



RIGHTS

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racket*

"RIGHTS"

A Protection Racket

by R. Duey

RECENTLY Wall Street Journal reported that 88-year-old Walter Spilman was awarded \$2.7 million by a Florida nursing home. His family, dissatisfied with the treatment the ailing man was receiving, filed suit for "... violation of his rights to proper hygiene, nutrition and medical care ..." Unanswered were questions such as how the figure of \$2.7 million was arrived at, what an 88-year old man in poor health is going to do with it, or what the residents of the facility will do when it is discovered that the suit has made their home-away-from-home untenable as a business concern.

Welcome to late-twentieth century: the end of an age, where you tear off a chunk of whatever you can get and never have to think of yourself as a pirate. Everyone has the right to do or be or have anything they want, including the right to have someone else get it for them, give it to them, and make sure no one else takes it from them. We have legal, religious, political, constitutional, statutory, customary, human, logical, natural, special, positive, negative, absolute, limited, prima facie, inalienable and, yes, God-given rights enough to go around.

In his "Declaration of the Rights of Man," published two-hundred years ago, Tom Paine lists the right to be free, the right to have property, security, to be free from oppression, the right to free speech, to participate in government, to demand an account of all public agents, etc, etc.

We are living in a gigantic insane asylum where anyone who disagrees must be crazy. Thinking about our "right to the pursuit of happiness" makes us light-headed. If I'm even close to being right, in a history class a hundred years from now, when the teacher tells her class, "In those days they believed that if they didn't like the government, they had the right to abolish it," the class will probably laugh out loud, thinking she's telling a joke.

The reader will probably have already gathered at this point that I'm skeptical of what is called "rights" to-

day. I've been thinking about this for some time now, slowly developing a theory. The whole field is so elusive of data, system, category, and normal sense it is much like sculpting the morning mist.

In the Freedom Movement today rights-language has become a currency of its own, accepted unquestioningly as payment for real ideas and concepts. It is taken for granted that people not only understand the subject of this currency, but that the currency is inherently understandable to begin with.

I considered the prominent place this subject occupies in Western Civilization, the possibility that that position is unwarranted, the harm caused by this imposture, and the healing which may be accomplished by its proper diagnosis and prescription. So I decided to organize my thoughts as well as I could and present them to anyone interested.

To find information on a subject like rights it is necessary to go to the philosophers. Philosophy is considered by many to be the most demanding of the academic disciplines. Rights is a perfect plaything for them to bounce around because of its nearly complete intangibility and the consequent infinite variety of argument that can be validly applied to its discussion. I don't mean to discredit the philosophers, or philosophy. Philosophy is not just a bunch of dreamers lounging around making profound statements. Philosophy is precise thinking, which is universally applicable. But it is important to realize that our discussion of rights is being considered from the perspective of a large organism called "an ecclesia," or, "Christian community," whereas the philosophers have other agendas.

First things first – we must have a good definition of what we mean by "rights." The word *right* in the dictionary is a large section, of which we need only a small part.

Websters Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines a *right* as:

... **something to which one has a just claim, as: the power or**

privilege to which one is justly entitled."

Please note that this concept of "right" does not mean the opposite of "wrong." It is not any function of being right. We are talking about having a right; a noun, not an adjective. It comes from the attitude that "we have something coming to us."

For now, this will suffice. The rest of this essay will fill in the blanks.

THE PHILOSOPHERS

Now let us take a brief look at some philosophical statements about our subject. Theodore Benditt says,

*"... there was no analogous concept of rights in Greece and Rome that corresponds with the modern one."
"... were there no personal rights prior to, say, the thirteenth century? If there were, then we must come to the awkward conclusion that people were not aware of them; but if there were not, then we must come to the equally awkward conclusion that rights come into existence only when people become aware of the concept." (2)*

Mr. Benditt is a well-recognized participant in the discussion of rights. These statements are significant.

Rights language has a distinctive vocabulary. Take, for instance, the word "claim" used by Websters. A right is a claim on someone else's performance.

