



The Law
by
Frédéric Bastiat
a
Review
by
Dennis G. Crumb

My focus right now is on fundamental principles, those principles that both define us as human beings and determine our behavior. As a Christian I believe those principles are inherent in us by virtue of our being created in God's image. In particular, I'm focusing on the principle of freedom, or liberty because everything we do begins here. Patterns in history can be both good things to observe or bad things to observe. While I believe in linear history I also know it has aspects of circling upon itself as found in Eastern philosophy. Change, Heraclitus wrote, is the one constant in life. No nation has been permanent; every empire has collapsed. The only nation to build itself upon the principle of individual freedom after that of the formation of Israel, the United States of America, like Israel has lost that true freedom. Having given up so much of our freedom can we realistically get it back? As I wrote in a prior post we first have to believe that freedom is our natural right, and this being so then work at making that freedom the definition of who we are as a people.

To help us take back our freedom I thought it time to look at how we tend to give it up and how the State takes it from us so we know what to change. A good place to begin is with The Law by Bastiat, who wrote in 1850 words that are as current for today as when he wrote them. He shows us "how to tell when a law is unjust or when the law maker has become a source of law breaking? When the law becomes a means of plunder it has lost its character of genuine law. When the law enforcer is permitted to do with others' lives and property what would be illegal if the citizens did them, the law becomes perverted." (Mises Institute on Bastiat's The Law.) For this reason (that his words are for today) I'm going to go through his work picking out parts that I think need commentary on to help us feel more comfortable with freedom and how it gets lost. Every time I think the essay is getting too long and I should stop and summarize the rest of what he says I find something said so important I must comment on it. What I am going to do, then, is break this study into parts so you can more easily digest each section. When I am finished I will place a complete version inside the "University" tab.

Frederic Bastiat

Life Is a Gift from God

"We hold from God the gift which includes all others. This gift is life — physical, intellectual, and moral life."

"But life cannot maintain itself alone. The Creator of life has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving, developing, and perfecting it. In order that we may accomplish this, He has provided us with a collection of marvelous faculties. And He has put us in the midst of a variety of natural resources. By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course.

"Life, faculties, production — in other words, individuality, liberty, property — this is man. And in spite of the cunning of artful political leaders, these three gifts from God precede all human legislation, and are superior to it. Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place."

What Is Law?

What, then, is law? It is the collective organization of the individual right to lawful defense.

"Each of us has a natural right — from God — to defend his person, his liberty, and his property. These are the three basic requirements of life, and the preservation of any one of them is completely dependent upon the preservation of the other two. For what are our faculties but the extension of our individuality? And what is property but an extension of our faculties? If every person has the right to defend even by force — his person, his liberty, and his property, then it follows that a group of men have the right to organize and support a common force to protect these rights constantly. Thus the principle of collective right — its reason for existing, its lawfulness — is based on individual right. And the common force that protects this collective right cannot logically have any other purpose or any other mission than that for which it acts as a substitute. Thus, since an individual cannot lawfully use force against the person, liberty, or property of another individual, then the common force — for the same reason — cannot lawfully be used to destroy the person, liberty, or property of individuals or groups. (Frederic Bastiat, The Law.)

A Short Bio

On June 30, 1801 Bastiat was born in Bayonne, Aquitaine, a port town in the south of France. His father, Pierre, was a prominent businessman in the town. His mother died when Frédéric was seven years old. The father moved to the town of Mugron sending for Frederic shortly after. The Bastiat estate in Mugron had been acquired during the French Revolution previously belonging to the Marquis of Poyanne. Pierre died during 1810, leaving Frédéric an orphan who was fostered by his paternal grandfather and his maiden aunt, Justine Bastiat. Frederic went to school in Bayonne. His aunt didn't approve of the school so she enrolled him in the school Saint-Sever. At age 17, he left school at Sorèze and worked for his uncle in the family's export business where his father had also been a partner. This experience was crucial to Bastiat's later work as it gave young Frédéric a first-hand knowledge of how regulation can affect markets.

Bastiat wanted to go to Paris and continue his studies but his uncle's bad health prevented that as he had to take care of his ailing uncle.

Bastiat was 24 when the uncle died. He had the means from the family's estate to continue his interest in theoretical studies taking in philosophy, history, politics, religion, and political economy. After the middle-class Revolution of 1830, Bastiat became politically active becoming justice of the peace in Mugron, and in 1831 became Council General (county-level assembly). He was elected to the national legislative assembly soon after the French Revolution of 1848. He died in Rome on December 24, 1850 from tuberculosis.

In his studies he would have become familiar with his fellow countrymen Montesquieu, especially his book, The Spirit of the Laws, and Tocqueville's Democracy in America, and the Scottish philosopher John Locke's Two Treatises of Government. While Bastiat would not have a primary influence upon our founding leaders who shaped our Constitution and limited government based upon these three earlier men, he was a supporting resource for their thinking adding content and reason to support both a limited government and the concept of freedom.

The one thing all four men had in common, other than their conclusions, was their deep religious faith from which those conclusions were drawn.

Support for Bastiat's first sentence

I'm going to make this statement up front and then will follow it with an attempt to establish it: True liberty (freedom) could only come from the God of Isaac, Jacob, and Abraham because he is, as established in Genesis, the source of all things. I also have the witness of history.

In Genesis 5 we have a long list of some or all of the lineage between Adam and Noah. Not much is said about them other than they were all faithful to the God of Adam and Eve and had, themselves, a relationship with Him. If we just count the years of their lives it covers some 1,100 years of history. In "Fundamental Principle: Liberty" I wrote this: "The Bible is not, was not intended to be a scientific explanation of how scientifically the Real was made real. It doesn't even come close to asking and answering those kinds of questions. Neither is it a philosophical treatise on the nature of being, nor a historical essay, though it touches on science, philosophy, history, and theology. The Bible, whether it be the Hebrew Bible or the Christian Bible, has one simple and driving narrative, the relationship between God and man."

For the most part the events in the Old Testament take place in the area we call the Middle East. Starting in the east you have Mesopotamian and Sumerian empires, where it is believed the Garden of Eden was located (this is today's Iraq) and where Abraham lived in Ur; then going farther west, the direction Abraham took, you come to Canaan, where Abraham moved his family that was at various times under the influence of Phoenicians, Assyrians (that became Lebanon and Syria in time), and Hittites (whose empire was in today's Turkey); then farther west you come to Egypt, where the children of Abraham ended up as slaves. Each empire had their own gods they worshiped, but one can make a fair assumption that this line of men (that would include their family and workers) had the freedom to worship the God they learned from Adam and Eve and had in their own ways contact with.

From Adam and Eve to Abraham there was no organized religious practices surrounding God, and I think we are not told this because it wasn't important. What was important was that they worshiped the True God of the Universe. That there was a relationship is clear.

After being exiled from the Garden of Eden, mankind took two different directions in their life: those who followed God and those who chose not to follow the God of the Garden and began to make gods of their own to explain life. What we importantly learn in Genesis is that God was not the God of just these men and their families, every person whether they believed in Him or not were still created in His image intended to be next to God. Because the Bible is not concerned with what is happening outside the context of following the line of true believers, we have a limited view of what is going on around them, except when and where the two make contact.

David, in his Psalm 8:4-6 says this: "What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, ..." Now in my mind it goes like this: because we are the highest creature next to God, and it was his intention to make us so, we had to discover we were not God, nor ever would be God, hence

the Garden of Eden story showing our testing. It was God's intention that all humanity be part of Him, including those who chose not to follow him to be part of him. He set in motion a plan to show them their error, all of us, in fact, and the way back.

Two events found in Genesis 9 and 11 show how far rebellion against God went and God's reaction to this. But I want to focus on one theme in the Noah account of the flood and the Tower of Babel: God judges all men who do not follow him as well as those who do follow him. In other words, what Bastiat is going to write about the law is not limited to believers in God but it is for everyone because the principle of life, liberty, and happiness/property is inherent in all men in spite of their non-belief. That by virtue of everyone—no one left out—is created in God's image. We are going to understand what that means, however, by following the storyline of the Bible as it reveals God's plan to bring all people back to him; first through the line from Adam all the way to Abraham, then through the children of Abraham, then through Christians.

I need to go a little further, yet, because until Moses, the law of God was written on men's hearts, but that necessarily changed before the nation was established in the Promised Land where now the world was to witness God's plan for redemption in a nation, not just individual people. But to get to Moses we had to begin with Abraham, a man who worshiped God as God intended so he was chosen to introduce a new plan. Was Abraham perfect and that is why God chose him? Not at all. As we read about Abraham and Sara, his wife, and the promise that his descendants would become a mighty nation, as the years go by and they have no child to begin this future generation, they take things into their own hands. So Abraham and Sara, like Adam and Eve generations before them, stand at their own Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and like Adam and Eve they partake of the fruit of the tree as Abraham lays with his servant and has a son by her. In time the promise from God comes to fruition and Sara provides a son to Abraham, the son that will be the starting point for a large family. But Abraham has denied God, as did Adam and Eve, and he is required to prove his love and loyalty to God. That is why the test in the mountains where Isaac is bound with Abraham about to plunge into his son the knife taking his life when the ram appears to save Isaac's life. Abraham has proven his love for God and so he now takes his family and servants and moves to a new home, the very land where his family will settle as a nation, generations later.

A lot happens in time. Abraham fought with time waiting for Isaac. His descendants will fight with time waiting for Moses as they don't become a nation until he leads them to the Promised Land from their slavery in Egypt. In the meantime, while these descendants carry the knowledge and love of God that Abraham had, who got it from Adam and Eve, time challenges their faith in God and his promise, especially as they are slaves in Egypt. There are those in this time period who keep the faith, and others who take in the gods of the Egyptians. I point this out because God must flesh out of them all those beliefs they've taken to themselves that are contrary to God. So on the road from Egypt to the Promised Land the Deuteronomic Code/Levitical Law comes into being and play in their lives, not seen before this time. Its purpose is to define a people in the image of God as opposed to the image of others around them. The caveat to this new nation of God is this word given to Moses: "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These

are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” (Exodus 19: 5-6 NIV.)

So now we have for the first time a written law and this is what it looks like:

Laws of religious observance

- Against worshipping other gods, at Deuteronomy 12:29-31
- Prohibiting deliberate disfigurement as an act of mourning, at Deuteronomy 14:1-2
- Concerning clean and unclean animals, at Deuteronomy 14:3-20
- Prohibiting the consumption of animals who have not been killed by mankind, at Deuteronomy 14:21
- Against Asherah groves and ritual pillars, at Deuteronomy 16:21-22
- Against blemished sacrifices, at Deuteronomy 17:1
- Prohibiting offerings and vows outside a single central sanctuary, at Deuteronomy 12:1-28
- Concerning the tithe, at Deuteronomy 14:22-29
- Concerning relief of debt in the seventh year, at Deuteronomy 15:1-11
- Ordering the offering to Yahweh of the firstborn males, at Deuteronomy 15:19-23
- Concerning the three annual feasts, at Deuteronomy 16:1-17

Then there is civil law:

Civil law

- Ordering the restoration of lost property once found, at Deuteronomy 22:1-4
- Prohibition of mixing kinds, at Deuteronomy 22:9-11
- Concerning tzitzit, a knotted ritual fringe at Deuteronomy 22:12
- Against marrying a step-mother, at Deuteronomy 22:30
- Against usury, at Deuteronomy 23:19-20
- Concerning vows, at Deuteronomy 23:21-23
- Concerning pledges, at Deuteronomy 24:6, and 24:10-13
- Concerning leprosy, at Deuteronomy 24:8-9
- Concerning the wages of a hired servant, at Deuteronomy 24:14-15
- Ordering justice towards strangers, widows, and orphans, at Deuteronomy 24:17-18
- Concerning the scraps of crops, at Deuteronomy 24:19-22
- Against the removal of boundary markers, at Deuteronomy 19:14
- Concerning primogeniture, at Deuteronomy 21:15-17
- Ordering undutiful sons to be stoned to death, at Deuteronomy 21:18-21
- Against transvestitism, at Deuteronomy 22:5
- Prohibiting taking a mother bird at the same time as its nest, at Deuteronomy 22:6-7
- Ordering roofs to be constructed with parapets, at Deuteronomy 22:8
- Prohibiting newly married women from being slandered, at Deuteronomy 22:13-21
- Concerning escaped slaves, at Deuteronomy 23:15-16
- Against religious prostitution, at Deuteronomy 23:17-18
- Concerning the crops of a neighbor, at Deuteronomy 23:24-25
- Concerning divorce, at Deuteronomy 24:1-4
- Against punishing the family of a criminal, at Deuteronomy 24:16

- Limiting the number of lashes, at Deuteronomy 25:1-3
- Against muzzling oxen during threshing, at Deuteronomy 25:4
- Concerning levirate marriage, at Deuteronomy 25:5-10
- Ordering women to be modest, at Deuteronomy 25:11-12

The problem with Plan B is that these people of God forgot that they were to be the representatives of God to the nations and internalized who they were. Because they were chosen by God they came to believe they were the only ones God cared about. All the judgments God brought on Israel, and when they split into two nations then also judgment on Judah, was because they failed to live and do what God asked of them.

When it was clear they weren't going to be that image Plan C came into play, the Christian Era. The reason Christians include in their Bible the Hebrew Bible is that Christians believe they are part of that line from Adam and Eve through Abraham and through Moses and not something foreign to it. A nation would no longer be representative of God, now it would be a people, not a localized people but people who would spread throughout the world. The key to Plan C is Jesus as Messiah, and the change can be seen in an encounter Peter had from a man named Cornelius who was a Roman but who believed in the same God Peter did. We read the story in Acts 10. An angel came to Cornelius asking him to send for Peter. On the way to Cornelius' home Peter stopped to pray, and became hungry. In prayer he fell into a trance and saw heaven:

11 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners.

12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds.

13 Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

15 The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

That Deuteronomic Code/Levitical Law was to help shape a people in a specific place and a specific time. God always wanted the law written on men's hearts, not on parchment or paper. The law wasn't being done away with for "We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, . . ." (I Timothy 1:9.)

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' "This is the great and foremost commandment...." (Matthew 22: 37-38.)

The audience that Bastiat is writing to is not just his fellow Frenchmen, but to every person in every nation in every timeframe. What he must have understood and it bolstered him was that the principles of law he writes about was actually being put into practice in the United States of America.

So we can go back now to The Law and work through its meaning for us today.

Part II**THE BASIS OF LAW**

A good chunk of me, politically, is libertarian. The biggest problem I have with libertarian philosophy, however, is its overwhelming faith that humans will get it right in the end if they are just left alone. That's not going to happen, their getting it right. Think for just a moment on that theological perspective I wrote earlier. If anyone would get it right you would think it Adam and Eve who lived in an idyllic world. They didn't. Nor did that long line of believers leading to you and me. If those who walk and talk with God can't get it right all the time, what hope is there for those who don't acknowledge God? When we don't live inside the greatest commandment to love God, ourselves, and others, then we run smack into the Law.

Law is necessary. The question is what law and how much law?

Where does law come from? Bastiat, and I agree, holds it is from God. No, I'm not talking theocratic law, the merging of religion and politics, I'm talking about the very fundamentals of law that defines what a thing or person is and their meaning in life. Take, for instance, the Code of Hammurabi that has a lot of similarity to the Deuteronomic Code and Levitical law:

"The Code of Hammurabi is a well-preserved Babylonian law code of ancient Mesopotamia, dating back to about 1754 BC. It is one of the oldest deciphered writings of significant length in the world. The sixth Babylonian king, Hammurabi, enacted the code, and partial copies exist on a man-sized stone stele and various clay tablets. The code consists of 282 laws, with scaled punishments, adjusting "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" (lex talionis) as graded depending on social status, of slave versus free man. Nearly one-half of the code deals with matters of contract, establishing, for example, the wages to be paid to an ox driver or a surgeon. Other provisions set the terms of a transaction, establishing the liability of a builder for a house that collapses, for example, or property that is damaged while left in the care of another. A third of the code addresses issues concerning household and family relationships such as inheritance, divorce, paternity, and sexual behavior. Only one provision appears to impose obligations on an official; this provision establishes that a judge who reaches an incorrect decision is to be fined and removed from the bench permanently. A few provisions address issues related to military service." ("Code of Hammurabi" Wikipedia) If you are interested in reading this Code please go [HERE](#).)

Some have suggested that the Deuteronomic Code and Levitical law comes from this. I'm not going to make an argument for or against whether or not this is true because the same God that was in the hearts of those children of Adam was also in the Babylonians, as he is in the hearts of us all and one ought to find commonness. There is not a nation in history that didn't have some kind of law by which people were governed. Laws against murder and stealing are in every nation. Almost every nation, if not every nation, the gods played varying roles in the ideas of right and wrong. In almost every nation, if not every nation, the people understood that there was something greater than themselves and their appeal for help and understanding was made to this higher "other".

Regarding this higher "other," those early Greek philosophers began to understand that there was a natural order (law) to the universe that we have nothing to do with. The mythologies of the Greeks, indeed most every people, was that one had to manipulate the gods to get them to do good things for

you or to stop them from doing bad. Those Greek philosophers said no to incantation and yes to understanding. What they did not do, and modern humanists want to falsely ascribe it to them, is reject the gods altogether. They did not. The nous and the logos were creative forces behind all things and from this "other" the universe was created and maintained by laws given to it. These ancients understood from what they saw that an "other" had to be a creative force to create the uniqueness they witnessed and began to understand.

Now the Apostle Paul had something interesting to say in this regard: "[B]ecause that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened...." (Romans 1:19-21 NIV.)

Let's tie this to something Paul said earlier: "So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you...." (Acts 17:22-23 NIV.)

Philosophers are not theologians, not ministers of a religious faith. They look for the "why" of things and those ancients understood that there was, as Aristotle put it, a First Cause. Their role is not to name this First Cause but to understand how that plays out in the universe and the meaning of things. It is up to the theologian to go further in naming and describing this "other" as Paul did on Mars Hill.

So the image of God is imprinted on all people regardless of whether they acknowledge him or not. They know something of God because they feel him within themselves and see him in nature. It is no wonder, then, that the laws of many nations have such similarities.

This is important to understand because from this we read in The Declaration of Independence: "When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation." (Bold mine.)

Paul says to those philosophers in Athens, "You pay homage to this unknown god, I'm going to give you his name and tell you about him." Washington, Jefferson, both Adams, Hamilton, Madison, among all those others, came to the Constitutional Convention believing in the God Paul spoke about to those Greek philosophers, the God of Adam and Eve, of Isaac, Jacob, and Abraham and Moses, who came to us as the logos with the name Jesus. What was learned in Part A, B, and C of God's plan of redemption, and what he expected of us, was in the hearts of our Founders and found its way into our law and life.

Modern progressives and atheists want to debunk this fact by debunking the Judeo/Christian influence upon our founders and therefore upon our governing documents. When you read raw his-

tory, not the revised version that today is being forced upon our children, there is no other conclusion that you can draw as most of the colonies were founded by strong Christian men and their faith was the basis of how they put their colonies together. One hundred and fifty years later, when we come to Washington, Jefferson and company, nothing had really changed, especially since the Great Awakening had reaffirmed the colonists' faith. The argument that Franklin was a deist and Jefferson was an agnostic, and Washington cut out all the miracles of Jesus in the Bible has no real founding when you look at the life of these men whose Christian faith was the basis of all they did. It's there in raw history, unedited. They weren't evangelists, they were just men of the community who wanted to make a political change in their lives and it was not their job to hold tent meetings for Jesus, it was their job to let their faith guide them in all they did.

As Bastiat wrote: "We hold from God the gift which includes all others. This gift is life — physical, intellectual, and moral life." And in that Declaration of Independence we read: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

What is so absolutely unique about this is that life, liberty, and property/happiness is the foundation of our life, but more than just a foundation, they are God's gift to humanity. These are the desires of all people, though not all people in history, and now, are allowed to enjoy them. But they are part of our being and therefor their desire is inside us.

If this is a Jewish/Christian fundamental belief, why did it take until 1776 AD/CE to come to fruition? Good question. I submit they had this in the period between Adam and Eve and Abraham; lost it until Moses and the found it again in the beginning of Israel as a nation; lost it until Jesus when those first Christians understood it (somewhat); lost it again when the Church came under the power of the Roman Catholic Church; found it again in Washington, Jefferson and company. Of course, we've lost it again and the reason for a renewed remembrance and appreciation of this, and the reason I write this essay.

