

Getting Libertarianism Right

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Introduction

THE WRITINGS COLLECTED IN THIS book are mostly addresses given in Bodrum to the Property and Freedom Society, of which Professor Hoppe is both Founder and President. I was fortunate to hear them read out to the gathering, and I am deeply honoured to have been asked to provide an Introduction to the published versions.

I will divide my Introduction into three sections. First, I will give a brief overview of Hoppe's early life and intellectual development. Second, I will write at greater length about the academic work that has placed him at the head of the international libertarian movement. Third, I will discuss the main theme or themes that emerge from the present collection.

HOPPE: CHILD OF THE WEST GERMAN SETTLEMENT

Hans-Hermann Hoppe was born on the 2nd September 1949 in Peine, a town in the British Sector of occupied Germany. After attending various local schools, he first went to the University of Saarland in Saarbrücken and from here moved to the Goethe University in Frankfurt,

where he studied under the notable neo-Marxist Jürgen Habermas, who also served as the principal advisor for Hoppe's doctoral dissertation in Philosophy on David Hume and Immanuel Kant. In those days, Hoppe was himself a Marxist, and had no serious differences with his master. He said later: "What I ... liked about Marxism is that it made the attempt to provide a rigorous, deductively derived system."¹ To any external observer, he was following a path followed by many thousands of his generation. It should, in the normal course of things, have ended in a tenured post in which his duty, under cover of spreading disaffection, was to preach conformity to the new order of things in West Germany.

However, what he soon disliked about Marxism was its failure as an intellectual system. His disenchantment was a gradual process, and he went through a period in which he was influenced by Karl Popper, and was even a social democrat in politics. His final break with leftism came while writing his habilitation thesis on the foundations of sociology and economics. He began with the notion that, while certain truths about the world can be known *a priori*, the laws of Economics and Sociology are at least largely known by induction. He then rejected this, moving to the view that Economics, in contrast to Sociology, is an entirely deductive science. This, then, led him to the discovery of Ludwig von Mises. Here was a system that made the same ambitious claims as Marxism. Austrianism was a set of interlocking and largely deductive theories of Economics, Politics, Law, and much else. Unlike

¹"The Private Property Order: An Interview with Hans-Hermann Hoppe," *Austrian Economics Newsletter* 18, no. 1 (2014). Available here: <https://mises.org/library/private-property-order-interview-hans-hermann-hoppe> — checked, November 2015.

Marxism, it held together intellectually. It also generated true knowledge about the world. The last step remaining on this new and unpredicted path was to discover Murray Rothbard. Hoppe ended the 1970s as a radical free market libertarian. No longer welcome at any West German university, in 1985 he left for the United States.

HOPPE: HEIR OF ROTHBARD

Until 1986, he taught in New York under Rothbard's supervision, "working and living side-by-side with him, in constant and immediate personal contact." They then moved together to teach at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. Here, they stood at the centre of what became "the Las Vegas Circle" — a grouping of libertarian economists and philosophers as brilliant and productive as any in the entire history of the libertarian movement. Other members of the Circle included Yuri Maltsev, Doug French, and Lee Iglody. Hoppe remained in Las Vegas as a Professor until 2008. But he admits that nothing was ever the same after Rothbard's untimely death in 1995. He saw Rothbard as his "principal teacher, mentor and master," and as his "dearest fatherly friend."

Though he produced much other work during his time with Rothbard and after, his most important contribution, both to libertarianism and to Philosophy in general, is probably his work on what he calls Argumentation Ethics. Every secular ideology appears to rest on shaky foundations. Free market libertarianism is no exception. Why should people be left alone? Why should they be free? We can argue that freedom allows people to make themselves happier than they would otherwise be. We can argue that it lets them become richer. The response is to ask why people should be happy or rich. These may be self-evident goods, but are not always so regarded. A further

objection is to start picking holes in the definition and measurement of happiness. Or we can claim that every human being is born with certain natural and inalienable rights, and that these include the rights to life, liberty, and property. The objection here is to ask how, without God as their grantor, these claimed rights are other than an exercise in verbal flatulence.

Hayek and von Mises, the two men who did most during the middle of the twentieth century to keep classical liberalism alive as an ideology, were various kinds of utilitarian. Rothbard, who took Austrian Economics and fused it with native American radicalism to create the modern libertarian movement, shared a belief with Ayn Rand in natural rights. For many years, until more practical disputes emerged after the end of the Cold War, almost every libertarian gathering involved a rehearsal of the differences between the two schools of foundation.

What Hoppe tries with his *Argumentation Ethics*, is to transcend this debate. In doing this, he draws on his early work with Habermas, on the Kantian tradition of German Philosophy, and on the ethical writings of Rothbard. He begins with the observation that there are two ways of settling any dispute. One is force. The other is argument. Any one party to a dispute who chooses force has stepped outside the norms of civilization, which include the avoidance of aggressive force, and has no right to complain if he is used very harshly. Anyone who chooses argument, on the other hand, has accepted these norms. If he then argues for the rightness of force as a means of getting what he wants from others, he is engaging in logical contradiction. In short, whoever rejects the libertarian non-aggression principle is necessarily also rejecting the norms of rational discourse. Whoever claims to accept

these norms must also accept the non-aggression principle.²

Speaking long after first publication, Hoppe denied that this was a retreat from natural rights:

I was attempting to make the first two chapters of Rothbard's *Ethics of Liberty* stronger than they were. That in turn would provide more weight to everything that followed. I had some dissatisfaction with [the] rigor with which the initial ethical assumptions of libertarian political theory had been arrived at. Intuitively, they seemed plausible. But I could see that a slightly different approach might be stronger. Murray never considered my revisions to be a threat. His only concern was: does this ultimately make the case? Ultimately, he agreed that it did.³

Indeed, Rothbard gave the theory his highest praise. He called it

a dazzling breakthrough for political philosophy in general and for libertarianism in particular. ... [Hoppe] has managed to transcend the famous is/ought, fact/value dichotomy that has plagued philosophy since the days of the Scholastics,

²See, for example, Hans-Hermann Hoppe, "The Ultimate Justification of the Private Property Ethic," *Liberty*, September 1988. Available here: http://www.hanshoppe.com/wp-content/uploads/publications/hoppe_ult_just_liberty.pdf — checked November 2015.

³"The Private Property Order."

and that had brought modern libertarianism into a tiresome deadlock.⁴

If Rothbard was the obvious leading intellectual of the libertarian movement, Hoppe was his obvious and chosen successor. By the time of Rothbard's death, he had made solid contributions not only to foundational ethics, but also to Economics, Politics and Law. He was an inspiring teacher and a public speaker in demand all over the world. There was no one in America or in the world at large better qualified to take up where Rothbard had left off. He now became the editor of *The Journal of Libertarian Studies*, and a co-editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics*.

Rothbard himself, though, was not universally accepted within the libertarian movement. One of his numerous talents had been for making enemies. He had many reasons for making, or just for attracting, enemies. He was an isolationist in an age when the American Right defined itself by opposition to Communism and the Soviet Union. He was sceptical of big business in a movement that was largely in love with American capitalism. He was an anarchist among economists who were feeling their way towards privatisation and deregulation. He saw every step of America's ascent to world power as a betrayal of the American Way. He was variously in alliance with leftists and with ultra-conservatives. He was at open war with the utilitarian statist and soft money advocates of the Chicago School. He was soon out of sorts

⁴Symposium, "Hans-Hermann Hoppe's Argumentation Ethics: Breakthrough or Buncombe?" *Liberty*, November 1988. Available at http://www.libertyunbound.com/sites/files/printarchive/Liberty_Magazine_November_1988.pdf - checked November 2015.

with the Cato Institute which he had done much to found. He was scathing in his contempt for political correctness and the very idea of a universal equality that went beyond an equality of negative rights.

Hoppe is a still more divisive figure. An avowed cultural conservative, he has no time for the more hedonistic or leftist strains of libertarianism. From the beginning, his libertarianism has placed more emphasis on property rights than on tolerance. In the *Democracy: The God that Failed*, he writes that, in his ideal community,

[t]here would be little or no “tolerance” and “openmindedness” so dear to left-libertarians. Instead, one would be on the right path toward restoring the freedom of association and exclusion implied in the institution of private property.⁵

He adds:

In a covenant concluded among proprietor and community tenants for the purpose of protecting their private property, no such thing as a right to free (unlimited) speech exists, not even to unlimited speech on one’s own tenant-property. One may say innumerable things and promote almost any idea under the sun, but naturally no one is permitted to advocate ideas contrary to the very purpose of the covenant of preserving and protecting private property, such as

⁵Hans-Hermann Hoppe, *Democracy: The God that Failed* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2001), p. 211.

democracy and communism. There can be no tolerance toward democrats and communists in a libertarian social order. They will have to be physically separated and expelled from society. Likewise, in a covenant founded for the purpose of protecting family and kin, there can be no tolerance toward those habitually promoting lifestyles incompatible with this goal. They — the advocates of alternative, non-family and kin-centered lifestyles such as, for instance, individual hedonism, parasitism, nature-environment worship, homosexuality, or communism — will have to be physically removed from society, too, if one is to maintain a libertarian order.⁶

These statements and others of their kind have been and remain wildly controversial within the libertarian movement. I think it no exaggeration to say that just about everyone in the Movement, since about 2000, has defined himself by what he thinks of Hoppe. Some regard him as the greatest living libertarian, others as The Devil. The only point of agreement is that he is a thinker who cannot be ignored.

THE PRESENT COLLECTION

This being so, the present collection will be useful as a brief statement of where Hoppe stands on the most important issues within the Movement — and the most important issues of our age. I am sensible of the truth that, while

⁶Ibid., pp. 216–17.

many skip over Introductions, others judge a book by its Introduction. I am therefore more than usually sensible of the need for a brief and accurate summary and discussion of the contents that follow my Introduction.

In several places, Hoppe restates and emphasises his view that the basics of libertarianism are derived by a chain of deductive reasoning from undeniable premises. We live in a world of scarcity. Either resources are scarce, or the time in which to use them is scarce. We all have different ideas on how these resources are to be used. Therefore, if we wish to live in a world where conflict over resources is minimised, we must agree on rights of ownership and transfer.

It must be taken for granted that we own ourselves. To claim the opposite leads to obvious inhumanity. It raises at least the potential for unlimited conflict over who owns whom. Where external resources are concerned, the ideal solution is that they belong to whoever first appropriates them from the State of Nature, and that they are then transferred by consent — that is, by sale or by gift or by inheritance. This is, of course, the *ideal* solution. In much of the world, landed property has been possessed for thousands of years, and has been repeatedly confiscated and reassigned. There is not a square inch of England or Western Europe the title to which derives from its original appropriator. The *practical* solution, then, is a rebuttable presumption in favour of existing titles — the rebuttal being good evidence of title derived from an earlier chain of possession. The exception is *state* property. This should be restituted to the holders of its last reasonable title.

Either this is irrefutable, or denying it leads to greater conflict than leaving things as they are. Here, though, the self-evident nature of libertarianism ends. Certain further

propositions derived from Economics continue the chain of self-evident truth. But other discussions of the approach to, or the shape of, a libertarian society involve questions of pragmatic engagement.

If the entire human race looked alike and thought more or less alike, libertarian activism would be a matter of unvaried and undiscriminating outreach. But the human race, as it exists, is endlessly diverse. There are differences of appearance, differences of ability, differences of belief and expectation. These differences are plain between individuals. They are plain between different groups of individuals. We are not some *tabula rasa*, on which the Spirit of the Age may write as it will. We are born different. We grow more different still in how we respond to whatever is meant by the Spirit of the Age.

In the long term, Hoppe and his critics are in full agreement. They look forward to a single humanity, united in respect for life, liberty, and property, all enriched from the cultural and material benefits that derive from a world of universal freedom. For the moment, this single humanity does not exist — nor is it likely to exist. Either we must take account of these facts of difference, or we will not. If we will not, then we shall become useless intellectuals — endlessly talking to each other, and to nobody else, about the relationship between the non-aggression principle and the doctrine of contractual frustration. Or we shall become dangerous intellectuals — advocating policies, in the name of the non-aggression principle, that do not reduce but increase the likelihood of conflict over resources. If we do choose to take account of these differences, then we find ourselves firmly on the unpopular side of nearly all the questions that define the age in which we live.

If there is room for debate over the causes, one fact is plain. This is that the freest and most prosperous societies ever to exist are those dominated by broadly heterosexual males descended from the hunter-gatherers who settled Western and Central Europe and Northern Asia. Indeed, if there is room for debate over causes, the most likely cause — something deniable usually by the products of a long and expensive university education — is something inherent to these peoples, rather than some set of contingent circumstances local to the past few thousand years.

This is not to say that these groups are “better” than others in any abstract sense. It is not to say that all members of these groups show equal aptitude to preserve their traditional or acquired social orders. Nor is it to say that all members of other groups are equally unable to acquire or preserve the relevant social orders. It is certainly not to invite us to think ill of those other groups. Hoppe has always been clear on this, and his Bodrum conferences are nothing if not diverse. It is simply a matter of facing general facts. There are bearded women. There are men with breasts. Not every Englishman keeps his appointments. Not every Nigerian ignores them. Even so, basing our conduct on exceptions rather than generalities is bound, sooner or later, to prove inconvenient.

One consequence of this approach is that Hoppe opposes anti-discrimination laws. If there were a law that only white Christian heterosexual males were allowed to practise as doctors, he would denounce this — just as he has, at the outset of his system, denounced any kind of chattel slavery. Such laws violate the negative corollary of the right to freedom of association. If we are to be free to associate as we choose, so we are to be free not to associate. Sometimes, our decisions will be grounded in the social realities just mentioned, sometimes not. In

any event, they are our decisions, and they should not be prevented by law.

A second consequence is that there should be an end to “regime change” and “nation-building” in other parts of the world. In this present collection, Hoppe mentions his opposition to our Middle Eastern interventions in passing. But his opposition is profound and firm. The alleged reasons of these interventions are all proven or probable lies. Even otherwise, the project of exporting our ways to places where there is neither desire for them nor aptitude to receive them can only lead to more bloodshed than leaving people with their own ways.

The third consequence is that he is opposed to open borders. This returns me to Hoppe’s point about the pragmatic application of libertarian theory. There are libertarians who memorise some pithy statement of the non-aggression principle, and immediately conclude that all borders are immoral. This approach ignores the present realities. Mass-immigration from outside the regions mentioned above has plainly negative effects. It increases crime and disorder. It greatly expands the roll of welfare claimants. It provides a growing constituency for politicians whose careers are one long attack on life, liberty, and property. Open borders in themselves at the moment — and especially open borders plus a welfare state and our endless wars of aggression that produce endless waves of refugees — are an attack on civilisation.

Nor is there any reason to believe that a truly libertarian society would allow what now passes for open borders. People have the right to trade with each other, not settle where and how they please. One of the central claims of libertarian theory is that all costs can and should be privatised. Well, any entrant to a libertarian community may impose costs that outweigh the benefits of his presence.

If so, it is the undeniable right of the property-owners in such a community to deter new entrants they regard — for whatever reason — as undesirable. Those who choose not to will be open to tort actions for allowing a nuisance on their property. A libertarian world would be a patchwork of communities. These would provide for every conceivable taste. Most of them, however, would probably be rather exclusive in their entry policies. There would be room for communities that welcomed all-comers with open arms. Hoppe's view, however, is that these would be a minority of communities, and that their failure would be an example to others.

Now, this is an argument about a world that does not exist, and may not exist for a very long time. We live in a world of nation-states, all with borders. What is to be done about immigration in such a world? Hoppe accepts the basic illegitimacy of the present order of things, but accepts that it is the present order. If civilisation is to survive in even its present defective condition, it is necessary to insist that states should act as trustees for those who fund them. This does not mean a total ban on immigration or hostility to individuals on the basis of their appearance. But it does mean strict control of borders and the deportation of undesirable entrants. It also means higher charges for the use of public property on those who have contributed nothing to its development. It means no access to such welfare as may — however unwisely — be available to the settled population. Anything less than that is best described not as “equality” or “anti-discrimination,” but as “forced integration.”

Most of Hoppe's polemical attacks in recent years have been on the self-described left-libertarians. These combine an acceptance of leftist notions of equality and anti-discrimination with some belief in free markets. At

the same time, he does not regard himself in any sense as a leader of what is called the Alt-Right. This is a broad coalition of national socialists, white nationalists, conservatives of various kinds, and disenchanted libertarians. It came to prominence in 2016 for its support of Donald Trump. It became notorious in 2017 for the riotous assembly it provoked at the Charlottesville Rally.

Hoppe accepts that the Alt-Right and libertarians share an opposition to the bloated, malevolent, warmongering elites who rule most Western countries. He has opened a dialogue with some of the more reasonable Alt-Right leaders. But he remains wary of the Alt-Right as a whole. He dislikes its frequent mysticism — its appeals to a “higher wisdom” than the cautious rationalism of the Enlightenment. He dislikes its obsession with race rather than a clear view of actual differences between individuals and groups of individuals. He particularly dislikes its concessions to socialism — socialism, so long as its “beneficiaries” are white people. If the Alt-Right evolves into a broad attack on undeniable evils, so much the better. If, as seems likely, it will become a coalition of totalitarian or semi-totalitarian cults, he wants nothing to do with it.

CONCLUSION

Hoppe mentions several times in this collection that he is growing older, and that he will continue working so long as his health allows. I hope he will continue for many years to come. But let us allow that all life is uncertain, and accept that he may be taken from us tomorrow. This would be a terrible loss. At the same time, I have not the slightest doubt that, on the basis of what he has achieved so far, the intellectual world has been made a better place by Hoppe’s presence within it. And I both hope and

believe that the inspiration his work provides will one day contribute to the emergence of a better world for all humanity. If this short collection of his writings, and if my brief Introduction, can form part of this contribution, it will not have been published in vain.

Sean Gabb

Deal

April 2018

A Realistic Libertarianism

Libertarianism is logically consistent with almost any attitude toward culture, society, religion, or moral principle. In strict logic, libertarian political doctrine can be severed from all other considerations; logically one can be — and indeed most libertarians in fact are: hedonists, libertines, immoralists, militant enemies of religion in general and Christianity in particular — and still be consistent adherents of libertarian politics. In fact, in strict logic, one can be a consistent devotee of property rights politically and be a moocher, a scamster, and a petty crook and racketeer in practice, as all too many libertarians turn out to be. Strictly logically, one can do these things, *but psychologically, sociologically, and in practice, it simply doesn't work that way.*¹

¹My emphasis. Murray Rothbard, “Big-Government Libertarians,” in Lew Rockwell, ed., *The Irrepressible Rothbard* (Auburn, AL: Mises Institute, 2000), p. 101

LET ME BEGIN WITH A FEW remarks on libertarianism as a pure deductive theory.

