

No Right to Violate Rights

[From Part III of the series, “Exposing the Pandemic Tyranny”]

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What are rights? What is their source and validation? What good are they? How are they to be protected? Why are they *individual* rights? Why is there no moral justification for group or collective rights above individual rights? Why is there no right to violate rights?

Rights are derived from the ethics that each human being’s life belongs to one’s ownself, that one should live by acting to produce the values needed to sustain and further one’s life. Rights are the moral conditions by which each individual is free from interference by other individuals in society, so as to achieve the values that each life requires. Rights are thus based on and validated by the very nature of human life, not as granted by any supernatural authority (God), or merely by government charter or collective agreement.

Governments are established with objective laws to implement a criminal code that protects rights by banning the initiation of force or fraud that violate rights. The legislature, police, courts, and military of the government – because a government holds a monopoly on the use of force – are themselves governed by a constitution that forbids the government from violating the rights of the individual citizen. Thus, the criminal code (and, derivatively, the civil code) mandates what each individual *shall not* do, but is otherwise free to do anything else. And the constitution mandates only what the government *shall specifically do, and nothing else*.

A moral society and a moral government shall not initiate force or fraud to violate the rights of the individual, any individual. Since it is a moral *good* that, as an individual, one seeks to produce the values for one’s life, it is morally *right* that one has the liberty to produce, trade, and enjoy the property earned by one’s own efforts. It is morally wrong to infringe, restrict, or trespass on that liberty by individuals or government. There is no right to violate rights.

The “right to violate right” is also self-refuting.

To violate rights is to disrespect rights, to deny that rights exist. But this denial includes the very “right” to deny or violate rights. The “right to violate rights” is self-contradictory, self-refuting, and is without and against reason. That’s why rights can be violated only by force or fraud (indirect force).

To violate rights is to be against the rights to life, against the conditions required for individuals to live in society. To violate rights is immoral, against reason, against life.

The immorality of violating individual rights is not absolved even if committed by a group of citizens or by a government elected by them. There is no collective right to violate rights.

Rights are an integrated whole, unitary, indivisible. The right to life entails, inseparably, the right to liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness. Without the liberty to think, speak, move, and act on one's goals and values, the right to produce one's property is impossible. Without the right to own the property one has produced, the right to liberty and to life itself is impossible. Without the rights to liberty and property, the right to the pursuit of one's happiness is impossible. To violate one right is to violate the other rights. Life, liberty, happiness – each right is not complete without the other rights. We each have the inviolate right to all right to life.

Conclusion

Rights are inviolate, moral conditions for individuals to live together in society – to collaborate, cooperate, coproduce – to trade value for value, to admire and enjoy each other's goodness and beauty in freedom. Rights are indispensable for a benevolent and prosperous society (laissez-faire capitalism).

In contrast, a society where rights are restricted, regulated, and reneged – violated legally by governments – is an immoral and miserable society of fear, doubt, mistrust, hostility, envy, impoverishment, and suffering. Such an oppressive and despairing culture is what the pandemic tyranny has exacerbated in an already, widely tyrannized society.

Exposing the subterfuge, irrationality, and immorality of the pandemic tyranny is a powerful start to refuting and reversing the prevalent government practices of violating private, individual rights for the alleged public, collective good.

Strengthening one's understanding and defense of absolute, inviolate rights – including the individualist philosophy of reason and reality that supports and validates them – will spread this power throughout the culture. Gradually, at times dramatically but eventually, more and more legislators will arise whose purpose will be to establish a new, good and true constitution of inalienable rights - and to repeal all laws that violate those rights.

On the way to that world, one will be liberated intellectually, free from fallacies and delusions, at peace with oneself. Freedom begins in the mind and with the will that drives it. Learn and teach that to the children (young and old), and so will the individualist society is more assured.



Sources - Excerpts from Ayn Rand's "Man's Rights", in her *The Virtue of Selfishness*

"Right" are a moral concept—the concept that provides a logical transition from the principles guiding an individual's actions to the principles guiding his relationship with others—the concept that preserves and protects individual morality in a social context—the link between the moral code of a man and the legal code of a society, between ethics and politics. Individual rights are the means of subordinating society to moral law."

"A 'right' is a moral principle defining and sanctioning a man's freedom of action in a social context. There is only one fundamental right (all the others are its consequences or corollaries): a man's right to his own life. Life is a process of self-sustaining and self-generated action; the right to life means the right to engage in self-sustaining and self-generated action—which means: the freedom to take all the actions required by the nature of a rational being for the support, the furtherance, the fulfillment and the enjoyment of his own life. (Such is the meaning of the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.)"