Again these words from Bastiat:

"Life, faculties, production — in other words, individuality, liberty, property — this is man. And in spite of the cunning of artful political leaders, these three gifts from God precede all human legislation, and are superior to it. Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place."

Here Bastiat defines our Declaration and Constitution. That pearl that keeps getting covered over is found again and dusted off by those brave men, and women, who risked everything to begin again in a New World. Those Puritans and Separatists, in particular, fled England and other places for this gift from God that is ours by right, not by any benevolence of any State. It's our rightful inheritance

and those settlers of the New World that turned their settlements into the Thirteen Colonies, then the United States of America, laid that as the foundation upon which everything else was built.

It's true that not everyone believed in the God of the Puritans, or God at all, but each saw the benefits of this gift and adopted the benefits even though they rejected where it came from. At some point in their life they will have to deal with this pragmatic leap of faith they exercised, but everyone recognizes honest goodness and wants that. These Christian men and women didn't come to create a theocracy even though at times some leaders leaned that way. When they stepped outside the freedom they came to establish and enjoy it wasn't the non-Christian who called them out but fellow Christians. When the lunacy that had taken Europe in the witch hunt and trials happened here in a very small way, again it was Christians who stopped it. These Puritans, and fellow Christians who had different beliefs, all understood that God wasn't building another "Israel", he was building individuals who would act from their image of God inside them influencing others to better behavior and a better life.

So the purpose of the State is to protect our natural gifts of life, liberty, and happiness/property, not define them for us, not grant them to us. This is our heritage and it is what built a great nation that exceeded all other nations and the people of the nations around the world were envious and wanted to come to enjoy freedom.

WHAT IS LAW?

What is law? Bastiat puts it this way: "It is the collective organization of the individual right to lawful defense." Do you understand what he just said? Law is not something imposed on us, it is our right to defend our fundamental rights that come from God, and law is that defense.

"Each of us has a natural right — from God — to defend his person, his liberty, and his property. These are the three basic requirements of life, and the preservation of any one of them is completely dependent upon the preservation of the other two."

I think we need to take a moment to let these words set in. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." There is a trilogy of rights upon which all others rest: life, liberty, and happiness/property. What Bastiat wants us to understand is that if we lose one of these rights we lose all three. If our property is taken from us then we have no liberty, no freedom. If we lose our liberty then we have no life and no happiness. We've assumed that the government can take property from us without it destroying the other two but we know instinctively this isn't true. The sad truth is we've pretty much lost much of all three. The government has decided that everyone other than white male and female heterosexuals are a protected class with absolute rights that cannot be violated so the pizza parlor owner, the baker, the card maker, the farmer who rents out his farm for weddings, soon all churches are crushed by the government taking away their property and their freedom. If these are gone so to are all the other rights and we are certainly seeing an assault on the First, Second, Fourth, Fifth, and Tenth Amendments. These rights are our inherited rights and we cannot give them away and no one can take them, unless we give them away or let someone take them from us because we no longer believe in our inheritance.

“For what are our faculties but the extension of our individuality? And what is property but an extension of our faculties? If every person has the right to defend even by force — his person, his liberty, and his property, then it follows that a group of men have the right to organize and support a common force to protect these rights constantly. Thus the principle of collective right — its reason for existing, its lawfulness — is based on individual right. And the common force that protects this collective right cannot logically have any other purpose or any other mission than that for which it acts as a substitute. Thus, since an individual cannot lawfully use force against the person, liberty, or property of another individual, then the common force — for the same reason — cannot lawfully be used to destroy the person, liberty, or property of individuals or groups.”

In our founding, property was sacrosanct to the individual. Yet it was recognized that sometimes for the public good—say if a freeway wants to go from point A to point B to relieve congested traffic—the state can claim a right of “imminent domain” that benefits all. But the state cannot just take the property because it has no legal right to it. The Fifth Amendment was intended to address this issue: “. . . nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.” (Bold mine.)

Now it's interesting that this right to life, liberty, or property is also connected to criminal proceedings as though Madison in writing the Bill of Rights was not just thinking of what British courts were doing but what future American courts would do in its lust for “takings”. One of a number of very bad police procedures that came out of the War on Drugs is seen in a bill passed by Congress that allows local police to profit from the drugs and other so-called contraband they seize. This turned into what we know as “civil forfeiture” where cops, acting on behalf of the state, can take property they believe was obtained illicitly before you're convicted of any wrongdoing in a court of law. The people whose assets have been seized then have to go to court to try and get it back, which may cost more money than the property itself. It doesn't matter that Congress passed such a bill, nor that with the backing of the Supreme Court cities carry it through, it is completely outside the Constitution and the Fifth Amendment, and certainly what we read from Bastiat. But here is one thing that happened:

“On June 23, 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Kelo v. City of New* the expected gains in new jobs and tax revenue flowing from a municipality's economic revitalization plan established a “public use” within the meaning of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution's takings clause. The takings clause, which states “nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation,” has been read to restrict eminent domain condemnations to those that effect a “public use.” While the court has held in the past that “public use” should be understood broadly to encompass various public benefits, in *Kelo* the court for the first time considered the constitutionality of condemnations justified solely on the grounds of economic development.

The above paragraph about the Supreme Court rewriting the Fifth Amendment is both shocking and a sign of our times where law has been used not to protect our natural rights but to destroy them and give them to the State.

I'm going to use a very controversial right-now event to demonstrate what Bastiat says: “If every person has the right to defend even by force — his person, his liberty, and his property, then it follows

that a group of men have the right to organize and support a common force to protect these rights constantly. Thus the principle of collective right — its reason for existing, its lawfulness — is based on individual right.” The case in point is the occupation of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. The current brouhaha began over the conviction of ranchers Dwight Hammond Jr. and his son Steven, charged with setting a 2001 fire that consumed 139 acres of public land in Oregon. Supposedly they lit the fire (now called arson) to cover illegal hunting on their part. Their explanation is that they were burning off wheat stubble and the fire got away, then they lit a backfire, yes on government land (this is the arson charge) to stop the fire from destroying everything in its path. It worked. Let me say I understand what they say completely because I was involved in something similar. The farm I was working on also had acres of wheat and after harvest the farmer lit the stubble—a common practice rather than plowing it into the ground—and it got out of control setting the forest of sage brush and grease wood trees on fire taking out hundreds of acres before it was stopped. You know the words of Forrest Gump: S__t happens. But the father and son are just a small part of a fight that has been going on for decades where the federal government is trying to take over every inch of land they can get so they truly have federal control over us all, and how they have gone about this is criminal. Just ask the father and son. Look up all the stories on this, you'll find the truth. Now in steps a group of armed people who want to protest this land grab by taking over a uninhabited building. I think they lost the power of their argument the moment they brought guns with them, but this isn't a discussion of this event but to show what Bastiat writes that collective action is justified because when it is based on the usurpation of individual rights it affects the collective, as well.

Bastiat ends up in that paragraph reminding us that neither as individuals or the collective can we “destroy the person, liberty, or property of individuals or groups.” If we hold as individuals or a collective that our life, liberty, and property/happiness can't be taken neither can we take that from others. Donald Trump needs to read this who through the use of law took the property of others in a “taking” so he could build parking lots for his hotels. Or cities that decide an area filled with homes or businesses would be better served if they were razed to the ground and “profitable” businesses put in their place. Of course, it's all about the dollar, that dollar that many cities are short of so new ways of finding it—by taking from others—is instituted with the support of law.

THE PERVERSION OF LAW

“But, unfortunately, law by no means confines itself to its proper functions. And when it has exceeded its proper functions, it has not done so merely in some inconsequential and debatable matters. The law has gone further than this; it has acted in direct opposition to its own purpose. The law has been used to destroy its own objective: It has been applied to annihilating the justice that it was supposed to maintain; to limiting and destroying rights which its real purpose was to respect. The law has placed the collective force at the disposal of the unscrupulous who wish, without risk, to exploit the person, liberty, and property of others. It has converted plunder into a right, in order to protect plunder. And it has converted lawful defense into a crime, in order to punish lawful defense.

“How has this perversion of the law been accomplished? And what have been the results?

“The law has been perverted by the influence of two entirely different causes: stupid greed and

false philanthropy." (Bastiat)

These words from Bastiat certainly define us today. In a paragraph just above these words of Bastiat he wrote: "It can be further stated that, thanks to the non-intervention of the state in private affairs, our wants and their satisfactions would develop themselves in a logical manner. We would not see poor families seeking literary instruction before they have bread. We would not see cities populated at the expense of rural districts, nor rural districts at the expense of cities. We would not see the great displacements of capital, labor, and population that are caused by legislative decisions." There are two sides to we humans; the saint side and the sinner side. We are capable of great good and great evil. There is individual good and evil and there is State good and evil. The good state, if we follow Bastiat, is that State that protects individual rights and not redefines them, that protects our "Life, faculties, production."

In a July 13, 2012 speech in Roanoke, Virginia, Obama gave a speech around this concept: "If you've got a business — you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen." In an attempt to explain his words, Eugene Kiely wrote this in *The Wire*: "There's no question Obama inartfully phrased those two sentences, but it's clear from the context what the president was talking about. He spoke of government — including government-funded education, infrastructure and research — assisting businesses to make what he called "this unbelievable American system that we have." His explanation actually says it all; "He [Obama] spoke of government . . ."

Michele Malkin, in her book, *Who Built That*, artfully describes how the drive and intelligence and entrepreneurship of individuals created some of the greatest companies and the benefits we derived from them. Yes, people helped them in various ways, but none of them had the vision to create. Apple computers came out of the vision of two men, though others helped bring them into existence. Without Jobs and Wozniak, and the others who had their creations I would not be typing so effortlessly on this computer, not have access to all the information in the world at my fingertips. All the others, certainly not the government, caused this to happen. In fact, if you look at Communism that represents the idea that the State created all goodness, you find nothing but failure. States, in and of themselves, have nothing, create nothing. What individuals create the State takes. The State wants to be our mother and father and our provider but all it does is enslave us and destroy our individuality and our "Life, liberty, and property/happiness." Why? Because it does not confine itself to its proper functions; the protection of our rights, not define them. "The law has placed the collective force at the disposal of the unscrupulous who wish, without risk, to exploit the person, liberty, and property of others. It has converted plunder into a right, in order to protect plunder. And it has converted lawful defense into a crime, in order to punish lawful defense." It has caused individuals to rebel against the State to protect their natural rights.

Why has the law been perverted? Because of "stupid greed and false philanthropy." Don't limit greed to material things in one's possession. Power is greed and the greatest greed our government shows today is its lust for power, power over us. False philanthropy is interesting.

In an earlier study in SHWT—"Fundamental Principle: Liberty"—I asked if you believed freedom, or liberty, was a fundamental principle of life. How you answer that question determines your life, whether you have the rights of control or others have that right. I can tell you as a matter of practical

fact, in the 21st Century in America, that right to determine us rests with the State, as well as others who believe they are controllers. For instance, in Pocatello, Idaho a cafeteria worker was fired for giving a \$1.70 lunch to a girl who didn't have money and was hungry. The school said no one is fired for a single incident though it didn't provide any other cause for firing. Then they went on a convoluted explanation about how they help the poor and feed the hungry, but one is hard pressed to find how that connects with this particular hungry child and the firing of the lady who helped her. The worker has been offered her job back after a community and national outcry, but she hasn't responded to the offer and I would advise her to shake the dust off her shoes. This lady, who could be any of us, was fired for exercising her freedom, fired for exercising that freedom because the school believed it, not her, had the right to determine what one got.

In a Mother Jones article, "Is Giving Food in Your City Illegal Too?" we read this: "Last week, 90-year-old World War II veteran Arnold Abbott made national headlines when he got busted by cops in Fort Lauderdale, Florida twice in one week—for giving out food to homeless people. While serving a public meal on November 2, Abbott told the *Sun-Sentinel*, 'a policeman pulled my arm and said, 'Drop that plate right now,' like it was a gun.' Abbott runs a nonprofit group that regularly distributes food in city parks. Because of an ordinance the city passed this October that restricts feeding the homeless in public, his charity work is now potentially illegal."

The State has decided it's role is to take care of us and when we do we get in their way of controlling and so the power of the gun steps in demanding "Drop that plate right now" or go to jail. We are not free to help others. Oh, we can give money to organizations, but we cannot do it ourselves, nor have cookie sales nor have lemonade sales on our lawn or face the actual risk of arrest, as many have.

It really isn't the role of government to "do for us," that's our role to do for ourselves and our neighbor and each other wherever we find a need that tugs at our heart. We have in too large a part stopped doing for each other, giving that to the government, and where we haven't voluntarily given our role away they are taking it from us. Does government do philanthropy better? Evidence clearly shows it doesn't.

What are we left with: "The law has placed the collective force at the disposal of the unscrupulous who wish, without risk, to exploit the person, liberty, and property of others." Think Department of Education, the BLM, the EPA, the IRS. Need I go on?

Part III

A FATAL TENDENCY OF MANKIND

"Self-preservation and self-development are common aspirations among all people. And if everyone enjoyed the unrestricted use of his faculties and the free disposition of the fruits of his labor, social progress would be ceaseless, uninterrupted, and unending."

"But there is also another tendency that is common among people. When they can, they wish to live and prosper at the expense of others."

In these first two sentences, Bastiat has given us the basic philosophy of Libertarians. But he recognizes there are two fundamental tendencies in humanity: saint-sinner, and we see this in the Garden

of Eden. It was easy to be a saint until one day a temptation confronted them and then they had to make a choice and it was a wrong choice. Because self-preservation—the desire to stay alive—and self-development—the desire to do is our basic nature, and this be uninterrupted, progress could be uninterrupted.

Thomas Hobbes believed that our basic nature was brutish, that left to ourselves we would kill and brutalize each other so a social contract was necessary to temper our basic natures. Jean-Jacques Rousseau had this to say: “MAN is born free; and everywhere he is in chains. One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater slave than they. How did this change come about?” Mankind doesn't begin as a sinner but along the way he becomes one. And here Bastiat recognizes this “sin” nature of man as in the second paragraph above he talks about a second tendency: “When they can, they wish to live and prosper at the expense of others.”

The human condition, if I may put it this way, is universal. We all begin with thoughts of aspiration even if we can't at a young age define them. Now is a good time to recall the words of Bastiat at the beginning: “The Creator of life has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving, developing, and perfecting it. In order that we may accomplish this, He has provided us with a collection of marvelous faculties. And He has put us in the midst of a variety of natural resources. By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course.” Part of the gift of life, liberty, property / happiness is the faculties to use them in beneficial ways, i.e., this computer I'm typing on, the car I drove to get to my favorite coffee shop, you know, those things the government didn't create but we individuals did, they come out of the goodness of man, that gift of creating.

When Alexis de Tocqueville wrote *Democracy in America* he found a nation, newly born, that had outstripped all of Europe that had been in existence for millennia. While Americans had not created a perfect world, they had managed to create a “best of all possible worlds”. Why? Because life, liberty, and property / happiness was the foundation of everything and government didn't get in the way. Those Pilgrims (this term is the non-religious way of saying Puritans) landed in a land that had nothing like they were used to in Europe. No buildings, no shops, no public transportation, just dirt and trees and mountains and bitter cold and hot summers. Yes, there were others who were here, but they hadn't developed much over the centuries in ways that Europeans had. Without any government help these new European arrivals took a blank land and built everything they needed, and wanted, and because of this we went from ox driven carts to eighteen wheelers to haul our goods, to buses to carry us if we didn't have a car, the car replacing the horse. Because of those faculties God has given us we have taken what our fathers gave us and progressed, at least technologically.

In his discussion of the law and how states abuse that he cautions us that while states can be evil, so can individuals. This is the sin nature of man, if you are religious; the natural flaw if you are not. States, businesses, are nothing outside the person or persons running them, so there is not per se an evil State or an evil business, it is the people who represent the State or business that are evil and do evil things. The real difference is the power States yield because of their size and control and therefore they have a greater destructive power over many, many more people. Setting aside States and businesses, Bastiat focuses for the moment on individuals. If there is a collective sin, or a collective good,

it is nothing more than individuals focused on a similar belief, action, or behavior. In other words, there is no “collective” without individuals.

Let me set a framework for this individual / collective duality we participate in because we have a hard time balancing the two swinging far into individuality and then far into the collective. Some like to think that social justice and justice being social is nothing more than semantics, that is, they are saying the same thing. They are not. Social justice is all about the collective. One of the greatest injustices today is seen in our forming of “protected classes” of people—a new collective—and individuals are punished if they do not change their behavior and beliefs according to the special class. No one has the right to be individual if that individuality is not in lockstep with the collective. I'm going to turn to Genesis 2 to get a perspective here on our individuality and our social needs.

4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

5 Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, 6 but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. 7 Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

8 Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. 9 The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

18 The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.”

24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

25 Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

I'm not going to do an exegesis of this text. I'm only concerned with one of the themes I pick up from it. So God creates the world, then creates man, then fashions one place in this creation into a garden and places man in this garden. Man is to work and take care of this garden, though there will be no weeds as it is an idyllic garden, and the fruit found in the garden he can eat, except for this one fruit tree. He does have another duty, to name the animals God brings to him. Adam had a relationship with the animals, he had an ongoing relationship with God who would come to Adam and they would speak together. However close he might have been with the animals they never truly reflected him. Even God, in whose image Adam was created, didn't completely reflect him. Eve was then created, and when Adam looked into Eve's eyes he truly saw himself, and she looking into Adam's eyes also saw herself. They were complete because they completed each other. “Bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh.” In this we see two truths: Adam and Eve are both individuals, but also social creatures. Eve was not Adam, she was Eve. Adam was not Eve, he was Adam. First and foremost, we are individuals. We will stand before God as individuals. But we are also social, we don't completely fulfill ourselves without the other as part of us.

A marriage ceremony always centers around two becoming one. It is typically described in terms of a synthesis—two becoming one, the one here is an absorption of the two individuals into a wholly new entity. Rather, and this is really how we experience it, it is a synergy—“the interaction of elements that when combined produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual elements, contributions, etc.” The individual is not wiped out, what they create as a new thing does not do away with their needs as individuals. The health of this new social unit depends on the health of the individuals.

So, the first temptation that we have is the desire as an individual “to live and prosper at the expense of others.” This is in each and everyone of us. Obviously not all of us give in to this temptation, and you don't have to be a Christian not to give in. You do have to believe in a goodness that is greater than yourself that guides your behavior. Thus the need for law. So, the “if everyone leaves me alone and lets me do what I want to do I will in the end do good things,” is a false presupposition, or at least an incomplete presupposition.

Where does the law fit into all this? Bastiat is going to focus on the negative use of law and what he sees as the greatest sin, plunder, taking from one to either give to another or keep for oneself.

LEGAL PLUNDER

“It is evident, then, that the proper purpose of law is to use the power of its collective force to stop

this fatal tendency to plunder instead of to work. All the measures of the law should protect property and punish plunder.”

The proper purpose of law is to protect our basic right of life, liberty, property / happiness. He puts this into an interesting context: “plunder instead of work.” The “entitlement” society that defines so many Americans comes out of a philosophy that says “You have to give to me what you worked for because I'm entitled to it without having to work for it. I'm owed it.” I'm not talking about those that have genuine need and a genuine need for help, I'm talking about those who could work but would rather plunder instead of work. But work is hard. Damn right it's hard but self-esteem does not come from just feeling good about yourself but from what you accomplish, or at least the attempt of accomplishment. Part of our gift, Bastiat says, is our use of those faculties God gives us: “use” being the operative word here. Our nature is not to sit on our butts and let others do the work then we steal from them, but that is exactly what too many of us are doing.

“But, generally, the law is made by one man or one class of men. And since law cannot operate without the sanction and support of a dominating force, this force must be entrusted to those who make the laws.”

Looking around throughout history it's clear that with few exceptions one man, say a king, or a class of men, say Royals, make the law and to ensure those laws are carried out these same men must have the power to enforce their law. All power rests at the top. Now this isn't how it worked in that new nation called the United States of America. Americans stepped outside the norm, outside business as usual and power was not concentrated at the top but at the bottom; “the consent of the governed.” As Lincoln said, it was a government of, by, and for the people. Of course this has totally been reversed, but what we have now isn't how we began.

