

Milei and Wilders Elected: Is the Libertarian Moment Finally Here?



by Roger L. Simon

It used to be said that conservative guys just called themselves “libertarian” so girls would talk to them at cocktail parties.

At least one well-known conservative talk show host called them “losertarians” since they didn’t always toe the line and vote Republican.

Nevertheless, many of us are still convinced Henry David Thoreau, sounding very libertarian, was correct when he wrote in his 1849 book “Civil Disobedience” that “the best government is that which governs least.”

Thomas Jefferson and John Locke earlier had said much the same

and now, after a couple of hundred years, that libertarian view seems to be growing globally.

Much of this is a reaction to the obvious: Marxism or quasi-Marxism does not work economically and, worse, it has engendered horrendous totalitarian oppression with a massive death count in China, Russia, North Korea, and Cambodia, among others.

Libertarianism has started to look a lot better, especially—and ironically—in the eyes of Karl Marx's beloved proletariat, unlike the so-called "elites," who are a protected class.

Here, in the United States, the MAGA movement that now dominates the Republican Party tilts libertarian. Its leader, 2024 presidential candidate Donald Trump, has also done so in most of his recent pronouncements.

Meanwhile, in South America and Europe, even more overtly libertarian candidates have won their country's elections.

First it was economist, professor, and sometime rock musician Javier Milei in Argentina, who in reaction to the catastrophic 134 percent inflation and a concomitant rise in poverty in his country, has become the new president-elect.

Then in the Netherlands, longtime political libertarian and strongly anti-immigration gadfly Geert Wilders out-paced all predictions in their elections and will attempt to form a government.

Mr. Wilders success is partly due to the Dutch farmers who were fed up with new "climate change" regulations that would make it impossible for them to make a living—and therefore for many of their countrymen to eat.

The corporate media and their political allies in the European Union and the United States immediately branded Mr. Milei and

Mr. Wilders with their now-favorite designation “far-right,” though these men are no more far-right than Jefferson, Locke, and Thoreau, the very figures these so-called liberals and progressives—though they prefer to ignore or “forget”—once considered their intellectual heroes.

What is transpiring now globally is a fight between these rising libertarians of various stripes and the incumbent statist. In recent years, despite the Trump interregnum, the statist have seemed to be in the ascendancy.

The Davos/globalist set, Klaus Schwab et al., was almost assumed to have already taken power under the mantra “You’ll own nothing, and you will be happy,” a phrase that originated in a 2016 video from the World Economic Forum. It was a new supposedly benign form of communism, though oddly reminiscent of the “three rounds and a sound” (bicycle, watch, and sewing machine plus a radio) deemed sufficient for life in the Communist China of the 1950s.

Meanwhile, those advocating this mantra, the aforementioned globalist set, flew in and out of that glamorous Davos resort on private jets to deliver speeches on global warming while their desired constituents, who rarely had a chance to fly business and felt lucky when they were admitted to an overcrowded airport lounge, looked on via television and internet with increasing skepticism.

Globalism was a shell game taking place before their eyes. Bill Gates would never be happy “owning nothing.” He was buying up all the farms in America (that weren’t already bought by the Chinese).

He and his cronies had found a new way get rich (or richer) and stay rich. Globalism was just a mask for oligarchic power, with that oligarchy extending into a one world-wide state. Why think small? National borders are so 20th Century.

So a battle has been joined between these mega-statists and

the libertarians (again of various stripes, often nationalist), but for the first time the latter seem to be ascendant.

Mr. Wilders and Mr. Meili are not far-right or “hard-right,” to use the term adopted by The Economist, which called the Dutch leader a “[headache for Europe](#).” (Actually men like Mr. Wilders will be Europe’s salvation, if allowed.) They are not Nazis, as they are sometimes called, or nearly so. The Nazis were socialists—the National Socialist Party—it is always worth reminding ourselves.

Mr. Milei and Mr. Wilders are not far-anything. They are a return to the values enshrined in the United States’ “Declaration of Independence,” the importance of the freedom of the individual.

We are seeing this new ascendancy domestically in the renewed popularity of President Trump as his poll numbers continue to rise.

But is the MAGA movement truly libertarian? In the largest sense, yes, because, after all, “libertarian,” like most political terminology these days, is rather vague. To some, a libertarian is a self-indulgent, pot-lover. (I’m not. I despise pot, though I used to smoke it. There are a number of things about some libertarians I don’t like.)

But MAGA stands firmly against the Deep State, and nothing is more libertarian than that. Cut the bureaucracy, cut the regulations, deep six as many government agencies as possible.

If fact, deep six the Deep State in its entirety.

That sounds pretty libertarian to me.

And while we’re at it, keep the government out of our cars, our refrigerators and stoves, our bank accounts, our medical care, our security systems, our reading material, our cable connections, our emails and text messages, internet, social media, cellphones, or anything to do with our private lives.

It's a safe bet Mr. Milei and Mr. Wilders would agree.

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