and students want for themselves. There's a tradition going back to Fichte's 1807 Addresses to the German Nation, of governments using schools to create what Joel Spring terms the "Educational Security State" - that is, to prop up their own power. (See his book *Pedagogies of Globalization* for more).

One may think that one has had a good education - one may read and learn to do arithmetic tolerably well at just about any school - but public schools come bundled with a gigantic public bad: the insidious transmission of a fatally flawed civic religion.

More specifically, many people claim to be "against socialism", but could not define it or recognize it if they were sitting *right inside of it*. Yes, right inside of it. Whenever government controls or owns the means of production of goods and services - as it owns and controls the schools - that is socialism in action.

[And we see the prevalence of such enthusiastic, unthought-out allegiance to the necessity of government in those who attended the government-schools today. Of course, indoctrination, not accessibility as the egalitarian believes, is the goal. Public provision of schooling is essential to the life of the State. Thanks for the thought, Terry. ~ The Front Range Voluntarist]

**THE SENSATIONS THAT DRIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH, CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF ECONOMIC
HARMONIES, FREDERIC BASTIAT, ARTICLE BY SCOTT ALBRIGHT**
[This is a continuance in our series on Bastiat's Book Economic Harmonies]

Chapter two delves into the cause and effect of satisfying wants by explaining actions determined by subjective valuations of ends and how their fulfillment comes about. Man has scarce resources to utilize as means to his ends. It is only natural that he desires to harness the forces of nature to ease his efforts and make them more productive so that he can have both more leisure and time to pursue the satisfactions of ever-changing, newer, more refined wants.

"The soul (or, not to become involved in spiritual questions, man) is endowed with the faculty of sense perception. Whether sense perception resides in the body or in the soul, the fact remains that as a passive being he experiences sensations that are painful or pleasurable. As an active being he strives to banish the former and multiply the latter. The result, which affects him again as a passive being, can be called satisfaction." [1]

In light of the chapter title, "Wants, Efforts, Satisfactions", it is very important to note that the sensations of want and satisfaction are most often in society felt by one individual, but the effort is mostly performed (and therefore felt) by others in terms of the satisfactions that we enjoy but do not produce directly, because we rather are most likely a producer of one or a limited number of other goods and/or services that we produce in order to exchange for. With an expanded division of labor and growth in capital accumulation, man is able to satisfy his wants on continually better terms and therefore, fulfill more wants he formerly did not have as new ones emerge. It is only in the state of isolation that man always feels all three of these sensations; wants, efforts, and satisfactions.

"Of the three terms that encompass the human condition – sensation, effort, satisfaction – the first and the last are always, and inevitably, merged in the same individual. It is impossible to think of them as separated. We can conceive of a sensation that is not satisfied, a want that is not fulfilled, but never can we conceive of a want felt by one man and its satisfaction experienced by another...If the same held true of the middle term, effort, man would be a completely solitary creature. The economic phenomenon would occur in its entirety within an isolated individual. There could be a juxtaposition of persons; there could not be a society. There could be a personal economy; there could not be a political economy."
[2]

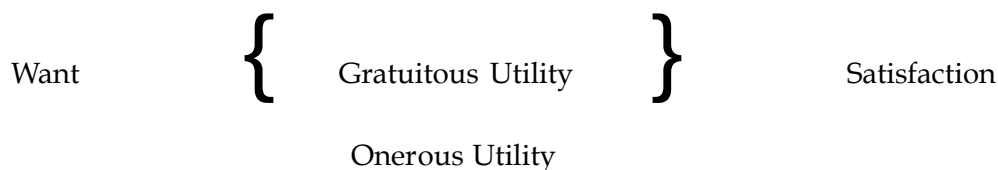
Chapter two also, as well as many others in Bastiat's Harmonies, elucidates the importance of human action and free will in studying economics; that logic and deductive reasoning can be traced from the axiom of action to show causal relationships crucial to understand in order to shed light upon the harmonies of capital.

