

O H I O  
PART THREE

By Sean Swain



For Mom and Dad.

#### ABOUT SEAN SWAIN

Sean Swain is a former journalist and volunteer union organizer held captive by an illegal rogue-state calling itself Ohio, for a crime he can objectively prove he did not commit, awaiting the fair trial ordered by the court of appeals in 1993. In 2011, the Ohio Adult Parole Authority held a secret full-board hearing contrary to law in which they continued Sean's captivity for strictly political reasons. Sean co-wrote Last Act of the Circus Animals, which pre-figured the Occupy Movement. He claims political prisoner status as he remains captive despite his innocence, because of his published criticism of the illegal rogue-state that has kidnaped him.

His work and other features are available at [seanswain.org](http://seanswain.org).

### PART THREE: THE MYTH

"The belief in 'authority' which includes all belief in 'government,' is irrational and self-contradictory; it is contrary to civilization and morality, and constitutes the most dangerous, destructive superstition that has ever existed."

--Larken Rose

"If the State is to exist, the dominated must obey the authority claimed by the powers that be."

--Max Weber

"Man's true liberation, individual and collective, lies in his emancipation from authority and from the belief in it."

--Emma Goldman

Ohio." It is unreasonable, irrational, and uncompromising. It leaves me no alternative but to find some way to bring it down completely.

I can't do it alone.

I'll need help.

A veritable ARMY.

Lucky for us, we can build that.

\* \* \*

or not.

They built a tunnel, a way to break-out, to escape this prison built around our minds.

We can soon participate in the biggest prison break in history.

It's already started.

It can't be stopped.

The cat is out of the bag.

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#### NECESSARY, PART VI

We need "government."

Well, I guess there are others who need "government." I only need "government" to do one thing: Go away. For good.

I hope there are others like me out there who feel the same way. Perhaps we can work together to get free once and for all. Free, as in "the absence of external regulation."

Perhaps all we need now is a plan.

Perhaps we can succeed where Tecumseh initially failed if we have a plan.

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#### BACK TO OHIO

For me, it all comes back to Ohio. It started here in one sense, so it should end here. And I have my own ulterior motive. As long as this "State of Ohio" exists, as long as it continues to function, I will remain its captive. For me to be free, this "State of Ohio" must cease to exist.

I think of my parents. I think of my children, never born, their lives foreclosed upon by "The State of Ohio" and the captivity to which it subjects me.

For my children, yet unborn, to ever live, this so-called "State of Ohio" must die.

I realize the gravity of what I'm writing. I don't take it lightly. It isn't a confrontation that I have chosen, but one thrust upon me by this "State of

#### MAGICAL BEANS, PART I

Imagine this. Imagine there has been a disaster on the international space station. NASA has to brainstorm for solutions and finds that no one can get a space craft up there for several days. One of the technicians suggests, "Perhaps we could plant magical beans and then climb the bean stalk into space, and rescue the space station."

I imagine nobody will take that technician seriously. Everyone knows there are no such things as magical beans, and magical beans won't become real just because our need for them requires it. To believe that magical beans will become real in response to our need is fantastical thinking.

There's no magical bean solution.

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#### FLAT EARTH, PART I

If we went back in time, say, a thousand years, everyone around us would believe the world is flat. The entire human population. They would have powerful institutions like The Church, holding to theories about the centrality of man in creation and the plan of God, all based on the false perception that the earth is flat and located in the center of the universe. To challenge their misperception, to say the earth is round, is to challenge ideas that are central to their concept of the universe. In fact, by asserting the earth is actually round, we would be calling into question the authority of The Church itself; we would be implying that if The Church bungled something so simple as the location and operation of the earth, perhaps it doesn't have a monopoly on divinely-inspired truth after all.

Everyone around us would have a vested interest in silencing us. It wouldn't even be a matter of whether or not, individually, people believed or disbelieved our claim. Belief aside, our proposition that the world is round would throw their lives into chaos. So, people would ridicule us. They would present arguments for the earth being flat, arguments we already know to

be debunked. They would get angry. Maybe burn us at the stake.

You can't go around challenging the false ideas that are in the very heart of people's belief systems.

You can't go around challenging the lies we have for everything.

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### MAGICAL BEANS, PART II

What if people from the future came back to tell us the false myths that we hold onto tightly, the same way that people a thousand years ago held onto the false myth that the earth is flat. Do you wonder what they would reveal to us as the big lie controlling how we fundamentally misperceive the world? I don't. I think I already know what people from the future would say. They would say, "This thing you call 'government' doesn't really exist. It's a myth. Fundamentally, it's as unreal as magical beans."

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### FLAT EARTH, PART II

I don't think we'd receive with any enthusiasm news from the future that "government" isn't real, that it's a myth. I suspect most of us would know that's just plain crazy. Respecting the laws of "government" is what makes us civilized. It makes us moral. Obeying the rightful authorities is a duty. We would say that not only is "government" real, but it's necessary. We need it.