If there were no scarcity in the world, human conflicts would be impossible. Interpersonal conflicts are always and everywhere conflicts concerning scarce things. I want to do X with a given thing and you want to do Y with the same thing.

Because of such conflicts — and because we are able to communicate and argue with each other — we seek out norms of behaviour with the purpose of avoiding these conflicts. The purpose of norms is conflict-avoidance. If we did not want to avoid conflicts, the search for norms of conduct would be senseless. We would simply fight and struggle.

Absent a perfect harmony of all interests, conflicts regarding scarce resources can only be avoided if all scarce resources are assigned as private, exclusive property to some specified individual. Only then can I act independently, with *my* own things, from you, with *your* own things, without you and me coming into conflict.

But who owns what scarce resource as his private property and who does not? First: Each person owns his physical body that only he and no one else controls *directly* (I can control your body only *indirectly*, by first directly controlling my body, and vice versa) and that only he directly controls also in particular when *discussing and arguing* the question at hand. Otherwise, if body-ownership were assigned to some indirect body-controller, conflict would become unavoidable as the direct body-controller *cannot* give up his direct control over his body as long as he is alive; and in particular, otherwise it would be impossible that any two persons, as the contenders in any property dispute, could ever *argue and debate* the question whose

will is to prevail, since arguing and debating *presupposes* that both, the proponent and the opponent, have exclusive control over their respective bodies and so come to the correct judgment *on their own*, without a fight (in a conflict-free form of interaction).

And second, as for scarce resources that can be controlled *only* indirectly (that must be appropriated with our own nature-given, i.e., *unappropriated*, body): Exclusive control (property) is acquired by and assigned to that person, who appropriated the resource in question *first* or who acquired it through voluntary (conflict-free) exchange from its *previous* owner. For only the *first* appropriator of a resource (and all later owners connected to him through a chain of voluntary exchanges) can possibly acquire and gain control over it without conflict, i.e., peacefully. Otherwise, if exclusive control is assigned instead to *latecomers*, conflict is not avoided but contrary to the very purpose of norms made unavoidable and permanent.

Let me emphasize that I consider this theory as essentially irrefutable, as *a priori* true. In my estimation this theory represents one of the greatest — if not *the* greatest — achievement of social thought. It formulates and codifies the immutable ground rules for all people, everywhere, who wish to live together in peace.

And yet: This theory does not tell us very much about real life. To be sure, it tells us that all actual societies, insofar as they are characterized by peaceful relations, adhere, whether consciously or subconsciously, to these rules and are thus guided by rational insight. But it does not tell us to what extent this is the case. Nor does it tell us, even if adherence to these rules were complete, how people actually live together. It does not tell us how close or distant from each other they live, if, when, how

frequent and long, and for what purposes they meet and interact, etc. To use an analogy here: Knowing libertarian theory — the rules of peaceful interactions — is like knowing the rules of logic — the rules of correct thinking and reasoning. However, just like the knowledge of logic, as indispensable as it is for correct thinking, does not tell us anything about actual human thought, about actual words, concepts, arguments, inferences, and conclusions used and made, so the logic of peaceful interaction (libertarianism) does not tell us anything about actual human life and action. Hence: just as every logician who wants to make good use of his knowledge must turn his attention to real thought and reasoning, so a libertarian theorist must turn his attention to the actions of real people. Instead of being a mere theorist, he must also become a sociologist and psychologist and take account of “empirical” social reality, i.e., the world as it really is.

This brings me to the topic of “Left” and “Right.”

The difference between the Right and the Left, as Paul Gottfried has often noted, is a fundamental disagreement concerning an *empirical* question. The Right recognizes, as a matter of *fact*, the existence of individual human differences and diversities and accepts them as natural, whereas the Left denies the existence of such differences and diversities or tries to explain them away and in any case regards them as something unnatural that must be rectified to establish a natural state of human *equality*.

The Right recognizes the existence of individual human differences not just with regard to the physical location and make-up of the human environment and of the individual human body (its height, strength, weight, age, gender, skin- hair- or eye-colour, facial features, etc., etc.). More importantly, the Right also recognizes the existence of differences in the *mental* make-up of people,

i.e., in their cognitive abilities, talents, psychological dispositions, and motivations. It recognizes the existence of bright and dull, smart and dumb, short- and far-sighted, busy and lazy, aggressive and peaceful, docile and inventive, impulsive and patient, scrupulous and careless people, etc., etc. The Right recognizes that these mental differences, resulting from the interaction of the physical environment and the physical human body, are the results of *both* environmental *and* physiological and biological factors. The Right further recognizes that people are tied together (or separated) both physically in geographical space and emotionally by blood (biological commonalities and relationships), by language and religion, as well as by customs and traditions. Moreover, the Right not merely recognizes the existence of these differences and diversities. It realizes also that the outcome of input-differences will again be different and result in people with much or little property, in rich and poor, and in people of high or low social status, rank, influence or authority. And it accepts these different outcomes of different inputs as normal and natural.

The Left on the other hand is convinced of the fundamental *equality* of man, that all men are “created equal.” It does not deny the patently obvious, of course: that there are environmental and physiological differences, i.e., that some people live in the mountains and others on the seaside, or that some men are tall and others short, some white and others black, some male and others female, etc. But the Left does deny the existence of *mental* differences or, insofar as these are too apparent to be entirely denied, it tries to explain them away as “accidental.” That is, the Left either explains such differences as solely environmentally determined, such that a change in environmental circumstances (moving a person from

the mountains to the seaside and vice versa, for instance, or giving each person identical pre- and post-natal attention) would produce an equal outcome, and it denies that these differences are caused (also) by some — comparatively intractable — biological factors. Or else, in those cases where it cannot be denied that biological factors play a causal role in determining success or failure in life (money and fame), such as when a 5 foot tall man cannot win an Olympic gold medal in the 100 meter dash or a fat and ugly girl cannot become Miss Universe, the Left considers these differences as pure luck and the resulting outcome of individual success or failure as undeserved. In any case, whether caused by advantageous or disadvantageous environmental circumstances or biological attributes, all observable individual human differences are to be equalized. And where this cannot be done literally, as we cannot move mountains and seas or make a tall man short or a black man white, the Left insists that the undeservedly “lucky” must compensate the “unlucky” so that every person will be accorded an “equal station in life,” in correspondence with the natural equality of all men.

With this short characterization of the Right and the Left I return to the subject of libertarianism. Is libertarian theory compatible with the worldview of the Right? And: Is libertarianism compatible with leftist views?

As for the Right, the answer is an emphatic “yes.” Every libertarian only vaguely familiar with social reality will have no difficulty acknowledging the fundamental truth of the Rightist worldview. He can, and in light of the empirical evidence indeed must agree with the Right’s empirical claim regarding the fundamental not only physical but also mental *inequality* of man; and he can in particular also agree with the Right’s normative claim of “laissez faire,” i.e., that this natural human inequality will

inevitably result also in *unequal* outcomes and that nothing can or should be done about this.

There is only one important caveat, however. While the Right may accept *all* human inequalities, whether of starting-points or of outcomes, as natural, the libertarian would insist that only those inequalities are natural and should not be interfered with that have come into existence by following the ground rules of peaceful human interaction mentioned at the beginning. Inequalities that are the result of *violations* of these rules, however, *do* require corrective action and *should* be eliminated. And moreover, the libertarian would insist that, as a matter of empirical fact, there exist quite a few among the innumerable observable human inequalities that *are* the result of such rule-violations, such as rich men who owe their fortune not to hard work, foresight, entrepreneurial talent or else a voluntary gift or inheritance, but to robbery, fraud or state-granted monopolistic privilege. The corrective action required in such cases, however, is not motivated by egalitarianism but by a desire for *restitution*: he (and only he), who can show that he has been robbed, defrauded, or legally disadvantaged should be made whole again by those (and only those) who have committed these crimes against him and his property, including also cases where restitution would result in an even greater inequality (as when a poor man had defrauded and owed restitution to a rich one).

On the other hand: As for the Left, the answer is an equally emphatic “no.” The empirical claim of the Left, that there exist no significant mental differences between individuals and, by implication, between various groups of people, and that what *appear* to be such differences are due solely to environmental factors and would disappear if only the environment were equalized is contradicted by

all everyday-life experience and mountains of empirical social research. Men are not and cannot be made equal, and whatever one tries in this regard, inequalities will always re-emerge. However, it is in particular the implied *normative* claim and activist agenda of the Left that makes it incompatible with libertarianism. The leftist goal of equalizing everyone or equalizing everyone's "station in life" is incompatible with private property, whether in one's body or in external things. Instead of peaceful cooperation, it brings about unending conflict and leads to the decidedly *un-egalitarian* establishment of a permanent ruling-class lording it over the rest of the people as their "material" to be equalized. "Since," as Murray Rothbard has formulated it, "no two people are uniform or 'equal' in any sense in nature, or in the outcomes of a voluntary society, to bring about and maintain such equality necessarily requires the permanent imposition of a power elite armed with devastating coercive power."²

There exist countless individual human differences; and there exist even more differences between different groups of individuals, since each individual can be fit into countless different groups. It is the power-elite that determines which of these differences, whether of individuals or of groups, is to count as advantageous and lucky or disadvantageous and unlucky (or else as irrelevant). It is the power elite that determines how — out of countless possible ways — to actually *do* the "equalizing" of the lucky and the unlucky, i.e., what and how much to "take" from the lucky and "give" to the unlucky to achieve equality. In particular, it is the power elite, by defining itself

²Murray N. Rothbard, "Egalitarianism and the Elites," *Review of Austrian Economics* 8, no. 2 (1995): 45.

as unlucky, that determines what and how much to take from the lucky and *keep for itself*. And whatever equalization is then achieved: Since countless new differences and inequalities are constantly re-emerging, the equalizing-job of the power elite can never ever come to a natural end but must instead go on forever, endlessly.

The egalitarian worldview of the Left is not only incompatible with *libertarianism*, however. It is so out of touch with reality that one must be wondering how *anyone* can take it seriously. The man-on-the-street certainly does not believe in the equality of all men. Plain common sense and sound prejudice stand in the way of that. And I am even more confident that no one of the actual proponents of the egalitarian doctrine really, deep down, believes what he proclaims. Yet how, then, could the Leftist worldview have become the dominant ideology of our age?

At least for a libertarian, the answer should be obvious: the egalitarian doctrine achieved this status not because it is true, but because it provides the perfect intellectual cover for the drive toward totalitarian social control by a ruling elite. The ruling elite therefore enlisted the help of the “intelligentsia” (or the “chattering class”). It was put on the payroll or otherwise subsidized and in return it delivered the desired egalitarian message (which it knows to be wrong yet which is enormously beneficial to its own employment prospects). And so the most enthusiastic proponents of the egalitarian nonsense can be found among the intellectual class.³

³Murray Rothbard has listed them: “academics, opinion-molders, journalists, writers, media elites, social workers, bureaucrats, counselors, psychologists, personnel consultants, and especially for the ever accelerating new group-egalitarianism, a veritable army of ‘therapists’

Given, then, that libertarianism and the egalitarianism professed by the Left are obviously incompatible, it must come as a surprise — and it is testimony to the immense ideological powers of the ruling elites and their court intellectuals — that many who call themselves libertarian today are, and consider themselves to be, part of the Left. How is such a thing possible?

What ideologically unifies these left-libertarians is their active promotion of various “anti-discrimination” policies and their advocacy of a policy of “free and non-discriminatory” immigration.⁴

These “libertarians,” noted Rothbard,

are fervently committed to the notion that, while each individual might not be “equal” to every other, that every conceivable group, ethnic contingent, race, gender, or, in some cases, species, are in fact and must be made “equal,” that each one has “rights” that must not be subject to curtailment by any form of “discrimination.”⁵

and sensitivity trainers. Plus, of course, ideologues and researchers to dream up and discover new groups that need egalitarianizing.” (Ibid., p. 51)

⁴As for who among today’s so-called libertarians is to be counted as a leftist, there is a litmus test: the position taken during the recent presidential primaries on Dr. Ron Paul, who is easily the purest of libertarians to ever gain national and even international attention and recognition. Beltway libertarians around Cato, George Mason, *Reason*, and various other outfits of the ‘Kochtopus’ dismissed Ron Paul or even attacked him for his “racism” and lack of social “sensitivity” and “tolerance,” i.e., in short: for being an upstanding “right-wing bourgeois,” leading an exemplary personal and professional life.

⁵Rothbard, “Egalitarianism and the Elites,” p. 102.

But how is it possible to reconcile this anti-discrimination stand with private property, which all libertarians are supposed to regard as the cornerstone of their philosophy, and which, after all, means *exclusive* property and hence, *logically implies discrimination*?

Traditional leftists, of course, do not have this problem. They do not think or care about private property. Since everyone is equal to everyone else, the world and everything on and in it belongs to everyone equally — all property is “common” property — and as an equal co-owner of the world everyone has of course an equal “right to access” to everywhere and everything. Absent a perfect harmony of all interests, however, you *cannot* have everyone have equal property and equal access to everything and everywhere *without leading to permanent conflict*. Thus, to avoid this predicament, it is necessary to institute a State, i.e., a territorial monopolist of ultimate decision-making. “Common property,” that is, requires a State and is to become “State property.” It is the State that ultimately determines not just who owns what; and it is also the State, then, that ultimately determines the spatial allocation of all people: who is to live where and allowed to meet and have access to whom — and private property be damned. After all, it is *they*, the Lefties, who would control the State.

But this escape route is not open to anyone calling himself a libertarian. He must take private property seriously.

Psychologically or sociologically, the attraction of non-discrimination policies to libertarians can be explained by the fact that an over-proportionally large number of libertarians are misfits or simply odd — or to use Rothbard’s description, “hedonists, libertines, immoralists, militant enemies of religion ..., moochers, scamsters, and petty

crooks and racketeers” — who became attracted to libertarianism because of its alleged ‘tolerance’ toward misfits and outliers, and who now want to use it as a vehicle to free themselves from all discrimination typically, in everyday life, dished out to their likes. But how do they do it “logically?” Left-libertarians, bleeding-heart libertarians, and humanitarian-cosmopolitan libertarians are not simply leftists. They know of the central importance of private property. Yet how can they seemingly *logically* reconcile the notion of private property with their promotion of anti-discrimination policies and in particular their propagation of a policy of discrimination-free immigration?

The short answer is: in placing *all* current private property and its distribution among distinct people under moral suspicion. With this claim, the left-libertarians fall into the opposite error from that committed by the non-libertarian Right. As indicated, the non-libertarian Right commits the error of regarding all (or at least almost all) current property holdings, including in particular also the property holdings of the State, as natural and just. In distinct opposition, a libertarian would recognize and insist that some present property holdings, and all (or at least most) State-holdings, are demonstrably unnatural and unjust and as such require restitution or compensation. In reverse, the left-libertarians claim that not only all or most *State*-holdings are unnatural and unjust (from this admission they derive their title ‘libertarian’), but that also all or most *private* property holdings are unnatural and unjust. And in support for this latter claim, they point to the fact that all current private property holdings and their distribution among various people have been affected, altered, and distorted by prior State action and legislation and that everything would be different and no

one would be in the same place and position he currently is had it not been for such prior State-interferences.

Without any doubt, this observation is correct. The State in its long history has made some people richer and others poorer than they would have been otherwise. It killed some people and let others survive. It moved people around from one place to another. It promoted some professions, industries, or regions and prevented or delayed and changed the development of others. It awarded some people with privileges and monopolies and legally discriminated against and disadvantaged others, and on and on. The list of past injustices, of winners and losers, perpetrators and victims, is endless.

But from this indisputable fact it does not follow that all or most current property holdings are morally suspect and in need of rectification. To be sure, *State*-property must be restituted, because it has been unjustly acquired. It should be returned to its natural owners, i.e., the people (or their heirs) who were coerced to ‘fund’ such ‘public’ property by surrendering parts of their own private property to the State. However, I will not concern myself with this particular “privatization” issue here.⁶ Rather, it is the further-reaching claim that past injustices also render all *current private* property holdings morally suspect, which does not follow and which is certainly not true. As a matter of fact, most private holdings are likely just, irrespective of their history — unless and except in such cases in which a specific claimant can prove that they are not. The burden of proof, however, is on whoever challenges

⁶See on this subject Hans-Hermann Hoppe, “Of Private, Common and Public Property and the Rationale for Total Privatization,” *Libertarian Papers* 3, no.1 (2011). <http://libertarianpapers.org/articles/2011/lp-3-1.pdf>

the current property holdings and distribution. He must show that he is in possession of an older title to the property in question than its current owner. Otherwise, if a claimant cannot prove this, everything is to remain as it currently is.

Or: To be more specific and realistic: From the fact that Peter or Paul or their parents, as members of any conceivable group of people, had been murdered, displaced, robbed, assaulted, or legally discriminated against in the past and their current property holdings and social positions would have been different if it had not been for such past injustices, it does not follow that any present member of this group has a just claim (for compensation) against the current property of anyone else (neither from within nor from outside his group). Rather, in each case, Peter or Paul would have to show, in one case after another, that he personally has a better claim because he has an older title to some specified piece of property than some current, named and identified owner and alleged perpetrator. Certainly, a considerable number of cases exists where this can be done and restitution or compensation is owed. But just as certainly, with this burden of proof on any challenger of any current property distribution, not much mileage can be gained for any non-discriminatory-egalitarian agenda. To the contrary, in the contemporary Western world, replete with “affirmative action” laws that award legal privileges to various “protected groups” at the expense of various other correspondingly unprotected and discriminated groups, *more* — not less — discrimination and inequalities would result if, as justice would require, everyone who in fact *could* provide such individualized proof of his victimization was actually permitted to do so by the State and bring suit and seek redress from his victimizer.

