

The Voluntarist Messaging Problem

Why do we voluntarists struggle to convince people of the fruits of our vision? Why do people look at us as crazy when we say we don't need a government to do anything? Is it because kids have been indoctrinated in government schools for generations? Perhaps, but I don't think this is the majority or even a large minority of the cause.

I think it is Americans' laziness. It is easier and more comfortable to rely on the government's coercive taxing ability to fund the roads, for example. Never mind the immorality of this theft, it's just easier and it works relatively fine so why bother.

This could properly called complacency.

When people start to really think about it, they come up with a few things they need the government to do. National defense, courts and roads are three common ones. I grant, these are somewhat trickier than welfare, healthcare for senior citizens, and funding for the national endowment for the arts, but the same question remains: Do we really need a government to do this?

Because we have these items (ie. Funding for the NEA, Medicare, food stamps) as low hanging fruit, people do not look beyond to the proper question. People argue all day and night about the size of government but the proper question is really government or no government.

We are complacent arguing about how much we should tax, should we spend more or less on the military or health care for senior citizens etc.. This is a combination of we have easier problems to answer and people are too complacent to think about anything but the easy problems. Unfortunately, while I support any and all efforts to reduce the size and scope of government, this takes our eyes off the ball. We need to be fighting every day about if we need government. Discussing the size of government cedes ground in the sense of implicitly affirming the need for government.

Because people tend to take the easiest possible answer to all problems, government is often used as an easy solution. We would benefit by always encouraging people to think critically about the need for government at all.

My opinion is we don't need a war mongering military and courts that throw people in jail for crimes in which nobody has been harmed. This is the debate we should be having rather than the size of the military or its accompanying policies.

As voluntarists, the evidence and not to mention morality are always on our side. We should use that as a calling card to constantly fight the implicit assumption of the need for

government. We need to change the messaging to fighting the idea of government rather than which policies or what size of government we want. In doing so, we may finally gain back some ground in public opinion.