

New Liberty

Not the Daughter, But the Mother of Order - Proudhon

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No. 2

The State is Your Enemy

To the Editor of New Liberty:

A lot of what you say is true, but I believe that you are missing the mark. Government CAN step in to prevent the concentration of corporate power and other evils through proper policy. Electing leaders who advocate on behalf of the people is the most practical response to our problems today. Libertarians have a tendency to assume that the scaling back of the state will lead to more liberty, but the opposite is the case. In a free market system, anyone who has the power to assert their will over others will do so. As Madison argued in the Federalist Papers, government is the check against these "factions." The strongest faction today is the corporation, and it is a far greater threat to the people than the state.

So not only CAN government prevent this despotism from occurring; it must. Otherwise, it's just the law of the jungle -- and that much liberty is not liberty at all, for liberty is nothing without equality.

Sincerely, "Federalist"

OCTOBER 28, 2008.

Absolute freedom is what we anarchists want. This includes freedom from compulsion, intolerance, rulers, class struggle, as well as institutionalized aggression, invasion, and violence. Only a state can impose the majority these ill-effects upon mankind; they are a plague that will cease upon the state's removal from the earth.

The state is your enemy, and as to the few cases where it appears benevolent (which is all too readily regurgitated by its media brethren), you can rest assured that its true motive is quite sinister. A sudden reversal of this policy is an utter pipe dream. By definition, the state is hostile, coercive, and invasive. It impedes the beneficial and destroys that which threatens it.

It is immensely important to recall Adam Smith's immortal words: "*Whenever the legislature attempts to regulate the differences between masters and their workmen, its counselors are always the masters.*" The state has never consistently intervened on behalf of the laboring class; it has always been for capital. Any improvements made for the masses were initiated by business attempting to grant order to the markets. The so-called "progressive era" was overwhelmingly marked by attempts from corporations to regulate the market to stranglehold any possible competition, and the New Deal was designed and represented by big business in a time of fear and instability. FDR's supposed assiduous advocacy for the laborer was nothing more than a sham: the institution of the Wagner regime showed that unpredictable labor practices were far too damaging for capitalists who relied on stability for profit.

The current organization is the "law of the jungle" that "Federalist" decries, moreso than any anarchistic structure could ever hope to be. As has been for countless years, the strongest entity is the state; it created the monopoly through regulation, whether it be dispossession of property from early peasant landowners or limiting access to capital and preventing ideas from entering the market. It has always imposed its will on others—domestic citizens, businesses, foreign nations—by the right of its own sheer power.

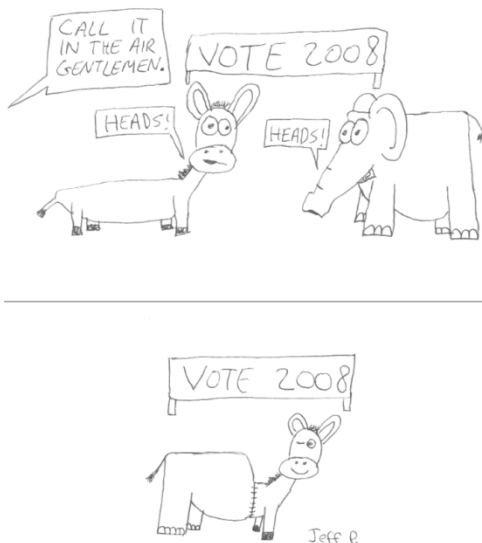
Liberty and equality are not opposed. In fact, they are natural allies. They both seek to abolish privilege, authority, and cultural restriction. With true liberty comes the equality of liberty, and under the law of equal liberty, all have the opportunity for what the classical anarchists called "moral self-direction."

A decentralist, free market organizational structure would ensure that no harmful entity is subsidized at the expense of the commoner; no crime against life, liberty, or property goes unpunished; no one can be coerced to act against their self-interest by an all-encompassing power; and all have the opportunity to achieve their potential by guiding their own lives freely and in peace.

All we ask is eternal vigilance.

RASKOLNIK

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Perspectives

In light of the 2008 U.S. presidential election

"[W]hat you have today is like walking into the grocery store and you go to the soft drink department, and there is only Pepsi and Coke. Those are the two you get to choose from. There is no Mountain Dew, no Root Beer, no Orange. They're both Colas; one is slightly sweeter than the other, depending on which side of the aisle you are on." - Jesse Ventura

"Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority. There is but little virtue in the action of masses of men. When the majority shall at length vote for the abolition of slavery, it will be because they are indifferent to slavery, or because there is but little slavery left to be abolished by their vote. They will then be the only slaves. Only his vote can hasten the abolition of slavery who asserts his own freedom by his vote." - H.D. Thoreau

