

Disobedience is a Virtue

In a couple videos recently I've worn my new shirt, from "Principled Propaganda" which says, "*disobedience is the true foundation of liberty.*" It makes for a catchy slogan, but it also happens to be a profound truth.

Consider the situation from the viewpoint of a tyrant. If his subjects are constantly bitching and moaning, saying nasty things about him, saying how they want someone else in charge, etc., while they all continue to obey his commands—complying with his "laws" and paying his "taxes"—and even condemning any who *don't* obey his commands as nasty "criminals"—then the tyrant knows his power is secure, and he has nothing to fear. There is a world of difference between, on the one hand, someone who complains about what the rulers are doing today, while continuing to believe that there need to be rulers, over him and over everyone else, and, on the other hand, someone who knows that there is no such thing, and can be no such thing, as a legitimate ruler. Only the latter poses any real threat to those in power.

Even some anarchists and voluntaryists don't quite seem to grasp the difference, especially those who are still trying to use the political process to achieve freedom. What all such action implies, even if this is accidental, is that we mere peasants cannot be free, and should not be free, unless and until we can get some "elected officials" on the throne who will give us their legislative *permission* to be free. Voting and petitioning merely reinforces the idea that it is up to the ruling class whether we are *allowed* to be free or not. The two giant problems with this are: 1) those who seek positions of "authority" have never, and will never, give permission to the peasants to not be ruled, and; 2) If you think you need someone else's *permission* to be free, you are already a slave inside your own head.

Even among some who intellectually and philosophically understand the concepts of self-ownership, non-aggression and voluntaryism, there can still be a strong residual psychological instinct to obey perceived "authorities." I admit to feeling that for a long time myself, years after becoming an anarchist, even when I already knew how insane and destructive that impulse is. Most of us, by way of the same general structure used in the Prussian "education" system, have undergone prolonged and intensive psychological indoctrination which was specifically *designed* to train us to bow to and obey supposed "authorities." If you want an eye-opening, stomach-churning example of just how well such indoctrination works, read *Obedience to Authority* by Dr. Stanley Milgram.

And even when our rational mind knows something to be true, our habits, instincts, fears,

familiar patterns of thought, and trained-in Pavlovian responses can take a long time to outgrow. When we spent most of our formative years being bombarded with the message—from parents, teachers, the media, agents of the state, etc.—that obedience is a virtue and disobedience is a sin, we “learn” that lie at a very deep psychological level, way beyond merely an intellectual understanding. As a result, it can take a long time for such a lie to be thoroughly rooted out.

I will leave you with an important yet depressing example. Look how many proud Americans, while rejoicing in their supposed “freedom,” continue to clamor and beg the political elite to grant their holy permission for the slave class to please be robbed a little less, by begging for “tax cuts.” What a pathetic spectacle it is to watch tens of millions of armed human beings begging a handful of crooks in Washington to please *let* the rest of us keep more of what we produce. Meanwhile, if a tenth of those people had the mental and psychological fortitude to simply **disobey**, the IRS would very quickly be history.

And yet, of all those proud Muricans who rant and rave, “demanding” that Congress do this or that (using “demands” which are backed by nothing, and so are not demands at all), the vast majority continue to firmly believe that they have a moral obligation to pay tribute to the ruling class via “taxes,” and to obey their every ridiculous legislative decree. They are nothing more than slaves begging their masters for mercy, while continuing to serve him whether he shows mercy or not. Some of the terminology may have changed, but the mind control and indoctrination is the same as it ever was.

*“To make a contented slave, you must make a thoughtless one. It is necessary to darken his moral and mental vision, and, as far as possible, to annihilate his power of reason. He must be able to detect no inconsistencies in slavery. **The man that takes his earnings, must be able to convince him that he has a perfect right to do so.** It must not depend upon mere force; the slave must know no Higher Law than his master’s will. The whole relationship must not only demonstrate, to his mind, its necessity, but its absolute rightfulness.” – Frederick Douglass (former slave)*