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A United State of Injustice

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A United State of Injustice

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Abstract: There are actions carried out by government under the guise of political authority that are immoral and unjust. I hope to show that the fact that government is the entity carrying out the morally questionable action is not sufficient to satisfy conditions that make *prima facie* wrong actions morally permissible. I will explore some political theories that attempt to explain why government has political authority, then challenge those theories. In an attempt to make clear why political authority is unjustified, I provide an argument in the form of a variety of extreme examples in which political authority might be justified. By using extreme examples I hope it becomes obvious that political authority is unjust in a normal society. The main concept that I hope can be taken from this paper is this: while the parent/child, employer/employee, doctor/mentally ill patient, morally superior person/morally inferior person, and expert/average person, relationships are all examples of valid authority, the relationship government has with the governed is not an example of valid authority. I wish to show with a discussion on morality, an analysis of various political theories, and my extreme examples of appropriate authority that government authority and actions are unjust.

0. Background

This paper is going to discuss not only how government in the present day United States performs unjust acts, passive or active, but I will also discuss how people choose to justify these actions. This is an important topic to the author for several reasons. Firstly, regardless of what political party one chooses to align themselves, citizens of a state ought to concern themselves with any injustices taking place by their government. Many are unaware of these injustices, or they choose to ignore them because it is socially preferable. I wish to start discourse so that people begin to at least acknowledge the actions of the government. My second purpose for writing this is to hopefully ignite a spark in those who read this. Someday I hope to live in a state where government is held to the same, if not more stringent, standards as the laymen within the borders. The state cannot be held accountable unless a large number of those within the state take some sort of action. And this action ought to be brought about by all people, however it needs to begin with the educated so that they can make the arguments against government accessible to those who do not understand the workings of government. Finally, I wish to take a personal journey with this project. I, like many of my fellow American citizens, have been compliant or at times even accepting of the government's various explicit moral violations taking place in modern times. If I can become aware of what ways the state is explicitly violating moral codes and why the citizens of the state allow them to continually violate them, then I can have personal accountability. Once I, personally, am aware, then I won't stand by idly and watch these injustices take place.

Through this research my political ideology has changed. No longer do I wear rose colored glasses when looking at government. Instead I see the moral violations

taking place and, now, I understand why people stand by idly. Hopefully my warning at the end of this project will help my readers understand that action must be taken. We cannot continue to let those who are supposedly the guardians of morality in our state violate the moral standards that they hold their citizens to each and every day. We need to hold our government to the same, if not higher, standards than the people of the state.

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1. Introduction

The United States of America, founded in 1776, is seen as a nation of freedom, liberty, and justice for all. The thirty second “Pledge of Allegiance” that school children say at the beginning of each day engrains the idea of “justice for all” in the malleable minds of the youth. So what is this concept of justice? Many think of justice as a concept regarding moral issues in terms of property and personal liberty. In the *Republic*, Plato describes justice as a virtue of both individuals and their societies. In “A Theory of Justice,” John Rawls outlines justice as the “first value of social institutions” (3). He further explains justice as a societal value, a value that allows persons a free and equal society in which there is a means of making use of these freedoms. In the primitive original position, a hypothetical society in which people do not know their social status position or the position of anyone else, along with a lack of knowledge of any strength, intellect, or other asset that one may possess, all people are equal (Theory of Justice 3). Thus, if all persons are equal in the original position, they ought to remain equal even after others become aware of the status and assets of their neighbors. If we are all equal, shouldn't all people and entities, regardless of their status or place within a governmental system, be held to equal moral standards?

This is the question that has prompted my enthusiasm and investigation into this matter. To begin my investigation, I will begin with a discussion on moral principles. I will list and explain which principles are relevant for our discussion regarding the injustices of government. This is important because justice is based upon certain socially relevant moral principles. In order to assess the actions of the state in moral terms we must be first clear on what moral terms are relevant. Because the focus of this paper is on

the United States government, I will be focusing only on moral principles and norms relevant to modern American society.

After going into depth regarding social moral values, I will examine which ones government chooses to ignore. I will go into depth on what actions specifically violate moral principles in both legalese and laymen terms. I will then delve into specifically why these actions violate moral principles. Following this will come a discussion on how the government or political scientists and philosophers justify these actions that go against modern American societal values, norms, and moral codes. This justification will include political theories such as the social contract theory and its extensions.

To make clear exactly how outlandish these justifications are, I will give examples of cases in which it would be appropriate for authority to carry out actions similar to those of the American government. I will then show how American government is not at all analogous to the given examples.

After all this persuasion I hope to explain why these ideas matter. I hope to show why it is imperative that we stop these injustices. Not only is the violation of moral norms intrinsically bad, this behavior can prevent social growth and violate freedoms. Not only is the violation of these norms a harm for society, but it is essentially un-American. This country, after all, claims to value freedom above all else. If this is true, then I aim to prove that the actions of the American government are not just unjust but are also un-American.

So what do we do about these injustices? Do we resist with civil disobedience as Henry David Thoreau suggests? Or is a warlike response the better option? Is there a way

to minimize government to solve these problems? Or, as most do when faced with unpleasant truths, do we turn away and act indifferent? My hope is that those who become aware of the behavior of the government will stand up. They will make change through modes such as education, protest, and other peaceful methods. Over time, hopefully government will no longer be allowed to pick and choose the morals by which they govern and instead all entities will be held to the same moral codes and standards.

To conclude I will recap my arguments and then present an idea of what I believe the solution to the problem of governmental injustice should be. Hopefully I will be able to inform, if not persuade, fellow citizens of the United States to hold their government to the same moral standards that the government holds her people to. The purpose of this paper is to argue that not only is government unjust in action (taxation, imprisonment, etc.) but also in basis. Hopefully this will prompt a change in opinion and thus action, if not a prompt to ponder these ideas.

2. Definitions

The following terms may be defined in a briefer sense later on. For ease of understanding for the reader, terms needing definitions may have an abridged form of the definition included with it in the text. I will reference the location of the definition with the initial usage of the word, however subsequent usages will not be referenced. As many philosophers know, words may mean different things in philosophy compared to every day usage. Thus, these definitions may not be the colloquial definition of the word but rather the way the word is used in this paper.

2.1 Authority

Authority is present if and only if some factors are present that make it morally or socially appropriate when entity A tells entity B what to do, and entity B is obligated in some way to obey the entity with or without being coerced. (Problem of Political Authority, 5) As will be discussed later, there are different types of authority figures.

2.2 Freedom

Freedom is the privilege for one to do or have something without restriction. This does not mean that a person is morally obligated to do or have said thing. For example, religious freedom. People don't have to be religious, but they are able to be religious and practice what they wish without restriction.

2.3 Obligation

A person is obligated to an authority for different reasons. It can be based in common sense, fear, or coercion, which will all be discussed later. In terms of political obligation one must ask “why does one entity obey the order of another?”

2.4 Prima Facie

If something is *prima facie* x, then something is x under normal circumstances. So if something is *prima facie* wrong, that means that it is wrong under normal circumstances. By qualifying a term with *prima facie* the possibility is opened up for other factors to come into play. While saying something is right means that it is right in all and any circumstances, saying that something is *prima facie* right means that there are some circumstances in which it could be wrong. This allows for some wiggle room instead of making generalized statements.

2.5 Right

A right is the obligation to allow a person to do or have something. This means it cannot be taken away from someone or allowed at one point and denied at another. One example is the right to life. We are obligated to allow this right for all people. It is wrong to take this right from someone by killing them.

2.6 State

For this paper I will be using the terms state and government in a similar context. Aristotle defines a state as a sum of its parts—parts being citizens. The state is not being used in a way comparable to the state of New York. New York is more like a province. A

state is more like the country of the United States or the Republic of China. The state can be small like a city-state or larger like a nation-state. Regardless of size, it typically has defined boundaries recognized by other states. The state is typically seen as being sovereign over all those within these boundaries. This is traditionally how the state is defined, but this is a view I will be challenging.

3. Moral Values and Principles

There are several moral values and principles that are held to higher esteem than others both on an individual level and a societal scope. Some of the most valued are those that deal with property and personal protections. While there are some principles on this list that may not be universal societal values, I'm focusing on American society. While moral values such as modesty and order are important and of superior value in the Middle East and North Korea respectively, they are not priorities in the States. For the purpose of this paper, moral principles will be formatted in the following way "X is wrong (or morally permissible or right)," with X being a condition that must be satisfied or a specific type of action. A moral value will be formatted as a single word "X." Moral principles and values have equal moral value—a value is no more important, valuable, or necessary than a principle. The wording is simply to preserve the integrity of what is being established. For example, where "truth" is a moral value, there are several properties that could stem from it and not all are necessarily desirable. One might assume that the value of truth necessitates the principle that "Not telling the truth is wrong." However this is flawed for two reasons 1) There are many actions that are morally right, but have no speaking, so do not include telling the truth; 2) There are instances where if truth were told the act would be wrong, such as in the case where the Gies couple lied in order to hide Anne Frank and seven others from Nazi death camps. To avoid these complications, a value such as honesty, should be used in place of the word truth in order to avoid the necessary universality of a fully grounded moral principle. If "awareness" is too broad of a value (ignoring the fact that it makes little sense) then it can be narrowed with the principle "Neglecting a child is wrong." If "Respecting elders is right" is too narrow of a principle,

then perhaps “respect” as a value would suffice. Moral principles will be used to narrow the scope of a value whereas moral values will be used to broaden the scope of a principle. Regardless of whether a principle or a value is used, the fact that they are of importance to society is what makes them valuable to this discussion.

3.1 Morals Regarding Property Rights

Moral values and principles regarding personal property are extremely important. The reason we have a successful capitalist society here in America is because we can own the possessions we work for. These assets form the basis for many laws regarding the protection of personal property. These laws often times reflect moral principles. For example, the punishment of theft mirrors the principle that “It is wrong to steal property from another person.”

