

Re: Violence Against Government

Parrish, my ponderings recall what I wrote yesterday for "Two Cents":

There's a scene in the third book where Katniss defends the members of her Capitol prep team (make-up, wardrobe) to Gale, who remarks to the effect that they disgust him as residents of the Capitol who love the [Hunger] Games. She tells him that they are like children who don't know any better and don't deserve his scorn. Indeed, I am sure they were themselves victims of intense Capitol indoctrination from the time they could talk to see the Games as good and right and necessary. When we see evil actions, we shouldn't be so quick to judge the evil-doer. He or she are most likely following their cultural programming, developed most likely by those who were likewise culturally programmed. Abuse is cyclical. Empathy, that is, putting yourself in another's place and trying to view the world through their mind, can go along way to understanding someone's suffering, whether that someone is an Adolf Hitler or your neighbor with a Republican Party sign in their front yard.

I'm hard pressed to judge most who fill posts with government as deserving of violence. I think they have been misguided their entire lives to believe that what they are doing is good and necessary. And if the liberty movement has taught us anything it's that violence can't kill an idea; in this case the idea of government. Instead, we should channel our energies into re-guiding others away from the state, building alternatives to state "services," ignoring the state and its decrees as safely as possible, and otherwise nonviolently resisting its encroachments. As Carl Watner, founder and editor of *The Voluntarist* wrote in Chapter 3 of my book:

Although certain services and goods are necessary to our survival, it is not essential that they be provided by the government. Voluntarists oppose the State because it uses coercive means. The means are the seeds which bud into a flower and come into fruition. It is impossible to plant the seed of coercion and then reap the flower of

voluntaryism. The coercionist always proposes to compel people to do something, usually by passing laws or electing politicians to office. These laws and officials depend upon physical violence to enforce their wills. Voluntary means, such as nonviolent resistance, for example, violate no one's rights. They only serve to nullify laws and politicians by ignoring them. Voluntaryism does not require of people that they violently overthrow their government, or use the electoral process to change it; merely that they shall cease to support their government, whereupon it will fall of its own dead weight. If one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself.

I do not believe that the use of violence against the state is wise or helpful *today* to the voluntaryist cause, the cause of liberty. And I am very reluctant to accept it as ever necessary, either in the past or some imagined dystopian future.

Skyler.