The Destruction of Libertarian Ideology

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

A few of my ideological mentors over the years have written or spoken recently on the idea of open borders, condemning the idea as not only anti-libertarian, but also dangerous and destructive.

It pains me to think these mentors of mine as being so wrong on this question, but alas that's what they are. In fact, the argument they employ would destroy libertarian ideology completely if taken to its logical conclusion. Let me explain.

The Argument Against Open Borders

The core argument my mentors use against open borders is here summarized by Hans Hoppe:

> *What would immigration policies be like if the State would, as it is supposed to do, act as a trustee of the taxpayer-owners' public property? What about immigration if the State acted like the manager of the community property jointly owned and funded by the members of a housing association or gated community? (emphasis added)*

In other words, Hoppe, and his compatriots in this position Lew Rockwell and the late Murray Rothbard, consider it the proper role and obligation of the State to "act as trustee of the taxpayer-owners' public property," such as an HOA.

As any good trustee, the State is supposed to act on behalf of taxpayers, fulfilling their wishes as if the taxpayers were controlling the property themselves. And because taxpayers don't allow just anybody onto their private property, the state should not allow just anybody into the nation.

Ergo, closed borders are the correct position for the libertarian to take. QED.

Why its the proper role and obligation of the State to act as trustee is because, according to Hoppe, et al, the State has taken that control away from taxpayers. Personally, I fail to see why it follows that because the State is oppressing its taxpayers, it's obtained the role and obligation of trustee.

Is this true of every oppressor? The slaver? The kidnapper? The rapist? Do they all obtain the role and obligation of trustee on behalf of their victims?

That doesn't seem right to me, nor does it seem that any logic is employed to make it so.

The Conclusion of This Logic

Private property owners enforce all sorts of rules on their property. Rules such as whether or not their entrants may carry firearms, or booze, or in what language they use, such as cursing.

If the State may properly restrict immigrants from entering "taxpayer-owners' public property" on the basis that taxpayers close the borders of their private property, then the logical conclusion is that the State may properly restrict the carrying of firearms, booze, and the language used on public property on that same basis.

In fact, since private property owners may enact any rule they please with the warning, "if you don't like it, you can leave," so too can the State. As such, there is no place for libertarian ideology within the borders of the State.

Libertarianism is completely irrelevant if the State's proper role and obligation is to act as trustee of public property, because with such a role and obligation, liberty is not only rightfully absent within the borders of private property, it must also be considered rightfully absent within the borders of public property, encompassing the entire nation.

Final Thoughts

Not only do they fail to show why the State should obtain the role and obligation of trustee on behalf of their victims, but to enact all the policies, including closed borders, the State could legitimately enact on this basis is to give the State immense powers and to grow the State astronomically.

It should be obvious that this is anything but a *libertarian* solution to the supposed problem of immigration. As a matter of logical consistency, it would mean the destruction of the entirety of libertarian ideology.