.. whenever someone has a right, it is held against some other person, and the latter has a corresponding duty to the right holder." (2)

So, whenever one man has a right or a claim, it means that another man has a corresponding debt or duty. The philosopher Jeremy Bentham's version of the theory was:

"... to have a right is simply to stand to benefit from a duty."

But it is easy to show that Bentham's theory is inadequate. If I tell you that I will give you a book that you want when Jones returns it to me, then you stand to benefit from Jones' fulfilling his duty ... and in Bentham's view this means you have a right to Jones' returning it. But of course you don't.

Nonetheless, rights do not stand alone. They are tied, logically, to duties. They are also called "entitlements." And yet another term is used by Kieran Cronin, who defends the existence of rights with this quote:

"A man's right to life can be the same as his moral power to claim or demand that no one take his life away. ... a handicapped or otherwise defenseless person ... has every bit as much right to life as the strongman. What both the weak and the strong have in common is the moral power ..." {3}

Joel Feinberg goes about as far as anyone in supporting the idea that rights are real things.

"Rights are themselves property, things we own, and from which we may not even temporarily be dismissed." (2)

This statement shows the exaggeration and the emotional nature of the discussion of rights commonly acquires.

But, not everyone is so convinced that rights are real. Alan White declares,

"Clearly, 'right' does not denote any entity, whether physical, mental or fictional. Having a right is neither like having a ring nor is it like having an idea. Nor is denying the existence of certain rights like denying the existence of centaurs or of El Dorado." (3)

Mr. T. Frey contributes to the discussion as follows:

"What is wrong with torturing or killing someone is not the violation of some right of his, but the sheer agony and suffering he undergoes, the snuffing out of his hopes and desires In short, there is no need to postulate moral rights as intermediaries between pain and agony ... ruined lives and the wrongness of what was done."

Mr. Frey gives us a new word – "in-

termediaries." But Kieran Cronin, the author/editor of this work, argues with Mr. Frey by saying that,

"... Frey's argument assumes the basic moral position that persons ought not to cause others suffering Surely, anyone can see this is Frey's reaction and there is no need to complicate matters by introducing rights as 'intermediaries.' In some cases no doubt some people do what is right and avoid what is wrong without considering the rights of others But this doesn't mean that nothing can be learned about the moral realities of such situations, and that rights are redundant from the explanatory point of view."

Cronin is a believer.

The next example of the philosopher's rights-thinking involves a hypothetical situation devised by the aforementioned Mr. Feinberg. It will illustrate a couple things, the most important of which is the prominent place occupied by Jews in philosophy in general, and in rights dialogue in particular. It is a logical phenomenon. Philosophers, though they would probably be loath to admit it, have a habit of approaching a subject out of context; sort of like trying to understand how a cell works by removing it from the organism, of which it is a part, and examining it under a microscope. It would not be unusual for Jews to separate rights from the context of the general health of the society in which they live, to use it for their own purposes. As per rights dialogue, Jews have a clear interest in the idea that a person has a right to claim certain behavior from others, being so dependent on their host countries' acceptance of their alien, often offensive ways.

Mr. Feinberg supposes a backpacking trip where a sudden, severe snowstorm threatens a hiker's life. He finds a well-stocked, vacant cabin, breaks in and weathers the storm inside, eating his host's food and burning his furniture to keep warm. Mr. Feinberg says,

"Surely you are justified in doing all these things, and yet you have infringed the clear rights of another person The infringement theorists' view is that rights don't disappear when outweighed; they persist. Even when it is permissible for me to burn your furniture, you

also have the right that I not burn it. The right has been outweighed, overridden; it has not prevented, morally speaking, my burning the furniture nor even entitled you to protect against my burning it; but it exists It has not been extinguished; it has been infringed." (2)

Of course, the average person regards the hairsplitting difference between extinguished and infringed as a bit eccentric, even humorous ... like John Stuart Mill's three gradations of expedience: "inexpedient, undesirable and regrettable."

