



Thieving and Reprehensible Government

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I hope you're a libertarian already. But if you're not, I hope you'll be one after you finish reading this post.

And if you're not a libertarian after reading this post, I suggest you emigrate to Zimbabwe, or some other place where government has unchecked and arbitrary power to steal. You'll feel right at home.

This post is about the disgusting practice of "asset forfeiture," which is basically a scheme that allows government to steal people's property and money.

I've already posted a [great video from the Institute for Justice](#) about this topic, and I also suggest you read [this horror story](#) and [this nauseating episode](#) to see how asset forfeiture works in the real world.

Now let's look at two new examples of theft by government.

Let's start with some excerpts from a [George Will column](#).

Russ Caswell, 68, is bewildered: "What country are we in?" He and his wife, Pat, are ensnared in a Kafkaesque nightmare unfolding in Orwellian language. This town's police department is conniving with the federal government to circumvent Massachusetts law — which is less permissive than federal law — to seize his livelihood and retirement asset. In the lawsuit titled United States of America v. 434 Main Street, Tewksbury, Massachusetts, the government is suing an inanimate object, the motel Caswell's father built in 1955. The U.S. Department of Justice intends to seize it, sell it for perhaps \$1.5 million and give up to 80 percent of that to the Tewksbury Police Department, whose budget is just \$5.5 million. The Caswells have not been charged with, let alone convicted of, a crime.

Is Will's language over the top? Hardly, as you can see from this excerpt. The government is trying to steal the hotel because a tiny percentage of guests engaged in victimless crimes.