Taking Someone Else’s Property

The moral principle that “It is wrong to steal property from another person” does not only apply to objects like cars or soccer balls. Nonphysical property can also apply. Intellectual property such as an idea or invention is also something that it is wrong to steal. The principle also applies to money. This could be physical cash, CD’s, stocks, bonds, or any other type of funds. One’s land and home are also assets included in the scope of this principle. Clearly this allows for trade between parties who are willing and able. However, a person should not be coerced into any type of trade or movement of property. Coercing someone to give you a better deal or to provide a good or service for free is, in essence, theft. We will discuss coercion in more depth later on.

Protecting One's Own Property

Another moral principle regarding personal property is that “It is morally permissible to protect one’s own property.” Many laws reflect this, such as the second amendment, or the right to bear arms. Having a form of protection for one’s property is essential. Other laws, such as the law that one can shoot a person who trespasses onto ones private property, allude to this moral concept. Clearly shooting someone out of the blue is wrong, but if you shoot someone to protect your property you are within moral boundaries.

3.2 Morals Regarding Human Rights

There are a variety of moral norms that apply to human rights as well. Human rights are the rights and freedoms that should be afforded to all people. Rights and freedoms can appear to overlap such as the freedom to live and the right to life. For the purpose of this paper, the term ‘freedom’ can be defined as the privilege for one to do or have something without interference. When I use the term ‘right’ I’m referring to the obligation owed to the right holder to allow one to do or have something. A right to life means that all people are obligated to not deny a person of life. A freedom to live is a right to have life.

Liberty

In regard to human rights, these can look like personal freedoms that all should have. Examples include freedom of speech, freedom from confinement, freedom to act for oneself without restriction, freedom to exist, freedom to live (or die), and freedom from servitude or forced labor. Other times these appear as rights such as the right to the

pursuit of happiness, the right to privacy, or even the right to do what one wishes with their body so long as it causes no harm to others. Through the process of denying a person these freedoms and rights, one is in violation of the moral value at the heart of American society: Liberty.

Value of Human Life

Liberty is not the only moral aspect of human rights. The value of human life is preserved in the principle “It is wrong to kill another human.” Now this principle is a *prima facie* preservation of rights. This means that in normal circumstances this principle does not violate any human rights (Right to Immigrate 2). However, there can be extenuating circumstances such as someone defending themselves or protecting their property, which make this action morally permissible. However, outside of a set of extenuating circumstances, it is wrong to take the life of a living human being.

Personal Privacy

The moral principle that it is *prima facie* wrong to violate personal privacy is another principle treasured by American society. The right to privacy is the right to not have one’s personal actions and artifacts made known. This includes actions on the internet, private conversations, text messages, who one is having relations with, and to have any actions or words done or said in private to remain private. While many Americans debate over which parts of life are specifically preserved under this right, all will agree that it exists to some extent. On one end of the spectrum there are those who say that privacy ought to be protected under all and any circumstances. More in the middle, there are some who agree with people like Edward Snowden in that all parts of

life ought to be private except for in cases of *reasonable* search and seizure in which a warrant is produced to delve into privacy when it is necessary for the safety of others. Others on the far end of the spectrum would say that all aspects of life ought to be visible to the government without a warrant.

Coercion

Another principle regarding personal freedoms and human rights is the principle that “Coercion is wrong.” Coercion is duress or the use of physical force or threat to make someone do something. As discussed earlier, this can be a violation of personal property. One can coerce a person to give them something by threatening to hurt them. When thugs on the street do this, it is called mugging. When coercion is carried out by the mob it is called racketeering. Coercion involves human rights as well. A person can be coerced into not acting or not doing something. This can take the form of blackmail, such as when a person is told they must do something if they don’t want private information shared. Requesting a ransom for a hostage is also a form of coercion because those requesting the ransom are threatening to hurt a person in exchange for money. Keep in mind that coercion is only a *prima facie* violation of rights. There are cases that will be discussed in depth in part 7 where coercion is not a violation of rights.

4 Government Actions

There are various actions carried out by government that lead to the blatant violation of the rights of mankind. As this is a finite paper and there is no way to conclusively make a finite list, not all rights violating actions be listed here, but I hope to highlight the ones that affect a significant number of people. These actions are defended by government and many political scientists, whose arguments I will present. However, I'm going to present counterarguments as to why the actions of the government are wrong and in violation of rights.

4.1 Imprisonment

One of the moral values highlighted in section 3.2 was the value of liberty. Two aspects of liberty are the rights to freedom of action and freedom to go where one pleases. People are denied these rights when they are imprisoned. In the States we have an unbelievable number of prisons housing American citizens. The people in these institutions are not allowed to roam freely and are often times confined to a small cell for large portions of the day. These people may have TVs and magazines, yet they don't have the freedom to work where they wish, spend time with their families, or go to the park whenever they please. The people in incarceration are not afforded the freedoms of action or movement and this is an explicit violation of rights. Let's assume that to deny someone these rights is only *prima facie* wrong. Let's say, for the sake of argument, that there are circumstances, such as that the people in prisons are dangerous to others, that make the denial of these freedoms morally acceptable. I'm not stipulating that it is ever

okay to deny these rights to people, however many would say that these are acceptable circumstances for denying people their rights. Even if this were the case, not all people denied the freedoms of movement and action are dangerous. Some are petty drug dealers or users with no violent history, others are African American men who have been victims of a system designed to keep them locked up. Not all people imprisoned in the United States are a danger to others, but all are denied two basic freedoms.

Additionally, those who try to escape incarceration or try to run from police in fear of incarceration are faced with the threat of a longer sentence or even violence. Because people are faced with a threat in order to force them into staying locked up, this is considered coercion. The idea of coercing inmates to stay incarcerated perpetuates the idea that government violates basic moral principles. By coercing people, the principle that coercion is wrong is blatantly violated.

While government calls imprisonment a necessary faction of society, most normal people would call it kidnapping (Problem of Political Authority, Part 1). Imagine you are walking with your lover on a path at a park when a stranger grabs your partner and threatens violence if you both refuse to cooperate. Your partner is then taken and locked up in a cage and denied freedoms of movement or action. The police and other agencies regarding public safety would consider this action to be a case of kidnapping.

4.2 Taxation

The first moral principle listed in section 3.1 states that taking property from other people is wrong. This principle is violated by government when people are taxed. Weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, people across the country get a paycheck with a percentage of their

earnings taken. Those who have funds removed from their paycheck don't have to give permission for their money to be taken, the money is just removed by government.

Normally when money is taken from those who earned it, the action is called theft. Money is taken from people through their taxes, and those who refuse are coerced into cooperation. They are threatened with imprisonment and sometimes even violence if they fail to pay their taxes. Now imagine you are being mugged. You are told that you will be either shot or kidnapped if you don't give the perpetrators the money they ask for. Most law enforcement officials would call this theft and coercion (Problem of Political Authority, 5). However, for some reason, the government calls it taxation.

Some would argue that taxation is not theft, but rather asking for payment upfront for goods and services provided to taxpayers by the government. This theory doesn't make sense as most people do not utilize all the services that their tax money pays for. I concede that, yes, there are resources paid with tax dollars such as the DMV and public education or transportation that the majority of those within the States do use. However, we cannot ignore the vast number of resources that would not exist without taxpayer money such as Medicaid, classified NSA and FBI documents, food stamps, bailout of banks and corporations, and veteran benefits that many pay for but do not get to access or benefit from. This counterexample shows that taxes are not exclusively a method of paying up front for services that later will be used.

4.3 Law Enforcement

Law enforcement is where the government appoints a group of people to protect the people living in their jurisdiction. These people have been given permission by a

government entity to detain or kidnap others for the violation of both rights-protecting and arbitrary laws. I say arbitrary because these are laws that do not protect rights. Laws that prevent people from hurting other people, stealing from others, or encroaching on other freedoms are “rights-protecting” laws. Laws that seemingly have no purpose aside for government involvement in daily life such as drug laws, a ban on prostitution, or government involvement in industry, can be characterized as arbitrary laws. While in most circumstances people being kidnapped and held against their will is wrong, in the cases of ‘rights protecting’ laws one could argue that this is morally permissible. However, no rational argument can be made for the detainment of those in violation of arbitrary laws. This is significant because, as discussed in the imprisonment section above, detainment is a violation of human rights. Even if one who violates arbitrary laws is not faced with imprisonment, being faced with a fine—what is the equivalent of loss of property—is a method of deterrence. Government uses the term ‘deterrence’ because it does not sound as negative as the situational synonym ‘coercion’. Threatening anyone with a fine is a form of coercion. Preventing action through threat is, by definition, coercion. If one chooses to avoid the fine set into place, one then has to fear the threat of imprisonment. All the threats that go into the enforcement of arbitrary laws are blatant violations of the moral principle that coercion is wrong. However, coercion in these cases are considered to be ‘deterrence’ or ‘law enforcement’ when carried out by entities of government

4.4 Military Actions

War itself is an action with moral implications that have been debated for centuries. For this paper, I’m not going to go into detail about my stance on warfare. However, I will

state simply that any government in the world participating in the act of war violates the moral principle that it is *prima facie* wrong to kill. Whether war is a condition that makes killing a morally justifiable act is up to ethical philosophers. While I'm not making a statement on the moral implications of injuring and murdering soldiers of another country with whom we are at war.

Imagine you have neighbors with whom you have some kind of problem. A verbal altercation takes place, and both parties agree that this altercation must become physical. At earlier times in American history one could protect their position with a duel. However, today this is considered a murderous practice. Why, then, is this practice considered acceptable when the two entities carrying out the murderous actions are governmental?

War is a borderline case of moral violation. While some say that war is a condition in which murder is permissible, others say that it is no more than killing. While I won't make a stand for one side or another, it is necessary to mention that one could consider warfare to be a violation of human rights. Especially considering that, as with imprisonment, taxation, and law enforcement, the actions would be considered wrong by all accounts if carried out by non-governmental entities.

