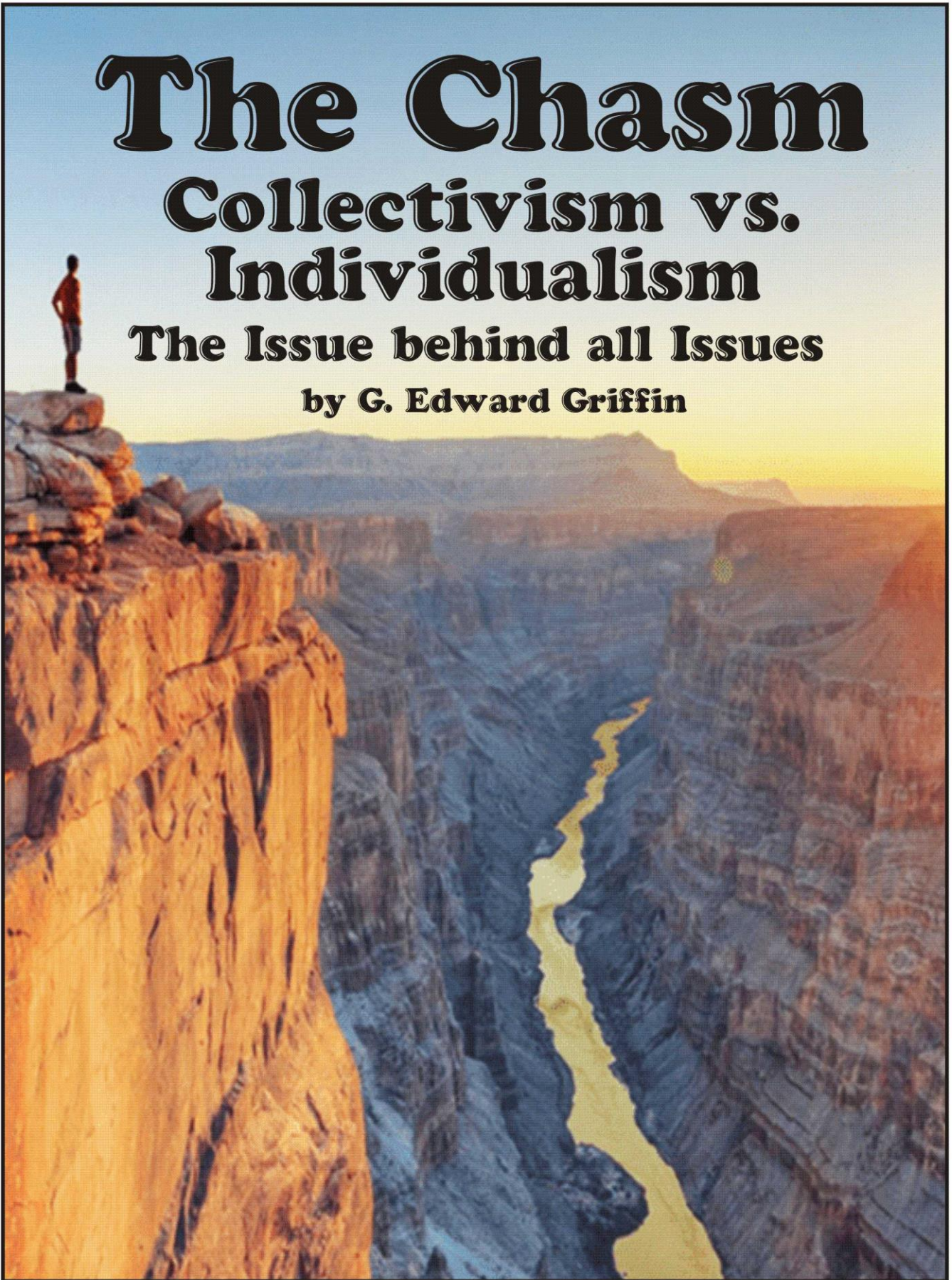


The Chasm

Collectivism vs. Individualism

The Issue behind all Issues

by G. Edward Griffin



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The Chasm

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There are many words commonly used today to describe political attitudes. We are told that there are Conservatives, Liberals, Libertarians, Progressives, Left-wingers, Right-wingers, Socialists, Communists, Maoists, Trotskyites, Fascists, Nazis and. if that isn't confusing enough, now we have Neo-Conservatives, Neo-Nazis, and Neo-everything else. When we are asked what our political orientation is, we are expected to choose from one of these words. If we don't have a strong political opinion or if we're afraid of making a bad choice, then we play it safe and say we are Moderates – adding yet one more word to the list.

Social mores and religious beliefs sometimes divide along the Left-Right political axis. In the United States, the Democrat Party is home for the Left, while the Republican Party is home for the Right. Those on the Left are more likely to embrace lifestyles that those on the Right would consider improper or even sinful. Those on the Right are more likely to be church-going members of an organized religion. But these are not definitive values, because there is a great deal of overlap. Republicans smoke pot. Democrats go to church. Social, religious, or lifestyle values cannot be included in any meaningful definition of these groups.

No one can clearly define the ideology that any of these words represent. They are used, primarily, as labels to impart an aura of either goodness or badness, depending on who uses the words and what *emotions* they trigger in their minds. Most political debates sound like they originate at the tower of Babel. Everyone speaks a different language. The words may sound familiar, but speakers and listeners each have their private definitions.

It has been my experience that, in those rare cases where the definitions can be agreed upon, most of the disagreements come to an end. To the amazement of those who thought they were bitter ideological opponents, they often find they share the same core beliefs. So, to avoid being blinded by this blizzard of words, our first task is to throw out the garbage. If we are to make sense of the political agendas that dominate our

planet today, we must not allow our thinking to be contaminated by the emotional load of the old vocabulary.

It may surprise you to learn that most of the political debates of our time – at least in the Western world – can be divided into just two viewpoints. All of the rest is fluff because, typically, it focuses on whether or not a particular action should be taken based on its predicted outcome. The real issue, however, is not the outcome of the action, but the ethical code that justifies or forbids that action regardless of the outcome. It is a contest between the ethics of *collectivism* and *individualism*. Those words have profound meaning, and they represent an ideological chasm that divides the entire Western world.¹

One thing that is common to both collectivists and individualists is that the majority of them are well intentioned. They want the best life possible for their families, for their countrymen, and for mankind. They want prosperity and justice for their fellow man. Where they disagree is how to bring those things about.

I have studied collectivist literature for over 60 years and, early on, it was clear that there are certain recurring themes, what may be considered as the seven pillars of collectivism. If they are turned upside down, they become the seven pillars of individualism. In other words, there are seven concepts of social and political relationships; and, within each of them, collectivists and individualists have opposite viewpoints.

1. THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The first of these has to do with the nature of human rights and the origin of state power. Collectivists and individualists both agree that human rights are important, but they differ over *how* important compared to other values and they especially differ over the *origin* of those rights.

Rights are not tangible entities that can be seen or measured. They are abstract concepts within the mind. They are whatever is widely agreed upon at any given time and place. Their nature changes with the evolution of civilization and they vary between cultures. One culture may accept that

¹ In the Middle East and parts of Africa and Asia, there is a third ethic called theocracy, a form of government that combines church and state and compels citizens to accept a particular religious doctrine. That was common throughout early European Christendom and it appeared even in some of the colonies of the United States. It survives in today's world in the form of Islam and it has millions of advocates. Any comprehensive view of political ideology must include theocracy, but time does not permit such scope in this presentation. For those interested in the author's larger view, including theocracy, there is a summary called *Which Path for Mankind?* attached to the end of this essay.

rights are granted by rulers who derive authority from God. Another culture may claim that rights are granted by God directly to the people. In other cultures, rights are perceived as a claim to the material possessions of others. People living in tribal or military dictatorships don't spend much time even thinking about rights because they have no expectation of ever having them. Primitive cultures don't even have a word for rights.

Because of the great diversity in the concept of human rights, they cannot be defined to everyone's satisfaction. However, that does not mean they cannot be defined to *our* satisfaction. We do not have to insist that those in other cultures agree with us; but, if we wish to live in a culture to *our* liking, one in which we have the optimum amount of personal freedom, we must be serious about a preferred definition of human rights. If we have no concept of what rights *should* be, it is likely we will live under a definition not to our liking.

The first thing to understand as we work toward a useful definition of rights is that their *source* determines their *nature*. This will be covered in greater detail further along, but the concept needs to be stated here. If a security guard is hired by a gated community to protect the property of its residents, the guards must be limited to activities that the residents, themselves, are entitled to perform. Guards may patrol the community and, if necessary, physically deter burglaries and aggressive violence because the residents have a right to do those things. But the guards may not compel residents to send their children to bed by 10 PM or donate to the Red Cross or save for their retirement or refrain from gambling or use only certain types of cancer treatments. Why not? Because the residents are the source of the authority, and they have no right to compel their neighbors in these matters. **The authority cannot exceed its source.** Most of the world's laws today violate this fundamental principle.

RIGHTS ARE WON ON THE BATTLEFIELD

In societies that have been sheltered for many generations from war and revolution, it is easy to forget that rights are secured by military power. They may be handed to the next generation as a gift, but they are always obtained on the battlefield. The Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution is a classic example. The men who drafted that document were able to do so only because they represented thirteen states that defeated the military forces of Great Britain. Had they lost the War of Independence,

they would have had no opportunity to write a Bill of Rights or anything else except letters of farewell before their execution.

Unfortunately, Mao Zedong was right when he wrote that political power grows from the barrel of a gun. He could just as well have said the same about rights. A man may declare that he has a right to do such-and-such derived from law or from a constitution or even from God but, if a thug or a soldier holds a gun to his head, he has no power to exercise his proclaimed right. Rights are always based on power. If we lose our ability or willingness to physically defend our rights, we will never be able to exercise them.

Now we come to the chasm between collectivists and individualists. If rights are won on the battlefield, we may assume they belong to the winners, but who are **they**? Do states win wars or do people? If states win wars and people merely fight them, then states hold the rights and may grant or deny them to the people. On the other hand, if people win wars and states merely serve them in this matter, then the people hold rights and may grant or deny them to states.

If our task is to define rights as we think they *should* be in a free society, we must choose between these two concepts. Individualists choose the concept that rights come from the people and states are the servants. Collectivists choose the concept that rights come from states and *people* are the servants. Individualists are nervous about that assumption because, if the state has the power to *grant* rights, it also has the power to take them away, and that concept is incompatible with personal liberty.

The view of individualism was expressed clearly in the United States Declaration of Independence, which says:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men....

Nothing could be clearer than that. The dictionary tells us that inalienable (spelled differently in colonial times) means “not to be transferred to another.” The assumption is that rights are the innate possession of the people. The purpose of the state is not to *grant* rights, but to *secure* them and protect them.

