

# Protection or Protection Racket? Rethinking State Provision of National Defense

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It is commonly accepted that certain functions in society cannot be supplied through voluntary means. While the market may be best at supplying us with t-shirts, televisions and computers, there are certain goods and services that should be left to the State. Nowhere is this more true than in the area of national defense. The protection of our lives and property from foreign aggressors is a function that even many of the most prominent and esteemed free market economists acknowledge must be left to the State.<sup>1</sup> As a “public good”, national defense simply cannot be provided through the market and, though perhaps an evil, the State is regarded as a necessary one.

In this paper I want to suggest otherwise—that is, the State is *not* needed for the production of security and defense. Instead, this most vital of functions can and should be provided purely through voluntary means. Some may claim this service is too important to be left to the market and to civil society. I am of the belief, however, that, precisely because security *is* so important is why it must be left to these institutions and *not* to a monopolist agency that outlaws competition.

While looked upon almost universally as an institution which provides us with protection, I will argue that, as it obtains its revenue through coercive means, the State should instead be seen for what it really is, namely, a giant protection racket—though one that happens to enjoy ostensive *legitimization* by the public. As far as I can discern, this is the only notable variable separating the State from the mafia. The act of appropriating an individual’s property without their consent when performed by the latter, for example, is rightly acknowledge as “theft,” though when carried out by the former, it is instead looked upon euphemistically as the act of “taxation.” It is hoped, then, that by clarifying a number of fundamental truths as they relate to the State and the State’s provision of national defense, the supposed indefatigable obviousness of State ‘protection’ will be called (if ever so tentatively!) into question.

As the public goods thesis is the major theoretical justification for State provision of national defense, this will be discussed and critiqued first. Evidence will be presented to show that the incentives States operate under cause it to needlessly expose individuals and society to dangers

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<sup>1</sup> Milton Friedman, F.A. Hayek, James Buchanan, George Stigler and Gordon Tullock, for example, are all proponents of State provision of national defense.

and threats. Like a protection racket, many of the problems the State ‘solves’ are of their own creation.

Though the limited length of this paper will unfortunately prevent me from giving a comprehensive treatment of the theory of free market defense, I will attempt to place this argument more generally within the context of anarchist theory, and then follow this with a brief look at some market-provided public goods. I will conclude with a summary of the principles underlying a free market in defense.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Theory of Public Goods**

To the lay public, the term “public good” is typically synonymous with any good that is provided by the government<sup>3</sup>. When economists use the term, however, they use it in a very precise manner to describe a good or service that exhibits two particular characteristics—*nonexcludability* and *nonrivalrous consumption*. It is the existence of these two features which makes something a public good, therefore, though perhaps confusing to non-economists, it is not contradictory for public goods to be provided through markets. As national defense is the quintessential public good in the economics literature and the focus of this paper, these two characteristics will be explained using this as the example.

Firstly, national defense, unlike attending a game of football, is nonexcludable. It is not difficult to exclude individuals who refuse to pay to enter a stadium but, once military defense of a certain territory is established, it is certainly far more difficult to exclude non-payers. This is an important criterion because it is argued that, if one cannot exclude those who do not pay, individuals will simply free-ride and let others pay the costs while they themselves enjoy all the benefits. These individuals may have even been willing to pay but, because of the “free-rider” problem, this particular good will either simply not be supplied, or will be supplied in suboptimal quantities. Because of this phenomenon, economists regard this as an instance of “market failure.”

The second characteristic, nonrivalrous consumption, is explained by Jeffrey Rogers Hummel as a situation when “one customer’s consumption of a marginal unit of the good or service does not preclude another’s consumption of the same unit.”<sup>4</sup> When someone eats an apple, this is now one apple that cannot be consumed by others, that is, an apple is a rival good. In contrast,

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<sup>2</sup> I will also include a fairly thorough collection of citations towards the end to substantiate and direct one to the relevant and wide-ranging scholarship in this area.