We would say that with the same fervor and conviction as the flat-earthers who would insist that the earth is flat as a pancake, who wouldn't just believe the world is flat, but would need the world to be flat, and we would go on believing that "government" is real. We would continue making decisions about our lives predicated on the belief that "government" is real. We would raise our children to obey authorities and to respect "government," to be good, obedient, moral, upstanding citizens who love

### CONVERGENCES, PART II

"Unsustainable" means it can't keep going. Our social order is unsustainable.

The Titanic was unsustainable as an ocean-going vessel after it hit the iceberg.

The Hindenberg was unsustainable as an aircraft once it caught fire.

Our culture is unsustainable.

People who have watched Al Gore's movie may have come to the conclusion that to save the planet (from us) we have to live a new way. That means recycling bottles.

The problem with our culture isn't that we have plastic drinking utensils. The problem with our culture is that it is built on fundamental lies, and we act upon those fundamental lies, and we live according to those fundamental lies.

We have to stop doing that.

We are quickly approaching the point where the natural world is going to demonstrate to us that our culture is unsustainable, that it can't keep going. We can get ready to live another way, or we can pretend we don't see "the reality on the ground."

Either way...

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### CONVERGENCES, PART III

The Occupy Movement isn't over. The occupation was just a beginning. When all of those people converged upon public spaces in a collective protest, they weren't simply expressing their anger at the existing system; they were practicing a new way of doing things.

It might look like the Occupy Movement ended. It might appear that everyone went back to their assigned seats.

Don't be fooled.

The people who participated in the Occupy Movement had a different experience of life. They tasted a moment of freedom, the absence of external regulation.

Occupy built something permanent, whether we see it



that plants will grow on their own if you just do nothing at all. So, at that point, I think most people will forage from what the land provides and do it more efficiently than farming.

Those who forage will have to become semi-nomadic so they don't burn up all their resources by sitting in one spot. So, these semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer communities will likely develop a kind of circuit for migrating, so they can be less of a burden on their food sources.

Semi-nomadic people are likely less attached to material possessions. It isn't that they have more noble characters, it's just easier to carry a couple changes of durable clothing than to carry a suitcase of the latest fashions. But the possessions they keep will be the important ones. Those possessions, like a good knife, will be invaluable.

These semi-nomadic people will have a different concept of the community of life that surrounds them and facilitates their survival. They won't be living "close to nature," whatever that phrase means; they will be living in it, part of it, a product of it.

Ohioans after "government" will look a lot like Ohioans before "government." The future will look a lot like the past.

I wonder what Tecumseh would think about that?

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#### CONVERGENCES, PART I

Isn't it funny how this started out with Native Americans and at the end of it, if we're lucky and wise, we'll be looking to them as our role models?

We can reject this magical bean thinking, this "right to rule" construct, and we can recognize that "government" never had any validity at all, or else we can hold onto this magical bean thinking like a lunatic gripping the hot end of the curling iron, and we can reap the inevitable consequences.

It's up to us.

Either way...

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their country, who defend the "government."

We have a lie for everything.

The biggest lies are the hardest ones to shake.

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#### RESPECTING THE LAWS, PART I

Respecting the laws of "government" makes us moral. That's what we'd say to time travelers who claim "government" is a myth.

But does respect for "laws" make us moral? At one time, it was legal to own slaves in this country and it was illegal to help a slave escape to freedom. Helping a slave escape to freedom was considered theft of the slave master's property.

So, if respect for the "laws" makes us moral, then respecting a slave master's right to property and respecting the institution of slavery was more moral than helping a slave escape to freedom. And then, perhaps the following day when slavery was outlawed, it would be more moral to help a slave escape to freedom than to respect the slave master's right to property.

That means, then, that if respecting the "laws" makes us more moral, then what's moral is sometimes one thing, and then the next day, what's moral is sometimes the opposite of what it was the day before.

Or, perhaps, respecting the "law" doesn't make us moral. Perhaps the Germans respected the "law" of their "government" under the Third Reich, and that didn't make them moral for doing it. Respecting immoral "laws" imposed by immoral "governments" cannot make us moral.

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#### WHAT IS A LAW?

A "law" is a demand made by a "government." It is a tool that "government" uses to make people do what the "government" wants them to do, whether they want to do it or not. If you comply with the demand, you don't get punished; if you don't comply, you get punished.

A law is a demand.

So when we say, "Respect for the laws makes us moral," what we're really saying is, "Complying with demands makes us moral."

What do I know, but isn't it more moral to think for yourself and do what you know to be right, rather than to comply with demands out of fear of punishment?

### THE RIGHT TO RULE, PART I

"Laws" are demands made by "government." But what is "government"? I think for our purposes, discussing human social organization, "government" is an institution that gives commands. It gives orders. But unlike every other institution that gives commands and orders, what makes "government" unique is that it is thought to have the right to be obeyed.

I can give you orders but that doesn't make me a "government." You and I both know I have no authority, no power based on anything. But a "government," in contrast, has recognition from those it commands. Those receiving the orders seem to recognize that the "government" has a "right to rule." And when the "government" is not obeyed, it has the "right" to punish.