This may sound funny and a little like men playing at teacups, but it is a fair representation of a dialogue on rights.

ORIGINS

So far we have not considered the question of origins. Where do rights actually come from? If we can have them, then they must come from somewhere. But things aren't quite so simple when it comes to rights. Even the question of the benefits assumed to come from rights can be baffling. As Mr. White stated, having a right is neither like having a ring (tangible) nor an idea (intangible, but provable). By inference, a right is even less tangible than an idea. But, how intangible can a thing be, if it is real? Can something so elusive even have an origin?

Fortunately, there is only one origin of rights worth considering – God. The reference may be to nature, nature's God, the Creator, etc, but the principle is the same. Tom Paine's version is,

"... the time when man came from the hand of his Maker We are now got at the origin of man and at the origin of his rights." (1)

A variation of the modern "church" version is provided by Mr. Cronin:

"... rights are granted by God to human persons as part of our special status as images of his, partners in covenant, free and self-assertive co-workers with the creator." (2)

Well, that may sound great in a seminary, but where is the evidence?

In Western Civilization in general,

North America in particular, and especially in the Freedom Movement today are many who talk about “God-given rights.” Thomas Jefferson said, “Rights come from God.” This idea pervades our thinking at all levels. It is written into the Declaration of Independence and is part of nearly all the state constitutions. And it just seems like a logical and natural thing to think of our rights as coming from the creator of the universe. It gives them a solidity and invincibility they could not otherwise have. So, let us turn to the Bible to find our rights.

THE SCRIPTURES

There is no point in putting this off – the Bible has almost nothing at all to say about rights. And about the modern sense of rights as a claim on another’s performance – the power or privilege to which one is entitled – it has absolutely nothing to say.

There are four Hebrew words and one Greek word that are used in ways that could be thought to resemble modern rights language. I’ve selected the best examples from the Scriptures to support the view that rights exist and can be found in the Bible.

The first Hebrew word is #6666, “*tsedaqah*” (tsed-aw-kaw), from #6663, “*tsadaq*” (tsaw-dak). The combined meanings are; *to be right, make right, clear self, rightness, justice*. No matter how these words are translated, they do not correspond to our subject. I see no need to list them here, but if the reader desires, he may read II Samuel 19:28 and Nehemiah 2:20.

Next is the Hebrew word #1353, “*geullah*” (ghe-ool-law), meaning *redemption (including the right and the object)*. The meaning is clearly not the same, but the usage in Ruth 4:6 is worth quoting:

“And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar my own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.”

This story from Ruth, concerning the redemption laws (customs) of next of kin sounds similar to our subject, but the similarity is superficial. It will be discussed at the end of this section.

In Malachi 3:5 the Hebrew word, #3225, “*yamiyn*” (yaw-meen), is used:

“And I will come near to you in judgment; and I will be swift against the sorcerers, and against adulterers ... against those that oppress the hireling in his wages ... and that turn aside the stranger from his right.”

The meaning of the Hebrew word used here refers to *the right hand or right side of a person or object*. It is probably being used figuratively.

The Greek word “*exousia*” (ex-oosee-ah), #1849, is used in Hebrews 13:10 and Revelation 22:14. It is a noun which means *authority, jurisdiction*. Neither example bears mention here.

The last word I will mention furnishes the best evidence of Scriptural support for the modern concept of rights. It is the Hebrew word “*mishpat*” (mish-pawt), #4941, meaning a *verdict, a sentence or formal decree*; from #8199, “*shaphat*” (shave-fat), *to judge, sentence, pronounce*. References to Psalms 140:12, Isaiah 10:2 and Jeremiah 5:28 are provided for further study, but the best citations are in Deuteronomy 21:15-17 and Ezekiel 21:27.

In Deuteronomy the discussion is of a man who has two wives, one loved and one hated, the first son coming from the hated wife. The text forbids the man from passing over this son, giving his firstborn rights to the first son of the loved wife.

The quote from Ezekiel reads,

“I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come, whose right it is; and I shall give it him.”

