

REVIEW OF KOSANKE'S *INSTEAD OF POLITICS*

DON STACY*

INSTEAD OF POLITICS. By John Kosanke. Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2010.

INDIVIDUALIST JOHN FREDERIC KOSANKE'S new book *Instead of Politics* is an intriguing addition to the literature of freedom. Logical economic arguments against a political society and for a free-market society are skillfully presented by the author. Ultimately, the comprehensive nature of the work identifies Kosanke as a noteworthy newcomer to the consequentialist camp of the libertarian movement.

Instead of Politics consists of one short introduction and two long sections. Each section is divided into five chapters. Each chapter is subdivided into multiple subchapters. Each subchapter is immediately followed by several cartoons (courtesy of cartoonist Rex F. May). The anti-state cartoons are reminiscent of the cartoons effectively employed in Walter Block's 1976 libertarian classic *Defending the Undefendable*.¹

Kosanke's Introduction quickly relates the purpose of the book:

So in publishing this booklet, my goal is to expose politics for what it is, set the record straight, and thus permit mankind to see and prevent its own manipulation.

*Don Stacy (donstacy.com; anarchist1972@yahoo.com) is an American libertarian writer and physician.

CITE THIS ARTICLE AS: Don Stacy, "Review of Kosanke's *Instead of Politics*," *Libertarian Papers* 3, 3 (2011). ONLINE AT: libertarianpapers.org. THIS ARTICLE IS subject to a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License (creativecommons.org/licenses). Published by the Ludwig von Mises Institute.

He then depicts his consequentialist method:

By demonstrating the most elementary market principles, I will put the almighty state before the tribunal and jury of contemporary man.¹

The author concludes the Introduction with a resolute call for action:

I will do my part to nudge my fellow bearers of light to join in my quest to forever affix this imposter—this “Caesar”—to his own Appian cross . . . We will be his slaves no more, for we will no longer grant him the means to compel us.

Section A, “Man versus State,” builds the foundation for a free-market society. Kosanke demonstrates, via empirical evidence, that the civilizing forces of the free-market are incompatible with and contrary to politics. The author proves that the seemingly eternal struggle between man and state is wholly unnecessary.

In Section A Chapter 1, “Natural Government,” Kosanke details the self-governing character of an unobstructed market, the nature of money as a medium of exchange, the positive role of technological advancement in the evolution of society, the value of advertising, the necessity of risk for progress, and the importance of non-compulsory insurance. He also explains the inefficiency of monopoly, the danger of a distorted price system, the decivilizing philosophy of the neoLuddites, the futility of regulation, the failure of collectivism to deal with catastrophe, and the deleterious consequences of the centralization of the U.S. banking system. An especially insightful discussion links medical competition to the adoption of healthy lifestyles.

In Chapter 2, “The Artifice of Monopoly,” Kosanke explicates the symbiotic relationship between monopolists and states, the reasons states pursue prohibition, the connection between foreign aid and tyranny, how licensing increases prices, and the existence of the market for the elimination of the state. He promotes the abolition of various state evils, particularly anti-trust legislation, transnational subsidies, compulsory licensing, and censorship. A comparison of Marx’s 10 planks for the communist state to current policies of the United States government reminds readers of the danger bureaucratic monopolization poses to civilization.

¹Walter Block, *Defending the Undefendable: The Pimp, Prostitute, Scab, Slumlord, Libeler, Moneylender and Other Scapegoats in the Rogue’s Gallery of American Society* (Auburn, AL: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2008).

Kosanke utilizes Chapter 3, "The Blackened Market," to show the immediate negative effects of state legislation. He critiques prohibition, compulsory monopoly legal systems, central economic planning, and utopianism. A review of CIA/DEA involvement in international drug smuggling illustrates the inevitable hypocrisy of prohibition; discerning analysis of contracts, bribery, "fair" prices, and "equilibrium" economics is also supplied.

Chapter 4, "The Faces of Tyranny," is Kosanke's opportunity to pan "free trade" agreements, price controls, the minimum wage, collectivist unions, and "full" employment. To replace those political policies, Kosanke supports legitimate free trade and price/wage/employment competition. A brief explanation of the difference between discrimination and slavery is illuminating.