"How fortunate for leaders that men do not think." - Adolf Hitler

"Under democracy one party always devotes its chief energies to trying to prove that the other party is unfit to rule - and both commonly succeed, and are right" - H.L. Mencken

"The great thing about democracy is that it gives every voter a chance to do something stupid." - Art Spander

Party Hardy

Have you ever been in a "would you rather" situation? All of us probably have at some point in our lives. It's the type of situation where you are forced to make a very difficult choice between two equally unappealing scenarios. These are often the hardest decisions to make, as no matter which of the two options you choose, you are doomed to be unsatisfied. For example would you rather live without music or live without TV? Would you rather fight a bear or fight three hundred kindergarten students at once? Now these examples may be a bit exaggerated and comical but they are tough nonetheless. They should cause a person to feel a need for alternative options with which they may be able to more closely align. Other and more practical situations in which you may encounter these issues are upon choosing between meals on an airplane or more importantly, a candidate for president.

Choosing a president is of great significance, so the fact that we have such a limited spectrum of possibilities is quite distressing. If a person is going to make such an important decision with his or her vote then you would expect them to have access to a wealth of information regarding the topics at hand and the ability to choose from a wide variety of options. This is the problem

with a strictly two party system: the voter can only hear two sides of an issue whereas many subjects are multifaceted. And if the candidates agree on the same issue and you disagree? Well it then looks as if you are tough out of luck. For example, in this election cycle both major presidential candidates supported the government bailout of Wall Street in spite of the fact that the vast majority of Americans opposed it. Most third party candidates were in staunch opposition to the bill, yet they were not given any press time by the media and therefore remained non-existent to the American people who shared their beliefs. This allowed both major candidates to talk openly about the positives of the bailout bill without fear of damaging criticism, continuing the ideology of the current administration.

Having a two party system allows for the same types of political philosophies to constantly control the government. There is no possibility of change, regardless of what the individual candidates preach. Having competition in politics is just as great as having it in the marketplace. Competition in the market allows for lower prices and higher wages; similarly, a lot of competition in politics allows added discussion about the most important issues. More candidates to choose from permits the increased possibility of a choice of someone whose views are aligned with your own. Furthermore, statistics show that a multiparty system consistently produces higher voter turnout than a two party-system.

This competition in politics also helps to identify the best solution and bring out the truth. With differing philosophies represented by several candidates, you can be sure that no stone will be left unturned. As it stands right now the two political parties have a monopoly on the political process, causing the American people to be exposed to only what THEY TELL US! Democrats and Republicans alike are strongly backed by corporations who control the media through their power and wealth. Third Parties are not represented en masse because of this lack of affiliation with the rich and the powerful, allowing them to have more of the peoples' interest in mind, as it should be.

So if you want more options, more truth, more competition, and more work being done on your behalf, then you should support third parties and help bring them to prominence. They truly can make the system better and end the stranglehold that the two corporately-motivated parties have had on politics for a very long time. As with anything in democracy it is up to you, the individual, to do your part to make both the political process and the country better as a whole.

PHIL REI

A Brainless Attack

I approach the following editorial with a little hesitancy. Normally, a piece so utterly devoid of rigorous intellectual quality or knowledge about the subject in question wouldn't earn the attention of this periodical, but the fact that Jacob Weisberg's 'The End of Libertarianism' sports a title so tawdry and appears in a popular mainstream publication (Newsweek) deserves it the honor of being rebuked.

So we begin with a definitional exercise. Libertarianism is the antonym of authoritarianism, and so long as there is authority or the threat of authority, it will be met with resistance. Whether it's the Sons of Liberty in America, the Tank Man in Tiananmen Square, or the White Rose in Nazi Germany, the voice of liberty will be heard, and its heroes will be honored in time. But this is not the substance of Weisberg's article. The subtitle hints at a more focused approach: "The financial collapse proves that its ideology makes no sense."

Ah! So libertarian ideology is to blame for the ongoing financial crisis. Funny, I can't recall libertarian ideals being soundly applied to an entire nation since the Icelandic Free State a millennium ago. But we'll let Weisberg have his fun:

(Continued on back, column three)

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"Your Ticket to Freedom" - Alex Bernier

In Defense of Socialism

I am well aware that many readers will scratch their heads in confusion at this title. "Isn't this a periodical for individual liberty? Isn't that principle diametrically opposed to socialism?" Well, not exactly. Despite the overwrought association of socialism with the violation of individual liberty, there is a rich history within the movement, and it deserves careful consideration from all sincere ideologies.

Joe the Plumber has stirred up that age-old American fear of socialism. The common reasoning goes, "The socialists want to redistribute wealth so individuals who worked the hardest are forced to give their well-earned dollars to those who didn't. This is theft."

But therein lies the implicit assumption that everybody is justly compensated for their labor. However, this hasn't historically been the case. The state's interference in the market has made the distribution of wealth resemble a scale of who can best use this intrusion to further their own aims, often at the expense of the greater society.