5 Justification

As discussed in section 4, some excuse the morally questionable actions of government with the justification that government has the authority to participate in such actions. This is the idea of political authority. While laymen may not be allowed to kidnap, steal from, coerce, and murder their neighbors, co-workers, and associates, many are perfectly willing to accept the idea that government is allowed to commit these actions under the guise of political authority.

Political authority is the idea that people obey rules and regulations set forth by government because they believe that government inherently has the power to set forth these rules and enforce them through coercion. But why? What is it about government that makes it morally acceptable to participate in actions that one would typically consider to be wrong if carried out by any other entity? Many would argue that there is a line to be crossed—a line where a government's actions go from legitimate to illegitimate—in which a government has gone too far. Many Americans would say that their government participates in appropriate and legitimate taxation, imprisonment, and law enforcement while the government of North Korea participates in inappropriate and illegitimate theft, kidnapping, and coercion. One could argue that this is because a dictatorship has no consent associated with it. But is consent what makes the government legitimate? If so, how is consent acquired?

There are numerous philosophers who have attempted to tackle these questions. In the following sections I will attempt to give a summary of a few of the political theories that have been used in an attempt to affirm and explain the existence of political authority

and our affirmation of it thus justifying the morally questionable actions carried out by government.

5.1 Social Contract- Hobbes

There is a pervasiveness of social contract theory present in United States political theory (Problem of Political Authority, 26). Most American high schoolers in an AP government class will learn something or other about social contract theory being the basis for political authority. The version of the social contract that I will be examining is the one set forth by Thomas Hobbes in his *Leviathan*.

Hobbes explains that without government man exists in a state of nature. While this sounds peaceful, it is actually quite the opposite. Hobbes describes a world in which man attacks his neighbor for personal gain. There is no enforcement of agreements, thus no reason to keep these promises meaning there is no hope for business or industry. In this state, everyone lives in constant fear not only of loss of property but also of loss of life and limb. In the state of nature, one's life is necessarily "nasty, brutish, and short" (Leviathan XIII).

Needless to say, the state of nature is not the ideal. Hobbes asserts that the erection of a commonwealth is the necessary way to avoid the state of nature. This can be done by transferring some of one's rights to a sovereign. As one gives up her rights to a sovereign, she is promised safety of life and property (Leviathan XIV). No longer is life nasty, brutish, or short.

This is the basis for contract theory. One exchanges some rights for safety. This is a contractual exchange involving an agreement. This means that parties consent to this

social contract in order to avoid the state of nature. The parties in the contract are those within the commonwealth—the contract is not between governed and sovereign. The contract is, however, between governed and governed. Keep in mind that it is the governed who are promising to refrain from harming one another for their own gain in order to preserve peace and a climate very different from the state of nature.

While this is just a basic outline of the theory, I want to point out four things that Hobbes makes clear. First, people give up their rights voluntarily (Leviathan XIV). Second, the governed must perform or hold up their end of a contract (Leviathan XV). Third, the sovereign ought to be allowed to curb free speech (Leviathan XVIII). Finally, monarchy is the superior form of commonwealth (Leviathan XIX). I think that these five points are extremely telling. The first and second points show that this is a legitimate contract situation. The third point sets a limit on the contractual agreement. The last two points show that this is clearly not an outline for American government as Americans value both free speech and democracy.

Not only is this text a proponent of censorship and monarchy opposed to free speech and democracy, but there are practical complications as well. If this arrangement between subjects is truly contractual as points one and two above explicitly state, then when does this agreement take place? I don't remember signing a contract, freely giving my right to harm my neighbor. Actually, aside from those who apply for visas or citizenship, very few in the United States sign any form of contract agreeing to give rights to the sovereign and to maintain peace with other members of the commonwealth. So how is an invisible and unsigned contract valid?

Some would argue that I gave verbal consent daily as a child in elementary school while saying the “Pledge of Allegiance.” Every morning I would arrive at school, place my right hand over my heart, stare at the flag, and recite a promise that I didn’t understand. It could be argued that the repeated pledging of my allegiance, however there are three factors to consider. First of all, it was a form of coerced acceptance. Everyone had to say the pledge if they didn’t want to get in trouble and miss recess. Additionally, there was a test one day in first grade ensuring that we knew the words to the pledge. If I did not pledge my allegiance I would have received a poor grade. Both of these instances are examples of the coerciveness of the saying of the pledge in grade school. The second problem with using the pledge of allegiance as a form of consent is that children often times don’t know what they are saying. I remember once asking my kindergarten teacher what “toothery public for witches tans” meant, not knowing that the phrase was actually “to the republic for which it stands.” Like many other children, I was also confused with why I was pledging allegiance to one nation “invisible” with liberty and justice for all. While I said the words, or what I thought the words were, I didn’t know what they meant. I was reciting a meaningless passage, much like after confession when I would have to recite a few ‘Hail Mary’s and a couple of ‘Our Father’s. How can what a child says count as consent when they don’t know the meaning of what they are saying? The third problem with accepting school children reciting the pledge of allegiance as consent is the fact that these children are minors. Minors cannot enter into contracts and are not old enough or educated enough to make decision like that. These three factors make it clear that children reciting any form of pledge to a state in school is not consent to the state.

5.2 Tacit Consent

Locke answers the question of consenting to a social contract by introducing the notion of tacit consent. Tacit consent is consent without a signature or verbal agreement. For example, at weddings the officiator asks those gathered if anyone objects to the marriage and silence is considered to be consent, or lack of opposition. Keep in mind, Locke sees the contract as one between governed and sovereign, not between governed and governed.

It could be argued that while we don't physically sign a contract, we agree to it by living in or benefiting from the state (Second Treatise 14). This can be problematic because not all who live in the state choose to be there. By state I don't mean a small territory within a larger one such as the state of California (see section 2 for definition of state). While some proponents of tacit consent theory say that people can just move, many do not have the means to do so as David Hume points out (Original Contract 24). Others may not care for the state but are bound to it by property ownership or familial ties.

Consent, tacit or otherwise, being given by residence of a person in a state is unreasonable because of the price of relocating as stated above. Another reason this is unreasonable is because this would imply that one gives consent at birth when they are born in a state. This is unreasonable given that newborn infants cannot give consent. Some would argue that the person is bound by the consent of their ancestors. This is to say that when a person's ancestors consented to the state by entering it they are not only consenting for themselves but for all future generations of offspring. For sake of argument, if this were the case only a select few of those currently in the United States

are here by consent. There are many whose ancestors were born in this land natively and were present before the state. These people never gave their consent to the state, yet were born within its boundaries. There are others whose ancestors were brought here on slave ships from coercion. My ancestors and the ancestors of many others came to the Americas to escape persecution. Both of these groups came here through coercion. Slaves had no choice in where they were being taken, they were coerced into slavery and moving to the new world as the only other option was death. This fear was present, too, in immigrants who came here to avoid being killed for their race or religion, however unlike slaves, those escaping persecution often times did have a choice in where to end up. Thus, one could argue that by selecting America opposed to, say, Australia, Canada, or Dubai, as consent. However, it is impossible to argue that slaves coerced into coming to the state gave their consent, unless the state is satisfied with receiving consent through coercion—which wouldn't be a surprise given what we learned about government and coercion in section 4. Say, for argument sake, that we count the coerced move of slaves as consent to the state, and that consent could be passed on from one's ancestors, then the offspring of those whose ancestors were slaves or native to the land are not bound by consent.

But what about the groups whose ancestors did give their consent to the state by willingly migrating here for better opportunities or to be near family? Are their offspring for an infinite number of future generations bound by their consent? Political philosopher John Rawls argues that people cannot be bound by the compacted consent of their ancestors (Lectures 170). Each individual, once of age, must consent for themselves. One's ancestors consenting does not bind them to anything. The consent given by an

ancestor binds only that ancestor. Thus, the location of a person's birth does not bind them to a state.

Or does it? A colleague reviewing this paper asked me the question—what if people while on a different plane can choose where they are born? This, surely, would be considered consent. I thought she was joking, but upon presenting her yet another draft without an answer to this question, she demanded an answer. While this may sound like absurd reasoning, it has philosophical merit. I can see where she is going with this. Imagine that all people, in their innate spiritual knowledge that they decide before birth with the intelligence and competence of an adult where we are going to be born. This sounds like consent doesn't it? For this analysis I'm going to assume, for sake of argument that people do consciously 'exist' before being born. Say we are spiritual beings whose essence exists on a separate plane where we can select our birth circumstances such as location, time, or parents. If, at that time on the separate plane, we decide to be born in a state, wouldn't this be the equivalent to giving consent by moving to a country in life? I would like to say no because there is the problem that consent must be given in the plane in which consent is needed. This is to say that, for the sake of argument, if other spiritual planes are in existence, a person is not bound to the consent made in a separate plane. In death contractual agreements are ended. If one buys a house they don't take the house with them to the next plane, instead it is transferred to someone on the living plane. But houses are physical, one might argue. In marriage, a relatively spiritual agreement, the contract is voided with death. For example, the phrase "Until death do us part," is a reflection of the fact that the contract ends in death. Once one partner is dead it's not required that the other seek divorce before remarrying. The

contract cannot continue from this spiritual plane to the next. Thus, any contracts made in a prior spiritual plane cannot be upheld in this one or any future planes. This means that if an unborn spiritual being gives consent to a state in a different spiritual plane, the consent is no longer valid once they are born and pass from the old plane to the new. Thus, consent is not given with birth. If we choose to not accept the outlandish idea that people choose where they are born it is clear that no consent is in play on the part of the person being born. If people could choose where they are born, I would have chosen to be born in an anarchist community. I'm glad that my birth in the United States is no way a form of giving any form of consent to the state.