But left-libertarians — the bleeding-heart and humanitarian-cosmopolitan libertarians — are not exactly known as “fighters” against “affirmative action.” Rather, and quite to the contrary, in order to reach the conclusion that they want to reach, they relax or dispense altogether with the requirement for someone claiming victimhood of offering individualized proof of victimization. Typically, in order to maintain their intellectual status as libertarians, the left-libertarians do so quietly, surreptitiously or even unknowingly, but in effect, in giving up this fundamental requirement of justice, they replace private property and property rights and rights violations with the muddled notion of ‘civil rights’ and ‘civil rights violations’ and individual rights with ‘group rights’ and thus become closet-socialists. Given that the State has disturbed and distorted all private property holdings and distributions, yet without the requirement of individualized proof of victimization, everyone and every imaginable group can easily and without too much intellectual effort claim somehow “victimhood” *vis-à-vis* anyone else or any other group.⁷

⁷Characteristically, this stealthy transformation of libertarianism into closet-socialism via the confused notion of ‘civil rights,’ has been identified decades ago already by Murray Rothbard. To quote him:

Throughout the Official Libertarian Movement [of left-libertarians], “civil rights” has been embraced without question, completely overriding the genuine rights of private property. In some cases, the embrace of a “right not to be discriminated against” has been explicit. In others, when libertarians want to square their new-found with their older principles, and have no aversion to sophistry and even absurdity, they take the sneakier path blazed by the American Civil Liberties Union: that if there

Relieved of the burden of individualized proof of victimhood, the left-libertarians are essentially unrestricted in their ‘discovery’ of new “victims” and “victimizers” in accordance with their own presupposed egalitarian assumptions. To their credit, they recognize the State as an institutional victimizer and invader of private property rights (again, from this derives their claim to be ‘libertarians’). But they see far more institutional and structural injustices and social distortions, far more victims and victimizers, and far more need for restitution, compensation, and attendant property redistribution in the current world than only those injustices and distortions committed and caused by the State and to be resolved and rectified by shrinking and ultimately dismantling and privatizing all State holdings and functions. Even if the State were dismantled, they hold, as late and lasting effects of its long prior existence or of certain pre-State conditions, other institutional distortions would remain in place that required rectification to create a just society.

The views held by left-libertarians in this regard are not entirely uniform, but they typically differ little from those promoted by cultural Marxists. They assume as ‘natural,’ without much if any empirical support and indeed against overwhelming evidence to the contrary, a largely ‘flat’ and ‘horizontal’ society of ‘equals,’ i.e., of essentially universally and worldwide homogeneous, like-minded and -talented people of more or less similar social and

should be so much as a smidgen of government involved, whether it be use of the public streets or a bit of taxpayer funding, then the so-called “right” of “equal access” must override either private property or indeed any sort of good sense. Rothbard, “Egalitarianism and the Elites,” pp. 102–03.

economic status and standing, and they regard all systematic deviations from this model as the result of discrimination and grounds for some form of compensation and restitution. Accordingly, the hierarchical structure of traditional families, of sex roles, and of the partition of labour between males and females, is considered unnatural. Indeed, all social hierarchies and vertical rank orders of authority, of headsmen and clan-chiefs, of patrons, nobles, aristocrats and kings, of bishops and cardinals, of 'bosses' generally, and of their respective underlings or subordinates, are viewed with suspicion. Similarly, all great or 'excessive' disparities of income and wealth — of so-called 'economic power' — and the existence of both a downtrodden under class as well as of an upper class of super-wealthy people and families are deemed unnatural. As well, large industrial and financial corporations and conglomerates are considered artificial creatures of the State. And also suspect, unnatural, and in need of repair are all exclusive associations, societies, congregations, churches, and clubs, and all territorial segregation, separation, and secession, whether based on class, gender, race, ethnicity, lineage, language, religion, profession, interests, customs, or tradition.

From that vantage point, the 'victim' groups and their 'victimizers' are easily identified. As it turns out, 'victims' make up the vast majority of mankind. Everyone and every conceivable group is a 'victim,' except that small part of mankind composed of white (including northern Asian) heterosexual males, living traditional, bourgeois family lives. They, and especially the most creative and successful ones among them (excluding interestingly only rich sports or entertainment celebrities), are the 'victimizers' of everyone else.

While this view of human history strikes one as bizarre in light of the amazing civilizational achievements originating from precisely this minority group of 'victimizers,' it coincides almost completely with the victimology also propagated by cultural Marxists. Both groups only differ on the cause of this similarly identified, described and deplored 'structural state of victimization.' For the cultural Marxists, the cause for this state of affairs is private property and unbridled capitalism based on private property rights. For them, the answer how to repair the damage done is clear and easy. All necessary restitution, compensation and redistribution are to be done by the State, which *they* presumably control.

For the left-libertarians this answer does not work. They are supposed to be in favour of private property and the privatization of State-property. They cannot have the State do the restitution, because as libertarians they are supposed to dismantle and ultimately abolish the State. Yet they want more restitution than only that resulting from the privatization of all so-called public property. Abolishing the State is not enough for them to create a just society. More is needed to compensate the just mentioned huge majority of victims.

But what? And on what grounds? Whenever there is individualized proof of victimization, i.e., if some person A can demonstrate that another person B had invaded or taken A's property, or vice versa, no problem exists! The case is clear. But absent any such proof, what else is it that the 'victimizers' owe their 'victims,' and on what grounds? How to determine who owes whom how much and of what? And how to implement this restitution scheme in the absence of a State, and without thereby trampling on someone else's private property rights? This poses the

central intellectual problem for any self-styled left-*libertarian*.

Not surprisingly, the answer given by them to this challenge turns out evasive and vague. From all I can gather, it amounts to little more than an exhortation. As a keen observer of the intellectual scene has summarized it: “Be nice!” More precisely: You, you small group of ‘victimizers,’ must always be especially ‘nice,’ forgiving, and inclusive *vis-à-vis* all members of the vast majority of ‘victims,’ i.e., the long and familiar list of everyone except white, heterosexual males! And as for enforcement: All ‘victimizers’ not demonstrating proper respect to some victim-class member, i.e., victimizers who are ‘nasty,’ unforgiving, or exclusive, or who say ‘nasty’ or disrespectful things about them, must be publicly shunned, humiliated, and shamed into obedience!

At first sight or hearing, this proposal of how to do restitution may — as can be expected coming from ‘nice’ people — appear, well, well meaning, harmless, and plain ‘nice.’ In fact, however, it is anything but ‘nice’ and harmless advice. It is wrong and dangerous.

First off: *Why* should anyone be particularly nice to anyone else — apart from respecting ones’ respective private property rights in certain specified physical means (goods)? To be nice is a deliberate action and takes an effort, like all actions do. There are opportunity costs. The same effort could also be put to other effects. Indeed, many if not most of our activities are conducted alone and in silence, without any direct interaction with others, as when we prepare our meal, drive our car, or read and write. Time devoted to ‘niceness to others’ is time lost to do other, possibly more worthwhile things. Moreover, niceness must be warranted. Why should I be nice to people who are nasty to me? Niceness must be

deserved. Indiscriminating niceness diminishes and ultimately extinguishes the distinction between meritorious and faulty conduct. Too much niceness will be given to undeserving people and too little to deserving ones and the overall level of nastiness will consequently rise and public life become increasingly unpleasant.

Moreover, there are also genuinely evil people doing real evil things to real private property owners, most importantly the ruling elites in charge of the State-apparatus, as every libertarian would have to admit. One surely has no obligation to be nice to *them*! And yet, in rewarding the vast majority of 'victims' with extra love, care, and attention, one accomplishes precisely this: less time and effort is devoted to exhibiting nasty behaviour toward those actually most deserving of it. The power of the State will not be weakened by universal 'niceness,' then, but strengthened.

And why is it in particular the small minority of white, heterosexual males, and especially its most successful members that owes some extra-kindness to the vast majority of all other people? Why not the other way around? After all, most if not all technical inventions, machines, tools, and gadgets in current use everywhere and anywhere, on which our current living standards and comforts largely and decisively depend, originated with *them*. All other people, by and large, only imitated what *they* had invented and constructed *first*. All others inherited the knowledge embodied in the inventors' products for free. And isn't it the typical white hierarchical family household of father, mother, their common children and prospective heirs, and their 'bourgeois' conduct and lifestyle — i.e., everything the Left disparages and maligns — that is the economically most successful model of social organization the world has ever seen, with the greatest

accumulation of capital goods (wealth) and the highest average standards of living? And isn't it only on account of the great economic achievements of this minority of 'victimizers' that a steadily increasing number of 'victims' could be integrated and partake in the advantages of a worldwide network of the division of labour? And isn't it only on account of the success of the traditional white, bourgeois family model also that so-called 'alternative lifestyles' could at all emerge and be sustained over time? Do not most of today's 'victims,' then, literally owe their lives and their current living to the achievements of their alleged 'victimizers'?

Why not the 'victims' giving special respect to their 'victimizers'? Why not bestow special honor to economic achievement and success instead of failure, and why not give special praise to traditional, 'normal' lifestyles and conduct rather than any abnormal alternative that requires, as a necessary condition of its own continued existence, a pre-existing dominant surrounding society of 'normal' people with 'normal' lifestyles?

I will come to the apparent answer to these rhetorical questions shortly. Before, however, a second — strategic — error in the left-libertarian advice of special niceness toward 'historic victims' must be briefly addressed.

Interestingly, the 'victim' groups identified by both left-libertarians and cultural Marxists differ little if at all from the groups identified as 'underprivileged' and in need of compensation also by the State. While this poses no problem for cultural Marxists and can be interpreted as an indicator of the extent of control that they have already gained of the State apparatus, for left-libertarians this coincidence should be cause for intellectual concern. Why would the State pursue the same or similar end of 'non-discrimination' of 'victims' by 'victimizers' that they,

too, want to achieve, if only by different means? Left-libertarians are typically oblivious to this question. And yet to anyone with only some common sense the answer should be apparent.

In order to reach total control over each individual person, the State must pursue a *divide et impera* policy. It must weaken, undermine, and ultimately destroy all other, rival centers of social authority. Most importantly, it must weaken the traditional, patriarchic family household, and especially the independently wealthy family household, as autonomous decision-making centers by sowing and legislating conflicts between wives and husbands, children and parents, women and men, rich and poor. As well, all hierarchical orders and ranks of social authority, all exclusive associations, and all personal loyalties and attachments — be it to a particular family, community, ethnicity, tribe, nation, race, language, religion, custom, or tradition — except the attachment to a given State *qua* citizen-subject and passport holder, must be weakened and ultimately destroyed.

And what better way to do this than to pass anti-discrimination laws!

In effect, by outlawing all discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, national origin, etc., etc., a vast number of people are declared State-certified ‘victims.’ Anti-discrimination laws, then, are an official call upon all ‘victims’ to find fault and complain to the State about their own ‘favourite’ ‘oppressors,’ and especially the more wealthy ones among them, and their ‘oppressive’ machinations, i.e., their ‘sexism,’ ‘homophobia,’ ‘chauvinism,’ ‘nativism,’ ‘racism,’ ‘xenophobia,’ or whatever, and for the State to respond to such complaints by cutting the ‘oppressors’ down to size, i.e., in successively dispossessing them of their property and

authority and correspondingly expanding and strengthening its own monopolistic power *vis-à-vis* an increasingly weakened, fragmented, fractionalized, and de-homogenized society.

Ironically, then, and contrary to their self-proclaimed goal of wanting to shrink or even eliminate the State, the left-libertarians with their peculiar, egalitarian victimology become accomplices to the State and effectively contribute to the aggrandizement of its power. Indeed, the left-libertarian vision of a discrimination-free multicultural society is, to use Peter Brimelow's phrase, Viagra to the State.

Which brings me to my final subject.

The role of left-libertarianism as Viagra to the State becomes even more apparent when one considers their position on the increasingly virulent question of migration. Left-libertarians are typically ardent advocates in particular of a policy of 'free and non-discriminatory' immigration. If they criticize the State's immigration policy, it is not for the fact that its entry restrictions are the wrong restrictions, i.e., that they do not serve to protect the property rights of domestic citizens, but for the fact that it imposes any restrictions on immigration at all.

But on what grounds should there be a right to unrestricted, "free" immigration? No one has a right to move to a place already occupied by someone else, unless he has been invited by the present occupant. And if all places are already occupied, all migration is migration by invitation only. A right to "free" immigration exists only for virgin country, for the open frontier.

There are only two ways of trying to get around this conclusion and still rescue the notion of "free" immigration. The first is to place all current place occupants and

occupations under moral suspicion. To this purpose, much is made of the fact that all current place occupations have been affected by prior State-action, war and conquest. And true enough, State borders have been drawn and redrawn, people have been displaced, deported, killed, and resettled, and state-funded infrastructure projects (roads, public transportation facilities, etc., etc.) have affected the value and relative price of almost all locations and altered the travel distance and cost between them. As already explained in a slightly different context, however, from this undisputable fact it does not follow that any present place occupant has a claim to migrate to any place else (except, of course, when he owns that place or has permission from its current owner). The world does not belong to everyone.

The second possible way out is to claim that all so-called public property — the property controlled by local, regional, or central government — is akin to open frontier, with free and unrestricted access. Yet this is certainly erroneous. From the fact that government property is illegitimate because it is based on prior expropriations, it does not follow that it is un-owned and free-for-all. It has been funded through local, regional, national, or federal tax payments, and it is the payers of these taxes, then, and no one else, who are the legitimate owners of all public property. They cannot exercise their right — that right has been arrogated by the State — but *they* are the legitimate owners.

In a world where all places are privately owned, the immigration problem vanishes. There exists no right to immigration. There only exists the right to trade, buy, or rent various places. Yet what about immigration in the real world with public property administered by local, regional, or central State-governments?

First off: What would immigration policies be like if the State would, as it is supposed to do, act as a *trustee* of the taxpayer-owners' public property? What about immigration if the State acted like the manager of the community property jointly owned and funded by the members of a housing association or gated community?

At least in principle the answer is clear. A trustee's guideline regarding immigration would be the "full cost" principle. That is, the immigrant or his inviting resident should pay the full cost of the immigrant's use made of all public goods or facilities during his presence. The cost of the community property funded by resident taxpayers should not rise or its quality fall on account of the presence of immigrants. On the contrary, if possible the presence of an immigrant should yield the resident-owners a profit, either in the form of lower taxes or community-fees or a higher quality of community property (and hence all-around higher property values).

What the application of the full cost principle involves in detail depends on the historical circumstances, i.e., in particular on the immigration pressure. If the pressure is low, the initial entry on public roads may be entirely unrestricted to 'foreigners' and all costs insofar associated with immigrants are fully absorbed by domestic residents in the expectation of domestic profits. All further-going discrimination would be left to the individual resident-owners. (This, incidentally, is pretty much the state of affairs, as it existed in the Western world until WW I.) But even then, the same generosity would most likely not be extended to the use made by immigrants of public hospitals, schools, universities, housing, pools, parks, etc. Entry to such facilities would not be "free" for immigrants. To the contrary, immigrants would be charged a higher price for their use than the domestic resident-owners who have

funded these facilities, so as to lower the domestic tax-burden. And if a temporary visitor-immigrant wanted to become a permanent resident, he might be expected to pay an admission price, to be remitted to the current owners as compensation for the extra-use made of their community property.

On the other hand, if the immigration pressure is high — as currently in the entire Western, white, heterosexual male dominated world — more restrictive measures may have to be employed for the same purpose of protecting domestic resident owners' private and common property. There may be identity controls not only at ports of entry, but also at the local level, in order to keep out known criminals and otherwise undesirable riffraff. And apart from the specific restrictions imposed on visitors by individual resident-owners regarding the use of their various private properties, there may also exist more general local entry restrictions. Some especially attractive communities may charge an entrance fee for every visitor (except for resident-invited guests) to be remitted to resident-owners, or require a certain code of conduct regarding all community property. And the requirements of permanent ownership-residency for some communities may be highly restrictive and involve intensive screening and a heavy admission price, as is still the case today in some Swiss communities.

But of course, then: this is *not* what the *State* does. The immigration policies of the States that are confronted with the highest immigration pressure, of the US and Western Europe, have little resemblance with the actions of a trustee. They do not follow the full cost principle. They do not tell the immigrant essentially to “pay up or leave.” To the contrary, they tell him “once in, you can stay and use not just all roads but all sorts of public facilities

and services for free or at discounted prices even if you do not pay up.” That is, they *subsidize* immigrants — or rather: they force domestic taxpayers to subsidize them. In particular, they also subsidize domestic employers who import cheaper foreign workers. Because such employers can externalize part of the total costs associated with their employment — the free use to be made by his foreign employees of all resident public property and facilities — onto other domestic taxpayers. And they still further subsidize immigration (internal migration) at the expense of resident-taxpayers in prohibiting — by means of non-discrimination laws — not only all internal, local entry restrictions, but also and increasingly all restrictions concerning the entry and use of all domestic *private* property.

And as for the initial entry of immigrants, whether as visitor or resident, States do not discriminate on the basis of *individual* characteristics (as a trustee would, and as every private property owner would, regarding his own property), but on the basis of *groups* or *classes* of people, i.e., based on nationality, ethnicity, etc. They do not apply a uniform admission standard: of checking the identity of the immigrant, of conducting some sort of credit check on him, and possibly charging him an entrance fee. Instead, they allow some classes of foreigners in for free, without any visa requirement, as if they were returning residents. Thus, for instance, all Rumanians or Bulgarians, irrespective of their individual characteristics, are free to migrate to Germany or the Netherlands and stay there to make use of all public goods and facilities, even if they do not pay up and live at German or Dutch taxpayers’ expense. Similarly for Puerto Ricans *vis-à-vis* the US and US taxpayers, and also for Mexicans, who are effectively allowed to enter the US illegally, as uninvited and unidentified trespassers. On the other hand, other classes

of foreigners are subject to painstaking visa restrictions. Thus, for instance, all Turks, again irrespective of their individual characteristics, must undergo an intimidating visa-procedure and may be entirely prevented from traveling to Germany or the Netherlands, even if they have been invited and command over sufficient funds to pay for all costs associated with their presence.

Resident owner-taxpayers are thus harmed twice: once by indiscriminately including some classes of immigrants even if they *can't* pay up and on the other hand by indiscriminately excluding other classes of immigrants even if they *can*.

Left-libertarians do not criticize this immigration policy as contrary to that of a trustee of public property ultimately owned by private domestic taxpayer-owners, however, i.e., for not applying the full-cost principle and hence *wrongly* discriminating, but for discriminating at all. Free, non-discriminatory immigration for them means that visa-free entry and permanent residency be made available to everyone, i.e., to each potential immigrant on equal terms, regardless of individual characteristics or the ability to pay for the full cost of one's stay. Everyone is invited to stay in Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, or the US, for instance, and make free use of all domestic public facilities and services.