So when we say to time-travelers from the future that respecting the "laws" of "government" makes us moral, what we are really saying is, "Respecting the demands of those who assume the right to rule us makes us moral."

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### MILGRAM, AGAIN

But this gets me to thinking about Stanley Milgram again. Remember him? He's the guy who did the experiments where a guy in a lab coat with a clipboard told average people to administer what they believed to be electric shocks, and most people, out of a respect for authority, complied. Most people were obedient to the commands of those who assumed a right

populations of plant life that grows and consumes the remains of idiots.

In the absence of lots of living idiots, we'll have abandoned spaces. Plants will quickly reclaim them, creating a community of life that will thrive. There would be no "scarcity of resources" that would make the human population go bonkers and behave badly like humans do in the post-apocalypse movies. Far from it-- there would be food everywhere: swimming in the water, slithering on the ground, running through the grass, flying through the air, falling out of trees, springing from the soil. Plentiful amounts of food. A veritable Garden of Eden.

In a very short time without "government," we would have an absence of idiots and an abundance of resources.

Who would pick up the trash? I think we'll probably figure that out.

### GOVERNMENT-LESS, PART III

I try to imagine what this place called Ohio would look like in a "government"-less world, in a world where we recognize that the "right to rule" is bullshit and we stop submitting to thugs who extort us and force us to live butchered half-lives.

I suspect in a "government"-less Ohio, most people would live in small communities where they feel safe and accepted and valued. Larger communities, you just feel swallowed up, invisible, voiceless. So, small communities make more sense. People would cooperate and work together because their survival would depend on it. This survival pressure would force people to develop very deep, intimate, meaningful connections with one another.

I'm no utopian. I don't think people are better than people really are. I know we're a mess. So, there will be people who want to do things in a way that I suspect will prove to be less effective. Most of them will probably sputter out quickly and get recycled.

Perhaps at the beginning most people will attempt some variation of farming, at least until they realize

people jumping on the furniture because mom and dad aren't home... only with guns and cars and alcohol.

Humans are messy.

We do dumb shit.

But from a very practical standpoint, 7 billion of us couldn't continue mayhem for very long even if we were single-mindedly dedicated to it-- which, most people aren't. We couldn't keep up mayhem for very long because we all need to sleep and eat, we need shelter from snow and rain, and we need to feel safe. There's a limit to the amount of mayhem we can maintain. You also have to figure, we live in a world of limited resources and idiots don't plan ahead. The idiot shooting at random cars, for instance, was an idiot yesterday before "government" went away, so the odds are, as an idiot, he didn't stockpile bullets. He'll run out very soon and he won't have ammunition to kill a wild boar for food because he's an idiot, and he's been wasting ammunition by shooting randomly at cars.

His mayhem won't last long.

A "government"-less world, contrary to our standard thinking, really wouldn't be a utopia for idiots. In a "government"-less world, the idiots will sooner or later stick their fingers in the wrong sockets.

Without "government," the Idiot Factory would quickly be shut down. Idiots, sociopaths, and those who simply don't play well with others will probably sputter out rather quickly. Sometimes under their own power. Sometimes with help.

So much for the Mad Max world we imagine, where crazy villains run everything; most "crazy villains" will quickly become mulch.

And that also dispels the other popular misconception about a "government"-less world-- that everyone will be driven into a mad frenzy, competing for dwindling resources.

If idiots sputter out quickly after the Idiot Factory shuts down, those idiots become lunch for all kinds of life. You'll have exploding populations of birds and wild boars and raccoons, and all of the other creatures that eat idiots. Then, you'll have exploding populations of creatures that eat the creatures who eat idiots. Then you'll have exploding

to rule. Most subjects kept administering what they believed were electric shocks to strangers, over and over and over.

So, if respecting the demands of those who assume the right to rule us makes us moral, then it's the height of morality to engage in human rights abuses, to perpetuate crimes against humanity, to participate in atrocities and genocide. To administer electric shocks to strangers over and over and over, maybe killing them.

It's moral to commit mass-murder for those who assume the right to rule.

Perhaps respecting the "laws" of "government," that is, respecting the demands of those who assume the right to rule us, only makes us as moral as the demands and as moral as those who assume the right to make those demands.

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## RESPECTING THE LAWS, PART II

Respecting the "laws" of "government" makes us civilized. That's what we say. But is it true?

Think of all the worst atrocities in history. All of them were committed by "governments," by those with the imagined "right to rule." All of the world's worst atrocities were carried out by people who respected the "laws" of "government," who complied with the demands of those who assumed the right to rule.

The most uncivilized acts have been committed in the name of "government."

Perhaps it is more moral to not respect the "laws" of "government." When we respect the "laws" of "government," we simply embolden those who imagine they have the right to rule, and when they demand bigger and bigger atrocities, we're to blame because we let them assume the right to rule in the first place.