Both texts are about “firstborn rights.” It is obvious in the first case; in the second, the throne of David is the subject, with the firstborn right of Jesus to take the throne.

These two verses, especially, and a number of other ones, could sound similar to modern rights language. The firstborn has “a right,” the stranger has “a right,” the laborer has “a right,” etc. But, the fact that the definitions don’t sound like today’s idea of rights may indicate that the concept was unknown at the time of writing.

A close look at these usages of rights language in the Bible will reveal that they are all matters of LAW; more accurately, CUSTOM. It was custom to give special recognition to firstborn

males, treat strangers fairly, pay laborers at the end of each workday, etc. These were not powers that came in-tact with each individual at birth, and which they could repeatedly claim at will. Rather, they were obligations en-joined by God upon the community at large. It is to God and his LAW that society is indebted – not to individuals born into it. No one is born holding collectible debts (rights) against society.

“Owe no man anything but to love one another” (Rom. 13:8)

This is just the way they did things, and had the health of the community in mind. In contrast, the modern concept of rights concentrates not so much on the goodwill of society as on the wants of the individual – a sentiment not found in Israel’s LAW.

IMPLIED RIGHTS

This brings us to the concept of “implied rights.” Implied rights are rights that are not stated specifically, but are presumed to exist by some implication. For instance, if there is a law that prohibits stealing, it is thought to imply that all people have a right not to be stolen from. Or, if there is a law to give firstborn sons special inheritances, then they have a right to them.

The problem with implied rights is that it relies upon speculation. If the U.S. Congress makes it a law to give ninety per cent of our money to the IRS, that doesn’t make it right, and neither does it give the IRS a right to ninety percent of our money. If rights do exist at all, they must be matters of moral principle, the exercise of which, by omission or commission, will be good for both society and the individual, not dependent on man’s capricious and often immoral legal inventions. The creation of a law is insufficient to establish a right.

It may be a difficult thing for Christians to accept, but that is about all the Bible says about rights. It is important for the reader to consider this: the Scriptures cover many areas of life, different times, personalities, situations, etc, all for our benefit. They are our blueprint for living on this planet. They are filled with Divine wisdom, advice and guidance. Yet they say almost nothing about rights. Could this be an oversight on

God's part? Surely, if rights are as important as we think they are, God would have been forthright in stating them.

If rights come from God, as so many think they do, we ought to be able to find clear evidence of this. Our LAW comes from God and we find it throughout the Bible – in the five books of the LAW, in the synthesis of the LAW called the Ten Commandments, in both Old and New Testaments. But we search in vain for any organized, concise presentation of rights. This is a most remarkable thing. For a Christian, it should be a normative phenomenon of the first magnitude. There must be a reason this is so.

DID GOD GIVE US RIGHTS?

Much of the rest of this essay will be some thinking aloud of my own. I don't claim to be a philosopher, a theologian, or even a particularly bright person. It is not important whether or not the reader accepts my view of rights. The important thing is to begin a critical examination of ideas that may have been overlooked.

I'm sure the reader understands by now that I am skeptical of "inherent rights." Actually, I don't believe they exist in any way at all except that people talk about them. They are a total figment of the imagination; an invention. Now, that may sound like a radical position to take, but it's a practical one for the purposes of argumentation, to bring out the issues.

When someone says "I have a right to be free," what exactly does he mean? Where does the right to be free come from? Even if most people agree to this statement, that does not make it so. Certainly everyone wants to be free, although most people's understanding of freedom is so naive that their wanting it is relatively meaningless. But, "I want to be free" is a big jump from "I have a right to be free." Did God give us the right to be free? He doesn't say so.

Did God give us the right to a jury of our peers? I don't know why he would – juries have no part in his justice system. Did he give us the right to workman's compensation? Again, I don't know why he would – government offices that dispense money have no part in his LAW. Did he give us the right to a speedy trial? To participate in government? To be secure in our persons and

property? He doesn't say so. Did he give us the right to adequate nutrition, in a world filled with food? Did he give us the right to a good education, in a world filled with knowledge? Did he give us the right to satisfying employment, in a world filled with work to be done?