“This fact [that power players make the law], combined with the fatal tendency that exists in the heart of man to satisfy his wants with the least possible effort, explains the almost universal perversion of the law. Thus it is easy to understand how law, instead of checking injustice, becomes the invincible weapon of injustice. It is easy to understand why the law is used by the legislator to destroy in varying degrees among the rest of the people, their personal independence by slavery, their liberty by oppression, and their property by plunder. This is done for the benefit of the person who makes the law, and in proportion to the power that he holds.”

The law, when used by the powerful, by the lazy becomes the “weapon of injustice.” One of my memories of when I was three years old was that either my older sister and brother or a neighbor, I don't recall which, had a lemonade stand on the sidewalk. Such stands are an American tradition for kids, still today. But today those innocent kids keeping tradition find policemen with guns closing them down for a variety of reasons, including they don't have a city permit, or a health permit. How more innocent can a lemonade stand be? Such stands are really a non-issue and yet the State cannot abide them. Why? And if this happens at this level you can imagine how the State and the lazy use their power for injustice on a greater scale.

The Results of Legal Plunder

“It is impossible to introduce into society a greater change and a greater evil than this: the conver-

sion of the law into an instrument of plunder.

“What are the consequences of such a perversion? It would require volumes to describe them all. Thus we must content ourselves with pointing out the most striking.

“In the first place, it erases from everyone’s conscience the distinction between justice and injustice.

“No society can exist unless the laws are respected to a certain degree. The safest way to make laws respected is to make them respectable. When law and morality contradict each other, the citizen has the cruel alternative of either losing his moral sense or losing his respect for the law. These two evils are of equal consequence, and it would be difficult for a person to choose between them.”

When the law is used to plunder our freedom a few things happen:

1. We lose the distinction between justice and injustice
2. We lose respect for law
3. We are caught between losing our moral sense and just giving in or losing our respect and ignoring law

I would suggest all this is our experience of law today. I’m not picking on the police but they do make for a very clear case for abuse by the State because they represent the State. This event is just one of hundreds every year.

“Last week in Fitchburg Massachusetts the FBI conducted a ‘no-knock’ raid and chainsawed through the door of Judy Sanchez’s apartment. They held her at gunpoint in front of her three year-old child for 30 minutes.

“About then they realized they had busted through the wrong door.

“From the story about the event on MSNBC

“I took two steps, faced the second door, and I heard the click of a gun, and saying, ‘FBI, get down,’ so I laid down on my living room floor,” Sanchez told WHDH.com. “I was screaming, ‘You have the wrong apartment, you have the wrong apartment,’ over fifty times. And then I seen the big blade coming down my door.”

“For the FBI this was supposed to have been the culmination of a two-year investigation into a drug and weapons-dealing operation.

“In two years they couldn’t figure out the actual apartment.”

Homes are destroyed, people are severely hurt, dogs are killed and the State excuses this because it is argued that even though they did it wrong they intended to do it right and so those destroyed by this “wrong” never get justice for that wrong as they cannot collect money to rebuild what was lost, let alone their sanity after being terrorized.

Such behavior is outside the norm, but that distance between norm and bad behavior is shrinking and these events only cause a loss of respect from us all. Going in a different direction here is another story of “takings” by authorities, this time a school. From TheBlaze.com we read this:

“An elementary school principal in St. Paul, Minnesota, has written a letter to parents that “dominant holidays” will no longer be celebrated at the school, according to the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

“Scott Masini, the principal of Bruce Vento Elementary School, wrote that “my personal feeling is we need to find a way to honor and engage in holidays that are inclusive of our student population.

. . . According to the Star Tribune, Saint Paul Public Schools was forced to issue a statement about the decision after reaction from parents:

“Because Saint Paul Public Schools is a diverse district that is filled with families from around the world we strive to respect all cultures and all students. We recognize that not every student celebrates or participates in some or all holidays. We have a board policy that discourages programs and festivities that celebrate observances unless they are required by law.

“I’m struggling with this and I don’t know what the right answer is,” Masini said in the statement. “But, what I do know is celebrating some holidays and not others is not inclusive of all of the students we serve.” (“Tired of the PC’: Elementary School Stops Celebrating Valentines’ Day, Christmas, Thanksgiving — Here’s Why,)

This is political correctness replacing law as PC becomes law. Please explain to me this justification that because of a diverse population to respect some cultures that are different from others we insult other cultures by taking from them tradition and meaning. You are not leveling the playing field; you are throwing some off the cliff. We’ve made right, wrong, and wrong, right and it’s no wonder we are confused about justice, and we lose respect for law, for authority, and are in a quandary over whether I should keep what I believe and get kicked out of school or go to jail or lose everything I have or give in and lose myself.

“The nature of law is to maintain justice. This is so much the case that, in the minds of the people, law and justice are one and the same thing. There is in all of us a strong disposition to believe that anything lawful is also legitimate. This belief is so widespread that many persons have erroneously held that things are “just” because law makes them so. Thus, in order to make plunder appear just and sacred to many consciences, it is only necessary for the law to decree and sanction it. Slavery, restrictions, and monopoly find defenders not only among those who profit from them but also among those who suffer from them.”

If we are not free by nature, then none of this matters and we are just pawns of those who move us around. But, and this is crucial, if we are free, if “life, liberty, and happiness/property” is our natural right by our created nature then why have we let, and why are we letting the State do this to us, plunder our property. And property, here, is everything we make and do.

When the State is allowed to get away with plunder then, as Bastiat writes, “it erases from everyone’s conscience the distinction between justice and injustice.” Over the years the Supreme Court has made a plethora of decisions all acting as laws suborning the role of Congress. They are enforced as law and some believe “that anything lawful is also legitimate.” Are these decisions law because the Supreme Court said they are?

Here are just a couple of Supreme Court decisions that fit this scenario of “outside” the Constitution and therefor outside their authority. In the 1954 case of *Brown v. Board of Education* the case was about segregation of blacks and whites in schools in the south. The Supreme Court ruled segregation was unconstitutional and in a further case in 1971 ruled on busing as the means of bring in black children to white schools. However right their intent was, and I personally believe they were right to desegregate the South, it was not the Supreme Court’s role to make this kind of legislation, and it is legislation by the Court when it, not Congress, is making the law. And busing was clearly outside the

role of the Court, but it was accepted as legal because the Court ruled it was. The constitutional way it should have gone down was that Congress pass a law declaring segregation illegal and if the South refused and it was then brought before the Court the Court could then rule the legislation constitutional. Right would not have been done wrong which always further conflicts right. Busing was so far outside the Courts jurisdiction that all Justices that sided with it should have been impeached. In the end busing might have been a plan, but the plans for desegregation, for following the Constitution affirmed by the Supreme Court should have been worked out by local communities. It was certainly quicker for the Court to make everyone's decision, but wrong, and seen by how many negative issues surrounded busing.

Another massive ruling by the Supreme Court that was legislation is seen in the case of Roe v. Wade in 1973 legalizing abortion. I'm not here going to argue for or against abortion, I only want to point out that this was legislation by the Court outside its Constitution duty. Today you would be hard pressed to find any decent lawyer that believes this was a Constitutional decision as the Court had to find creative machinations to come up with their decision.

And recently when Supreme Court Justice Roberts sided with the Obama administration on "Obamacare" giving it legal legitimacy by calling it a tax when the administration did not argue that point because that in itself didn't fit the Constitution, the Court usurped the role of Congress and the people.

These are but a few of the Court's illegal ruling, made illegal because they took authority they didn't have, that belonged to Congress, not them. But many fully believe that because the rulings are made law they are therefor legitimate.

What if I came to you and said, "You see that house across the street? It's yours. I give it to you." Then I go across the street with my gun and force the occupants out and let you move in. Did I have a right to do this? Obviously no. But I had the gun and the gun gave me the right. Truth is, it's no different with the Supreme Court. If I ask you what is the law of the land how would you answer? Many of you will answer the Supreme Court because this has ipso facto become our final arbiter of law. But this isn't true. What did Ben Franklin say to the woman after the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention? "We have created a republic." He didn't say we created a democracy, no, he said a Constitutional Republic. The supreme law of the land is not the Supreme Court but the Constitution. In that Constitution the Supreme Court was not given the role of legislating from the bench, that was given to Congress. The moment Congress, the President, the Supreme Court took their eyes off the Constitution is the moment these words of Bastiat come into reality: "Thus it is easy to understand how law, instead of checking injustice, becomes the invincible weapon of injustice. It is easy to understand why the law is used by the legislator to destroy in varying degrees among the rest of the people, their personal independence by slavery, their liberty by oppression, and their property by plunder. This is done for the benefit of the person who makes the law, and in proportion to the power that he holds."

And these words are important: "The safest way to make laws respected is to make them respectable." I have twelve years of school—kindergarten through high school; four years of undergraduate college; two years of graduate school. That's eighteen years of schooling. It wasn't until years

after college that I really studied how our country was founded and how and why the Constitution was written. And I did this personal study because I wanted to know why what we were doing was wrong and how it is supposed to be done. Most of us have never undertaken this kind of study. Truth is, it is simply a matter of reading a few books with enough variety to ensure you get a full picture. That's all. Not at all difficult. It is a little harder today because there are so many lies about our past from those who want to change it to support their ideology of Marxism/Socialism/Progressivism. But, you see, Congress, the President, the Supreme Court take their eyes off the Constitution because we either never had our eyes on our history or took our eyes off that history. And now the State could plunder us and get away with it.

Legal Plunder Has Many Names

If this isn't the United States you want and believe in, and you believe in liberty then you must do what it takes to take back your natural rights.

"Now, legal plunder can be committed in an infinite number of ways. Thus we have an infinite number of plans for organizing it: tariffs, protection, benefits, subsidies, encouragements, progressive taxation, public schools, guaranteed jobs, guaranteed profits, minimum wages, a right to relief, a right to the tools of labor, free credit, and so on, and so on. All these plans as a whole — with their common aim of legal plunder — constitute socialism."

"A wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government."

Thomas Jefferson - Inaugural Address – 1801

In 1941, after the big crash, Roosevelt saw a chance to do the opposite of what Thomas Jefferson said in his inaugural address. Roosevelt was a progressive, meaning the people can't take care of themselves so government must do it for them. There were very few companies that had retirement plans, certainly those who were poor couldn't sock away money for their later years, so Roosevelt's administration came up with a retirement plan when you paid a percentage of your money into (the government would take money from your check because you didn't have the fortitude to send it in yourself), and when you retired from working you would be paid back that money with the interests it earned keeping you out of the poor house.

Let's get something straight, the poor have been and will always be among us. There will always be those for reasons not their own and for reasons that are their own, who will be poor and in need of help. We can wish this weren't so but it was, is, and will be, and we will never end it in this world.

But this doesn't let us off the hook for helping our fellow man. A little history: It was a time of prosperity and everything seeming going right for the Northern Kingdom of Israel thanks to the long rule of King Jeroboam II. From Chadbad.org on Amos we read: "He recovered every piece of land which had been lost by his forerunners. He subdued the Kingdom of Moab and captured parts of Syria (Aram) which had long been like a thorn in the flesh of his people. Even Damascus, Syria's capital fell to him." And then came Amos, a shepherd, a dresser of sycamore trees—It seems that the trees called 'sycamores' produced a small fruit of little taste. It was the fruit of the poor. To succeed in get-

ting it even to that poor state someone had to puncture the skin of the fruit while on the tree. That's what the 'dresser' did." And now we read in Amos these shocking words:

21 "I hate, I despise your religious festivals;

your assemblies are a stench to me.

22 Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them.

Though you bring choice fellowship offerings,

I will have no regard for them.

23 Away with the noise of your songs!

I will not listen to the music of your harps.

24 But let justice roll on like a river,

righteousness like a never-failing stream!

Wow! You would think God would be pleased with them. What happened? When you read through Amos you understand what they were not doing, they were not taking care of the poor, their neighbor, their family, the stranger. Those words were not just to the leaders but to everyone. God knew that even among "his" people there would be poor people, it could be no other way if we had freedom. But this didn't mean one could ignore the inevitable. We are, after all, not just individuals, we are also social. This act of helping was not the responsibility of the State but it was a responsibility on every person. Families took care of family, they took care of friends, they took care of strangers. Why? Because that is who we are. Will we always do it perfectly, assuming we can come to some kind of definition of "perfectly"? No. Will some reject our help? Yes, and sadly if they reject our help we must let them go knowing nothing good will happen for them or to them until they are ready to be helped.

So prior to the big crash that make Roosevelt feel he had to take over "helping" through the State, for the most part families helped family, and charities (mostly Christian) sprang up to help those missed by family. This was the philosophy and principle of this nation until those with progressive ideas believed they had a better philosophy and principle. Don't be fooled by the term "progressive" thinking it means progress. Progressives would have you think that mainstream people are stuck in the mud in the old ways and they are just fighting the new ways that are better for everyone. Those of us who are not progressives are not against progress; it's just not every idea of progress is progress. In fact, this progress is part of the trilogy Marxism/Socialism/Progressivism, socialism and progressivism are just another form of Marxism.

One could say that the idea of "too big to fail" that began under President Bush and carried into absurdity with Obama, began with President Franklin Roosevelt. The truth is, it's more about control than about help. Oh, sure, it's couched in words of "helping," but when you see how it's played out you realize it ends with the State in control taking away our personal freedom and responsibility.

On one level Social Security, and later welfare sounds like a good and necessary idea. They were sold on the idea of helping and temporary help because the supposed goal was to help people get back on their feet so they can then resume taking care of themselves. Was Roosevelt and those after him naive? Was it a conspiracy for government control? Well, you do understand that a conspira-

cy that comes about is not a conspiracy but a fact. In fact, it ended with government controlling us, so you tell me the truth of why. Temporary became permanent, and we now have a welfare culture where generations of families are and have been on welfare, the State taking care of them. Recently Seattle passed a \$15-dollar minimum wage that everyone wanted. How did that work out? Here is the reality: those who complained they weren't making a living wage and therefore were also living on the dole, though now they were making a living wage they realized they had to give up the dole and complained that companies should cut back their time so they wouldn't make so much money they had to get off the dole. Go figure. They are now making more but working less hours so in the end they are making exactly what they were before, but they get to remain on public assistance.

So back to the State's legal plunder. When Social Security began, it was to help those workers who had no retirement. The money taken from not just their, but everyone's paycheck, was put into a secure account from which they would be paid. No, it didn't happen that way. The money was put into the general account and politicians began borrowing money from SS to fund their pet projects putting in its place an IOU. To add to this, "do-gooders" came up with the wonderful plan that help should be extended to this person and that person from that money collected and your, and my, SS tax that was supposed to be mine was now shared with those who didn't contribute. To fund all this the State began taking more and more from us.

You do understand that both social security and welfare is nothing more than a pyramid scheme, a Ponzi scheme? In order to feed all those recipients off the same dollar you must have a large enough supply constantly coming in. It kind of works if you keep fresh money coming in, but it falls apart when that new money isn't found, and that is where we are today.

Legal plunder becomes necessary for the State to be in control because they know how to do things better than we do and must then do it for us. The law then becomes our enemy rather than our friend.

Part IV

The Proper Function of the Law

"And, in all sincerity, can anything more than the absence of plunder be required of the law? Can the law — which necessarily requires the use of force — rationally be used for anything except protecting the rights of everyone? I defy anyone to extend it beyond this purpose without perverting it and, consequently, turning might against right. This is the most fatal and most illogical social perversion that can possibly be imagined. It must be admitted that the true solution — so long searched for in the area of social relationships — is contained in these simple words: Law is organized justice.

"Now this must be said: When justice is organized by law — that is, by force — this excludes the idea of using law (force) to organize any human activity whatever, whether it be labor, charity, agriculture, commerce, industry, education, art, or religion. The organizing by law of any one of these would inevitably destroy the essential organization — justice. For truly, how can we imagine force being used against the liberty of citizens without it also being used against justice, and thus acting against its proper purpose?"

These words of Bastiat—"The organizing by law of any one of these would inevitably destroy the

essential organization — justice” should be tattooed on the insides of your eye lid so you constantly see them. Remember that the idea of law as understood by our Founders was codified in the Constitution and Bill of Rights: it is there to protect our natural rights, not displace and replace them. When government does this it ends up destroying and not helping, not increasing our rights.

What you need to do is take these to phrases of Bastiat—“law is organized by justice” and “justice is organized by law” and meditate long on them. What is justice for Bastiat? It’s the rights of everyone being protected, rights that are ours by nature, inherent in us, a gift from God. From this we organize laws to protect those rights. What Bastiat understands is that if you go beyond that you end up perverting justice and “turning might against right”.

If law determines “labor, charity, agriculture, commerce, industry, education, art, or religion”, it, not you, decide justice and right; it determines what is labor, charity . . . and religion, and, of course, force is used to establish each. This is the foundation of Marxism/Socialism/Progressivism where the State determines what should be done and how it should be done and who can and can’t do it. Do we really want to believe that some know better than all the rest of us?

Aristotle wrote that nature abhors a vacuum, meaning, for us, if we abrogate our duty and responsibility that is part of our created nature, government will step in and fill that duty for us. Governments, however, become self-serving and controlling. If this is okay with you, and it seems it is for many, you must understand that this is an abrogation of your duty and you will in the end have to account for that. Furthermore, because you allow the State to control, not only does it control you but me, as well, and I don’t appreciate that.

The Political Approach

“When a politician views society from the seclusion of his office, he is struck by the spectacle of the inequality that he sees. He deplores the deprivations which are the lot of so many of our brothers, deprivations which appear to be even sadder when contrasted with luxury and wealth.

“Perhaps the politician should ask himself whether this state of affairs has not been caused by old conquests and lootings, and by more recent legal plunder. Perhaps he should consider this proposition: Since all persons seek well-being and perfection, would not a condition of justice be sufficient to cause the greatest efforts toward progress, and the greatest possible equality that is compatible with individual responsibility? Would not this be in accord with the concept of individual responsibility which God has willed in order that mankind may have the choice between vice and virtue, and the resulting punishment and reward?

“But the politician never gives this a thought. His mind turns to organizations, combinations, and arrangements — legal or apparently legal. He attempts to remedy the evil by increasing and perpetuating the very thing that caused the evil in the first place: legal plunder. We have seen that justice is a negative concept. Is there even one of these positive legal actions that does not contain the principle of plunder?”

Here is the picture Bastiat paints: a politician is sitting secluded in his office with a view of the nation below him or her. (It’s interesting that he describes it as “secluded” meaning that this politician has separated him or herself away from people, the people he or she serves so as not to be personally

effected by them. In essence this is how much of the world’s political system worked. This certainly makes how the system Americans devised so unique because the politician was not a royal but a citizen who came from the everyman and was never intended to be separate from them.)

From this secluded office he or she sees the pain of the poor and the luxury of the rich and is made sad by what is seen. But wait: “Perhaps the politician should ask himself whether this state of affairs has not been caused by old conquests and lootings, and by more recent legal plunder.” The politician never considers that he or she is part of the cause of the problems he or she sees, therefore the “fix” must begin with them.

While I’ve many times stated that this nation was the best of all possible nations it wasn’t without its faults and problems. But were they of such nature that a “fundamental transformation” was needed?

I’ve posed this question before and answered no. Then I asked if no, why the change? The answer is that a new political philosophy swept the Western world; Marxism. Quite honestly Russia was in seriously bad shape and needed a fundamental change. World War I gave Vladimir Lenin the chance to step into Russia carrying the writing of Karl Marx and set about to fundamentally transform the Russian nation. But honestly, that transformation was nothing more than one dictator replacing another, one repressive regime replacing another. But Marxist philosophy had an idealistic appeal and it seemed to be the “hope and change” Russians needed

This idealistic appeal swept England, nowhere near the bad shape of Russia, suffering somewhat from the pains of the Industrial Revolution that was upsetting the political powers that were. Those who wanted to be controllers knew that the violent march of Marxism wouldn’t work in England so they reworked Marxism into Socialism hoping to effect the changes Marxism sought but do so without the need of a gun.

Now, the United States by this time in its history had many ties to Europe and the appeal of Marxism/Socialism had its effect on our intelligencia and political leaders. But if England was marginally suffering troubles the United States was a nation of saints in comparison. Again, not that everyone was moral and honest, they weren’t, but more were than not and that is why the great progress seen in America was not seen elsewhere. But, the philosophy of Marxism is that individuals cannot govern themselves, they must be governed by others; and that big business exploits everyone for its own greed. So those politicians cloistered in their office looking over the nation looks through those Marxist glasses, though now reformed again into progressivism that sounds so much better, sees problems and applies Marxism/Socialism/Progressivism as the solution. So the drastic change we now see was never needed, just another Awakening would have done the job.