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## SUBMISSION

From early childhood we are taught to obey the

demands of "authority." We are graded and loved and rewarded according to how well we first obey our parents, and then how well we obey teachers and maybe clergy, and then how well we obey bosses and the "government." We all know the good people are the ones who do as they are told, who work and don't steal and pay their taxes. The bad people are the ones who rebel against "authority." To be a good person is to know that obedience is a virtue and to practice it. God expects it. Parents expect it. Teachers expect it. Bosses expect it. "Government" expects it.

It is good and right to do as you are told, regardless of how you feel about what you are told to do. Everyone can't do what they want to do. If everyone did that, it would be chaos, anarchy, madness.

Yep. A lie for everything.

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#### TRUTH FROM THE FUTURE

A time traveler from the future would probably listen to all of our arguments and then say, "In your time, people hold it in high regard when 'subjects' obey the commands of those with the imagined 'right' to rule. But your obedience has not brought you order and peace as you imagine, but an era of greater chaos, war, and suffering than any other. Your perceived 'virtue' of obedience to 'government,' which you deeply believe, and which you pass on to your children, never led to anything good. What you are falsely taught to believe to be the purpose of 'government'-- to create a peaceful, orderly, civilized society --has never been manifested in the real world by any claimed 'government' ever. People from your time will bemoan the evils committed by 'governments' and will catalog all the ways that even the 'government' of their own country is corrupt and bad, but they will still assert that 'government' is a force for good; they will still insist that people need 'government.' They think that 'government' is still a noble idea that sometimes goes wrong rather than an antiquated concept that is false and

solve your own problems. You would have to develop a system for your trash, and address the delinquent kids throwing rocks.

You would have to go from dependency to responsibility. You would have to find ways to work with others in the same situation as yourself, to combine your resources in the absence of external regulation, solve problems collectively, and come up with a system that works for you.

Telling the thugs they have no right to rule you is one thing.

Living it is another.

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#### GOVERNMENT-LESS, PART II

Without "government," there will be chaos and looting, murder and mayhem, destruction and death. It will be dog eat dog, a struggle of all against all, the survival of the fittest. We all know that. At least, we think we do.

But are you going to act crazy if the system collapses? Are you going to go out raping and pillaging, shooting people at random, burning down buildings? Me neither. I'll have more important priorities. I'll be making sure family and friends are safe and have basic needs met. I'll be busy surviving.

I'm sure you probably feel the same way.

So, if you and I won't be out contributing to the looting and pillaging and raping and mayhem, who will? It must be Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally.

You know how they are.

It must be these "others." No one I ever spoke to identified themselves as the potential causes of mayhem.

At any rate, I think this idea we have that we will experience madness and mayhem if the "government" goes away comes from us not knowing what will happen. It's very unpredictable. There's no way to know how 7 billion people might act if suddenly they lived in a world where the Apache attack helicopter wasn't aiming at them anymore. We assume the worst. Some people will certainly blow off steam. It might be like 7 billion



under the guise of a 'benevolent' 'government,' takes the opportunity to hobble all of you with a myth, imprisoning all of your minds so that not only are you prevented from escaping, but so that you never recognize that there is anything to escape from."

In the heavy silence that would follow, one person in the crowd would raise his hand.

"But who would come and pick up the garbage?" He would ask.

"And another: "Yeah. And who would print the money?"

And still another: "And what about the national parks?"

"Will we have prayer in schools?"

"Who will trim the branches in my yard so they don't fall in the storm and knock out the power on my block?"

"Who would hand out alcohol licensing?"

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#### NECESSARY, PART V

List all of the life forms in the world capable of surviving and thriving without the myth of "government." There's a lot of them. Now list all of the life forms that cannot survive without the myth of "government."

Makes you feel pretty lonely, doesn't it?

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#### GANG ACTIVITY, PART II

There's a gang. They've been extorting you, taking your money, imposing their demands on you, threatening you, keeping you dependent on them. If you resist the gang and drive them away, you'll be free. You will experience the absence of their external regulation. You would be free to regulate yourself.

But you wouldn't have the gang to rely upon in order to solve your problems. If you drove off the gang, you certainly couldn't call them to pick up your trash or to protect you from delinquent kids in the neighborhood throwing rocks at cars. You would have to

irrational at its very foundations."

Yes, false and irrational at its very foundations. Then this time traveler might point out how we're always taught to defer to some outside authority, to ignore the "reality on the ground," to go along with someone else's program, and that's why people sometimes ignore what they see with their own eyes and, under the direction of a disembodied voice coming out of the dashboard, will drive directly into a lake.

"...Calculating route..."

#### THE RIGHT TO RULE, PART II

If "government" is the building where governing takes place, then "government" isn't a myth at all. Those buildings are very real. And if "government" is the people who assume the right to rule, then "government" isn't a myth—because those people are very real.

But "government" isn't a building. In places where natural disasters occur and buildings get knocked down or swept away or flooded, "government" keeps issuing its orders from tents or trailers. And "government" isn't the people giving the orders, either, because some people get voted out and replaced, or they die, or they resign in scandal and get replaced by other people. So "government" isn't the people who give the orders.