By contrast, all collectivist political systems embrace the opposite view that rights are granted by the state. That includes Nazis, Fascists, and Communists. It also is a tenet of the United Nations. Article Four of the UN Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights says:

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, in the enjoyment of those rights provided by the State ... the State may subject such rights only to such limitations as are determined by law.

There you have it. If the state can *grant* rights, it can also *take them away*. After proclaiming that rights are provided by the state, it then says that those rights may be subject to limitations “as are determined by law.” In other words, the collectivists at the UN presume to grant us our rights and, when they are ready to take them away, all they have to do is pass a law authorizing it.

Compare that with the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution. It says Congress shall make *no* law restricting freedom of speech, or religion, peaceful assembly, the right to bear arms, and so forth – not *except as determined by law*, but *no* law. The Constitution embodies the ethic of individualism. The UN embodies the ethic of collectivism, and what a difference that makes.

THE ORIGIN OF STATE POWER

Closely related to the origin of human rights is the origin of state power. It is the flip side of the same coin. As stated previously, individualists believe that a just state derives its power from the people. That means the state cannot have any legitimate powers unless they are given to it by its citizens. Another way of putting it is that governments may do only those things that their citizens also have a right to do. If individuals don't have the right to perform a certain act, then they can't grant that power to their elected representatives. They can't delegate what they don't have. It makes no difference how many of them there may be. If none of them have a specified power to delegate, then a million of them don't have it either.

To use an extreme example, let us assume that a ship has been sunk in a storm, and three exhausted men are struggling for survival in the sea. Suddenly, they come upon a life-buoy ring. The ring is designed only to keep one person afloat; but, with careful cooperation between them, it can keep two of them afloat. However, when the third man grasps the ring, it

becomes useless, and all three, once again, are at the mercy of the sea. They try taking turns: one treading while two hold on to the ring; but after a few hours, none of them have strength to continue. The grim truth gradually becomes clear. Unless one of them is cut loose from the group, all three will drown. What, then, should these men do?

Many people would say that two of the men would be justified in overpowering the third and casting him off. The right of self-survival is paramount. Taking the life of another, terrible as such an act would be, is justified if it is necessary to save your own life. That certainly is true for individual action, but what about collective action? Where do two men get the right to gang up on one man?

The collectivist answers that two men have a greater right to life because they outnumber the third one. It's a question of mathematics: *The greatest good for the greatest number*. That makes the group more important than the individual and it justifies two men forcing one man away from the ring. There is a certain logic to this argument but, if we further simplify the example, we will see that, although the action may be correct, it is justified by the wrong reasoning.

Let us assume, now, that there are only *two* survivors – so we eliminate the concept of the group – and let us also assume that the ring will support only one swimmer, not two. Under these conditions, it would be similar to facing an enemy in battle. You must kill or be killed. Only one can survive. We are dealing now with the competing right of self-survival for each individual, and there is no mythical group to confuse the issue. Under this extreme condition, it is clear that each person would have the right to do whatever he can to preserve his own life, even if it leads to the death of another. Some may argue that it would be better to sacrifice one's life for a stranger, but few would argue that *not* to do so would be wrong.

When the conditions are simplified to their barest essentials, we see that the right to deny life to others comes from the *individual's* right to protect his *own* life. It does not need the so-called group to ordain it.

In the original case of three survivors, the justification for denying life to one of them does not come from a majority vote but from their *individual and separate* right of self-survival. In other words, either of them, acting alone, would be justified in this action. They are not empowered by the group. When we hire police to protect our community, we are merely asking them to do what we, ourselves, have a right to do. Using physical force to

protect our lives, liberty, and property is a legitimate function of the state, because that power is derived from the people as *individuals*. It does not arise from the group.¹

Here's one more example – a lot less extreme but far more typical of what actually goes on every day in legislative bodies. If government officials decide one day that no one should work on Sunday, and even assuming the community generally supports their decision, where would they get the authority to use the police power of the state to enforce such a decree? Individual citizens don't have the right to compel their neighbors not to work, so they can't delegate that right to the state. Where, then, would the state get the authority? The answer is that it would come from itself; it would be self-generated. It would be similar to the divine right of ancient monarchies in which it was assumed that governments represent the power and the will of God. In more modern times, most governments don't even pretend to have God as their authority, they just rely on SWAT teams and armies, and those who object are eliminated.

When states claim to derive their authority from any source other than the people, it always leads to the destruction of liberty. Preventing men from working on Sunday would not seem to be a great threat to freedom, but once the principle is established, it opens the door for more edicts – and more, and more – until freedom is gone. If we accept that the state or any other group has the right to do things that individuals alone do not have the right to do, then we have unwittingly endorsed the concept that rights are *not* intrinsic to the individual and that they, in fact, *do* originate with the group. Once we accept that, we are on the road to tyranny.

Collectivists are not concerned over such picky issues. They believe that states have powers that are greater than those of their citizens, and the source of those powers, they say, is, not the individuals within society, but society itself, the groups to which individuals belong.

2. GROUP SUPREMACY

Collectivism is based on the belief that the group is more important than the individual. According to this view, the group is an entity of its own and it has rights of its own. Furthermore, those rights are more important

¹ The related question of a right to use deadly force to protect the lives of others is reviewed in Part Four in connection with the White House order to shoot down hijacked airliners if they pose a threat to ground populations.

than individual rights. Therefore, the individual must be sacrificed, if necessary, for “the greater good of the greater number.”

Who can object to the loss of liberty or property or even life if it is for the greater good of society? The ultimate group, of course, is the state. Therefore, the state is more important than individual citizens, and it is acceptable to sacrifice them, if necessary, for the benefit of the state. This concept is at the heart of all modern totalitarian systems built on the model of collectivism.

Individualists on the other hand say, “Wait a minute. Group? What is *group*? That’s just a word. You can’t touch a group. You can’t see a group. All you can touch and see are individuals. The word *group* is an abstraction and doesn’t exist as a tangible reality. It’s like the abstraction called *forest*. Forest doesn’t exist. Only trees exist. Forest is the concept of many trees. Likewise, the word *group* merely describes the abstract concept of many individuals. Abstractions cannot have rights. Only individuals are real and only individuals can have rights.¹

Just because there are many individuals in one group and only a few in another does not give a higher priority to the individuals in the larger group – even if you call it the *state*. A majority of voters do not have more rights than the minority. Rights are not derived from the power of numbers. They do not come from the group. They are *intrinsic* with each human being.

¹ Corporations fall into this same category. Lately there is widespread anger at corporations because of political favoritism and injustices associated with unprincipled policies and profit-seeking. It is popular to echo the chant against corporations as though they exist as real entities, but they do not. Corporations are merely groups of investors (stockholders) and their managers who have obtained authorization from the state to carry on business as *though* they were individuals. However, corporations don’t exist outside the human mind; only the people who run them exist. Therefore, corporations do not have rights, cannot make money, cannot break the law, and cannot pay taxes or fines. Only *people* can do those things. “Tax those big, bad corporations, not the workers,” is the cry. Yet, if we double corporate taxes, they will be passed along to consumers in the form of higher prices for the goods or services they provide. State taxes on gasoline are an example. Those are not paid by oil companies or service stations. *We* pay them when we fill the tank. Corporations never pay any tax on anything. Corporate taxes are just another way to extract money from the common man. Currently, if the president and board of directors of a drug company agree to falsify research records to conceal the fact that their vaccine is highly toxic and, as a result, thousands of children are crippled or killed by it, the courts may award large settlements to the parents; and the pundits say, “Good! Those corporations should pay *big* for that.” But the money is not paid by the executives who committed the crime. It is paid by the stockholders – and by customers who pay indirectly through the purchase of the corporation’s products or services. If corporate executives and directors were personally held responsible for the consequences of their decisions instead of being protected by the legal shield of an abstraction called “corporation”, most if not all of the objectionable acts they commit would come to a halt. If those who falsify research records were tried for murder instead of being given a bonus for improving drug sales, corporate ethics would improve drastically. This applies to officials in government, as well. If police officers and government officials were held personally responsible for their actions instead being immune from prosecution; if they had to pay court-awarded damages to their victims instead of passing the cost on to taxpayers, the quality of public service also would greatly improve. Corporations and government agencies cannot be held accountable for their actions because they exist only as abstractions, but the people who direct them are *real*. They *can* be and *should* be held accountable.

When collectivists argue that individuals must be sacrificed for the greater good of society, what they really are saying is that *some* individuals will be sacrificed for the greater good of *other* individuals. The morality of collectivism is based on numbers. Anything may be done so long as the number of people benefiting supposedly is greater than the number of people being sacrificed.

Note the word, supposedly. In the real world, those who decide who is to be sacrificed don't count fairly. Dictators always claim they represent the greater good of the greater number but, in reality, they and their support organizations usually comprise less than one percent of the population. The theory is that someone has to speak for the masses and represent their best interest, because they are too dumb to do it for themselves. So, collectivist leaders, wise and virtuous as they are, make the decisions for them. In this way, it is possible to justify any injustice, crime, or atrocity as necessary for the greater good of society.

In the 1960's, an FDA agent, who had testified in court against a Kansas City businessman, admitted under cross-examination that he had lied under oath twenty-eight times. When asked if he regretted what he had done, he replied: "No, I don't have any regrets. I wouldn't hesitate to tell a lie if it would help the American consumer."¹

Ah, yes! The greater good for the greater number.

If we accept the premise that individuals may be sacrificed for the group, we have made a huge mistake on two counts. First, individuals are the *essence* of the group, which means the group is being sacrificed anyway, piece by piece. Secondly, the underlying principle is deadly. Today, the individual being sacrificed may be unknown to you or even someone you dislike. Tomorrow, it could be you. It takes but a moment's reflection to realize that the greater good for the greater number is *not* achieved by sacrificing individuals but by *protecting* individuals. In reality, the greater good for the greater number is best served by individualism, not collectivism.

REPUBLICS VS DEMOCRACIES

We are dealing here with one of the reasons people make a distinction between republics and democracies. In recent years, it is commonly believed that a democracy is the ideal state structure. Supposedly, that is

¹ Omar Garrison, *The Dictocrats* (Chicago-London-Melbourne: Books for Today, Ltd., 1970, p. 130.

what was created by the American Constitution, and the justification for invading other countries and overthrowing their tyrannical governments is, we are told, to spread democracy throughout the world. But, if you read the documents and the speech transcripts of the men who *wrote* the Constitution, you find that they spoke strongly against democracy – and if you look at the reality of life in those lands where democracy has been delivered, you find little difference between the old and new regimes, except that the new ones often are worse.

In colonial America, Samuel Adams, a prominent leader of the movement for independence, expressed the common view of his colleagues when he said: “Democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There was never a democracy that did not commit suicide.”

This understanding of the dark side of democracy was not unique to the American colonists. European historians and political writers of the period had come to the same conclusion. In England, Lord Acton wrote: “The one pervading evil of democracy is the tyranny of the party that succeeds, by force or fraud, in carrying elections.”

