

The Economic Coercion and 'Repressive Tolerance' of the Woke Regime

by Michael Rectenwald

I am tasked with talking with about how the regime seeks to control our schools, our families, and even our speech by denouncing everything it dislikes as "hate."

First, although I am the last speaker today, I will have to define what I mean by "the regime." Just what is this regime that we speak of?

The regime, of course, includes the government itself. The government, as I will show, is exerting its power to control expression and information, peddle official narratives, dictate to schools, and control and alter the substance of families themselves. It seeks to define and delimit our rights by suggesting that they have been accorded to us by the government in the first place.

For example, when asked by a reporter whether she was upholding her oath to the Constitution upon issuing a public health order suspending the right to carry guns in public in Albuquerque and the surrounding county, Michelle Grisham, the governor of New Mexico, stated that "no constitutional right, in my view, including my oath, is intended to be absolute." When a federal judge blocked part of the executive order, she proceeded by issuing another order prohibiting guns in parks and playgrounds. This example is merely the most recent glaring case of the kind of despotism that the state has attempted to arrogate to itself. I'll talk about more later.

But the regime includes more than the government itself. It

also consists of state apparatuses that are not strictly part of the government, per se, including corporate entities that have been drawn into the state's ambit as state enablers and that effectively carry out state functions as state apparatuses. I've called these corporate state apparatuses "governmentalities." Governmentalities are especially conspicuous today in the cases of Big Tech and Big Pharma. The former serves to censor, disseminate propaganda, and control information while the latter is granted an exemption from liability and a legal monopoly over medicines and vaccines in exchange for the extension and intensification of state coercion.

Examples of Big Tech censorship and propaganda in collusion with the government are legion, with the Twitter files and Missouri vs. Biden case providing the most recent illustrations. As I wrote in [Google Archipelago](#), Big Tech is an array of digital technologies that are adopted and used by the state to enhance the state's disciplinary and governmental apparatuses and vastly augment state power. My argument has since been validated by the Twitter files, which revealed a direct pipeline between several government agencies (the DHS, FBI, NSA, CDC, and the Whitehouse itself) and social media companies to control information, suppress covid "conspiracy theories," and curate the political sphere by suppressing news and information about political criminality of the Biden family. This collusion was corroborated in Missouri vs. Biden. Representative Stacey Plaskett went so far as to threaten journalist Matt Taibbi with jail time for his testimony before a Congressional committee regarding the Twitter files, and the IRS ransacked Taibbi's New Jersey home while he was giving testimony in D.C. Such is the ruthless and devious character of the regime.

The mainstream media complex is also a governmentality. Along with social media, the mainstream media disseminates official narratives and propaganda and buries or discredits conflicting

information. The media is the priesthood of the administrative regime because it defines and enforces the public orthodoxy with which the state identifies itself. Social media is central to this priesthood, which explains why Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter (re-branded as X) apparently poses a threat and why Musk, no matter what else we might say about him, has been dogged by the regime ever since buying Twitter.

Organizations like the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center are also governmentalities, as Musk has learned.

Of course, the military industrial complex is a governmentality and the so-called "proxy war" in Ukraine is but the latest example of the state and its governmentalities in action. The military industrial complex extracts wealth from the productive class to expand the state's reach but also to intimidate, suppress, and surveil the domestic population.

The regime also includes such state actors who, although not necessarily employees of the government or corporations, serve as its foot soldiers. These include the standard-issue academics who disseminate statist ideology. Academia is one of the main "ideological state apparatuses" of the regime.[1] Academics function to rationalize state power, making it appear natural and inevitable. "Promoting this ideology among the people," Murray Rothbard wrote in *Anatomy of the State*, "is the vital social task of the 'intellectuals.'"[2] These minions furnish the state with "intellectual bodyguards,"[3] as Hans-Hermann Hoppe put it. These are state agents who, like Noam Chomsky, posture as "radicals." Unsurprisingly, many of these academics are socialist. The state encourages the proliferation of socialism because socialism is statist.

