
The Voluntaryist

Whole Number 73

"If one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself."

April 1995

Whose Property Is It Anyway?

By Carl Watner

In my article, "Sweat Them At Law" (Whole No. 72), I contended "that governments don't create, protect, or enforce property rights." Below is further evidence to support my conclusion. Although I knew that inheritance and estate taxation is a potent means by which the State undercuts and destroys the principle of private property, I had no idea how blatantly the American judiciary acknowledged this fact.

Inheritance refers to the manner in which property, upon the death of its owner, is conveyed into new hands. Since the beginning of human history, people have been acquiring real and personal property, and leaving it for the benefit of their heirs. The right of children to inherit the property of their parents has existed in one form or another long before Esau sold his birthright to the wily Jacob. However, both in ancient societies and in modern times, their inheritance has been taxed and the right to bequeath property has been minutely regulated by those possessing political power. For example, "seven centuries before the Christian era, property transfers were taxed in Egypt at a 10 per cent rate; [and] the transfer of property by inheritance was included in this tax." References to estate taxes are found in a papyrus dating from 117 B. C. The Romans instituted a 5% tax on bequests in 6 A.D.

The Egyptian and Roman taxes, like their modern counterparts, rested on the feudal doctrine of property - that full title to all property in the domain of the sovereign rested with its political ruler or the State. The Egyptian inheritance tax was viewed as a "redemption fee," meaning that the heirs had to ransom the property of their deceased parent from the pharaoh. Likewise, thousands of years later, "the United States Supreme Court and the vast majority of state tribunals, on numerous occasions, have enunciated the doctrine that Succession is a privilege conferred by the State and that the power of the State with respect to it is unlimited." In American, as in ancient, jurisprudence, "it is only by virtue of the State that the heir is entitled to receive any of his ancestor's estate."

When a person dies, what might happen to the property that person has owned? Several scenarios are possible. First of all, the person or people designated by the deceased might take possession and title

to the property, according to instructions left by the deceased. Historically, in some societies the deceased has been required to leave the bulk of his or her estate to spouse and children. In at least one place - communist Russia - all inheritance was prohibited for a time (under the decree of April 27, 1918, which lasted for five years). "The reason for the restoration of Succession was the discovery that the people were circumventing the law so flagrantly that it was considered more expedient to allow Succession and impose a tax on it than to attempt [outright] confiscation." Finally, if neither the State nor the family succeeds to the property, it might simply be left up for grabs and taken by the first person to appear and claim it.

Societies organized around the tribe or clan did not have to deal with the the question of succession because the concept of inheritance presupposes that of private ownership. But even in those times and places where some forms of private property have existed, there have always been political restrictions on how and to whom the deceased could leave property. If property, whether real or personal, is truly private, then logical consistency demands that the owner be able to leave instructions regarding the disposition of his or her assets. As Murray Rothbard in his essay, "Justice and Property Rights," has put it

...if Smith and Jones and Clemente have the right to their labor and their property and to exchange the titles to this property for the similarly obtained property of others, then they also have the right to give their property to whomever they wish. The point is not the right of 'inheritance' but the right of bequest, a right which derives from the title to property itself. If Roberto Clemente owns his labor and the money he earns from it, then he has the right to give that money to the baby Clemente [or whomever he chooses].

Contrast this reasoning to the theory that the right to own property is created by the State. As one expositor wrote, "Inheritance is a creature of domestic law. The State gives and the State may take away." This has been, and is, the situation in America today. When it comes to inheritance, there is no judicial pretense that the disposition of property is a natural right. In other words, there is nothing in the federal or any of the state constitutions that restrains politicians from abolishing inheritance or the will-making power altogether. Inheritance and estate

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The Voluntaryist

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Subscription Information

Published bi-monthly by The Voluntaryists, P.O. Box 1275, Gramling, SC 29348. Yearly subscriptions (six issues) are \$18 or .050 ounce or 1.5550 grams of fine gold. For overseas postage, please add \$5 or 1/3 of the regular subscription price. Single back issues are \$4 each or 1/5 of the regular subscription price. Please check the number on your mailing label to see when you should renew.