In Scotland, a history professor at the University of Edinburgh, Alexander Tyler, wrote:

A democracy is always temporary in nature – it simply cannot exist as a permanent form of government. A democracy will continue to exist until the time that voters discover that they can vote themselves generous gifts from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always vote for the candidates who promise the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that every democracy will finally collapse due to loose fiscal policy – usually followed by a dictatorship.

Those who drafted the American Constitution believed that a democracy was one of the worst possible forms of government and so, they created what they called a republic. Unfortunately, that word no longer has the classic meaning it did in 1787. Today it is used indiscriminately for everything from military dictatorships, such as The Republic of Angola, to technocratic dictatorships such as the Republic of China. But, when the American Republic was created, the word had a precise meaning, and it was understood by everyone.

This is why the word democracy does not appear in the Constitution; and, when Americans pledge allegiance to the flag, it's to the *republic* for which it stands, not the democracy. When Colonel Davy Crockett joined the Texas Revolution prior to the famous Battle of the Alamo, he refused to sign the oath of allegiance to the future government of Texas until the wording was changed to the future government of Texas to the future *republican* government of Texas.¹ The reason this is important is that the difference between a democracy and a republic is the difference between collectivism and individualism.

In a pure democracy, the majority rules; end of discussion. You might say, "What's wrong with that?" Well, there could be *plenty* wrong with that. What about a lynch mob? There is only one person with a dissenting vote, and he is at the end of the rope. That's democracy in action.

"Wait a minute," you say. "The majority should rule. Yes, but not to the extent of denying the rights of the minority," and, of course, you would be correct. As Lord Acton observed:

It is bad to be oppressed by a minority, but it is worse to be oppressed by a majority. ... The most certain test by which we judge whether a country is really free is the amount of security enjoyed by minorities.

To provide security for minorities is precisely the role of a republic. A republic is a state based on the principle of *limited* majority rule so that the minority – even a minority of one – will be protected from the whims and passions of the majority.

Republics are characterized by written constitutions that spell out the rules to make that possible. That was the function of the American Bill of Rights, which is nothing more than a list of things the state may not do. It says that Congress, even though it represents the majority, shall pass no law denying the minority their rights to free exercise of religion, freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, the right to bear arms, and other "unalienable" rights.

These limitations on majority rule are the essence of a republic, and they also are at the core of the ideology called individualism. And so here is another major difference between these two concepts: Collectivism on the

¹ "David Crockett: Parliamentarian," by William Reed, *National Parliamentarian*, Vol. 64, Third Quarter, 2003, p. 30.

one hand, supporting any action so long as it can be said to be for the greater good of the greater number; and individualism on the other hand, defending the rights of the minority against the passions and greed of the majority.

DEMOCRACY COMES TO IN AMERICA

The seed of individualism was firmly planted in American soil, but it was poorly cultivated and soon was crowded out by the weeds of collectivism. When the Founding Fathers passed away, so did the Spirit of 76 that was unique to their generation. The new generations, no longer threatened by tyranny from abroad and having no perception of the possibility of tyranny from within, became more interested in material comfort and pleasure than in the ideology of freedom. The French Revolution had captured their imagination, and they were attracted to the slogans of Equality, Fraternity, and Democracy. The right to vote became the center of their political philosophy, and they adopted the belief that, so long as the majority approves of a measure, it is good and proper. That nebulous abstraction called society became more important than human beings. The group had become more important than the individual.

Barely three generations after ratification of the Constitution, a young Frenchman, named Alexis de Tocqueville, toured the United States to prepare an official report to his government on the American prison system. His real interest, however, was the social and political environment in the New World. He found much to admire in America, but he also observed what he thought were the seeds of its destruction. What he discovered was collectivism, which even then, was far advanced. Upon his return to France the following year, he began work on a four-volume analysis of the strengths and weaknesses he found. His perceptivity was remarkable, and his book, entitled *Democracy in America*, has remained as one of the world's classic works in political science. As we read his words, which are so perfectly descriptive of our modern time, it is hard to believe that they were written in 1831:

The Americans hold that in every state the supreme power ought to emanate from the people; but when once that power is constituted, they can conceive, as it were, no limits to it, and they are ready to admit that it has the right to do whatever it pleases. ... The idea of rights inherent in certain individuals is rapidly disappearing from the

minds of men; the idea of the omnipotence and sole authority of society at large rises to fill its place.

The first thing that strikes the observation is an innumerable multitude of men, all equal and alike, incessantly endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives. Each of them, living apart, is a stranger to the fate of all the rest; his children and his private friends constitute to him the whole of mankind.

Above this race of men stands an immense and tutelary power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications and to watch over their fate. That power is absolute, minute, regular, provident, and mild. It would be like the authority of a parent if, like that authority, its object was to prepare men for manhood; but it seeks, on the contrary, to keep them in perpetual childhood: it is well content that the people should rejoice, provided they think of nothing but rejoicing.

After having thus successively taken each member of the community in its powerful grasp and fashioned him at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community. It covers the surface of society with a network of small, complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd.

Our contemporaries are constantly excited by two conflicting passions: they want to be led, and they wish to remain free. As they cannot destroy either the one or the other of these contrary propensities, they strive to satisfy them both at once. They devise a sole, tutelary, and all-powerful form of government, but elected by the people. They combine the principle of centralization and that of popular sovereignty; this gives them a respite: they console themselves for being in tutelage by the reflection that they have

chosen their own guardians. Every man allows himself to be put in leading strings, because he sees that it is, not a person or a class of persons, but the people at large who hold the end of his chain. By this system the people shake off their state of dependence just long enough to select their master and then relapse into it again.¹

3. COERCION VS FREEDOM

The third concept that divides collectivism from individualism has to do with responsibilities and freedom of choice. We have spoken about the origin of rights, but there is a similar issue with responsibilities. Rights and responsibilities go together. If we value the right to live our own lives without others telling us what to do, then we must assume the responsibility to be independent, to provide for ourselves without expecting others to take care of us. Rights and responsibilities are different sides of the same coin.

If only individuals have rights, then it follows that only individuals have responsibilities. If groups have rights, then groups also have responsibilities; and, therein, lies one of the greatest ideological challenges of our modern age.

Individualists are champions of *individual* rights. Therefore, they endorse the principle of *individual* responsibility, not group responsibility. They believe we should provide, first for ourselves and our family, and then for others who are in need. That does not mean we don't believe in helping each other. Because I am an individualist does not mean I have to move my piano alone. It just means that moving it is my responsibility, not someone else's, and it's up to me to organize the *voluntary* assistance of others. That is the difference between **collective action** and **collectivism**. Collective action is built upon voluntary participation. Collectivism is based upon compulsion.

Collectivists declare that individuals are not responsible for charity, raising their own children, providing for aging parents, or even for themselves. These are group obligations of the state. Individualists expect to do it themselves; collectivists want the government to do it for them: to provide employment and health care, a minimum wage, food, education, and a decent place to live. They are enamored by government. They worship

¹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. II (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1945), pp. 290 - 91, 318 - 19.

government. They have a fixation on government as the ultimate mechanism to solve all problems.

Individualists do not share that faith. They see government as the creator of more problems than it solves. They believe that freedom of choice will lead to the best solution of social and economic problems. Millions of ideas and efforts, each subject to trial and error and competition – in which the best solution becomes obvious by comparing its results to all others – that process will produce results that are far superior to what can be achieved by a group of politicians or committees of so-called wise men.

By contrast, collectivists do not trust freedom. They are afraid of freedom. They are convinced that freedom may be all right in small matters such as what color socks you want to wear, but when it come to the important issues such as the money supply, banking practices, investments, insurance programs, health care, education, and so on, freedom will not work. These things, they say, simply must be controlled by the government. Otherwise, there would be chaos.

There are two reasons for the popularity of that concept. One is that most of us have been educated in government schools, and that's what we were taught. The other reason is that government is the one group that can legally force everyone to participate. It has the power of taxation, backed by jails and the force of arms to compel everyone to fall in line, and that is a very appealing concept to the intellectual who pictures himself as a social engineer.

Collectivists say, "We must force people to do what we think they should do, because they are too dumb to do it on their own. We, on the other hand, have been to school. We've read books. We are informed. We are smarter than those people out there. If we leave it to them, they are going to make terrible mistakes. So, it is up to us, the enlightened ones. We shall decide on behalf of society, and we shall enforce our decisions by law so no one has any choice. That we should rule in this fashion is our obligation to mankind."

Individualists say, "We also think we are right and that the masses seldom do what we think they should do, but we don't believe in forcing anyone to comply with our will because, if we grant that principle, then others, representing larger groups than our own, could compel *us* to act as *they* decree, and that would be the end of our freedom."

The affinity between intellectual egotism and coercion was dramatically demonstrated by Canadian law professor, Alan Young, who wrote an editorial in the March 28, 2004, edition of the *Toronto Star*. His topic was “hate crimes,” and his solution was a classic example of the collectivist mindset. He wrote:

The defining feature of the hate criminal is stupidity. It is a crime born of intellectual deficiency.... Criminal justice actually can do very little to combat stupidity.... The hate criminal probably needs rigorous deprogramming....

Just as some cancers require invasive surgery, the hate crime needs intrusive measures... The usual out-of-site, out-of-mind approach to modern punishment just won't work in this case. For crimes of supreme stupidity, we need *Clockwork Orange* justice – strapping the hate criminal into a chair for an interminable period, and keeping his eyes wide-open with metal clamps so he cannot escape from an onslaught of cinematic imagery carefully designed to break his neurotic attachment to self-induced intellectual impairment.

In the context of hate crime, I do have some regrets that we have a constitutional prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment.¹

One of the quickest ways to spot a collectivist is to see how he reacts to public problems. No matter what bothers him in his daily routine – whether it's littering the highway, smoking in public, dressing indecently, bigotry, sending out junk mail – you name it, his immediate response is “There ought to be a law!” And, of course, the professionals in government who make a living from coercion are more than happy to cooperate. The consequence is that government just keeps growing. It's a one-way street. Every year there are more laws and less freedom. Each law by itself seems relatively benign, justified by some convenience or the greater good of the greater number, but the process continues *forever* until government is total and freedom is dead. Bit-by-bit, the people themselves become the solicitor of their own enslavement.

THE ROBIN HOOD SYNDROME

A good example of this collectivist mindset is the use of government to perform acts of charity. Most people believe that we all have a

¹ “Hate Criminal Needs Deprogramming,” by Alan Young, *Toronto Star*, March 28, 2004, p. F7.

responsibility to help others in need if we can, but what about those who disagree, those who couldn't care less about the needs of others? Should they be allowed to be selfish while we are so generous? The collectivist sees people like that as justification for the use of coercion because the cause is worthy. He sees himself as a modern Robin Hood, stealing from the rich but giving to the poor. Of course, not all of it gets to the poor. After all, Robin and his men have to eat and drink and be merry, and that doesn't come cheap. It takes a giant bureaucracy to administer a public charity, and the Robbing Hoods in government have become accustomed to a huge share of the loot, while the peasants – well, they're grateful for whatever they get. They don't care how much is consumed along the way. It was all stolen from someone else anyway.