Locke says that, "Every man, that hath any possession, or enjoyment, of any part of the dominions of any government, doth thereby give his tacit consent, and is as far forth obliged to obedience to the laws of that government, during such enjoyment, as anyone under it" (Second Treatise 2.119) This means that anyone who benefits from the state is giving consent. This argument is flawed. Some would argue that by taking public transportation, using the DMV, or walking on public sidewalks would be sufficient for tacit consent. This is clearly not the case for all of these examples.

If someone uses public transportation or even food stamps, that person is not consenting to the state by using these services. First of all, the person is consenting to ease of access, for transportation, and life, for food stamps. Second, the person has to be aware that using these services counts as consent. According to Hume, consent is something that must be willed (Of the Original Contract). The intent of using a service ought to be consent, otherwise, the action does not count as tacit consent.

What about usage of the DMV or public sidewalks? These actions, too, are not forms of tacit consent. This is because the government has a monopoly on these resources. While public, there is no private alternative to the DMV or sidewalks. These are both necessary features of life in the United States, and cannot be avoided. Saying that someone using a necessary public service is offering tacit consent is absurd. This is like saying that by drinking water one is giving tacit consent to a belief in a higher power because that person is using one of Her necessary creations. There is no private option for these necessary services. The government has a monopoly on these services. Not using these services could result in a person being disadvantaged. This looks like a form of coercion—a person will face the threat of being unable to drive or denied the freedom of movement if they don't want to give their tacit consent by using these services. Entrance into a contract should not be considered valid if done so under coercion. However as we saw in section 4, government is not above coercion. Additionally, as with the public transportation example, at the very least one must be informed that they are entering a contract by use of these services. Consent is not willed by using the DMV or sidewalks. Therefore this condition is not met, thus rendering tacit consent unrealistic through use of government offices and services.

5.3 Consent Theories Are Question Begging

Some philosophers argue that the idea of consent, tacit or otherwise, begs the question of political authority. Christopher Wellman argues in “Toward a Liberal Theory of Political Obligation” that if a state “doesn't have a claim to a territory prior to the consent of its constituents, then the state is not justified in the simple fashion that consent theorists advertise” nor do they have the right to “insist that citizens must play by the state's rules

or leave” (736). To put it simply, the state doesn’t have the authority to ask for consent, but consent theorists claim that consent provides authority. See how this is question begging?

I’d like to present an example modified from Lea Brillmayer’s Justifying International Acts. Imagine the wedding example from the beginning of section 5.2, except this time imagine that the wedding florist is the one asking if there are any objections. Failure of those present to respond or take the question seriously wouldn’t be taken as a lack of objection because the florist clearly doesn’t have the authority to be asking for objections in this matter. The florist has the authority to ask if anyone objects to lilies in the centerpieces, however she has no authority to ask for objections regarding marriage. A consent theorist would say that by not objecting to the florist in regards to the finalization of the marriage, those present give the florist authority, however the florist had no authority to ask for objections in the first place. One can only ask for objections to the marriage if they are in a position of authority. Thus, the consent to the florist does not give her authority if she didn’t have the authority to ask for objections in the first place. Let’s translate this example to government. If I give consent to government to tell people in a territory what they can or cannot do, but the government has no authority over the people in the territory, this does not make the government legitimate. I could consent to my dog, Bear, ruling over my apartment complex so that all humans and creatures must obey her every bark, however, Bear doesn’t have authority over anyone. Even though I consented to her ruling over the complex, I’m not obligated to her as she is an illegitimate authority. As you can see, the theories of explicit and tacit

consent are question begging—consenting to an entity without the authority to ask for consent does not make the entity an authority,

Clearly, even if one consents, the government does not have some innate authority. Any theory of tacit consent would require the government to have authority in the first place, thus begging the question. In fact, any theory of consent at all begs the question because we cannot assume that the state ever had the authority to propose a “social contract” of any sort. However, by teaching consent theories in schools across America, the youth of the state grow up with an acceptance of authority

6 Why Most Let Government Do As Government Wants

Why are people okay with the state having authority over them? People are aware of the scandals that take place in government, and many know that the current system of delegation or modes of election are corrupt or unjust. The simple fact that government is the entity carrying out unjust actions is not sufficient to satisfy conditions that make *prima facie* wrong actions morally permissible. There are three main reasons people believe this. First, some say that government has the best interest of all citizens in mind. A second reason is that government is some morally superior entity. The final reason is not one given by those who are satisfied with government, but is rather given by those who choose to avoid ignorance. The third reason is that people are brainwashed. The following sections consist of reasons people use to explain why they allow the state to wield unjustified power and assert an illusion of authority. Whether one likes the state or not, and whether one feels the state is justified in its authority and actions or not, many choose to remain inactive and allow the state to persist as it is. In the following sections I'll respond to the reasoning of those who are passive about their liberty.

6.1 In Our Best Interest

Adding to this claim is the claim that government has the best interest of the citizens in mind. While it may be in the best interest of a government to act in the best interest of the governed in order to avoid being overthrown, Hobbes claims that the sovereign may do as she pleases, whether it is in the best interest of the governed or not (Leviathan, XVIII). Some do say that the government has the best interest of those governed in mind, thus making government authority valid. However, in a state with a population of over 300 million, how can we expect government to have the best interest of everyone in mind?

Statistically it's impossible that the citizens as a whole have the same best interest. The party system in the United States is direct proof of this conflict of interest. The government typically addresses the needs of those with one political ideology at a time. Because it is impossible for 300 million people to have the same interest, it is impossible for the government to act in the best interest of 300 million people. Thus, government does not have authority on the basis that they keep the best interest of their citizens in mind.

6.2 Morally Superior

I've heard the argument before that government has authority on the grounds of moral superiority. Some argue that while the subjects are a morally questionable bunch of folks, those in government are morally superior. I smile as I entertain this idea because it's very obvious that those in office are in no way morally superior. There are politicians having affairs, senators taking bribes, and history tells us that those in congress were whiskey connoisseurs during prohibition. Monroe, Watergate, and Lewinsky are just a few instances in which those in power behaved in morally questionable ways. While I disagree with the idea that sexual preference and activity be regulated by government, having an extramarital affair without permission or approval from their spouse is typically considered a morally questionable activity.

If examples of politicians whose actions are morally inferior to that of those they govern are not persuasive enough, then perhaps a psychological experiment will be a sufficient method of persuasion. Philip Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment is a perfect example of the corruption of those in power. Zimbardo created an experimental prison in which 24 male college students volunteered to experience a two week study as

either guards or prisoners. The prisoners and guards were selected by the toss of a coin. The guards became cruel, harassing the inmates while drunk with power. They coerced the prisoners and got pleasure out of their role as aggressive and violent authority figures. Often times the guards would implement arbitrary rules that were only followed because of the perception of authority. Not all the guards were this way, some were tough but fair, others were the good guys, but the rest were abusive with their power. In fact “about a third of the guards were hostile, arbitrary and inventive” when it came to wielding their power and “enjoy[ed] the power they wielded” despite the fact that early psychological personality tests showed no signs of these behaviors (prisonexp.org). This shows that this power drunkenness was a direct result of the assumed authority associated with the role. Three prisoners initially reacted to this abuse of power with a rebellion, however after time prisoners became complacent “doing everything the guards wanted them to” (prisonexp.org). This experiment shows how when people are put into a position of power they are likely to abuse it.

People in government often have questionable morals. While not all are bad, it is fair to say that government is not morally superior to those governed. Especially considering the fact that those in power are predisposed to abuse the power they have in morally questionable ways. While there are some in government who are morally superior to most people, they are a minority and are not the standard. The argument that we should allow government to rule because of the moral superiority of those in government to those being governed is amusing, but unrealistic.

6.3 People Are Brainwashed

I believe that the main reason that people are accepting of the status of society and the pervasiveness of government is that people are brainwashed by perceived authority. I know this sounds like some kind of conspiracy theory like the conspiracy that there is an underground bunker or an Illuminati connection at Denver International Airport, but it's not. There are three examples that can be used to prove the idea that the governed are brainwashed into complacency.

6.3.1 Stanford Prison Experiment

The first example I will refer to regarding intelligent and informed people becoming brainwashed is the example of the Stanford Prison Experiment. As discussed in section 6.1, the experiment resulted in the guards becoming drunk with power and abusing that power. Those who were prisoners were educated and knew perfectly well that the guards were not *real* guards and that everyone was participating in an experiment. The prisoners knew that the guards had no genuine authority. However, these young men were afraid of the guards and did everything they were told to do. They were complacent with being bullied and bossed around. Even though they knew it was an experiment and that the guards had no real authority, these students were brainwashed into obedience.

Much like the students in this experiment, many people in the United States are aware, to some extent that government has no legitimate authority. Even though people are aware of a lack of authority, when they are put into a situation in which they are coerced—the guards used aggression, government uses law enforcement—they become complacent and do whatever they are told, such as handing over a large portion of their

paycheck in a national stickup scheme called taxation. The brainwashing of the students in the Stanford Prison Experiment parallels the brainwashing of the governed in regards to the authority of the state.

6.3.2 The Milgram Experiment

The Milgram experiment outlined in Milgram's Obedience to Authority shows the power of authority to generate a response from someone. Participants in the experiment were told that they would be participating in a study about the effects of punishment on learning. Participants would draw slips of paper to determine whether they would be the learner or the teacher. The teacher would provide pairs of words to the learner that they had to memorize. Each time the learner paired the wrong word, the teacher would have to administer a shock to the learner. The shock would begin at 15 volts, a "slight shock," and could increase gradually with each wrong answer to 450 volts, a shock with the descriptive label "XXX" with shocks ranging from "strong shock," "extreme intensity shock" and "Danger: Severe Shock" in between. The teacher was given a small shock before the testing to feel what the learner was experiencing. The learner would do terrible on the test and got almost every answer wrong, thus increasing the shock. The learner would cry out in pain, complain about chest pains, and then fall into silence. The teacher had to accept silence as a wrong answer and continue shocking. If at any point the teacher wished to stop, a man in a lab coat would say that "the experiment requires you to continue," or "it is necessary that you continue." Little did the teachers know, the learner was in on the experiment, the roles were predetermined before the start of the experiment. The learner was actually an actor faking pain. In fact, the only shock administered was the one given to the teacher as a sample shock before the testing of the learner began.