"We are endowed with the faculty of comparing, of judging, of choosing, and of acting accordingly. This implies that we can arrive at a good or a bad judgment, make a good or a bad choice – a fact that it is never idle to remind men of when we speak to them of liberty." [3]

In my opinion, the most captivating point in chapter two is the unique description of how man's wants are satisfied: There are two cooperating factors, the first comes from Providence,

gifts of nature, termed “gratuitous utility” by Bastiat, such as water, rainfall, sunlight, electricity, minerals in the earth, land (in its natural state), or anything that human labor has not produced. The second factor is “onerous utility”, any human labor performed or services exchanged that are part of the production process.

"If we give the name of utility to everything that effects the satisfaction of wants, then there are two kinds of utility. One kind is given us by Providence without cost to ourselves; the other kind insists, so to speak, on being purchased through effort. Thus, the complete cycle embraces, or can embrace, these four ideas:



...Our self-interest is such that we constantly seek to increase the sum of our satisfactions in relation to our efforts; and our intelligence is such – in the cases where our attempt is successful – that we reach our goal through increasing the amount of gratuitous utility in relation to onerous utility.

Every time progress of this type is achieved, a part of our efforts is freed to be placed on the available list, so to speak; and we have the option either of enjoying more rest or of working for the satisfaction of new desires if these are keen enough to stir us to action.

Such is the source of all progress in the economic order." [4]

This passage describes part of the essential thesis of the book and what it entails, of man's desire to better his lot in life, have more leisure at his disposal and newer, more refined wants satisfied. One often overlooked factor from free markets and innovative capital investment is that it frees up labor to pursue newer, more advanced and higher order talents that emerge in the market as newer wants desired by consumers emerge in the market. This is good both for producers and consumers.

This is how man, in his self-interest, pursues his ends. But it doesn't end here. When man is successful in harnessing the forces of nature to utilize more efficiently the scarce factors of production necessary to yield desired satisfactions from his efforts, he not only benefits himself but society as a whole. Provided exchange is voluntary and competition is unleashed, that man is free to pursue his ends so long as he does not initiate force against the person or property of others, these benefits extend to the employees in their capacity as workers from increased output per worker, productivity gains resulting in higher living standards, more leisure and time to pursue new, unfulfilled wants. Consumers also benefit from more choices, higher quality, lower prices, and having more purchasing power so that they can consume and/or save/invest more of their income as well as fulfill new wants that they did not formerly have.

"I have just defined political economy and marked out the area it covers, without mentioning one essential element: gratuitous utility, or utility without effort.

All authors have commented on the fact that we derive countless satisfactions from this source. They have termed these utilities, such as air, water, sunlight, etc., natural wealth, in contrast to social wealth, and dismissed them; and, in fact, since they lead to no effort, no exchange, no service, and,

being without value, figure in no inventory, it would seem that they should not be included within the scope of political economy.

This exclusion would be logical if gratuitous utility were a fixed, invariable quantity always distinct from onerous utility, that is, utility created by effort; but the two are constantly intermingled and in inverse ratio. Man strives ceaselessly to substitute the one for the other, that is, to obtain, with the help of natural and gratuitous utilities, the same results with less effort. He makes wind, gravity, heat, gas do for him what originally he accomplished only by the strength of his own muscles.

Now, what happens? Although the result is the same, the effort is less. Less effort implies less service, and less service implies less value. All progress, therefore, destroys some degree of value, but how? Not at all by impairing the usefulness of the result, but by substituting gratuitous utility for onerous utility, natural wealth for social wealth. From one point of view, the part of value thus destroyed no longer belongs in the field of political economy, since it does not figure into our inventories; for it can no longer be exchanged, i.e., bought or sold, and humanity enjoys it without effort, almost without being aware of it. It can no longer be counted as relative wealth; it takes its place among the blessings of God. But, on the other hand, political economy would certainly be in error in not taking account of it. To fail to do so would be to lose sight of the essential, the main consideration of all: the final outcome, the useful result; it would be to misunderstand the strongest forces working for sharing in common and equality; it would be to see everything in the social order except the existing harmony. If this book is destined to advance political economy a single step, it will be through keeping constantly before the reader's eyes that part of value which is successively destroyed and then reclaimed in the form of gratuitous utility for all humanity." [5]

