

The Meaning of Property

The American dream started with these words: "...all men are created equal... they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and property... (The Declaration of Independence- *first draft*)

Our Founding Fathers understood that the protection of property is the most important responsibility designated to government. They wisely perceived that it is the right to *use* one's property that overshadows all other considerations, because the term *property* embodies all we are and all we own, including life and liberty.

In fact, virtually everything in our lives necessitates the *use* of some form of property. A car has value because we can use it to take us where we want to go. A house has value because we can use it for shelter. A beautiful painting has value because we can take pleasure in using it for enjoyment.

Even an idea or a thought has value because we derive some benefit from using it. But in every case it is property's potential use and *what someone would be willing to pay to use it* that gives it value. If the usage, or partial usage, of our property is taken from us, *even if we still own it*, then property has been stolen. To fully comprehend this, consider the greatest property theft of all, *to take another's life*. When a murder is committed, the murderer takes from the victim everything he has, or ever would have had, because he steals from him the *use* of his allotted time on earth.

The framers of the Alabama 1901 Constitution also understood the paramount importance of property rights. In Section 35, under "Object of Government" our Constitution states: "*That the sole object and only legitimate end of government is to protect the citizen in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property...*" It further states: "*and when the government assumes other functions it is usurpation and oppression.*" To date, I have not found one single state legislator who could correctly answer the simple question, "What is the purpose of government?" And yet, it is clearly stated in the quote above from the Alabama 1901 Constitution, which they all swore to defend and protect when they took their oath of office.

Under Feudalism, Fascism, Communism, Socialism, and Environmentalism, in fact under anything but freedom and individual ownership of property, a powerful few control all property and the many are at their mercy. The single most important factor in creating the greatness and prosperity of America is in *our freedom to choose how we use* our lives and our property.

Karl Marx wrote, "Communism can be summarized in one sentence: The abolition of private property"

"We are fast approaching the stage of the ultimate inversion: The stage where the government is free to do anything it pleases, while the citizens may act only by permission – which is the stage of the darkest periods of human history, the stage of rule by brute force." -Ayn Rand.

Unless we wake up and defend our rights, our freedom and our property will surely slip away. But that is redundant is it not, since liberty and property are one and the same? *Taking property is taking liberty.*

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