<sup>3</sup> In this paper I will use the terms “State” and “government” interchangeably. The meaning I attach is that this is an organisation that has obtained a legitimized monopoly on the use of coercive force in some given territory.

<sup>4</sup> Jeffrey Rogers Hummel, “National Goods Versus Public Goods: Defense, Disarmament, and Free Riders,” *The Review of Austrian Economics* 4 (1990): 89.

once a defense capability is established for an entire territory, the addition of one extra person to this territory is not going to diminish the protection of all others, that is, national defense is a non-rival good. Nonrivalrous consumption is also said to result in a market failure because, even though it would cost nothing to allow an additional individual to enjoy this good, the market will exclude them which is regarded as an inefficient allocation of resources.

A pure public good must exhibit *both* of these features; however there are goods that can exhibit nonexcludability *or* nonrivalrous consumption. Hummel notes, though, that, “according to the public-goods argument, either characteristic alone causes ‘market failure’—that is, an allocation of resources that is less than Pareto optimal. Thus, either can be sufficient to justify State intervention.”<sup>5</sup> Nonexcludability, though, is seen as the more significant variable as incentives still exist for entrepreneurs to produce non-rival goods providing they can exclude non-payers.

Though it is standard in the economics literature for the treatment accorded various goods to be based on these two characteristics, there have been a number of serious objections raised to the theory of public goods—especially as it concerns its use as justification for State provision of national defense. A number of these arguments will be taken up below.

### **Deficiencies in the Public Goods Thesis**

Building on ideas propounded particularly by various economists of the so called “Austrian school,” Hans-Hermann Hoppe is certainly one of the fiercest critics of this thesis and has said that, “In spite of its many followers, the whole public goods theory is faulty, flashy reasoning, riddled with internal inconsistencies, non sequiturs, appealing to and playing on popular prejudices and assumed beliefs, but with no scientific merit whatsoever.”<sup>6</sup>

Hoppe calls into question *the entire legitimacy* of using nonexcludability and nonrivalrous consumption as criteria to make a distinction between “public” or “private” goods because he argues that goods never fall solely into one category or the other. He notes that “all goods are more or less private or public and can—and constantly do—change with respect to their degree of privateness/publicness as people’s values and evaluations change, and as changes occur in the composition of the population.”<sup>7</sup> Because “nothing is a good unless at least one person subjectively evaluates it as such...[there] can never be private or public goods as such...Even seemingly completely private things like the interior of my apartment or the colour of my

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.: 90.

<sup>6</sup> Hans-Hermann Hoppe, "Fallacies of the Public Goods Theory and the Production of Security," in *The Economics and Ethics of Private Property: Studies in Political Economy and Philosophy* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2006), 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 8.

underwear can thus become public goods as soon as somebody else starts caring about them.”<sup>8</sup> Numerous other (seemingly trivial) examples are given, such as rose gardens, improvements to one’s personality, deodorant, etc., that, based upon the characteristics of nonexcludability and nonrivalrous consumption, leads one to the conclusion that these aforementioned goods *are*, in fact, public goods. What, then, does this imply? Should the State concern itself with their production? Is the phenomenon of “market failure” really ubiquitous or is it instead the case that the theory has some very uncomfortable and, indeed, inherently grave flaws?

Hoppe shows the criterion of nonrivalrous consumption to be a canard because no outside observer could *objectively* establish that “the admittance of an additional free rider at no charge would not indeed lead to a subtraction in the consumption of a good to others.”<sup>9</sup> Hoppe regards this public/private distinction as “a relapse into the pre-subjectivist era of economics” because *all* costs and benefits are inherently subjective to individual actors.<sup>10</sup>

Even if the public/private distinction was admitted, Hoppe maintains this *still* could not justify State provision of public goods because *a norm must be introduced* that would enable us to go from “X is a public good” to “the State *ought* to provide X.” No longer is one in the domain of positive science; instead, one is dealing with an assertion that requires a justifiable ethical or moral theory. Hoppe states that “nowhere in public goods theory literature can anything that even faintly resembles such a cognitive theory of ethics be found.”<sup>11</sup> He then goes on to show that the norm required to justify State provision of public goods—the legitimacy of initiatory violence—would ultimately lead to chaos if universalized (which, of course, as a norm, it must).

