

Good and Decent Neighbors

Many of us are trusting our neighbors much more than we should. We suppose that these neighbors would never burglarize our homes in our absence or accost us on the street and thrust upon us the choice, “Your money or your life?” And in most cases we are probably right to make these assumptions.

Yet, in many cases these same neighbors are striving to elicit the services of a criminal middleman — actually an enormous, highly organized criminal gang — that would extort money from us and put it to uses our neighbors approve, often uses of direct benefit to them.

So, really, amigos: is there any substantive difference? In both cases we are threatened by thugs who will rob us stealthily (e.g., by burglary or by inflation of the money stock) or who will harm us if we fail to comply with the demands made and, in effect, transfer at least a portion of our money to our neighbors against our free will.

This is not how good, decent people treat their neighbors.