The highlight of Chapter 5, "The Heart of the Beast," is the author's dissection of the mechanics of global statist intellectual monopoly via a comprehensive analysis of disparate conspiracy theories. This chapter also explores free versus central banking, the causes of inflation, economic propaganda, and the interdependencies between finance and media and empire. Kosanke consistently chooses liberty.

Section B, "Property and Order," erects the superstructure of a free-market society. The author demonstrates that property rights create and maintain order. Kosanke proves, via empirical evidence, that the abolition of property rights destroys and corrupts order and must be prevented by rejecting statism.

In Section B Chapter 1, "The Nature of Property," Kosanke praises private security markets, non-state property ownership, population distribution based on cost of living rather than coercion, and the economic law of supply and demand. Conversely, he rebukes zoning, taxation, rent control, and, last but certainly not least, state-induced famine. A short discourse coupling lower property taxes to greater wildlife capacity is worth numerous readings.

Chapter 2, "Pollution = Collectivism," contains a brilliant passage challenging environmentalist dogma. The following sentence is my favorite:

While it is inevitable that mankind will not be able to prevent the extinction of most existing species, he is their best and only hope.

Additional Kosanke targets include the substitution of criminal law for tort law, state "ownership" of property, "cap and trade" legislation, and federal control of transportation maintenance and improvement. Concepts

positively reviewed by the author include conservation, for-profit hunting/game ranges/parks, strict pollution accountability, and user fees.

Chapter 3, “The Mysteries of War,” condemns war, reflexive obedience to authority, tribalism, pro-war propaganda, the military draft, and the military-industrial complex. Kosanke exposes the horrifying consequences of statism to all societies by connecting, in my favorite portion of the book, Hitler’s Operation Himmler, Reichstag Fire Decree, and Enabling Act of 1933 to Operation Northwoods to the Milgram experiment to the War on Terrorism, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Transportation Security Administration. Simultaneously, the author recommends skepticism, political heresy, the marketplace of ideas, reason, a “no first strike” military policy, and the abolition of foreign aid as strategies to minimize war.

Kosanke urges the adoption of private security, religious freedom, media deregulation, market-based crime prevention, and law reduction in Chapter 4, “The Elements of Security.” He slams, in no particular order, imperialism, democracy, the Federal Communications Commission, prison violence, and “gun control.” A brief examination of state and federal violations of the 4th Amendment confirms that the Founding Fathers were not as “paranoid” about state power as they should have been.

In “Escape from Utopia,” the final chapter, Kosanke decimates any remaining justifications for the state by rejecting such philosophical absurdities as the social contract, democracy, elections, crony capitalism, “voluntary” taxation, political “reform,” the political line scale, and collectivism. He also furnishes a fascinating review of modern Japanese fascism, reinforcing the fact that political injustice does not vary with geography or race or nationality. To end his tome, the author posits the following non-political alternatives: individual sovereignty, free trade, free markets, voluntarism, civil disobedience, tax resistance, Civil Order Pacts, and private security/insurance/arbitration.

However, *Instead of Politics* is not, in my opinion, a work of perfection. My perusal of this opus (admittedly a Rothbardian deontological market anarchist perusal) unearthed three minor flaws. First, Kosanke’s preference to concentrate on cause and effect excludes presentation of a deontological justification for liberty. Second, the decision to provide empirical evidence rather than proselytize prevents the clear identification of the author’s preferred end (minarchism vs. market anarchism). Third, the statement in Section B Chapter 3 that suicide is “the purest form of selflessness” is a controversial idea disputed by many philosophers and bioethicists.

In conclusion, John Kosanke’s new book *Instead of Politics* is a sweeping consequentialist plea for a free-market society. Kosanke expertly delineates

the inevitable negative consequences of statism and the inevitable positive consequences of liberty. I recommend the purchase of this pro-freedom work, minor objections notwithstanding, and plan to use the author's reasoning to fortify my intellect with powerful utilitarian arguments for market anarchism.