Despite the painful noises coming from the learner, the teachers who stopped the experiment were in the minority. 65% of the participants were willing to administer the maximum amount of volts (Milgram). Very few participants would stand up to the authority figure when told to press on with the experiment. Keep in mind that these were good, sane people, not sociopathic, sadistic, maniacs.

These participants violated their own personal moral codes and disregarded the pain of another in order to obey an authority figure. This is similar to the many American citizens that watch and do nothing as the state kidnaps and psychologically tortures thousands of other citizens. Those in disgust of the actions of the state still pay their taxes which fund those prisons, a roundabout method of administering the shock to the learner. Many people oblige to perceived authority for authority's sake. Many are aware that government has no genuine authority, however they choose to comply with commands much like those in the Milgram experiment. The brainwashing of individuals by the illusion of authority is one reason people are so passive and acceptant of the pervasiveness of government and the amount of power it wields without basis. Much like the Milgram Experiment, many are reluctant to stand up for what they believe in the face of authority.

6.3.3 Stockholm Syndrome

Some people may be passive about the government's abuse of power because they are brainwashed by their captor. This sounds extreme, but will make sense in the context of Stockholm Syndrome.

In 1973 four people were held hostage for six days at a bank on Stockholm's Norrmalmstorg square, according to BBC News Magazine. According to the BBC's Kathryn Westcott, when the stand-off was over, the captives appeared to be sympathetic to their captors. Many wondered how one could have a positive relationship with the person holding them hostage. To answer this question, psychiatrists Nils Bejerot and Dr. Frabj Ochberg respectively coined and defined the term 'Stockholm Syndrome.' Ochberg stated that the hostages "experience a type of infantilisation—where, like a child, they are unable to eat, speak, or go to the toilet without permission." Hostages being given food or other small privileges results in a "primitive gratitude for the gift of life," which they think they owe their captor for not killing them (Westcott). Sven Safstrom, one of the hostages, believed he owed his life to his captor. He states that he was thankful when his captor "told him he was planning to shoot him—to show the police understood he meant business—but added he would make sure he didn't kill him and would let him get drunk first." Bonding with a captor in this way is a survival strategy, a method of adapting to a stressful situation (Westcott).

I firmly believe that one reason that people in The States are passively acceptant, and sometimes even proud of the government that infringes on their freedoms and rights is that these people suffer from Stockholm Syndrome. The relationship between the governed and the state is analogous to the relationship between the hostages and their captor at the Stockholm bank. The government is the captor, restricting freedoms, but allowing certain privileges. One example from the Stockholm bank where the captor allowed privilege to a hostage is when hostage Elisabeth Oldgren was feeling claustrophobic so her captor allowed her to move around the bank floor with the

restriction of a rope around her neck (Westcott). This seems analogous to the United States government restricting movement outside of the borders of the state. While American citizens have to answer to customs and must have a passport to leave, the hostage had a rope around their neck.

I think that many Americans suffer from Stockholm Syndrome resulting in a spectrum of emotions from ambivalence to pride. Those who admire or relate to their captor or oppressor—the state—are using a survival method just as the hostages in the bank did. By having Stockholm Syndrome, citizens can survive more –positively instead of being conflicted and emotionally worn out from the abuse received from the state.

7 Valid Authority

The following sections will consist of examples in which the state's authority is legitimate. These examples are outlandish and absurd, but this is the point. Much as Judith Thompson used extreme and absurd examples as an easy method of argumentation to support a woman's right to determine what to do with her body, I hope to use these examples as accessible methods of argumentation to show that state authority is unjust and illegitimate. By arguing that these specific, outrageous, amusing examples are of legitimate authority then contrasting them with reality, I hope to show government does not have valid authority. The key factors that obligate one party to another and make authority legitimate in the examples are all missing in today's government.

Take our definition for authority as outlined early in this paper, but plug in government and governed:

Government authority is present if and only if some factors are present that make it morally and socially appropriate when government tells the governed what to do, and the governed is obligated in some way to obey the entity with or without being coerced.

This can be broken up into two definitions:

- 1) Presence of government authority exists if and only if there exists the presence of factors that make it morally and socially appropriate when government tells the governed what to do.
- 2) Presence of government authority exists if and only if there exists the presence of some factors that make it morally and socially appropriate when the

governed is obligated in some way to obey the government with or without being coerced.

Both must be true for government to be an authority. One is not an authority if it is inappropriate for them to tell another entity what to do (with or without coercion). One is also not an authority if it is inappropriate for entity B to be obligated in some way to obey them.

Part (2) of this definition is clearly fulfilled. The presence of the authority of government implies that there is the presence of some factors (ability to imprison someone) that make it morally and socially appropriate when the governed is obligated in some way to obey the government with or without being coerced, which is true—without the presence of imprisonment, the government wouldn't have authority. Additionally, saying that if there is the presence of some factors (ability to imprison someone) that make it morally and socially appropriate when the governed is obligated in some way to obey the government with or without being coerced, then the authority of government is present is true as well—if there was no authority of government, it would not be morally appropriate to imprison. While government fits the definition of authority described in part (2), I want to ask whether government has authority as prescribed by part (1).

Part (1) means that the presence of the factors that make it morally and socially appropriate for government to tell the governed what to do are *necessary* and *sufficient* for authority. The only difference in definitions (1) and (2) are the phrases “when the government tells the governed what to do” and “the governed is obligated in some way to obey the government with or without being coerced,” respectively. So what makes the factors that appropriately obligate the governed to obey government different from the

factors that make it appropriate for government to tell the governed what to do? A variety of combinations of factors are required to make it morally and socially appropriate for the government to tell the governed what to do (factors that will be elaborated in the following section), then government is clearly an authority. However the power of government is sufficient to obligate the governed to obedience through coercion.

Given that government has authority, then does government have the factors required that make it morally and socially appropriate to tell the governed what to do? Because these factors are necessary, authority requires them to be the case. If I can prove that government does not have these factors, then it will necessitate that government does not have authority, according to modus tollens.

In the following section, I will examine the factors that make it socially and morally appropriate for entities to tell people what to do—thus giving them authority. But without these factors, these entities would not have authority. Government would only be an authority if government has factors that make it morally and socially appropriate to tell the governed what to do. The following sections will look like modus tollens. I will begin each section with a description of the relationship of an obligated person to their valid authority and the combination of factors that give it that authority. Next, I will ask you to imagine you are in a world in which the government has those factors and is thus that figure of authority and you and everyone else in the country are in the position of the obligated. To be fair, the third section will be a comparison of the imagined scenario with the actual state of affairs with the current government. The final portion will contrast the valid form of authority with American government by showing how the factors required

for authority are not present. This should make it clear how the state is not analogous to the given relationship and is, through *modus tollens*, an illegitimate form of authority.

Keep in mind that I'm not saying that people argue that government has authority because they resemble these authority figures, I'm saying that these are genuine authority figures and that government is not. By showing specifically what features give this list of authority figures have their authority, I hope to show that government has none of these features.

I am not proposing that this list is exhaustive. However, I challenge anyone who can conceive of another authority that does not fit into one of the following relationships to establish the features that make both their example *and* government legitimate authorities. My point is that there are factors that are the basis to the legitimacy of authority in the following relationships while those factors are not present in government resulting in a lack of basis for the legitimacy of government authority.

The lack of legitimacy of authority makes government coercion unjust. Additionally, this lack of legitimacy amplifies the immorality of the unjust actions discussed in section 4. The illegitimacy of government authority makes government further unjust.

7.1 The Parent/Child Relationship

As every child growing up learns, parents have authority over them. This can be seen as important for many different reasons. Children are not of an age to consent, and thus must rely on their parents to look out for their best interest. Even before children have to concern themselves with the idea of consent, they have to be fed and nurtured. This

requires a degree of authority—determining the child’s diet, play schedules, education, etc. Liberties such as freedom of speech are not afforded to children in regards to their relationship with their parents—I know my parents wouldn’t let me swear. Because children are often vulnerable, parents have to control their freedom of movement, freedom of access to the internet, and other freedoms. Imagine a world where young children were afforded the right to guns—it sounds a little frightening to me. It appears to be a necessary part of society for children to be under the authority of their parents. The idea that a child is the responsibility of their parent and under the authority of that parent is pretty widely accepted. Explicitly, the combination of the factors that make parents a legitimate authority are: immaturity of the child, familial bond between the two, the responsibility that the parent has over the child and the fact that the parent cares for the best interest of the child (parents who neglect their child often lose them). Keep this in mind as we begin a thought experiment.

7.1.1 If Government Was the Parent of the Governed

Use your imagination with me and pretend that you are ten years old and we are in a land where government consists of your parents. Everyone in the state is your brother or sister about the same age as you. Your parents impose restrictions such as no swearing, no crossing the street without holding hands, and no use of guns. Your parents could be morally questionable people, but they do love you. Or they could be saints, teaching you how to live a moral life. Regardless of which type of parent you have decided to imagine, the parent is still responsible for you. They have the authority to give you a timeout or ground you when you exercise your freedom of speech and say that your brother is a lint licker. As children, you and your brothers and sisters have a small number of inalienable

rights. Other privileges are restricted by how your parents choose to raise you. They can take away a portion of your allowance if they want. Imagine you are in the car thirty miles from home with your brothers and sisters are you are picking on them. Your parents turn around and say, “If you don’t knock it off right now, you’re going to have to walk home.” They are making sure you do or don’t do something by threatening you with something, which is an acceptable method of parenting.

