



“Capitalism Is The Virus”: Right-Wing, ‘Free-Market’ Think-Tanks Vandalized In DC

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On Monday, March 16th, a [Twitter account](#) posted up a communique along with photos of anarchist graffiti and slogans addressing the exploding crisis brought on by the coronavirus that were written across the walls and windows of the Cato Institute and the American Enterprise Institute, both right-wing think-tanks in Washington DC.

The [Cato Institute](#) was founded by Ed Cane, Murray Rothbard, an “anarcho”-capitalist and proponent of [historical revisionism](#), and Charles Koch, of the infamously wealthy and influential Koch family, who over the decades has [helped finance](#) a variety of far-Right, Republican, and “libertarian” [causes and organizations](#). According to [The Nation](#), “the Cato Institute has been one of the leading Republican Party policy and propaganda factories since at least the early 1990s.” [According to SourceWatch](#), the Cato Institute has promoted privatization of government services, fought against attempts to regulate Wall Street, pushed climate change denial, supported the tobacco industry, and opposed campaign finance reform.

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) has grown to become one of the largest and most influential right-wing think-tanks. As [Vanity Fair](#) wrote: during the Bush II years, the AEI became an “intellectual command post of the neoconservative campaign for regime change in Iraq.” Moreover as [SourceWatch](#) documented, the AEI has supported climate change denial, opposed net neutrality, and pushed back against raising the minimum wage.

Both think-tanks have been instrumental in pushing for attacks on safety nets and social welfare programs for the working-class and the poor.

According to the communique that was posted to Twitter:

We took these actions against the think tanks of the wealthy because their policies put us in this hellscape. Cato Institute and the American Enterprise Institute have both fought tooth and nail against paid sick leave, universal health care, and worker protections.

The rich jet to disaster bunkers and leave a world in lockdown, without a safety net, and in-debt to them. The political establishment would like you to believe that this is a one-off crisis – but this is capitalism.

If we are going to address COVID-19, we have to address the conditions that have further put the most vulnerable Americans in danger.

Mass incarceration has put the lives of working class people in danger. The federal government has the ability to detain people they simply believe are carrying this illness during a pandemic and place them in medical segregation.

In short, their solution is open air prisons. Our solution is mutual aid, solidarity, and an environment where every human has the resources they need to survive.

The communique ended with an endorsement for the “5 Demands,” which have grown in popularity since the start of the economic crisis brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. The demands call for free healthcare, no work, no payment of debt, freedom for prisoners and ICE detainees, and free housing for all.