

THE PROGRESS REPORT

When You Vote

By Fred E. Foldvary

When you vote, you are not just voting for a candidate to represent you, but you are also voting for a whole social policy.

A candidate takes positions on various issues, and also supports an entire system of social policy. Typically, Democrats favor the use of government to aid people who suffer from lack of purchasing power for food, housing, health care, education and old age income. Republicans tend to want to reduce the expense of the welfare state, but they go along with the policy of treating the effects of poverty. Both major parties want to use government to enforce the culture and economic interests of special interests.

The minor parties, such as Reform, Libertarian, Green, and Natural Law, seek more fundamental changes. But they too in many cases seek change within the system rather than a change of the system. The system is to have a powerful government that treats the effects of social problems and provides privileges and subsidies to moneyed and landed special interests, at the expense of the public.

So when you vote for a candidate, you are voting also to endorse the whole system. Many vote negatively, for the lessor of evils. But a lesser evil is still evil, and different folks will disagree about whether the worse evil is the high taxes for the welfare state or the problems the welfare state is supposed to treat.

The effective remedy for social problems is to eliminate the cause. The cause is usually some government intervention that prevents people from working, producing, and investing. Restrictive regulations and taxes make labor and products more expensive. These interventions reduce profit incentives. Taxes and subsidies distort and skew prices and profits and put up barriers that prevent land, labor, and capital from getting together to produce.

When you vote, you can vote for dysfunctional, economy-wrecking policy and a vicious cycle of welfare spending and taxes, or you can vote against that system. If you vote for candidates and parties that support the system and seek only minor changes within the current system, you vote to support the system.

The natural economy has no restrictions on peaceful and honest enterprise or behavior, and no taxes on productive activity. Its public finance collects land rent, pollution charges, and voluntary user fees. The natural economy has true free trade with all countries and is in optimal harmony with the natural environment.

To avoid supporting the economy-poisoning system, you need to vote for candidates and parties that seek to overthrow the system and replace it with a natural economy that avoids putting up barriers to enterprise. If there are no candidates who favor economic freedom, then you can write

in a candidate or leave that office blank. Check with your local voter registrar to see if they have an official list of write-in candidates, or add your own.

When you vote, you can either support the political system of mass democracy, where special interests finance campaigns and get massive subsidies in return, or you can support a political system of human-scale democracy, where you vote for neighbors you know. Tyrants love mass democracy, because a charismatic hero can whip up the masses to raise their fists and cry Sieg Heil!

You can be *boobus americanus* and carry a big sign for your favorite Big Party candidate and cheer when he appears on TV. You can be *goofus boobus* who sits home on election day and lets the others decide. Or you can be a righteous citizen who either votes for the small party or write-in candidate that seeks economic freedom and justice, or else casts a blank ballot to reject the system.

When you vote, you most importantly vote either to support our current system of privileges and barriers, or you can vote to let the walls come tumbling down. The American system looks good only because most of the rest of the world is so much more corrupt and tyrannical. But we are dancing and dining on a Titanic -- do you not see or care that there may be icebergs up ahead?

When you vote, you can vote to turn the ship around to avoid the icebergs, or you can vote for which dinner to order and what music to dance to, never mind the icebergs. We are sovereign human beings, but we are prisoners of a system that only lets us exercise our sovereignty at the ballot. You can use your sovereignty either to vote for your favorite prison guard, or to eliminate the prison.

When you vote, how will you choose?