I find no evidence that he did. If God didn't give us rights, where do they come from? Nature? Chance? There is no credible source for rights other than God, and in his definitive statement to us, the Bible, he says nothing about them.

MORE IMPLIED RIGHTS

But what about the physical universe, you say? Surely, we have a right to air, water, sunlight, food, etc.

Here, again, we are talking about implied rights: i.e., "God created water to sustain our life, so we must have a right to it." However, God created trees, and minerals, but if you cut trees, or dig gold, from your neighbor's property you will be stealing. The mere existence of something created by God is insufficient to establish a right to have it.

- Model #1: Here is a way to look at the problem. Let us take freedom, for example, and construct a model:

1. *If you have the power and the will to have freedom, then you don't need the right to have it.*
2. *If you don't have the power and the will, the right won't do you any good.*

So, where do rights come in? What real function do they serve? If they serve no purpose, do they exist? Maybe if you had a tool that had no purpose, served no function, etc, you could still say that it exists. But inherent rights are not only ideas ... they are ideas created for no necessary purpose. Mr. Benditt poses the question,

"For any theory of rights we must ask: is there a unique contribution being made by a notion of rights in this theory? Or are the rights in this theory merely echoes of other moral concepts?" (2) (my underline)

The function of rights in this model is like attaching a "doohickey" to a motor, calling it the "motivator valve," and maintaining that it is necessary to keep the motor running.

The real concepts are the power and

the will, both of which have been given us by God in sufficient quantity to lawfully get anything on earth we want or need.

- Model #2: Let us try another model. What is the difference between the following two statements?

1. *It is right that men be free*
2. *Men have a right to be free.*

There are many differences. In #1, the word "right" is an adjective; in #2 it is a noun. In #1 it is descriptive; in #2 it is possessive. In #1 it is active; in #2 it is passive. But the main difference between these two statements is that, if we try to live by them, we can be free according to the first, but cannot according to the second.

The second statement, reflecting the modern concept of rights, makes men passive (like the word). It makes them dependent on others for freedom or whatever else they desire. Keep in mind that what we are dealing with here is a pattern of thought that becomes an unconscious habit, and does its damage unnoticed. If I have the power and the will to be free, then I'll make myself free. Having the right to be free has never made anyone free.

NOWHERESVILLE

Mr. Feinberg constructed a model called "Nowheresville," an imaginary place where men have no rights. After examining his creation he makes some observations about it. He says, for instance, that the inhabitants there have a sense of duty, compassion, sympathy, pity, etc. Lack of rights does not cause any abnormalities or pathologies that he can name. Yet, to Mr. Feinberg, Nowheresville would be a terrible place to live because:

"... something important is missing from the moral life of this community - the idea that a person is entitled to something can claim something as his own due. Nowheresvillians, even when they are discriminated against invidiously, or otherwise treated badly, do not think to leap to their feet and make righteous demands against each other" (2) (my underline)

No doubt Mr. Feinberg got this quote from a "holocaust survivor." It is a

cliché of the Jewish spirit.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to trace an idea to its origin. I think it is likely that, if the truth were known, the origin of the modern concept of “rights” would be found in its purest form in the necessity of the wandering Jew to make his host’s hospitality mandatory instead of voluntary. This would be accomplished over time by changing the laws of the host country. Mr. Feinberg, right on cue, asserts on page fifteen of Mr. Benditt’s work, that rights “... *make something happen, legally speaking.*” From this point, the idea has been adopted by most people and co-opted by government.

Whatever its origins, rights-thinking is something we have allowed ourselves to fall into, without really examining the situation carefully enough. It has become a habit: we want something, so we imagine we have a right to it. We mix reality up in a bowl, throw in a “motivator valve” and come up with a Frankenstein called rights.

