

LIBERTARIAN ALTERNATIVE GOVERNMENT

Modest proposal to the LP of Michigan, March 2011

"That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any ... government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it..."

or to fire the dipwads and find someone else to do the job.



Background

Probably four to six months ago, I was moving around the Web and saw a Google ad for Panarchy South Jersey, so I clicked it and started reading. Panarchy? Hmmm. I had not really heard of the concept, so I looked it up on Wikipedia and sure enough it's been around a while. Two sentences from the Wiki article, with the heading "Panarchy as freely chosen government:"

"Panarchy is a conceptual term first coined by the Belgian botanist and economist Paul Emile de Puydt in 1860.... In his 1860 article "Panarchy" de Puydt, who also expressed support for laissez-faire economics, applied the concept to the individual's right to choose any form of government without being forced to move from their current locale."

Whoa!

Amazingly enough, panarchy thus defined came to me as a revelation and an inspiration, I contacted the proprietor of the South Jersey site, Dwight Johnson (<http://governmentbycontract.com/>) and we began a correspondence. I really haven't developed my own ideas much more than that, but I have written a couple of columns in the Coffee Coaster that discuss the idea of freely choosing one's government(s).

Implementation

One of Dwight's ideas is the choosing of governments along lines of current political parties. For example, on a given day the responsible adults residing in the current state of Michigan designate what organization they wish to serve as their 'government,' the entity that provides organized protection and legal services with some infrastructure.



We as libertarians would all choose a Libertarian noncoercive government with no additional 'services' such as schools or miscellaneous aggressions for "the common good." Some might wish those things. Even those who want coercive governments, in effect, because of the freedom of choice, get a government that is noncoercive to the extent of letting them end the contract.

Johnson's concept is that these new noncoercive governments will form along the lines of political parties, which I find novel. Before that would ever happen, however, the political party(s) is going to have to be willing to step up and form a government. Let's start at the state level with the LP of Michigan. Hypothetically, a cross-section of the leadership of the LPM forms a government (like a publicly owned corporation) and writes a business plan to gather subscribers.

With the subscriptions and whatever initial capital raised, the Libertarian Government of Michigan is conceived and begins to operate. What does it do? It provides the legitimate rights-protection services of any government: police and courts and a proper execution of law for handling civil disputes. It will also need protocols for dealing with other governments, both the coercive ones that have been left behind and the other ones forming who will want to be cooperative. Indeed, once the process of freedom of choice in government gets in gear the great majority of government activity will be cooperation in creating the best possible services for the end client, the individual.

So what would it look like in Michigan at the state level?

I sign up with the Libertarian government that is forming, agree with its bylaws—all government bylaws will include an agreement by each individual client to adhere to the nonaggression principle—then arrange to make payments. In return I receive a subscription identification as a sovereign individual, location of courts, numbers for police, and so on. Also a document discharging the existing State of Michigan from its contract with me and me from it.



Thus my financial considerations to the State of Michigan are ended. No, the state initially is probably not going to like that, and this is where we have policies depending on personal preference how much to cooperate with the old coercive state. At the very minimum, one's allegiance ends and the commitment to no longer engage in the contract is asserted. The Libertarian government will no doubt prepare for the eventuality of the state's rejection—I advocate peaceful noncooperation for the new governments, not force of arms. Mainly, because I do not think we'll need arms. The alternative government concept will go viral very quickly; the old state will essentially evaporate in a hurry for lack of business. It's not an inefficient dinosaur for nothing!

The issue comes up: what about the infrastructure that we're all a part of. Mainly roads, streets, utilities? Actually, utilities have been shown to be privatizable based on one's property conditions. The same can be said for roads, though less work has been done there. Dwight Johnson reminds us that the ownership of transportation properly belongs with those who own the property through which it traverses. Again, a lot of work has occurred on free markets in transportation modes. Here's Walter Block's classic Free Market Transportation.

But the big question on the state level is going to be the schools and the public welfare systems. These are going to be set free fairly quickly by the advent of cooperating governments; on welfare-related systems very likely many new governments will include a charitable function fee to help with the transition for humanitarian reasons. On state schools, the transition to voluntary, community-funded, family, and individual education systems is straightforward: you need some education, write a check. The compulsory-addiction system of the state schools will end mercifully when freedom of choice in government arises, and the best teachers will be picked up by the vast new array of alternative educational businesses.

New Direction for Libertarians?

When the party was founded, you might have made a case that the government was susceptible to change. But with the knowledge I've come into lately and based on

Libertarian results, it's clear that the main role of the LP qua political organization has been a "sandbox," a trap to distract genuine freedom lovers from seriously confronting and undoing the statist money power. The ownership class won't let the LP break thru; it just wraps it up in a pseudolegal maze rendering it nonthreatening.

By offering a real noncoercive government, libertarians in concert, or Libertarians doing a winning business plan can achieve real progress in creating a free society.

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2011 March 14

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