In this state, with your parents as government and all other citizens as their children, the authority of government is legitimate. This is because the government is responsible for and has a familial relationship with the governed. Government also looks out for the best interest of the governed who are all of an immature age of minority. Keep in mind that other parents do not have this relationship or responsibility, so this means you are not obligated to follow any other parents’ rules, and they have no authority over you.

7.1.2 How Government Resembles the Parent/Child Dynamic

Let’s compare the above scenario with the actual state. Government imposes restrictions. Parents saying no swearing is a form of censorship of certain types of speech, like how government restricts certain forms of speech such as fighting words. Your parents restrict your movement by not letting you cross the street much like the state restricts movement by requiring a passport to move (see section 6.3 for more ways the state restricts movement). Your parents not allowing gun use is much like how the state restricts gun use. The idea that your parents could be saintly or morally questionable is similar to the idea that we don’t know what kind of people, morally speaking, make up government. Time outs and groundings in the thought experiment are similar to imprisonment in the

real world. The taking of allowance is akin to taxation. Telling you that you must behave if you don't want to walk home, be grounded, etc. resembles the government's use of coercion to ensure obedience.

7.1.3 How American Government Is Not Like a Parent to the Governed

While the government and parents alike use tactics such as coercion, censorship, and imprisonment to govern or "raise" citizens, government is not analogous to a parent. The vital fact that children are able to govern themselves by the age of 18 is a key aspect of the parent child relationship. The state, however, does not allow you to govern yourself after reaching an age of majority. The immaturity of children is one key factor that gives parents their authority, and one way the state is different from a parent as mature people over the age of 18 cannot govern themselves.

The second most obvious way that the state is different from a parent is that the state does not go through birth to create you. Your chromosomes come from two donors: mom and dad. Not to mention, one of the donors forced you out of her body in a marathon of pain. You have a genetic link to your parental figures. In the case of those who are adopted, their parental units cannot chemically or biologically bond, yet they still have a parental connection because they psychologically bond. While government is an entity, there is not an individual to bond with. In a bureaucracy, there is not one person you can identify as the parental figure. Congress is made up of multiple individuals, as is the courts and those who carry out the laws. There is no person to identify as the parental figure, only a large mass of people who make up the entity called government. Even if we were to say that the entity of government was the individual the governed were to identify as their parent, how do we relate to it? We cannot talk to an arbitrary entity, we

cannot ask it questions or bond with it. Even if government as a whole were supposed to be the parental figure, a personal relationship of any sort is impossible because government is not the proper type of entity for these relations. This familial bond is one factor that makes a parent a valid authority. There is no bond like this between state and governed, which is another strike against the legitimacy of the state.

The responsibility of a parent and their child is a key aspect of the relationship. Parents take care of their children by feeding them, loving them, teaching them and tending to their basic needs. While one could argue that government feeds some with welfare and food stamps, and teaches through public education, this is not done out of love, and is not done for all people. Not everyone gets food stamps or welfare. There are various other needs uncared for. The state doesn't hold you when you cry after getting dumped, explain the birds and the bees, or push you on the swings at the park. Additionally, the state is not responsible for your actions, nor are they responsible for your life. The responsibility of a parent to their child is not present between the government and the governed, which is a key factor of parent/child relationships and the authority of a parent.

Finally, government does not have the best interest of the governed in mind as discussed in 6.1. Policies that disadvantage, imprison, or steal from people are clearly not looking out for their best interest. Some might argue that the government has to decide between the lesser of evils. While this may be the case, this still requires generalization. Someone is going to be disadvantaged from some policy so long as it results in loss of money or freedoms. Putting a non-violent drug dealer away for life is *not* in the dealer's best interest. Keep in mind, also, that government is made up of many self-interested

people who want to look out for themselves and the corporations that pay them on top of their paycheck. This often times leads government to policies that do not look out for the best interest of the governed. This is the final factor that distinguishes parental authority from the state in this example. Thus, government has been left without any of the factors that lead to the authority of parents.

Those who argue that government has authority because it is like the parent of the governed fail to account for the impossibility of such a relationship with such an entity. Parents allow a child to govern themselves after the age of majority, are bonded to their child either psychologically, chemically, biologically, and thus familialy, look out for the child's best interest and are responsible for their child. None of these are true of government, thus showing how government authority is not like parental authority. Parental authority is clearly a valid form of authority, but one cannot make the argument or excuse that because government is like a parent to the governed that it has authority.

Because most do not argue that government is like a parent, I just want to point out again the reasons for parental authority. The factors where people can govern themselves at an age of maturity, the parent is responsible for the child, the familial ties between the two, and the fact that parents protect their child's best interest give parents their authority. As has been shown, government does not have this combination of factors and thus cannot pose a legitimate authority in the way parents do.

7.2 The Employer/Employee Relationship

Most employees know that their boss has authority over them. If the employee does not respect that authority, they cannot expect to receive a paycheck that will in turn put food on the table. Cartoons like Dilbert and movies like Office Space highlight the

relationship the employee has with their superior, often times poking fun at the arbitrary regulations put in place by the authority figure. Aside from being a laughing matter, the authority of the employer over the employees is necessary in some ways. Employees sign a contract with their employer, saying that they will obey the authority of the employer. This obedience is a requirement for the employee to receive a paycheck. The employee must respect the authority of the employer because they are typically experts in the company's field (we will explore this concept more in section 7.5). If the employer didn't have authority, very little would get done as employees are not likely to respect the employer's time without guidelines or rules. The authority an employer has over employees disappears once the employees go home or terminate their contract. Authority over liberties such as freedom of dress are necessary to improve relationships with the customers and with the public. Keep in mind that the company is liable and thus responsible for the employee, so their authority ensures there will be no unnecessary lawsuits. The important thing to note about the authority that a boss has over his employees is that this is a contract based relationship. The employee is offering to abide by the authority of the boss in exchange for a sum of money, health and life insurance, vacation opportunities, or a combination of all of these. Imagine a world in which employers had no authority over their employees—nothing would be accomplished. It is generally accepted that the contractual obligation between an employee and their employer as well as the fact that the company is responsible for the employee and employee answerable to company, but only while on contract or during business hours, are the factors that give an employer authority over employees.

7.2.1 If Government Was the Employer of the Governed

Given the fact that this obligation exists, take a moment and imagine yourself in your best business suit—unless it's Friday, then you can go casual. You are in a world where the government is your employer and all the citizens of the United States are fellow employees. To put a face to the employer, picture your boss as the CEO of the company—she owns it and manages it—thus she is your employer. Your boss can impose restrictions such as a dress code, whether or not you can smoke in the building, how long your lunch break can be, and can even reprimand you for swearing. Some people may love the boss, others may hate her. All that matters is that they are a figure of authority—even if you are picturing a very laid back boss who makes dirty jokes at the water cooler, she owns the company so she is probably more invested in *it* than *you*. The boss has the authority to fire you or not pay you if you don't show up for work. However, because you have a contract between you and the company, they cannot randomly decide to stop paying you. This also means that if you don't perform well or show up they can fire you. If you have a cool boss, aside from having to show up, do the work, and be a relatively decent person, you probably feel like your rights have not been imposed on in any way. If you have a mean boss, you probably hate the dress code, the extra hours she makes you work—if you're on salary this really gets you going because there's no overtime—and the fact that the receptionist keeps reminding you to watch your language. Keep in mind that all of this is the case only because of the contract both parties have signed.

It's no fun having to sit at a desk all day, but at least you get to go home at 5:00, and there's the paycheck. When you get home, you are free to do as you wish and are no longer restricted in any ways you were at the office, which is a welcomed change of pace.

Because you are no longer responsible for the work you do for your company/country, you are free to do as you wish when off the clock.

If you were to do something, during business hours, that violated some law, the company may be responsible for you. The state/employer may have to pay for a lawsuit if you drive over someone while doing a delivery for them. This is one reason they have the rules they have. However, because you don't have to follow the rules while at home, they don't have to worry about being responsible for you driving over someone while off the clock.

In this state, in which government is your employer and all other citizens are employees who are both parties in an employment contract, the authority of government is legitimate. This is because of the following factors: an employment contract exists, the authority disappears when you leave the office, and the state is responsible for you while you are on the clock. A person not employed by the government is not obligated to follow the code of conduct of the "corporation" of government, and the government has no authority over them as there is no contract between the two—a factor of authority.

7.2.2 How Government Resembles the Employee/Employer Dynamic

Let's compare the above scenario with the actual state. Government imposes restrictions in this scenario as well. The employer restricting what you can say, such as swearing or saying certain things to customers, as a part of the 'code of conduct' portion of your contract, is censorship of speech, just like how government restricts certain forms of speech such as fighting words. Your employer restricts your movement by making you stay at work for eight hours with a 30 minute lunch break in between (see section 6.3 for

more ways the state restricts movement). Telling you that you must show up for work, perform well, and adhere to a code of conduct in order to maintain employment and receive pay resembles the government's use of coercion to ensure obedience.

Additionally, the state does employ some people. It is not an employer of all, but the government is one of the biggest employers in the country. The state also provides health insurance through Obamacare like the fictional employer/state might do for its employees. Welfare, disability, and social security are forms of a "paycheck" from the state that some people also receive.

7.2.3 How American Government Is Not Like an Employer to the Governed

While the government and employers alike use tactics such as coercion, and restriction of movement and speech, to govern or "employ" citizens, government is not analogous to an employer. Major factors in the differences between state and employer is that the modern state has constant control of your actions, while an employer can only have authority if you sign a contract, and during business hours. Keep in mind also that the government is not responsible for you while your employer is.

If the government only had authority from 9-5 this would be a somewhat analogous scenario. However no matter where you are or what time of day, you still have to obey government laws and requirements. However, the time period in which employees must obey their employer and an employer is responsible for their employee is determined in a contract signed by both parties.