CUI BONO

The strange contradiction we see today is that the more people talk about rights, the less they enjoy them. In most things, as the consciousness of a problem increases the ill-effects of the problem decrease. But not so with rights.

We don’t have to look far for the explanation.

“The demand for rights in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a demand against the existing state and authorities, against despotism, arbitrariness and disenfranchisement of those who held different opinions. The demand for rights in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries becomes increasingly a claim against the state, a demand that it provide and guarantee the means for achieving the individual’s happiness and well-being, his welfare.” Eugene Kamenka (3) (my underline)

Again, this time from Mr. Benditt:

“...any idea belongs to a historical period. The idea of a right comes out of an era which saw the rise of the nation state, and, as a concomitant, the rise of the individual, the citizen, a morally self-contained atom, shorn of all the ties of family,

class and status which for so long defined people and their moral and social situations” (2) (my underline).

GOVERNMENT — MAN’S, NOT GOD’S

Government is the reason why *rights consciousness* continually escalates. Government is continually taking more and more from us. Rights is a government protection racket: government the parasite steals from us, we respond by crying out for relief, government responds by offering us a right not to be stolen from. Government rapacity creates the need for rights and then government itself provides them. They pass themselves off as protectors while they disguise the salient fact of the matter, that it is they we need protection from! It is a classic protection racket. They provide a smoke screen of limited rights, change the definition of “stealing,” and pass new laws to steal more from us.

A prime beneficiary of rights is lawyers — the little ones who are officers of the courts and the big ones who are officers of the legislatures.

If someone figures he has a right, for instance, to compensation for damages to his car as a result of a collision where another person is at fault, and the person refuses to pay, how will the situation be handled? In today’s world we bring in third parties called lawyers and pay them to argue points of law. There is a symbiotic relationship between rights-thinking and lawyers — one feeds the other. There is a mountain of litigation in the American court system at any given time. Just how much of this workload is a result of some aspect of rights-thinking is unknown, but it must be the lion’s share, and probably close to all of it.

Legislators profit by their large salaries, with benefits, and the power derived from the concept of rights that allows them to make so many laws — laws that have the ostensible claim to be serving someone’s rights but are actually used to control large populations. The whole thing is a vast perpetual motion machine. The fuel is the idea that “I’ve got something coming.” Legislators make merchandise of this attitude by making laws that buy voters; people, increasingly under the assumption that they’ve got rights, turn to

the government for definition and enforcement; and the next generation takes it the next step. The machine rolls on.

When politicians engage in rights-talk it is a “limited hangout.” A limited hangout is when people tell on themselves to make sure the story people hear about them is a watered down version of their real crime. Government knows that the laws they make produce dangerous effects in us such as anger, resentment and a tendency toward violent reaction. To assuage the potentially explosive effects of their actions, they like to make a pretense of stepping up to the microphone and delivering grand speeches, complaining with feigned righteous indignation about the rights of the American people being trampled by corrupt politicians. It’s really an admission of their culpability, except that they dilute the truth so much and word it so cleverly that we actually think they are concerned about us, when nothing could be further from the truth.

Rights-thinking may not have originated with politicians, but they have definitely co-opted it for their purposes. Certainly, no one profits from it more. It is a brilliant way for them to justify their intrusion into every area of our lives. How? Simple. Who is going to enforce rights? Government always demands a monopoly on law enforcement. Any matter to be litigated must pass through their hands, under their control. All that is necessary to move society in any desired direction is a well-placed, well-timed lawsuit. It is nothing to produce a Civil War, Brown vs Board of Education, billions in reparations payments, etc.

Government wants us to think we’ve got something coming because we have rights. Rights-thinking is government telling us that if there is anything we really need, they’ll get it for us. They want all good things in our lives to come from them. They tell us, “Work within the system. Don’t go outside the system. It works for all of us. Reform from within.” And when we do, we are locked into the game for which they make the rules. When we lose our patience and get excited they give us a tranquilizer — rights.

