

Libertarian Criticisms Miss Mark

Recently, I read a rant describing libertarianism in unlibertarian ways. This is normal. I've never seen a criticism of libertarianism that hit the mark.

The point is usually that libertarians are selfish and don't care about other people; a claim that only works on those who are in the dark.

It is said we don't care about the poor because the taxes and regulations we're against are for their protection. Yet taxes and regulations hit those hardest who are least able to afford them; much harder than those with a stable of lawyers standing ready.

Detractors say libertarians don't believe in altruism and would destroy the "social safety net." They are mistaken. Altruism never involves robbing some for the benefit of others. The truth is, instead of relying on a safety net bought with the anti-social practice of taxation, libertarians prefer to help people voluntarily. This is true altruism and is safer for everyone than today's system.

Libertarians are scolded for heartlessly refusing to admit the protection government provides society against bad guys. Except when those bad guys are politically connected, hold an office, or run one of the thousands of bureaucratic positions used to rob and control members of society in the name of governing. You can't protect society by sacrificing the individuals who comprise it. I refuse to admit this "protection" for the same reason I refuse to admit the health benefits of cancer.

Libertarians, we are told, should realize not all politicians are out for themselves; some have the best intentions. We shouldn't blame them for using institutionalized theft and coercion to impose their good ideas on others. It's the system's fault ... but don't question the system's legitimacy either.

Finally, libertarians "only care about their own freedom," despite the fact I spend more time trying to inspire others to exercise their rightful liberty than I do worrying about my own.

The list goes on, never getting close to the truth. Every criticism is the equivalent of saying how much I dislike people who collect stamps because they sit on a boat baiting hooks all day. It's total nonsense.

Which brings me to the most dishonest anti-libertarian statement of all: "Libertarians believe that the nastiest of men, for the nastiest of motives, will somehow work for the benefit of us all." Replace the word "libertarians" with any other political stance out there — Democrat, Republican, socialist, whatever — and I couldn't have summarized the pro-

government position any better myself.