Now backtracking a bit, while all thirteen colonies were under the rule of England, they were independent, separate, and sovereign from each other. Each colony in some respects was like a little nation, each with their own unique personality and their own laws. Their commonness came from their shared English language and their shared English history, and for those who weren’t English they were at least European with similar cultural histories. Out of this came many similar laws and political systems, but no colony had any authority over another. While citizens could travel between colonies without documents and could move to another colony without any permissions from the

Colony, commerce between colonies was taxed at the border. Two things brought the colonies together; the French and Indian War and the various Acts passed by the English Parliament and the King that equally affected every colony. The Committee of Correspondence was formed in Boston in 1764, committees that every colony eventually had where information was passed between them about what England was doing to tax them and take greater control over them. Part of the talk between them when England began pushing really hard against them was the idea of independence.

This would lead to the First Continental Congress where delegates from twelve of the thirteen colonies met to petition the King to stop and leave them alone. When this didn't happen they held the Second Continental Congress (this time all thirteen colonies were represented) where now they declared their independence from England. Their uniting document was the Declaration of Independence; their governing document was the Articles of Confederation. In this they gave up partial independence to form a unified body they named the United States of America. Please note that States is plural and not singular and this is crucial to understand. A national government would have some, but very limited rule over the whole in order for the thirteen colonies to function as one. This did not change when ten years later they met again and replaced the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution of the United States. They gave a tiny bit more control to a national government, but still most governing would remain in the various states. This fact was codified in the Tenth Amendment: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Not the President, not Congress, and not the Court.

The Constitution defined the role of the national government where any and all legislation came from Congress. The President would be America's representative to the world, and he would ensure that legislation from Congress was properly carried out throughout all the States. The Supreme Court would essentially resolve any differences between states and issues arising from legislation that supposedly was contrary to the Constitution.

The good side of our human nature sees a problem and wants to fix it. Even our first president, George Washington, violated in two ways the Constitution he fought to win and now served by creating a Bank of the United States and building a federal highway. The war was very costly and the smaller states had a very difficult time repaying their debt—you will remember, if you read our history, that the colonies had to contribute money for the war effort which was one, very difficult to obtain, and two, left several States in debt. Alexander Hamilton convinced Washington that it was the best thing to do, that is, create a bank to spread the debt out and save any state from bankruptcy. There is more to the bank but this was a crucial part. Secondly, Washington knew that a highway that one could get on in one state and travel uninterrupted to another or several states was a good thing both for citizens and commerce. It was a right idea, just that the Constitution did not allow for this act without a new Amendment. He thought it could be done faster if the federal government stepped in rather than leave it up to the several states to pass such a project and then complete it.

The problem is, and here we went down that slippery slope, however right and good an action seems (and is), when done wrong leads to more problems over time, such as presidents now believing they have a pen and a phone and can get anything done by going around Congress.

So Bastiat asks: "Since all persons seek well-being and perfection, would not a condition of justice be sufficient to cause the greatest efforts toward progress, and the greatest possible equality that is compatible with individual responsibility?"

And his answer: "But the politician never gives this a thought. His mind turns to organizations, combinations, and arrangements — legal or apparently legal. He attempts to remedy the evil by increasing and perpetuating the very thing that caused the evil in the first place: legal plunder."

What happens is that goodness in the politician gives way to the control of the politician and power becomes more important than proper. Proper takes time, power can be instant. Without questioning the reality of the need for help, the State must take from one area and give it to another area and it does this without the consent of the governed because legal plunder has become the name of the game. Because the State believes it is its right, and therefore, in the case of the school worker who gave a lunch to a hungry girl, the people who help feed the poor in a part, charity now becomes without the specific blessing of the State because the State no longer see individuals, it only sees the collective.

The Law and Charity

"You say: "There are persons who have no money," and you turn to the law. But the law is not a breast that fills itself with milk. Nor are the lacteal veins of the law supplied with milk from a source outside the society. Nothing can enter the public treasury for the benefit of one citizen or one class unless other citizens and other classes have been forced to send it in. If every person draws from the treasury the amount that he has put in it, it is true that the law then plunders nobody. But this procedure does nothing for the persons who have no money. It does not promote equality of income. The law can be an instrument of equalization only as it takes from some persons and gives to other persons. When the law does this, it is an instrument of plunder.

"With this in mind, examine the protective tariffs, subsidies, guaranteed profits, guaranteed jobs, relief and welfare schemes, public education, progressive taxation, free credit, and public works. You will find that they are always based on legal plunder, organized injustice."

In this one statement—"the law is not a breast that fills itself with milk"—we have come to the bottom line of what's wrong. States do not create, they take. Mothers' breasts, whether they be human or animal, have their milk for the child naturally created by the body so that what is emptied today is refilled for tomorrow. Not so with the government. The breasts of government are not natural, they are stitched on and have no milk to offer unless someone sticks in a hose connected to an outside source. When its teats are empty the only way it is refilled is by taking from others. Now there is one exception, the State can and does print money. When we were on the gold standard this was not a serious issue because you could not print more money than you had gold or silver to back it. In this case the value of the dollar remained constant. But when President Nixon dropped the gold standard and money became fiat money with no real backing, the more money you printed the less value it had. We found this out when the Federal Bank promised it wouldn't print money to help the economy, then pretended it wasn't when it was, and the value of the dollar began to drop and our purchasing power began to precipitously drop.

The problem Bastiat is presenting is when the State (the Law) takes over charity from individuals and families. It did this because it convinced us that the problem was too big for individuals and families. You know the concept that came at the conclusion of the Bush presidency and carried out throughout the Obama presidency, "too big to fail." In this case it was financial institutions and GM and Chrysler. So what did the State do? In the case of GM it took money from we the people without our permission, supposedly loaned it to GM to keep them from failing with the promise GM paying it back.

This computer I'm typing on, even my smartphone, sometimes gets glitches and does things wrong and I have to reboot it and start over. GM, in particular, had a lot of problems with overhead—read too many at the top taking money and doing very little. It also had a problem with unions demanding more and more and lack of quality in their product. What happened was that Americans stopped buying their cars in favor of foreign cars made better. It would have been better for GM to fail and start over losing much of the top heaviness and changing union contracts. But no, the State had a better idea, and in the end we got stuck with empty pockets. Sure, the president likes to tout how successful GM now is, but really, they have not paid us back one red dime of the money taken from us. Sure, how hard is it to be successful when you are given tons of money you don't have to pay back. Include the payback and they are not so successful, and does not justify taking our hard earned money without our consent.

In every way the law is being used against us.

The same can be said for the financial institution bailed out. I've been in a bankruptcy and it doesn't feel good, but sometimes it's the only way to stop what is failing and start over. No shame in that, assuming that you gave it a good shot. Sure, we would have hurt in the short term if big auto companies and financial institutions failed. Many would have temporarily lost their jobs but in the end stronger institutions more in tune with the public they serve would be better for it. With the government playing Santa Claus with our money, the only real losers were you and me who had our hard-earned money stolen from us so Uncle Sam could give it away, oh, yeah, and keep a big chunk of that money for itself.

Part V

The Law and Morals

"You say: "Here are persons who are lacking in morality or religion," and you turn to the law. But law is force. And need I point out what a violent and futile effort it is to use force in the matters of morality and religion?"

"It would seem that socialists, however self-complacent, could not avoid seeing this monstrous legal plunder that results from such systems and such efforts. But what do the socialists do? They cleverly disguise this legal plunder from others—and even from themselves—under the seductive names of fraternity, unity, organization, and association. Because we ask so little from the law—only justice—the socialists thereby assume that we reject fraternity, unity, organization, and association. The socialists brand us with the name individualist.

"But we assure the socialists that we repudiate only forced organization, not natural organization.

We repudiate the forms of association that are forced upon us, not free association. We repudiate forced fraternity, not true fraternity. We repudiate the artificial unity that does nothing more than deprive persons of individual responsibility. We do not repudiate the natural unity of mankind under Providence."

Between August 24 and October 3, 1572 we have in Paris the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre where thousands were killed because of their Protestant faith. The Huguenot Wars in France between French Catholics and French Protestants (Huguenots) saw thousands killed for their faith. Before the Protestant Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church from Rome all the way north to England determined one's faith and participation in the State. This was the political side of the church I wrote about in *Miracle Across the Water*. The Reformation would change the course of the Western world forever and while the Roman Catholic Church would still have a role in nations it now had to share that role with others with differing interpretations of that faith.

In *Miracle Across the Water* I tried to show how the Reformation impacted England and that change led directly to what was established in the New World that eventually became the United States of America. While there were a few leaders in the New World who tried to keep a very modified church dominance it was soon rejected for a non-religious rule though the church would always, until modern times, have a significant part in how governing took place. There was no separation of church and state, rather it was a shared participation.

Bastiat would have had this in mind when he penned this section. But he wasn't limited to church-state dominance, he took it further in that as much as the state wanted to dominate religion it also wanted to dominate all associations increasing its power over us.

What do Socialists do? he asks. "They cleverly disguise this legal plunder from others—and even from themselves—under the seductive names of fraternity, unity, organization, and association" If we don't accept their brand of fraternity, unity, organization, and association then we are labeled as individuals, standing outside the properly defined system of governing. Today we can reduce this to one phrase, political correctness.

Since Theodore Roosevelt, the first progressive president, there have only been three presidents who can clearly not be called progressives: Calvin Coolidge, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Ronald Reagan. Every other president, both Democrat or Republican was into progressive philosophy in one degree or another. All of them believed in a larger federal role over the States and over everyone and put in place policies to get us there. As many have said, while the progressive Democrats were driving us in a speeding train to Socialism, the Republicans were going in the same direction but at a lesser speed. Both have been taking us to Socialism.

To accomplish this, they had to break our free associations outside the control of government for ones that were controlled by government. Political correctness was the best means of achieving this. Exclusive has become an evil word and in its place is inclusive. Every fraternity, association, organization must be a microcosm of the world around us to include every gender, every race, every faith, every identity lest we be called racist or homophobic or Islamophobic or a host of phobics. To not be this microcosm could and will land you in a court to answer for your sin.

You will say, that's good, isn't it? And I will answer, yes, there can be good in a more inclusive

association. As a student of history I know that when one culture comes into contact with another and different culture new and better things happen. When they don't a culture stagnates and dies. So it's good to associate with as many different from you as possible.

The problem comes when the State dictates those associations because it defines what is good and that good is always for the purpose of extending its power, not your goodness. When the State dictates morality it is its morality being dictated, not God's. And this can be seen in the fact that even the State cannot be consistent with its dictates. While on the one hand it is pushing Christianity out of public view it is encouraging Islam on the public and in schools. If religion is bad then no religion should be encouraged. While on the one hand it demands blacks be included in all associations it allows black to segregate themselves, seen most recently in the University of Connecticut to have their own housing separate from "whites". You can come up with all the justifications you want, they are just justifications. And here is a good headline for you: "Religious Diversity Must Include Nonbelievers".

When you turn control over to the State this is what you get.

A Confusion of Terms

"Socialism, like the ancient ideas from which it springs, confuses the distinction between government and society. As a result of this, every time we object to a thing being done by government, the socialists conclude that we object to its being done at all.

"We disapprove of state education. Then the socialists say that we are opposed to any education. We object to a state religion. Then the socialists say that we want no religion at all. We object to a state-enforced equality. Then they say that we are against equality. And so on, and so on. It is as if the socialists were to accuse us of not wanting persons to eat because we do not want the state to raise grain."

If this isn't the truth of us today nothing is true. Socialism wasn't introduced into the United States until the late 1800s. From Mariam-Webster we get this definition:

- 1 : any of various economic and political theories advocating collective or governmental ownership and administration of the means of production and distribution of goods
- 2 a : a system of society or group living in which there is no private property
- b : a system or condition of society in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the state
- 3 : a stage of society in Marxist theory transitional between capitalism and communism and distinguished by unequal distribution of goods and pay according to work done

Political commentator Bill O' Reilly once challenged the use of socialism in defining where our government was going based on the definition that the government in socialism owns both the means of production and the distribution. What we were seeing, for a time with the reinterpretation of the commerce clause that distribution was taken over by the federal government, but not the companies themselves. What he ignored, and I don't think he does today, is that the government doesn't have to

own production, all it has to do is regulated it and in effect it now owns the company as well. This is now the clear pattern. The government gets what it wants without all the complications of owning a company, especially a large one, entails.

What Bastiat writes about government and society under socialism losing their distinction is very right and we have in the United States a fading distinction of the two. Government is not only in our businesses, it's in our schools, our social behavior, it's everywhere and you can't walk a few feet without tripping over a government regulation. Worse, not just government has this new control but we see it in our schools and in our businesses that have bought into the idea of socialism.

Political correctness has been an effective means of government controlling us, both in our behavior and in our thoughts. Bastiat saw this 200 years ago: "[E]very time we object to a thing being done by government, the socialists conclude that we object to its being done at all."

The Constitution gives no ground to the federal government to run our schools, yet it has found a way to do just that by taking money from States, then returning it in grants for school, except there are a host of strings attached that must be followed to get and keep that money. This is how Common Core got in, even with all the wild denials by the federal government that it isn't a national program, it is because it is forced on schools through their taking money. Neat trick. It's how the federal government works in terms of our highways. Again there is nowhere in the Constitution a role for the federal government to interfere with States' rights over their highways. Yet years ago it mandated all roads have a maximum speed limit of 55 MPH to save oil. How did it do this? Because it first took money from the States, then gave it back (a partial give-back) for highways and with that money came strings.

So, if we say Common Core is bad their response is that we are against educating our children. If we say 55 MPH is unnecessary they respond we are against conserving and stopping the use of fossil fuels. If we say ethanol is not working, that it has as many problems as fossil fuels and raises the price of corn, again they accuse us of not wanting clean air. If we are not for abortion on demand, we hate women. If we don't believe in gender fluidity and having boys go into girl's bathrooms we hate those who are different and different is just as good.

Under socialism the State dictates morality and we are almost completely there.

The Influence of Socialist Writers

I thought about not including the entirety of this section but couldn't because it is so telling and what we need to hear.

"How did politicians ever come to believe this weird idea that the law could be made to produce what it does not contain—the wealth, science, and religion that, in a positive sense, constitute prosperity? Is it due to the influence of our modern writers on public affairs?

"Present-day writers—especially those of the socialist school of thought—base their various theories upon one common hypothesis: They divide mankind into two parts. People in general—with the exception of the writer himself—from the first group. The writer, all alone, forms the second and most important group. Surely this is the weirdest and most conceited notion that ever entered a human brain!

"In fact, these writers on public affairs begin by supposing that people have within themselves

no means of discernment; no motivation to action. The writers assume that people are inert matter, passive particles, motionless atoms, at best a kind of vegetation indifferent to its own manner of existence. They assume that people are susceptible to being shaped—by the will and hand of another person—into an infinite variety of forms, more or less symmetrical, artistic, and perfected.

“Moreover, not one of these writers on governmental affairs hesitates to imagine that he himself—under the title of organizer, discoverer, legislator, or founder—is this will and hand, this universal motivating force, this creative power whose sublime mission is to mold these scattered materials—persons—into a society.

“These socialist writers look upon people in the same manner that the gardener views his trees. Just as the gardener capriciously shapes the trees into pyramids, parasols, cubes, vases, fans, and other forms, just so does the socialist writer whimsically shape human beings into groups, series, centers, sub-centers, honeycombs, labor corps, and other variations. And just as the gardener needs axes, pruning hooks, saws, and shears to shape his trees, just so does the socialist writer need the force that he can find only in law to shape human beings. For this purpose, he devises tariff laws, tax laws, relief laws, and school laws.”

That introductory question is quite stinging: “How did politicians . . .” Recall the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The serpent came to Eve with a new idea, then she passed it on to Adam. We all have questions inside us. They are questions of wonder and awe, and questions of why. It is a natural part of that natural intelligence that God gave us. Babies have no language, other than cries or giggles or grunts, yet they have intelligence and they understand without language something about life that directs their behavior. All you have to do is have a child, or be reminded of this with grandchildren. As we develop we rely on others to fill in the blanks, those things we feel but can't define. There have been a lot of influences in my life that have shaped my thinking, but there are a few that stick out as playing a significant role in my thinking: my mother and father, Plato, Descartes, Tillich, Ellul, just to name a few. Each added a different part to what was already inside me, a part that never got lost. Adam and Eve would have had questions about that tree forbidden to them and the serpent fed into those question.

This is the tricky part of our humanity, balancing out competing voices and not losing ourselves in those voices. We typically don't do this well and sometimes it's because when we were young points of view were beaten into us and we couldn't find our way out of them; sometimes we just get lazy and never for ourselves prove what we believe so that our beliefs are ours, not someone else's. I often say we typically pick our truths like we pick fruit: oh, this looks good and we pick the fruit and eat it. Then, oh, that looks good so we pick the fruit and eat it. Somewhere along the line we get a terrible stomach ache and can't figure out why, never understanding that not all fruit goes together.

Now, going all the way back to the beginning of The Law the first statement made was that we have a natural right to life, liberty, property /happiness. That's our inherent right given to us by God, not the State. The only role a State has is to protect those natural rights by not stepping on them for its own purposes. If you accept this as true, then anything that contradicts that is automatically wrong. You can't have it both ways; socialism and democracy. A democratic socialism is a contradiction in terms, though it is the term being used today to make socialism palatable.

In answering the question of how could politicians come to socialist views, it was socialist writers who influenced them. Now just writers like Karl Marx whose Das Capital is more a rant against capitalism than a coherent philosophy, but also popular writers like Charles Dickens whose books were not just stories but socialist stories trying to influence readers into the socialist philosophy. We can call these writers ideologues and all have this in common:

“[P]eople have within themselves no means of discernment; no motivation to action. The writers assume that people are inert matter, passive particles, motionless atoms, at best a kind of vegetation indifferent to its own manner of existence. They assume that people are susceptible to being shaped—by the will and hand of another person—into an infinite variety of forms, more or less symmetrical, artistic, and perfected.”

The foundation of Marxism/Socialism/Progressivism is that you and I (those other than themselves) are incapable of governing ourselves so they must govern for us. Once you understand this you are no longer under their power and influence and you can reason for yourself truth. Don't misunderstand that only leftist writers are ideologues and need scrutiny, this can be said of writers with a conservative bent, as well. Everything we read ought to be put to critical thinking, but the focus of Bastiat is on leftist writers so I concentrate on them here.

When they were arguing in both the Continental Convention and the Constitutional Convention what form of government should they create, there were contrary voices aplenty. The argument was that we weren't capable of governing ourselves and we needed a ruler in one form or another versus we were by right free to govern ourselves and didn't need the heavy hand of a ruler. The latter argument won and a government of the people, for the people, and by the people was created. This government could only function with the consent of the governed. No nation went this far.

But that contrary voice never left, in fact, those with it found their way inside government and worked relentlessly to fundamentally transform our government into being ruled by others. When progressivism came to the states those who wanted strong government found a coherent philosophy that would lead them to it. So, as Bastiat put it with the gardener shaping trees, they began shaping we the people until the day we resembled what they wanted and accepted what they wanted and now we have an outspoken Socialist running for president, another who is as she proclaims an American Progressive (just another name for Socialist) and half the people are persuaded, especially the young who have had progressivism shoved down their throats in school.

This is what happens when we don't critically think about what we read and accept as gospel.

The Socialists Despise Mankind

“According to these writers, it is indeed fortunate that Heaven has bestowed upon certain men—governors and legislators—the exact opposite inclinations, not only for their own sake but also for the sake of the rest of the world! While mankind tends toward evil, the legislators yearn for good; while mankind advances toward darkness, the legislators aspire for enlightenment; while mankind is drawn toward vice, the legislators are attracted toward virtue. Since they have decided that this is the true state of affairs, they then demand the use of force in order to substitute their own inclinations for those of the human race.

“Open at random any book on philosophy, politics, or history, and you will probably see how

deeply rooted in our country is this idea—the child of classical studies, the mother of socialism. In all of them, you will probably find this idea that mankind is merely inert matter, receiving life, organization, morality, and prosperity from the power of the state. And even worse, it will be stated that mankind tends toward degeneration, and is stopped from this downward course only by the mysterious hand of the legislator. Conventional classical thought everywhere says that behind passive society there is a concealed power called law or legislator (or called by some other terminology that designates some unnamed person or persons of undisputed influence and authority) which moves, controls, benefits, and improves mankind.”