The so-called charity of collectivism is a perversion of the Biblical story of the Good Samaritan who stopped along the highway to help a stranger who had been robbed and beaten. He even takes the victim to an inn and pays for his stay until he recovers. Everyone approves of such acts of compassion and charity, but what would we think if the Samaritan had pointed his sword at the next traveler and threatened to kill him if he didn't also help? If that had happened, I doubt if the story would have made it into the *Bible*; because, at that point, the Samaritan would be no different than the original robber – who also might have had a virtuous motive. For all we know, he could have claimed that he was merely providing for his family and feeding his children. Most crimes are rationalized in this fashion, but they are crimes, nevertheless. When coercion enters, charity leaves.¹

Individualists refuse to play this game. We expect everyone to be charitable, but we also believe that a person should be free *not* to be charitable if he doesn't want to be. If he prefers to give to a different charity than the one we urge on him, if he prefers to give a smaller amount than what we think he should, or if he prefers not to give at all, we believe that we have no right to force him to our will. We may try to persuade him to do so; we may appeal to his conscience; and especially we may show the way by our own good example; but we reject any attempt to gang up on him, either by physically restraining him while we remove the money from his pockets or by using the ballot box to pass laws that will take his money

¹ Let's be clear on this. If we or our families really were starving, most of us would steal if that were the only way to obtain food. It would be motivated by our intrinsic right to life, but let's not call it virtuous charity. It would be raw survival.

through taxation. In either case, the principle is the same. It's called stealing.

Collectivists would have you believe that individualism is merely another word for selfishness, because individualists oppose welfare and other forms of coercive re-distribution of wealth, but just the opposite is true. Individualists advocate true charity, which is the voluntary giving of their own money, while collectivists advocate the coercive giving of other people's money, which is why it is so popular.

One more example: Collectivist will say, "I think everyone should wear seatbelts. People can be hurt if they don't wear seatbelts. So, let's pass a law and require everyone to wear them. If they don't, we'll put those dummies in jail." The individualist says, "I think everyone should wear seatbelts. People can be hurt in accidents if they don't wear them, but I don't believe in forcing anyone to do so. I believe in convincing them with logic and persuasion and good example, if I can, but I also believe in freedom of choice."

One of the most popular slogans of Marxism is: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." That's the cornerstone of theoretical socialism, and it is a very appealing concept. A person hearing that slogan for the first time might say: "What's wrong with that? Isn't that the essence of charity and compassion toward those in need? What could possibly be wrong with giving according to your ability to others according to their need?" And the answer is, *nothing* is wrong with it – as far as it goes, but it is an incomplete concept. The unanswered question is *how* is this to be accomplished? Shall it be in freedom or through coercion?

I mentioned earlier that collectivists and individualists usually agree on objectives but disagree over means, and this is a classic example. The collectivist says *take* it by force of law. The individualist says *give* it through free will. The collectivist says not enough people will respond unless they are forced. The individualist says enough people will respond to achieve the task. Besides, the preservation of freedom is also important. The collectivist advocates legalized plunder in the name of a worthy cause, believing that the end justifies the means. The individualist advocates free will and true charity, believing that a worthy objective does not justify committing theft and destroying freedom.

There is a story of a Bolshevik revolutionary who was standing on a soapbox speaking to a small crowd in Times Square. After describing the

glories of socialism and communism, he said: “Come the revolution, everyone will eat peaches and cream.” A little old man at the back of the crowd yelled out: “I don’t like peaches and cream.” The Bolshevik thought about that for a moment and then replied: “Come the revolution, comrade, you *will* like peaches and cream.”

This, then, is the fourth difference between collectivism and individualism, and it is perhaps the most fundamental of them all: collectivists believe in coercion; individualists believe in freedom.

4. PRIVATE PROPERTY

[Dear reader, please be aware that this section is in progress. Some elements need to be edited, some need elaboration, and several issues need to be added or placed in a different location. Thanks for your patience.]

It is widely believed that property ownership – particularly ownership of land – was unknown to the native tribes that inhabited the North American continent when the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620. The attitude of the natives was popularized by the saying: “White man thinks he owns land, but land owns white man.”

The concept is philosophically compelling. How can people be so foolish as to think they could “own” something that has existed for eons before they were born and will continue to exist for eons after leaving their last footprint on the land they claim to own? However, this apparent absurdity quickly vanishes if we just shorten the time period. What if we are talking about years instead of eons? If we were to argue that people cannot own a piano or a house that existed for years before they were born and likely will continue to exist for years after they die, the proposition would be laughable.

There are political and ethical arguments as well. Some say that private ownership of property is illogical, unjust, and a tool for exploitation of the poor. Why should one person or a small group of people have exclusive use of anything they didn’t create? Why shouldn’t it be used for the benefit of all? It’s unjust, they say, because it allows those with wealth to enjoy the fruits of nature and the luxuries of production while other humans, who are not so fortunate, live in squalor. It exploits the poor, they say, because it allows owners of business enterprises to unfairly profit from the labor of those who do most of the work. It’s a cause of environmental pollution, they say, because corporations dump toxic waste into and air,

ground, and water, and scar the earth with massive holes and man-made canyons. None of this would happen, they say, if resources were owned and managed by the state on behalf of everyone.

These are powerful arguments primarily because there is so much evidence to prove the existence of the evils described. However, as will be shown in the following narrative, although the evils really exist, the solutions offered by collectivists are merely more of what created those evils in the first place.

The abolition of private property is the mantra of collectivism. It was memorialized by Karl Marx in *The Communist Manifesto*. After bemoaning the sad plight of the working class (the Proletariat) compared to the middle class (the Bourgeoisie) he wrote: “In the conditions of the proletariat, those of old society at large are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without property....” Then, elsewhere in *The Manifesto*, he wrote: “The theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.”

There you have it. The great theoretician of Communism declares that one of the most egregious injustices of the system at that time was that the working class had no property. His solution, however, was not to get property to those who don't have it but to take it away from those that do! It makes you wonder if Marxists actually read their own literature.

No matter whether it is Communism, Socialism, Fascism, Nazism, or any other variant, all the high priests of collectivism are in agreement that private property must be replaced by so-called public property under the direction of benevolent administrators for the good of all. This view was expressed eloquently by George Counts, Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, in his 1932 book, *Dare the School Build a New Social Order*:

If property rights are to be diffused in industrial society, natural resources and all-important forms of capital will have to be collectively owned. ... This clearly means that, if democracy is to survive in the United States, it must abandon its individualistic affiliations in the sphere of economics. ... Within these limits, as I see it, our democratic tradition must of necessity evolve and gradually assume an essentially collectivistic pattern. ...

The important point is that fundamental changes in the economic system are imperative. Whatever service historic capitalism may have rendered in the past, and they have been many, its days are numbered. With its dedication to the principles of selfishness, its exaltation of the profit motive, its reliance on the forces of competition, and its placing of property above human rights, it will either have to be displaced altogether or changed so radically in form and spirit that its identity will become completely lost.¹

At the time he wrote this, Professor Counts was on the payroll of the Carnegie Foundation. The Foundation hired him, and numerous other academics, for the specific purpose of changing the course of education in America. The task was to undermine the concept of private property and promote the concept of collective ownership as the wave of the future.

If it seems strange that men who hold vast stores of property, like Andrew Carnegie, would want to eliminate private property, it is because that assumption is incomplete. It is missing part of the equation. The rest of it is that they intend to *continue* holding their property – and much more – not necessarily in their own names, but in the name of some tax-exempt foundation, which they control, or in the name of “the people”. In other words, the future rulers of the collective are planning to own *everything*.

It may seem contradictory for me to say that the mantra of collectivism is that no one should own anything as significant as land or water or the means of production and then say that the ruling elite of collectivists want to own everything. The contradiction vanishes, however, once we understand the meaning of ownership. What does it mean when we say that we own something? Does it mean we have a right to use it, exchange it, give it, or destroy it? Is it necessary that we create it, purchase it, or receive it as a gift? Is it necessary that we possess a piece of paper declaring that we are the owner?

The dictionary says that any of these tests may be used, depending on the purpose or occasion of property possession. There is, however, one fundamental characteristic that is common to them all. The basic test of ownership is *control*.

If you own a car but are not allowed to drive it (because you don't have a license) or are not allowed to sell it (because you failed to properly

¹ Counts, George S., *Dare The School Build A New Social Order* (New York: John Day Co., 1932) p. 42.

register it with the state), what's the benefit of a piece of paper that says you own the car? On the other hand, if you do not have a pink slip (let's say the car is provided by your employer) and you are allowed to drive it anytime you wish and you don't have to pay for maintenance, gasoline, or insurance, who needs such a silly thing as a certificate of ownership?

Those who have access to automobiles, planes, estates, and expense accounts from corporations and governments are in a similar position. They may not be the legal owners of these assets, but they are the *de facto* owners because they have access to and control over them. That is the manner in which the elite intend to own everything of importance.

TWO TYPES OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

It is generally accepted that individuals are justified in using force against others to defend their lives and liberty. Therefore, they can delegate that power to the state to create laws on their behalf, but what about property? Is that on the same level of importance as life and liberty?

This cannot be answered unless we acknowledge that there are two types of property: (1) Essential and (2) Convenience. Essential property is essential to the protection of lives and liberty, such as food, water, shelter, utility clothing, tools for one's livelihood, weapons for one's defense against predators, savings in whatever form we choose, such as cash, bank account balances, precious metals, real estate, art, antiques, business inventories, and so on. Regardless of their form, they are a hedge against being dependent on others when that rainy day arrives. In this context, we are justified in using force against our neighbors should they attempt to steal or destroy these nest eggs, so we also are justified in calling for laws (legalized use of force) to help us in this regard.

Convenience property is different. No one is justified in using extreme force, including lethal force, against someone who is attempting to steal a pencil. That's because the loss of pencil does not normally threaten our lives or liberty. They are convenient but not essential. Naturally, there will be gray areas where something very mundane for most people is a matter of great importance to someone else's survival, and the crossover point is not always clear, but that's why we have courts, judges, and juries. Resolving such gray-area issues is a legitimate function of the state. Fortunately, the really big issues in our lives are not gray, and the underlying principles are black-and-white clear.

The Creed of Freedom justifies laws to protect Essential property but not Convenience property. However, petty theft and disregard for the privacy and health of others does not have to be tolerated in passive silence. There still remains the power of public disapproval and scorn. For example, those proven to be guilty of a second or third offense against Convenience property might find that their names and records of court-convictions are published in local news sources. This is something that any citizen would have the right to do and, therefore, if there is strong enough public demand, it would be consistent with *The Creed of Freedom* to enact laws to activate such measures.

THE SOURCE OF PROSPERITY AND FREEDOM

Throughout history, the degree to which nations and cultures enjoyed prosperity and freedom is closely aligned to the degree to which the concept of private property was embedded into their legal codes, and there are at least five good reasons for that.

