

COFFEE COASTER SNAP-SHOTS ____ No. 1

Open letters to friends and family regarding the Sacred Nonaggression Principle

This week I'm starting a new occasional feature with my Monday column: the SNaPshot. It seems a day doesn't pass that someone close to me either objects to the SNaP idea or shows in their actions a dangerous ignorance, even defiance, of the highest moral ideal for society exhibited by the nonaggression principle (NaP). Because of the usually familiar circumstances of these objections or aggression-enabling behavior, I've decided to express my responses through "open letters" (OLs) ... staying as rant-free as possible.

Please let me know how I do.

OL to Mark[1]: So you want to work for the government...

A couple of weekends ago, I joined my elite group of beer drinkers and poker players for our annual outing in the Uppa US (northern Michigan). There are six guys in the Poker Gang all married with children, except me; their kids are becoming adults. At our debarkation point for the trip, a home of one of the guys, I'm having a conversation with his wife. She tells me the younger son, Mark, who will graduate from college soon "is thinking about getting into federal law enforcement."

Practically choking on my donut, I mutter something like, "Why would he want to do that, Meryl? Why does he want to force people, beat them up?" And she knew I was upset, but it was way too early to get into a discussion, especially on the threshold of a four-day festive weekend with the guys. And we both let it go. But it did eat at me, periodically, that whole four days, and since. On the trip back with four of us in the van—which was driven by the boy's father (longtime friend)—somebody mentioned the drug war or some other federal war or program of death and destruction... and I went ballistic.

Man, I just got to quit doing that: launch into a tirade—with varying degrees of loud insinuation toward a hapless audience—about some gross evil inflicted by the state against innocent civilians. But on this occasion, in a weakened state following three days of overeating and overdrinking, sunburned, and uncomfortable, I couldn't stop myself. Also, seeing Mark's father driving there, it reminded me that his kid was actually considering going to work for the Gross Perpetrator of all these atrocities. Aaaaacchhh!

One of these days the boy—me—will grow up. At least didn't call anyone names this time, and I ramped down about as quickly as I had ramped up. Fact is, the "spiritual solution" to political wretchedness is becoming more and more real for me these days... subject of several columns already and more to come. Indeed, my new-found inclination toward taking the high road is what leads me to these Open Letter conversations. And I surely hope the following one to young Mark has some positive effect:

OL to Mark re: a federal law-enforcement career

Dear Mark:

Your mother mentioned to me you were thinking of a career in federal law enforcement, and I hope you will give me a few moments of your time to consider

some ramifications that many patriots (activists for Constitutional liberty) will see in such a decision... if, in fact, you go that way.

First, I'm happy that you've come to graduation from college; I know your parents are extremely proud that you have matured to this point, that you have become an adult with an independent mind and strong moral sensibilities. Although we don't know each other that well as individuals, you were around sometimes at the poker games at your folks' house... and more recently we played golf when you subbed on the league. I enjoyed bantering with you then, and even think I left you with a card to my site, which references my book, *The Sacred Nonaggression Principle*.

The book is no joke, Mark, no light and transient thing, even though your dad and the poker buddies have little interest in my political ideals or literary work. [It's all right, the causework for freedom isn't for everyone.] But there is a 900-# gorilla in the living room of world affairs whether we choose to notice it or not. That gorilla metaphor is my short-hand designation of the Western central governments, particularly the military empire and police-security-state enforcement arm represented by the current United States government.

