

# The Washington Post

## McPherson Square's libertarian lessons

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A key theme of the Nov. 10 Style articles on Occupy D.C. [["A square gets hip"](#)] was that the protesters in McPherson Square are pursuing their goals through "spontaneous order." Residents of the square have created an informal government with committees, voting procedures and a regular, daily schedule. Natural leaders are emerging and starting libraries, kitchens and health services.

It's interesting to note that this sort of spontaneous order was central to libertarian economist Friedrich Hayek's understanding of a free-market capitalist society. He described how — absent coercion — individuals come together voluntarily to solve problems, generate wealth and create useful social institutions.

How will the libertarian social experiment in McPherson Square evolve? Will the 1 percent with the largest tents come under attack? Will leaders promise free coffee in return for more centralized power? Hayek's ["The Road to Serfdom"](#) has the answers, so occupiers should get some copies for their library.

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