We are so easily fooled by good words, especially if they are eloquently read off a teleprompter. How is it that one candidate for office proclaims “this is what Americans want” and an opposite candidate says the same thing? According to Socialist Bernie Sanders and early twentieth century progressive Hillary Clinton the American people want the government to do everything for them. According to supposed conservative Republican Donald Trump the American people want him to fix everything for them. Each candidate has their own definition of what Americans want. Are they each right? An impossibility since those “wants” are so contradictory. Are they each wrong? If so they shouldn't be candidates for office. But the point is, with the exception of those who believe in the Constitution and want to follow the principles from it that support honest life, liberty, and property/happiness, what the candidates want is what they want, not we the people. Why? Because they believe the average person, and that is everyone below themselves, cannot govern themselves, they need a strong leader to govern over them. The vision they have is exactly as Bastiat said: “While mankind tends toward evil, the legislators yearn for good; while mankind advances toward darkness, the legislators aspire for enlightenment; while mankind is drawn toward vice, the legislators are attracted toward virtue.” Somehow they have slipped the bounds of earth into a higher realm and aren't we blessed to have them. So what have they drawn from their transcendence? “Since they have decided that this is the true state of affairs, they then demand the use of force in order to substitute their own inclinations for those of the human race.”

Our Founders rejected a royal class, a professional politician. The House of Representatives was and still is, though it now is a meaningless term, called “the people's house.” It is here that we citizens are represented by our fellow citizens, not the professional politician but the baker, the candle stick maker, the cookie maker, the farmer, us. To protect State's rights the Senate was made up of two appointed representatives appointed by each State legislature. The Senate was to ensure any federal government did not run over the States. This was true until progressives convinced the nation to dump that for elected Senators by the people of the State effectively destroying the State's voice in the 17th Amendment. Was this good for the people? Absolutely not! It increased the power of the federal government over us because two things happened that our Founders naively didn't fully perceive: politicians became a professional class housed in Washington DC, and political parties replaced individuality. A conspiracy to take control over us? Remember, a conspiracy that is real is not a conspiracy, it's a fact.

A Defense of Compulsory Labor; A Defense of Paternal Government; The Idea of Passive Mankind; Socialists Want to Regiment People

I'm going to comment on these sections with just a few specific quotes from them because together they paint a picture drawn from the Socialist's mind extolling the control of the State over the people. Drawn from the belief that some men are meant to control and all men benefit from that control, to support their argument they point to Ancient Egypt and Crete (at least in France prior to the French Revolution) as utopian societies because of good governance. I'm reminded of the modern argument that we should get rid of modernity—all our appliances and technology that supposedly enslaves us and destroys the earth. We should go back to primitive manhood, you know, those ancient of us who lived in nature and were one with nature and every one hugged trees and was euphoric. Sometimes what you smoke puts you into a dream world and you interpret this dream world as the real world. Your mind might be in some la la land but your ass is still in this world and when you come down from your euphoric high nothing has changed, it was all in your mind. But you write a best seller about how wonderful this dream world is and that we can all reach into it and live happy lives. I've read a number of books on utopian societies extolling their virtue but in each case the author has to select facts to put in and facts to leave out to present his vision, and they all failed.

The State that wants to control puts out their vision of utopia that can be reached if we but listen to them and do everything they demand of us. From Bastiat he writes: “Thus, according to Bossuet, persons derive nothing from themselves. Patriotism, prosperity, inventions, husbandry, science—all of these are given to the people by the operation of the laws, the rulers. All that the people have to do is to bow to leadership.”

From Wikipedia we read about this Bossuet:

“Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet: 27 September 1627 – 12 April 1704) was a French bishop and theologian, renowned for his sermons and other addresses. He has been considered by many to be one of the most brilliant orators of all time and a masterly French stylist.

“Court preacher to Louis XIV of France, Bossuet was a strong advocate of political absolutism and the divine right of kings. He argued that government was divine and that kings received their power from God. He was also an important courtier and politician.

A brilliant orator. Does this remind you of anyone? The idea of “divine right of Kings” was strongly held by King James I, the only son of Elizabeth. He ruled for 22 years (1603-25). It never set well with the English parliament and after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 ending the rule of King James II when Mary II, the daughter of James II with the help of her husband and cousin William of Orange, took control of England. She and her husband were Protestant, and for you of Irish descent you will know William because he invaded Ireland essentially splitting the Irish nation into two countries, the North, Protestant, the South remained Catholic.

While the divine right of Kings faded in England it still was accepted in France under Louis XIV. The point here, with Bastiat, is that while there was this divine right of Kings it was part of an absolutist political rule where the State determined what was done and how it was done and not any individual. Remind you of “you didn't build that” because the government built the roads, etc., etc. “Patriotism, prosperity, inventions, husbandry, science—all of these are given to the people by the operation of the laws, the rulers.”

To justify this last statement, Socialist writers began to rewrite history extolling the virtues of An-

cient Egypt and the building of pyramids. As Bossuet wrote:

“One of the things most strongly impressed (by whom?) upon the minds of the Egyptians was patriotism.... No one was permitted to be useless to the state. The law assigned to each one his work, which was handed down from father to son. No one was permitted to have two professions. Nor could a person change from one job to another.... But there was one task to which all were forced to conform: the study of the laws and of wisdom. Ignorance of religion and of the political regulations of the country was not excused under any circumstances. Moreover, each occupation was assigned (by whom?) to a certain district.... Among the good laws, one of the better was that everyone was trained (by whom?) to obey them. As a result of this, Egypt was filled with wonderful inventions, and nothing was neglected that could make life easy and quiet”

This is communism before communism was communism. The State had a Master Plan where no one was “useless to the state.” The law, or government, assigned to everyone their job, and I can hear them now whistling while they worked. So, Bosseut tells them, everyone is happy because they do what the State tells them to do and not what they, the individual, wants to do. Certainly this was an extreme argument and it didn't go over all that well, but the idea of it never left the thought world where people from time to time pick it up and play with it. Just a little over 200 years ago it is picked up and packed into Marxism/Socialism/Progressivism. Common Core is the State telling us how the children should be educated; Agenda 21 is the State telling us how and where we should live; the EPA is telling us what cars we can drive and what fuels we can use; the State is telling us we can't have consciences any longer unless that conscience is state-ordained.

Again, according to Bossuet:

“The Greeks, naturally intelligent and courageous, had been early cultivated by the kings and settlers who had come from Egypt. From these Egyptian rulers, the Greek people had learned bodily exercises, foot races, and horse and chariot races.... But the best thing that the Egyptians had taught the Greeks was to become docile, and to permit themselves to be formed by the law for the public good.”

What was the best thing the Greeks learned? To be docile and “permit themselves to be formed by the law for the public good.” This is certainly what governments that violate their role as guardians of the people want, and by god if we can't get there peacefully we will get there by force.

“Thus, in his Utopia of Salentum, [François Fénelon, was a French Roman Catholic archbishop, theologian, poet and writer.] he puts men—with all their interests, faculties, desires, and possessions—under the absolute discretion of the legislator. Whatever the issue may be, persons do not decide it for themselves; the prince decides for them. The prince is depicted as the soul of this shapeless mass of people who form the nation. In the prince resides the thought, the foresight, all progress, and the principle of all organization. Thus all responsibility rests with him.”

Not to pick on the Roman Catholic Church but it was, and still is to a good degree, a very top-down organization where one man, the Pope, makes all decisions on behavior (for the most part). So it was only natural, France believing in the divine right of kings, that the church would wholeheartedly support this.

When in 2008 Michele Obama said this: “We are going to have to change our conversation; we're

going to have to change our traditions, our history; we're going to have to move into a different place as a nation,” she was saying we would have to conform to her husband's vision because he knew better what was good for us. The political correctness movement is all about conforming to someone's idea of what is right and good. Of course, the intelligencia always believe in an absolutist ideology that everyone must fit into. Their problem, especially with Americans, is that we are too steeped in freedom to so blindly march lockstep with them without a fight. Our problem is that too many of us are being convinced that this small group of leaders knows better than we do.

Part VI

Socialists Want Equality of Wealth

It is fitting for our time, right now, that we have this discussion with Bastiat over socialism. In this presidential campaign for the next president the Democrats have given us two Socialist candidates. One, Bernie Sanders, boldly promotes Socialism; the other, Hillary Clinton, hides her socialism under the term of early Twentieth Century Progressive, but if you have followed my writing, and if you have listened to her, you are not fooled into believing progressivism is not socialism, it is just with softer language. Now this is significant that at this time in our history two candidates for president are socialist.

Let me recall where this nation began. In the Progressive Platform of 1912 their vision for a transformed America was laid out. Throughout their document they constantly use the term “democracy”, and we citizens have always described our nation as a democracy.

Our Founders like Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Washington, Madison, and others studied historical governments in formulating what they hoped would be the best of all possible government to meet with their vision. Having rejected a monarchy and all forms of dictatorship, the only alternate form of government was democracy, a system of Ancient Greece and Rome where everyone participated in government.

Madison in Federalist #10 lays out his argument against pure democracy, though, and why it wouldn't work. The greatest fear of our Founders was factionalism. You see it in Adams and especially in Washington's Second Farewell Address. That which is divided always fails. It was the reason why slavery was tolerated, though restricted, because they understood that only a united Union of States (or colonies at that time) could have defeated England, and only a united Union of States could keep the whole safe. Here is a good working definition of democracy:

“a: government by the people; especially: rule of the majority b : a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.” (The Jefferson Perspective.)

And here is the problem Madison is addressing in #10:

“A faction is a group of citizens with interests that are adverse to the rights of other citizens or to the best interests of the whole nation. Because of the nature of man, such groups are inevitable. Moreover, in a free society, they are unavoidable, because they result from the different interests and opinions that arise from persons differently situated, especially with respect to the ownership of property.” (ibid)

Madison asks how we can prevent factions: "There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests." (Federalist 10.) As we have been reading throughout Bastiat on socialism, the first is their plan in controlling society while at the same time trying to indoctrinate every citizen into the same belief. But Madison understands that given human nature neither will work, though the first means has been the historical way of governing. In fact, our Founders escaped a monarchy that was not working.

At the end of the day Madison and company knew that the basis of government had to be a democracy, but also understood clearly that pure democracy would not work because of all those competing voices, and for the reason progressivism has used the term democracy, the majority can be easily persuaded by others to follow. The only way a democracy would work to keep the majority from ruling over the minority would be a representative government where citizens chose their representatives and those representatives carried the wishes of their constituents. But our Founders went one step further, this would not be just a representative democracy but a Constitutional Republic so that no one governs from their own opinions but must follow a Constitution that overrides everything.

This worked until the coming to our shores a progressive ideology that pushed us out of a Constitutional Republic into a democracy, and in that progressive platform they talk so wonderfully about the people making their own decisions (and the reason the why Senators were chosen was changed) because they wanted to persuade people that their vision, that socialist vision, was a better way of governing. And we fell into their trap.

With socialism on the television screen almost every day thanks to Bernie Sanders it's interesting that very few really know what socialism means. In a recent Pew poll they found that those between the ages 18-29 years old had a favorable opinion of socialism, but only in the abstract because they could not define what it was. According to a Reason-Rupe poll this same age group when asked which was better, socialism or a government-managed economy, they chose socialism, but with only a meaningless difference they are basically the same having the same outcome.

From Reason.com in their study, "Millennials don't know what 'socialism' means" they write this:

"In fact, a 2010 CBS/New York Times survey found that when Americans were asked to use their own words to define the word "socialism" millennials were the least able to do so. According to the survey, only 16 percent of millennials could define socialism as government ownership, or some variation thereof. In contrast, 30 percent of Americans over 30 could do the same (and 57% of tea partiers, incidentally).

"Millennials simply don't know that socialism means the government owning everybody's businesses. They don't understand that socialism means the government owns the banks, the car companies, Uber, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, etc. They don't even want the government taking a managerial role over the economy, let alone nationalizing private enterprise.

"In fact, millennial support for a government-managed economy (32%) mirrors national favorability toward the word socialism (31%). Millennial preferences may not be so different from older generations once terms are defined.

"Millennials' preferred economic system becomes more pronounced when it is described precisely. Fully 64 percent favor a free market economy over an economy managed by the government (32%), whereas 52 percent favor capitalism over socialism (42%). Language about capitalism and socialism is vague, and using these terms assumes knowledge millennials may not have acquired."

It is easy to be for something as an idea when that idea itself is not clear.

Bastiat quotes here Condillac:

"Impartiality in law consists of two things: the establishing of equality in wealth and equality in dignity among the citizens.... As the laws establish greater equality, they become proportionately more precious to every citizen.... When all men are equal in wealth and dignity — and when the laws leave no hope of disturbing this equality — how can men then be agitated by greed, ambition, dissipation, idleness, sloth, envy, hatred, or jealousy?"

Our reality is that we live between two idyllic worlds. Even though not one of us alive has experienced the Garden of Eden, it is etched in our souls because of our shared humanity. And deep in our souls is the hope of a New Jerusalem, a return to that idyllic world where "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." (Rev. 21:4 NIV.)

Communism was supposed to be the great leveler of all. How did that work out? Socialism/Progressivism is now presenting itself as the great leveler? How do you think that will work out? It seems many are placing their hope on socialism and when wealth has been equally redistributed there will be no "greed, ambition, dissipation, idleness, sloth, envy, hatred, or jealousy." And if you believe this I have some swamp land you'll want to purchase for an outrageous price.

What Is Liberty?

"Actually, what is the political struggle that we witness? It is the instinctive struggle of all people toward liberty. And what is this liberty, whose very name makes the heart beat faster and shakes the world? Is it not the union of all liberties — liberty of conscience, of education, of association, of the press, of travel, of labor, of trade? In short, is not liberty the freedom of every person to make full use of his faculties, so long as he does not harm other persons while doing so? Is not liberty the destruction of all despotism — including, of course, legal despotism? Finally, is not liberty the restricting of the law only to its rational sphere of organizing the right of the individual to lawful self-defense; of punishing injustice?"

"It must be admitted that the tendency of the human race toward liberty is largely thwarted, especially in France. This is greatly due to a fatal desire — learned from the teachings of antiquity — that our writers on public affairs have in common: They desire to set themselves above mankind in order to arrange, organize, and regulate it according to their fancy."

This nation was not founded upon the principle of equality of outcome but equality of opportunity. Yes, they stepped on that principle in places but it was still the operating principle and why in time those who were denied that opportunity were accorded legal rights with all.

If you have eyes, open them and see. If you have ears, open them and listen. Everyone who promises you equality of outcomes is lying to you. How can I state this so equivocally? Because history

has a list of people who have promised equality of outcome, like Marx and Lenin and Mao and Hitler and Obama, and none of them have produced it because they and their friends are always above the common people. They are special so they must be treated special. Obama preaches against the rich yet his special rich friends, like GE and Gates, get special rules different from others and that is called crony capitalism. Democrats in Congress were willing to place everyone under Obamacare, but not themselves, of course, they deserved a better health care policy.

What is it about Socialist writers Bastiat said: "They desire to set themselves above mankind in order to arrange, organize, and regulate it according to their fancy." This is the truth many don't want to accept, but it is the reality you deal with no matter how much you deny it.

The working assumption is that people are perfect human beings and only the system they created is wrong (that seems to be a contradiction in itself, wouldn't perfect beings create a perfect system?) Really, do you believe that if everyone had everything the same in the same amount and same intensity everyone would be ecstatic and life would be glorious? Really? That might describe a machine that has no other purpose other than being a machine, it certainly doesn't define a human being in the image of God. Come back to these words of Bastiat: "Is it not the union of all liberties — liberty of conscience, of education, of association, of the press, of travel, of labor, of trade? In short, is not liberty the freedom of every person to make full use of his faculties, so long as he does not harm other persons while doing so?" I can think what I want to think, learn what I want to learn, associate with those I wish, speak what I wish, go where I wish. Doesn't that sound better than being a stamped out machine? Is this not liberty? "Is not liberty the restricting of the law only to its rational sphere of organizing the right of the individual to lawful self-defense; of punishing injustice?"

The Socialists Want Dictatorship

"Again, it is claimed that persons are nothing but raw material. It is not for them to will their own improvement; they are incapable of it. According to Saint-Just, only the legislator is capable of doing this. Persons are merely to be what the legislator wills them to be. According to Robespierre, who copies Rousseau literally, the legislator begins by decreeing the end for which the commonwealth has come into being. Once this is determined, the government has only to direct the physical and moral forces of the nation toward that end. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the nation are to remain completely passive. And according to the teachings of Billaud-Varennes, the people should have no prejudices, no affections, and no desires except those authorized by the legislator. He even goes so far as to say that the inflexible austerity of one man is the foundation of a republic.

"In cases where the alleged evil is so great that ordinary governmental procedures cannot cure it, Mably recommends a dictatorship to promote virtue: "Resort," he says, "to an extraordinary tribunal with considerable powers for a short time. The imagination of the citizens needs to be struck a hard blow." This doctrine has not been forgotten. Listen to Robespierre:

"The principle of the republican government is virtue, and the means required to establish virtue is terror. In our country we desire to substitute morality for selfishness, honesty for honor, principles for customs, duties for manners, the empire of reason for the tyranny of fashion, contempt of vice for contempt of poverty, pride for insolence, greatness of soul for vanity, love of glory for love of money, good people for good companions, merit for intrigue, genius for wit, truth for glitter, the charm of

happiness for the boredom of pleasure, the greatness of man for the littleness of the great, a generous, strong, happy people for a good-natured, frivolous, degraded people; in short, we desire to substitute all the virtues and miracles of a republic for all the vices and absurdities of a monarchy."

In many respects the United States is very much like France was prior to their French Revolution of 1789. It was an age of absolute monarchy in Europe, and especially in France under King Louis XVI. The nation was close to bankruptcy by his policies. Agriculture was in disaster with droughts and diseases and high prices for food and higher taxes imposed on them to pay for what King Louis had misspent was killing them. Along with this was that the lower class was far greater in number than the upper classes of France yet they had no voice. The masses were angry with government as usual, with the status quo, with establishment politicians. Inspired by the Enlightenment and the American Revolution they decided to rebel. They would overturn their government but what they got in its place was not that much different and led to Robespierre, who has only been succeeded in chopping off heads by the modern ISIS.

These last words of Bastiat in the above quote is chilling: "we desire to substitute all the virtues and miracles of a republic for all the vices and absurdities of a monarchy." These are chilling words precisely because this is where we are today in the United States. We have not officially changed our form of government, but in effect we have because we have voted in monarchs, those who rule over us instead of with us. We have elected monarchs, not presidents. Today the choice is between a Democrat monarch or a Republican monarch (Trump) and under either choice this Constitutional Republic will be buried and gone in the dust bin of history. The Great Experiment our Founders began will have failed, not because it was a wrong concept but because people chose slavery to freedom.

The Vicious Circle of Socialism

"We shall never escape from this circle: the idea of passive mankind, and the power of the law being used by a great man to propel the people.

"Once on this incline, will society enjoy some liberty? (Certainly.) And what is liberty, Mr. Louis Blanc?

"Once and for all, liberty is not only a mere granted right; it is also the power granted to a person to use and to develop his faculties under a reign of justice and under the protection of the law.

"And this is no pointless distinction; its meaning is deep and its consequences are difficult to estimate. For once it is agreed that a person, to be truly free, must have the power to use and develop his faculties, then it follows that every person has a claim on society for such education as will permit him to develop himself. It also follows that every person has a claim on society for tools of production, without which human activity cannot be fully effective. Now by what action can society give to every person the necessary education and the necessary tools of production, if not by the action of the state?

"Thus, again, liberty is power. Of what does this power consist? (Of being educated and of being given the tools of production.) Who is to give the education and the tools of production? (Society, which owes them to everyone.) By what action is society to give tools of production to those who do not own them? (Why, by the action of the state.) And from whom will the state take them?"