To their credit, left-libertarians recognize some of the consequences this policy would have in the present world. Absent any other, internal or local entry restrictions concerning the use of domestic public properties and services and increasingly absent also all entry restrictions regarding the use of domestic private property (owing to countless anti-discrimination laws), the predictable result would be a massive inflow of immigrants from the third and second world into the US and Western Europe and

the quick collapse of the current domestic 'public welfare' system. Taxes would have to be sharply increased (further shrinking the productive economy) and public property and services would dramatically deteriorate. A financial crisis of unparalleled magnitude would result.

Yet why would this be a desirable goal for anyone calling himself a libertarian? True enough, the tax-funded public welfare system should be eliminated, root and branch. But the inevitable crisis that a "free" immigration policy would bring about does not produce this result. To the contrary: Crises, as everyone vaguely familiar with history would know, are typically used and often purposefully fabricated by States in order to further increase their own power. And surely the crisis produced by a "free" immigration policy would be an extraordinary one.

What left-libertarians typically ignore in their nonchalant or even sympathetic appraisal of the predictable crisis is the fact that the immigrants who caused the collapse are still physically present when it occurs. For left-libertarians, owing to their egalitarian preconceptions, this fact does not imply a problem. For them, all people are more or less equal and hence, an increase in the number of immigrants has no more of an impact than an increase of the domestic population via a higher birth-rate. For every social realist, however, indeed for everyone with any common sense, this premise is patently false and potentially dangerous. A million more Nigerians or Arabs living in Germany or a million more Mexicans or Hutus or Tutsis residing in the US is quite a different thing than a million more home-grown Germans or Americans. With millions of third- and second-world immigrants present when the crisis hits and the paychecks stop coming in, it is highly unlikely that a peaceful outcome will result and a natural, private-property-based social order emerge.

Rather, it is far more likely and indeed almost certain that civil war, looting, vandalism, and tribal or ethnic gang warfare will break out instead — and the call for a strong-man-State will become increasingly unmistakable.

Why, then, one might ask, does the State not adopt the left-libertarian “free” immigration policy and grasp the opportunity offered by the predictable crisis to further strengthen its own power? Through its internal non-discrimination policies and also its current immigration policies, the State has already done much to fragment the domestic population and so increase its own power. A “free immigration” policy would add another, enormous dose of non-discriminatory “multiculturalism.” It would further strengthen the tendency toward social de-homogenization, division, and fragmentation, and it would further weaken the traditional, white, heterosexual male dominated ‘bourgeois’ social order and culture associated with the “West.”

The answer as to ‘why not?’ appears simple, however. In contrast to left-libertarians, the ruling elites are still realistic enough to recognize that besides great opportunities for State growth, the predictable crisis would also entail some incalculable risk and could lead to social upheavals of such proportions that they themselves may be swept out of power and be replaced by other, ‘foreign’ elites. Accordingly, the ruling elites proceed only gradually, step by step, on their path toward a “non-discriminatory multiculturalism.” And yet they are happy about the left-libertarian “free immigration” propaganda, because it helps the State not just to stay on its present *divide et impera* course but to proceed on it at an accelerated pace.

Contrary to their own anti-statist pronouncements and pretensions, then, the peculiar left-libertarian victimology and its demand for indiscriminating niceness

and inclusiveness *vis-à-vis* the long, familiar list of historical “victims,” including in particular also all foreigners qua potential immigrants, actually turns out to be a recipe for the further growth of State power. The cultural Marxists know this, and that is the reason why they adopted the very same victimology. The left-libertarians do apparently *not* know this and are thus the cultural Marxists’ useful idiots on their march toward totalitarian social control.

Let me come to a conclusion and return to libertarianism, and the topic of Left and Right — and thereby finally also to the answer to my earlier rhetorical questions concerning the peculiar leftist victimology and its significance.

You cannot be a consistent left-*libertarian*, because the left-libertarian doctrine, even if unintended, promotes Statist, i.e., un-libertarian, ends. From this, many libertarians have drawn the conclusion that libertarianism is neither Left nor Right. That it is just “thin” libertarianism. I do not accept this conclusion. Nor, apparently, did Murray Rothbard, when he ended the initially presented quote saying: “but psychologically, sociologically, and in practice, it simply doesn’t work that way.” Indeed, I consider myself a right-libertarian — or, if that may sound more appealing, a realistic or commonsensical libertarian — and a consistent one at that.

True enough, the libertarian doctrine is a purely aprioristic and deductive theory and as such does not say or imply anything about the rival claims of the Right and the Left regarding the existence, the extent, and the causes of human inequalities. That is an *empirical* question. But on this question the Left happens to be largely unrealistic, wrong, and devoid of any common sense, whereas the Right is realistic and essentially correct and sensible. There can be consequently nothing wrong with applying

a correct aprioristic theory of how peaceful human cooperation is possible to a realistic, i.e., fundamentally rightist, description of the world. For only based on correct empirical assumptions about man is it possible to arrive at a correct assessment as regards the practical implementation and the sustainability of a libertarian social order.

Realistically, then, a right-libertarian does not only recognize that physical and mental abilities are unequally distributed among the various individuals *within* each society and that accordingly each society will be characterized by countless inequalities, by social stratification and a multitude of rank orders of achievement and authority. He also recognizes that such abilities are unequally distributed among the many *different* societies coexisting on the globe and that consequently also the world-as-a-whole will be characterized by regional and local inequalities, disparities, stratification, and rank orders. As for individuals, so are also not all societies equal and on a par with each other. He notices further that among these unequally distributed abilities, both within any given society and between different societies, is also the mental ability of recognizing the requirements and the benefits of peaceful cooperation. And he notices that the conduct of the various regional or local States and their respective power elites that have emerged from different societies can serve as a good indicator for the various degrees of *deviation* from the recognition of libertarian principles in such societies.

More specifically, he realistically notices that libertarianism, as an intellectual system, was first developed and furthest elaborated in the Western world, by white males, in white male dominated societies. That it is in white, heterosexual male dominated societies, where adherence to libertarian principles is the greatest and the deviations

from them the least severe (as indicated by comparatively less evil and extortionist State policies). That it is white heterosexual men who have demonstrated the greatest ingenuity, industry, and economic prowess. And that it is societies dominated by white heterosexual males, and in particular by the most successful among them, which have produced and accumulated the greatest amount of capital goods and achieved the highest average living standards.

In light of this, as a right-libertarian, I would of course first say to my children and students: always respect and do not invade others' private property rights and recognize the State as an enemy and indeed the very anti-thesis of private property. But I would not leave it at that. I would not say (or silently imply) that once you have satisfied this requirement "anything goes." Which is pretty much what 'thin' libertarians appear to be saying! I would not be a cultural relativist as most "thin" libertarians at least implicitly are. Instead, I would add (at a minimum): be and do whatever makes you happy, but always keep in mind that as long as you are an integral part of the worldwide division of labour, your existence and well-being depends decisively on the continued existence of others, and especially on the continued existence of white heterosexual male dominated societies, their patriarchic family structures, and their bourgeois or aristocratic lifestyle and conduct. Hence, even if you do not want to have any part in that, recognize that you are nonetheless a beneficiary of this standard "Western" model of social organization and hence, for your own sake, do nothing to undermine it but instead be supportive of it as something to be respected and protected.

And to the long list of 'victims' I would say: do your own thing, live your own life, as long as you do it peace-

fully and without invading other people's private property rights. If and insofar as you are integrated into the international division of labour, you do not owe restitution to anyone nor does anyone owe you any restitution. Your coexistence with your supposed 'victimizers' is mutually beneficial. But keep in mind that while the 'victimizers' could live and do without you, albeit at a lower standard of living, the reverse is not true. The disappearance of the 'victimizers' would imperil your very own existence. Hence, even if you don't want to model yourself on the example provided by white male culture, be aware that it is only on account of the continued existence of this model that all alternative cultures can be sustained at their present living standards and that with the disappearance of this "Western" model as a globally effective *Leitkultur* the existence of many if not all of your fellow 'victims' would be endangered.

That doesn't mean that you should be uncritical of the "Western," white male dominated world. After all, even these societies most closely following this model also have their various States that are responsible for reprehensible acts of aggression not only against their own domestic property owners but also against foreigners. But neither where you live nor anywhere else should the State be confused with "the people." It is not the "Western" State, but the "traditional" (normal, standard, etc.) lifestyle and conduct of the western "people," already under increasingly heavy attack by their very "own" State-rulers on their drive toward totalitarian social control, that deserves your respect and of which you are a beneficiary.

ON DEMOCRACY, DE-CIVILIZATION, AND THE QUEST FOR A NEW COUNTERCULTURE

BECAUSE EVERY ACTION REQUIRES THE employment of specific physical means — a body, standing room, external objects — a conflict between different actors must arise, whenever two actors try to use the same physical means for the attainment of different purposes. The source of conflict is always and invariably the same: the *scarcity or rivalrousness of physical means*. Two actors cannot at the same time use the same physical means — the same bodies, spaces and objects — for alternative purposes. If they try to do so, they must clash. Therefore, in order to avoid conflict or resolve it if it occurs, an actionable principle and criterion of justice or law is required, i.e., a principle regulating the just, lawful, or “proper” vs. the unjust, unlawful, or “improper” use and control (ownership) of scarce physical means.

Logically, what is required to avoid all conflict is clear: It is only necessary that every good be always and at all times owned *privately*, i.e., controlled exclusively by some specified individual (or individual partnership or association), and that it be always recognizable which good is owned and by whom, and which is not or by someone

else. The plans and purposes of various profit-seeking actor-entrepreneurs may then be as different as can be, and yet no conflict will arise so long as their respective actions involve only and exclusively the use of their own, private property.

Yet how can this state of affairs: the complete and unambiguously clear privatization of all goods, be practically accomplished? How can physical things become private property in the first place; and how can conflict be avoided in these initial acts of privatization?

A single — praxeological — solution to this problem exists and has been essentially known to mankind since its beginnings — even if it has only been slowly and gradually elaborated and logically re-constructed. To avoid conflict from the start, it is necessary that private property be founded through *acts of original appropriation*. Property must be established through *acts* (instead of mere words, decrees, or declarations), because only through actions, taking place in time and space, can an objective — intersubjectively ascertainable — link be established between a particular person and a particular thing. And only the *first* appropriator of a previously unappropriated thing can acquire this thing as his property *without conflict*. For, by definition, as the *first* appropriator he *cannot* have run into conflict with anyone in appropriating the good in question, as everyone else appeared on the scene only *later*.

This importantly implies that while every person is the exclusive owner of his own physical body as his primary means of action, no person can ever be the owner of any other person's body. For we can use another person's body only *indirectly*, i.e., in using our directly appropriated and controlled own body *first*. Thus, direct appropriation temporally and logically precedes indirect

appropriation; and accordingly, any non-consensual use of another person's body is an unjust misappropriation of something already directly appropriated by someone else.

All *just* (lawful) property, then, goes back directly or indirectly, through a chain of mutually beneficial — and thus conflict-free — property title transfers, to prior and ultimately original appropriators and acts of appropriation. *Mutatis mutandis*, all claims to and uses made of things by a person who had neither appropriated or previously produced these things, nor acquired them through a conflict-free exchange from some previous owner, are *unjust* (unlawful).

Let me emphasize, that I consider these elementary insights argumentatively irrefutable and hence, *a priori* true. If you want to live in peace with other persons — and you demonstrate that you wish to do so by engaging in argumentation with them — then only one solution exists: you must have private (exclusive) property in all things scarce and suitable as means (or goods) in the pursuit of human ends (goals); and private property in such things must be founded in acts of original appropriation — the recognizable em-bordering or enclosure of scarce resources — or else in the voluntary transfer of such property from a prior to a later owner.

We can say, then, that these rules express and explicate the “natural law.” “Natural,” given the uniquely human goal of peaceful interaction; and “natural,” because these laws are “given” and merely *discovered* as such by man. That is, they are emphatically *not* laws that are *made-up*, *contrived*, or *decreed*. In fact, all man-made (rather than discovered or found) law, i.e., all *legislation*, is not law at all, but a perversion of law: orders, commands, or prescriptions that do not lead to peace, but to conflict, and hence are dysfunctional of the very purpose of laws.

This does not mean that, with the discovery of the principles of natural law, all problems of social order are solved and all friction will disappear. Conflicts can and do occur, even if everyone knows how to avoid them. And, in every case of conflict between two or more contending parties, then, the law must be *applied* — and for this *juris-prudence* and *judgment* and *adjudication* (in contrast to *juris-diction*) is required. There can be disputes about whether you or I have misapplied the principles in specific instances regarding particular means. There can be disagreements as to the “true” facts of a case: who was where and when, and who had taken possession of this or that at such and such times and places? And it can be tedious and time-consuming to establish and sort out these facts. Various prior-later disputes must be investigated. Contracts may have to be scrutinized. Difficulties may arise in the application of the principles to underground resources, to water and to air, and especially to flows of water and air. Moreover, there is always the question of “fitting” a punishment to a given crime, i.e., of finding the appropriate measure of restitution or retribution that a victimizer owes his victim, and of then enforcing the verdicts of law.

Difficult as these problems may occasionally be, however, the guiding principles to be followed in searching for a solution are always clear and beyond dispute.

In every case of conflict brought to trial in search of judgment, the presumption is always in favour of the current possessor of the resource in question and, *mutatis mutandis*, the burden of a “proof to the contrary” is always on the opponent of some current state of affairs and current possessions. The opponent must demonstrate that he, contrary to *prima facie* appearance, has a claim on some specific good that is *older* than the current possessor’s

claim. If, and only if an opponent can successfully demonstrate this must the questionable possession be restored as property to him. On the other hand, if the opponent fails to make his case, then not only does the possession remain as property with its current owner, but the current possessor in turn has acquired a lawful claim against his opponent. For the current possessor's body and time was misappropriated by the opponent during his failed and rejected argument. He could have done other, preferred, things with his body-time except defend himself against his opponent.

And importantly also: the *procedure* to be selected for dispensing justice along the just indicated lines is clear and implied in the very goal of peaceful, argumentative conflict resolution. Because both contenders in any property dispute — John and Jim — make or maintain opposite truth claims — I, John, am the lawful owner of such and such a resource *versus* no, I, Jim, am the lawful owner of this very same resource — and hence, both John and Jim are interested, partial or biased in favour of a particular outcome of the trial, only some disinterested or neutral third party can be entrusted with the task of dispensing justice. This procedure does not guarantee that justice will always be done, of course. But it assures that the likelihood of unjust verdicts is minimized and errors of judgment most likely and easily be corrected. In short, then, for each and every property dispute between two (or more) contending parties it must hold: No party may ever sit in judgment and act as final judge in any dispute involving itself. Rather, every appeal to justice must always be made to “outsiders,” i.e., to impartial third-party judges.

We may call the social order emerging from the application of these principles and procedures a “natural

order,” a “system of natural justice,” a “private law society,” or a “constitution of liberty.”

Interestingly, although the prescriptions and requirements of a natural order appear intuitively plausible and reasonably undemanding on its constituent parts, i.e., on us as individual actors, as a matter of fact, however, we inhabit a world that sharply deviates from such an order. To be sure, there are still traces of natural law and justice to be found in civil life and the handling of civil disputes, but natural law has become increasingly deformed, distorted, corrupted, swamped, and submerged by ever higher mountains of legislative laws, i.e., by rules and procedures at variance with natural law and justice.

It is not too difficult to identify the root cause for this increasingly noticeable deviation of social reality from a natural order and to explain this transformation as the necessary consequence of one elementary as well as fundamental original error. This error — the “original sin,” if you will — is the monopolization of the function of judgeship and adjudication. That is, the “original sin” is to appoint one person or agency (but no one else!) to act as final judge in *all* conflicts, including also conflicts involving itself.

The institution of such a monopoly apparently fulfills the classic definition of a *State* as a monopolist of ultimate decision-making and of violence over some territory that it acquired neither through acts of original appropriation nor through a voluntary transfer from a previous owner. The State — and no one else! — is appointed and permitted to sit in judgment of its own actions and to violently enforce its own judgment.

This involves in and of itself a twofold violation of natural law and justice. On the one hand, because the

State thus prohibits everyone involved in a property dispute with itself from appealing for justice to any potential outside third-party judge; and *mutatis mutandis*, because the State excludes everyone else (except itself) from proffering his adjudication services in such conflicts.

Moreover, from the original error predictable consequences follow. As a universal rule, each and every monopoly, shielded from competition, leads to higher prices and a lower quality of the product or service in question than would otherwise be the case. In the special case of a judicial monopoly and the particular service of adjudication, this means on the one hand that the quality of law and justice will fall and natural law will be successively replaced by monopolist-made legislation, i.e., perversions of law. Predictably, the monopolist will use his position as ultimate decision-maker not only to resolve conflict between contending property owners, but increasingly also to initiate or provoke conflicts with private property owners, in order to then decide such conflicts in his own favor, i.e., to expropriate the just property of others to his own advantage on the basis of his own made-up laws. And on the other hand, the price to be paid for justice will rise. In fact, the price of justice will not simply be a 'higher price' that justice seekers may or may not be willing to pay (as would be the case for any other monopoly), but a *tax* that justice seekers *must* pay whether they agree to it or not. That is, private property owners involved in property disputes with the State will not only be expropriated *via* legislation, but they must also pay the State for this "service" of expropriating them, thus adding insult to injury.

In effect, with the establishment of a judicial monopoly all private property becomes essentially *fiat* property, i.e., State-granted private property.

Private property is only *provisionally* private and left under private control, i.e., only until some State-made law or regulation does not decree otherwise, thus creating an environment of permanent legal uncertainty and causing an increase in the social rate of time-preference.

Let me term this process that is set in motion with the institution of a State: the progressive deviation from a natural order and system of justice and the increasing erosion of all private property rights and corresponding growth of the legislative and regulatory powers of the State, the *process of de-civilization*.

While steady in its direction, the process of de-civilization begun with the establishment of a State may proceed at different speeds at different times or places, sometimes more slowly and sometimes at a faster pace. However, another, additional, error can be identified that will result in an acceleration of the process of de-civilization. This second error is the transformation of the State into a democratic State. This transformation does not involve any change in the status of the State as judicial monopolist. Yet it still involves a significant twofold change: entry into the State and the position of ultimate judge is opened for every (adult) inhabitant of a given territory and the function as final judge is exercised only temporarily, for some short fixed period by the winner of regularly recurring secret and anonymous one-man-one-vote elections.

Predictably, this change will lead to a systematic acceleration of the process of de-civilization.