1. **The desire for private property is an instinct found in all higher life forms.** It is associated with mating and procreation rituals but also enhances security against famine and predators. This second aspect is important, because it reveals that this instinct is strongly related to Essential property.
2. Collectivists say there is no such thing as social instinct and that all human responses are the result of cultural and environmental influences. This is a necessary premise for them, because they seek to *change* the nature of man through scientific method to make him passive, obedient, non-competitive, and non-possessive. In contrast, individualists seek to *channel* the nature of man – assertive, disobedient, competitive, and possessive as he is – into peaceful and constructive endeavors. Robert Ardrey, in his book, *The Territorial Imperative*, summarizes:

If we behave as we do in our attachment for property because we have been taught to, because our culture and our social mechanisms demand it of us, then we deal with nothing fundamental. What is learned may be unlearned, and we may assume that man will adjust himself to collective existence or to the lonely crowd. But if, in sharp contrast, we deal with an innate behavior pattern, an open instinct, an inward biological

demand... then we deal with the changeless. And we hold in our hand a secret key; if lost, it will have locked and starved and frustrated a vital portion of our nature, but if used, it may open human potentials which today we cannot glimpse.¹

3. **Private property is an incentive for production.** The hope of acquiring private property (including money, which is merely a *form* of property) is an incentive for people to work harder and longer than they would be willing to do if their only reward is access to basic necessities – especially if those necessities are provided whether they work or not. It also is an incentive for investing in business ventures that seek profit by producing goods and services. If it were not possible to be rewarded for the risk of losing one’s investments in these ventures, including the investment of time and effort, no one would invest, and production of goods and services would sharply decline – except by government decree and forced labor. Private property, therefore, is essential for optimum productivity and the material support of mankind.

Incidentally, we must not denigrate the material component of society or undervalue the importance of comfortable living standards. Intellectual pursuits are possible only in societies where philosophers, artists, authors, and theologians are affluent enough to have time for more than mere survival. Intellectuals live on the surplus of material assets produced by others.

4. **Private property is fair.** It is an impartial judge that dispenses rewards to those who are good stewards of Earth’s resources and punishes those who abuse them.

That statement appears to be counter-intuitive when we consider such things as deforestation, strip mining, soil depletion, and pollution of air and water, all of which we see resulting from the operations of privately owned corporations. It is tempting to conclude that, if these industries were owned by the state, instead of privately owned, those repugnant effects would disappear.

It is true that private businesses often are bad stewards of natural resources, but it also is true that governments are no better – if not

¹ Robert Ardrey, *The Territorial Imperative; A Personal Inquiry into the Animal Origins of Property and Nations* (New York: Atheneum, 1966), p. 103.

worse. One of the most dramatic examples of this is the contrast between lumbering practices of companies that own their own timberland compared to the U.S. National Forest Service. In the 1960s, I personally witnessed lumber operations in Oregon and found that it was easy to spot which acreage had been cut by private companies *vs.* the Forest Service.

Privately owned timberland had seeder trees – healthy, mature specimens – every 500 feet or so to generate new growth. Gouges in the soil from dragging logs to staging areas were filled and packed to minimize erosion. In many cases, seedlings were planted by hand by the thousands to hasten reforestation.

Federal land, by comparison, usually had no trees left standing unless they were snags (dead or near dead), which were of no value as timber. It was common knowledge among loggers that the Feds were not as concerned about the forests as they were about maximizing their budgets. Whereas those greedy corporations must replant their forests to guarantee future profits, the selfless administrators of public lands know that forests or not, their future income is assured – from taxes. Present production is all that matters, because that enlarges their budgets, with promotions and bonuses flowing from that.

This same pattern exists in most areas of environmental impact on natural resources. The only time private corporations are likely to ignore the consequences of their operations is if they are working on land they do not own – in other words, public land. If the land is leased from the government, or if the companies are contracted by the government to do the work, they have no direct interest in conservation. However, if operations are on their own land, it is in their self-interest to protect and preserve resources as much as possible.

On a smaller scale, this same phenomenon can be seen in every neighborhood with a mixture of owned homes and rentals. Where residents are owners (or buyers), it is customary for houses and yards to be maintained. Rental units, by comparison, often are poorly maintained and severely damaged by the occupants. There is no mystery to this. With private property, owner-occupants are justly rewarded by a higher property value for being good stewards of the resources they control. Likewise, if they abuse their own property,

they are justly punished by having the monetary value of their property decline. In this manner, self interest becomes a force for good.

Polluting the environment with industrial waste is another matter. It is not related to private ownership of property, because no one owns the air or the bodies of water that are polluted. The fact that they are *not* privately owned is one of the reasons polluters are unconcerned about the consequences. They have no skin in the game, so to speak. Homeowners with plumbing attached to a septic tank or with sewer lines they must maintain are very careful about what gets flushed but they may not give the matter a second thought in public restrooms. Pollution is not a consequence of private property but of public property.

Since the proper function of the state is to protect the lives, liberty, and property of its citizens, it follows that the state has an obligation to regulate anything that would endanger health, which is a condition of life. However, here is another gap between theory and reality. It is common for companies to lobby legislators for exemptions to anti-pollution laws. (Does fracking come to mind?) Corporate executives receive appointments to head up the very government agencies that regulate the executives' former employers. Governments use the excuse of controlling pollution to justify regulations that have entirely different goals, such as raising revenue through taxes and fines, giving an economic advantage to one industry over another, or controlling the living patterns of the population. It is beyond naïve to think that governments are reliable guardians of the environment.

Private property is a prerequisite for independence and freedom. Without private property (including money, which is a *form* of property) we cannot obtain the necessities of life. In that state of helplessness, we become dependent on others to take care of our needs. Whether they are family members, friends, corporations, benefactors, or governments, whoever provides these things will have authority over us. If we have no property, then we *are* property.

That is why every variant of collectivism, including Communism, Fascism, Socialism, Technocracy, etc., demands the abolition of private property. Those without property must depend on

others for survival, and those who depend on the state must serve the state. That's a central theme at the World Economic Forum under the tutelage of Clause Schwab. Schwab is a technocrat, of course, which means he also is a raving collectivist. The very foundation of The Great Reset that he advocates is his absurd proclamation that "You will own nothing, and you will be happy."

5. **Private property is a human right.** Contrary to the theories of Professor Counts, property can never be placed above human rights, because property rights *are* human rights. The right to personal property is one of the most fundamental rights of all, because property, in all forms, is what allows us to be independent, secure, and free. The ramifications of this understanding are profound. Human rights are not subject to taxation. It would be absurd to advocate that freedom of speech, for example, should be taxed. If it were to be taxed, then it would be merely a privilege granted and regulated by the state. It would not be a right and it would not be free. Why, then, do accept the same absurdity without question when it is applied to property. When we accept the premise that the state can justly tax and regulate property, we are stupidly accepting the premise that property is not a right but a privilege. When the public eventually wakes up to this reality, we will see the largest tax revolt in history.

In summary, the human instinct for private property is a positive force because it provides an incentive for production, which is necessary for the material support of mankind. It justly rewards those who use resources wisely and punishes those who abuse them. Those without property must depend on others for survival, and those who depend on the state must serve the state. Therefore, private property is a human right, essential for prosperity, justice, and freedom.

5. MONEY WITHOUT COERCION

[>>>> **Dear reader**, please be aware that this section has yet to be taken beyond the first draft. The basic theme is that money is too important to be trusted to political control. The free market is the only mechanism capable of producing a monetary system that does not cheat the common man. Aside from making sure that contracts are honored, and that users of dishonest weights and measures are punished, the forces of supply and demand will, in the long run, allow consumer preferences to determine the best money.

Legal-tender laws are the means by which banks and politicians force people to use their bank fiat money. Get rid of legal-tender laws and let the people decide.]

In summary, I believe in freedom to accept or reject any currency, or other forms of money, based entirely upon my personal judgment of its value, because a monopoly over the issuance of money and the power to force others to accept it leads to corruption, inflation, and legalized plunder.

6. EQUALITY VS. INEQUALITY UNDER LAW

The sixth concept that divides collectivism from individualism has to do with the way people are treated under the law. Individualists believe that no two people are exactly alike, and each one is superior or inferior to others in many ways but, *under law*, they should all be treated equally. Collectivists believe that the law should treat people *unequally* in order to bring about desirable changes in society. They view the world as tragically imperfect. They see poverty, suffering and injustice and they conclude that something must be done to alter the forces that produce these effects. They think of themselves as social engineers who have the wisdom to restructure society to a more humane and logical order. To do this, they must intervene in the affairs of men at all levels and redirect their activities according to a master plan. That means they must redistribute wealth and use the police power of the state to enforce prescribed behavior.

The consequence of this mindset can be seen everywhere in society today. Almost every country in the world has a tax system designed to treat people unequally depending on their income, their marital status, the number of children they have, their age, and the type of investments they may have. The purpose of this arrangement is to override the decisions of a free market and to redistribute wealth, which means to favor some classes over others. In some cases, there are bizarre loopholes written into the tax laws just to favor one corporation or one politically influential group. Other laws provide tax-exemption and subsidies to favored groups or corporations. Inequality is the whole purpose of these laws.

In the realm of social relationships, there are laws to establish racial quotas, gender quotas, affirmative-action initiatives, and to prohibit expressions of opinion that may be objectionable to some group or to the master planners. In all of these measures, there is an unequal application of the law based on what group or class you happen to be in or on what

opinion you hold. We are told that all of this is necessary to accomplish a desirable change in society. Yet, after more than a hundred years of social engineering, there is not one place on the globe where collectivists can point with pride and show where their master plan has worked as they predicted. There have been many books written about a collectivist utopia, but the glorious vision never materialized in the real world. Wherever collectivism has been applied, the results have been more poverty than before, more suffering than before, and certainly more injustice than before.

There is a better way. Individualism is based on the premise that all citizens should be equal under law regardless of their national origin, race, religion, gender, education, economic status, lifestyle, or political opinion. No class should be given preferential treatment, regardless of the merit or popularity of its cause. To favor one class over another is not equality under law.

7. THE GREAT LEADER

One of the most perplexing conundrums in political theory is how to construct a system that protects the freedom of its citizens when those same citizens, including those struggling for freedom, are attracted by the idea of a Great Leader. How can we avoid state intervention in our personal lives when we expect the state to create jobs, provide food, housing, education, and health care, and give smart phones to the poor? As stated in *The Creed of Freedom*, the dilemma is this: “If the state is powerful enough to give us everything we want, it also will be powerful enough to take from us everything we have.”

Collectivist politicians promise sweeping changes and bountiful benefits because they operate on the principle of winner-take-all. They believe that winning the election gives them the right to do anything they wish and the power to force those who did not vote for them to pay for it. The majority rules, they say. That’s democracy, right?