The immediate question on the table is, "Does the United States federal government serve as an aggressor and a violator of the Constitutionally recognized natural rights of human beings... or as a protector of those rights?" To me—and I think to anyone who reads or understands much of anything—the answer is obvious: the US federal government today is the primary wanton aggressor upon the lives and liberties of all humankind. Here are a few facts:

- ❑ It launches preemptive wars based on lies, slaughtering millions of individuals on all sides... for which its leaders are subject to prosecution for murder.
- ❑ It imprisons, tortures, and kills people worldwide with military pretenses—but actually without any valid reason or cause—renditioning innocent civilians to allied governments, where they are imprisoned, tortured, and killed.
- ❑ It conducts a wholesale assault on consensual adult activity in the United States generally known as the War on Drugs, in which hundreds of thousands of peaceful, nonaggressing citizens are sent into the prison gulag, their lives destroyed.
- ❑ It denies Americans access to a trillion-dollar-per-year industry by insanely classifying agricultural hemp as a Schedule I narcotic.
- ❑ It is responsible for millions of deaths of Americans by denying access to life-preserving drugs and other treatments via the Food and Drug Administration.
- ❑ It routinely massacres civilians in police assaults such as the killings in Waco, false flag operations such as the Oklahoma City bombings, and "Pearl Harbor" black ops such as the 9/11 attacks.
- ❑ It is guilty of sundry massacres and atrocities through its military forces overseas or through its contracted mercenary killers, e.g. Blackwater; it has unleashed the WMD of depleted uranium in areas affecting tens of millions of people.
- ❑ It has set up the Federal Reserve Banking System (1913) and the income tax (1916) as unlawful tools for expropriation of productive-class citizens by the

government for banking and corporate elites; tens of trillions of dollars have been stolen over the previous century.

Oh, yeah. I forgot, it put Martha Stewart in jail for a few months because she got a stock tip. ...but I have to stop due to time constraints. So, Mark, what is it about federal-government enforcement activities that appeals to you?

Do you think they'll put you in a department that tries to stop real criminals? People who kill and steal? Like, say, the Mafia. [The Mob would not exist without the drug laws or other consensual (pseudo) (unconstitutional) crime laws created by the government.] "The Federal Law Enforcement Department that Protects the Rights of Citizens against Aggression," if it exists, will not have the budget to pay you minimum wage.

That's my argument, Mark. The feds are criminals of the lowest order, they are enemies of human liberty and human life. No man or woman, no parent, no sibling, is safe while this government continues to breach its constitutional limits.... The feds are the bad guys, not the good guys. For verification, please read the reference links; call me or email me.

Let me close by reminding you of what Jesus said: "They who take the sword die by the sword." What he meant by that is "don't be an aggressor, because the logic of that choice will cause someone else to defend himself against the aggression." That is, those who initiate force tend to suffer retaliation of force. Please do not take up the sword, Mark. Just say no to crime, say no to the feds!

Best Regards,

Brian

This is a good place to recommend—to Mark and to any of my college-age readers—that instead of enlisting for Tyranny Central, you should join the liberty movement on a campus near you.

The Ron Paul book *End the Fed* has come out now, and he's been on *The Daily Show*, where Jon Stewart gave Paul and the book a hearty endorsement. Even consider hooking up with the Libertarian Party here in Michigan. Even though the government has worked hard to destroy our economy, there are still many alternatives to government employment, particularly in the law enforcement area; i.e., there is no need to cross over to the Dark Side.[2]

OL to Gerry: The "PANG"[3] objection to the SNaP

The following letter (paraphrased) came to me from a former engineering colleague, who over the years has always exhibited "liberal" reservations to my longstanding radical libertarianism. Gerry is a successful consultant with advanced degrees in physics and engineering; he's one sharp cookie. His original letter is in response to my "Space Lizards and Pod People" article:

The initial email from Gerry

Dear Brian:

The thing I learned in kindergarten was certainly: 1) Don't hit, 2) Don't steal, 3) Be honest. The other thing I learned was that the teacher or the parent were absolutely

vital in enforcing these principles... since it appears evolution has not yet made these principles the driving forces in us.

This leads to adulthood where my experience is that it is still very necessary to have someone to enforce these principles. You mentioned that maybe one in a hundred or a thousand might be willing to transgress these principles, but I think the willingness to transgress is much more common than this. [Esp., I find most people are willing to take advantage of someone during a transaction, if they feel they can, though it technically isn't stealing. For example, how many buyers at a garage sale would inform the seller that the vase displayed on the card table for 50¢ is a priceless Ming antique?]