Academics undertake ideological enforcement on the ground. For example, a Wayne State University English Professor, Steven Shaviro, made a Facebook post stating that it would be better to kill "bigots" rather than "to shout them down." The

professor, who has taught courses in film, wrote: "So here is what I think about free speech on campus. Although I do not advocate violating federal and state criminal codes, I think it is far more admirable to kill a racist, homophobic, or transphobic speaker than it is to shout them down." In other words, according to Shaviro, some speech merits their speakers a death sentence. That is, killing a human being is deemed morally preferable to allowing speech that one doesn't condone.

We should not imagine that Shaviro's view represents an exception; it is now common among the establishment. For example, Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs's press secretary recently resigned after advocating [shooting "transphobes"](#) in a tweet—on the heels of a transgender shooter killing six people here in Nashville, TN.

Shaviro implied that a speaker's audience is qualified and authorized to determine whether a speaker is "racist, homophobic, or transphobic," and thus deserves the death penalty.

It must be noted that such attitudes as Shaviro's follow directly from a monumental piece of leftist statist "theory," namely Herbert Marcuse's 1965 essay, "Repressive Tolerance." [4] It has become the blueprint for the leftists who now run the state.

In "Repressive Tolerance," Marcuse argued for the intolerance that statists currently demonstrate against expression of which they disapprove—that is, all expression other than their own. Marcuse argued that "tolerance" for expression was originally born in opposition to existing powers, but this was before leftists gained power. Real tolerance should not be "impartial," Marcuse argued. It should favor only then-oppositional (i.e., then leftist) expression.

Tolerance, as it was practiced in 1965, Marcuse asserted, was

of two kinds:

(1) the passive toleration of entrenched and established attitudes and ideas even if their damaging effect on man and nature is evident; and (2) the active, official tolerance granted to the Right as well as to the Left, to movements of aggression as well as to movements of peace, to the party of hate as well as to that of humanity. I call this non-partisan tolerance “abstract” or “pure” inasmuch as it refrains from taking sides—but in doing so it actually protects the already established machinery of discrimination.[5] That is, the expression of the “the Right” supports “aggression,” “hate,” and “the machinery of discrimination,” while that of “the Left” supports “peace” and “humanity.” This claim should surely strike us as ironic in 2023—just as it should have struck readers as ironic in 1965. But Marcuse saw “pure” or “abstract” tolerance as “ridiculous.”

It would follow then that Marcuse would think that only leftist speech should be tolerated. And that is exactly what he argued. How did he justify this position? Citing John Stuart Mill, Marcuse argued that tolerance was only ever supposed to be a means for promoting freedom and truth, thus improving the lot of mankind:

Tolerance of free speech is the way of improvement, of progress in liberation, not because there is no objective truth, and improvement must necessarily be a compromise between a variety of opinions, but because there is an objective truth which can be discovered, ascertained only in learning and comprehending that which is and that which can be and ought to be done for the sake of improving the lot of mankind[6].

And what kind of politics did Marcuse see as improving the lot of mankind? Why, “leftist” politics, of course. How could Marcuse make this claim after the horrific repression and

slaughter in the Soviet Union had come to light? His reasoning necessitated exempting the Left from the political crimes of leftism in power.

Instead, Marcuse focused his criticism on the West, and in particular the U.S. After all, it was the social order of the United States that Marcuse and his fellow travelers were intent on subverting. Why else, when they escaped Nazi Germany, would the Frankfurt School theorists have emigrated to the U.S., rather than heading east to the Soviet Union—unless, that is, they sought to enjoy the relative freedom and wealth of the U.S., while working mercilessly to tear it to shreds?