Individualists are prohibited by their ideology from playing that game. I often have mused over what I would say if I were a presidential candidate. It might sound something like this:

My fellow citizens, if I am elected President, on the first day of office, I will issue a personal letter to all officials, appointees, and employees of the federal government, with copies to all news services within the United States, reminding them of the actions and policies I

advocated during my campaign. I will explain that my principles do not allow me to redistribute wealth even if it is authorized by law because, in my view, legal plunder is just as unethical as illegal plunder. Therefore, none of the proposals I advocated during my campaign include the principle of plunder.

In my letter, I will remind everyone, that the President of the United States is not a king or emperor. Like the president of a corporation who must follow the wishes of a board of directors, chief executives of representative governments are merely administrators of the policies given to them by their legislatures. Presidents have no proper authority beyond that. Therefore, I would remind them that most of the proposals I advocated during my campaign cannot be initiated by me. They must come from Congress.

Next, I would list what those proposals are, explain why I think they should be accepted, and urge Congress to convert them into law.

One of the proposals on my list would be a recommendation to restore the original method of selecting Presidents, which was done by the legislative bodies of the states. This would put an end to the political circuses of national presidential campaigns and would be in alignment with the fact that Presidents are not chosen by a direct vote of the people even today. It may come as a surprise to many, but US Presidents are elected by a relatively small group of people called the Electoral College, not by voters at large. It may come as even a greater surprise to learn that there are excellent reasons for that, most of which relate to protecting the minority against the greed and passion of the majority.¹

Finally, I would advise everyone that, although I am obligated by my office of President to carry out the wishes of Congress, I will refuse to do so if, in my personal judgment, Congress is asking me to violate the Constitution, which I will have taken an oath to protect and defend. That will leave Congress with the option of yielding to my judgment or removing me from office by the constitutional process of impeachment. As long as I hold office, however, I shall remain true to my convictions and principles.

¹ An excellent overview of this topic is “Why We Use Electoral College, Not Popular Vote” by Jarrett Stepman, The Daily Signal, Nov. 7, 2016, <http://dailysignal.com/2016/11/07/why-the-founders-created-the-electoral-college/>

Needless to say, with a stance like that, my chances of becoming President of the United States are pretty slim. Not only would I be of no interest to those expecting a free lunch, but even many of those who agree with my proposals would be looking for a Great Leader who has the “strength and courage” to break the rules, if necessary, to achieve our goals.

The concept of a Great Leader is not unique to collectivist systems. It is a major feature of all totalitarian states. Absolute monarchies, theocracies, and every other form of unabashed dictatorship have this feature as evidenced by huge billboard-photos of the nation’s Great Leader seen on city streets in every country in the world where freedom languishes.

TECHNOCRACY

But wait! The story does not end there. Now we are told there is a new phenomenon called technocracy that threatens to cause the Great Leader to become extinct, at least at the global level. One of the world’s leading technocrats, Parag Khanna, says:

We are building the global society without a global leader.

Global order is no longer something that can be dictated or controlled from the top down. Globalization itself is the order.¹

Technocracy is a system of governance where decision-makers are selected based on their scientific knowledge instead of political popularity. William Henry Smyth, a Californian engineer, is credited with inventing the word in 1919 to describe a social system that is ruled by scientists and engineers. In the 1930s, the concept became a thriving movement in the United States led by Howard Scott, although Scott insisted that his movement was independent of anything Smythe had done.

Both Smyth and Scott had a knowledge of history, an understanding of human nature, and a contempt for traditional political and economic systems. They were neither right nor left, neither management nor working class, neither nationalists nor internationalists. They were not interested in reforming society and had no interest in politics. Their unspoken motto was: “Fie on all your houses.” Naturally, this was attractive to people who were fed up with stupidity and corruption in high places.

¹ Parag Khanna, *Connectography, Mapping the Future of Global Civilization* (New York: Random House, 2016), p. 118, 281, or 319 -check to confirm which pages

That was what might be called the negative attraction, but the positive attraction was technocracy, itself, which was – and still is – offered as something new, something entirely different from anything the world has ever seen before, and something that will finally bring most of the world’s woes to an end.

A serious examination of technocracy literature, however, quickly reveals that technocracy is merely a new variant of collectivism. The thing that is new is the theory that scientists and engineers are the only ones who can be trusted to direct society. History has proved, they say, that politicians and bankers and corporate executives and especially the common man are all incapable of even running their own lives much less running the economy, planning the creation and distribution of goods, or determining the future allocation of energy and natural resources.

The solution, they say, is to replace existing social and political structures – and even geographical boundaries – with new control mechanisms. To sell this idea, they speak of the limitations and evils of the present system, the importance of freedom, and the need to protect privacy, property, and human dignity. This, however, is merely bait to encourage us to look favorably upon their proposals. Read their statements carefully and you will see that these assurances are conditional, not absolute. Freedom, privacy, human dignity, personal property, and all the things necessary for human fulfillment and contentment are allowed in their system only so long as they do not interfere with the master plan devised by the ruling elite. They call it the “purpose” of society. In other words, this is no different than all other forms of collectivism except that the master planners are so-called scientists and AI programmers instead of politicians. Rather than speaking of social justice and government benefits, they speak of production and allocation of goods, leisure, and living standards.

William Smyth published a series of essays in 1920 and 1921 entitled *Technocracy*, which appeared in the *Gazette* located in Berkeley, California. The following excerpts are taken from that series: ¹

A Human Society or Nation is sanely designed and rationally organized on correct principles only when it has a Purpose.... a purpose based upon peace and rational Human Development; a

¹ “Technocracy, Part I, Human Instincts in Reconstruction. An Analysis of Urges and a Suggestion for Their Direction”, by William Henry Smyth, *Gazette*, 1920, 1921, <https://archive.org/details/technocracyfirst00smyt/page/n5>.

purpose as inspiring and unifying as War for Democracy, and as high as our highest Ideal of Life.

[For this, we need] a Supreme National Council of Scientists – Supreme over all other National Institutions – to advise and instruct us how best to Live and how most efficiently to realize our Individual and our National Purpose and Ideals. But, First and Last, a unifying National Objective.... [For this, we need] Natural ownership based on making conventions that legalize taking, ...[and] the proposition that the ill-haps of unavoidable social hazards and the chance-favors of good fortune should be shared equally by all. ... [We need] rational human initiative and development with the aid of all the resources of the Nation, coordinated for the commonweal under the management of Scientific Leadership to accomplish a consensus National Objective.

In the following except, we can see how pledges of respect for basic human rights are meaningless when they are made secondary to the master plan:

The main purpose of “Society” is to facilitate the economic production and the efficient distribution of food, clothing, housing, etc., to each of its human units without fictitious (privilege), distinction, and in such was as to affect the greatest physical well being of the individual members. But, ... a rational social organization – in order to be consistent with Evolutionary Progress and with Human Nature – must unite the conscious wills of its members in ‘upward’ ever expanding and consciously perceived rational purpose. Does it not seem obvious that the only form of national organization which is enduring and “humanly” desirable is one in which self-conscious, and other-consciousness, individuality and mutuality, are inter-adjusted and work harmoniously for the spiritually worth-while purposes of the Nation?

In an essay entitled Social Universals, Smyth was quite specific about the nature of technocracy. If you have read Hitler’s *Mein Kamp*, you will recognize the concepts and almost identical phrasing. Smyth wrote:

The main function of society is to oppose its combined effectiveness to every natural and artificial condition which tends to hamper the freedom of the individual in so far as the acts of the individual are consistent with the community objective. ...

The community's most valuable and vital asset are the children. Therefore, self-preservation makes it imperative that the highest intelligence and unremitting effort be expended upon their preparation for carrying forward the national objective. ...

Nature's resources are its gifts to all; they are man's inalienable environment; they are his common heritage and his common birthright. [He is talking about land and mineral deposits, such as oil and precious metals and water in your well] ...

As it is only by and through the organization of the community that the individual can socially function, it is inherently right and reasonable that the surplus product of that functioning should accrue to the community [the state] at his death.¹

The man who launched the technocracy movement in the United States was Howard Scott. When he was asked what the difference is between technocracy and communism, this was his amazing response:

Technocracy has proposed the design of almost every component of a large-scale social system. True, it would require a technological orchestration of all physical operating factors, but a technological socialization is far more reaching, more drastic and more pervasive than anything that Marx or any socialist ever thought of. ... It is well to realize here and now that Technocracy, like science, has no truth; truth is a philosophic absolute, while in Technocracy all things are relative.²

[>>>> Add another issue here relating to technocracy and AI: Include quote about future society will have no leaders. It will be science. Show that this is only smoke and mirrors. It now is being theorized that, in the future, there will be machines that are self programming, self-maintaining, and even self-replicating. That is the genesis for the idea that machines eventually will be able to replace humans, first, by being capable of doing everything humans can do and possibly, doing it better; and second, by deciding to

¹ *Ibid*, PP. 104, 105.

² "History and Purpose of Technocracy by Scott Howard, p. 17.

https://archive.org/stream/HistoryAndPurposeOfTechnocracy.howardScott/HistoryAndPurposeOfTechnocracy.howardScott.pd-2_djvu.txt

eliminate humans as bothersome pests. If I were to write a fanciful novel about this, I might tell the story of how the machines become bored and, looking for a suitable challenge to their great intelligence, decide to invent biological robots that run, not from external power sources such as generators or batteries or solar panels, but from digesting plants and lesser versions of themselves, and that these were capable of self-maintenance and self-replication. At the end of the story, we might behold something that looks amazingly like homo sapiens but even smarter than the machines. In fact, they are so smart they discover that the original masterminds who invented the machines were uncertain of the wisdom of what they were doing and secretly built in a back-door, self-destruct program but, unfortunately, the machines killed them before they could activate the program or tell anyone else about it. The story would progress eventually to the point where the re-created humans start to fiddle with creating machines that will be smarter and more capable than themselves and ... well, you can imagine how the cycle would repeat from there.

The real point of the story, however, would be that today's technocrat enthusiasts who are so enamored by AI are one thing, but the masterminds who are leading the development of it are not so stupid as to try to create something they could not control, turn off, or destroy – which means that technocracy, in practice, will always be controlled by humans.

Technocrats at the top of the pyramid are confident they will be the elite ruling class of the future even though their personal identities may not be common knowledge to the humanoids who serve them.

So the statement that the Great Leader is a feature of all collectivist systems is true, but in the age of technocracy, the Great Leader is thought to be an idea, a supreme solver of problems, an impartial arbiter of conflicts, a benign force of justice. In the minds of the true believers, it even is thought to be God. The reality, however, is that technocracy is merely another variant of collectivism. Behind the façade of “science” the Great Leader will be the highest-ranking member of the ruling council of humans who write the algorithms of the system. Behind all the scientific jargon and technical wizardry, is the inescapable mantra of collectivism: “You are being denied freedom because it's for the greater good of the greater number.”]

