The Non-Problem of Rogue Defense Agencies

Even in today's universally statized world, prudent individuals continue to patronize private protection agencies, hire bodyguards, and otherwise increase their personal security by the use of market means. The reason for them doing this is obvious – they know all too well that they cannot rely on the "protection services" provided by coercive governmental monopolies, which are not constrained by the profit-and-loss test and thus need not care about the quality and cost-efficiency of their operations.

But if coercive governmental monopolies need not care about the quality and cost-efficiency of their operations, and thus cannot be expected to effectively intervene if a given individual's personal security is threatened, then it must be concluded that as regards the relationship between themselves and their clients, private protection agencies operate under the conditions of practical anarchy. Hence, as the critics of a private law society would have it, they should be continually aggressing against one another, as well as against their so-called clients, eventually destroying what started out as a purely voluntary industry.

However, the very fact that the market for private protection exists, and has existed since times immemorial, proves beyond any doubt that no such financially ruinous intra-industry conflicts take place. There is, after all, no reason why they should, since the existence of the market in question hinges on the fact that, unlike extra-market entities such as territorial monopolies of force, private protection agencies can survive only if they manage to maintain their professional reputation, and this they can do only if they consistently refrain from engaging in acts of initiatory aggression.

Hence, the coexistence of territorial monopolies of force and private protection agencies demonstrates that the supposed problem of rogue defense agencies under anarcho-capitalism does not look genuinely problematic when examined at least a bit more closely.