What is so important to take home from this passage is that most people, especially those who clamor against income and wealth inequality, lose sight of these effects from gratuitous utility that have so prolific an enjoyment and benefits yet have easily taken them for granted in the grand scheme of things. It seems to be heavily conditioned into society that unemployment of certain classes of labor or tradesman due to innovations in capital investment or from international trade is inherently undesirable and that we need state intervention to ostensibly slow this process down via tariffs, subsidies and worker protections in union contracts. It's baffling to see the logical inconsistencies exhibited between people's desires for these benefits at the individual vs. societal levels. You may often hear people decry automation, outsourcing of production, insourcing of labor, but have you ever heard anyone complain about not having to hand wash clothing or dishes, knit their own clothing, or see them scream at the checkout counter in a grocery store because of cheap produce?

The next chapter review will show more of the depths of man's desires, not just the logical mechanisms of how they are attained. Later reviews will expound upon the differences between value and utility and show where some of the classical economists, such as Adam Smith and Jean Baptiste Say, went wrong and gave fuel to the fire of the communists.

[1] Bastiat, Frederic. Economic Harmonies, p. 26, The Foundation for Economic Education, 1996; [2] Ibid, p. 30; [3] Ibid, p.28; [4] Ibid, p.27-28; [5]Ibid, p.32-33

**THE INEXHAUSTIBLE NATURE OF WANTS AND WHAT KEEPS THEM IN CHECK, REVIEW OF
BASTIAT'S ECONOMIC HARMONIES, CHAPTER THREE, BY SCOTT ALBRIGHT**
[This is the third segment in our series on Bastiat's Economic Harmonies]

The process of how man's wants are satisfied as described by Bastiat in chapter two of Economic Harmonies may seem a little dry and methodical to some, but chapter three goes deeper into the depths of a man's essence and being on top of elucidating on some causal relationships. There have always been deep seated fears that automation emerging in the market via innovative capital investments would make people lazy and create many idle hands. Coupled with this fear is the claim that unfettered capitalism and the full unleashing of free market forces would give rise to immorality and a societal degradation, so to speak. Chapter Three highlights that although suffering is inevitable in our world, it also can and often does act in a manner that tends to rid itself of its own causes.

"The study of the natural laws of society will reveal that the role of suffering is gradually to destroy its own causes, to restrict itself to narrower and narrower limits, and, finally, to guarantee us, by making us earn and deserve it, a preponderance of the good and the beautiful over the evil." [1]

Part of the reason that people seem to fear that capital investment and wealth creation will eventually lead us to become lazy and idle is that they tend to assume that man's wants and desires are a fixed quantity beyond which people will just consume leisure. They forget that self-interest is the mainspring force that drives humanity and that the well of desires in man is endless.

"On the subject of human wants I have an observation to make that is important, even fundamental, for political economy: they are not a fixed, immutable quantity. By nature they are not static, but progressive.

This characteristic is to be noted even in the most material of our wants; it becomes more marked as we advance to those intellectual tastes and yearnings that distinguish man from beast." [2]

Also, there is much to be learned from one of the most poignant statements concerning the problems that arise when people believe that wants are a fixed quantity to be desired:

"It is impossible to find a good solution to the problem of the machine, foreign competition, and luxury, as long as wants are considered as an invariable quantity, or their capacity for indefinite multiplication is not taken into account.

But if man's wants are not fixed quantities, but progressive, capable of growth like the inexhaustible desires on which they constantly feed, we must conclude, granting that a balance between the means and the end is the first law of all harmony, that Nature has placed in man and about him unlimited and constantly increasing means of satisfaction. This is what we shall now examine." [3]

Not everyone desires solely economic and monetary gains as their most valuable ends, as the essence of one's being often desires to enjoy more nobler goals, such as the continual learning and expanding of knowledge, the cultivation of one's intelligence and sensibilities to become more learned and refined, the charitable giving to their less fortunate brethren, close relationships with family, friends, community and extended ranges of society beyond the

individual are high on the lists of many. But we must not forget that enjoying these said desires of a higher order can only be realized after we can provide for our own basic needs.