Summary: Leadership is a natural outgrowth of human dynamics and is essential for social order and large-scale tasks. However, there are two types of leadership. One is based on coercion and decree, found in military

organizations and totalitarian political systems. The other is based on persuasion and good example, found in voluntary organizations and free political systems. We must evaluate leaders, not only on their stated goals, but on which type of leadership they offer. Their goals may be admirable, but how they pursue those goals may be tyranny. All modern totalitarian systems have a Great Leader who claims to represent the best interests of the people but who is merely a dictator. Truly great political leaders do not follow that path.

8. PROPER ROLE OF THE STATE

When all of these factors are considered together, we come to the eight ideological division between collectivism and individualism. Collectivists believe that the proper role of the state should be positive, that the state should take the initiative in all aspects of the affairs of men, that it should be aggressive, lead, and provide. It should be the great organizer of society.

Individualists believe that the proper function of the state is negative and defensive. It is to protect, not to provide; for if the state is granted the power to provide for some, it must also be able to take from others, and once that power is granted, there are those who will seek it for their advantage. It always leads to legalized plunder and loss of freedom. If the state is powerful enough to give us everything we want, it is also powerful enough to take from us everything we have. Therefore, the proper function of the state is to protect the lives, liberty, and property of its citizens; nothing more.¹

¹ There is a third category of human action that is neither proper nor improper, neither defensive nor aggressive; activity that may be undertaken by the state for convenience – such as building roads and maintaining recreational parks – provided they are funded, not from general taxes, but by those who use them. Otherwise, some would benefit at the expense of others, and that would be coercive re-distribution of wealth. These activities would be permissible because they have a negligible impact on freedom. I am convinced they would be more efficiently run and offer better public service if owned and operated by private industry, but there is no merit in being argumentative on that question when much more burning issues are at stake. After freedom is secure, we will have the luxury to debate these finer points. Another example of an optional activity is the allocation of broadcast frequencies to radio and TV stations. Although this does not protect lives, liberty, or property, it is a matter of convenience to orderly communications. There is no threat to personal freedom so long as the authority to grant licenses is administered impartially and does not favor one class of citizens or one point of view over another. Another example of an optional government activity would be a law in Hawaii to prevent the importation of snakes. Most Hawaiians want such a law for their convenience. This is not a proper function of government because it does not protect the lives, liberty, or property of its citizens, but it is not improper either so long as it is administered so that the cost is borne equally by all. It could be argued that this is a proper function of government, because snakes could threaten domestic animals that are the property of its citizens, but that would be stretching the point. It is this kind of stretching of reason that demagogues use when they want to consolidate power. Almost any government action could be rationalized as an indirect protection of life, liberty, or property. The defense against word games of this kind is to stand firm against funding in any way that causes a shift of wealth from one group to another. That strips away the political advantage that motivates most of the collectivist schemes in the first place. Without the possibility of legalized plunder, most of the brain games will cease. Finally, when issues become murky, and it really is impossible to

THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

We hear a lot today about Right-wingers versus Left-wingers, but what do those terms really mean? For example, we are told that communists and socialists are at the extreme left, and the Nazis and Fascists are on the extreme right. Here we have the image of two powerful ideological adversaries pitted against each other, and the impression is that, somehow, they are opposites. But what is the difference? They are not opposites at all. They are the same. The insignias may be different, but when you analyze Communism and Nazism, they both embody the principles of socialism. Communists make no bones about socialism being their ideal, and the Nazi movement in Germany actually was called the National Socialist Party.

Communists believe in *International Socialism*, whereas Nazis advocate *National Socialism*. Communists promote *class* hatred and *class* conflict to motivate the loyalty and obedience of their followers, whereas the Nazis use *race* conflict and *race* hatred to accomplish the same objective. Other than that, there is no difference between Communism and Nazism. They are both the epitome of collectivism, and yet we are told they are, supposedly, at opposite ends of the spectrum!

In the United States and most European countries there is a mirage of two political parties supposedly opposing each other, one on the right and the other on the left. Yet, when we get past the party slogans and rhetoric, we find that the leaders of both parties support all the principles of collectivism that we have outlined. Indeed, they represent a right wing and a left wing, but they are two wings of the same ugly bird called collectivism. A true choice for freedom will not be found with either of them.

There's only one thing that makes sense in constructing a political spectrum and that is to put zero state control at one end of the line and 100% at the other. Now we have something we can comprehend. Those who believe in zero state control are the anarchists, and those who believe in total state control are the totalitarians. With that definition, we find that communism and Nazism are together at the same end. They are both totalitarian. Why? Because they are both based on the model of collectivism.

clearly see if an action is acceptable for government, there is always a rule of thumb that can be relied on to show the proper way: That government is best which governs least.

Communism, Nazism, Fascism, and Socialism all gravitate toward more and more state control, because that is the logical extension of their common ideology. Under collectivism, all problems are the responsibility of the state and must be solved by the state. The more problems there are, the more powerful the state must become. Once you get on that slippery slope, there is no place to stop until you reach all the way to the end of the scale, which is total state control over everything. Regardless of what name you give it, regardless of how you re-label it to make it seem new or different, *collectivism is totalitarianism*.

Actually, the straight-line concept of a political spectrum is somewhat misleading. It is really a circle. You can take that straight line with 100% state control at one end and zero at the other, bend it around, and touch the ends at the top. Now it becomes a circle because, under anarchy, where there is no state control, you have absolute rule by those with the biggest fists and the most powerful weapons. So, you jump from no state control to totalitarianism from non-state entities in a flash.

It makes no difference if those non-state entities are individual thugs, organized gangs, or corporations established to operate private security systems or armies, they can become just as oppressive as any totalitarian state.¹ State or no state, the consequences to personal liberty can be equally devastating.

Zero state control and total control meet at the top. We are really dealing with a circle, and the only logical place for us to be is somewhere in the middle of the extremes. We need social and political organization, of course. In fact, given human nature, that is inevitable and will develop spontaneously whether we want it or not. Instead of insisting that there be no state mechanism at all for social order, we should do all within our power to see that the social order we have is built on individualism, an ideology with an affinity to that part of the spectrum with the *least* possible amount of state control, instead of collectivism with an affinity to the other end of the spectrum with the *most* amount of government possible. That state is best which governs least.

¹ If you are inclined to think that a private army run by a corporation with private stockholders is the solution to this challenge, consider the Blackwater organization, a US-based private army that made headlines in 2007 when its mercenaries were found guilty in a US court for killing seventeen Iraqi civilians and injuring twenty more in Nisour Square, Baghdad. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academi>. Also Jeremy Scahill, *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army* (New York, Nation Books, 2007)

It's amazing, isn't it, how much is contained in that one little word:
collectivism.

Model	1. Barbarism	2. Theocracy	3. Collectivism			4. Individualism
Variants			Leninism	Rhodesism/Fabianism	Fascism/Nazism	
Adherents	Any advocate of rule by brute force with no pretense at ideological justification; includes anarchists	Any advocate of government to coerce citizens to accept a religion (such as Islam and early Christendom)	Marxist/Leninists, Maoists, Communists, Trotskyites, National-Liberation and Proletarian-Revolution groups	Marxist/Fabians, Royal Inst. of Internatl. Affairs, Rhodes Scholars, CFR, Trilateral Commission, Bilderbergers	Fascists and Nazis	<i>Should be</i> everyone else
Basis of morality (right vs. wrong)	Might makes right	The word of God as interpreted by those who rule	The greater good for the greater number as interpreted by rulers	The greater good for the greater number as interpreted by rulers	The greater good for the greater number as interpreted by rulers	Enlightened self-interest or the word of God as self-interpreted
Nature of rights	Man's only right is to serve the rulers	Man's only right is to serve God represented by rulers	Granted by the state; may be denied by the state	Granted by the state; may be denied by the state	Granted by the state; may be denied by the state	Intrinsic to each individual; protected by the state
Who is supreme?	The state (sovereign monarch and ruling elite)	The state (holy man and ruling elite), claiming to represent God	The state (charismatic leader and ruling elite), claiming to represent the majority	The state (charismatic leader and ruling elite), claiming to represent the majority	The state (charismatic leader and ruling elite), claiming to represent the majority	The individual, claiming to represent only himself
Desirable ends	By coercion of decree	By coercion of law	By coercion of law	By coercion of law	By coercion of law	By voluntary action
People treated	Unequally	Unequally	Unequally	Unequally	Unequally	Equally
Role of government	Subjugate and exploit for the benefit of ruling elite; no limit	Enforce God's word as interpreted by ruling elite; no limit	Anything for greater good of greater number as decided by ruling elite; no limit	Anything for greater good of greater number as decided by ruling elite; no limit	Anything for greater good of greater number as decided by ruling elite; no limit	Limited to protecting the lives, liberty and property of its citizens
Property	Privately owned but subject to confiscation by the rulers	Heavily controlled by the state; ruling elite enjoy exceptions	Owned by the state; ruling elite enjoy use	Privately owned, controlled by state; exceptions for ruling elite	Privately owned, controlled by state; exceptions for ruling elite	Privately owned with minimal state control; no exceptions
Means of production	Privately owned but subject to confiscation by the rulers	Varies with theology but subject to control by the state	Owned and controlled by the state	Privately owned, controlled by the state; ruling elite enjoy competitive advantage	Privately owned, controlled by the state; ruling elite enjoy competitive advantage	Privately owned, minimal state control, no advantage for political influence
Economic model	Plunder	Varies with theology but usually state monopoly	State monopoly	Corporate monopoly enforced by the state	Corporate monopoly enforced by the state	Free-market competition; minimal state interference
Charity	Responsibility of each individual; after plunder by rulers, little is left for charity	Varies with theology but usually required or administered by the state	Responsibility of the state, administered politically, paid by taxation	Responsibility of the state, administered politically, paid by taxation	Responsibility of the state, administered politically, paid by taxation	Responsibility of each individual, administered privately, paid voluntarily
Money	Issued by rulers with bullion backing at their discretion; usually little or no backing; causes inflation, a hidden tax	Christian theocracies did not oppose money with little or no backing; Islam adheres to 100% bullion-backed money	Issued by the state with bullion backing at its discretion; usually little or no backing; causes inflation, a hidden tax	Issued by the banks with protection of the state; usually little or no bullion backing; causes inflation, a hidden tax	Issued by the banks with protection of the state; usually little or no bullion backing; causes inflation, a hidden tax	Issued by the state, banks, or anyone else; that which is backed with bullion becomes money-of-choice; no inflation
Effect	Rulers are solvers of all important problems; totalitarian state accepted as norm; limited freedom, low productivity, scarcity	Rulers are God's agents to solve important problems; leads to totalitarian state, limited freedom, low productivity, scarcity	The state is seen as solver of all important problems; leads to political corruption, totalitarianism, low productivity, scarcity	The state is seen as solver of all important problems; leads to political corruption, totalitarianism, low productivity, scarcity	The state is seen as solver of all important problems; leads to political corruption, totalitarianism, low productivity, scarcity	The state is seen as cause of more problems than it solves; limited state power leads to freedom, high productivity, abundance
Means of expansion	Organization, training, strategy and leadership for military conquest; brutally eliminate opponents	Organization, training, strategy & leadership to win converts, create religious conflict, and prepare for military conquest; brutally eliminate opponents,	Organization, training, strategy and leadership to dominate power centers, create class conflict and internal revolution; brutally eliminate opponents,	Organization, training, strategy and leadership to dominate power centers; quietly capture government; use law and media to eliminate opponents	Organization, training, strategy and leadership to create race conflict and gain political control; military expansion; brutally eliminate opponents	No previous plan but <i>should</i> be organization, strategy, training, and leadership in power centers; replace opponents; empower freedom

INTRODUCTION TO THE CREED OF FREEDOM

There is nothing more common in history than for oppressed people to rise up against their masters and, at great cost in treasure and blood, throw off the old regime only to discover that they have replaced it with one that is just as bad or worse. That is because it is easy to know what we dislike about a political system but not so easy to agree on what would be better. For most of history, it has been the habit of the oppressed to focus on personalities rather than principles. They thought that the problem was with the people who rule, not with the system that sustains them. So, one despot was merely replaced by another in hopes that, somehow, the new one would be wiser and more benevolent.