The early socialists recognized this problem and sought to remedy it. Benjamin Tucker wrote in his classic essay, *State Socialism and Anarchism*, "The economic principles of Modern Socialism are a logical deduction from the principle laid down by Adam Smith in the early chapters of his 'Wealth of Nations,' - namely, that labor is the true measure of price."

Yet as price and wage failed to reflect the total input of labor, the socialists argued that industrial capitalism had created this inequity.

Tucker continues, "It was at this point - the necessity of striking down monopoly - that came the parting of their ways. Here the road forked. They found that they must turn either to the right or to the left, - follow either the path of Authority or the path of Liberty. Marx went one way; Warren and Proudhon the other. Thus were born State Socialism and Anarchism."

An egalitarian system free from monopolies is socialism; progressive taxation is not. The claims of the right-wingers that modern liberals seek to create a socialistic system is spurious. Rather, liberals intend to slightly shift the balance of power from the corporation toward the state. While nearer to state socialism than the policy of conservatives, it is within the wider realm of corporate plutocracy nonetheless. Yet, with state intervention in the market being what it is, attempting to redistribute wealth through a welfare system isn't any more unreasonable than preserving the status quo.

Mikhail Bakunin once wrote, "Liberty without socialism is privilege, injustice; socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality." If liberty and equality are natural allies, then so are liberty and socialism. The socialist objections to usury, privilege, and hierarchy are no different than those of the principled libertarian.

At the *New Liberty*, we wish to drastically reduce or abolish the state's influence on natural society. This will need to be accomplished and maintained through anti-capitalist voluntary associations designed to ensure justice, equality, and freedom.

RASKOLNIK

McCain: Bush III

I have a message for all the McCain supporters out there: Our foreign wars and government spending are very connected. But of course you know that right? Then why do you believe McCain's bullshit when he professes that he will take a hatchet to government expenditures? Has he professed any commitment to drastically cut back our aggressive foreign policy that has bankrupted the country? No. The fact remains that we have military bases in 130 countries that are worth a total of \$115 billion. The "defense" budget exceeds all others in the world combined. I think anyone knowledgeable of history would deem it safe to say that the United States is an empire. We launch preemptive wars to serve our own national interests while

continually taking out leaders from other countries that don't back our imperialistic policies. And McCain's foreign agenda is more of the same. We will see wars waged for profit in Asia sold in a carefully-knit package of "spreading our freedoms." It's hypocrisy of the highest level, especially when we have restrictions on civil liberties at home. Furthermore, our aggression throughout the world coupled with massive military spending is one of the many causes of the failing economy. We are in so much debt that the infamous counter in Times Square was unable to compute the new \$10 trillion figure. NOT a good sign. There is a \$1.4 trillion trade deficit with China. At least Barack Obama recognizes that the strength of the military is dependent on the strength of the economy. Our empire will end, not because the people will finally realize it is morally wrong, but because our economy will go bankrupt funding our empire.

There can be no doubt that McCain is a warmonger who intends to further the power of the United States. While Obama will not drastically cut our military budget and leave our bases worldwide, at least he says he will end the war in Iraq. This is not an endorsement for Obama. He is a puppet for the corporations controlling this country, being groomed and prepped from the beginning. But I will let that issue remain untouched for another time.

The only hope to return to a sane foreign policy is to amplify the voices of third parties and candidates out of the mainstream—people who will speak their minds. Unfortunately however, the vast majority of people will not "waste their votes" on such politicians. People will always vote for the *lesser of two evils*. The fact that the term is even used illustrates the hopelessness of our current system. The *lesser of two evils* is still evil. Why are the American people settling for an evil candidate?

SHAUNA MUSSER

Obama: Future Mass Murderer

Every once in a while, we in the libertarian community feel a sense of smug self-satisfaction in discovering how the old adage that the two dominant parties in American politics are "two sides of the same greasy coin" remains supremely true. The media may attempt to illuminate where their differences lie with regard to pet issues, but on the most important issues? No discernable difference. Nowhere is this better evidenced by the glee with which the (ex-Trotskyite) neoconservatives have welcomed Obama into their ranks. From Christopher Hitchens, to Colin Powell, Francis Fukuyama, Ken Aldeman, Andrew Sullivan, and most recently, Scott McClellan, many of those that made the case for "Democracy, Now and Forever by the *Blade!*" have joined the bandwagon for Obama.

So what's the deal? Is it his effusive charm, sensible tone, and calm demeanor? Unlikely. While the vortex of hope has swept into the hearts of starry-eyed liberals, the warmongers' vision remains soundly fixed on the dawn of the new American empire. Neoconservatism as an ideology has been soundly rejected by the American people as evidenced by the response to the Iraq misadventure, but what was once disguised as 'compassionate conservatism' now has a new face.