Louis Blanc was a French utopian socialist. Here is the presupposition of Bastiat: "But life cannot

maintain itself alone. The Creator of life has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving, developing, and perfecting it. In order that we may accomplish this, He has provided us with a collection of marvelous faculties. And He has put us in the midst of a variety of natural resources. By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course." Louis Blanc ignores this but tries to keep part of it for argument sake, that is, suppose we are free, where are we going to get the "tools" to exercise this freedom? In other words, we are just helpless children with ideas but no means of reaching them on our own. Because he is a committed socialist, Blanc cannot admit to the truth Bastiat gives us that God, having given us the liberty has also given us the mind to create. He skips this part because only the State can give us the tools to create. "Who is to give the education and the tools of Production?" he writes. Well, of course, it's the State that will fulfill you. If it were otherwise we wouldn't need the State. The clash between Christianity and the State is precisely here: Christianity is about the freedom of the individual; the State is about the rule over the collective. If you believe in life, liberty, and property/happiness, then you cannot support a powerful State because they fundamentally are contradictions.

This is why I find it absolutely imperative that we come to a personal conclusion over life, liberty, and happiness/property because your future, and mine, is dependent upon that conclusion. We may come to agreement with Bastiat, and also our Founders, but feel impotent to change the oppressive hand of government that now controls us. If this is where you are we can work on this. But if you conclude that man is incapable of life, liberty, property/happiness and someone must rule over us you may enjoy being a slave to the State, I don't.

Is it not true that the State has decided, and this really goes all the way back to Lyndon Johnson and his "Great Society," that education must be determined by the State and not the individual states as traditionally set up, and even more specifically by the local community and the parents in that community.

Looking at 2015, the Federal government allocated some \$154 billion on education. In fact, money has been the singular force for raising the educational level of Americans. How is this working out? In one ranking on world education the United States stands at an overall ranking of 14, with a 24 ranking in literacy. When education was taken out of the hands of parents, out of the hands of the community, out of the hands of states and handed over to the federal government to control, the "tools" the State gives are ineffective tools. In a study I did titled, What All Parents Need to Know About Common Core, a study less about the actual teaching of Common Core than the reasons why it came about, you will find a good background for where and why we are today in education. I encourage you to read this.

Now, what I've said about the State giving "tools" for education that are ineffective, the same can be said for every "tool" the State gives, and you need to, for yourself, go through each program of the State and see how effective/ineffective it is and how it is used to control you.

Part VII

The Doctrine of the Democrats

"The strange phenomenon of our times — one which will probably astound our descendants — is the doctrine based on this triple hypothesis: the total inertness of mankind, the omnipotence of the law, and the infallibility of the legislator. These three ideas form the sacred symbol of those who proclaim themselves totally democratic.

"The advocates of this doctrine also profess to be social. So far as they are democratic, they place unlimited faith in mankind. But so far as they are social, they regard mankind as little better than mud. Let us examine this contrast in greater detail.

"What is the attitude of the democrat when political rights are under discussion? How does he regard the people when a legislator is to be chosen? Ah, then it is claimed that the people have an instinctive wisdom; they are gifted with the finest perception; their will is always right; the general will cannot err; voting cannot be too universal.

"When it is time to vote, apparently the voter is not to be asked for any guarantee of his wisdom. His will and capacity to choose wisely are taken for granted. Can the people be mistaken? Are we not living in an age of enlightenment? What! are the people always to be kept on leashes? Have they not won their rights by great effort and sacrifice? Have they not given ample proof of their intelligence and wisdom? Are they not adults? Are they not capable of judging for themselves? Do they not know what is best for themselves? Is there a class or a man who would be so bold as to set himself above the people, and judge and act for them? No, no, the people are and should be free. They desire to manage their own affairs, and they shall do so.

"But when the legislator is finally elected — ah! then indeed does the tone of his speech undergo a radical change. The people are returned to passiveness, inertness, and unconsciousness; the legislator enters into omnipotence. Now it is for him to initiate, to direct, to propel, and to organize. Mankind has only to submit; the hour of despotism has struck. We now observe this fatal idea: The people who, during the election, were so wise, so moral, and so perfect, now have no tendencies whatever; or if they have any, they are tendencies that lead downward into degradation.

Bastiat wondered what his descendants would think about his generation's doctrine based on his defined triple hypothesis. He has to be in a quandary that we today still suffer from the same triple hypothesis: "the total inertness of mankind, the omnipotence of the law, and the infallibility of the legislator." In honesty we are not "totally" inert, just mostly inert. And the law is not yet omnipotent, but it is mostly omnipotent. And we hardly believe in the "infallibility" of the legislator, yet we keep voting the same ones in that then turn around and screw us, so we do want to totally trust them and not ourselves.

How timeless his description of voting as it describes us today. We are in the midst of a presidential campaign. Listen to each and every politician running for the office of president. Don't each of them say, "We know what the American people want. We hear them loud and clear. We are here for the American people, to protect them, to give them liberty and life and happiness and that's what they want from us." We attend their rallies and we laugh, we clap, we say, "right on", and we swallow every word they utter because they are speaking what we would say if we were up there on that

platform. Every candidate claims to know and understand what the American people want. Two recently played this game very well: Obama and Trump who one day before one particular crowd they will say what the crowd wants to hear, then the next day with a different crowd will say just the opposite and contradict themselves because it was what that day's crowd wanted to believe. And we ignored and are ignoring their contradictions because we so desperately wanted in the case of Obama hope and change and in Trump we want a non-politician which he promises to give us.

So both in Bastiat's day and today the politician heaps praise on the people for being so smart, so free to choose, so accepting that the politician will do everything they say they will do, and the moment you vote them in or back in they turn and step all over you and ignore you and it's business as usual. They are not concerned with what we want, they are ultimately concerned with what they want and that they stay in power. There are only a handful of politicians who are not corrupted by the system and keep their principles intact when they go to Washington D.C., or the state capital. Only a handful and they are called every name in the book by their fellow politicians because they won't play the game.

We know that about our politicians yet we continue to vote them in and drink their snake oil and complain about it all until the next election and we do the same thing over again. That's inertness. You see, the fear our Founders had over a democracy has proven out, we are easily persuaded by others, and in effect bestow upon politicians an infallibility. We don't think of it that way but that's what we do.

The French Revolution never succeeded like the American Revolution did because they never got beyond themselves in ruling whereas Americans stepped outside themselves and wrote a Constitution to be their governing document, not men. I have to agree with Glenn Beck on this one; we are facing three different revolutions in this election: one that will take us into socialism and totally undermine our Republic, one will take us into a new kind of Fascism with a strong ruler lording over us and totally destroy our Republic, and the third is a return to the principles of our Republic. Which one are we going to choose? It ought to be a non question, but it is and the kind of revolution we will have is up in the air.

Socialists Fear All Liberties

"Well, what liberty should the legislators permit people to have? Liberty of conscience? (But if this were permitted, we would see the people taking this opportunity to become atheists.)

"Then liberty of education? (But parents would pay professors to teach their children immorality and falsehoods; besides, according to Mr. Thiers, if education were left to national liberty, it would cease to be national, and we would be teaching our children the ideas of the Turks or Hindus; whereas, thanks to this legal despotism over education, our children now have the good fortune to be taught the noble ideas of the Romans.)

"Then liberty of labor? (But that would mean competition which, in turn, leaves production unconsumed, ruins businessmen, and exterminates the people.)

"Perhaps liberty of trade? (But everyone knows — and the advocates of protective tariffs have proved over and over again — that freedom of trade ruins every person who engages in it, and that it

is necessary to suppress freedom of trade in order to prosper.)

"Possibly then, liberty of association? (But, according to socialist doctrine, true liberty and voluntary association are in contradiction to each other, and the purpose of the socialists is to suppress liberty of association precisely in order to force people to associate together in true liberty.)

"Clearly then, the conscience of the social democrats cannot permit persons to have any liberty because they believe that the nature of mankind tends always toward every kind of degradation and disaster. Thus, of course, the legislators must make plans for the people in order to save them from themselves.

"This line of reasoning brings us to a challenging question: If people are as incapable, as immoral, and as ignorant as the politicians indicate, then why is the right of these same people to vote defended with such passionate insistence?"

Marxists, Socialists, Progressives all fear liberty. Have you not understood that yet? It is the same way Christianity is so feared; one cannot be free and controlled at the same time, either one is free or is controlled. Has not government become about control? Has not many of our large businesses become about control over the marketplace? Has not our schools become all about control of our children's knowledge?

Bastiat goes into a series of questions challenging the State's need to decide for us what liberties we have. Should we have a conscience? Well, if the State allows us a conscience then we might believe things contrary to the State. For France at this time when the church was so much a part of the State it feared in allowing people to think for themselves they might reject the church. In a way it is the opposite for us today in America, the State fears we might prefer religion to the State, at least Christianity. But, too, liberty of conscience might lead one to believe the Patriot Act went way too far in destroying our liberty and speak out against it. The hot topic of the day is the fight between the government and for the moment Apple. Some believe this is sacrosanct:

"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized." Forth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

Does the need for security override our right of privacy? These words of Ben Franklin should always be in mind: "Those who give up liberty for security deserve neither." I want to be as secure as anyone. I want the bad guys to be caught as much as anyone. But do you remember earlier in this review we looked at life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness/property in the sense that if you give up one of these you give them all up? If we give up liberty of conscience that says to us to give up our liberty, it is to give up our real security, as well, and the ISIS we fear today will be our own government tomorrow, and is already in a lot of respects today. If you don't want to believe this then read the history of the world and see how it works.

The argument against liberty of education is that we parents would turn over to teachers our children who would teach them all manner of sin (defined by the State), whereas in turning over education to the State our children will be uniformly taught what the State believes should be taught. According to the State, every child from the smallest town in the most remote location should know

exactly the same thing as the child in a giant metropolitan city. Standardization is the new buzz word of the day.

I remember when standardization in education began, long before Common Core, and our children's text books were dumbed down with anecdotal stories of history and nothing deep about any subject and teachers taught to the standard test so they would look good and the school would get money. My children were in junior high at the time and I argued with their teachers how nonsensical this was because an ounce of information for standardization sake was taught as opposed to the gallons of information available to them. This wasn't education, it was pretending to educate. But money and psychology became the bus that drove education and feeling good became more important than doing good. How in the hell did we ever progress as a people and send a rocket and men to the moon prior to this modern education?

"You know, these so-called right-to-work laws, they don't have to do with economics," said President Obama on Monday. "They have everything to do with politics. What they're really talking about is giving you the right to work for less money." Business men are nothing but evil monsters that want to take every advantage of you and enslave you for their gain. Obviously we can't have liberty of labor and the State must protect us by forcing Unions on us, as though they are the saviors and not themselves the monsters. Does not liberty mean anything?

"[T]rue liberty and voluntary association are in contradiction to each other", so Bastiat explains the Socialists fear of free association. What if whites only associated with whites; blacks only associated with blacks, homosexuals with homosexuals, heterosexuals with heterosexuals; ect., ect. Democrats must only associate with Democrats and Republicans with Republicans. Remember that the State believes we cannot on our own choose that which is good for us and to prevent us from choosing badly the State must determine our associations.

It is our basic tendency to associate with those like us, nothing wrong with that. Now if we use our associations to discriminate against others different from us we only hurt ourselves because we stagnate and die. I often like to recount the story of the Anasazi Indians who lived in cliff dwellings in the hills outside Cortez, Colorado. Their civilization lived in the flatland around Cortez for centuries before they moved to the Mesa Verde. When you follow their history they changed very little in those centuries because they kept their associations with others very limited. One day they left their cliff dwellings and were never heard of again.

Civilizations progress not because they are self-contained but because they let others in and learn from them new things, new ways of doing things, new ideas, new foods, new thoughts. Look at the history of peoples and you will find this truth: those who don't learn from others fail, those who do succeed.

This being a particularly political year it being presidential election time, we hear a lot about political party's need to be inclusive—"covering or including everything: open to everyone : not limited to certain people: including the stated limits and everything in between". (Merriam-Webster Dictionary.)

While some have and will abuse the freedom of association, when the State steps in and forces our associations all it does is fractionate people. When we freely expand our association everyone wins.

All my associations don't have to be multicultural, multiethnic, multi-sexual, multi-whatever. This doesn't deny my humanity, but I also know for my humanity to expand to its full potential I must also associate with others different from me, and I must do this freely.

This leads us to this: "the social democrats cannot permit persons to have any liberty because they believe that the nature of mankind tends always toward every kind of degradation and disaster." Therefore, the State "must make plans for the people in order to save them from themselves."

And then Bastiat leaves us with a question that ought to burn into everyone of us: "If people are as incapable, as immoral, and as ignorant as the politicians indicate, then why is the right of these same people to vote defended with such passionate insistence?" I have asked this same question often. Who made the controllers god, so much better than ourselves that we give over to them control? This certainly was the practice of many nations that the "royals" were royal and the peons were peons as God set apart the classes of men: some to rule, some to be ruled. But if God didn't order the classes of man it must be that the strong takes advantage of the weak and teaches everyone this distinction and everyone buys into it.

One of the first things our Founders did was throw out class distinctions. There would be no royals. Yes, there were still social distinctions that some adhered to, but even then one could rise into money and one could lose all their money, but neither were bound by some ontological definition of who they were. Israel for a time was the epitome of this definition of classlessness, until they demanded a king and a royal class separated themselves from the people. Politicians back in the day were citizen politicians, not professional, not royal, but like us who at one particular time in our personal history helped our fellow citizens by representing them. When we lost that we lost ourselves.

The Superman Idea

"The claims of these organizers of humanity raise another question which I have often asked them and which, so far as I know, they have never answered: If the natural tendencies of mankind are so bad that it is not safe to permit people to be free, how is it that the tendencies of these organizers are always good? Do not the legislators and their appointed agents also belong to the human race? Or do they believe that they themselves are made of a finer clay than the rest of mankind? The organizers maintain that society, when left undirected, rushes headlong to its inevitable destruction because the instincts of the people are so perverse. The legislators claim to stop this suicidal course and to give it a saner direction. Apparently, then, the legislators and the organizers have received from Heaven an intelligence and virtue that place them beyond and above mankind; if so, let them show their titles to this superiority.

"They would be the shepherds over us, their sheep. Certainly such an arrangement presupposes that they are naturally superior to the rest of us. And certainly we are fully justified in demanding from the legislators and organizers proof of this natural superiority."

I am reminded here of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, or "overman". In his book, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, he gives us his idea of the overman, something for him that we are all to aspire to and is our "higher" self. Friedrich Nietzsche (October 12, 1844 - August 25, 1900) was never popular nor were his works widely read during his lifetime, though as I became an adult there was a coming popularity

of his writings and ideas.

“An “overman” as described by Zarathustra, the main character in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, is the one who is willing to risk all for the sake of enhancement of humanity. In contrary to the last man whose sole desire is his own comfort and is incapable of creating anything beyond oneself in any form. This should suggest that an overman is someone who can establish his own values as the world in which others live their lives, often unaware that they are not pre-given. This means an overman can affect and influence the lives of others. In other words, an overman has his own values, independent of others, which affects and dominates others lives that may not have predetermined values but only herd instinct. An overman is then someone who has a life which is not merely to live each day with no meanings when nothing in the past and future is more important than the present, or more precisely, the pleasure and happiness in the present, but with the purpose for humanity.

Honestly, what Nietzsche really wanted was to be free of all moral strictures and live his life his way without others challenging him. He especially hated the Apostle Paul and Christian morality that restricted his behavior. I bring Nietzsche up even though I doubt Bastiat read him because the Socialist controller Bastiat writes about is exactly in the tradition of the “overman”. Have you really listened to Donald Trump’s campaign speeches; he is the overman, so far above others that only he knows the way and will lead us into it. The same can be said about our current president, Barak Obama whose ideology is so pure and ours so impure that he has tried to save us from ourselves by controlling us.

Our presidents are no longer the presidents outlined in the Constitution, we have elected monarchs, elected kings, and though we would never say it out loud, we believe them to be better than ourselves and we welcome their control over us to make us better.

The Enormous Power of Government

“As long as these ideas prevail, it is clear that the responsibility of government is enormous. Good fortune and bad fortune, wealth and destitution, equality and inequality, virtue and vice — all then depend upon political administration. It is burdened with everything, it undertakes everything, it does everything; therefore it is responsible for everything.

“If we are fortunate, then government has a claim to our gratitude; but if we are unfortunate, then government must bear the blame. For are not our persons and property now at the disposal of government? Is not the law omnipotent?

“In creating a monopoly of education, the government must answer to the hopes of the fathers of families who have thus been deprived of their liberty; and if these hopes are shattered, whose fault is it? In regulating industry, the government has contracted to make it prosper; otherwise it is absurd to deprive industry of its liberty. And if industry now suffers, whose fault is it?

“In meddling with the balance of trade by playing with tariffs, the government thereby contracts to make trade prosper; and if this results in destruction instead of prosperity, whose fault is it?

“In giving the maritime industries protection in exchange for their liberty, the government undertakes to make them profitable; and if they become a burden to the taxpayers, whose fault is it?

“Thus there is not a grievance in the nation for which the government does not voluntarily make

itself responsible. Is it surprising, then, that every failure increases the threat of another revolution in France?

“And what remedy is proposed for this? To extend indefinitely the domain of the law; that is, the responsibility of government.

“But if the government undertakes to control and to raise wages, and cannot do it; if the government undertakes to care for all who may be in want, and cannot do it; if the government undertakes to support all unemployed workers, and cannot do it; if the government undertakes to lend interest-free money to all borrowers, and cannot do it; if, in these words that we regret to say escaped from the pen of Mr. de Lamartine, “The state considers that its purpose is to enlighten, to develop, to enlarge, to strengthen, to spiritualize, and to sanctify the soul of the people” — and if the government cannot do all of these things, what then? Is it not certain that after every government failure — which, alas! is more than probable — there will be an equally inevitable revolution?”

Bastiat faced a government that was already in control. We Americans are caught in that middle ground between freedom and control, however that log we are riding is right at the precipice of that waterfall and once the log’s balance is tipped in favor of falling over the waterfall it will be all over. We are not upstream, our log is already reaching over the precipice and while some of us are frantically trying to back the log up others are either content to let the log go over the falls while others are actively rowing to push us all the way over.

In my lifetime I’ve watched the three branches of our government take our freedoms away from us while they piled on laws and regulations all geared at controlling us. When Lenin got his way and the Russian Revolution brought forth a Communist state, the contrast between the American Revolution and the Communist Revolution could not be more stark. The American Revolution was about ending government control in favor of citizen liberty. The Communist Revolution was all about exchanging one controlling power over the people with another controlling power over them. It wasn’t that the people would create their own wealth through their own exercise of their God-given powerful faculties, it was that the State would determine what they did and how they did it because the State knew better than the people what worked and didn’t work.

That Marxist/Socialist/Progressive ideology that finally made it to the shores of America was presupposed on the premise that only a few (special people, the overman people) knew better for the whole who were naturally ignorant and easily manipulated into bad things left to their own freedoms. From the moment Communism took over in Russia their five and ten year plans to build their economy so that everyone would have the same failed and millions starved to death and millions were kept in slavery.

As Bastiat wrote: “Good fortune and bad fortune, wealth and destitution, equality and inequality, virtue and vice — all then depend upon political administration. It is burdened with everything, it undertakes everything, it does everything; therefore it is responsible for everything.” And yet that government that controls everything never takes the blame for where it failed but is quick to take the praise where it got it right (those few times it got it right).

If you think yourself god, then nothing you think is wrong and everything you think is right. It is never their ideology that is wrong and doesn’t work, it is that people resist what they know is right

and if the people only understood they would accept what god (them) told them. I think I have heard things like this come from our current president who complains he just didn't make himself clear and when he does the people will bow down and worship him and we will all be in heaven.

If the government undertakes control of wages, undertakes all care for the needy, undertakes support for the unemployed, undertakes interest free loans, undertakes a deciding role in all things and fails, what then? Isn't this us, today, in America where the government has driven minimum wages higher and higher. The problem here is that the economy is so screwed up higher wages will not fix our problems of living. Through taxation (including healthcare that now is a tax) and regulations the costs of doing business is higher than ever before, and most business don't have large amounts of cash lying around that they can tap into to cover these new costs, so they have to raise the price of their goods. The whole idea of fast food businesses was to provide a food service that was cheap enough for anyone to buy their food while giving up and coming workers a chance to develop work skills. Fast food joints were not designed to be a stopping place for employees but a stepping stone up. But they have become a permanent work stop because other businesses that workers might transition up to are having their own financial problems, and because of those added costs cannot afford fulltime workers making most employees go on part-time. Labor for any business is the most expensive part of doing business. It isn't that businesses want employees to be poor, they just can't afford too high an increase in wages thanks to the whole declining economy. While today gas prices are at an all-time low, everything else keeps going up. The good news is that with that extra money we save in gasoline we can afford those higher costs, but gas prices will climb again and then no where will anything be cheap again. We consumers lose at every turn. So the government forcing higher wages doesn't solve the problem of living, it exacerbates it.