Think of the Milgram experiment where people were asked to administer shocks to someone else who they can't see, and willingly did so. In general evolution has set us up to survive and do what is best for us as individuals, next our tribe, next our country (the world seems to be a concept so remote that few people seem to be willing to do what's right for it yet).

... all of this leads me to the realization that in order to have people obey your SNaP we will need many rules to define what constitutes an aggression. These rules are presently called laws. So rather than starting from first principles and reinventing all of the rules, should we start and continue on with the rules we have now? ... that is why it is important to try to get the best possible people into lawmaking.

Democracy attempts to do this, but there could certainly be improvements in our voting methods. In order to enforce these rules we will need governments (and taxation) to enforce them. By the time you implement the SNaP principle into the real world and work out its bugs, human nature will force you to end up with a system not far from where we are today.

I like simplicity and all of my life I have attempted to achieve it whenever I can (Einstein said, "make things as simple as possible, but no simpler." I think the SNaP is overly simplistic, and leads us back to where we are now when you consider everybody's different views on what constitutes aggression. In reality even more aggression will be required to force everyone to conform to your view of what aggression consists of.

[Gerry concludes this letter with comments to the effect that the US Constitution is good but imperfect and we should not regard it as a Bible. It needs to evolve and be a work in progress... and that he hates to write so much that writing this letter to me should be considered a high gesture of respect.]

[Then when I responded that his PANG theory was a fairly conventional objection to liberty and had some major holes, Gerry came back that it wasn't so much that people are immoral, they simply are not capable of living without aggression... partly because there's so much disagreement on what aggression is, and partly because it's such a hugely complicated issue for them.]

My open letter to Gerry

Dear Gerry:

Thanks for opening up with your letter(s); I know it's a pain in the ass to write if one isn't used to doing so. The fact that you cared so much is important to me... and it tells me that at least the idea of the SNaP piques some interest, if not anxiety.

First, what is so complicated about the concept of aggression? Assault, theft, rape, murder, fraud. If someone points a gun at your head and orders you to hand over your wallet, do you think there's any doubt in anyone's mind that that's the initiation of force? Puhleeeasse. [True, some borderline instances exist, that's why we have the law.]

The whole point of my Kindergarten Rules is to show that the concept of aggression is obvious to children. Therefore it should be obvious to adults. And it's fine with me if we only consider the clearest cases of aggression: 99% of all instances. Let's just ban those. "Don't hit, don't steal, don't lie." You good with that?

You mention you needed a kindergarten teacher as an enforcer. Okay, what was she enforcing? "Don't hit, don't steal, don't lie." Which is consistent with the original idea of the American experiment, a Constitutional limited government that protects its citizens from aggression. Advocates of the NaP realize that utopia is not an option, some people will aggress... and we need practical systems to take care of that. These practical systems are not aggression: they are systems that act as best they can to prevent and remedy aggression.

Second, I'm struggling to locate in your emails where you identify a different principle from the NaP that enables humans to live in peace and harmony. What is your organizing rule, your "kindergarten" doodah that everyone can grasp and everyone can get behind with minimal conflict?

- Divine Right of Kings?
- Discerning the grunts of Igor?
- Bread and circuses for everyone?

I'm pretty sure you personally believe in the nonaggression principle and that you truly think the NaP would be a good thing for human beings to practice. What I really think you desire is not alternatives to the NaP, but exceptions. Sorry.

So when someone like me proposes that the NaP apply to all humankind—including and especially governments—it makes a lot of people nervous. Many of us have got used to a high level of predictable aggression in society, particularly from their governments.[4] As Jefferson predicted, it is natural for liberty to wane and statism to wax. And this is why I came up with the SNaP in the first place, to change that tendency toward unchecked government aggression.