Obama's tough talk on Russia's response to the Georgian initiatory attack on South Ossetia where Russian peacekeepers were stationed has helped to transform the (as they call it) former Soviet Union into something of an international pariah; to them, the bear has awakened from its great slumber. Furthermore, under an Obama administration, Israel is still an untouchable (or dare I say it, *the unmentionable*), a preemptive attack on Iran is not 'off the table,' more troops will be sent to a rapidly deteriorating country known as Afghanistan, and Pakistan is squarely in America's sights.

He may not be the neocon darling that is John McCain, but the powers-that-be astutely recognize that an Obama administration is nothing to fear. Their ideology may be bruised and battered, but it is far from dead. And really, who better than Obama to sell to the public the case for war?

With an imploding economy and hard times ahead lending itself to volatile emotions, you can rest assured that Obama will be added to the long list of U.S. leaders who ought to be tried for **mass murder**. But hey, we're told that institutionalized violence sanctioned by the state is okay. Whether it's Nixon's vengeful bombing of Vietnam in the last day's of the war or Clinton's asphyxiating sanctions upon Iraq that

murdered 500,000 children, the revered presidential seat is a trap for psychotic behavior, immiseration of millions, and *genocide*.

Ignorance is no excuse. Every bomb dropped and every act of economic warfare has grave consequences that this country unhesitatingly swallows like it were Tylenol (or perhaps Xanax). This has been demonstrated for decades, and shows no signs of slowing in the 21st century.

But look on the bright side! There stands to chance that you too can head down to a quaint little polling booth on a chilly November day and swallow the implications of pulling the lever for the lesser of two evils! Just make sure that you are supporting the first black president for the President of the United State, who just *happens to be* a future mass murderer.

Or you could just vote McKinney I guess.

R.

A Brainless Attack (cont.)

(smaller font signals excerpts from Weisberg's article)

Utopians of the right, libertarians are just as convinced that their ideas have yet to be tried, and that they would work beautifully if we could only just have a do-over of human history. Like all true ideologues, they find a way to interpret mounting evidence of error as proof that they were right all along. To which the rest of us can only respond, *Haven't you people done enough harm already?* We have narrowly avoided a global depression and are mercifully pointed toward merely the worst recession in a long while. This is thanks to a global economic meltdown made possible by libertarian ideas.

Whoosh! Correct me if I'm wrong, but my recollection is that Frédéric Bastiat sat on the left in the French Assembly. But for Weisberg, libertarianism is a monolithic right-wing movement whose chief original intellectual heirs are Ayn Rand and Alan Greenspan. *Yeah, and I suppose Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Peter Kropotkin were real right-wingers as well.* At any rate, Weisberg goes on to elucidate his opinions on how deregulation caused the current financial problems. Whatever the merits of his arguments (and I have reason to believe that they miss the mark), his approach is patently absurd. What passes for "deregulation" these days are not libertarian ideals in practice, but temporary transfers of power from the authoritarian state to the authoritarian corporation:

The best thing you can say about libertarians is that because their views derive from abstract theory, they tend to be highly principled and rigorous in their logic. Those outside of government at places like the Cato Institute and Reason magazine are just as consistent in their opposition to government bailouts as to the kind of regulation that might have prevented one from being necessary.

...
The worst thing you can say about libertarians is that they are intellectually immature, frozen in the worldview many of them absorbed from reading Ayn Rand novels in high school. Like other ideologues, libertarians react to the world's failing to conform to their model by asking where the world went wrong. Their heroic view of capitalism makes it difficult for them to accept that markets can be irrational, misunderstand risk, and misallocate resources or that financial systems without vigorous government oversight and the capacity for pragmatic intervention constitute a recipe for disaster. They are bankrupt, and this time, there will be no bailout.

Carefully hidden beneath my populist rhetoric you will find the romantic mind of John Galt, upholding the principles of capitalism above all else... or so says Weisberg. In reality, libertarian "purists" like myself (and *not* the majority of folks at Reason or Cato) recognize the role of the state in perpetuating state capitalism, and what is called a free market today is merely an elaborate trick on behalf of the power elite in *equating* capitalism with a free market.

And nothing could be further from the truth. The development of capitalism was dependent on the concentration of capital by the use of force through dispossession and coercion—the exact opposite of anything resembling a free market. Yet Weisberg's 'heroic view of the state' conceives him blind to the fact that anything that can go "wrong" in a marketplace can far more easily go wrong in government due to its removal from the effects of the calculations in question.

Whether Mr. Weisberg is intentionally or unintentionally ignorant about the ideology he places himself in opposition to, this sort of vacuous hatchet-job on liberty cannot be allowed to continue unchecked. Authority has many forms, and its staunchest defenders need to be exposed for the statist shills they are.

R.