And there are no brakes on the train. We have more and more rights all the time. Our society is not based on the timeless, simple laws of the Scriptures, but on the bottomless pit of man’s law. Man’s law throws the natural world into

imbalance. Man's laws are like lies – each one is only the beginning. More and more lies are needed to cover for previous lies. We need more and more laws, and more and more rights. Bad money drives out good; bad morals drive out good; bad thinking drives out good – in the short run.

The modern concept of rights has done much harm. Kieran Cronin, though he believes in rights, points out two reasons they can be harmful:

“First, the language of rights tends toward individualism and egoism, and tends to play down social solidarity and the common good. Second, the exercise of rights, especially the use of the faculty of ‘claiming,’ is a sign of a growing adversarial trend in modern life which ... does little for social harmony and peace.” (3)

Rights-thinking has contributed more than its share to making us passive, weak-kneed “citizens,” participants in a system that enslaves us, shamelessly tolerant of our oppressor's abuse, afraid to rock the boat by looking elsewhere for redress of the injustices of the society we live in. Rights are a true Pandora's Box. Maybe it's time to re-think this thing. Maybe the best thing is to avoid the whole mess by eliminating rights from our thinking.

“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.” (2Pe 2:19)

EVERYTHING COMES DOWN TO LAW

God didn't give us rights. He gave us something much better - his LAW ... and his SPIRIT. It is our standard of right and wrong. The LAW needs no rights to back it up. I'm convinced that God had good reason to omit rights from the Bible. He never instructed us in evil or in error. He knew what effect rights would have on the fabric of our communities.

God gave us the ability to get what we need, make what we need, to do, be or have anything we need. It is up to us to act for our own welfare. He gave us direct orders not to let men make laws that contravene his, and not to honor them if they are made. He never said

“You have the right to be blessed in the city and be blessed in the field, to be blessed in the fruit of your body and the fruit of the ground, and the fruit of your flocks. You have the right to be secure from all your enemies.”

We do not have a right to God's blessings! He said:

“... if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the Lord thy God, to observe and do all his commandments which I command thee this day, the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth.” (Deuteronomy 28:1)

The age of rights swept up many millions, and many generations, into its vortex. We are probably at the height of this storm of error today. Rights-talk is all around us. We are constantly whining about rights. In the Freedom Movement we make trips to Washington, D.C. and send open letters to Congress and write hundreds of pages, complaining about our trampled rights.

Either we have the power and the will to make ourselves free, or we don't. If we do, we don't need rights; if we don't, rights won't do us any good.

DON'T TAKE THE BAIT

We've got nothing coming from anyone. No one has an inherent right to do, be or have anything. But we do have the LAW, and that's sufficient.

Rights-thinking is a dementia. We are a demented generation. It may sound strange to hear someone say that demanding our rights is contributing to our own slavery. Actually, rights is not the important issue. The real issue is a proper attitude toward government. Wanting government to do right, even in demanding your so-called rights, is not a proper attitude toward government. Asking government for anything is wrong, whether it's a timid request or a defiant demand, whether we are right or wrong. Demanding “rights” is participating in their system. It is agreeing that they should rule over you.

Anti-Christian governments, though they be backed by state-of-the-art weaponry and overwhelming numbers, must be ignored and disclaimed as far as humanly possible. They have no acceptable place in our lives.

– [editor's note: In keeping with

Mr. Duey's article, consider this. Rights are debts. To claim a right is to call in a debt. Are we to assume that men are born with automatic rights (debts) owed them by society, and that a growing body of debts (rights) accrues to society with each individual born into it? Is this what God's word teaches?

A “right” is a privilege that can be given, or taken away. Patriots are fond of saying that privileges are from man, but rights are from God ... as if the two are somehow different ... or even mutually exclusive. Actually, rights and privileges are the same. Neither is automatic, and either one can be taken away.

