

Fawning Over a Corporation to Protect Us from Corporations

"One Voluntarist's Perspective" is an original column by the founder and editor Skyler J. Collins.

It's always struck me as extremely odd that leftists fawn over using government to protect us from corporations. What do they think the government is? The fawning is quite indicative of their ignorance in at least ten ways.

First, the government is a group of people, just like them, ie. morally weak and greedy and partial.

Second, as a group of people with a singular objective, the government is by definition a corporation, albeit one who threatens violence in the supply of its services.

Do non-governmental corporations threaten violence in the supply of their services? I've never seen that. That doesn't mean private corporations don't hurt people. Sure they do, and when such harm is made apparent, the market doles out all sorts of negative consequences (sullied reputation, lost profits, ~~crowdfunded assassinations~~).

Third, what effect does a single person have on the actions of the government? Virtually zero, mathematically speaking. The government does whatever the people in charge want to do. Not you or I. It's an extremely high standard to effect change in a positive (liberty, justice) direction. History has shown in millions of ways the disastrous results of government action.

Fourth, lobbying by corporations (for and not for profit) as a much greater effect on the future actions of the government than does voting and political activism. I've seen this personally in my home state of Utah with the results of the Libertas Institute's lobbying efforts. They've had positive (from my perspective) effects on legislation. If they have done it and can do it, so can every other corporation, especially those who are more interested in handouts and protections from the government, always at the expense of you and I.

Fifth, as a corporation, the more we lobby for the government to behave in our preferred way, the more it profits and the larger it becomes. Very strange coming from people who want to be protected from corporations.

Sixth, the market has put more corporations out of business than has the government. This is why corporations lobby, to protect themselves from market forces by appealing to the large corporation with the guns. They can't or don't want to compete for profits, so they lobby. Or, the competition lobbies, so they must lobby to stay competitive, all the

while enlarging and profiting the large corporation with the guns.

Seventh, people mistakenly believe that the morally weak, greedy, and partial individuals that comprise the government have their best interests at heart. This is both contrary to their nature (everyone's primary interest is always and everywhere themselves) and contrary to the incentives they face as a corporation who threatens violence in the supply of its services. Succeeding reduces budgets while failing increases them. Want to get paid? Join the government and help it to fail.

Eighth, every positive advance in consumer protections have come primarily from corporations chasing profits, not from the actions of the government. This has been the case all around the world as we see job safety increase as a result of industrialization and economic growth. Likewise with product safety. Again, look at the incentives. Corporations can't survive by killing or maiming their customers. The government can.

Ninth, the government operates institutions of both lower and higher education, all of which have embedded practices to shape the minds of their students toward accepting and even promoting pro-government ideas. Do you know of any other corporations that do this? Wouldn't it be strange, and maybe a bit outrageous to see compulsory schools owned by McDonald's or Walmart that teach students to adore both past and present CEOs and read only corporate approved textbooks, among other others? Why isn't it strange when the government does this?

Tenth, nobody, to my knowledge, has solved either the knowledge problem or the calculation problem in economics. The government simply doesn't have the means or the ability to know everything that needs to be known or to properly calculate the effect their policies have toward their goals. And 10 times out of 10 they fail to reach their goals.

Still believe the violent government can protect us from other, nonviolent corporations? If so, I have a bridge to sell you.