

People's Maudit Daily

Truly Honest Leftist Admits Your Income is the “Rightful Property” of Government

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In a perverse way, I admire leftists who openly express their desire for bigger government and less liberty. That's why I (sort of) applauded when Matthew Yglesias wrote in favor of confiscatory tax rates while admitting the government wouldn't generate any revenue. And I gave Katrina vanden Heuvel credit for openly admitting her desire to redefine “freedom” so that it means a claim on other people's income and property.

Both are proposing horrible policy, of course, but at least they're honest about their goals and motivations. Unlike politicians, they're not trying to disguise their intentions behind poll-tested platitudes.

We can now add another person to our list of honest leftists. The new leader of the Labour Party in the United Kingdom, Jeremy Corbyn, is a British version of Bernie Sanders, except he really is a socialist who believes in government ownership and control of business. And the chief economic adviser to Corbyn is Richard Murphy.

And, as reported by the U.K.-based Sun, Mr. Murphy openly says everyone's income belongs to government.

Chartered accountant Richard Murphy, 57, is the brains behind the “Corbynomics” strategy of renationalisation, higher taxes and printing millions of pounds in “new” money. ...his bizarre ideas have already sparked fears among Britain's top economic experts... One of Murphy's strategies was revealed in August 2014... The dad-of-two claimed taxpayers' money was NOT their own – and was instead the state's “rightful property”. Murphy said: “I would suggest that we don't as such pay taxes. The funds that they represent are, I suggest, in fact the property of the state.”

To be fair, sometimes people mangle their words. To cite one hypothetical example, accidentally omitting a word like “not” might totally change the meaning of a sentence and give a journalist

an opportunity to make a speaker look foolish. So, maybe Mr. Murphy didn't really mean to say that the government has first claim on everyone's income.

But if you continue reading, it becomes apparent that he really does believe that government is daddy and the rest of us are children who may be lucky enough to get some allowance.

“...if we give the state the power to define what we can own, how we can own it and, to a very large degree, what we can do with it – and we do – then I would argue that we also give the state the right to say that some part of what we earn or own is actually its rightful property and that we have no choice but pay that tax owed as the quid pro quo of the benefit we enjoy from living in community. Murphy went on: “Well let me inform you that there is no such thing as ‘taxpayers’ money’: it is the government’s money to do what it will with in accordance with the mandate it has been given and for which it will have to account.

Wow, this truly gives us a window into the soul of statism.

Though let's be fair to Murphy. He's simply stating that untrammelled majoritarianism is a moral basis for public policy, even if it means 51 percent of the population ravages 49 percent of the population. And that's an accurate description of how economic policy works in the United States ever since the Supreme Court decided to toss out the Constitution's limits on the power of the federal government.

Moreover, Murphy's view is basically reflected in the “tax expenditure” concept used in Washington and the “state aid” concept in the European Union. None of this justifies Murphy's poisonous ideology. Instead, I'm simply making the grim point that statist already have achieved some of their goals. But maybe it will be easier to counter further attacks on economic liberty now that Murphy has openly said what his side wants.

P.S. There are two types of honest leftists. Richard Murphy, like Matt Yglesias and Katrina vanden Heuvel, are honest in that they openly state what they really believe, even when it exposes their radical agenda.

Some other folks on the left have a better type of honesty. They're willing to admit when there is a contradiction between statist ideology and real-world results. Just look at what Justin Cronin and Jeffrey Goldberg wrote about gun control and what Nicholas Kristof wrote about government-created dependency.

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