"Government" is the right to rule, no matter what structure the ruling is made in, and no matter who the individual people are who make the rulings. It is the "right to rule."

And that means that if this so-called "right to rule" is a myth, then it doesn't matter that there are buildings where "government" happens, and it doesn't matter that there are people who claim to be acting on behalf of the "government." If there is no "right to rule," then "government" is as real as magical beans and faerie dust.

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## ACQUIRING THE "RIGHT TO RULE"

How would somebody acquire "the right to rule"? And how would the person or persons they choose as subjects somehow lose the right to even rule themselves?

For me to rule you, for instance, I would first have to have the right to rule myself. Otherwise, without the right to rule myself, you could come along and claim the right to rule me. Then I would be the ruled and not the ruler. So first, I must demonstrate the right to rule myself, and then I must somehow demonstrate that you have lost the right to rule yourself and that I have the right to rule you.

In all of this, how do we distinguish between the people who have magically or supernaturally gained the right to rule others from those who have magically or supernaturally lost the right to even rule themselves? Is there some kind of sign? Perhaps those with the "right to rule" have certain color eyes or certain sized feet or a special birth-mark?

It used to be that we had tests that would reveal the right to rule, like acts of daring or swords stuck in rocks so that the gods could reveal who they chose to rule us by letting the chosen one yank the sword out of the rock. But it appears these days that we have pulled all of the swords out of all the rocks and the gods, limited in imagination as they are, have found no new method for communicating their will to us.

So now we hold votes so that people can choose which ruler they object to the least and impose that ruler onto other people who did not choose the ruler at all. So all of us are ruled by the ruler that some found the least objectionable.

That means our ruler gets picked because that's the one that most of the voters won't do anything about.

So, the "right to rule" is synonymous with, "what some asshole can probably get away with."

Wow.

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## GANG ACTIVITY

What if you had a coffee shop in a bad neighborhood

faerie dust, and unicorns, and this thing called "government" is no different than a street gang that extorts protection money and imposes demands under threat of violence.

## NECESSARY, PART IV

This vagrant holy man from a couple thousand years ago reportedly told people to consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field as models for ideal life, then the "government" executed him as a dangerous radical.

Birds of the air live without "government."

Lilies of the field live without "government."

If only we were as smart and imaginative as birds of the air and lilies of the field, we would want to live without "government," and our vagrant holy men wouldn't be executed as dangerous radicals.

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## THE IDIOT FACTORY

Imagine how surprised most of us would be if those time-travelers from the future told us, "Because you're chained to a lie-- the lie of 'government' legitimacy --you've allowed a small group of opportunists to enslave all of you and turn your world into an Idiot Factory. A small group of opportunists continue to engineer a social system where humans are exploited, mismanaged, and abused, prevented from living full and rewarding lives, from ever reaching their full potential and thereby outgrowing any imagined 'need' for 'government.' Your system purposely and deliberately turns people into idiots because idiots are easier to control, manipulate, and keep dependent. Under this delusion of 'government legitimacy,' the vast numbers of you have become slaves to opportunists you select, who then decide what you learn, what you hear, what you see, what you eat, how you think, and therefore how you live. In this way, the small group of selected opportunists,

Bill, Rita, and Sally are behaving badly right now. "Government" hasn't stopped them. "Laws" haven't stopped them.

We can write a million laws and prescribe a million punishments for a million crimes, but people will still act as dumb tomorrow as they did today.

We have more idiots now than ever before. All of these idiots don't come out of some secret enclave hidden away in the mountains where no "government" can reach, some secret Idiot Factory the "government" cannot stop.

All of these idiots are the product of "government" and "laws." Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally are the product of this world with its "government" and "laws."

We live in the Idiot Factory.

By my best guess, Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally are running it.

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### NECESSARY, PART III

As humans, we contend we are smarter than squirrels. But squirrels have developed a method for living without "government." If we were as smart and as imaginative as squirrels, perhaps we could develop a way to live without needing "government."

### THE RIGHT TO RULE, PART VII

So, do you accept that Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally have a "right" to rule you, despite the fact that Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally have a demonstrable record of ruling themselves badly? Do you accept that they have the "right" to rule you and turn your world into an Idiot Factory? Do you accept that they can "rule" you any better than you can rule yourself, particularly since you know you and they don't?

Since all "government" is based on this idea of the "right to rule," which is as real as magical beans,

and some local gang-bangers were harassing you? What would you do?

The enforcers for the gang wear obvious gang colors and sag their pants. Some of them are packing heat. They tell you that you must pay them a certain percentage of the money you make as "protection." They tell you they expect your shop to operate according to their demands. If you don't comply, they will drag you away and do harm to you while your shop goes bankrupt and you lose everything.