"Without professing, then, to classify human wants in a rigorously methodical order, we may say that man cannot direct his efforts toward the satisfaction of his highest and noblest moral wants until he has provided for those that concern the preservation of his life. Hence, we can already conclude that any legislative measure that makes material life difficult is harmful to the moral life of nations, a harmony that I call to the reader's attention in passing..."

Since the inexorable necessities of material life are an obstacle to moral and intellectual development, it follows that more virtue will be found in the more affluent nations and classes...Today there is a veritable mania for attributing to the poorer classes a monopoly of all the devotion, all the self-sacrifice, all the noble qualities that constitute in man moral grandeur and beauty." [4]

This certainly would not be espoused by most of the media, the political class, and academic heads of today. Many rant as if the U.S. and the Western World is the problem and that the developing and poverty stricken third world are the benevolent and selfless ones. Today, it is no different sentimentally speaking, as it was in the days of Bastiat. The illogical paradox that this places these claims in is exposed very gracefully by Bastiat, once again.

"But is it possible to admit as a general proposition that virtue is the privilege of the poverty-stricken, and that vice is the unlovely and unfailing companion of the well-to-do? This would be to affirm that moral and intellectual development, which is compatible only with a certain degree of leisure and comfort, works to the detriment of intelligence and morality.

And I appeal to the honest judgment of the unfortunate classes themselves. To what horrible discords would such a paradox not lead?

We should therefore have to say that humanity is faced with the terrible alternatives of either remaining eternally poverty-stricken or of moving toward ever increasing immorality. In accordance with this logic, all the forces that lead to wealth, such as enterprise, thrift, orderliness, skill, honesty, are the seeds of vice; whereas those that hold us back in poverty, like improvidence, idleness, dissipation, negligence, are the precious buds of virtue. Could a more discouraging discord be imagined in the moral world?" [5]

Another aspect of the nature of man's wants that is lost in most analyses of political economy is the nature of foresight, of anticipating future demand for goods and services, which necessarily includes foregoing/delaying some consumption of goods, or what Murray Rothbard referred to as the lowering of one's time preferences. This is necessary so that one can consume more in the future, hence the saying "savings is delayed consumption."

"We can satisfy most of our wants only by taking pains, which can themselves be considered suffering. The same is true of the act by which, exercising a noble restraint over our appetites, we deprive ourselves of something." [6]

The fact that we must delay consumption, restrain our appetites, grow savings to enable more investment in capital, so that we can consume more in the future, is what helps to naturally keep man's wants in check. No one person or nation ever enriched themselves by consuming away all that they produce. It is this necessary lowering of time preference which forces man to be prudent, frugal, to have an eye for the future, not just to live here in the moment.

"Foresight is one of man's noblest privileges, and it is hardly necessary to say that, in almost all the circumstances of life, the odds are all in favor of the man who best knows the consequences of his decisions and his acts.

Restraint of one's appetites, control of one's passions, acceptance of present privation for the sake of future, though distant, gain – these are the essential conditions for the building up of capital; and capital, as we have seen, is itself the essential prerequisite for all the undertakings that are at all complicated or extensive." [7]

Once we examine these truths, we see that one of the harmonies of capital is that it acts as an incentive in and of itself, to promote a bettering of society because it necessitates a foregoing of consumption and an exercising of foresight which requires us to be more wise in all of our decisions and to think more long term. It is not reasonable to think that we can just act a fool, so to speak, living in the moment having no regard for the future, and still expect to prosper.

"I shall not dwell on this. We need only look about us to realize that all our strength, all our faculties, all our virtues, work together for the advancement of man and society.

