

# Accumulation of Private Property

The following question was asked about 5 months ago on r/AskLibertarians by u/genshu\_diatribе, “Can accumulation of private property ever go too far?”. After which the following conversations occurred between myself, this same user, and another after they split the thread. Enjoy!

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**Skyler:** The state subsidizes large holdings through its monopoly on force. If large holders had to pay the entire bill for security they may not hold as much as otherwise. As there shouldn't be a state there shouldn't be any policies to prevent this kind of accumulation.

**genshu\_diatribе:** Without a state there would be even less standing in the way of property owners forming new states / monarchies.

**Skyler:** They may form whatever state they please on their own property.

**genshu\_diatribе:** So you have no issue with the US government then?

**Skyler:** Are you assuming the federal government obtained property without aggression against original owners? That's a very ahistorical assumption to make.

**genshu\_diatribе:** No, when did I do that?

**Skyler:** When you implied the US government is a legitimate property owner. It's not. It's a criminal organization.

**genshu\_diatribе:** It commands legitimacy by its ability to enforce its claims. You think there are gonna be no contested property claims in your libertarian “utopia”? Whoever has the most property and therefore power in your system will be at liberty to decide which claims are valid and which claims aren't. Which is the same as the current system.

**Skyler:** So you're going to assume “might makes right” and assume everybody else is also going to assume “might makes right”? Maybe you should ask your questions with less assumptions and more clarity.

**genshu\_diatribе:** I'm not assuming it, it's a material reality

**Skyler:** So is the federal government's ability to nuke every major city on the planet at once. But that's totally irrelevant to an analysis of the sort you were asking.

**genshu\_diatribе:** Not at all. It's in fact exactly my point. Just because you imagine

your libertarian “utopia” will only be comprised of property claims you consider legitimate, doesn’t mean it will be so. You can imagine up any kind of “dispute resolution system” you want to make your system feel more feasible, but the material reality is that philosophical discussions of legitimacy of property claims have no bearing on how things play out in reality in a “libertarian utopia”. He who amasses the most resources will have no need for any such discussions of legitimacy.

**Skylar:** You can have your point, I fail to see it’s relevance. I was never talking about reality, I was talking about theory. Obviously theory has to run up against reality at some point, nobody’s ever denied that.

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**Skylar:** Are you assuming the federal government obtained property without aggression against original owners? That’s a very ahistorical assumption to make.

**Mutant\_Llama1:** Look up the Louisiana purchase, the Alaska purchase, and the Gadsden purchase.

**Skylar:** Look them up yourself, or make an argument.

**Mutant\_Llama1:** They’re cases where the government purchased things from other entities, like other land owners do.

**Skylar:** With stolen funds (taxation, inflation)? How do other land owners do that?

**Mutant\_Llama1:** Bailouts. Should companies have to give up land they bought with government bailout and subsidy money?

**Skylar:** Yes. Obviously. They don’t really own it, since they used stolen funds to get it. Give it back to its rightful owner.

**Mutant\_Llama1:** But those funds were taken from so many people. The government doesn’t keep track of whose money goes where. The only real solution would be to open it up to new homesteaders, or have it owned in common.

**Skylar:** New homesteaders, yes. Do that, and stop taking what isn’t yours through taxation. End the injustice, first, then allow resources to allocate to their most efficient uses as determined by market forces.

**Mutant\_Llama1:** Do you want them allocated to their most efficient use, or according to market forces? Market failures happen. Capitalism favors the most “efficient” way for the rich to become richer. Any other results incidental.

**Skylar:** Everyone gets richer under capitalism. This is empirically and theoretically

indisputable.

**Mutant\_Llama1:** Indisputable as long as you don't pull up a map of the current world and point to it. People may get richer on average, but only because outliers shift the average.

**Skylar:** Look at the wealth all around you. Or bury your head in the sand. I don't care.

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The first guy moved the goal posts from theory/deontology to reality. The second guy is just confused about capitalism and its history. I believe I've had other run-ins with Mutant\_Llama1, so keep your eyes open for those.