Now let's change the scenario a bit. Instead of wearing gang colors, the enforcers for the gang wear blue uniforms with badges and they carry side-arms. They drive squad cars with the motto, "To Protect and To Serve," emblazoned on the fenders. They still demand a percentage of your money and they call it "taxes." They still promise "protection." They still expect you to run your shop according to their demands, which they call "regulations" and "ordinances" and "laws." And they still imply that if you don't meet their demands, they'll drag you away and subject you to harm called "imprisonment" while your business fails.

In the first scenario, you're being victimized by ruthless thugs. In the second scenario, you're being "governed" by those who have the "right to rule." The difference isn't in their clothing or what they drive. It isn't in how they act or what they do to you. The difference is only in how you see them.

You would resist the thugs in the first scenario because they have no right to take from you or to boss you around. But as soon as we change the word "gang" to "government," you greet the enforcers with free coffee, boast about how much protection (taxes) you pay, and praise your employees for following demands ("laws").

So what is the difference between the "gang" and the "government"?

How you see them.

### FLAT EARTH, PART III

If we went back in time and tried to tell people the

truth that the earth is round, we'd catch a lot of resistance. All those folks deluded by a powerful myth would try to prove they're smarter than us, that they know something that we don't know when, in point of fact, we would know something that they don't know.

At some point, we might get resentful. We might start rolling our eyes when these deluded people are spouting off arguments we already know to be wrong. Amongst ourselves, we might start referring to these delusional idiots as "flat-earthers."

"These crazy flat-earthers," and, "I just can't deal with these flat-earthers," and, "If one more flat-earther tries to tell me...", and so on. Then, at some point, one of us might let slip and call them flat-earthers to their faces.

Flat-earthers.

What would the time-travelers from the future, knowing this idea of "government," this imagined "right to rule" is utterly false, call all of us who are locked firmly in the prison of our own delusional thinking? What do you think their derogatory name for us might be? "State worshipers"? "Hierarchs"? "Pyramid zombies"?

If we explained to them the necessity of "government" do you think they might roll their eyes, shake their heads, and one of them would mutter under her breath something like, "...Calculating route..." and the rest of them would laugh?

I bet they would.

#### MORE THAN ONE DIFFERENCE?

Somebody in the crowd might raise a hand, feeling rather offended that one of these messengers from the future compared "government" to "gang activity." When given the chance to speak, that offended apologist for "government" might say, "There's more than one difference between 'government' and 'gang activity.' The 'government' is benevolent, it intends to do good, to help people, to make the world better. But gangs just want to run something and they don't care how they get what they want."

"rule" of a small group of delusional humans who do not know me but assume the right to rule me, rather than being under the rule of myself, so that I can meet my own needs, which I ought to know best?

#### NECESSARY, PART II

Notice how, when people make the Necessity of "Government" argument, they always say "government" is necessary because other people-- not me and you, of course --are so messed up they need to be told what to do. I think we should give those other people names: Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally. They're the problem.

Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally are perfectly incapable of healthy self-management. Without "government," Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally would fuck everything up.

You and I would be fine, of course. So would most of the militant Hierarchs. We know the laws and rules aren't designed to keep you and me from acting like idiots; the laws and rules are aimed at Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally. We need to keep them from acting like idiots.

But here's the question: When the "government" passes "laws" to make bad behavior "crimes," does the passage of the "law" ever stop Charlie, Bill, Rita or Sally from engaging in the bad behavior that the "law" has made criminal? I don't think it ever has. I think you and I could outlaw every species of bad behavior known to human kind-- from cannibalism to sticking your tongue out at your sister on the bus --and within seconds, millions of people the world over will be engaged in really dumb behavior.

I bet 20% of the world's population are doing something dumb right now. That's 1.4 billion people.

There are laws against drugs. Do we still have addicts?

There are laws against murder. Do we still have serial killers?

There are laws against thieves. Do we still need locks on our doors?

So when die-hard Hierarchs tell me we need "government" in order to keep Charlie, Bill, Rita, and Sally from behaving badly, I assert that Charlie,



even if it is mythological, even if the "right to rule" is as real as magical beans and faerie dust and unicorns. The fact of the matter is, people are a mess and they need to be told what to do or else we'll have chaos and madness and mayhem.

At least, that's what we're told. And most of us believe it, so long as we don't think about it.

The truth is, people are a mess. We do dumb things. We get in bar fights and have sex with our friends' spouses and drive through red lights and dive into fountains. We make some pretty self-destructive choices-- some of us worse than others.

A die-hard Hierarch-- poor, delusional Hierarchs -- will tell you that this is the perfect argument for "government," for the few to assume the "right to rule" the many. People are a mess, so in order to limit the disorder and madness and mayhem, we need the few to rule the many.

I disagree. I think the fact that people are a mess is the perfect argument for opposing the idea of "government," the few assuming the right to rule the many. I don't know that I want the world's important decisions in the hands of a few people who get in bar fights and have sex with friends' spouses and run red lights and dive into fountains.