By the same token there is not one of our vices that does not contribute directly or indirectly to poverty. Idleness paralyzes the very sinews of production. Ignorance and error give it false direction. Lack of foresight opens the way to miscalculations. Yielding to the appetites of the moment prevents the building up of capital. Vanity leads to dissipating our energies on illusory satisfactions, at the expense of real ones. Violence, fraud, provoking violence and fraud in return, force us to surround ourselves with burdensome protective measures, to the great depletion of our energies." [8]

Chapter three also reiterates the truths established in chapter two concerning how man attains his ends via using both onerous and gratuitous utility, always attempting to substitute the latter for the former. However, it is more important for this chapter review to show how mans wants are held in check by the necessities of delayed consumption and foresight necessary to build up capital and to correctly anticipate future demand. If everyone were to be a spendthrift, uncaring for the future and potential lot of their posterity, this natural harmony of interests could not exist, as the poorer classes could not expect to obtain goods and services on better terms enabled by future capital investment, the productive job opportunities would be more grim for everyone, and there would be more uprisings as a result, especially considering what people grow to expect in terms of living standards and opportunities would be crushed. The more nobler desires of moral and intellectual development, refining of tastes and cultivation of sentiments would only be available for the few rich who are frugal, if any. The next chapter review will be on exchange, and its benefits and necessity for economic growth.

[1] Bastiat, Frederic. Economic Harmonies, p. 36, The Foundation for Economic Education, 1996; [2] Ibid, p. 39; [3] Ibid, p. 43-44; [4] Ibid, p. 37; [5] Ibid, p.38; [6] Ibid, p. 34; [7] Ibid, p. 55; [8] Ibid, p. 56

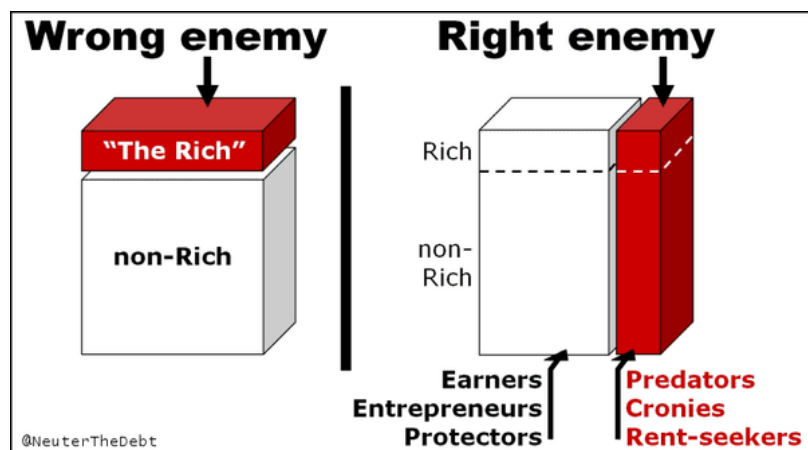
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ENEMIES, RIGHT AND WRONG: IS THE LEFT A NECESSARY ENEMY OF VOLUNTARYISTS? No, says
RICHARD G. ELLEFRITZ, PHD, LIBERTARIAN SOCIOLOGY 101 COLUMN

In my last installment, titled “Karl Marx, Conflict Theory, and the Coming Battle Between Libertarians and Socialists,” I openly attacked Colorado Springs Socialist, Emma Redman, by critiquing her writing style and criticizing her ideology. In doing so, I made several grammatical errors myself, and I waved my own ideological flags, Weberian social theory (as opposed to Marxian social theory) and voluntaryism (as opposed to statism). So, do two wrongs make a right? Well, it depends on the wrongs, and under whose authority we consider what makes something right (or correct). In this essay, I first quibble over grammatical and stylistic issues in writing, and then proceed toward a discussion of authority. I conclude the essay by addressing the title’s question (and answer). (Readers of my first installment will notice my retention of the device I used and continue to use, but more on that later.)

When writing, one must assume (or is it presume?) the knowledge and perspectives of their readers, but one also must take into account how their readers read. Ms. Redman (if I may assume *zir* gender) presumed her readers would know the connection between Karl Marx and sociological conflict theory, and I questioned this presumption as logical for her targeted audience yet illogical for broader audiences. Increasingly Leftist in their politics, university professors, social scientists, and sociologists are much more likely (see also here) than the average member of U.S. society to be in the Democratic Party, consider themselves to be liberal progressives, and identify with the writings of and ideologies associated with Karl Marx. Though this fact is not surprising to some, for example, to readers of David Horowitz’s book, 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America, the knowledge of from where, exactly, Marxian ideologies are disseminated in U.S. society is likely lacking (this is my assumption, but one I will pay further attention to in upcoming installments), but perhaps Emma (if I could be so presumptuous as to use her first name) has reason to suspect her readers know and understand this connection, i.e. that thousands of sociology instructors across and throughout U.S. society expose millions of first year college students to Marxian ideology. Perhaps Emma is the victim of Marxian indoctrination, and now a perpetrator of this insidious ideology.

