

Suit, Robe, or Uniform: Does it Matter What Criminals Wear?

Probably due to the origins of my voluntarism being the study of economics and adoption of the free market creed, I don't typically view the average business person in negative terms. In fact, my bias is that entrepreneurs and capitalists are among mankind's greatest heroes.

And why not? They're the ones directly responsible for raising the standard of living of everyone, thereby saving millions of lives in the process. This is no small thing, right?

My bias aside, we shouldn't believe that all business people strictly follow free market principles. Perhaps, even, most of them don't. Who knows? What I do know is that every single person is capable of behaving in ways contrary to voluntarism, and a strong majority of us have at some point in our lives.

I shouldn't group business people together. I despise collectivism and believe that every single person should be judged on the merits of their own actions, without regard to whatever title they hold.

In other words, whether a person wears a suit, a robe, or a uniform, what they have done, or what they are doing, to their fellow humans deserves either our praise or our scorn.

Every voluntarist knows that most people who comprise government are actively committing acts of aggression, directly or indirectly, against innocent people. Government, the state, would not be what we know it to be if this were not the case. Monopolizing the provision of law and order, and stealing from people, are crimes in the voluntarist sense. Most governments go far beyond this, however, and so they are rightfully considered criminal organizations of varying size and scope.

They aren't the only criminal organizations, though. Cartels, mafias, and street gangs, all of which threaten or commit acts of aggression against innocent people, are likewise illicit. And yes, when businesses engage in crime, they too are criminal organizations.

Often businesses will team up with governments to do so. When that occurs, they've left the realm of free markets and are absorbed into the machinery of the state. This is true for religions as well. It's true for everyone. Nobody should get a pass for the crimes they commit, regardless of who they are or what they wear.

The challenge for voluntarists and those who favor free markets is in offering criticism of business-suit-wearing criminals without coming across as anti-business and pro-government. Which is a very difficult thing to do without bloated prefacing.