Remember, humans are stupid. We're a mess. And I have no reason to believe that those who are so deluded as to believe they have obtained some supernatural "right" to rule would be any better at making good choices than the janitor or the secretary or the plumber. In fact, by virtue of these self-appointed rulers thinking they have some magical "right to rule" bestowed upon them, I'm immediately suspicious of their aims and I am concerned about their sanity.

I would never assume the "right" to rule you, to use an Apache attack helicopter to make you go along with the rules I would write for you to follow. But these politicians would assume the right to rule you, to use an Apache attack helicopter to make you go along with their program. They spend millions of dollars of other people's money to get the chance to do that.

They clearly can't be trusted.

So, to the die-hard Hierarchs I ask, in light of how messy humans are, why I would be better off under the

The time travelers would roll their eyes and shake their heads and one of them would mumbled, "Hierarchs, poor deluded Hierarchs."

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BENEVOLENCE

The benevolence argument. "Government" is different from gangs because "government" is a force for good and we need it. Most of us believe that to be true.

It's funny but the same guy who rants about the Internal Revenue Service destroying good people's lives will tell you that "government" is a force for good. So will human rights investigators who document disappearances, torture, and mass killings by dictators all over the world. So will those who think Kennedy was killed in a "government" plot. And those who believe the Iraq War was deliberately built on lies. Or those who think 9/11 was an inside job.

"Government" is benevolent, a force for good," they will say, even when their conclusion flies into the face of all the evidence they can see, even when their belief about the benevolence of "government" conflicts with the "reality on the ground," even when they recognize the worst atrocities in history resulted from "government" and from those who followed the orders of "government."

To make an analogy, we see that the leaves and the fruit and the branches are rotten, but we still conclude that the tree is fundamentally good.

Sure, "government" sometimes does good things. The every act of "government" is not evil and mean-spirited. I bet most serial killers will occasionally help little old ladies across the street or donate money to charity; but that doesn't mean that serial killers are benevolent forces for good.

If "government" was really benevolent, why does it act just like a gang? And how does "government benevolence" explain why they have those Apache attack helicopters?

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### THE RIGHT TO RULE, PART III

A street gang can't boss us around and expect our allegiance to them because they have no imagined "right to rule" us. So when the street gang tries to extort us, we resist. When they threaten us, we defy them. When they try to impose themselves, we meet force with force if necessary to defend our lives and our rights and our autonomy.

But when the "government" subjects us to the very same conditions as the street gang, we accept them. We don't just accept the conditions, but we're happy to accept them. We pay the extortion and comply with the demands and we think of ourselves as "free."

Really??? Free???

But if we were truly "free," wouldn't we be the ones who exercise the "right" to rule? What I mean is, I don't understand how being the subject of someone else who exercises a "right" we don't have somehow makes us "free." If being ruled makes you free, then what does exercising the "right to rule" make you? Super-free???

Back in Part I and Part II you'll remember that I asked how Thomas Worthington could assume the authority to create a corporation, a "government," that had the "right to rule" when Thomas Worthington himself possessed no such right that he himself could bestow upon his created corporation. How is it that anyone can gain this special "right to rule"? And if we can't figure out where it comes from and how it is bestowed, then perhaps we need to conclude that this "right to rule" is a myth. That it's made-up. Not really true.

It might be referred to in common parlance as, "Bullshit."

Perhaps "government," which is the "right to rule," is "bullshit."

### FREEDOM

I don't understand how people can be "ruled" and still think of themselves as "free." I think perhaps

No one can consent to be governed. Even in the crazy situation where somebody says, "I agree to let you force me to do what I don't want to do, and I consent to it," that consent is only consent so long as there is voluntary agreement; but as soon as there is no voluntary agreement, as soon as there is no consent, there is force-- no matter what the person said.

One cannot give consent to be forced.

### CONSENT, PART II

To give "consent" to be "governed," which is to say, to give "consent" to be subjected to force, is like giving "consent" to be raped.

Either it's consent or it's rape.

Either it's consent or it's force.

### LAWS, PART I

Laws are tools used by "government" to force people to go along with the program when they can't be persuaded to go along with the program of their own free will. "Laws" are tools used by those who assume "the right to rule."

Key word: "Force."

Key word: "Assume."

### THE RIGHT TO RULE, PART VI

You can't consent to be governed, that is, to be externally regulated, that is, to be forced to do what you don't want to do. If you consent, you aren't being forced; if you are being forced, it isn't consent.

So much for the "right to rule."

### NECESSARY

We need "government." "Government" is necessary,

where people vote and the will of the majority of voters is what gets imposed upon everyone, you don't have the "Will of the People" bestowing the "right to rule" upon the chosen "government." Instead, you have the voting majority forcing everyone else to relinquish their rights to rule themselves.

\* \* \*

#### THE RIGHT TO RULE, PART V

But now we have to address the question of whether you have the "right" to relinquish your right to rule yourself, to bestow that "right" upon a chosen "government." If you can, then we can say definitively that there exists a "right to rule." And if there is a "right to rule," then "government" is not a myth after all.

But I don't think you can relinquish your "right" to rule yourself. I don't think you can consent to be governed.