On the one hand, as Helmut Schoeck above all has amply demonstrated, the feeling of envy is one of the most widespread and powerful of de-civilizing motivational forces. All major (high) religions have therefore

condemned the desire for the property of one's neighbours as sinful. In a natural order or a system of natural law and justice, people too, some more and others less, are tempted to expropriate the property of others to their own advantage. But in a natural order, quite in accordance with religious prescriptions, such temptations are considered immoral and illegitimate and everyone is expected to suppress any such desires. With a State in place, some — a few — people are permitted to give in to such immoral desires for an indeterminate period and use legislation and taxation as means to satisfy their own desire for the property of others. Only with democracy, however, i.e., the free and unrestricted entry into the State, are *all* moral restraints and inhibitions against the taking of others' lawful property removed. Everyone is free to indulge in such temptations and propose and promote every conceivable measure of legislation and taxation to gain advantages at other people's expense. That is, whereas in a natural order everyone is expected to spend his time exclusively on production or consumption, under democratic conditions, increasingly more time is spent instead on politics, i.e., on the advocacy and promotion of activities that are neither productive nor consumptive, but exploitative and parasitic of and on the property of others. Indeed, even the opponents of such a development must waste their time increasingly on unproductive endeavors, i.e., on politics, if only to defend themselves and their property or take precautionary actions against such incursions. In fact, under democratic conditions, a new class of people emerges — politicians — whose profession it is to propose and promote law — decrees and taxes designed to expropriate the property of some to the advantage of others (including and foremost themselves).

Moreover, owing to regularly recurring elections, the politicization of society never comes to an end but is constantly reignited and continued. Legal uncertainty or lawlessness is thus heightened and social time preferences will rise still further, i.e., increasingly shortening the time horizon taken into consideration in one's action-plans. And in the process of political competition, i.e., in the competition for the position of ultimate decision-maker, such politicians and political parties will rise to the top who have the least moral scruples and the best skills as demagogues, i.e., of proposing and propagating the most popular assortment of immoral and unlawful demands from a near limitless supply of such demands on offer in public opinion.

On the other hand — as the other side of the same coin — democracy will lead to increasing corruption. With open entry into the State, the resistance against State-rule is reduced and the size of the State will grow. The number of State employees and administrators will increase, and because their income and livelihood is dependent on the continuation of the State's power of legislation and taxation, they will, not necessarily, but in all likelihood, become reliable and loyal supporters of the State. In particular, the class of intellectuals, i.e., the producers of words (wordsmiths) in contrast to the producers of things (manufacturers), will be thus bought off and corrupted. Because there is only little and fickle market demand for words rather than things, intellectuals are always desperate for any help they can get to stay afloat, and the State, in permanent need of ideological support for its relentless onslaught against natural law and justice, is only too willing to offer such help and employ them as public educators in exchange for the appropriate propaganda.

Yet it is not only State employees that are so corrupted. Tax-revenue and the State's range of control over other, non-monetary assets and holdings will far exceed what is necessary to employ and equip its workers. The State can also disperse income and assistance to various members of civil society. The loyalty of the poor and downtrodden can be assured through so-called social welfare programs, and the rich and the captains of banking and industry, and indirectly also their employees, can be corrupted through government privileges, contracts, and interest bearing governments bonds. And this same policy can be used also for the purpose of "dividing" the members of civil society, so as to more easily control an increasingly factionalized or "atomized" population. *Divide et impera!*

While the principal direction of social evolution can be safely predicted based on a few elementary assumptions about the nature of man, the State, and of democracy in particular, all details concerning the process of de-civilization remain uncertain and unclear. To be more specific, history must be consulted. In particular, about the last hundred years must be looked at, i.e., the history since the end of WWI in 1918, when modern democracy came into its own displacing the former monarchical State.

While this history confirms the general prediction, the actual results are truly horrendous, surpassing the worst fears. As far as moral degeneration and corruption is concerned, and taking only the US as the dominant example and model of a democratic State into consideration, a few indicators may suffice as illustration.

In the US, a *Code of Federal Regulations* — a document listing all government rules and regulations — did not exist at the beginning of the period (until 1937). By 1960, the *Code* had reached 22,877 pages, and

by 2012 it had swollen to a total of 174,545 pages, subdivided into 50 titles, regulating in minutest detail the production of everything imaginable, from agriculture and aeronautics to transportation, wildlife, and fisheries. Whereas natural law is comprised of only three principles: self-ownership, original appropriation, and contractual property transfer from a prior to a later owner, then, today, after a hundred years of democracy, no aspect of production and consumption is left free and unregulated. As well, at the beginning of the period no more than a handful of “federal crimes” existed, concerning matters such as “treason” or the “bribery of federal officials” (while all “normal” crimes were defined and prosecuted by the individual States). By 1980 the number of “federal crimes” had already grown to about 3,000, and by 2007 it had reached 4,450, criminalizing not just ever more non-tortious actions and victimless crimes but increasingly also motives, thoughts, words, and speech.

As a second indicator for the degree of corruption it is revealing to contrast the total population number with the number of State-dependents. Presently, the total population of the US is about 320 million, or about 260 million, if we subtract the number of people below age 18 and ineligible to vote. By contrast, the number of people wholly or mostly dependent for their livelihood on State-funding includes the following: The number of State-employees (of all levels of governments) is about 22 million. Forty-six million people receive “food stamps.” Sixty-six million people are “Social Security” recipients. Eight million people receive “unemployment insurance.” Federal government spending alone on for-profit firms amounts to some \$500 billion, accounting according to an estimate by Charles Murray for about 22 percent of the American workforce or about 36 million people.

Lastly, non-profit organizations and NGOs, with annual revenues of \$2 trillion and almost 12 million employees, receive about a third of their funding from government, accounting for about another 3 million dependents — thus bringing the total of State-dependents to about 181 million people. That is, only 79 million people or about one third of the adult (above 18) US population of 260 million (or about 25 percent of the total population of 320 million) can be said to be financially wholly or largely independent of the State, whereas close to 70 percent of the US adult population and 57 percent of the total population are to be counted as State-dependents.

Finally, as a third indicator of moral degeneration and corruption, a look at the top of the democratic State-system is instructive: at the politicians and political parties who run and direct the democratic show. In this regard, whether we look at the US or any of its satellite States in Europe and all around the globe, the picture is equally unambiguous and clear — and equally bleak. If measured by the standards of natural law and justice, all politicians, of all parties and virtually without any exception, are guilty, whether directly or indirectly, of murder, homicide, trespass, invasion, expropriation, theft, fraud, and the fencing of stolen goods on a massive and ongoing scale. And every new generation of politicians and parties appears to be worse, and piles even more atrocities and perversions on top of the already existing mountain, so that one feels almost nostalgic about the past.

They all should be hung, or put in jail to rot, or set to making compensation.

But: Instead, they parade around in public and broad daylight and proclaim themselves — pompously, pre-tentiously, arrogantly, and self-righteously — as saintly do-gooders: as good Samaritans, selfless public servants,

benefactors, and saviors of mankind and human civilization. Assisted by a hired intelligentsia, they tell the public in endless loops and variations that as in Alice's wonderland nothing is what it seems:

“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you can make words mean so many different things.”

“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master — that's all.”

And it is the politicians, who are the masters, and who stipulate that aggression, invasion, murder, and war are actually self-defense, whereas self-defense is aggression, invasion, murder, and war. Freedom is coercion, and coercion is freedom. Saving and investment are consumption, and consumption is saving and investment. Money is paper, and paper is money. Taxes are voluntary payments, and voluntarily paid prices are exploitative taxes. Contracts are no contracts, and no contracts are contracts. Producers are parasites, and parasites are producers. Expropriation is restitution, and restitution is expropriation. Indeed, what we can see, hear, or otherwise sense does not exist, and that which we cannot see, hear, or otherwise sense does. The normal is a-normal and the a-normal normal. Black is white and white is black. Male is female and female male, etc.

Worse, the overwhelming majority of the public, far exceeding even the number of State-dependents, falls for this nonsense. Politicians are not despised and ridi-

culed but held in high esteem, applauded, admired, and even glorified by the masses. In their presence, and in particular *vis-à-vis* “top” politicians, most people show themselves awestruck, submissive, and servile. Indeed, even those opposing or denouncing one particular politician or party do so almost always only to propose or hail yet another, different but equally absurd and confused politician or party. And the intelligentsia, finding its own verbal mumbo-jumbo echoed in the blabbering of this or that politician or political party, virtually drools over them.

And on the other hand: The number of those who still hold on to the principles of natural law and justice as the basis of all moral judgment, and who assess the contemporary world accordingly as an “Absurdistan,” i.e., an insane asylum run by crazed megalomaniacs, makes up no more today than a minuscule minority of the population, smaller in size even than the infamous 1 percent of the “super rich” of leftists’ fame (and with little if any overlap with this latter group). And tinier still is the minority of those, who recognize also, however vaguely, the systematic *cause* of this outcome. And all of these — the few sane people left within the asylum —, then, are under constant threat by the guardians and wardens of this “Absurdistan” called democracy, and are branded as Neanderthals, reactionaries, extremists, pre-enlightenment dumb-dumbs, sociopaths, or scum.

Which brings me to the Property and Freedom Society (PFS). Because it purposefully assembles precisely such outcast Neanderthals: people who can see through the “*Schmierentheater*” (fleapit) going on before their eyes, who have had it with all blathering politicians and mass-media darlings, and who have consequently just one

wish: to exit, i.e., to opt out of the legal system imposed on them by the democratic State.

But wherever these Neanderthals happen to reside, they find themselves in the same predicament: the exit is barricaded or entirely barred. Secession from the State's territory is not permitted. One may emigrate from one country to another and thus leave one State-jurisdiction A for another jurisdiction B. But one's immovable property remains thereby subject to the jurisdiction of A, also and especially in the case of sale, and likewise remains the transfer of all moveable property subject to A's jurisdiction. That is, no one, anywhere, can exit with his property left intact, whether in staying or moving elsewhere. And not only is secession prohibited and considered treasonous by politicians, but it is viewed as illegitimate, as shirking one's duties, also by the overwhelming bulk of the 'educated' or rather brainwashed public. Thus, matters appear hopeless for Neanderthals.

The PFS cannot offer a way out of this predicament, of course. Its gatherings, too, must take place on the ground and are as such subject to State-law and jurisdiction. It cannot even be taken for granted that meetings such as ours will be always and everywhere permitted to take place. PFS meetings can offer no more, then, than a brief escape and reprieve from our real life as inmates of an insane asylum, if not on the ground then at least in the virtual reality of ideas, thought, and argument.

But, of course, these meetings have a *real* purpose. They want to accomplish a change in the world of *things*. At the very minimum, they want to prevent the Neanderthal culture, i.e., the culture of natural law, order, and justice, from going entirely extinct. They want to help sustain and provide intellectual nourishment for this increasingly rare species of people and culture.

More ambitiously, however, the PFS wants to help these Neanderthals and their culture regain strength in public opinion by putting them on open display and showcasing them as a uniquely attractive and fascinating species and counterculture.

To achieve this goal, the PFS, seemingly paradoxically, engages in a policy of strict discrimination, i.e., of exclusion and inclusion. Thus, on the one hand, the PFS systematically excludes and discriminates against all representatives and promoters of the present, dominant democratic State-culture: against all professional politicians, State-judges, -prosecutors, -jailers, -killers, -tax-collectors, and -bankers, all warmongers, and all advocates of socialism, legal positivism, moral relativism and egalitarianism, whether of “outcome” or “opportunity.” On the other hand, positively, the PFS seeks out and admits only people, who have adopted for themselves Thomas Jefferson’s dictum that “There is not a truth existing which I fear ... or would wish unknown to the whole world,” who accordingly know of no intellectual “taboo” and of no “political correctness,” and who are committed instead to uncompromising intellectual radicalism, willing to follow the dictates of reason wherever these may lead. More specifically, the PFS seeks out and admits only people dedicated to the recognition of justly acquired private property and property rights, freedom of contract, freedom of association and of dis-association, free trade, and peace.

Following this strict policy of discrimination the PFS, after ten years of its existence, has established itself as a veritable monopoly in the world of intellectual societies: a society made up of exceptional individuals of all ages, intellectual and professional backgrounds and nations, free and unpolluted by all Statists and everything statist,

unrivalled in the interdisciplinary breadth and depth of its radicalism, gathered in beautiful surroundings and united in a spirit of conviviality and comradeship; a society smeared, despised, and even hated (and yet secretly envied) by all the usual suspects, and yet hailed by all those who have had the wisdom and fortune to see and experience it.

Unlike other, ‘regular’ monopolies, however, it is not my goal to preserve and maintain the PFS’s current monopoly position. Quite to the contrary. In setting an example, by producing an appealing and indeed beautiful product — a privately produced public good, if you will — it is my hope that the PFS’s present monopoly position will only be a temporary one, and that its example will serve as an inspiration to others, that more and more similar associations and meetings will spring up, that the dominant democratic un-culture will thus be put increasingly on the defensive and opened up to public ridicule, and that ultimately *they*, the proponents and exponents of the reigning democratic un-culture, will be considered outcasts in polite society.

There are some positive signs: the one-day *Mises Circle* events across major US cities, Rahim Taghizadegan’s *Wertewirtschaft* gatherings in Austria and Andre Lichtschlag’s *Eigentuemlich-Frei* conferences in Germany. However, I am afraid that to match the accomplishment of the PFS will be a difficult task and that it is to maintain its unique status for quite a while. Personally, I am planning to continue this project as long as my and especially also Gülçin’s strength holds up and, even more importantly, as long as you keep coming and effectively supporting the intellectual product and enterprise that is the PFS.

LIBERTARIANISM AND THE ALT-RIGHT: IN SEARCH OF A LIBERTARIAN STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

WE KNOW THE FATE OF the term liberal and liberalism. It has been affixed to so many different people and different positions that it has lost all its meaning and become an empty, non-descript label. The same fate now increasingly also threatens the term libertarian and libertarianism that was invented to regain some of the conceptual precision lost with the demise of the former labels.

However, the history of modern libertarianism is still quite young. It began in Murray Rothbard's living room and found its first quasi-canonical expression in his *For A New Liberty: A Libertarian Manifesto*, published in 1973. And so I am still hopeful and not yet willing to give up on libertarianism as defined and explained by Rothbard with unrivalled conceptual clarity and precision, notwithstanding the meanwhile countless attempts of so-called libertarians to muddy the water and misappropriate the good name of libertarianism for something entirely different.

The theoretical, irrefutable core of the libertarian doctrine is simple and straightforward and I have explained it already repeatedly at this place. If there were no scarcity

in the world, human conflicts or more precisely physical clashes would be impossible. Interpersonal conflicts are always conflicts concerning scarce things. I want to do A with a given thing and you want to do B with the same thing. Because of such conflicts — and because we are able to communicate and argue with each other — we seek out norms of behaviour with the purpose of avoiding these conflicts. The purpose of norms is conflict-avoidance. If we did not want to avoid conflicts, the search for norms of conduct would be senseless. We would simply fight and struggle.

Absent a perfect harmony of all interests, conflicts regarding scarce resources can only be avoided if all scarce resources are assigned as private, exclusive property to some specified individual or group of individuals. Only then can I act independently, with *my* own things, from you, with *your* own things, without you and me clashing.

But who owns what scarce resource as his private property and who does not? First: Each person owns his physical body that only he and no one else controls *directly*. And second, as for scarce resources that can be controlled *only* indirectly (that must be appropriated with our own nature-given, i.e., *unappropriated*, body): Exclusive control (property) is acquired by and assigned to that person who appropriated the resource in question *first* or who acquired it through voluntary (conflict-free) exchange from its *previous* owner. For only the *first* appropriator of a resource (and all later owners connected to him through a chain of voluntary exchanges) can possibly acquire and gain control over it without conflict, i.e., peacefully. Otherwise, if exclusive control is assigned instead to *latecomers*, conflict is not avoided but contrary to the very purpose of norms made unavoidable and permanent.

Before this audience I do not need to go into greater detail except to add this: If you want to live in peace with other people and avoid all physical clashes and, if such clashes do occur, seek to resolve them peacefully, then you must be an anarchist or more precisely a private property anarchist, an anarcho-capitalist, or a proponent of a private law society.

And by implication, then, and again without much further ado: Someone, anyone, is *not* a libertarian or merely a *fake* libertarian who affirms and advocates one or more of the following: the necessity of a State, any State, of ‘public’ (State) property and of taxes in order to live in peace; or the existence and justifiability of any so-called “human rights” or “civil rights” other than private property rights, such as “women rights,” “gay rights,” “minority rights,” the “right” not to be discriminated against, the “right” to free and unrestricted immigration, the “right” to a guaranteed minimum income or to free health care, or the “right” to be free of unpleasant speech and thought. The proponents of any of this may call themselves whatever they want, and as libertarians we may well cooperate with them, insofar as such a cooperation offers the promise of bringing us closer to our ultimate goal, but they are not *libertarians* or only *fake* libertarians.

Now, “a funny thing happened on the way to the forum.” While Rothbard and I, following in his footsteps, never went astray from these theoretically derived core beliefs, not just non-libertarians but in particular also fake libertarians, i.e., people claiming (falsely) to *be* libertarians, and even many possibly honest yet dim-witted libertarians have selected and vilified us as their favorite *betes noires* and incarnates of evil. Rothbard, the *spiritus rector* of modern libertarianism, has been branded by this so-called “anti-fascist” crowd as a

reactionary, a racist, a sexist, an authoritarian, an elitist, a xenophobe, a fascist and, to top it all off, a self-hating Jewish Nazi. And I have inherited all of these honorary titles, plus a few more (except for the Jewish stuff). So what funny thing has happened here?

Trying to develop an answer to this question brings me to the topic of this speech: the relationship between libertarianism and the alternative right or “Alt-Right,” which has gained national and international notoriety after Hillary Clinton, during the 2016 presidential election campaign, identified it as one of the inspirational sources behind the “basket of deplorables” rooting for Trump (and whose leadership, to its credit, after Trump’s election victory, quickly broke with Trump when he turned out to be just another presidential warmonger).