The Breakdown of Government

By Harry Browne

HOW MUCH GOVERNMENT?

What, then, is the answer? How do you keep government reined in?

I don't believe you can. Limited government—the concept that government should perform certain, specified functions and no more—is a noble ideal. But I'm not aware of any instance in history when it succeeded. I think it is an impossibility.

When you empower government to perform the functions you believe are legitimate—keeping the peace, adjudicating disputes, protecting our shores, whatever—you empower it to carry out the desires of those with the most influence, and there's no way to stop it.

Can the Constitution restrain government? I've heard it said the Constitution is a perfect instrument if only the politicians would obey it. But if the Constitution can't stop politicians from violating it, how can it be perfect?

A Constitution's purpose is to define government's limited duties. The people hold a gun on the government and say to it, "We want you to do this much but no more." But then the people hand the gun to the government and expect it to live up to its promises. The truth is that a Constitution can only spell out good intentions.

But if government can't be contained, what's the answer? What kind of government *would* work?

It is said that Thomas Jefferson asserted, "That government is best which governs least."

Henry David Thoreau took this thought to its logical conclusion:

I heartily accept the motto, "That government is best which governs least." ... Carried out, it finally amounts to this which I also believe, "That government is best which governs not at all," and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have.

By saying "when men are prepared for it," Thoreau wasn't thinking of some ideal time when humans

have renounced avarice, violence, and dishonesty. I believe he meant that government would disappear when people realized that they don't need it—that it serves no useful purpose—that people can obtain much more efficiently on their own whatever government is supposed to provide.

Most people fear a world without government—never stopping to realize that their worst fears are already realized in the present system. They think we need government to protect us because people are greedy, destructive, and predatory—and so they allow greedy, destructive, predatory people to govern their lives. The result is the mess we see around us.

As Jefferson said, if man can't be trusted to govern himself, how can he be trusted to govern others?

IMAGINING A FREE SOCIETY

But without government, how would we protect ourselves from bandits and predators? How would money be issued and circulated in a free society? How would we defend ourselves from foreign invaders?

I don't know the answers to these questions—although innovative, plausible, exciting alternatives to government have been advanced over the years.

Those alternatives serve only to show that a free society can provide whatever we need without government. They don't tell us what a free society *will* be. A free society isn't planned, it evolves from the wishes and talents of its members. So there's no way to know what system of protection, money-issuance, or road-building would win out in the free market. In fact, most likely there would be many systems from which each of us could choose for himself.

I may not know how a free society would work, but that doesn't mean it *wouldn't* work. I also don't know how computers will work in the year 2000. I know only that the best minds in that world will develop computers and software beyond my ability to imagine today. They will do this because they'll earn fortunes applying their genius to the needs of computer-users. I will benefit from their talents without knowing in advance what they'll develop.

And just because I can't visualize how some task would be accomplished in a free society doesn't mean such a task *couldn't* be accomplished. Today only a few people are developing free-market alternatives to government. What if the best minds in America could make fortunes providing personal protection, national defense, sound money, better schools, safer roads, and efficient mail delivery? The possibilities

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"Those who speak truths are liable. They are liable to get hurt..., but they are the closest thing we have to hope."

—R. R. Mann

Big Brother Attacks!

[Editor's Note: Franklin Sanders in the October 1994 issue of THE MONEYCHANGER wrote a lengthy article about the prosecution of the National Commodity Barter Exchange, Box 2255, Longmont, Colorado 80502. What follows is a long excerpt from that piece.]

BOYCOTTING THE FED

NCBA has fought the government on a number of fronts. Years ago they established a system of *warehouse exchanges* to give their members a means of *boycotting* the Federal Reserve banking system, and dealing in lawful, honest gold and silver money. Ten years ago a raging IRS tried to get their membership lists by every means fair and foul, but NCBA fought them to a standstill, dealing the IRS a stunning defeat in the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals.

IRS ATTACKS VOSS

Later the IRS attacked NCBA Director John Voss personally, charging him with willful failure to file income tax returns, but they underestimated their victim. An engineer by training, John Voss is one of those rare quiet men with an air of utterly calm assurance born of integrity, training, & self-discipline. He was acquitted on all counts.