### **Public Goods Theory as an Argument *Against* State Provision of National Defense**

In contrast to Hoppe, Jeffrey Rogers Hummel accepts the public goods thesis (though he does acknowledge the critical remarks of other theorists), but in so doing, he makes the case that “rather than providing a solid justification for State provision [of national defense, public goods theory] offers one of the most powerful objections to such provision.”<sup>12</sup> The reason for this is that the public goods problem is *not* overcome when the State intervenes to alleviate an alleged market failure. This is because *political action itself* is subject to free-rider incentives which can result, not in a “market failure,” but a “political failure.”<sup>13</sup> Briefly put, Hummel’s argument as it concerns the provision of national defense by the State, is that small groups will organise to

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>12</sup> Hummel, "National Goods Versus Public Goods," 92.

<sup>13</sup> This application of economics to the domain of politics is the field known as “public choice.”

agitate for bogus public goods that benefit them—the minority—but at the expense of the majority. The production of these goods, then, rather than producing positive externalities, generates *negative* externalities for society.<sup>14</sup> This important contention is made more explicit by the clarifying remarks below.

At the outset, Hummel points out that “the public-goods justification rests upon a fundamental equivocation over exactly what service ‘national defense’ entails.”<sup>15</sup> His clarification of the term shows there to be *two* services that go under this name. Firstly, national defense can be thought of as the “protection of people’s lives, property, and liberty from foreign aggressors.”<sup>16</sup> This is typically what people have in mind when they think of national defense. But “this defense of the people is not synonymous with another service that goes under the same ‘national defense’ label: protection of the State itself and its territorial integrity.”<sup>17</sup>

Though they can overlap, the State’s interests are not ipso facto society’s interests.<sup>18</sup> Recognising this crucial distinction illuminates a great deal. For one, it becomes obvious that much analysis found in International Relations is beholden to “a glaring example of the fallacy of composition,” that is; the State is *not* society and society is *not* the State.<sup>19</sup> Though routinely identified with their subjects, it is misleading to treat the two as one and the same.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, in

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<sup>14</sup> “When a group successfully provides itself a public good through the market, the resources it expends pay directly for the good. In contrast, when a group successfully provides itself a public good through the State, the resources it expends only pay the overhead cost of influencing State policy. The State then finances the public good through taxation or some coercive substitute....The State has strong incentives to provide national defense that protects itself and its prerogatives, but it has very weak incentives to provide national defense that protects its subjects’ lives, property, and liberty.” See Hummel, “National Goods Versus Public Goods,” esp. 98-122. Though he doesn’t mention the term explicitly, Hummel’s thesis goes some way in accounting for the phenomenon of the “military-industrial complex.”

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.: 94.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Murray Rothbard was certainly one of the most insightful and discerning theorists in recent times who showed that the State and its interests, rather than in harmony with society, are in fact antithetical to it. Building upon and integrating classical liberalism, individualist anarchism, and insights gained from his exhaustive study and comprehension of Austrian economics, Rothbard is, arguably more than anyone else, responsible for laying out the foundations (and implications) of modern libertarianism. For these reasons, as Llewellyn H. Rockwell notes in his Introduction to *For a New Liberty*, Murray Rothbard was called “Mr. Libertarian” and “The State’s Greatest Living Enemy.” For his perceptive and critical treatment of the State, though present throughout many of his writings, see in particular, Murray N. Rothbard, “Anatomy of the State,” in *Egalitarianism as a Revolt against Nature* (Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2000). ———, *For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto*, 2nd ed. (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2006), esp. 55-86. ———, *The Ethics of Liberty* (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 161-97.