And government helped screw all this up when it extended unemployment insurance to those out of work. It did two very bad things: it extended a persons need not to work because the government was giving them money, and it didn't bring them back into the workforce but kept them out, many permanently. The government kept thinking that if we just give a person a little help they will go out and from that help learn to help themselves. It doesn't work, never worked, it only creates an entitlement class where people expect the government to support them and they don't have to support themselves. Those states that put a time limit on such welfare requiring people taking state money to within a time period find employment and were kicked off the government dole, had more people actually going back into the marketplace. But these states were condemned as being uncaring. Tough love sounds uncaring but if tough love is not exercised all you end up doing is enabling someone to remain dependent. We need to get it through our heads, government does not solve problems, it created them then wants us to believe it has a plan to fix them. It doesn't.

Progressives believe in this statement: "The state considers that its purpose is to enlighten, to develop, to enlarge, to strengthen, to spiritualize, and to sanctify the soul of the people." How is that working?

Part VIII

Proper Legislative Functions

"It is not true that the legislator has absolute power over our persons and property. The existence of persons and property preceded the existence of the legislator, and his function is only to guarantee their safety.

"It is not true that the function of law is to regulate our consciences, our ideas, our wills, our education, our opinions, our work, our trade, our talents, or our pleasures. The function of law is to protect the free exercise of these rights, and to prevent any person from interfering with the free exercise of these same rights by any other person.

"Since law necessarily requires the support of force, its lawful domain is only in the areas where the use of force is necessary. This is justice.

"Every individual has the right to use force for lawful self-defense. It is for this reason that the collective force — which is only the organized combination of the individual forces — may lawfully be used for the same purpose; and it cannot be used legitimately for any other purpose.

"Law is solely the organization of the individual right of self-defense which existed before law was formalized. Law is justice."

It is good to note with Bastiat that "The existence of persons and property preceded the existence of the legislator." This for Bastiat (and I agree) is because life, liberty, and happiness/property is our gift from our creator and is, as theologian Paul Tillich would put it, "our ontological ground of being." It's not something we take up; it is something we are. So, it is not true that the legislator has absolute power over us and our property, though legislators sure want us to believe this. And, "It is not true that the function of law is to regulate our consciences, our ideas, our wills, our education, our opinions, our work, our trade, our talents, or our pleasures." But isn't this exactly where we find ourselves today from schools and government who want to curb our free speech, along with others who are trying to regulate our consciences?

The one place free speech ought to be sacrosanct—our institutions of higher learning—they have mostly become institutions of progressive propaganda where an exchange of free ideas are not welcomed, they are prevented. This has been happening since the so-called free speech revolution that began in Berkeley at the University of California in the late sixties when a few radical students took charge of what would be taught and who would do the teaching.

Just recently a conservative speaker was denied by the President of the Cal State University at Los Angeles (CSULA) from speaking on the subject of "When Diversity Becomes a Problem" because the school president believed the university needed to organize a more "inclusive" event. That meant that there should be lots of other speakers in a panel to challenge the voice of this conservative. As students pointed out, the school had no "inclusive" issues when leftist speakers spoke at the university. As with the sixties the free speech movement is not about free speech but about denying speech to those who are not spouting the politically correct messages. These so-called "safe zones" now the rave on university campuses are nothing more than an attempt to limit speech to what those in the zone accept. We should all be familiar with the University of Missouri professor who called for "some muscle" to remove reporters from their safe zone who ended up being fired. It looked bad because

it was captured by a cell phone and sent around the world. This was just a shock to the university administration because it was captured on video and made the university look bad, but this kind of thing is happening daily and acceptable because there is a solid attack on our First Amendment rights.

According to Bastiat there is only one legitimate use of force, lawful self-defense. What this professor was calling for was not in any sense of the world "lawful self-defense". This certainly is true at the individual level, but so too at the collective level because, as he pointed out, the collective is nothing more than a grouping of individuals. Since it is the natural right of every individual to have life, liberty, and happiness/property it is never the right of any individual or collective to force that away from others. As he likes to point out, this came before the law was even created and the law was instituted to protect this natural right. The laws and regulations that have come into play in the United States since the progressive era began have been all about taking our life, liberty, and property/happiness. Through the EPA the federal government is taking away both private and state property and where they can't outright steal it they regulate it so it can't be used. Since the Department of Education came into play the Federal government and the state governments have been taking away from parents the right to educate their children. Since so many colleges have decided to become harbingers of leftist ideology they have taken away the rights of students to have a well-rounded liberal arts education.

The life you and I can have, the liberty you and I can have, the happiness/property you and I can have is now determined by the State, not absolutely at the moment, but the state is working toward that.

Law and Charity Are Not the Same

"The mission of the law is not to oppress persons and plunder them of their property, even though the law may be acting in a philanthropic spirit. Its mission is to protect persons and property.

"Furthermore, it must not be said that the law may be philanthropic if, in the process, it refrains from oppressing persons and plundering them of their property; this would be a contradiction. The law cannot avoid having an effect upon persons and property; and if the law acts in any manner except to protect them, its actions then necessarily violate the liberty of persons and their right to own property.

"The law is justice — simple and clear, precise and bounded. Every eye can see it, and every mind can grasp it; for justice is measurable, immutable, and unchangeable. Justice is neither more than this nor less than this. If you exceed this proper limit — if you attempt to make the law religious, fraternal, equalizing, philanthropic, industrial, literary, or artistic — you will then be lost in an uncharted territory, in vagueness and uncertainty, in a forced utopia or, even worse, in a multitude of utopias, each striving to seize the law and impose it upon you. This is true because fraternity and philanthropy, unlike justice, do not have precise limits. Once started, where will you stop? And where will the law stop itself?"

You will want to read that first paragraph in this section over and over. If you believe in that very first proposition Bastiat began with that life, liberty, and property/happiness is our natural right then the only conclusion is that "[t]he mission of the law is not to oppress persons and plunder them of

their property, even though the law may be acting in a philanthropic spirit. Its mission is to protect persons and property."

"Even though the law may be acting in a philanthropic spirit." What does that mean? Franklin Roosevelt saw it as a philanthropic action when he sold his New Deal. Lyndon Johnson wanted to usher in the Great Society. From The Heritage Society looking back at the Great Society program, Johnson wanted to "rebuild the entire urban United States" in the next 40 years (by 2005) but promote "community" and combat "loneliness and boredom and indifference." The environment should not only be unpolluted but allow men to "wonder at nature." Education will not only bring children out of poverty, it will give them "hours of leisure." Johnson is confident that a hyper-expanded government, reliant on Deweyan experimentation in government programs, can manage both political and spiritual transformation. Under the rubric of "creative federalism" the Constitution's true principle of federalism is overridden."

John Dewey (1859-1952), William James and C.S. Pierce, brought us a new philosophical construct: pragmatism. Modern education, including Common Core, is built upon Dewey. Let me give you a couple of quotes from the Stanford Dictionary of Philosophy about Dewey that will put what Johnson wanted in context:

"Values, Dewey suggested, can be viewed as constructs to solve practical problems. Like an outmoded piece of technology, a past value which was once constructed to address a problem in one set of circumstances can outlive its usefulness, and become a hindrance to the capacity of those in the present to deal with their practical needs and worries. This, Dewey believes, is the case with values of classical liberalism. These have come to block the capacity to resolve social problems in a way compatible with what he takes to be liberalism's core commitment to individual liberty. It is in this way that 'the slogans of liberalism in one period can become the bulwarks of reaction' in the next ('Logical Method and Law', MW15, 76).

"Dewey criticizes classical liberalism for conceiving of the individual as 'something given, something already there', prior to society and for viewing social institutions for coordinating the interests of pre-social individuals. Instead, he argues, social institutions are not 'means for obtaining something for individuals. They are means for creating individuals' (Reconstruction in Philosophy, MW12, 190-192)."

You will note that the second paragraph turns Bastiat's idea of who we are on its head: instead of our nature being created by God we create our nature. Our natures don't create our institutions, our institutions create us. So using this pragmatic construct where the State redesigns society, Johnson believed one day we will look back at this time and say, "It was then, after a long and weary way, that man turned the exploits of his genius to the full enrichment of his 'life.'"

In my study, "What All Parents Need to Know About Common Core," which you can read by going [HERE](#), I have a long discussion on Dewey's influence on our education that runs from page 6 to 9 that will give you a great understanding on why things have gone so wrong with education. I will give just this one quote from that study that will illustrate how different the presupposition about who we are has become:

"Education according to Dewey is the "participation of the individual in the social consciousness

of the race" (Dewey, 1897, para. 1). As such, education should take into account that the student is a social being. The process begins at birth with the child unconsciously gaining knowledge and gradually developing their knowledge to share and partake in society.

"The educational process has two sides, the psychological and the sociological, with the psychological forming the basis. (Dewey, 1897). A child's own instincts will help develop the material that is presented to them. These instincts also form the basis of their knowledge with everything building upon it. This forms the basis of Dewey's assumption that one cannot learn without motivation.

"Knowledge is a social condition and it is important to help students construct their own learning, as stated: "Hence it is impossible to prepare the child for any precise set of conditions. To prepare him for the future life means to give him command of himself; it means so to train him that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities; that his eye and ear and hand may be tools ready to command, that his judgment may be capable of grasping the conditions under which it has to work, and the executive forces be trained to act economically and efficiently" (Dewey, 1897, Para. 7)

Bastiat speaks about a "forces utopia" or "a multitude of utopias, each striving to seize the law and impose it upon you." Former President George H.W. Bush in his January 20, 1989 inaugural speech added to this idea of the government creating our utopias:

"I have spoken of a thousand points of light, of all the community organizations that are spread like stars throughout the Nation, doing good. We will work hand in hand, encouraging, sometimes leading, sometimes being led, rewarding. We will work on this in the White House, in the Cabinet agencies. I will go to the people and the programs that are the brighter points of light, and I will ask every member of my government to become involved. The old ideas are new again because they are not old, they are timeless: duty, sacrifice, commitment, and a patriotism that finds its expression in taking part and pitching in."

President John Kennedy didn't always do things right but he sure had it right when he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country," in his inaugural speech of 1961. The government believes it is being charitable when it "does" for us.

As Bastiat wrote, when the government tries to define our utopias you find "each striving to seize the law and impose it upon you. This is true because fraternity and philanthropy, unlike justice, do not have precise limits. Once started, where will you stop? And where will the law stop itself?" Indeed, where will it stop and how much are we to lose before we wake up?

The Basis for Stable Government

"Law is justice. In this proposition a simple and enduring government can be conceived. And I defy anyone to say how even the thought of revolution, of insurrection, of the slightest uprising could arise against a government whose organized force was confined only to suppressing injustice.

"Under such a regime, there would be the most prosperity — and it would be the most equally distributed. As for the sufferings that are inseparable from humanity, no one would even think of accusing the government for them. This is true because, if the force of government were limited to suppressing injustice, then government would be as innocent of these sufferings as it is now innocent of changes in the temperature.

"As proof of this statement, consider this question: Have the people ever been known to rise

against the Court of Appeals, or mob a Justice of the Peace, in order to get higher wages, free credit, tools of production, favorable tariffs, or government-created jobs? Everyone knows perfectly well that such matters are not within the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeals or a Justice of the Peace. And if government were limited to its proper functions, everyone would soon learn that these matters are not within the jurisdiction of the law itself.

"But make the laws upon the principle of fraternity — proclaim that all good, and all bad, stem from the law; that the law is responsible for all individual misfortunes and all social inequalities — then the door is open to an endless succession of complaints, irritations, troubles, and revolutions."

"Law is justice," Bastiat repeats, and what is justice? "Law is solely the organization of the individual right of self-defense which existed before law was formalized." Justice is that law protects our natural rights. Period. "In this proposition a simple and enduring government can be conceived." It's where we began as a nation. Ours wasn't a perfect nation, but it was a blessed nation. All because the government was to protect the rights of citizens and not get in their way as they pursued life, liberty, and property/happiness. Individuals defined what those meant, not government. And yet we haven't endured. No, it wasn't the fault of the system, it was because lazy individuals didn't want to work for their substance, they wanted others to work for them and they reap the benefit. It was because individuals never believed others could manage their own lives and they were needed to manage it for them. It was because some were obsessed with power, power over others. And when the Industrial Revolution changed the nature of our lives and many feared this change, when Progressivism came it gave them a rhetoric they could use to convince others to surrender to the plunder of their natural rights.

"Under such a regime, [the one our Founders created] there would be the most prosperity — and it would be the most equally distributed." But if you listened to Roosevelt and Johnson and the first Bush you would be convinced only the government could create real prosperity and see it equally distributed.

Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835 looked at this relative new nation that began informally in the 1600s and formally in the late 1700s and compared it with Europe and its thousands of years in existence and marveled how we had eclipsed them socially, economically, and politically. When a government steps out of the way of individuals they prosper and the nation prospers. This is because not only did God give us our rights but he gave us the capacity to fulfill those gifts. As Bastiat wrote in the very beginning: "The Creator of life has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving, developing, and perfecting it. In order that we may accomplish this, He has provided us with a collection of marvelous faculties. And He has put us in the midst of a variety of natural resources. By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course."

Remember, and I say this because we have certainly forgotten this truth, the State creates nothing. All it can do is take from one and give it to another. In the mind of the State there is an idea of the equal distribution of wealth. But this is a lie, because when you look at every nation that has championed equal distribution of wealth none has even come close to accomplishing this and not because the people fight it but because the State is corrupt. Under communism if you were a member of the

Communist party you had special benefits, and the higher you were in the party the sweeter those benefits were. Equal distribution of wealth? Not a bit.

Bastiat holds that a nation built on the principles he had been writing about would see a greater equality in distribution. How could this be? Because not everyone, in fact, most were not greedy. What we have forgotten because the government has made it something it is not by regulations, is that free market systems work best when everyone is prosperous. If I grow cotton for me to be prosperous I need for the cotton gins to be successful in processing the cotton and the millers prosperous in producing cotton threads for the weavers to be successful and the market place selling cotton goods to be successful and in this way everyone shares in the wealth from my cotton.

In the third paragraph Bastiat asks a very interesting question because in his day there was a simple answer: Has anyone petitioned the Court of Appeals or Justice of the Peace for higher wages, free credit, tools to use for work, favorable tariffs, or government jobs? His point here was that everyone knows the Court of Appeals or Justice of the Peace cannot provide such things. Well, according to our Constitution neither are these things within the scope of government and the courts, but that is exactly what we now expect of government and we petition government and the courts to provide us those things. We want free money from the government, free education, jobs, higher wages, and the government is all too ready to feed our greed, and greed it is. Remember, anything that the government gives it first takes.

Part IX Concluding

The Path to Dignity and Progress

“Law is justice. And it is under the law of justice — under the reign of right; under the influence of liberty, safety, stability, and responsibility — that every person will attain his real worth and the true dignity of his being. It is only under this law of justice that mankind will achieve — slowly, no doubt, but certainly — God’s design for the orderly and peaceful progress of humanity.

“It seems to me that this is theoretically right, for whatever the question under discussion — whether religious, philosophical, political, or economic; whether it concerns prosperity, morality, equality, right, justice, progress, responsibility, cooperation, property, labor, trade, capital, wages, taxes, population, finance, or government — at whatever point on the scientific horizon I begin my researches, I invariably reach this one conclusion: The solution to the problems of human relationships is to be found in liberty.”

Where do we find our real worth and the dignity of our being? In government? Honestly, you want to put your faith and fate in the hands of government? Show me a success of government. No, not their words about supposed successes, but real success. Every welfare program, while it has helped a few has enslaved so many more and is filled with abuse, fraud, and corruption, and the government has to come back to us, the wage earners, and taken more from us to feed their failing welfare programs. How about education? Has the government been successful in education? After billions of dollars have been thrown into the system we have not advanced, we have slipped in the world. How about economically? Are we not \$18+trillion in debt. From USA Today we read: “The staggering national debt — up about 60% from the \$10 trillion Obama inherited when he took office

in January 2009 — is the single biggest blemish on Obama’s record, even if the rapid descent into red began under President George W. Bush. Obama has long emphasized Bush’s role in digging the immense hole. But he owns it now.” Obama’s excuse, even to this day seven years into his presidency, is how bad it was he inherited from Bush, and we let him get away with the lie. He took what was seriously bad and made it so much worse. Why? Because he believed he could spend his way out of debt and all he did is spend us deeper into debt. Oh, he loves to give a rosy picture about how better we are off today, but the lie is everywhere around him. We cannot possibly be better off with \$18 trillion in debt and it climbing. Just look at your own personal and family finances. If you keep spending more than you take in, if your credit card debt grows so large you cannot possibly make enough money to pay it off, what do you think will happen to you? You will go bankrupt, thrown out of your home, lose everything you had, that’s what will happen. Why do you think it will be any different on a national level? China has already stopped lending us money because they know we cannot pay back what they have already loaned us. So what does our government do? They print more money. Does that help? Maybe in the short-term, but in the long term it destroys us because the more money printed the less each dollar is worth and the more the price of goods go up. That’s exactly what is happening now. We are all excited how low gas prices are and while we are euphoric about that everything else is going up higher and higher. So is government really helping?

How about in terms of labor. Has the government helped here? Let me give you some government-speak:

“Unemployment rate in the United States dropped to 4.9 percent in January 2016, from 5 percent in the previous month, while total non-farm payroll employment increased by a lower-than-expected 151,000. The number of unemployed persons, at 7.8 million, was essentially unchanged from December. Unemployment Rate in the United States averaged 5.82 percent from 1948 until 2016, reaching an all time high of 10.80 percent in November of 1982 and a record low of 2.50 percent in May of 1953. Unemployment Rate in the United States is reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“In the United States, the unemployment rate measures the number of people actively looking for a job as a percentage of the labour force. This page provides the latest reported value for - United States Unemployment Rate - plus previous releases, historical high and low, short-term forecast and long-term prediction, economic calendar, survey consensus and news. United States Unemployment Rate - actual data, historical chart and calendar of releases - was last updated on February of 2016.”

Every administration likes to give you the best possible numbers so it can show how successful it is and why we can trust them to solve problems. That we now have a 4.9 percent unemployment rate is miraculous given that not long ago we were over 10 percent. But wait. Is this really the “real” number because if it is we ought to all be better off? Let’s look at Forbes to help us find an answer: “Despite the significant decrease in the official U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) unemployment rate, the real unemployment rate is over double that at 12.6%. This number reflects the government’s “U-6” report, which accounts for the full unemployment picture including those “marginally attached to the labor force,” plus those “employed part time for economic reasons.”

What, the real rate of unemployment is not 4.9 but more like 12.6 percent? Is our government lying to us? Yes. Because the economics of this nation is so bad millions cannot find work and have given

up and they are not counted in the unemployment rate. Because of so many regulations, especially the unconstitutional Obamacare, the costs of doing business is so high many employers are reducing their workforce by letting employees go and by reducing their hours to part-time because it is cheaper for businesses to do it this way. Are these employers just greedy? No, not really. For employers to be successful so that they can hire full-time employees and pay them good wages they must be successful in the marketplace. There are a few businesses with a lot of cash lying around (and this is a separate subject) but most don't. If the cost of doing business rises they have no choice but to recoup that extra cost by raising the price of their goods which at some point takes it out of the range of most people and in turn causes a loss for the business. I know there is a lot of dumping on businesses going around because for one, the government is painting businesses as bad guys to take the focus off their failure. But before you take up arms against businesses think through what it takes to be in business. You will appreciate the problem facing business more because you will better understand what it takes to be in business.

Now today there is a lot of anger about those big businesses that are closing down their U.S. plants and moving them to other countries. The charge from the government is that they are just greedy bastards. This isn't really true. Remember that any business needs profit because it is from this profit that they repair things, they expand, they add new equipment, they create new products, they increase wages and have some protection from the future. Businesses are moving outside the United States because the cost of doing business inside this nation is too costly. Rather than be mad at businesses be mad at the government and the economy that stifles good business. Don't forget that we consumers demand low prices for our goods because most of us are not rich enough to pay whatever the market will bear. To get to those low prices, overhead must be low enough to allow for those low prices. There are more complex issues around business than most of us want to consider but in not understanding the issues we create false narratives about business that only makes things worse.