But the IRS still raged, still determined to bury NCBA.

IF AT FIRST THEY DON'T INDICT, TRY, TRY AGAIN

The assistant US Attorney prosecuting NCBA investigated for *another four years*, using *three* grand juries. Numerous witnesses were subpoenaed & questioned but grand juries still refused to indict NCBA leaders. Several IRS agents, some working undercover, assisted in this investigation. They secured copies of over 15,000 bank & other documents (checks, deposits, deposit slips, bank statements, wire transfers, Currency Transaction Reports (CTRs), etc.) & examined them, trying to identify NCBA members.

Finally the US attorney found a grand jury compliant enough to indict. They charged John Voss & four others: Mitchell & Brent Beals, brothers who operated the Denver NCBA Warehouse Exchange; Paul Carter, an NCBA member who operated a check cashing service for NCBA members, & Wally Waggoner, a precious metals broker who bought & sold gold & silver coins for NCBA members. The indictment charged conspiracy (the "skunk charge"—they throw it out on the courtroom floor & hope it *sprays* somebody), multiple counts of "structuring" to avoid currency transaction reporting, and contempt of court.

The contempt of court charge was the strangest,

& most ridiculous. Through the grand jury the government had issued a subpoena to "NCBA," not to any individual, for all names of NCBA members & for all NCBA records. Because the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals had already specifically upheld NCBA's right to privacy of that very information, & because the subpoenas addressed no individuals & so lacked the specificity the Supreme Court requires for enforcement, NCBA leaders provided nothing. (Imagine a policeman issues a friend of yours a traffic citation, then charges *you* with contempt of court for not appearing. It's the same thing.)

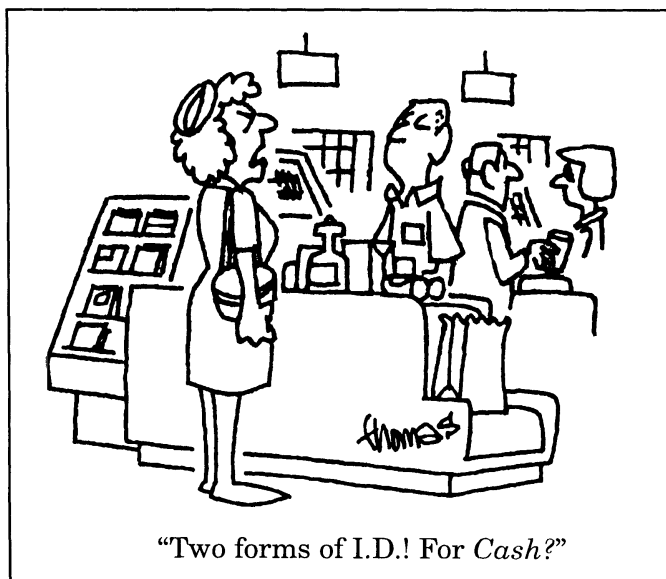
When the indictment was published, a puzzled Denver business editor quoted the indictment verbiage which charged the men with "opposition to compliance" with federal tax laws & "nonparticipation" in the banking system. The bewildered editor told John Voss that he hadn't realized it was unlawful to oppose or challenge the government, or to fail to have a bank account. How could a journalist be so naive?

THE VERDICT

On May 11, 1994 after a three week trial in Denver the trial jury returned a verdict of not guilty on eleven counts of the 12 count indictments. John Voss told me, "I thank God for providing us with a jury of folks steeped in common sense." But most bewildering of all, the jury convicted John Voss, Mitchell Beals, & Brent Beals of the most ridiculous charge, contempt of court. More bewildering still, on sentencing the judge converted the *misdemeanor* conviction into a *felony* sentence!

THE SENTENCE

On August 8, 1994 the district court judge sentenced John Voss to 24 months in prison, Mitch Beals to 18 months, & Brent to 12 months & a day. The charge under 18 USC 401(3) is a *misdemeanor*, but US attorney Jim Murphy insisted that the men's actions were not those of misdemeanants, but more



like those of *Mafiosi* & therefore warranted *felony* punishment. The judge was duly persuaded, & converted a misdemeanor conviction into a felony sentence! Nevertheless, all three men are free on bond pending appeal, & surely, surely the 10th Circuit will overturn the convictions.