\* \* \*

#### CONSENT, PART I

There are two ways that you can interact with "government." You can agree with what the "government" tells you to do, or you can disagree. When you act in agreement, you consent. When you disagree, you are forced by threat of punishment.

In the first instance, you do not have consent to be governed because, although you have consent, you do not have "government." When you agree to what the "government" commands, you consent to what it tells you, so you do not have force or threat of punishment. You're just doing what you want to do.

In the second instance, we have force. When you disagree with what the "government" says, you have punishment and the threat of punishment, so we definitely have force. But in the second instance, we no longer have consent.

Where there is consent, there is no "government"; where there is "government," there is no consent.

we need to think about freedom a little more deeply. I think we have to figure out what it is.

We can list freedoms like the freedom of speech or the freedom of religion, and that might reveal which freedoms we most care about. We can make up a laundry list of freedoms but that doesn't tell us what freedom is, just like listing all the different flavors of ice cream won't reveal anything about the ingredients for the ice cream itself. Our exhaustive list will only reveal that we really like ice cream.

So what we're lacking is a working definition of what freedom is. We can't necessarily recognize freedom until we pin down exactly what it is we're looking for. I think this is a generally good working definition for freedom, and I hope you agree: "Freedom" is the absence of external regulation.

That's a very generalized definition-- the absence of external regulation.

Whenever you have external regulation, something beyond you-- whatever it is --regulating you, then you are less free. Where you have the absence of external regulation, you have freedom. In my way of thinking, I imagine a line and at opposite ends of the spectrum you have absolute freedom on one end and absolute regulation on the other. In between, we have varying gradients of freedom and regulation. The more free you are, the less regulated; the more regulated, the less free.

From this view, freedom and external regulation are opposites. They work against each other. So if you value freedom, and you recognize that freedom is the absence of external regulation, then you invariably have to oppose external regulation. If you value freedom, then external regulation represents a threat, an opposition to your freedom.

External regulation is the enemy to freedom. External regulation happens any time I am regulated or forced by something that is outside of me. If a gang compelled me to pay extortion money, that gang would be an external regulator. External regulation equates with force. External regulators do not compel you to do what you want to do; if they compelled you to do what you want to do, it would not be compulsion and it would not be external regulation-- it would simply be

you doing what you want to do.

So, external regulation is force. It is force imposed by someone or something that assumes the "right" to compel you, to give you orders, someone or something that expects orders to be followed or reserves the "right" to punish.

We most commonly refer to such a someone or something as "government." It doesn't matter who or what makes up the "government," because what matters is what it does. It governs. It regulates.

So, by this conception of things, "freedom" is the absence of external regulation, the absence of being governed or forced, and "government" is the "right to rule," to force. That means "freedom" and "government" are opposites. If you are free, you are without external regulation, without "government," and if you are governed, you are forced, and you are consequently not free.

"Government," that is, external regulation and force, could never be the protector of liberties, of freedom, of the absence of external regulation. "Government" by its very nature is the limiter and inhibitor of freedom. Wherever you have "government," the imagined "right to rule," you have less freedom. So how is it we can imagine that we are "free" and our "government" is the source of our "freedom"?

Because we have a lie for everything.

### MAGICAL BEANS, PART III

We need "government," so whether or not anyone actually has the "right to rule," and whether or not being the subject to "government" qualifies as freedom, practical reality dictates that we need "government." We just need it.

That might be true. But it also might be true that we need those magic beans to produce a giant bean stalk we can climb so we can save the international space station.

We may need government the same way we need magical beans, but our "need" for them won't make either of them real.

If the "right to rule" is a myth and no one actually possesses it, then "government," which is based on this mythological "right to rule" doesn't really exist. It's just a product of fantastical thinking. It inhabits the same space in our world as magical beans and faerie dust and unicorns.

Besides, we don't need "government."

Name one good thing that "government" can do that good people left to their own devices wouldn't be able to do just as well or better if "government" wasn't there.

Just one.

Yep. That's what I thought.

### THE RIGHT TO RULE, PART IV

"But it's the Will of The People," somebody would chime in. "That's what democracy is all about. That's freedom. We can choose to have a 'government.' And the 'right to rule' us is bestowed on the 'government' by The People. Of The People, By The People, and For The People."

That's what somebody would say to the time travelers who attempted to debunk this mythological "right to rule."

Hierarchs. Poor deluded Hierarchs.

First, let's just assume for a moment that you have the "right" to give away your right to rule yourself. Let's assume you have the "right" to choose a "government" to rule you. Even if we assume you have such a "right," you could in no way give away my right to rule myself. You can only make choices for yourself and you can't make the choice for me. So even if you hold a vote and you have a hundred friends-- no, not a hundred; a thousand--or, better yet, a million friends, and they all unanimously vote to relinquish their right to rule themselves, the million of you have no right or authority to force me to give up my right to rule myself. You have no right to force me to relinquish my rights and accept the "government" that you have chosen.

So, any system, like that in the United States,