"The concept of a 'right' pertains only to action—specifically, to freedom of action. It means freedom from physical compulsion, coercion or interference by other men."

"Thus, for every individual, a right is the moral sanction of a positive—of his freedom to act on his own judgment, for his own goals, by his own voluntary, uncoerced choice. As to his neighbors, his rights impose no obligations on them except of a negative kind: to abstain from violating his rights."

"The right to life is the source of all rights—and the right to property is their only implementation. Without property rights, no other rights are possible. Since man has to sustain his life by his own effort, the man who has no right to the product of his effort has no means to sustain his life. The man who produces while others dispose of his product, is a slave."

"Bear in mind that the right to property is a right to action, like all the others: it is not the right to an object, but to the action and the consequences of producing or earning that object. It is not a guarantee that a man will earn any property, but only a guarantee that he will own it if he earns it. It is the right to gain, to keep, to use and to dispose of material values."

Excerpts from Ayn Rand's essay, "Collectivized Rights", In *The Virtue of Selfishness*:

"Since only an individual man [person] can possess rights, the expression 'individual rights' is a redundancy (which one has to use for purposes of clarification in today's intellectual chaos). But the expression 'collective rights' is a contradiction in terms."

"Any group or 'collective', large or small, is only a number of individuals. A group can have no rights other than the rights of its individual members. In a free society, the 'rights' of any group are derived from the rights of its members through their voluntary, individual choice and contractual agreement, and are merely the application of these individual rights to a specific undertaking. Every legitimate group undertaking is based on the participants' right of free association and free trade. (By 'legitimate', I mean: noncriminal and freely formed, that is, a group which no one was forced to join.)"

"A group, as such, has no rights. A man can neither acquire new rights by joining a group nor lose the rights which he does possess. The principle of individual rights is the only moral base of all groups or associations."

"Any group that does not recognize this principle is not an association, but a gang or a mob. Any doctrine of group activities that does not recognize individual rights is a doctrine of mob rule or legalized lynching."

"The notion of 'collective rights' (the notion that rights belong to groups, not to individuals) means that 'rights' belong to some men, but not to others—that some men have the 'right' to dispose of others in any manner they please—and that the criterion of such privileged position consists of numerical superiority."

"Nothing can ever justify or validate such a doctrine—and no one ever has. Like the altruist morality from which it is derived, this doctrine rests on mysticism: either on the old-fashioned mysticism of faith in supernatural edicts, like 'The Divine Right of Kings'—or on the social mystique of modern collectivists who see society as a super-organism, as some supernatural entity apart from and superior to the sum of its individual members."

Excerpts from Ayn Rand's "The Nature of Government, in The Virtue of Selfishness:

"If physical force is to be barred from social relationships, men need an institution charged with the task of protecting their rights under an objective code of rules."

"This is the task of a government - of a proper government - its basic task, its only moral justification and the reason why men do need a government."

"A government is the means of placing the retaliatory use of physical force under objective control - i.e., under objectively defined laws."

"The source of the government's authority is 'the consent of the governed'. This means that the government is not the ruler, but the servant or agent of the citizens; it means that the government as such has no rights except the rights delegated to it by the citizens for a specific purpose."

"The difference between political power and any other kind of social 'power', between a government and any private organization, is the fact that a government holds a legal monopoly on the use of physical force. This distinction is so important and so seldom recognized today that I must urge you to keep it in mind. Let me repeat it: a government holds a legal monopoly on the use of physical force."

"No individual or private group or private organization has the legal power to initiate the use of physical force against other individuals or groups and to compel them to act against their own voluntary choice. Only a government holds that power. The nature of governmental action is: **coercive** action. The nature of political power is: the power to force obedience under threat of physical injury—the threat of property expropriation, imprisonment, or death."

"The fundamental difference between private action and governmental action - a difference thoroughly ignored and evaded today - lies in the fact that a government holds a monopoly on the legal use of physical force. It has to hold such a monopoly, since it is the agent of restraining and combating the use of force; and for that very same reason, its actions have to be rigidly defined, delimited and circumscribed; no touch of whim or caprice should be permitted in its performance; it should be an impersonal robot, with the laws as its only motive power. If a society is to be free, its government has to be controlled."

"Under a proper social system, a private individual is legally free to take any action he pleases (so long as he does not violate the rights of others), while a government official is bound by law in his every official act. A private individual may do anything except that which is legally forbidden; a government official may do nothing except that which is legally permitted."

"This is the means of subordinating 'might; to 'right'. This is the American concept of 'a government of laws and not of men'."