CERTAIN TIDBITS

John Voss shared with me several tidbits from the trial which show just how crucial NCBA's fight is for the freedom of every American. Read & be warned!

- An IRS Criminal Investigation Division Special Agent said that the law prohibiting "structuring" of currency transactions (to avoid Currency Transaction Reports or CTRs) was meant to include *even regular trips* to the grocery store. If you pay for groceries in cash every time, the checker should be keeping track of such payments. When the total reaches \$10,000.01, the law clearly requires that checker to fill out & submit a CTR to the IRS office in Detroit!

- Bank officers are instructed by the IRS to consider a cash transaction *even by a valued customer* as suspicious & to report it to them immediately if it falls just under the \$10,000 threshold amount which would otherwise trigger the filing of a CTR.

- A 17-year career IRS agent told the jury that our concern for re-establishing privacy in our personal financial transactions was *all the proof they needed that we were engaged in criminal activity*.

- Yet another Special Agent informed the jury that John Voss's attempt to rescind his social security number, followed by his subsequent refusal to supply his prior number, were plainly efforts to *obstruct the IRS* in performing their duties, since the IRS considers the number one of their most important tools in tracking the activities & whereabouts of any American.

[THE MONEYCHANGER is a privately circulated newspaper published 12 times yearly. Gold and silver accepted or \$95 if you have nothing but paper "money." Box 341753, Memphis, TN 38184. Single copies, \$ 3 in silver, \$ 10 in paper.] ▣

Whose Property Is It Anyway?

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taxation rest on three intertwined theories: (a) the feudal power of the state over the property of the dead; (b) the power of the state to control and regulate succession within its boundaries; and (c) the power of the state to raise revenue via various forms of taxation. The federal and state judiciaries have asserted these theories time and time again, as a review of the most important inheritance cases reveals:

"Let people keep their own money, eliminate the bureaucratic barriers to spontaneous family and community activity-and people will see to their own education. If that sounds romantic and unrealistic, it only illustrates how far we have been taken in by the religion of state, which teaches that we, the enlightened people, could not get along in even the simplest matters without our wise and benevolent governors. People taught their own children to read, write, and reckon for centuries without the help of government. But today we can't imagine how it could be done. And we call ourselves a free and independent people.

-Sheldon Richman,
SEPARATING SCHOOL AND STATE
(1994), pp. 85-86.

Mager v. Grima (United States Supreme Court, 49 US 1168, 1850)

Now, the law in question is nothing more than an exercise of the power, which every state and sovereignty possesses, of regulating the manner and terms upon which property, real or personal, within its dominion, may be transmitted by last will and testament, or by inheritance; and of prescribing who shall and who shall not be capable of taking it. Every State or nation may unquestionably refuse to allow an alien to take either real or personal property situated within its limits, either as heir or legatee, and may, if it thinks proper, direct that property so descending or bequeathed shall belong to the State. In many of the States of this Union, at this day, real property devised to an alien is liable to escheat [to the State].

Eyre v. Jacob (14 Gratt 422, 73 Am Dec 367, Virginia, 1858)

The right to take property by devise or descent is the creature of the law and secured and protected by its authority. The legislature might, if it saw proper, restrict the succession or it may tomorrow, if it pleases, absolutely repeal the statute of wills and that of descents and distributions and declare that upon the death of a party his property shall be applied to the payment of his debts and the residue appropriated to public uses.

Pullen v. Commissioners (66 NC 361, North Carolina, 1872)

Property itself, as well as the succession to it, is the creature of positive law. The legislative power declares what objects in nature

may be held as property; it provides by what forms and on what conditions it may be transmitted from one person to another; it confines the right of inheriting to certain persons whom it defines as heirs; and on the failure of such it takes the property to the State as an escheat.

The right to give or take property is not one of those natural rights and inalienable rights which are supposed to precede all government, and which no government can rightfully impair. There was a time, at least as to gift by will, [when] it did not exist; and there may be a time again when it will seem wise and expedient to deny it. These are the uncontested powers of the Legislature upon which no article of the Constitution has laid its hands to impair them. If the Legislature may destroy this right, may it not regulate it? May it not impose conditions upon its exercise? And the condition it has imposed in this case is a tax.

