

A Crippling Lack of Imagination and Problem Solving

Here's one of those (thankfully, rare) long reply posts. Someone had a problem with me not liking socialism/government and responded with a request for answers (link). So I did what I could.

"...paint me a REALISTIC portrait of a world without government"

I'd love to, but I can no more do that than the first bully who proposed governing others could have painted the skeptics a realistic portrait of what today's world would look like *with* governments. I'm OK with not being psychic and having some unknowns.

"I do not believe that humans are designed to operate well in such environments."

And yet, we do. I don't need anyone governing me, and I seriously doubt you need anyone governing you. You know the best course for your own life... or at least many orders of magnitude better than what some bureaucrat believes is the best for you.

"Though, historically, that 'government' might have been a tribal leader, we have always had government."

Only if you believe leaders equal government. I don't. Leaders can lead without theft and aggression. If I choose to follow someone without them threatening me, I'm not being governed. If I can stop following that person without being attacked, ostracized, or murdered, then he's not governing. The difference is consent. I do not consent to be governed, but I have consented to follow someone for a specific, limited purpose several times in my life.

"[The other anarchist's] argument always seemed to boil down to 'the people' will spontaneously reward good actors and punish evil doers."

Do you continue to do business with someone who cheats you or sells you poisoned food? Or, would you go elsewhere and tell people what the bad actor did to you? Would you go do business with someone you had been warned about?

“Though the mechanism for knowing who was good (and the intrinsic generosity of The People) was never established.”

So how do you know who to v*te for if you can't know who is good? Or does that not matter in making your choice?

How do charities survive even when they have to compete with forced support of government “welfare” sucking up the available money? Even people who support welfare programs do it because they are generous; just misguided into believing they can be generous with stuff which doesn't belong to them. Sounds like evidence that people are intrinsically generous.

“Conversely, a boycott only works when you know who is actually responsible (for example, how do you know who littered their trash in front of your house?) and have the capacity to punish them (if I sell widgets to another community – you have no ability to boycott me).”

You don't have to be certain to shun someone (boycott). Because I'm not initiating force nor violating their property rights, I'm not harming them if I'm mistaken. And it is easy to change course if I discover I'm wrong about who did what.

My next door neighbors litter and throw it into my yard. I haven't actually seen them (*almost!*), but the circumstantial evidence is good enough that I shun them. I'm not harming them by shunning them.

I'm not interested in punishing anyone. Self defense and defense of property from an immediate threat, yes, but punishment after the fact. No. I'm not into revenge.

And, if a bad guy is selling his widgets in another community I will tell his potential customers in that community why I am boycotting/shunning him. After that, it is up to them. The internet is a good tool for following bad guys around. In fact, it would be better without governments getting in the way and protecting bad guys from the rightful consequences of their behavior.

“I find neither to be credible without an overarching government invested with the power to investigate and punish.”

Why do you believe only a government can do that? Why can't a voluntarily funded, ad

hoc group do what you want? If I want to investigate something, and don't feel capable of doing so myself, I will hire someone to do it for me and when the job is done I can stop paying them. I don't expect you to be on the hook in perpetuity for something I may never need. And, again, I have no interest in punishing anyone. Do what you want, but not on my behalf.

"Further, I do not find it credible that The People will willingly donate sufficient amounts to create public works such as large-scale infrastructure projects."

So you're saying those things aren't necessary. Because if they are necessary, and people don't have the option of robbing their neighbors to pay for it, they'll chip in or do without. If they are still not willing to fund it, it needs to die.

"Nor do I believe that people will factor in their own externalities (oh, yea, I polluted the river, but my portion was only a little bit, and anyway, it's a problem for those downstream)"

When those downstream can seek restitution for your portion of the damage you've caused them, you might change your mind. And, in such a society, the tools to discover who added what to a stream will improve- just because of the potential for profit.

Even in the current situation where government protects people from the real consequences of their bad behavior, I do my very best to avoid letting trash blow out of my car on a windy day (which is most days around here) just because that's not what I want to do to my surroundings. And I pick up massive amounts of litter tossed by those who are less responsible- without asking government to punish them.

"Lastly, I ask, how does this society defend itself against an organized aggressor? For example, if the US breaks up into anarchist (or extreme libertarian) communities, what stops the Canadians from taking over?"

What would the Canadians "take over" if there is no government to surrender to them? As it is, all they have to do is make the government surrender and they've taken over. They can move into the offices, use the "public" records, and easily become the new tyrant. Without a central "authority" to replace it would be much harder. You'd basically have to

get each individual to surrender, one at a time. And for what? People who are not brainwashed into paying “taxes” aren’t going to suddenly believe “taxation” is legitimate. They won’t suddenly believe and respect the counterfeit “laws” which the new ruler would try to impose. Plus, they would recognize they have a natural human right (and obligation) to kill– in defense– every government employee they encounter. The only reason people are too scared to do so now is that the “society” around them has been fooled into calling government something other than what it is.

“Surely, The People of Bozeman Montana cannot stand up to the Canadian Army. Would it be expected that other city-states would come to its aid?”

Again, I doubt they’d ever have to since there would be nothing for Canada to gain, but just hypothetically– I wouldn’t count on city-states, because we are talking about a free society, not a government-infested one. Would individuals come to their aid? Why *wouldn’t* anyone? Lots of people still sign up for the military without being forced to because they want the excitement of being allowed to shoot people (“the enemy”). I don’t expect that to change.

“What makes you think that The People of Tuscaloosa are going to stick their necks out for them?”

What makes you think none of them would? The old ads in *Soldier of Fortune* tell a different story.

“And, even banded together, they won’t have the large-scale military to develop and produce tanks and jets and whatnot.”

You think all those things will just go away? No one would collect and maintain them in the absence of government? And without a BATFE and other gangs forbidding weapon development, those big scale things might be obsolete soon anyway. In fact, I’d bet on it.

“It would be (roughly) equivalent to the US Army verse the Native Americans – sure they put up a good fight, but the outcome was inevitable.”

Except that the Natives had no concept of the types of weapons (and diseases) the army

was using against them. No way to buy or manufacture or invent. Do you think the people of Bozeman would share that disadvantage? I don't.

"Perhaps you can paint the picture better?"

I can try, but I've discovered over the years that government extremists won't listen. They want to know exactly how every detail will work out in a free society, with no doubt whatsoever. Something they can't even do in defense of their own position. What I see in every single case is an astounding lack of ability to think outside their box- lack of imagination and lack of problem-solving skills. But, occasionally I'll give it a shot, anyway. Just for kicks.

"To be sure, it would be nice to live in a world where a crazed orange man does not have access to nuclear weapons and influence over the economy."

I wouldn't want anyone having that kind of illegitimate power.

"And, sure, the government sucks at its job..."

Maybe you are mistaken as to what government sees as its job. I don't think the "job" is legitimate, but I think government does it well. Like the Mafia.

"...as Mr. Twain said, it is the worst option except for all the others."

That's the same thing everyone has said about their favorite flavor of government (if Twain actually even said it). It's a great way to make people give up on looking for a better way. *"Sure he beats you, controls you, and sometimes rapes you. He's the worst husband... except for all the others."* Yeah, that doesn't work either.

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Of course then he goes into a long dissertation about how horrible and self-centered people are, not realizing he is negating his own argument. Who does he imagine any government would be made up of? Angels or the people he hates and distrusts?

And another guy describes how nasty people are when they've been brainwashed by government, believing this shows how essential government is.

And they get upset when I doubt their intelligence...