This is the next problem with the employer model of government: the contract. As was discussed extensively in 5.1, some people think that the government, like an employer, has proposed a contract which you have accepted. Opposed to working for 8 hours in exchange for a paycheck, government asks for obedience and tax money in exchange for public services and freedom. However, this is not analogous as discussed in section 5.3. Even if the contract between governed and government did exist, it wouldn't be valid. The employer has the authority to propose a contract of employment, the government does not—or at least did not initially—have the authority to propose a contract to restrict daily life. This is the most vital flaw in the idea that government, like an employer, has a contract over those they impose their authority on.

Finally, as discussed in 7.1, the government is never responsible for the governed. While the employer is only responsible during business hours, this is still more responsibility than the government has. If you kill someone, that's on you, the government is not liable for your actions.

Nobody really argues that government resembles an employer. The important portion of this example is that employers have authority because of a valid contract. Employers have the right to propose such a contract because they own a business and can afford to pay their employees. Government, can try to claim authority on the basis of the present infrastructure and services provided, however this is based on a contract proposed over 200 years ago at a time American government had no right to propose. Even if you do not accept the question begging argument presented in section 5.3, it is clear that employers have a physical contract with their employee that is signed by both parties.

The contract between governed and government is unsigned, and has never officially been proposed (see section 5.2).

The authority of an employer is clearly a legitimate form of authority because of a contractual agreement of authority, the responsibility a company has to employee action, and limited hours for the authority and responsibility because of this agreement.

Government cannot claim to have such an agreement due to lack of contract, responsibility, or limited hours with the governed making their authority invalid.

7.3 The Relationship of a Violent Mentally Ill Person and The Mental Hospital

The following may appear to be an odd example but it is worth discussing. People who are mentally ill often have caregivers or are locked up in mental wards in order to maintain their safety. As I know from personal experience, it is a humiliating experience. Very few liberties are afforded to mentally ill people. They are required to take medications and are often reprimanded if they refuse. There are specific visiting hours and outside from those the person does not have the liberty to meet freely with friends or family members. Often times the hospital won't even let patients have a smoke. If patients earn the privilege, perhaps they get to take a quick walk outside under supervision of a nurse. Patients also can't dress how they want, usually their shoe laces and belts are removed. Cell phones and laptops and any other methods of outside communication, aside from maybe a landline, are taken away. This example is different from a place like a drug rehabilitation center because patients at a rehab are not under a legal hold. While it's not recommended to do so, the people at rehab centers don't have to stay the full 30 or 90 days, some can have phones and laptops, and often do not have to adhere to a dress code. Those in the mental hospital typically have a lawful hold placed

on them which makes the hospital their guardian. Hospitals say the restrictions in place are in the patient's best interest or for their safety. The main reason someone would have one of these holds placed over them is to reduce the likelihood of them hurting themselves or others. Because one has the right to life, true liberty means that one has the right to take their own life. However, injuring someone else out of mental illness is wrong. For this example, we will only focus on those with mental holds placed on them for homicidal reasons as placing a hold on one who is suicidal is a violation of liberty and thus illegitimate authority. The authority over these patients is vital to preserve the life and health of others. It appears to be a valuable part of society for violent or homicidal patients be under the authority of a mental hospital. This protects others and addresses the mental issues at place opposed to imprisoning a person for having a disease that they cannot control.

As with the employer example, there is a time limit for how long one is under the hospital authority. Additionally, they are only under the authority while on hospital grounds. The final, but most important, factor is that this authority only exists because of a patient's violent tendencies, we are not discussing non-violent mental patients with various mental illnesses who may or may not be a danger to themselves, only patients who are a danger to society or others.

7.3.1 If Government Were a Mental Hospital for the Governed Who Are All Mentally Ill and Homicidal

This one may be a little harder to picture than the last two. Imagine that you have a mental illness, a daily struggle. You and all other citizens are relatively homicidal as a result of the chemical imbalance in your brain. Because you are a threat to others, and it

is wrong to punish a person for having an illness that they cannot control, you are in a mental hospital. This hospital is the government. Nobody has shoelaces and everyone is wearing a hospital gown. If you want to experience fresh air and take a walk around the outside of the hospital, you must earn the privilege by attending group therapy sessions. Your days are filled with arts and crafts, positive movies, and group therapy meetings. Occasionally you get to speak with a psychiatrist and you are prescribed a medication. If you do not take this medication you are reprimanded, and you are expected to take it if you ever want to get better and leave the hospital. You are given one phone call each day and you can't talk about other patients. Your weekly visitors can only stay for an hour and there is no conjugal visitation.

Worst of all, despite the fact that you do not have any choice in regards to your presence at the hospital, you have to pay a hefty bill for your stay. In the hospital you have very few rights. With the hospital as your guardian, you feel as though you have a childlike status. You are not an adult in the traditional way, you are limited in rights like a child. In this imaginary state, with government being a mental hospital and the governed being homicidal mentally ill patients we can argue that the authority over patients is legitimate. This is because their authority only exists during a specific time and place--you are at the hospital and on a time limited hold—and you are a violent mental patient.

7.3.2 How the Mental Hospital Example is Similar to Government

Let's compare the above scenario with the actual state. Government imposes restrictions similar to those experienced at the mental hospital. Restriction of communication by denial of access to cell phones and laptops and being unable to talk about other patients is

a form of censorship of certain types of speech, similar to some of the restrictions imposed by government. The restriction of movement and minimal access to the outdoors is similar to the restriction of movement the government imposes. Being forced to ingest a medication—a control over what types of substances can be put into one’s body—reflects government’s rules and regulations about what substances one may or may not ingest. While government says one cannot ingest drugs while permitting consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine is not *forcing* one to take a substance like the doctors at the mental hospital, it is similar in telling a person what they can and cannot put in their bodies. By not allowing conjugal visitation, the hospital is reflecting government’s limitations on sexuality. While only some American states have legislation against sexual acts such as sodomy, most have criminalized acts such as consensual sex between teenagers with more than a few years between them or marriage between same sex couples. One of the factors unique to the hospital example is the relationship between doctor and patient. The patient has minimal say in regards to their care, just as those within the state have a minimal say in the way in which they are governed. The fact that the patient has to pay for their care even if they do not wish to be there resembles taxation. Just as government coerces the governed to control behavior, the hospital gives patients certain rights based on positive behavior. The hospital situation certainly resembles real world government.005168482

7.3.3 How American Government Is Not Like a Hospital Caring For Those with Mental Illnesses That Cause Homicidal Intent

While the above section shows similarities between the relationships of governed/government and patient/mental hospital, the hospital’s authority is legitimate

while that of government is not. This is because the patients at the hospital pose a harm to others, and the authority is restricted to a time and place.

People who are mentally unstable and have homicidal thoughts are a threat to society. The hospital is caring for those who are not sane. This is the source for obligation to the authority. Sane, non-homicidal patients would not be obligated to the same authority. Most people in the state are, however, sane. They do not have homicidal intent or mental issues that could put others in danger and harm society. Because of this key difference, government's authority over the governed is not legitimate.

The other two, more minor reasons, regard the time and place of the authority. As discussed in the employer example, government has control over the governed at all times while the hospital is limited in the extent of their authority. This combination of factors gives the hospital authority but are not applicable to the state.

Because the three factors needed for hospital authority over a patient with require a patient with an intent to harm society or others and a limitation on authority for a certain time period and only on hospital grounds. These factors needed are not present in the state, meaning the state doesn't have authority over others like the hospital does.

7.4 The Authority of Experts

There are a variety of experts to whom people listen. The people who follow advice or instructions of experts are not required to follow any of these suggestions, but often times do.

When one goes to college, students listen to their professors. They show up for class and turn in assignments. While this is not required, students relatively take the advice of their professors because it will result in a better grade.

The same with doctors. When patients take the advice of a doctor it is because they are aware that it will be beneficial to their health. The doctor has the best interest of the patient in mind, and years of schooling that result in a knowledge that most patients do not possess.

Lawyers, priests, and other experts give advice that it is not *necessary* to follow, but most do. The reason a person follows their plumber's advice regarding what items are appropriate to flush down the toilet is because it is in their best interest. All of these experts have an authority because they have knowledge that those following their advice do not possess. However, this authority is non-binding. People do not *have* to obey the expert. It is typically in the best interest of the person, and it is typically the rational thing to do, but it is in no way necessary.

This is clearly a different type of authority than the authorities explored in sections 7.1-7.3. The authority in this example is non-restrictive. Instead of saying the non-expert must do things, experts use their expertise to make suggestions in the person's best interest. The reason one would follow the advice of the authority is because it is rational to do so. Because most people are rational, they follow the advice of experts. As was explained in the definition of authority given at the beginning of this paper, authority is one entity being obligated to follow the instruction of another entity. The obligation to follow the instruction of an expert does not come from fear, it comes from the fact that most people are programmed to behave rationally and in their own best interest.

The person receiving the advice seeks it out actively, and thus incurs any responsibility of payment. Nobody pays to receive advice if they don't want it, otherwise they wouldn't seek it out.

Because the advice of experts is usually rational advice that is in the best interest of the person receiving the advice, people are obligated—by human nature—to follow the advice. The authority of experts is a combination of these factors: the facts that the advice comes from experts, people are not bound to follow the suggestion of the experts, the advice is actively sought out, the expert is paid only by the advice seeker and the thing suggested is in the best interest or at least rational.

7.4.1 If Government Were an Expert

The idea of the government as a friendly expert is one that will make any libertarian smile. This is because the government would have minimal influence.

If government were an expert, there wouldn't be laws, there would be suggestions. Instead of saying that it is illegal to use methamphetamine, government would say it's not wise to use the drug and that it is recommended to not do so.

Government would have authority because it would be comprised of experts. But this is *not* a coercive authority. The only obligation those taking the suggestion of government would have is to themselves—their self-interest and rationality. Not following the suggestion of experts is not wise, but it is not punishable. In this example, one can't go to jail for not taking advice.