Under the supposed “oppression” and “exploitation” of capitalism, where supposedly only that which supports oppression is allowed expression, impartial tolerance is itself repressive, Marcuse argued. It is a “false tolerance.” Because real tolerance was always meant to be liberating, and because tolerance should only be granted to so-called “liberating” expressions and deeds, and further because the expression of “the Right” supports the repressive status quo, Marcuse concluded that “[l]iberating tolerance, then, would mean intolerance against movements from the Right, and toleration of movements from the Left.”[7]

Real tolerance then, he continued, “must begin with stopping the words and images which feed this consciousness [consciousness that supports ‘the repressive status quo’].”[8] In other words, to have a “liberating tolerance” rather than a “repressive tolerance,” repression of “the Right” is essential.

Marcuse then openly admitted: “To be sure, this is censorship, even pre-censorship, but openly directed against the more or less hidden censorship that permeates the free media.”[9] And who should be the arbiters of expression? Well, leftists like Marcuse (or Shaviro), of course.

There you have it: censorship and repression of “the Right” are not only allowable but also necessary, because the expression and deeds of “the Right” cannot be tolerated if we are to have real tolerance.

If that accounts for regime’s belief that it has the right, nay, the obligation, to shut down expression and action deemed “regressive” and of “the Right,” the following accounts for its justification for using violence to do so:

But I believe that there is a “natural right” of resistance for oppressed and overpowered minorities to use extralegal means if the legal ones have proved to be inadequate.[10]

There’s the justification for violating the non-aggression principle in response to speech. Enter Steven Shaviro and his ilk. They now hold near total power in the United States.

Did it ever occur to such leftists as Marcuse that repression comes from the state and its governmentalities and thus that vesting its power in “the Left” was a formula for totalitarianism? I suggest that it did and that’s exactly what Marcuse wanted. Leftism is endemically totalitarian.

Globalism

Now, the dominant, top-down political orientation of the current regime is globalism. It makes no practical difference to us whether the World Economic Forum, the United Nations, or any other globalist organization are behind this program, although they are. It has been fully embraced by the government and its corporate governmentalities. Globalism has as its aim the de facto if not legal dissolution of the sovereignty of the United States. It aims at eradicating national borders, nullifying the Constitution, and abrogating the rights of national citizens. It means to control the consumption, reduce the living standards, remold the habits,

overwrite the cultures, and even reduce the population of its subjects. Globalism involves a technocracy, with an “expert” class wielding technological tools and systems for surveillance, behavioral modification, and repression.

The globalist state seizes on various “crises” to accomplish these objectives, including “pandemics,” “climate change,” and war. At home and abroad, it thrives on anarcho-tyranny, cultural and political disorientation, the devaluing of the currency, and economic sanctions.

It also uses “stakeholder capitalism” and its Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) indexing as weapons. ESG is an extra- or para-governmental instrument of coercion that is increasingly backed by government. It infringes on property rights, distorts markets, and coerces producers into accepting its precepts. It thereby establishes a woke cartel of approved producers while eliminating the non-compliant from the market and even civic life, all the while eroding the industrial, energy, and agricultural bases of the Western world.

The quasi-official dogma of the statist-globalist regime is a leftist totalitarian ideology called wokeness. Wokeness functions to censor speech, suppress dissidents, and pit supposedly beleaguered identity groups against the majority. It denies property rights by forcing organizations to hire and promote employees based on their identities and by treating ownership as a “privilege” that can be revoked. It aims at banning the freedom of association and eviscerating the remnants of the natural social order.

Wokeness and anti-white racism are central to the administrative globalist state and its weaponized Justice Department and surveillance agencies, who use them to attack the middle-class majority, whom they see as their primary adversaries, as those most inimical to their rule. They therefore buy the allegiance of special identity groups and weaponize them against the regime’s alleged foes. This

explains the Biden administration's insistence that "white nationalism" represents the number one domestic threat to the nation, when white nationalists comprise a minuscule fraction of the population.