If you have gotten the impression that I, as a sociologist and personally, am opposed to Marxian thought, you are (mostly) correct. While I patently reject the labor theory of value and some other Marxian concepts, I do believe that Marx and Marxists have developed and/or employed several useful concepts and conceptual schema, though not without caveats toward each. For instance, it can be useful, as Marx and Engels did in their manifesto, to divide world history into two competing camps. Afterall, along with many other libertarians, voluntaryists, and anarchists, I tend to view the world along the lines of those who prefer non-aggression as the organizing principle of society and those who either prefer coercion or cannot see the dominant paradigm for what it is, statist to the core. But, perhaps this is my presumption (no, it is not an assumption, for example see here and here), and what really separates society is the relationship to the means of production, as Marx and Engels asserted.



The figure below (Figure 1. *Enemies, Right and Wrong*) depicts this in a popular Internet meme, which I referenced at the end of my last installment where I mistakenly stated that the right side of the figure had columns on both the left and right sides as it should due to authoritarianism having both dimensions.

Sociologically, Marxians and Weberians view society in terms of conflict, but whereas the

former believe this conflict is between the rich (capitalists) versus the rest (workers), Weberians look toward property ownership (class), lifestyle (status), and access to political parties (power) as dynamic, multi-dimensional and multi-faceted features of societal conflict. From my perspective, both left-wing authoritarianism and right-wing authoritarianism are inexcusable ideologies that rely upon coercion to implement their versions of the social good. Instead of statism in either its Left or Right versions, I believe society should be organized around voluntaryism. Those of us in the middle pretty much just want to get on in our lives in terms of working up Maslow's hierarchy of needs (e.g., see here), but many others in society continue to push toward the use of state power as a solution to the social problems they advocate. As (some) sociologists know well, though, social problems are the outcome of claims-making by interest groups that achieve societal recognition and legitimation. What this means is that one group's problem is another's solution (and vice versa), and that some issues are never taken up as a problem due to lack of support or recognition. That is, groups in society raise issues to the level of social problems, and then they seek to remedy those problems.

Marxists of all stripes see economic inequality and capitalism as intertwined social problems, and their solution has always been to increase the bureaucratic power of the state to the point where it has the ability to redistribute, and ultimately abolish, all private property. The vast majority of libertarians, voluntaryists, and anarchists understand that private property is an essential, unalienable feature of human existence, for if you cannot own yourself and the fruits of your labor, you cannot control your destiny and pursue happiness (without harming others, of course). But perhaps that is the point: Marxists want to own you, by any means necessary.

Now, here is where logic and language enter the discussion. Does society exist? Yes, but in what ways, how, and why? These have been questions pondered by sociologists since the field's inception in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, and they are questions with which I entertain myself. Importantly, if one believes society to be a thing in and of itself, *sui generis* (as Emile Durkheim thought it), one might also be inclined to believe that society can (and should be) engineered. The reason for this is that society is thought of not as a collection of real, live human beings complete with their own psyches, cognitions, feelings, aspirations, families, friends, occupations, groups, and networks, but rather society is viewed as a series of groups, networks, organizations, and social institutions, each of which is thought of as a component of society.

Therefore, the conclusion is drawn that some entity can and should govern these components to the end that society is benefited, i.e. the state operates toward the greater good. But, how do we define this greater good?