United States v. Perkins (United States Supreme Court, 163 US 625, 1896)

While the laws of all civilized States recognize in every citizen the absolute right to his own earnings, and to the enjoyment of his own property, and the increase thereof, during his life, except so far as the State may require him to contribute his share for public expenses, the right to dispose of his property by will has always been considered purely a creature of statute and within legislative control. ... [W]e know of no legal principle to prevent the legislature from taking away or limiting the right of testamentary disposition or imposing such conditions upon its exercise as it may deem conducive to the public good.

Magoun v. Illinois Trust & Savings Bank (United States Supreme Court, 170 US 283, 1898)

Legacy and inheritance taxes are not new in our laws. The constitutionality of the[se] taxes has been declared. They are based on two principles (1) An inheritance tax is not one on property, but one on the succession; (2) the right to take property by devise or descent is the creature of the law, and not a natural right, - a privilege, - and therefore the authority which confers it may impose conditions upon it.

Irving Trust Co. v. Day (United States Supreme Court, 314 US 556, 1942)

Nothing in the Federal Constitution forbids the legislature of a state to limit, condition, or even abolish the power of testamen-

tary disposition over property within its jurisdiction.

After reading these statist comments, several remarks are in order. First of all, it is important to remember that the family, and succession of property within the family, existed long before the State came into existence. "A practice so universally accepted and so universally acquiesced in at all times, ..., is something more substantial than a privilege conferred by the State." Secondly, what would people do regarding succession if there were no State, or if the State made no laws for testamentary disposition or descent? What would happen is what occurs whenever voluntarism flourishes. People would arrange their own affairs to suit themselves. Yes, there might be chaos and confusion until things were sorted out, but eventually customs and practices would evolve under which property was transmitted from one generation to another in accordance with the desires and instructions of the deceased. The last thing in the world we need, both figuratively and literally, is for the State to tell us what we may do and may not do with our property when we die. ☐

The Breakdown of Government

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are far beyond my ability to imagine.

Suppose Federal Express and UPS were competing to deliver first-class mail instead of providing only courier services. Who knows how the whole concept of mail delivery would change and improve within a year or two?

Suppose Bill Gates of Microsoft could make his billions not by creating an operating system for computers, but by developing a system of neighborhood protection. We can't even imagine the possibilities that his genius for innovation and management would produce.

Suppose America's best entrepreneurs were competing to provide the best schooling, the safest and fastest roads, the most stable money, the best defense. Today the government preempts these fields—through prohibition, regulation, or subsidy. But once it became profitable for the world's best and freest minds to address these needs, we could enjoy excellence in protection, schooling, and purchasing power comparable to what we now get in telephones, computers, and fax machines.

"History is not given from the heavens. We are the ones who are doing history. So everybody is responsible. I am responsible. That's all."

—Yuri Orlov

How would these things operate? I have no idea, and it would be presumptuous to think that I knew what people would want and what geniuses would create. I know only that a market solution would provide what we need and desire—not what enhances the politicians and their allies.

GOVERNMENT DOESN'T WORK

But I'm straying from the point.

The issue isn't how a totally free society would work. It isn't really even whether it would work.

What's important is that *government doesn't work*. Government is the source of most of society's ills. And giving it a new start won't help anything—because a system relying on coercion would revert to the monster we have today.

Government doesn't work. It can't deliver the mail on time. It can't issue a currency that retains a level purchasing power. It can't maintain the roads in a usable fashion, or keep them from being endlessly congested, or reduce a highway death rate that would brand the road managers as criminally negligent if the roads were privately owned. ...

Once we realize that government doesn't work, we will stop dreaming that we can solve this or that social problem by passing a law or by creating a new government program or by electing someone who will

clean up government.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ABOUT IT?

If you agree that government is destructive, what should you do about it?

You don't necessarily have to do anything. To quote Thoreau again, "I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad."