Meanwhile, corporate capitalists curry favor with the government and embrace the state religion of wokeness because they understand who is wielding power and who can strip them of their wealth. They also recognize the power of the woke cartel, which combines companies and activists, who threaten to cancel them if they fail to kowtow to woke demands—by sufficiently censoring speech, adhering to official narratives, or meeting ESG criteria, including the promotion of transgender ideology. Thus, cloaked under a thin "anti-racist," "progressive," and environmentalist scrim, wokeness is statist and centralized but also emanates from governmentalities, which impose extra-governmental sanctions on both business enterprises and individuals, over and above those decreed by the state. Globalism represents a further growth phase of this woke corporate-state hegemon. Woke imperialism works to dissolve any local or national community to intensify the globalist state's control and extension over more and more of the world.

Localism Versus Globalism

Yet an emergent political force, albeit still nascent, is taking shape. This movement, the one from below, may be called localism. It seeks to resist the desiderata of the federal-state globalists and to nullify their encroachments on the self-determination of citizens. It envisions and builds parallel structures under local control. It localizes the control of the police, the sheriff, the school system, property protection, self-defense, the economy, and even privatized competitive banking with private currencies. Bitcoin is a key financial tool in its arsenal. Localizing and decentralizing these functions and functionaries means to

resist the impositions of the federal government (including the Federal Reserve) and its statist-globalist aspirations.

Localist and decentralized movements are already underway in various states and localities, including in Idaho, Washington state, New Hampshire, and elsewhere. In the U.S., we have a legal basis for localism in the [10th Amendment to the Constitution](#), which states that: 1) “The federal government is only authorized to exercise those powers delegated to it” and 2) “The people of the several states retain the authority to exercise any power that is not delegated to the federal government as long as the Constitution doesn’t expressly prohibit it.” This principle can be taken further—to the local and individual level.

Localism’s watchword is decentralization. Unlike globalism, this movement is straightforward and honest about its objectives. Globalism, on the other hand, acts through deception. It doesn’t announce itself as “globalism” and, therefore, must be detected through its effects. For reasons that I’ll discuss shortly, localism is the only means for circumventing centralized government in the hands of the federal-global state. It is the only antidote to globalist tyranny.

Of these two orientations, centralized globalism is necessarily more powerful, emanating as it does from the government and extra-governmental ruling class. Contrary to conscious and unconscious Marxists, the ruling class is the state and its beneficiaries, not the “capitalist class.” The state is the only entity that extorts wealth from the productive class through coercion and without an agreement.[11] The state is the real conductor and beneficiary of any “exploitation.”[12] And the ambition of the reigning statist is to globalize, leaving no escape from their clutches.

Of course, under globalism, the regime does not operate

strictly to serve national interests. Or, to put it another way, the national interests, as defined by the regime, no longer involve the weal of the nation per se. Instead, the ruling class is interested in dissolving the nation into a global hegemon. This global power may be run from the United States, but the ruling class is not interested in maintaining the integrity of the nation. Instead, it aims at making the nation part of a global order, with the citizens of the United States having no particular claim to exclusive citizenship or the rights and privileges that it entails. This accounts for the unfettered immigration that the state encourages with open borders and social welfare. Much like its corporate partners, the regime has become globalist. It is a Great Reset state, and the nation is now an impediment to its monopolization of power.

The regime has almost unlimited powers of coercion at its disposal. But localism's power lies in the capacity of the productive class to resist by refusing to participate, by withdrawing its consent and precluding its own exploitation. Although the statist globalists have vastly more resources at their disposal, their power, nevertheless, depends on the consent and participation of the exploited. The main resource of localists is an inexhaustible reserve of independence. But to succeed, more and more of the exploited need to develop a new class consciousness, one that understands the state, which includes its governmentalities, as their real exploiter and oppressor. Academia has been commandeered as a bulwark against this possibility. Likewise, as Rothbard argued, a cadre of libertarian intellectuals must counter the academic intellectual class and "libertarian education of the public must include an exposé of this exploitation, and of the economic interests and intellectual apologists who benefit from State rule." [13] This is the primary function of the Mises Institute, as I see it.

A Bottom-Up Revolution

As Hans-Hermann Hoppe argues, under a democratic system, top-down reform of the state is virtually impossible. The holders of power over public “goods” have no compulsion to abdicate their positions as exploiters, especially given the democratic participation of the exploited. And, unlike kings, leaders in democratic states wield an expanding property base that they do not own. Likewise, they have a shorter time preference than kings, which means that they use state resources more profligately.