<sup>19</sup> Hummel (1990, 96) elaborates:

Nationalism treats nations as collective entities, applying principles drawn from the analysis of individual interaction to the international level. In a war between two nations, the nationalist model focuses on essentially two parties: nation A and nation B. As in fights between individuals, one of these two nations is the aggressor, whereas the other is the defender. As a result, the model axiomatically equates protecting the State with protecting its subjects. The basic flaw in the nationalist model is its collectivist premise.

<sup>20</sup> This distinction is *not* lost on IR scholars. See, for example, Christopher Hubbard, *An Australian Introduction to International Relations* (Sydney: Pearson Education Australia, 2008), 52. Nonetheless, it is customary to treat the State

any international conflict there are not two clashing parties, but at least *four*: State A and State B; and the subjects of State A and State B. With this differentiation in mind, Hummel alleges that “historically, the State [has] often embark[ed] on military adventures unrelated to the defense of its subjects.”<sup>21</sup> This is certainly true. For why would one need protection from other States if States only engaged in defensive actions?!

Once this distinction between the State and society is admitted, though, it should become apparent that “protection from foreign States is not a discrete or unique service. It is a subset of a more general service: protection from *any* State.”<sup>22</sup> Even in purportedly defensive wars, State interests take precedence over the interests of those they’re allegedly protecting. This is most clearly evidenced by the concept and practice of conscription. Millions of individuals have been forced by the State to join its Armed Forces with the explicit understanding that these individuals will be slaughtered on the battlefield. Those fortunate enough to escape this involuntary servitude and who remain behind in the home territory, though, are similarly victimised. During times of war, States will typically engage in an intensification of their confiscatory taxation and inflation, and they will enact ever greater economic regulation such as rationing, wage and price controls. Furthermore, innumerable forms of civil rights violations will be undertaken, rationalized by the State and its apologists as necessary measures for the good of the war effort.<sup>23</sup> Whatever one calls these actions, they surely belie the idea of the State as an agency that was instituted to *protect and secure* individual freedom and *uphold and enforce* property rights.

Though perhaps not framed in such a manner, this notion that people are subservient to the State and above all are there to advance the *State’s* interests—and not the other way around as is claimed almost universally by those who propound some form of Statism (particularly those who

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and its subjects as a solitary, acting entity with commensurate and aligned objectives and concerns when this just simply is not true.

<sup>21</sup> Hummel, "National Goods Versus Public Goods," 94.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*: 97. By:

Abandoning this collectivist identification of the State with its subjects, [it] exposes the critical insight about the national-defense service. If one is truly concerned about defense of peoples’ lives, property, and liberty, then the transfer of their capital city from one location to another is not intrinsically significant. The territory constituting the United States is in a very real sense already conquered—by the United States government. All that is significant is whether transferring the capital city brings the citizens a net loss or gain. The danger is not foreign conquest per se, but the amount of power the conquering State can successfully wield (Hummel 1990, 96-7).

<sup>23</sup> It is important to point out, too, that this expansion of the State’s size, scope and power during wartime is not reduced to pre-war levels once a war is terminated. A ratchet effect accompanies State intervention which ensures the continual growth of government—which necessarily comes at the expense of individuals’ liberty and property. This ratchet effect thesis is laid out in detail in Robert Higgs, *Crisis and Leviathan: Critical Episodes in the Growth of American Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

favour democracy)—is a fact generally recognised and accepted by International Relations scholars.<sup>24</sup>

In a particularly devastating critique in one of his monographs, Hoppe weighs up the empirical evidence of the United States qua a State established for arguably all but the most limited and defensive of purposes and declares it a “complete failure.”<sup>25</sup> It is difficult to argue with him, especially when one expands the analysis to include all those actions undertaken by the U.S. government that typically gets little attention. After all, what would one say if a *private corporation* had engaged in acts of torture, assassination, training and supporting terrorists, using chemical and biological weapons at home and abroad, kidnapping, looting, eavesdropping, etc.<sup>26</sup>

### Conceptions of a Stateless Society

Advocacy of a stateless society—*anarchism*—is typically met with confusion and derision. As the State is identified with the provision of a vast array of goods and services, the anarchist is seen as either championing lawlessness and chaos, or promoting fanciful and utopian ideals of a post-scarcity world where man’s nature is transformed, thereby ushering in a veritable Heaven on Earth.