Instead of seeking “rights” we should be seeking FREEDOM, the gift of Christ. “Freedom” is the correct word. “Rights” is the wrong word. Scripture establishes “righteousness” (i.e., rightness) not “rights” (debts against society). A child that survives birth and infancy does so not because of a right to live, but because of the diligent work of loving, God-given parents. Freedom comes from diligence and truth, not from debts (rights) owed by society.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” (Gal. 5: 1)

“But whoever looks carefully into the perfect law of liberty, and continues in it, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his work.” (James 1:25)

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. ... If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. “ (In. 8:32, 36)]

References:

- * “Cui Bono?” (“for whose benefit?”)
1. Selected Works of Tom Paine, The Modern Library, 1943
 2. Rights, Theodore Benditt, 1982
 3. Rights and Christian Ethics, Kieran Cronin, 1992



Anti-thought-control DICTIONARY

A Guide to Deceptive Words and Terms Used to Neutralize Christians

RIGHTS

CONTROLLED MEANING: The "unalienable" liberties and choices that belong to every person from birth. "Rights" are not "privileges." Rights come from God, and privileges come from rulers.

ACTUAL MEANING: A "right" is a claim against another man's property or performance. It is a debt subject to claim and collection. One man's "right" equates to a debt, a due, or a demand against some other man, or men. **BLACK'S LAW DICTIONARY** defines it as: "A capacity residing in one man of controlling, with the assent and assistance of the state, the actions of others. A legally enforceable claim of one person against another, that the other shall or shall not perform a given act."

The theory that all men are "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights," as claimed by The Declaration of Independence, claims that every man is born with inherent collectible claim (debt] against mankind in general.

This claim does not agree with God's Word. "Owe no man anything But to love one another" (Rom. 13:8) God's word instructs us that happiness, freedom, and security are not ours by right, but by condition that we follow His law (Dt . 28:1, 30.15-20, Jms 1:22-25; 2" 15-26). Nowhere does God's Word indicate that men are born with an automatic claim upon these things. We are born helpless and in need of instruction and goodwill - especially from God. In Christ we develop the will and power to seek freedom But if we sit back and demand freedom be handed to us, nothing will happen Claiming a "right" to be free is like claiming a "right" to a particular skill. It won't happen unless you are willing to work to achieve it? Freedom is not free!

To claim "rights" against government implies that a covenant, and thus a debt, exists between you and government Only a debt agreement or an injury can entitle you to make claims or demands. The act of making the claim and pursuing it in government courts indicates a tacit covenant and establishes government jurisdiction. It is idolatry because it acknowledges and validates the false god called "government."

IDOLARTY

CHURCH MEANING: The worship of stone statues, monuments, or false gods.

ACTUAL MEANING: Accepting other lawmakers and law systems in place of Yahweh and His law system.

The "god" of a society is determined by who, or what, creates its laws. The god of the United States is its Congress. Congress creates law, and holds supreme claim to that power via the Constitution.

But God's word establishes Yahweh as the Lawmaker. His laws are recorded in Scripture. He reserved to Himself alone the authority to make law. He commanded us to have no other gods (lawmakers) in place of Him. Alternative lawmakers, or systems of law, are forms of idolatry.

The U.S. Government and its Congress is the greatest idolatry of the ages. The Constitution is its charter. The Legislature is its temple. Politicians (lawyers) are its scribes and ministers. The black-robed judges are its chief priests. International bankers are its trustees (owners).

The Anti-Thought-Control Dictionary is a regular feature in

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REDNECKS

You've probably heard some of the redneck jokes that are common today.

"The rednecks shops for groceries at a gas station, and paints his car with house paint. The passenger window in his old truck is covered by a plastic trash bag. His mail box is made out of old auto parts, and his dog doubles as a dishwasher. He still refers to fifth grade as his senior year."

Admittedly all very funny. Yes indeed.

But consider the origin of the term. It comes from the fact that some men's necks are "red" because they are burned from working hard out in the sun day after day.

Rednecks make their living doing manual labor. When their backs give out they will eventually retire without pension. They are responsible for their own medical expenses and their own equipment.

Doesn't it say something about a society that makes such a person the subject of jokes and ridicule?



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