Before democracy, writes Hoppe, “[i]t would have been necessary only to force the king to declare that from now on, every citizen would be free to choose his own protector, and pledge allegiance to any government that he wanted.”[14] Under democracy, the terms have changed:

Under democratic rule then, the abolition of the government's monopoly of justice and protection requires either that a majority of the public and of their elected representatives would have to declare the government's protection monopoly and accordingly all compulsory taxes abolished, or even more restrictive, that literally no one would vote and the voter turnout would be zero. Only in this case could the democratic protection monopoly be said to be effectively abolished. But this would essentially mean that it was impossible to ever rid ourselves of an economic and moral perversion. Because nowadays it is a given that everyone, including the mob, does participate in politics, and it is inconceivable ... that the mob should ever, in its majority or even in its entirety, ... renounce or abstain from exercising its right to vote, which is nothing else than exercising the opportunity to loot the property of others.[15]

This leaves bottom-up decentralized revolution as the only viable option. The premise is that while people cannot control

what the statist-globalist regime puppeteers attempt to impose on them, and they are unlikely to convince the majority to abstain from paying taxes or voting, they can nevertheless cut the puppet strings from themselves. This is also the premise of the Grand Refusal, the nine-point plan to stop the Great Reset, as detailed in my book, [*The Great Reset and the Struggle for Liberty: Unraveling the Global Agenda*](#). This means establishing and extending freedom zones where the dictates of the global state regime can be resisted.

Unlike globalism, however, localism is explicitly anti-totalitarian. Decentralization involves the self-determination of localities and individuals. As a matter of principle, localism does not dictate what various states and regions do in response to global state dictates; whether they accept or reject them is entirely their prerogative. It means positing control in localities as opposed to the central government, as far down the scale as possible.

Of course, the obstacles to this movement are manifold, but they are not insurmountable. It has a far better chance of success than any attempt to permanently wrest the reins of the federal government from the grips of the totalitarians who control it. It does not rely on a majoritarian system that is likely rigged in the totalitarians' favor. And it does not depend on convincing the majority to recognize their own servitude. Instead, it depends on the self-determination of properly class-conscious individuals and communities and their capacity to withdraw and flourish independently.

The only possibility for resisting and refusing the regime is from the ground up. It must begin with dissociation from the federal-global state under a spirit of voluntarism. Only after filtering interests into autonomous or semi-autonomous freedom zones that protect property and individual rights can the project of the nation be reinvigorated. Then and only then might we rebuild a Republic on a firm foundation. Only from a position of local freedom can the national project be

reconfigured.

Localism is a distinctly American project. It is a movement for independence from tyranny, and it draws from the same spirit that inspired the first American Revolution.

[1] Louis Althusser. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards and Investigation)." *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Monthly Review Press (1971).

[2] Murray Rothbard. *Anatomy of the State*. Ludwig von Mises Institute (2009), page 20.

[3] Hans-Hermann Hoppe. "What Must Be Done." Mises Institute (2009), page 12.

[4] Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance." In Robert Paul Wolf, Barrington Moore, Jr., and Herbert Marcuse. *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*. Beacon Press (1965).

[5] Ibid., page 85.

[6] Ibid., page 89.

[7] Ibid., page 109.

[8] Ibid., page 111.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., page 116.

[11] Murray Rothbard. *Anatomy of the State*.

[12] Hans-Hermann Hoppe. "Marxist and Austrian Class Analysis." *The Journal of Libertarian Studies*. 9.2 (Fall 1990).

[13] Murray Rothbard. "The Political Thought of Étienne de la Boétie." Introduction. Étienne de la Boétie. *The Politics of Disobedience: The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*. Black Rose Books (1975), page 35.

[14] Hans-Hermann Hoppe. "What Must Be Done," page 7.

[15] Ibid., page 9.