Just as one doesn't have to pay for the advice of a doctor, plumber, or professor unless they seek it, the constituents in this example are not obligated to pay for advice

from government experts unless they want to seek it. This means that one governed person does not need to pay needlessly for expertise if they don't want it. It also means that the burden of payment for the expertise lies on the governed who seeks government, not anyone else. And the seeking of government expertise does not bind the governed to the advice or suggestions proposed. The governed can choose to do whatever action they please. However, as stated earlier, only self-interest and rationality obligate the person to act.

The "expert state" has authority mainly because the person getting advice is not bound to follow it by anything other than their own rationality and self-interest. Additionally, the receiver of the expertise of the state gets it from an expert that they actively seek out and are thus responsible for compensating. If these factors exist, then the authority exists, coercion is not necessary.

7.4.2 The Above Example Compared to Present Day American Government

Some would argue that the above description of government as an expert is not total fiction. One could say that government is an expert, or made up of several experts, or politicians. These people are experts at government and are paid for their services by taxpayers. Some politicians may even really be experts in their own right: Jim McDermott of Washington is a psychiatry expert, Rand Paul of Kentucky is an ophthalmology expert, President Barak Obama is a lawyer (as are many other politicians) or law expert, New York's Louise Slaughter is a microbiology expert, Kerry Bentivolio of Michigan is not only an expert in beekeeping but also reindeer training, Rhode Island governor Lincoln Chafee is not only an expert in both Latin and Greek classics but he's also an expert in feet—horse feet—as he is a licensed horse podiatrist, Minnesota Senator

and comedian Al Franken is an expert in comedy, and Jim Jordan of Ohio is a wrestling expert/coach. Other politicians are experts at being politicians, or professional politicians. Seeing that 41% of congress is made up of lawyers, one could argue that these people are all experts in law. Given that law is an essential faction of modern government, you could argue that these politicians are experts in this area of government.

Along with the fact that government is made up of experts, the government does give some good advice. Government suggests against certain harmful activities such as using drugs, committing suicide, or drunk driving. This is usually backed up by state-funded studies showing why, if not obvious, this is good advice.

Clearly, there are some similarities between the above example and government. In fact, arguably some of the best parts of government are the parts reflected above. The experts present in government and the advice given by these experts are factors of government that are favorable.

7.4.3 The Above Example Contrasted With Present Day American Government

While experts and their advice exist in government, there are several factors that make the modern model of American government very different from the model outlined above. The most obvious factor being that the advice of the experts is not suggestive but required of all citizens, other aspects such as that the experts are sought out and paid by a person who wants expertise, the advice is in the best ineptest of the seeker and the areas of expertise are relevant also factors that make this example distinct from reality.

As stated earlier, the obligatory nature of laws makes reality far from the model above. If it were a choice to follow laws as suggestions, this would not be the case,

however laws are seen as mandatory orders that the governed are obligated to follow. As discussed earlier, the obligation in the expert model stems from rationality and self-interest whereas the obligation currently in place stems from coercion. In present-day America one must pay taxes and follow laws—or avoid getting caught breaking the law—in order to avoid being prosecuted in some way. This is not a “common sense” obligation as the obligation to one’s doctor or plumber as in the example. Keep in mind, as well, that these laws are imposed over all, not just those who seek the expertise and suggestion of government. In the expertise model, one can choose for themselves to seek the expertise, then one can choose to follow it if they wish. Neither of these are the case in reality. Americans can even be prosecuted for laws they didn’t even know exist. In the model above, people can’t be punished for not abiding by advice of the expert, and they are aware of the advice because they themselves sought it out. These two factors that lead to authority are thus not present in real government.

The payment of experts in the model is carried out by the one seeking out the authority of the expert. This is not the case in reality where all people pay taxes so that experts can give their required suggestion to all people—even if they don’t want the advice. Government in the expertise example would not be paid for by anyone except the seeker of the expertise. Keep in mind, as discussed earlier, that many people don’t know what expertise they are paying for with their taxes. One could also argue that very little of the tax money even goes toward expertise of any sort—take welfare, for example. This makes yet another factor unaccounted for.

One interesting aspect discussed in 7.4.2 is the various areas in which politicians have expertise. Why horse podiatry, or even microbiology, are important areas for

government expertise is beyond me. Experts in government or political science and theory, or even sociology, are the experts needed to have “government expertise.” While one may argue that the 41% of congress that has legal expertise, I would like to point out that this consists of expertise in presently existing law. It is not fair to make the argument that all lawyers have expertise in government theory, social welfare, or political science. Lawyers know *what* the laws are but not *why* the laws are what they are or *why* they are enforced in the first place. While rational, we cannot expect the governed to select those with expertise in the areas of government aside from law itself to govern them. This invalidates the expertise of government.

Finally, the suggestions made by government are not always in the best interest of the governed, as has now been discussed at length. Additionally, they are not always rational. If I’m a marginalized person who cannot get paid above 7.50/hr., it would be rational to sell drugs, something government advises against.

In the example, experts are government experts, and one has a choice in their participation of their suggestion. This suggestion is sought and paid for by the same person, and it is in the best interest of the person to follow if not rational. This is not the case in reality. Because of this, the necessary factors for expert authority are not present.

8. Why It Matters

So why should one care about the obligation one has to the state, or the injustices of government, or even why government doesn't actually have authority but corporations/parents/experts do? My hope, in this discussion is to spark a flame of change. I hope that upon education of the fact that government uses an unjust authority to carry out unjust actions one will address these issues to their political circles, if not resistance or rebellion.

While I'm very thankful to live in America opposed to, say, Syria, I would love to change where I live. I don't want to live in a society where there is a forced authority that can take my money or threaten me with being locked in a cage. I don't want to accept the current state of affairs, I want to expect the best.

There's a spectrum of action, from inaction to rebellion, which can be taken in response to this information. I believe that a moderate amount of rebellion carried out by a lot of people is the most effective way to respond. In order to address the extremists and the inactive I'll discuss the pros and cons to various amounts of action.

Say we have full out rebellion of a handful of intellectuals who want to resist government's unjust authority. I don't think that not paying taxes, getting high, and living off the grid is the best way to get government attention—but it's a great way to get arrested, and from prison there is even less action that can be carried out. A large number of people need to respond with this sort of rebellion in order for government to notice. Otherwise, this looks like delinquency. This is the negative. The positive is the fact that the rebellious few won't be participating in the unjust relationship of authority and

obligation imposed on those within American borders. While this is positive for them, there is, likely, little social good to come of it.

What about a little less rebellion? Because there will be less rebellion—thus lower consequences—it is more likely that more people will participate. While they sound equal mathematically, I don't think a few people creating a lot of resistance is equal socially to a lot of people creating a little resistance. I think that a larger group of people carrying out a smaller amount of resistance will be more visible politically and will create more impact. Not only does this scheme result in a larger population of people in a state of unrest, this also doesn't look like delinquency. I think that a larger group with less, but still influential, resistance--in forms of propaganda, minor "illegal" acts (opposed to major ones like not paying taxes or attempting to secede from the state), and education—is more likely to create change than a small, full-out rebellion. While this positive outcome is likely, there is still some risk making it unappealing to the majority.

I hope that after learning about the injustice of government that nobody will remain in a state of inaction. If one who reads this is contemplating this option, please consider the following arguments. I don't want to make hyperbolic arguments or sound like certain presidential candidates, but it's imperative to keep in mind the extreme. While I'm not saying that America could become like Nazi Germany, I want to point out that fascism exists in modern societies comprised of educated people. If there is inaction on the part of those who are aware of the injustices of government, we can assume that the government will continue to be coercive and remain unjust. It is possible that these injustices can encroach further on daily life such as limiting movement between states, speech, and the private sphere of business even more than what we see now. This sounds

like a slippery slope in which government becomes more and more oppressive. While this cannot be expected because of inaction, it is a possibility. Additionally, inaction is against the self-interest of the person not acting. The only good thing about inaction is that there is no risk and it is easy. Most people don't act because they are not educated, but, if you have read this far, you clearly are. This is the main reason inaction is difficult—acquiring the education itself takes time. Hopefully, this makes it clear why the only real reason someone reading this can choose inaction is because there is no risk. Certainly the negatives outweigh the positives in this scenario—this is not the path for an educated person to take.

So what kind of action should we take? Papers like this educate those who are already somewhat educated, but perhaps a shorter and easier to understand paper could affect the masses. Propaganda and education are two of the strongest tools. Because this is an argument from rationality, no hyperbolic propagandas should be used. In contrast, people should be educated and faced with their own irrationality to create a rational outcome. While not paying taxes is extreme, if a large group of people demand lower taxes then perhaps the state will listen. One idea I like is if an entire community stops using a public good paid for with tax money and instead opts for a private service, then perhaps the good will become obsolete or privatized. The things taught in high school government classes also need to be changed. Teens should be educated with real models of government opposed to being force-fed a social contract that results in blind obedience. Social factors that result in dependence on an entity enforce the authority of government and obligation of the governed. These factors, such as propaganda dependent

on government and pervasiveness of public services in daily life, ought to be minimized, unused, or at the least challenged.

Action of some sort must be taken if we want to hold government to the same moral standard those within the American borders are held to. Education and propaganda are very powerful tools that have been used to support government authority but can also defend the liberty of all.

9. Conclusion

Government is unjust. Some claim that the actions one would consider unjust are justified by the fact that government has some authority. The political theories that argue this are question begging as government has no authority to even propose this sort of agreement in the first place. Not only are immoral and illegal actions like kidnapping, theft, or

murder being carried out by government on the governed, but the basis of government authority is imaginary and thus unjust. For government to have authority, it must have certain factors that give it authority. These factors are not present, which is the point made with the various examples in section 7.

Knowing that government has no authority will hopefully lead to some form of action. Hopefully this will be the kind of action required to create some form of social and political change.

Government is unjust and has no authority. There is no excuse for this. If the governed are held to standards that prohibit stealing, kidnapping, and murdering, the government should be held to those same standards, if not higher.

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