

Keeping Your Moral Distance

One of my greatest disappointments of the past five years, so far as public affairs are concerned, is that so many of my acquaintances whom I had counted as supporters of the free society have gone over to the dark side — by which on this occasion I mean to supporting Trump.

In some cases they were driven mainly by anti-immigrant inclinations that either were or verged on being racist. They took that position in many cases because they were misled by spurious arguments that, pending the advent of anarchy, we ought to view the nation state as a sort of home owners' association. This self-declared "property rights" argument evinced a totally bogus understanding of what the state is or can be.

Others simply hated the left and considered the actions of Trump and his ilk to be better than whatever the leftists might do if they held more power. I can't help recalling how many seemingly decent Germans decided to support Hitler in the early 1930s because he seemed, at least, to afford them some protection from the feared Bolshevik hordes and their friends in Germany.

I wish more people would realize that nothing they do strategically will alter the state's course. Given that reality, why shouldn't friends of liberty always refuse to have anything to do with the real danger to our liberties — the state that controls the territory in which we live. If you can't control history, you can at least keep your moral distance from it.

The realities of modern social and political life almost certainly condemn us to a future of totalitarianism. And we can go there by the left road or the right road. Do not presume that the latter is relatively benign and ends up anywhere else but hell.