The Alt-Right movement is essentially the successor of the paleo-conservative movement that came to prominence in the early 1990’s, with columnist and best-selling author Patrick Buchanan as its best-known representative. It went somewhat dormant by the late 1990s, and it has recently, in light of the steadily growing damage done to America and its reputation by the successive Bush I, Clinton, Bush II, and Obama administrations, re-emerged more vigorous than before under the new label of the Alt-Right. Many of the leading lights associated with the Alt-Right have appeared here at our meetings in the course of the years. Paul Gottfried, who first coined the term, Peter Brimelow, Richard Lynn, Jared Taylor, John Derbyshire, Steve Sailer, and Richard Spencer. As well, Sean Gabb’s name and mine are regularly mentioned in connection with the Alt-Right, and my work has been linked also with the closely related neo-reactionary movement inspired by Curtis Yarvin (*aka* Mencius Moldbug) and his now defunct blog *Unqualified Reservations*. In sum,

these personal relations and associations have earned me several honourable mentions by America's most famous smear-and-defamation league, the SPLC (*aka* Soviet Poverty Lie Center).

Now: How about the relationship between libertarianism and the Alt-Right and my reasons for inviting leading representatives of the Alt-Right to meetings with libertarians? Libertarians are united by the irrefutable theoretical core beliefs mentioned at the outset. They are clear about the goal that they want to achieve. But the libertarian doctrine does not imply much if anything concerning *these* questions: First, how to maintain a libertarian order once achieved. And second, how to attain a libertarian order from a non-libertarian starting point, which requires (a) that one must correctly describe this starting point and (b) correctly identify the obstacles posed in the way of one's libertarian ends by this very starting point. To answer these questions, in addition to theory, you also need some knowledge of human psychology and sociology or at least a modicum of common sense. Yet many libertarians and fake libertarians are plain ignorant of human psychology and sociology or even devoid of any common sense. They blindly accept, against all empirical evidence, an egalitarian, blank-slate view of human nature, of all people and all societies and cultures being essentially equal and interchangeable.

While much of contemporary libertarianism can be characterized, then, as theory and theorists without psychology and sociology, much or even most of the Alt-Right can be described, in contrast, as psychology and sociology without theory. Alt-Righters are not united by a commonly held theory, and there exists nothing even faintly resembling a canonical text defining its meaning. Rather, the Alt-Right is essentially united in its description of the

contemporary world, and in particular the US and the so-called Western World, and the identification and diagnosis of its social pathologies. In fact, it has been correctly noted that the Alt-Right is far more united by what it is against than what it is for. It is against, and indeed it hates with a passion, the elites in control of the State, the MSM, and academia. Why? Because they all promote social degeneracy and pathology. Thus, they promote, and the Alt-Right vigorously opposes, egalitarianism, affirmative action (*aka* “non-discrimination”), multiculturalism, and “free” mass immigration as a means of bringing multiculturalism about. As well, the Alt-Right loathes everything smacking of cultural Marxism or Gramscism and all “political correctness” and, strategically wise, it shrugs off, without any apology whatsoever, all accusations of being racist, sexist, elitist, supremacist, homophobic, xenophobe, etc., etc. And the Alt-Right also laughs off as hopelessly naïve the programmatic motto of so-called libertarians (which my young German friend Andre Lichtschlag has termed as “Liberallala-Libertarians”) of “Peace, Love, and Liberty,” appropriately translated into German by Lichtschlag as “Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen.” In stark contrast to this, Alt-Righters insist that life is also about strife, hate, struggle and fight, not just between individuals but also among various groups of people acting in concert. “Millennial Woes” (Colin Robertson) has thus aptly summarized the Alt-Right: *“Equality is bullshit. Hierarchy is essential. The races are different. The sexes are different. Morality matters and degeneracy is real. All cultures are not equal and we are not obligated to think they are. Man is a fallen creature and there is more to life than hollow materialism. Finally, the white race matters, and civilization is precious. This is the Alt-Right.”*

Absent any unifying theory, however, there is far less agreement among the Alt-Right about the goal that it ultimately wants to achieve. Many of its leading lights have distinctly libertarian leanings, most notably those that have come here (which, of course, was the reason for having invited them here), even if they are not 100-percenters and would not identify themselves as such. All Alt-Righters that have appeared here, for instance, have been familiar with Rothbard and his work, all the while the most recent presidential candidate of the Libertarian Party had never even heard of Rothbard's name, and all of them, to the best of my knowledge, were outspoken supporters of Ron Paul during his primary campaign for the Republican Party's nomination as presidential candidate, all the while many self-proclaimed libertarians attacked and tried to vilify Ron Paul for his supposedly (you already know what's coming by now) "racist" views.

However, several of the Alt-Right's leaders and many of its rank and file followers have also endorsed views incompatible with libertarianism. As Buchanan before and Trump now, they are adamant about complementing a policy of restrictive, highly selective, and discriminating immigration (which is entirely compatible with libertarianism and its *desideratum* of freedom of association and opposition to forced integration) with a strident policy of restricted trade, economic protectionism, and protective tariffs (which is antithetical to libertarianism and inimical to human prosperity). (Let me hasten to add here that, despite my misgivings about his "economics," I still consider Pat Buchanan a great man.)

Others strayed even further afield, such as Richard Spencer, who first popularized the term Alt-Right. In the meantime, owing to several recent publicity stunts, which have gained him some degree of notoriety in the

US, Spencer has laid claim to the rank of the maximum leader of a supposedly mighty unified movement (an endeavour, by the way, that has been ridiculed by Taki Theodoracopulos, a veteran champion of the paleo-conservative-turned-Alt-Right movement and Spencer's former employer). When Spencer appeared here, several years ago, he still exhibited strong libertarian leanings. Unfortunately, however, this has changed and Spencer now denounces, without any qualification whatsoever, all libertarians and everything libertarian and has gone so far as to even put up with socialism, as long as it is socialism of and for only white people. What horrifying disappointment!

Given the lack of any theoretical foundation, this split of the Alt-Right movement into rival factions can hardly be considered a surprise. Yet this fact should not mislead one to dismiss it, because the Alt-Right has brought out many insights that are of central importance in approaching an answer to the two previously mentioned questions unanswered by libertarian theory: of how to maintain a libertarian social order and how to get to such an order from the current, decidedly un-libertarian *status quo*. The Alt-Right did not discover these insights. They had been established long before and indeed, in large parts they are no more than common sense. But in recent times such insights have been buried under mountains of egalitarian, leftist propaganda and the Alt-Right must be credited for having brought them back to light.

To illustrate the importance of such insights, let me take the first unanswered question first.

Many libertarians hold the view that all that is needed to maintain a libertarian social order is the strict enforcement of the non-aggression principle (NAP). Otherwise, as long as one abstains from aggression, according to their

view, the principle of “live and let live” should hold. Yet surely, while this “live and let live” sounds appealing to adolescents in rebellion against parental authority and all social convention and control (and many youngsters have been initially attracted to libertarianism believing that this “live and let live” is the essence of libertarianism), and while the principle does indeed hold and apply for people living far apart and dealing with each other only indirectly and from afar, it does *not* hold and apply, or rather it is *insufficient*, when it comes to people living in close proximity to each other, as neighbours and cohabitants of the same community.

A simple example suffices to make the point. Assume a new next-door neighbour. This neighbour does not aggress against you or your property in any way, but he is a “bad” neighbour. He is littering on his own neighbouring property, turning it into a garbage heap; in the open, for you to see, he engages in ritual animal slaughter, he turns his house into a “Freudenhaus,” a bordello, with clients coming and going all day and all night long; he never offers a helping hand and never keeps any promise that he has made; or he cannot or else he refuses to speak to you in your own language, etc., etc. Your life is turned into a nightmare. Yet you may not use violence against him, because he has not aggressed against you. What can you do? You can shun and ostracize him. But your neighbour does not care, and in any case you alone thus ‘punishing’ him makes little if any difference to him. You have to have the communal respect and authority, or you must turn to someone who does, to persuade and convince everyone or at least most of the members of your community to do likewise and make the bad neighbour a social outcast, so as to exert enough pressure on him to sell his property and leave. (So much for the libertarians who, in addition

to their “live and let live” ideal also hail the motto “respect no authority!”)

The lesson? The peaceful cohabitation of neighbours and of people in regular direct contact with each other on some territory — a tranquil, convivial social order — requires also a commonality of culture: of language, religion, custom, and convention. There can be peaceful co-existence of different cultures on distant, physically separated territories, but multi-culturalism, cultural heterogeneity, cannot exist in one and the same place and territory without leading to diminishing social trust, increased tension, and ultimately the call for a “strong man” and the destruction of anything resembling a libertarian social order.

And moreover: Just as a libertarian order must always be on guard against “bad” (even if non-aggressive) neighbours by means of social ostracism, i.e., by a common “you are *not* welcome here” culture, so, and indeed even more vigilantly so, must it be guarded against neighbours who openly advocate communism, socialism, syndicalism, or democracy in any shape or form. They, in thereby posing an open threat to all private property and property owners, must not only be shunned, but they must, to use a by now somewhat famous Hoppe-meme, be “physically removed,” if need be by violence, and forced to leave for other pastures. Not to do so inevitably leads to — well, communism, socialism, syndicalism, or democracy and hence, the very opposite of a libertarian social order.

With these “rightist” or as I would say, plain commonsensical insights in mind I turn now to the more challenging question of how to move from here, the *status quo*, to there. And for this it might be instructive to first briefly consider the answer given by the liberallala, the peace-love-and-liberty, the Friede-Freude-Eierkuchen,

or the capitalism-is-love libertarians. It reveals the same fundamental egalitarianism, if in a slightly different form, as that exhibited also by the live-and-let-live libertarians. These, as I have just tried to show, define what we may call the “bad neighbour problem” — and what is merely a short-hand for the general problem posed by the co-existence of distinctly different, alien, mutually disturbing, annoying, strange, or hostile cultures — simply out of existence. And indeed, if you assume, against all empirical evidence, that all people, everywhere, are essentially the same, then, by definition, no such thing as a “bad neighbour problem” exists.

The same egalitarian, or as the liberallala-libertarians themselves prefer to call it, “humanitarian” spirit also comes to bear in their answer to the question of a libertarian *strategy*. In a nutshell, their advice is this: be nice and talk to everyone — and then, in the long run, the better libertarian arguments will win out.

Outside egalitarian fantasy lands, however, in the real world, libertarians must above all be *realistic* and recognize from the outset, as the Alt-Right does, the inequality not just of individuals but also of different cultures as an ineradicable *datum* of the human existence. We must further recognize that there exist plenty of enemies of liberty as defined by libertarianism and that they, not we, are in charge of worldly affairs; that in many parts of the contemporary world their control of the populace is so complete that the ideas of liberty and of a libertarian social order are practically unheard of or considered unthinkable (except as some idle intellectual play or mental gymnastics by a few “exotic” individuals); and that it is essentially only in the West, in the countries of Western and Central Europe and the lands settled by its people, that the idea of liberty is so deeply rooted that these

enemies still can be openly challenged. And confining our strategic considerations here only to the West, then, we can identify, pretty much as the Alt-Right has effectively done, these actors and agencies as our principal enemies.

They are, first and foremost, the ruling elites in control of the State apparatus and in particular the “Deep State” or the so-called “Cathedral” of the military, the secret services, the central banks and the supreme courts. As well, they include the leaders of the military-industrial complex, i.e., of nominally private firms that owe their very existence to the State as the exclusive or dominant buyer of their products, and they also include the leaders of the big commercial banks, which owe their privilege of creating money and credit out of thin air to the existence of the central bank and its role as a “lender of last resort.” They together, then, State, Big-Business, and Big-Banking, form an extremely powerful even if tiny “mutual admiration society,” jointly ripping off the huge mass of taxpayers and living it up big time at their expense.

The second, much larger group of enemies is made up of the intellectuals, educators, and “educrats,” from the highest levels of academia down to the level of elementary schools and kindergartens. Funded almost exclusively, whether directly or indirectly, by the State, they, in their overwhelming majority, have become the soft tools and willing executioners in the hands of the ruling elite and its designs for absolute power and total control. And third there are the journalists of the MSM, as the docile products of the system of “public education,” and the craven recipients and popularizers of government “information.”

Equally important in the development of a libertarian strategy then is the immediately following next question: who are the *victims*? The standard libertarian answer to this is: the *taxpayers* as opposed to the *tax-consumers*.

Yet while this is essentially correct, it is at best only part of the answer, and libertarians could learn something in this respect from the Alt-Right: because apart from the narrowly economic aspect there is also a wider cultural aspect that must be taken into account in identifying the victims.

In order to expand and increase its power, the ruling elites have been conducting for many decades what Pat Buchanan has identified as a systematic “culture war,” aimed at a trans-valuation of all values and the destruction of all natural, or if you will “organic” social bonds and institutions such as families, communities, ethnic groups, and genealogically related nations, so as to create an increasingly atomized populace, whose only shared characteristic and unifying bond is its common existential dependency on the State. The first step in this direction, taken already half a century or even longer ago, was the introduction of “public welfare” and “social security.” Thereby, the underclass and the elderly were turned into State-dependents and the value and importance of family and community was correspondingly diminished and weakened. More recently, further-reaching steps in this direction have proliferated. A new “victimology” has been proclaimed and promoted. Women, and in particular single mothers, Blacks, Browns, Latinos, homosexuals, lesbians, bi- and transsexuals have been awarded “victim” status and accorded legal privileges through non-discrimination or affirmative action decrees. As well, most recently such privileges have been expanded also to foreign-national immigrants, whether legal or illegal, insofar as they fall into one of the just mentioned categories or are members of non-Christian religions such as Islam, for instance. The result? Not only has the earlier mentioned “bad neighbour problem” not been avoided or solved, but

systematically promoted and intensified instead. Cultural homogeneity has been destroyed, and the freedom of association, and the voluntary physical segregation and separation of different people, communities, cultures, and traditions has been replaced by an all-pervasive system of forced social integration. Moreover, each mentioned “victim” group has thus been pitted against every other, and all of them have been pitted against white, heterosexual, Christian males and in particular those married and with children as the only remaining, legally un-protected group of alleged “victimizers.” Hence, as the result of the trans-valuation of all values promoted by the ruling elites, the world has been turned upside down. The institution of a family household with father, mother, and their children that has formed the basis of Western civilization, as the freest, most industrious, ingenious, and all-around accomplished civilization known to mankind, i.e., the very institution and people that has done most good in human history, has been officially stigmatized and vilified as the source of all social ills and made the most heavily disadvantaged, even persecuted group by the enemy elites’ relentless policy of *divide et impera*.

Accordingly, given the present constellation of affairs, then, any promising libertarian strategy must, very much as the Alt-Right has recognized, first and foremost be tailored and addressed to this group of the most severely victimized people. White married Christian couples with children, in particular if they belong also to the class of taxpayers (rather than tax-consumers), and everyone most closely resembling or aspiring to this standard form of social order and organization can be realistically expected to be the most receptive audience of the libertarian message (whereas the least support should be expected to come from the legally most “protected”

groups such as, for instance, single Black Muslim mothers on welfare).

Given this constellation of perpetrator-enemies vs. victims in the contemporary West, then, I can now come to the final task of trying to outline a realistic libertarian strategy for change, the specifics of which will have to be prefaced by two general considerations. For one, given that the class of intellectuals from the tops of *academia* to the opinion-moulding journalists in the MSM are funded by and firmly tied into the ruling system, i.e., that they are a part of the *problem*, they also should not be expected to play a major if any role in the problem's *solution*. Accordingly, the so-called Hayekian strategy for social change, that envisions the spread of correct libertarian ideas starting at the top, with the leading philosophers, and then trickling down from there to journalists and finally to the great unwashed masses, must be considered fundamentally unrealistic. Instead, any realistic libertarian strategy for change must be a *populist* strategy. That is, libertarians must short-circuit the dominant intellectual elites and address the masses directly to arouse their indignation and contempt for the ruling elites.

And second, all the while the main addressees of a populist libertarian message must be indeed the just mentioned groups of dispossessed and disenfranchised native whites, I believe it to be a serious strategic error to make "whiteness" the exclusive criterion on which to base one's strategic decisions, as some strands of the Alt-Right have suggested to do. After all, it is above all white men that make up the ruling elite and that have foisted the current mess upon us. True enough, the various protected "minorities" mentioned before take full advantage of the legal privileges they have been accorded and they have become increasingly emboldened to ask for ever more

“protection,” but none of them and all of them together did not and do not possess the intellectual prowess that would have made this outcome possible, if it were not for the instrumental help that they received and are receiving from white men.

Now, taking our cues from the Buchanan-, the Paul- and the Trump-movements, on to the specifics of a populist strategy for libertarian change, in no specific order except for the very first one, which has currently assumed the greatest urgency in the public mind.

One: *Stop mass immigration*. The waves of immigrants currently flooding the Western world have burdened it with hordes of welfare parasites, brought in terrorists, increased crime, led to the proliferation of no-go areas, and resulted in countless “bad neighbours” who, based on their alien upbringing, culture, and traditions, lack any understanding and appreciation of liberty and are bound to become mindless future supporters of welfare-Statism.

No one is against immigration and immigrants *per se*. But immigration must be by invitation only. All immigrants must be productive people and hence, be barred from all domestic welfare payments. To ensure this, they or their inviting party must place a bond with the community in which they are to settle, and which is to be forfeited and lead to the immigrant’s deportation should he ever become a public burden. As well, every immigrant, inviting party, or employer should not only pay for the immigrant’s upkeep or salary, but must also pay the residential community for the additional wear and tear of its public facilities associated with the immigrant’s presence, so as to avoid the socialization of any and all costs incurred with his settlement. Moreover, even before his admission, every potential immigrant invitee must be carefully screened and tested not only for his productiv-

ity but also for cultural affinity (or “good neighbourliness”) — with the empirically predictable result of mostly, but by no means exclusively, western-white immigrant-candidates. And any known communist or socialist, of any colour, denomination, or country of origin, must be barred from permanent settlement — unless, that is, the community where the potential immigrant wants to settle officially sanctions the looting of its residents’ property by new, foreign arrivals, which is not very likely to say the least (even within already existing ‘commie’ communes).

(Brief message to all open-border and liberallala libertarians, who will surely label this, you guessed it, “fascist”: In a fully privatized libertarian order there exists no such thing as a right to free immigration. Private property implies borders and the owner’s right to exclude at will. And “public property” has borders as well. It is not unowned. It is the property of domestic taxpayers and most definitely not the property of foreigners. And while it is true that the State is a criminal organization and that to entrust it with the task of border control will inevitably result in numerous injustices to both domestic residents and foreigners, it is also true that the State *does something* also when it decides *not* to do anything about border control and that, under the present circumstances, doing nothing at all in this regard will lead to even more and much graver injustices, in particular to the domestic citizenry.)