Finally, as part of your PANG theory, you cite the Milgram Experiment, where individuals shocked others because they were instructed to by an authority. What about the Inquisition, the Crusades, the Communist gulags, the Holocaust, etc.? Gerry, these instances of gross aggression are grist to my mill, not yours.

The fact that people aggress upon one another—mass slaughter of millions occurs exclusively via governments—is exactly the problem we need to solve. The only way you solve a problem based on mass aggression is to instill the Kindergarten Rules, the SNaP, universally and without exception [this means we take away government systems of aggression (GSAs) as the highest priority (the biggest-worstest systems,

like the drug war and the Fed, first)]... at the same time fostering intellectual and moral independence.

Just out of curiosity, what particular GSA are you holding onto? Government schools? Welfare? Health care? The space program? Well, these systems, when liberated from state coercion, are hundreds of times better.

Thanks, Gerry, for pointing out the urgency of the aggression problem, the many instances where governments and their minions aggress with impunity because of lack of attention and blind obedience to authority. As I mention to Mark above, there are several groups working toward the end of these systems of government aggression... and I'm sure you'll be wanting to lend a hand or a sizeable financial contribution, maybe make a SNaP presentation to your local Optimist Club.

Also, I'm working on the revision of the Sacred Nonaggression Principle book as we speak. Anything you can do to promote or put this book into the hands of the masses—particularly social activists, teachers, and public officials—will make you an honored benefactor of humanity. Thanks for all your help.

Brian

PS: Gerry, I do think, as I expressed to you in a brief email message, that the underlying solution to the aggression problem lies along the lines of individual spiritual enlightenment. And I particularly like the Falun Dafa approach in this regard (because it is so consistent with the SNaP and vice versa). More on these ideas in subsequent columns.

Well, that's sort of where I end the SNaPshot today.

As for Mark's situation, I find it difficult to have to make moral judgments. But look at it this way, if your neighbor's son decided he wanted to be a prison guard at Auschwitz, how would you feel? Would you speak up?

As for my friend Gerry's reservations on the SNaP, we find he's more concerned about the lack of understanding of the NaP... or inability to put it into effect. Fortunately, the SNaP, by elevating the idea of the NaP to our highest moral standard, will help. As usual, I invite readers to contribute to the Coffee Coaster blog or contact me via email.

###

[1] The recipients of my open letters are real people, but I'm either only using first names or using pseudo first names to designate them... or other real people who are referred to.

[2] In a column several months ago, "An Open Letter to the Law Enforcement Community: Enforcing the Bill of Rights is Job One!" I made the case that anyone considering a career in law enforcement insist that no action of theirs will ever violate the Bill of Rights. It's perfectly valid to join the government's law enforcement community so long as you a) defy any order that obviously commits an act of aggression upon a person or b) work as a secret agent for the libertarian resistance to undermine and destroy government aggressor-agencies.

[3] PANG = People Are No Good. The PANG theory holds that people are either not moral enough or not competent enough to achieve <some social good or personal ideal>. Normally, the PANG theory is used to justify government aggression, like a

redistribution of wealth, ... on the premise that people will not act morally on their own to help those to whom the wealth is allegedly going to be distributed.

[4] From government schools and health care/retirement systems to drug wars and imperial wars, "the Cartel[5]" figures out how to butter everybody's bread for the Cartel's benefit. [The government (as Cartel agent) walks around a room taking a penny from everyone: it hands half of all the pennies to the Cartel, a quarter of all the pennies to itself, and a few pennies to one guy. This guy naturally loves this part of the government. Then the government repeats the process, bestowing the few pennies on the next guy, then the next, etc. Taking the pennies is an act of aggression, but the shell game makes it seem benevolent. The SNaP is a real party pooper for exposing and ending the shell game.]

[5] My preferred name is "the Kleptocons."

2009 October 05

Copyright © Brian Wright | The Coffee Coaster™

Federal Law Enforcement | Bill of Rights | PANG Theory | Nonaggression | SNaP