While many sociologists have spilled much ink working toward an understanding of how it is that societal definitions come into existence, most of them owe their livelihoods to the hermeneutics of Max Weber. Weber, as far as I know, did not have a totalizing conception of society. Though he viewed society as composed of bureaucracies and groups of various sorts, he was interested in sociological social psychology that leads humans to engage in social action. Whereas Ludwig von Mises's *Human Action* spelled out the preconditions under which people act (i.e. to alleviate discomfort and work toward achieving subjectively defined ends with logical means), Weber focused on *social* action, noting that some people in some situations act with instrumental rationality (practical means-ends calculations) whereas others act with value-oriented rationality (means-ends motives predicated on cultural values and beliefs). Still, he theorized, people will find themselves motivated by tradition and emotions in other circumstances. Without delving too much deeper into Weberian social theory, it is useful to point out that he had developed similar typologies of authority as well, including rational-legal, traditional, and charismatic origins of authority (they can combine into and emerge from each other in various ways).

What we in the voluntarist, Non-Aggression Principle camp oppose is not authority per se, but rather the types of traditional and rational-legalistic authority structures that preclude sovereignty and ownership of our own bodies and minds. Right- and Left-wing authoritarians, in whichever socio-economic status level they might be, support and operate the machinery of the state, which is that authority structure that monopolizes the legitimate use of force and violence in society (Weber's definition). Like social problems, though, it is the state and its supporters that define society and its components in need of its violence. This is indicated by the variants of the word legitimate: *Legitimate* is an adjective that means to conform to the governing laws and norms, whereas *legitimate* is a verb that means to justify or to make *legitimate*. Emma Redman and other Marxists seek to further *legitimate* state violence to the extent that self-ownership is an esoteric, ancient, or unpopular form of social organization, but this is not necessarily the stance of all Leftists.

As an adherent to left-libertarianism, mainly due to my inclinations toward Weber's writings on domination and state power, I find that there are allies and potential apologists and recruits among the Left. And so I believe we voluntarists are not, and should not be necessarily enemies with them. Marxists are a different matter altogether. Whereas a Leftist might believe that government works and can solve problems, they might simply have never been educated about the role of entrepreneurs and market forces in society, and so they have come to believe, for one reason or another, that state power is the primary solution to the social problems they believe need the most attention. We voluntarists see the state itself as a social problem, and should advocate it as such to as many people as possible, including those on the Left who can come to their senses and understand that taxation, war, and welfare are far more harmful than not, and that they are completely unnecessary in a peaceful, prosperous society built on the tenets of voluntarism. If we voluntarists move forward as an exclusive bunch, we will surely atrophy and our cause will wither, but if we open our arms to potential allies, especially those who are or who can be divested of the pernicious assumptions and presumptions of Marxism, we open the potential to diminishing the numbers and effects of the most dangerous authoritarians: Marxists. (Note: I will have more to say about fascists in future installments.)

**PHYSICAL REMOVAL - SEPARATING THE FACTS
FROM THE PERVERSIONS, ARTICLE BY JAKOB
HÖRNGREN**

**Hans-Hermann Hoppe, Augusto Pinochet, and
the Alt-Right Trolls**

The meme warriors from 4chan have revolutionized the art of meme warfare, and in the process of doing so, prominent libertarian scholars have appeared frequently together with fascist leaning military dictators in what I would call the "alt-right meme circus."

Memeing Gone Rampant

The helicopter is warmed up, photoshopped into the image are the faces of Augusto Pinochet (the former Chilean dictator) and Hans-Hermann Hoppe (Austrian economist and libertarian theorist) replacing the original caricature faces. Loaded onto the helicopter are a few communists or Antifa social justice activists. Pepe the frog furthermore drags the commies onto the helicopter, and the helicopter carries the flag of Kekistan (an invented kingdom). The text on the meme reads, "Hoppe's Physical Removal Service", or "The Hoppean helicopter ride", or "Free Kekistan!" Does this scenario sound familiar to you?

If you identify yourself as an anarcho-capitalist libertarian then you have certainly been exposed to the literature of Hans-Hermann Hoppe, and you might laugh in amusement at this type of weaponized autism put forward by the alt-right internet trolls. While the perversion of Hoppe's argumentation ethics is entertaining in a warped sort of way, it is understandable that some people could be deceived by this distortion of Hoppe's arguments, and consequently obtain a twisted interpretation of one of the greatest heroes for the cause of liberty.