Two: *Stop attacking, killing, and bombing people in foreign countries.* A main cause, even if by no means the only one, for the current invasion of Western countries by hordes of alien immigrants, are the wars initiated and conducted in the Middle East and elsewhere by the US’s ruling elites and their subordinate Western puppet-elites. As well, the by now seemingly ‘normal’ and ubiquitous

terrorist attacks in the name of Islam across the Western world are in large measure the “blow-back” of these wars and the ensuing chaos throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa. There should be no hesitation to call these Western rulers what they are: murderers or accessories to mass murder. We must demand, and cry out loud instead for a foreign policy of strict non-interventionism. Withdraw from all international and supranational organizations such as the UN, NATO, and the EU that intricate one country into the domestic affairs of another. Stop all government-to-government aid and prohibit all weapon sales to foreign States. Let it be *America First!*, *England First!*, *Germany First!*, *Italy First!*, and so on, i.e., each country trading with one another and no one interfering in anyone else’s domestic affairs.

Three: *Defund the ruling elites and their intellectual bodyguards.* Expose and widely publicize the lavish salaries, perks, pensions, side-deals, bribes, and hush monies received by the ruling elites: by the higher-ups in government and governmental bureaucracies, of supreme courts, central banks, secret services and spy agencies, by politicians, parliamentarians, party leaders, political advisors and consultants, by crony-capitalists, “public educrats,” university presidents, provosts, and academic “stars.” Drive home the point that all their shining glory and luxury is funded by money extorted from taxpayers, and consequently urge that any and all taxes be slashed: income taxes, property taxes, sales taxes, inheritance taxes, etc., etc.

Four: *End the FED and all central banks.* The second source of funding for the ruling elites, besides the money extorted from the public in the form of taxes, comes from the central banks. Central banks are allowed to create paper money out of thin air. This reduces the purchas-

ing power of money and destroys the savings of average people. It does not and cannot make society as a whole richer, but it redistributes income and wealth within society. The earliest receivers of the newly created money, i.e., the ruling elites, are thereby made richer and the later and latest receivers, i.e., the average citizen, are made poorer. The central bank's manipulation of interest rates is the cause of boom-bust cycles. The central bank permits the accumulation of ever greater "public debt" that is shifted as a burden onto unknown future taxpayers or is simply inflated away. And as the facilitators of public debt, the central banks are also the facilitators of wars. This monstrosity must end and be replaced by a system of free, competitive banking built on the foundation of a genuine commodity money such as gold or silver.

Five: *Abolish all 'affirmative action' and 'non-discrimination' laws and regulations.* All such edicts are blatant violations of the principle of the equality before the law that, at least in the West, is intuitively sensed and recognized as a fundamental principle of justice. As private property owners, people must be free to associate or disassociate with others: to include or exclude, to integrate or segregate, to join or separate, to unify and incorporate, or to disunite, exit, and secede. Close all university departments for Black-, Latino-, Women-, Gender-, Queer-Studies, etc., etc., as incompatible with science and dismiss its faculties as intellectual imposters or scoundrels. As well, demand that all affirmative action commissars, diversity, and human resources officers, from universities on down to schools and kindergartens, be thrown out onto the street and be forced to learn some useful trade.

Six: *Crush the "Anti-Fascist" mob.* The trans-valuation of all values throughout the West: the invention of ever more "victim groups," the spread of "affirmative action"

programs, and the relentless promotion of “political correctness,” has led to the rise of an “anti-fascist” mob. Tacitly supported and indirectly funded by the ruling elites, this self-described mob of “social justice warriors” has taken upon itself the task of escalating the fight against “white privilege” through deliberate acts of terror directed against anyone and anything deemed “racist,” “right-wing,” “fascist,” “reactionary,” “incorrigible,” or “unreconstructed.” Such “enemies of progress” are physically assaulted by the “anti-fascist” mob, their cars are burnt down, their properties vandalized, and their employers threatened to dismiss them and ruin their careers — all the while the police are ordered by the powers that be to “stand down” and not to investigate the crimes committed or prosecute and punish the criminals. In view of this outrage, public anger must be aroused and there must be clamoring, far and wide, for the police to be unleashed and this mob be beaten into submission.

(Query for liberallala-libertarians, who are sure to object to this demand on the ground that the police asked to crush the “anti-fascist” mob are *State*-police: Do you also object, on the same grounds, that the police arrest murderers or rapists? Aren’t these legitimate tasks performed also in any libertarian order by *private* police? And if the police are not to do anything about this mob, isn’t it o.k. then that the target of its attacks, the “racist Right,” should take the task upon itself of giving the “social justice warriors” a bloody nose?)

Seven: *Crush the street criminals and gangs.* In dispensing with the principle of the equality before the law and awarding all sorts of group privileges (except to the one group of married white Christian men and their families) the ruling elites have also dispensed with the principle of equal punishment for equal crime. Some

State-favored groups are handed more lenient punishment for the same crime than others, and some especially favored groups are simply let run wild and go practically unpunished at all, thus actually and effectively promoting crime. As well, no-go areas have been permitted to develop where any effort at law-enforcement has essentially ceased to exist and where violent thugs and street gangs have taken over. In view of this, public furor must be provoked and it be unmistakably demanded that the police crack down quick and hard on any robber, mugger, rapist, and murderer, and ruthlessly clear all current no-go areas of violent gang-rule. Needless to say that this policy should be color-blind, but if it happens to be, as it in fact does, that most street criminals or gang members are young Black or Latino males or, in Europe, young immigrant males from Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, or Eastern Europe, then so be it and such human specimens then should be the ones that most prominently get their noses bloodied. And needless to say also that in order to defend against crime, whether ordinary street crime or acts of terrorism, all prohibitions against the ownership of guns by upstanding citizen should be abolished.

Eight: *Get rid of all welfare parasites and bums.* To cement their own position, the ruling class has put the underclass on the dole and thus made it a most reliable source of public support. Allegedly to help people rise and move up from the underclass to become self-supporting actors, the real — and actually intended — effect of the State's so-called "social policy" is the exact opposite. It has rendered a person's underclass status more permanent and made the underclass steadily grow (and with this also the number of tax-funded social workers and therapists assigned to "help and assist" it). For,

in accordance with inexorable economic law, every subsidy awarded on account of some alleged need or deficiency produces more, not less, of the problem that it is supposed to alleviate or eliminate. Thus, the root cause of a person's underclass status: his low impulse control and high time preference, i.e., his uncontrolled desire for immediate gratification, and the various attendant manifestations of this cause, such as unemployment, poverty, alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, divorce, female headed households, out-of-wedlock births, rotating shack-up male companions, child abuse, negligence, and petty crime, is and are not alleviated or eliminated but systematically strengthened and promoted. Instead of continuing and expanding this increasingly unsightly social disaster, then, it should be abolished and be loudly demanded that one take heed of the biblical exhortation that he who can, but will not work, also shall not eat, and that he who truly cannot work, due to severe mental or physical deficiencies, be taken care of by family, community, and voluntary charity.

Nine: *Get the State out of education.* Most, if not all, social pathologies plaguing the contemporary West have their common root in the institution of "public education." When the first steps were taken, more than two centuries ago, in Prussia, to supplement and ultimately replace a formerly completely private system of education with a universal system of compulsory "public education," the time spent in State-run schools did in most cases not exceed four years. Today, throughout the entire Western world, the time spent in institutions of "public education" is, at a minimum, around ten years, and in many cases, and increasingly so, twenty or even thirty years. That is, a large or even the largest part of time during the most formative period in a person's life is spent in State-

funded and State-supervised institutions, whose primary purpose from the very beginning was *not* to raise an enlightened public, but to train “good soldiers” and “good public servants:” not independent and mature or “mündige Bürger,” but subordinate and servile “Staats-Bürger.” The result? The indoctrination has worked: the longer the time a person has spent within the system of public education, the more he is committed to leftist-egalitarian ideas and has swallowed and wholeheartedly internalized the official doctrine and agenda of “political correctness.” Indeed, in particular among social science teachers and professors, people *not* counting themselves as part of the Left have practically ceased to exist. Consequently, it must be demanded that the control of schools and universities be wrest away from the central State and, in a first step, be returned to regional or better still local and locally-funded authorities, and ultimately be completely privatized, so as to replace a system of compulsory uniformity and conformity with a system of decentralized education that reflects the natural variation, multiplicity, and diversity of human talents and interests.

Ten: *Don't put your trust in politics or political parties.* Just as *academia* and the academic world cannot be expected to play any significant role in a libertarian strategy for social change, so with politics and political parties — after all, it is the ultimate goal of libertarianism to put an end to all politics, and to subject all interpersonal relations and conflicts to private law and civil law procedures. To be sure, under present, all-pervasively politicized conditions an involvement in politics and party politics cannot be entirely avoided. However, in any such involvement one must be keenly aware of and guard against the corrupting influence of power and the lure of money and perks that comes with it. And to minimize

this risk and temptation, it is advisable to concentrate one's efforts on the level of regional and local rather than national politics, and there to promote a radical agenda of decentralization: of nullification and peaceful separation, segregation, and secession. Most importantly, however, we must take heed of Ludwig von Mises's life-motto: Do not give in to evil, but proceed ever more boldly against it. That is, we must speak out whenever and wherever, whether in formal or informal gatherings, against anyone affronting us with by now only all-too-familiar "politically correct" drivel and left-egalitarian balderdash and unmistakably say: "No. Hell no. You must be kidding." In the meantime, given the almost complete mind-control exercised by the ruling elites, *academia*, and the MSM, it already requires a good portion of courage to do so. But if we are not brave enough to do so now and thus set an example for others to follow, matters will become increasingly worse and more dangerous in the future, and we, Western civilization and the Western ideas of freedom and liberty will be wiped out and vanish.

COMING OF AGE WITH MURRAY

I FIRST MET MURRAY ROTHBARD in the summer of 1985. I was then 35 and Murray was 59. For the next ten years, until Murray's premature death in 1995, I would be associated with Murray, first in New York City and then in Las Vegas, at UNLV, in closer, more immediate and direct contact than anyone else, except his wife Joey, of course.

Being almost as old now as Murray was at the time of his death I thought it appropriate to use this occasion to speak and reflect a bit on what I learned during my ten years with Murray.

I was already an adult when I first met Murray, not just in the biological but also in the mental and intellectual sense, and yet, I only came of age while associated with him — and I want to talk about *this* experience.

Before I met Murray I had already completed my Ph.D. and attained the rank of a *Privatdozent* (a tenured but unpaid university professor), the same rank incidentally that Ludwig von Mises once held in Vienna. Apart from my doctoral dissertation (*Erkennen und Handeln*), I had already completed two books. One (*Kritik der kausalforschung*), that revealed me as a

Misesian, and another, about to be published in the following year (*Eigentum, Anarchie und Staat*), that revealed me as a Rothbardian. I had already read all of Mises's and Rothbard's theoretical works. (I had not yet read Murray's voluminous journalistic work, however, which was essentially unavailable to me at the time.) Thus, it was not my personal encounter with Murray, then, that made me a Misesian and Rothbardian. Intellectually, I was already a Misesian and Rothbardian years before I ever met Murray personally. And so, notwithstanding the fact that I am myself foremost a theoretician, I do not want to speak here about the grand Austro-libertarian intellectual edifice that Mises and, in his succession, Rothbard have handed down to us, or about my own small contributions to this system, but about my long personal experience with Murray: about the practical and existential lessons that I learned through my encounters with him and that turned me from an adult to a man who had come of age.

I moved to New York City, because I considered Murray the greatest of all social theorists, certainly of the 20th century and possibly of all times, just as I considered Mises the greatest of all economists, and, with Mises having long gone and out of the picture, I wanted to meet, get to know, and work with this man, Rothbard. I still hold this view concerning the greatness of Mises and Rothbard. Indeed, even more so today than 30 years ago. And since then, there has been no second Mises or Rothbard. Not even close, and we may have to wait for a long time for this to happen.

So I moved to NYC knowing Murray's work, but knowing almost nothing about the man. Remember, this was 1985. I was still writing in longhand and then using a mechanical typewriter, acquainting myself with a computer for the first time only during the following year at

UNLV. And Murray never used a computer but stayed with an electric typewriter until the end of his life. There were no cell phones, there were no emails, no internet, no Google, no Wikipedia, and no Youtube. At the beginning, even fax machines did not exist. My correspondence with Murray preceding my arrival in NYC, then, was by old, regular snail-mail. Murray expressed his enthusiasm about my wish to meet and work with him and immediately offered to enlist the help of Burton Blumert, and indeed, Burt then was of instrumental help in facilitating my move from Europe to the US. (The wonderful Burt Blumert, owner of *Camino Coins*, and founder of the original *Center for Libertarian Studies* that would ultimately be merged with the *Mises Institute*, was one of Murray's dearest friends and confidants. He was also a great benefactor and dear friend to me.)

I had seen some photos of Murray, I knew that he, like Mises, was Jewish, that he taught at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute (subsequently renamed New York Polytechnic University and nowadays Polytechnic Institute of NYU), that he was the editor of the much admired *Journal of Libertarian Studies*, and that he was closely associated, as its academic director, with the Ludwig von Mises Institute that Lew Rockwell had recently, 35 years ago, in 1982, founded. That was about it.

And so, both unprepared, we met for the first time in Murray's university office. Here was I, the 'cool blonde from the North,' to cite a popular advertisement for bitter tasting northern German beers, young, tall and athletic, somewhat unsociable, dry and with a dry sense of humour, and more on the blunt, sarcastic, and confrontational side. Perfect *Wehrmacht*-material, if you will. And there was Murray: the 'big-city neurotic,' to use the German title of Woody Allen's comedic *Annie Hall*, a gen-

eration older, short and round, non-athletic, even clumsy (except for typing), gregarious and hilarious, never moping but ever joyful, and, in his personal dealings (quite unlike in his writings), always non-confrontational, well-tempered, or even tame. Not exactly *Wehrmacht*-material. Personality-wise, then, we could hardly have been more different. Indeed, we were quite an odd couple — and yet, we hit it off from the start.

Given the long, special relationship between Germans and Jews, especially during the 12-year period of National Socialist Party rule in Germany, from 1933–45, I, as a young German meeting an older Jew in America, had been afraid that this history might become a potential source of tension. Not so. Quite to the contrary.

On the subject of religion itself, there was general agreement. We were both agnostics, yet with a profound interest in the sociology of religion and quite similar views on comparative religion. Yet Murray greatly deepened my understanding of the role of religion in history through his unfortunately uncompleted great work, during the last decade of his life, on the history of economic thought.

Moreover, in our countless conversations, I learned from Murray about the importance of complementing Austro-libertarian theory with revisionist history in order to come up with a truly realistic assessment of historic events and global affairs. And it was I, then, as someone who had grown up in defeated and devastated post-WWII West Germany with the then (and still) ‘official history’ taught across all German schools and universities of (a) feeling guilty and ashamed of being German and German history and (b) believing that America and America’s democratic capitalism was ‘the greatest thing’ since or even before the invention of sliced bread, who

had to revise his formerly still, despite all Austro-libertarian theory, rather naïve views about world affairs in general and US-American and German history in particular. As a matter of fact, Murray made me fundamentally change my rather rosy view of the US (despite Vietnam and all that) and helped me, for the first time, to feel consoled, content, and even happy about being German, and to develop a special concern for Germany and the fate of the German people.

To my initial surprise, then, — and ultimately my great and pleasant relief — Murray was quite a Germanophile. He knew and highly appreciated the German contributions to philosophy, mathematics, science, engineering, scholarly history, and literature. His beloved teacher Mises had originally written in German and was a product of German culture. Murray loved German music, he loved German baroque churches, he loved the Bavarian beer-garden atmosphere and the from-church-to-beer-garden-we-go tradition. His wife Joey was of German ancestry, her maiden name being JoAnn Schumacher, and Joey was a member of the Richard Wagner Society and a lifelong opera buff. As well, most of Murray's friends that I would eventually meet turned out to be Germanophiles.

Foremost among them Ralph Raico, the great historian of classical liberalism, whom I had hoped to see again at this occasion but who sadly left us forever almost a year ago now. I met Ralph only a few months after my arrival in NYC, at a party held at Murray's apartment on the upper Westside. I immediately took to his caustic sarcasm and over the years we developed a close friendship. Apart from our many meetings at various Mises Institute events, I still fondly remember in particular our extended joint travels in northern Italy and especially when, at a conference in Milano, sponsored by some friends and

affiliates of the once (but no longer) secessionist Lega Nord, some self-proclaimed — who would have guessed that?! — “anti-fascist” demonstrators appeared in front of the conference hotel to denounce us, to our great amusement, as *‘libertari fascisti.’* Ralph was also the one who introduced me to the revisionist scholarship concerning WWI and WWII as well as the entire interwar period, and it was Ralph who taught me about the history of German liberalism and in particular its radical 19th century libertarian representatives that had been almost completely forgotten in contemporary Germany.

Incidentally, Lew Rockwell, too, early on showed his Germanophile credentials. When we first met in NYC in the fall of 1985, he drove a Mercedes 190, he then went astray for a few years, driving an American-made pickup truck, but ultimately returned to the fold by driving a Mini Cooper, produced by BMW.

But above all it was Murray who taught me never to trust official history, invariably written by the victors, but to conduct all historical research instead like a detective investigating a crime. Always, first and foremost and as a first approximation, follow the money in search of a motive. Who is to gain, whether in terms of money, real estate, or sheer power from this measure or that? In most cases, answering this question will lead you directly to the very actor or group of actors responsible for the measure or policy under consideration. Simple as it is to ask this question, however, it is much more difficult and requires often arduous research to answer it, and to unearth, from under a huge smokescreen of seemingly high-minded rhetoric and pious propaganda, the hard facts and indicators — the money flows and welfare gains — to actually prove a crime and to identify and ‘out’ its perpetrators. Murray was a master in this, and that at a time when you

did not have access to computers, the internet, and search machines such as Google. And to do this detective's work, as I learned from Murray, you must go beyond official documents, the MSM, the big and famous names, the academic 'stars,' and the 'prestigious' journals — in short: everything and everyone deemed 'respectable' and 'politically correct.' You must also, and in particular, pay attention to the work of outsiders, extremists, and outcasts, i.e., to 'disrespectable' or 'deplorable' people and 'obscure' publication outlets that you are supposed to ignore or not even know about. To this day, I have heeded, and indeed relished following this advice. Anyone who could see my list of bookmarks of frequently visited websites would likely be surprised, and any establishmentarian or leftist in particular would likely be shocked and shudder in disgust.