You may decide that life is too short and too important to sacrifice to the impossible task of changing the world. There's always so much you can do to improve your own life directly, while you have so little chance to turn the world around.

If you do enjoy the crusade, it's important to fight it with consistency and principle—not by acting as though coercion is sometimes good and sometimes bad. If people shouldn't be forced to subsidize farmers they shouldn't be forced to subsidize schools. If government should let people decide for themselves what they'll buy, it should let them decide what they'll read and see.

Realize that tinkering with coercion won't make it less destructive. Government isn't capable of solving our medical problems or building an information superhighway or creating a pristine environment, so modifying such programs won't make them **workable**. They are wrong, period. No matter how **high-flown** the intentions, they will fail—and they will steal wealth from hard-working citizens and destroy the lives of innocent people. To support them in *any* form is a mistake.

And if you hope to make others understand, you can do so only by focusing on the central issue—the coercion behind a program. It's wrong to force physicians to work under government direction, it's wrong to confiscate what people have earned honestly, it's wrong to try to achieve honorable ends by forcing people to help.

It's wrong because it violates every concept of justice in our culture, and because it can't possibly succeed. Good physicians won't work for the government, productive people will stop providing what we need when the confiscation becomes unbearable, and people will do everything possible to circumvent the edicts.

Always keep your eyes on the principle involved. A government agency isn't a mistake because it's wasteful, inefficient, or even corrupt; it's a mistake because it relies on coercion. A government program isn't bad because it's too big; it's bad because it exists.

DEALING WITH THE GOVERNMENT

If you understand what government is, a few simple rules suggest themselves.

1. Don't count on government to achieve any stated goal—whether that be deficit reduction, bringing peace to some region of the world, or better health care. Your future depends upon how you arrange your

A Noisy Noise

By Berton Braley (1882-1966)

Bang! goes a billion!
Doggone quick,
Up—like a rocket.
Down—like the stick!

Double up taxes!
(Gotta have the "mon")
Bang! goes a billion!
Shoot another one!

Boondogglers doggle,
Plans go bust,
Bang goes a billion
Blown to dust!

Projects vanish
In noise and smoke,
But—bang go the billions!
Till we go broke!

Debts go haywire
And thrift goes hang.
Bang go the billions!
Bang! Bang! BANG!

(From NEW DEAL DITTIES, NY:
Greenberg. 1936, p. 21.)

life, not on what government promises to do.

2. Don't waste your time trying to reform government. You can't make an agency of coercion be efficient or benevolent.

3. Don't try to get anything from it. You probably won't like what you get or the way it will make you feel about yourself.

4. Don't be awed by it. You're more intelligent than it is.

5. Don't confront it. You won't achieve anything. I doubt that the IRS agent cares about your views on coercion.

6. Don't despair. The public's view of government has changed drastically over the last two decades. We may always be saddled with government, but people less and less see it as a benefactor—and more and more as the enemy it is.

As that trend continues, the government will have to use the stick more than the carrot—and that will accelerate even more the public's understanding of what government really is. It may be that people will always have to pay tribute to Caesar, but the day may come when they stop saluting as they do.

The breakdown of government may seem terrifying, but what we're seeing are the birth pangs of a new age—one that revolves around the exciting new technology and dreams of people, not government.

SELF-RESPECT

Most of all, simply recognize the truth about government, and don't shame yourself by participating in follies and deceptions concerning government. It isn't necessary to nod your head in approval when someone says he doesn't begrudge taxes that help the poor, or that he's proud of what "our boys" accomplished in Iraq. Don't make yourself a party to other people's ignorance.

Neither is it necessary to voice your disagreement. It is necessary only that you not betray yourself with false words or gestures—that you not break faith with what you know. Your self-respect is far more important than catering to the misguided opinions of others.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn said, "The simple step of a courageous individual is not to take part in the falsehood. One word of truth outweighs the world."

One word of truth won't outweigh the world in creating public policy—or even public opinion. But truth does outweigh the world where it matters—with the people you respect, the people who think, with your own family and your closest friends.

And where it matters most of all—in your own heart.

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How Can Governments Be Abolished?