In 1971 President Nixon put into place both a wage freeze and price controls to try and stop inflation. Many people applauded this move as necessary and good. By 1974 everyone now agreed this was a bad idea.

Think like a business owner. It's good that I don't have to increase wages because that will save me money. But along with that I have to freeze the price of goods I charge the consumer so I'm not taking in any more money. Truth is, in this scenario everyone loses. Why? Simply because while wages are frozen and while the price for goods are frozen, nothing else is. That means for me, a business owner, the wholesale cost of goods rises that I make my products from so I'm now losing money because I cannot pass that increase on. For the wage earner, having my wages frozen costs me for the same reason, things not under price control keep going up and the money I have to spend keeps going down. As they found out, you cannot freeze a part of the economy without freezing all of it and if you do that incentive to produce goes away and everyone loses. Just look at Russia and China who controlled their economies to this level with their five and ten year plans. In the end, while liberty will bring out some greed, for the majority it is the only way to benefit.

Proof of an Idea

And does not experience prove this? Look at the entire world. Which countries contain the most peaceful, the most moral, and the happiest people? Those people are found in the countries where the law least interferes with private affairs; where government is least felt; where the individual has the greatest scope, and free opinion the greatest influence; where administrative powers are fewest and simplest; where taxes are lightest and most nearly equal, and popular discontent the least excited and the least justifiable; where individuals and groups most actively assume their responsibilities, and, consequently, where the morals of admittedly imperfect human beings are constantly improving; where trade, assemblies, and associations are the least restricted; where labor, capital, and populations suffer the fewest forced displacements; where mankind most nearly follows its own natural inclinations; where the inventions of men are most nearly in harmony with the laws of God; in short, the happiest, most moral, and most peaceful people are those who most nearly follow this principle: Although mankind is not perfect, still, all hope rests upon the free and voluntary actions of persons within the limits of right; law or force is to be used for nothing except the administration of universal justice.

Bastiat is in France so when he says look at the entire world for that example where free people are prosperous, moral, peaceful, the happiest, you will find it from that nation (in this case he was looking at the United States of America) where there is the least law to interfere with liberty.

Democrat Presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, an avowed Socialist, likes to point to Denmark as the ideal we should strive to emulate. But listen to this from a Heritage Foundation study on Denmark's socialism:

"Denmark has the highest total tax obligation in the world, towering far above the European average. It also has the smallest private sector in Europe, to support one of the biggest public sectors. Add to that a generous entitlement system allowing unemployed and unemployable citizens an income well above that achieved by full-time employees in the private sector in many European countries, and tax revenues nearly unmatched anywhere else in the world are required. While the majority of Danish politicians may intuitively understand this malady – many of them still view capitalists as an unpleasant necessity to generate the necessary revenues to fund a social welfare state and its myriad of responsibilities. They continue to spend more money, hire more public servants, regulate, supervise and monitor even the most insignificant activities."

Please take note of one interesting thing said here: "many of them [Danish politicians] still view capitalists as an unpleasant necessity to generate the necessary revenues to fund a social welfare state and its myriad of responsibilities." Socialism as an economic system just doesn't work. China knows this, as well. Adam Smith, who began looking at markets and why those that failed, failed and those that succeeded were successful. The bottom line for success was "self-interest," not to be confused with selfishness. I've already written about the dualism we live under; the individual and the collective, we are both. I am motivated first and foremost by what benefits me. Well, isn't this selfishness? Not at all because I also understand that what benefits me benefits others. It begins with me and if it stays there then it becomes greed and selfishness. But then, as socialism wants to do, if I only do what benefits others and I leave myself out of the equation I have no incentive to benefit at all. This is

the great failure of Communism and the one thing Ayn Rand so desperately fought against. Because she had come out of the repressive communism system she fought to keep Americans from falling into that idealist trap that never works and her "Objectivism" and hatred of altruism at times got too heavy-handed and she sounded more selfish than she really was.

In *Atlas Shrugged* she writes about the government trying to determine for everyone what is best and works to destroy those individuals and companies that believed in liberty and that they knew best the market and what worked over the government. Dagny Taggart owns a railroad company and some of their lines are in desperate need of repair. She discovers Rearden Metal where Hank Rearden has created a new steel that is invincible. Both personal and political intrigue behind the scene try to prevent this from happening and they attempt to force Dagny Taggart to use a steel the government supports over Rearden's.

It's a story right out of Bastiat's, *The Law*, where the government wants to determine what is life, liberty, and happiness/property. Where government wants to control both production and distribution. But everywhere this is tried it fails. Where is a success? It is in that nation "where government is least felt; where the individual has the greatest scope, and free opinion the greatest influence; where administrative powers are fewest and simplest."

We don't know this today because it is not our experience. Today, there isn't an hour in the day when I don't feel the power of government over my life. This below ought to cause you to cry:

"No one knows how many laws there are in the United States. Apparently, no one can count that high.

"They've been accumulating, of course, for more than 200 years. When federal laws were first codified in 1927, they fit into a single volume. By the 1980s, there were 50 volumes of more than 23,000 pages.

"And today? Online sources say that no one knows. The Internal Revenue Code alone, . . . contains more than 3.4 million words and, if printed 60 lines to the page, is more than 7,500 pages long. There are about 20,000 laws just governing the use and ownership of guns.

"New laws mean new crimes. From the start of 2000 through 2007, Congress had created at least 452 new crimes, so that at that time the total number of Federal crimes exceeded 4,450.

"Of course, times change and laws need to be updated. But many laws detract from, rather than contribute to, our quality of life and overall well-being. It is impossible for anyone to know all of the laws that affect them and it is, therefore, impossible to not break any laws. How many of the 4,450 crimes have you broken?

"The role of Congress, unfortunately, is to create new laws, not to do away with old laws that don't work. Members of Congress running for re-election want to be able to say that they sponsored and passed new laws – regardless of how harmful the laws may be.

"In a typical year, Congress passes at least 125 new laws, but Congress has fortunately slowed the pace of late. In 2011, after Republicans took control of the U.S. House of Representatives, Congress passed just 90 bills into law. As of last August, only 61 of the 3,914 bills that had been introduced in 2012 as of that date had been passed into law." (Taken from Kowal Communications, Inc.)

How are both state and Congressional legislators judged as successful? It is by the number of

legislations they either introduced or co-sponsored. Do you understand the presuppositional philosophy behind this? It is simply that they see it as their role to determine everything we do and how we do it and if we do it. I want you to pay special attention to this sentence by Phaedra Trethan when explaining congressional sessions: "Congress is charged with drafting, debating and sending bills to the president to be signed into law." This is certainly the operating assumption and definition most Americans seem to hold. Now take time and read Article I of the Constitution of the United States and see where this is found. Certainly they are, when necessary, to draft legislation and send it to the president, but I dare you to find where this is their "charge," or primary business. Article I, Section 8 gives you a list of Congressional duties, those very specific areas where they are to utilize congressional oversight and write legislation. As given to us in the Bill of Rights, the 10th Amendment states: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Take a day or two to think about Article I and Amendment 10. The Federal government has very little control over the states and the people of the various states. The Founders did not envision a blurring of states and federal government. Every state had to write a Constitution that was in total agreement with the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights and no state could pass a law that conflicted with the Constitution or Rights. Beyond that, the states made the laws its citizens would abide by and different states could have different laws concerning the same thing. When I leave California and go to my favorite spot in Colorado I have to learn the differences in their laws—especially in terms of driving—from California's, and this includes the States of Arizona and New Mexico which I have to travel through. What Bastiat is talking about in terms of the federal state applies equally to the individual states. States have become just as oppressive in terms of plundering our rights.

Going back to Bastiat, the good state is "where taxes are lightest and most nearly equal, and popular discontent the least excited and the least justifiable; where individuals and groups most actively assume their responsibilities, and, consequently, where the morals of admittedly imperfect human beings are constantly improving."

Article I, Section 8 to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare.

Well, what are we to make of this? I'll give you two perspectives, one from a person with visions of a very limited State and the other from one who would like to see State powers expanded.

First from James Madison: "James Madison advocated for the ratification of the Constitution in *The Federalist* and at the Virginia ratifying convention upon a narrow construction of the clause, asserting that spending must be at least tangentially tied to one of the other specifically enumerated powers, such as regulating interstate or foreign commerce, or providing for the military, as the General Welfare Clause is not a specific grant of power, but a statement of purpose qualifying the power to tax."

Now the other is Alexander Hamilton who had a more expansive view after the ratification of the Constitution: "Alexander Hamilton, only after the Constitution had been ratified, argued for a broad interpretation which viewed spending as an enumerated power Congress could exercise independently to benefit the general welfare, such as to assist national needs in agriculture or education,

provided that the spending is general in nature and does not favor any specific section of the country over any other.”

I'll tell you that Madison was more correct in what the tax clause meant and Hamilton accepted this interpretation without argument during the ratification process, but those expansive tendencies came out after and did not reflect the intent of this power.

The greatest failure of the Articles of Confederation was precisely that the central government had no power to pay for itself and for the duties it was supposed to carry out. And so an express power to tax, most specifically on goods going in and out of the country, was necessary to meet the needs of the central government. As Madison and others clearly understood it, to now include the “general welfare” did not mean that the government would create a welfare state as it later did, but it simply meant the health of the nation due to the central government being able to operate and pay for those operations, especially in terms of a military for common defense.

And then came the progressive movement and the push for the federal government to increase its role in everyone's lives. The income tax was first proposed during the War of 1812 but didn't find any sponsors. However, come the Civil War which was very costly, Congress did pass the Revenue Act of 1861 with a 3% tax on income above \$800. The Revenue Act of 1862 became the first progressive tax with a graduated rate of between 3% and 5% now starting at an income level of \$600. These taxes expired in 1872, but, and here is a very large BUT, the State made a ton of money beyond meeting the needs of the war. And now the Socialist Party, the Populist Party, and the Democrat Party was all about a progressive income tax. And under the guidance of President Woodrow Wilson the Sixteenth Amendment was adopted: “The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.” What began in 1908 working its way through Presidents Taft and Roosevelt the income tax was now law.

Another aspect of the good state is “where individuals and groups most actively assume their responsibilities, and, consequently, where the morals of admittedly imperfect human beings are constantly improving.” Here is the thing, every American while they were still in colonies and later in states understood that they were responsible for their lives. I wrote earlier that freedom without responsibility is not freedom. You cannot have freedom without responsibility and you cannot have responsibility if you do not have freedom. Take one out of the equation and both go away. We cannot expect the government to have responsibility for us and we remain free, it doesn't work that way. And we know this because we experience it every day.

Two hurricanes illustrate the failure of government; Katrina and Sandy. In both cases the federal government through its disaster agency FEMA failed miserably in both showing up and in actually helping. What we witnessed in the aftermath of Katrina was FEMA pointing the accusing finger at the mayor of New Orleans and Governor of Louisiana and they pointing the finger at the federal government for the disaster that befell the city and environs as we watched on our television people stranded on top of their houses waiting to be rescued and the unconscionable rush of thousands to the Superdome to get above the water having to live in filth of an overcrowded area. In truth, it was the responsibility of the mayor of New Orleans and the governor of Louisiana to lead the exodus of

people out of harms way and they didn't. FEMA eventually showed up with trailers that only a few moved into as most of them didn't meet standards for family living. A year later I was in New Orleans for a week and I, along with 20,000 of my fellow Starbucks managers helped repair the city.

Hurricane Sandy did its disastrous job on New Jersey and New York where again there was a massive failure on the part of government to help. The charity organization, Mercury One, sent out 14 tractor trailers filled with food, two of which went to Coney Island that had seen so much destruction. But not only was it truck loads of food and supplies but hundreds of churchgoers from around the nation went to the areas destroyed by Sandy and helped the communities rebuild themselves. It wasn't the government that did the most good, it was ordinary people taking responsibility and helped others.

Americans are the most giving people, both in terms of money and in physical help around the globe. Why? Because it is part of our humanity, part of our nature as God's creatures. Recently Americans donated over \$10 million dollars through the Nazarene Fund designed to help 2,000 Syrian Christians find new homes in other countries as throughout the Middle East they are being killed in an attempt at genocide. The United States government wouldn't take in any of these Christians who were seriously vetted by this group, rather taking in only refugees not Christian who supposedly are vetted by the U.S. Government, only we know through experience how lousy they have been at this. Let Bastiat say it again, responsibility is not the responsibility of the government but of us individually and collectively. You want something done right, do it yourself.

This taking of responsibility consequently leads to better morals where the morals of “imperfect human beings are constantly improving.” Think about this very interesting statement: taking responsibility makes us better people. I'll let you work this one out on your own.

Another example of the good life is “where labor, capital, and populations suffer the fewest forced displacements; where mankind most nearly follows its own natural inclinations.”

The greatest personal disaster I've been in was in 1986 and the family and I had recently moved into a new neighborhood when on a clear blue sky day an Areomexico DC-9 was hit by a small single-engine Piper and both fell out of the sky into my neighborhood killing 165 people on the jet and the two in the Piper, and 15 on the ground. I had a press pass and so I grabbed my camera and began surveying the devastation in my neighborhood. While the city was quickly cleaning up the mess it was over a year and longer before those destroyed homes could be rebuilt. It took this long because from the time those homes were originally built until this accident the demands from the city on what and how you built a home had drastically changed and it was a hassle to rebuild.

I start with this because to get back to this “good state” will not be easy as the multitude of changes the State has already forced on us complicates everything. Progressives like to attack capitalism and free markets as evil but we neither have capitalism nor free markets as the plethora of government rules and regulations have muddied the water. We need a vacuum to suck out all the silt in the water to return it to clear so we can see what is really there. In 1980 President Reagan proposed a 30% tax cut and got from Congress a 25% cut. He rightly claimed that we were being unduly taxed, there was excessive government regulation, and federal spending was out of control. In the beginning this mostly helped the rich—its intention—because it was the rich who provided jobs and wealth for oth-

ers and the nation. It both worked and failed. It worked because more people, not just the rich, had more of their own hard-earned money in their pocket to do with as they desired. It helped because new people found ways to create new things and new businesses. President Clinton and his wife would later condemn this period, yet it was through Reaganomics they made their money. It failed—by fail I simply mean wasn't as successful as it could have been—because Congress did not hold to their part of the agreement and stop spending. It failed because there were those who wanted control over everyone and this gave too many a free hand in their own lives. It was derogatorily called “trickle-down” economics because the heart of it was that the rich, in creating new jobs and businesses, would benefit, and the benefit would go to everyone. The truth has always been the progressives want higher taxes because they want to control what is done. The one who controls the purse, controls. It is why both Democrats and Republicans (those progressive Republicans which now represent much of the party) will not get rid of the IRS, because through the IRS they have great control over us.

I've already covered labor and capital, now let's look into forced displacements. In our time, in modern America forced displacements are economic driven, not what happened to Indian tribes forced into Reservations, or the Japanese who were forced into internment camps, though in the good society neither of these would happen.

I understand my perspective is from California and while it applies to the West Coast and East Coast, much of middle America has a different perspective on forced displacement. This is not entirely true. Even in the Midwest the cost of farming has become prohibitive and many have had to sell their farms and move into towns. This is certainly true in California. I spent part of my childhood on a peach ranch where my father was foreman. As I've written before, one time visiting my used-to-be small town (back then some 5,000 in population, today over 100,000) I couldn't take my children to see the old homestead because all that land had been developed into tract homes. What happened? Money happened. Cities need money to do for us and their money comes from land taxes and taxing individual homes is far more lucrative than tracts of farmland. Farming got too expensive for most small farmers to exist and they sold their land to developers and everyone made money except the farmers and farm employees. This was, in every sense of the word, forced displacement. Another aspect of forced displacement comes from my Southern California experience where the housing market closer to Los Angeles got so far out of hand thousands and millions found they could not afford to live close to their jobs and moved further east from LA where homes were cheaper and affordable. A fifteen-minute commute to your job then became thirty minutes and now over an hour and a half, and those homes are no longer cheap and affordable because demand has driven up the prices.

As Ralph Kramden use to say in *Honeymooners*, “Well Alice, this is another fine mess you got us into.” There will always be some who find themselves displaced, but this wholesale displacement of masses is happening because of an unstable economy that keeps disrupting our lives.

The Desire to Rule Over Others

“This must be said: There are too many “great” men in the world — legislators, organizers, do-gooders, leaders of the people, fathers of nations, and so on, and so on. Too many persons place

themselves above mankind; they make a career of organizing it, patronizing it, and ruling it.

“Now someone will say: “You yourself are doing this very thing.” True. But it must be admitted that I act in an entirely different sense; if I have joined the ranks of the reformers, it is solely for the purpose of persuading them to leave people alone. I do not look upon people as Vancauson [a French inventor who created automated machines, like an automated loom] looked upon his automaton. Rather, just as the physiologist accepts the human body as it is, so do I accept people as they are. I desire only to study and admire.

“My attitude toward all other persons is well illustrated by this story from a celebrated traveler: He arrived one day in the midst of a tribe of savages, where a child had just been born. A crowd of soothsayers, magicians, and quacks — armed with rings, hooks, and cords — surrounded it. One said: “This child will never smell the perfume of a peace-pipe unless I stretch his nostrils.” Another said: “He will never be able to hear unless I draw his ear-lobes down to his shoulders.” A third said: “He will never see the sunshine unless I slant his eyes.” Another said: “He will never stand upright unless I bend his legs.” A fifth said: “He will never learn to think unless I flatten his skull.”

“Stop,” cried the traveler. “What God does is well done. Do not claim to know more than He. God has given organs to this frail creature; let them develop and grow strong by exercise, use, experience, and liberty.”

What God does is well done. We are not in need of a fundamental transformation. Our systems have become corrupt but they didn't begin that way. Marxists/Socialists/Progressives are seeking to remake man in their image. It's why the big push in indoctrination of our children as the system seeks to fundamentally change them from their parents so they, the children, will listen not to their parents but the State for their truths. And it is working. It is really difficult for the State to fundamentally change me, not because I am set in my ways as the State likes to ridicule us seniors. They are having a hard time changing my children because they had the benefit of measuring my truths against the State's truths. But their children, my grandchildren, are part of a wholesale transformation as they are taught not to listen to their parents or grandparents who belong to a bygone age and failed beliefs.

Ask a child if it's okay to have a Christmas scene at their school and their answer will be, “No, it's unconstitutional.” Where did they get that? From everyone who begins this discussion with the fact that it is against the Constitution. When lies are stated as positive facts over and over soon no one questions them but repeats the lie as though it is true. I don't care how many times you say it, there is nothing in the Constitution that demands a separation from church and state, nothing that says prayers can't be said in school, nothing that says Christmas themes can't be on government property. NOTHING! And yet many of you believe it does.

Pay attention! The State has become like those “soothsayers, magicians, and quacks.” What a telling story Bastiat introduces, and it is so fitting today, maybe even more so than in his time. But what God does he does well. We are not in need of having our nostrils stretched or our ears made larger, or our eyes slanted for better vision, or our legs bent, or our skulls flattened, all of which in their own way the State is doing to us, and especially our children. We simply need to wake up to the truth that has always been there with us:

“We hold from God the gift which includes all others. This gift is life — physical, intellectual, and

moral life.”

“But life cannot maintain itself alone. The Creator of life has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving, developing, and perfecting it. In order that we may accomplish this, He has provided us with a collection of marvelous faculties. And He has put us in the midst of a variety of natural resources. By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course.”

Let's end this review with how Bastiat ends it:

Let Us Now Try Liberty

“God has given to men all that is necessary for them to accomplish their destinies. He has provided a social form as well as a human form. And these social organs of persons are so constituted that they will develop themselves harmoniously in the clean air of liberty. Away, then, with quacks and organizers! Away with their rings, chains, hooks, and pincers! Away with their artificial systems! Away with the whims of governmental administrators, their socialized projects, their centralization, their tariffs, their government schools, their state religions, their free credit, their bank monopolies, their regulations, their restrictions, their equalization by taxation, and their pious moralizations!

“And now that the legislators and do-gooders have so futilely inflicted so many systems upon society, may they finally end where they should have begun: May they reject all systems, and try liberty; for liberty is an acknowledgment of faith in God and His works.”

(Note: I have covered about half of what Bastiat wrote in The Law. In Shaping How We Think site go to the “University” tap and click it; then click on “History”, then click on “Political History” to find the full version of The Law. I have also placed in “Political History” the complete review of Bastiat for those who want to go back and read the complete study without breaks.)