With this general perspective and outlook on things, revisionists such as Murray (and myself) are regularly charged, contemptuously, as some nutty conspiracy theorists. To this charge, Murray would typically respond: First, put bluntly and sarcastically, even if one were a certified paranoid this cannot be taken as proof that no one was actually after you and your money. And second and more systematically: Conspiracies are less likely, of course, the larger the number of supposed conspirators. Also, it is naïve to assume the existence of just one big all-encompassing conspiracy run by one all-powerful group of conspirators. But conspiracies, often rival or even contradictory conspiracies, i.e., confidential efforts of various groups of people acting in concert in the pursuit of some common goal, are indeed an ever-present feature of social reality. As any action, such conspiracies can succeed or they can fail and can lead to consequences that were *unintended* by the conspirators. But realistically speaking,

most if not all historical events are more or less exactly what some identifiable people or group of people acting in concert intended them to be. Indeed, to assume the opposite is to assume, incredibly, that history is nothing but a sequence of unintelligible accidents.

Moreover, in learning from Murray about the necessity of complementing Austro-libertarian theory with revisionist history so as to gain a complete, realistic picture of the world and worldly affairs, I also received constant training from him in the art of prudent and judicious judgment and evaluation of people, actions, and events. Pure theory allows us to make rather clear-cut judgments of true or false, right or wrong, and effective, leading to the goal intended, or ineffective. But many if not most actions and events provoking or eliciting our judgments do not fall into the category of matters that can be thusly evaluated. We are surrounded, or better still: encircled, by a class of people — politicians and state-agents — that, day-in and day-out, renders and enforces decisions that systematically impact and affect our property and consequently our entire conduct of life without our consent and even against our explicit protestation. In short: we are confronted by an elite of *rulers*, instead of, in contradistinction, an elite of *agents*. And confronted with politicians and political decisions, then, our judgment concerns the evaluation of, at best, second-bests. The question is not true or false, right or wrong, effective or ineffective. Rather, it is this: Given that political decisions are *per se* false, wrong, and ineffective, which of these decisions is less false, wrong, and ineffective and comparatively closer to the truth, the right, and the good, and which person represents a lesser evil or a greater one than another. Such questions do not allow for a scientific answer, because answering them involves

the comparative evaluation of countless immeasurable and incommensurable variables. And in any case, newly discovered facts about the past or future developments may well reveal any such judgment as mistaken. But the answer is also not arbitrary. What *is* true, right, and effective is *given*, as fix-points, and reasons must be supplied, whether based on logic or empirical evidence, for locating various second-bests as closer or more distant to such points. Rather, judgment-making in matters such as these is a difficult *art*, much like entrepreneurship is not a science but an art. And just as some people are good at entrepreneurship and others bad, indicated by monetary profits or losses, then, so are some people good at judging political events and actors and others bad, gaining or losing in the reputation as wise and prudent judges.

Murray was of course not unfailing in his judgments. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, for instance, he misjudged the anti-war stand of the New Left as more principled than it really was, something that he afterwards readily admitted as a mistake. And I know of at least one, rather personal case, where Joey's judgment was better and more on the mark than his. This notwithstanding however, I have not encountered anyone of sounder, subsequently vindicated judgment than Murray.

With this I want to come to the second major lesson I learned during my long association with Murray. While the first lesson in revisionism concerned matters of practice and method, the second lesson concerned existential matters.

Before I met Murray, I knew of course that he was a radical outsider in a predominantly leftist-liberal academia and I expected (and was willing to accept for myself) that this would involve some sacrifices, i.e., that

one would have to pay a price for being a Rothbardian, not only, but also in terms of money. But I was quite surprised to realize how high this price was. I knew that Brooklyn Polytechnic was not a prestigious university, yet I expected Murray to occupy there a comfortable, well-paying post. Moreover, at the time I still fancied the US as a bastion and bulwark of free enterprise and consequently expected that Murray, as the foremost intellectual champion of capitalism and the personified antithesis to Marx, would be held in high esteem, if not in academia then certainly outside of it, in the world of commerce and business, and accordingly be rewarded with a certain degree of affluence.

In fact, at Brooklyn Polytechnic Murray occupied a small, grungy, and windowless office that he had to share with a history professor. In Germany, even research assistants enjoyed more comfortable surroundings, not to speak of full professors. Murray ranked among the lowest paid full professors at his school. Indeed, my German National Science Foundation grant at the time — a Heisenberg scholarship — turned out to be considerably higher than Murray's university salary (something that I was too ashamed to reveal to him after I had discovered it). And Murray's apartment in Manhattan, large and filled to the ceiling with books, was dark and run-down. Certainly nothing like the penthouse that I had imagined him to occupy. This situation improved significantly with his move in 1986, at age 60, to Las Vegas and UNLV. While my salary went down there as compared to my previous compensation, Murray's went sharply up, but was still below \$100,000, and he could afford to buy a roomy but spartan house. Even as the holder of an endowed chair at UNLV, however, Murray did not have command of any research assistants or a personal secretary.

Yet Murray never complained or showed any bitterness or signs of envy but always plugged along joyfully and pushed ahead instead with his writings. This was a hard lesson for me to learn and I am still having difficulties following it at times.

A propos, Joey and Murray once told me laughingly how, at the time when they were still dating, both had expected the other to be a good catch. Joey, because Murray was Jewish, and Murray, because Joey was gentile — only to then find out that they were both wrong in their expectations.

Moreover, despite his towering achievements as an intellectual champion of free market capitalism, Murray never won any prizes, awards, or honours to speak of. That he did not win a Nobel prize in economics was not surprising, of course. After all, the great Mises also did not win it. But in the US alone there existed dozens of institutions — think-tanks, foundations, business associations, research centers, and universities — that professed their dedication to free markets and liberty, and yet none of them ever awarded Murray any significant prize or honorary award, all the while they showered people with money and awards who had done little more than to suggest — “daringly” — some incremental reform such as, let’s say, lowering the marginal tax rate from 35 percent to 30 or cutting the budget of the EPA by some percentage points, or who had simply expressed their “personal love” of “freedom” and “free enterprise” often, loudly, and emphatically enough.

None of this fazed Murray in the slightest. Indeed, he expected nothing else, for reasons that I still had to learn.

What Murray realized and I still had to learn was that the most vociferous and ferocious rejection and opposi-

tion to Austro-libertarianism would not come from the traditional socialist Left, but rather from these very self-proclaimed “anti-socialist,” “limited government,” “minimal state,” “pro-private enterprise,” and “pro-freedom” outfits and their intellectual mouthpieces, and above all from what has become known as the Beltway Libertarians. They simply could not stomach the fact that Murray had demonstrated with plain logic that their doctrines were nothing but inconsistent intellectual clap-trap, and that they were all, to use Mises’s verdict *vis-a-vis* Milton Friedman and his company, a “bunch of socialists,” too, notwithstanding their vehement protestations to the contrary. For, as Murray argued, once you admitted the existence of a State, any State, defined as a territorial monopolist of ultimate decision-making in every case of conflict, including conflicts involving the State itself, then all private property had been *effectively* abolished, even if it remained provisionally, *qua* State-grant, *nominally* private, and had been replaced instead by a system of “collective” or rather State-property. *State*, any State, *means* socialism, defined as “the collective ownership of factors of production.” The institution of a State is praxeologically incompatible with private property and private property based enterprise. It is the very anti-thesis of private property, and any proponent of private property and private enterprise then *must*, as a matter of logic, be an *anarchist*. In this regard (as in many others) Murray was unwilling to compromise, or “intransigent,” as his detractors would say. Because in theory, in thinking, compromise is impermissible. In everyday life, compromise is a permanent, and ubiquitous feature, of course. But in theory, compromise is the ultimate sin, a strict and absolute ‘no no.’ It is not permissible, for instance, to compromise between the two incompatible

propositions that $1+1=2$ or that $1+1=3$ and accept that it is 2.5. Either some proposition is true or it is false. There can be no “meeting in the middle” of truth and falsehood.

Here, regarding Murray’s uncompromising radicalism, a little anecdote told by Ralph Raico seems apropos. To quote Ralph:

Murray was someone special. I recognized that fact the first night I met him. It was after the Mises seminar; a buddy of mine and I had been invited to attend, and afterwards Murray suggested we have coffee and talk. My friend and I were dazzled by the great Mises, and Murray, naturally, was pleased to see our enthusiasm. He assured us that Mises was at least the greatest economist of the century, if not the whole history of economic thought. As far as politics went, though, Murray said, lowering his voice conspiratorially: “Well, when it comes to *politics*, some of us consider Mises a member of the non-Communist Left.” Yes, it was easy to see we’d met someone very special.

Unlike Murray, quite a few individuals who had learned essentially everything they ever knew from Murray, in particular his *Man, Economy and State*, were willing to make such intellectual compromises, and they were richly rewarded for their intellectual “flexibility” and “tolerance.” But that was not Murray! And consequently, he was (and still is) ignored, excluded, or denounced by the chieftains of the “limited-government-free-market-industry.” And he was essentially left without any institutional support, as a lone fighter, until the arrival of Lew Rockwell and the Mises Institute.

I experienced this *Rothbard-phobia* second-handedly, if you will. For as soon as word had gotten out that the new German arrival was Murray's boy and also appeared rather "intransigent," I found myself immediately placed on the same blacklists with him. Thus, I had quickly learned a first important real-life lesson of what it means to be a Rothbardian.

Another lesson was in humility. Murray had a huge library, had read and digested an enormous amount of literature and was consequently a humble man. He was always reluctant and highly sceptical to assume or recognize any "originality" claims. "Originality" claims, he knew, are made most frequently by people with tiny libraries and little reading. In distinct contrast, Murray was highly generous in giving credit to others. And he was equally generous in giving advice to anyone asking. Indeed, on almost any conceivable subject, he was prepared, off the top of his head, to provide you with an extensive bibliography. As well, he encouraged any sign of productivity even among his lowliest students.

While I always tried to follow this example, I could not bring myself to go quite as far as Murray did, however. Because I thought and still think that Murray's humility was excessive, that he was humble almost to a fault. His students at Brooklyn Polytechnic, for instance, mostly engineering majors (or, as Murray described Mises's students at NYU, "packaging majors"), had no idea who he was, because he never mentioned his own works. They were genuinely surprised to find out from *me* who their jolly professor was when I substituted teaching Murray's class while he was out of town. And at UNLV the situation was not much different. While I actively promoted him as his unofficial PR-agent, Murray continued in his self-deprecation. Although he had

written on almost any imaginable subject in the social sciences, he would, when he suggested or assigned term papers to his students, mention his own related writings, if at all, only as some sort of afterthought or upon specific request.

Yet Murray's extreme modesty had also another, unfortunate effect. When we moved to Las Vegas in 1986, we had expected to turn UNLV into a bastion of Austrian economics. At the time, UNLV's basketball team, the Runnin' Rebels, under coach Jerry Tarkanian, were a national powerhouse, always slightly scandalous, but impossible to overlook. We had hoped to become the Runnin' Rebels of economics at UNLV. Several students had transferred and enrolled at the university in anticipation of such a development. But these hopes were quickly disappointed. Already at our arrival at UNLV the composition of the economics department had significantly changed, and then majority rule, democracy, set in. To balance the Austrian influence, only one year later, the department majority decided, against our opposition, to hire a no-name Marxist. I urged Murray to use his position and reputation to interfere with the university's higher-ups and prevent this appointment. Except for Jerry Tarkanian, Murray was the only nationally recognized person at UNLV. He held the only endowed chair at the university. We knew the university's president and provost socially and were on cordial terms with both of them. Accordingly, I believed that there was a realistic chance to overturn the department's decision. But I could not persuade Murray of his own powers.

After this missed opportunity matters became worse. The department continued to hire anyone but an Austrian or Austrian sympathizer. Our students were mal-treated and discriminated against. The department and the dean

of the business college denied me tenure (which decision was overruled by the university's provost and president, not least because of massive student protests and the intervention of several university donors). The department chairman wrote an outrageous, nasty, and insulting annual evaluation of Murray's professorial performance (upon which the university administration forced the chairman to resign from his position). As a consequence, a second chance for us arose to turn matters around. Plans were developed and were discussed with the provost to split the department and establish a separate economics department in the College of Liberal Arts. This time Murray became involved. But the initial momentum to our advantage had been lost in the meantime, and after the first signs of resistance, Murray quickly resigned and gave up. He was not willing to take off his gloves, and our secessionist project soon fizzled out in defeat.

Only to quickly finish our UNLV saga: After Murray's death in 1995, I continued working at UNLV for another decade in an increasingly hostile environment. The once protective university administration had changed, and I felt ever more unappreciated and out of place. Even my great popularity among students was used against me, as proof of the "danger" emanating from my teaching. In 2004, I became embroiled in a scandal. In a lecture I had hypothetically suggested that homosexuals, on average, and owing to their characteristic lack of children, had a comparatively higher degree of time preference, i.e., of present-orientation. A cry-baby student complained, and the university's affirmative action commissar immediately, as if he had only waited for this opportunity, initiated official proceedings against me, threatening severe punitive measures if I were not to instantly and publicly recant and apologize. "Intransigent" as I was, I refused

to do so. And I am certain that it was only this steadfast refusal of mine to beg for forgiveness that, after a full year of administrative harassment, I ultimately emerged victorious from this battle with the thought police, and the university administration suffered an embarrassing defeat. A year later I resigned from my position and left UNLV and the US for good.

Coming back to Murray: Naturally, I was disappointed about the developments at UNLV. But they did not have the slightest effect on our continued cooperation. Maybe Murray had been right and more realistic all along and it was I, who had suffered from too much youthful optimism? And in any case, there was one more important lesson about the larger scheme of things that I still had to learn.

Whereas most people tend to become milder and more 'tolerant' in their views as they grow older, Murray grew increasingly more radical and less tolerant over time. Not in his personal dealings, as I already emphasized. In this regard Murray was and remained to the end a 'softie,' but in his speeches and writings. This radicalization and increasing 'intransigence' came in response to developments in the world of US politics at large and in particular within the "limited-government-free-market" industry and among the so-called libertarians assembled around Washington, DC's Beltway. There, everywhere, a slow yet systematic drift toward the Left and leftist ideas could be observed. A drift that ever since, up to this day, has only further gained in momentum and grown in strength. Constantly, new "rights" were 'discovered' and adopted in particular also by so-called libertarians. "Human rights" and "civil rights," "women rights" and "gay rights," the "right" not to be discriminated against, the "right" to free and unrestricted immigration, the "right" to a free

lunch and free health care, and the “right” to be free of unpleasant speech and thought. Murray demolished all this allegedly “humanitarian” or, to use a German term, this “*Gutmenschen*” talk as intellectual rubbish in demonstrating that none of these supposed “rights” were compatible with private property rights. And that, as libertarians above all people should know, only private property rights, i.e., the right of every person in the ownership of his physical body and the ownership of all external objects justly (peacefully) acquired by him, can be argumentatively defended as universal and compossible human rights. Everything except private property rights, then, Murray demonstrated again and again, are phony, non-universalizable rights. Every call for “human rights” other than private property rights is ultimately motivated by egalitarianism and as such represents a revolt against human nature.

Moreover, Murray moved still further to the right — in accordance with Erik von Kuehneldt-Leddihn’s dictum that “the right is right” — in pointing out that in order to establish, maintain, and defend a libertarian social order more is needed than the mere adherence to the non-aggression principle. The ideal of the left- or “modal”-libertarians, as Murray referred to them, of “live and let live as long as you don’t aggress against anyone else,” that sounds so appealing to adolescents in rebellion against parental authority and any social convention and control, may be sufficient for people living far apart and dealing and trading with each other only indirectly and from afar. But it is decidedly insufficient when it comes to people living in close proximity to each other, as neighbours and cohabitants of the same community. The peaceful cohabitation of neighbours and of people in regular direct contact with each other on some territory requires also

a commonality of culture: of language, religion, custom, and convention. There can be peaceful co-existence of different cultures on distant, physically separated territories, but multi-culturalism, cultural heterogeneity, cannot exist in one and the same place and territory without leading to diminishing social trust, increased conflict, and ultimately the destruction of anything resembling a libertarian social order.

If Murray had been ignored, neglected, or resented before by the usual suspects, now, with this stand against everything deemed “politically correct,” he was vilified and met with undisguised hatred. The by now only all-too-familiar litany of denunciatory terms followed: Murray was a reactionary, a racist, a sexist, an authoritarian, an elitist, a xenophobe, a fascist and, to top it all off, a self-hating Jewish Nazi.

Murray shrugged it all off. Indeed, he laughed about it. And indeed, to the consternation of the “smear bund,” as Murray referred to the united popular front of his “anti-fascist” detractors, his influence only grew and has continued to grow still further since his death. It may not be widely recognized, but without Murray there would be no Ron Paul as we know him — and I say this without wishing thereby to diminish or belittle Ron Paul’s own, personal role and extraordinary achievements in the slightest —, there would be no Ron Paul movement, and there would be no popular or, as the “smear bund” prefers to say, no “populist” libertarian agenda.

As for me, my own views radicalized, too, along with Murray’s. My *Democracy: The God That Failed* was the first major documentation of this intellectual development, and if anything, my radical intolerance regarding anything left-libertarian and “politically correct” has been growing still ever since. Almost needless to say

that I, too, then have been awarded the same and even a few extra honorary titles by the “smear bund” as Murray (except for the self-hating Jewish stuff). Yet I had learned to shrug all of it off, too, as I had seen Murray do it, and as Ralph Raico had always encouraged and continued to advise me. In addition, remembering a popular German saying helped me: “*viel Feind, viel Ehr.*” And indeed, the ongoing success of my annual Property and Freedom Society conference-salon, now in its 12th year, held and conducted in a genuinely Rothbardian spirit, has demonstrated the utter failure of all defamation campaigns directed at me. If anything, they have helped rather than hindered me in attracting an ever larger circle of intellectual friends, affiliates, and supporters.

I should add that during the last decade or so, under the wise and strict guidance of my lovely wife Gülçin, I have also made great strides in combining uncompromising intellectual radicalism with personal lovability, even though nature and natural disposition have prevented me from coming anywhere close to Murray in this regard.

I have said far too little here about Lew, and I sincerely apologize. But this I must say: Lew, apart from Murray has been one of the most important people helping me become the man that I am today. And to Murray, who I am sure is watching us today from up high, I say: thank you Murray, you are my hero, “I shall not look upon his like again,” and I hope you are happy with your student. I always felt tremendous joy when you told me “great Hans, Attaboy,” and even if I can’t hear you right now, nothing would give me greater pleasure than if you said it again right now up there, where the kings of thought are gathered.

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