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soldier, nor a field-marshal, nor a minister of state, nor a tax collector, nor a witness, nor an alderman, nor a jurymen, nor a governor, nor a member of Parliament, nor, in fact, hold any office connected with violence. That is one thing. Secondly, such a man should not voluntarily pay taxes to governments, either directly or indirectly; nor should he accept money collected by taxes, either as salary, or as pension, or as a reward; nor should he make use of governmental institutions, supported by taxes collected by violence from the people. That is the second thing. Thirdly, a man who desires not to promote his own well-being alone, but to better the position of people in general, should not appeal to governmental violence for the protection of his own possessions in land or in other things, nor to defend him and his near ones; but should only possess land and all products of his own or other people's toil in so far as others do not claim them from him.

[Reprinted from Charles Sprading, (ed.), LIBERTY AND THE GREAT LIBERTARIANS, 1913, pp. 332-333.] ▣

"Some man or group in every form of state Has sovereign power to kill and confiscate."

"But the power that made the Constitution yesterday, can unmake it tomorrow. I am not referring to the ever present possibility of revolution, but to the orderly process of amendment reserved in the Constitution itself. Suppose a resolution to be introduced in Congress proposing a constitutional amendment empowering the President to proceed by information against political offenders, and to try and sentence them in the exercise of his sole discretion. Suppose this resolution to be carried by the requisite two-thirds majority in both houses of Congress. Suppose the proposed amendment to be duly ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the commonwealths. Suppose, finally, a sentence of death to be imposed by the President in strict accordance with the authority conferred upon him. To whom then would the threatened citizen look for protection? The answer must be that he could look nowhere for protection. The illustration may be objected to on the ground that no such amendment as the one suggested could possibly be adopted. This objection amounts to nothing except an expression of faith that a sovereign who has acted considerately in the past will probably continue to act considerately in the future. ... I think there can be no escape from this logic or from the underlying fact that gives rise to it. If you live in a political society at all, some man or group can confiscate your property and forfeit your life."

—F. Lyman Windolph,
LEVIATHAN AND NATURAL LAW

How Can Governments Be Abolished?

By Lyoff N. Tolstoy

Slavery results from laws, laws are made by governments, and, therefore, people can only be freed from slavery by the abolition of governments. But how can governments be abolished? All attempts to get rid of governments by violence have hitherto, always and everywhere, resulted only in this: that in place of the deposed governments new ones established themselves, often more cruel than those they replaced. Not to mention past attempts to abolish governments by violence, according to the Socialist theory, the coming abolition of the rule of the capitalists—that is, the communalization of the means of production and the new economic order of society—is also to be carried out by a fresh organization of violence, and will have to be maintained by the same means. So that attempts to abolish violence by violence neither have in the past nor, evidently, can in the future emancipate people from violence, nor, consequently, from slavery. It cannot be otherwise. Apart from outbursts of revenge or anger, violence is used only in order to compel some people, against their own will, to do the will of others. But the necessity to do what other people wish against your own will is slavery. And, therefore, as long as any violence, designed to compel some people to do the will of others, exists, there will be slavery. All the attempts to abolish slavery by violence are like extinguishing

fire with fire, stopping water with water, or filling up one hole by digging another. People must feel that their participation in the criminal activity of governments, whether by giving part of their work in the form of money, or by direct participation in military service, is not, as is generally supposed, an indifferent action, but, besides being harmful to one's self and to one's brothers, is a participation in the crimes unceasingly committed by all governments and a preparation for new crimes, which governments are always preparing by maintaining disciplined armies.

The age for the veneration for governments, notwithstanding all the hypnotic influence they employ to maintain their position, is more and more passing away. And it is time for people to understand that governments not only are not necessary, but are harmful and most highly immoral institutions, in which a self-respecting, honest man cannot and must not take part, and the advantages of which he cannot and should not enjoy. And as soon as people clearly understand that, they will naturally cease to take part in such deeds—that is, cease to give the governments soldiers and money. And as soon as a majority of people ceases to do this the fraud which enslaves people will be abolished. Only in this way can people be freed from slavery. And in order not to do the evil which produces misery for himself and for his brothers, he should, first of all, neither willingly nor under compulsion take any part in governmental activity, and should, therefore, be neither a

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