Physical Removal

In order to clear up the confusion regarding the controversy around Hoppe, we need to look closer at his argumentation ethics, and frame the issue given the presumed conditions from which Hoppe derives his reasoning. In his masterpiece, *Democracy - The God That Failed*, Hoppe famously claims that "*in a covenant...among proprietor and community tenants for the purpose of protecting their private property, no such thing as a right to free*

(unlimited) speech exists" because some people might promote ideas that would disturb the naturally established covenant and destabilize the covenant's asserted protection of private property, concepts such as "*democracy and communism*". Hoppe furthermore goes on to argue that "*there can be no tolerance toward democrats and communists in a libertarian social order*", and the conclusion is that the alleged enemies of private property preservation "*will have to be physically separated and removed from society*", so to speak. The idea of "physical removal" is coming from the aforementioned statements. These statements, when taken out of context can be widely misunderstood.

The "Hoppean proviso"

It therefore becomes crucial to understand from what framework Hoppe delivers his bold rhetoric. People who have never even read a line in *Democracy - The God That Failed*, will think that Hoppe believes it is acceptable from an anarcho-capitalist stand-point to physically remove socialists by the use of government force, i.e., initiate aggression. This is obviously not the case, and anyone who has had the opportunity to read Hoppe's work, knows that the proviso for removing people is the understanding and contractual agreements of property rights in a free society. The "Hoppean proviso" rests on the presumption that the notion of private property in a covenant society is the rule of law. It is therefore not controversial at all to say that a property owner has every right to exclude anyone from his/her property, for any reason, at any time. The natural right to discriminate is fundamental to maintain a peaceful and prosperous society, and it is nothing more controversial than your own right to decide whom you invite to come to your house for dinner. In other words, when framing the issues by looking at them through the lens of self-determination, property rights, and voluntary association, it becomes crystal clear that the right to exclusion is a high necessity and a defense against moral decay and high time-preference. On the other hand, if one looks at the issues through the statist lens of government coercion, collectivism, and nationalism, like factions of the alt-right, then they are easy to become grotesquely contorted, as they have been.

(cont. p. 28)

Migration and Borders

The anti-state mentality of the “Hoppean” proviso can be applied to the question of immigration and borders as well. In a free society, no such thing as state borders would exist from restricting the movement of individuals. However, there would be private borders instead driven by market forces, and private borders of property owners spanning geographical territories can exclude and discriminate freely. Private borders are just; state borders are not. We can therefore conclude that no such thing as “*freedom of immigration*” exists between private borders of different property titles. How could there be free immigration if highly selective homeowner associations and property owners determine admission to a specific territory? The property titles may vary in their restrictive nature. We could have areas where there would be “*no sale or rent to Jews, Germans, Catholics, homosexuals, Haitians, families with or without children, or smokers*”, and at the same time there would be areas where the selectivity and discrimination would be less restricted due to more relaxed covenants on immigration.

Even in the case of immigration, the “physical removal” part is not justified with state action, but it is justified by the notion that property owners ought to have the right to do as they please with their respective property titles. When immigration occurs without the consent or invitation of

property owners in a specific area, by the force of the government iron fist, we have a case of forced integration. In a free society, a case of forced integration would be called trespassing, and thus “physical removal” is without any doubt warranted. When the “Hoppean” proviso is not satisfied and the state carries out deportations despite there being an agreement between property owner and migrant, we have a case of forced segregation or forced exclusion. The “physical removal” by forced segregation, and hence not in line with the “Hoppean” proviso, is not warranted and it violates the ethics of private property.

Freedom from The State

This piece should have cleared up some of the confusions involving the phenomenon of “physical removal” contained in Hoppe’s argumentation ethics. All the arguments derived from Hoppe are rooted in the basic notion of negative rights as opposed to positive rights. Namely freedom in the sense that you are free *from* the compulsion of the state, but not freedom to impose yourself and violate property rights of individuals who simply and peacefully refuse to associate with you in any way. Discrimination is not an act of violence, and as individuals we choose to discriminate every day, from the food we eat, to where we buy our clothes, to who we rent from, and so forth.

[Submitted from NYC, New York]



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