Even if new rulers have good intentions, they may be corrupted by the temptations of power; and, in those rare cases where they are not, they eventually are replaced by others who are not as self-restrained. As long as the system allows it, it is just a matter of time before new despots rise to power.

To prevent that from happening, it is necessary to focus on the system, not personalities. However, to do that, it is just as important to know what we are *for* as it is to know what we are *against*.

Even today, with so much talk about freedom, who can define what that means? For some, it merely means not being in jail. Who can define the essence of personal liberty? Who can look you in the eye and say: “This I believe, and I believe it for this reason and this reason and this reason, also.” The world is dying for something to believe in, a statement of principles that leaves no room for misunderstanding; a creed that everyone of good faith toward their fellow human beings can accept with clarity of mind and strength of resolve. There is an old saying that, if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. *The Creed of Freedom* that you are about to read is the rock-solid ground that will allow us to stand firm against all the political nostrums of our day, and those in the future as well.

The Creed of Freedom expresses the core ideology that binds the members of Freedom Force together. It is not like the platform of a

political party that typically is a position statement on a long list of specific issues and which changes from year to year to accommodate the shifting winds of popular opinion. Instead, it is a statement of broad principles that do not change over time and that are not focused on specific issues at all. If these principles are followed, then most of the vexing political and social issues of the day can be quickly resolved in confidence that the resulting action will be consistent with justice and freedom.

Although I have authored *The Creed*, I cannot claim credit for it. Anyone familiar with the classical treatises on freedom will recognize that most of its concepts have been taken from the great thinkers and writers of the past. My role has been merely to read the literature, identify the concepts, organize them into categories, and condense them into a single page. It only took me fifty years to do it.

THE CREED OF FREEDOM

INTRINSIC NATURE OF RIGHTS

I believe that only individuals have rights, not the collective group; that these rights are intrinsic to each individual, not granted by the state; for if the state has the power to grant them, it also has the power to deny them, and that is incompatible with personal liberty.

I believe that a just state derives its power solely from its citizens. Therefore, the state must never presume to do anything beyond what individual citizens also have the right to do. Otherwise, the state is a power unto itself and becomes the master instead of the servant of society.

SUPREMACY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

I believe that one of the greatest threats to freedom is to allow any group, no matter its numeric superiority, to deny the rights of the minority; and that one of the primary functions of a just state is to protect each individual from the greed and passion of the majority.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

I believe that desirable social and economic objectives are better achieved by voluntary action than by coercion of law. I believe that social tranquility and brotherhood are better achieved by tolerance, persuasion, and the power of good example than by coercion of law. I believe that those in need are better served by charity, which is the giving of one's own

money, than by welfare, which is the giving of other people's money through coercion of law.

PROPERTY RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

I believe that the human instinct for private property is a positive force because it provides an incentive for production, which is necessary for the material support of mankind. It justly rewards those who use resources wisely and punishes those who abuse them. Those without property must depend on others for survival, and those who depend on the state must serve the state. Therefore, private property is a human right, essential for prosperity, justice, and freedom.

MONEY WITHOUT COERCION

I believe in freedom to accept or reject any currency, or other forms of money, based entirely upon my personal judgment of its value, because a monopoly over the issuance of money and the power to force others to accept it leads to corruption, inflation, and legalized plunder.

EQUALITY UNDER LAW

I believe that all citizens should be equal under law, regardless of their national origin, race, religion, gender, education, economic status, life style, or political opinion. Likewise, no class should be given preferential treatment, regardless of the merit or popularity of its cause. To favor one class over another is not equality under law.

PROPER ROLE OF THE STATE

I believe that the proper role of the state is negative, not positive; defensive, not aggressive. It is to protect, not to provide; for if the state is granted the power to provide for some, it must also be able to take from others, and once that power is granted, there are those who will seek it for their advantage. It always leads to legalized plunder and loss of freedom. If the state is powerful enough to give us everything we want, it also will be powerful enough to take from us everything we have. Therefore, the proper function of the state is to protect the lives, liberty, and property of its citizens; nothing more. That state is best which governs least.

THE THREE COMMANDMENTS OF FREEDOM

The Creed of Freedom is based on five principles. However, in day-to-day application, they can be reduced to just three general codes of conduct. I consider them to be The Three Commandments of Freedom:

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

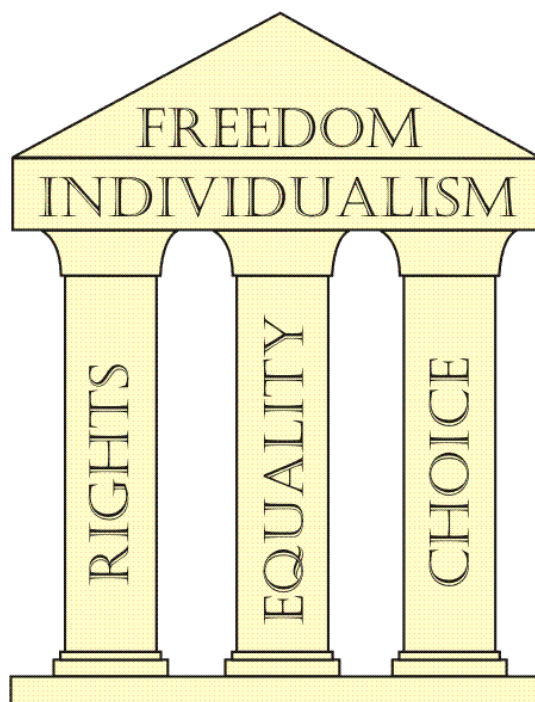
Do not sacrifice the rights of any individual or minority for the assumed rights of the group.

EQUALITY UNDER LAW

Do not endorse any law that does not apply to all citizens equally.

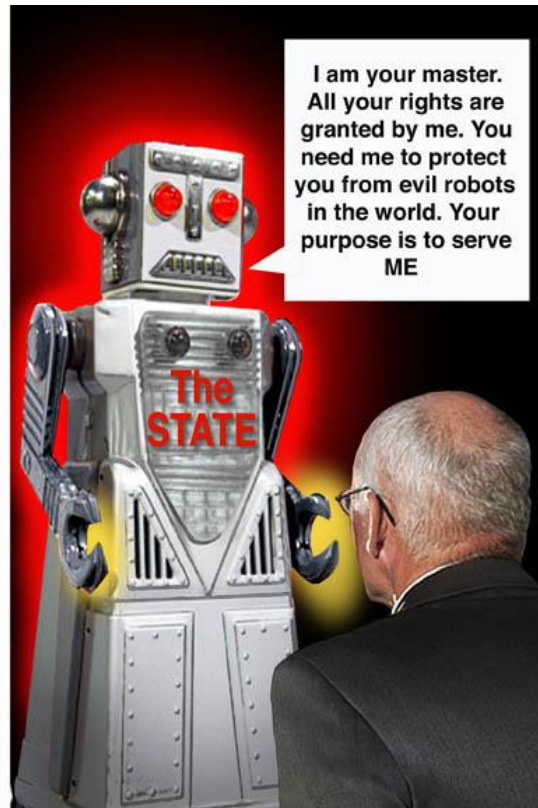
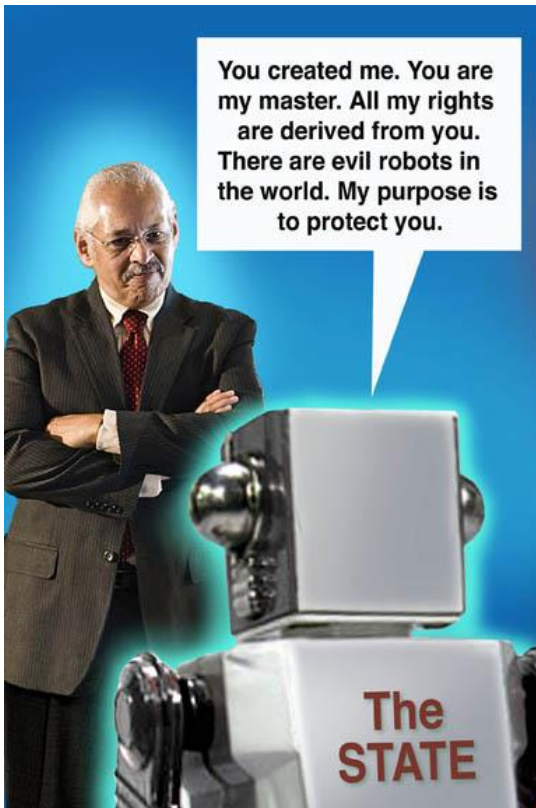
FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Do not use coercion for any purpose except to protect human life, liberty, or property.



THE THREE PILLARS OF FREEDOM

Another way of viewing these principles is to consider them as the three pillars of freedom. They are concepts that underlie the ideology of individualism, and individualism is the indispensable foundation of freedom.



Which of these robots would you want? If you choose the one on the left, you are an individualist. If on the right, you are a collectivist.



When dealing with the state, which signs would you prefer? If on the left, you are a collectivist. If on the right, you are an individualist.



Which of these signs would you prefer to see? If you choose on the left, you are an individualist. If on the right, you are a collectivist.



Which of these statements is correct? If you select the one on the left, you are a collectivist. If on the right, you are an individualist.



Which of these signs would you prefer to see? If you choose the one on the left, you are a collectivist. If on the right, you are an individualist.

OK, you are an individualist. So why have you been voting for collectivists?

Answer: You may not have realized what you believe and, more likely, you probably never questioned what your elected representatives believe. Politicians prefer to talk about issues rather than principles, the *what* rather than the *how*.

Collectivists seek political office because it gives them power over others. Individualists shy away from office because they dislike politics and prefer not to get involved with it. If freedom is to prevail, that has to change.

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