Though the above description may apply to *some* anarchists, it most certainly does *not* apply to them all. Peter Boettke distinguishes between three forms of Anarchism—Utopian, Revolutionary, and Analytical Anarchism.<sup>27</sup> While the first two are marked by their virtual

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<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Hubbard, *An Australian Introduction to International Relations*, 41. “Every government worthy of the name counts as *its first obligation the maintenance of the territorial integrity and political independence of the state* of which it has stewardship. In other words, there is universal acknowledgement that, *first and foremost, the state itself must be secured against external coercion and subjugation by aggression from all quarters*” (emphasis mine). Of course, it is not the *people* but the *State* that gets to decide who or what is a threat and how and in what manner to respond. Whether the people accept the State’s claims is another matter—hence the need, of course, for propaganda which is used by the State to demonize their particular enemies. As has been shown time and time again, though, this is not a prohibitively difficult task. As Hermann Goering explained at the Nuremberg Trials:

Why of course the people don't want war ... But after all it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship ... Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger.

That the State has an inherent self-interest to not only *exaggerate* but even to *provoke* such threats should give one pause to perhaps reflect on the widespread acceptance of the State as the ideal institution to provide us with protection.

<sup>25</sup> Hans-Hermann Hoppe, *The Private Production of Defense* (Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2009), 13-16.

<sup>26</sup> William Blum, *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, 3rd ed. (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 2005). By pointing out such acts committed by the U.S. State, one is careful to avoid downplaying all those crimes committed by other States. As bad as the US government is, if number of individuals murdered is used as the metric, the U.S. certainly pales when compared to other regimes. On this, see R.J. Rummel, *Death by Government* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1994). Recent revisions published on his blog raise the total number of civilians murdered by governments in the twentieth century to 262 million: <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/>

<sup>27</sup> Peter J. Boettke, “Anarchism as a Progressive Research Program in Political Economy,” in *Anarchy, State and Public Choice*, ed. Edward P. Stringham (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2003).

rejection of anything that resembles sound economic theorizing, the latter is distinguished by *its very basis* being grounded firmly in economic science. While its roots can be traced back to a number of earlier thinkers<sup>28</sup>, this branch of Anarchism only really emerged in the 1970s, most notably in the works of Murray Rothbard and David Friedman.<sup>29</sup>

Since that time, the breadth of scholarship has grown exponentially, and in all directions. The literature is now vast and encompasses a wide range of disciplines—economics, law, philosophy, sociology and history. The argument for a stateless society with a purely voluntarist defense that is advanced in this paper should ideally be seen in light of this scholarship.<sup>30</sup>

### **The Private Provision of Public Goods**

In the prior review of some of the arguments propounded by Hoppe, it was shown that many things which are typically not thought of as public goods *can* be regarded as such. Are there examples of goods, though, that people generally ascribe to the domain of the State but have historically (or even now) been provided by markets? Yes.

The 2002 book edited by David T. Beito, Peter Gordon, and Alexander Tabarrok, *The Voluntary City: Choice, Community, and Civil Society* gives various accounts of a multitude of such goods and services.<sup>31</sup> Urban planning, city planning, roads, courts, police, medical care and education are all goods that *have*, despite their alleged public goods (and ergo “market failure”) characteristics been provided voluntarily through the operations of the free market, and civil

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<sup>28</sup> The Belgian economist Gustave de Molinari’s 1849 publication, “The Production of Security,” is generally regarded as the first work in this regard.

<sup>29</sup> See Rothbard, *For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto*, David Friedman, *The Machinery of Freedom: Guide to a Radical Capitalism* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1973). Though not mentioned by Boettke, the other important book published in the 1970s in a similar vein was Linda Tannehill and Morris Tannehill, *The Market for Liberty*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Fox & Wilkes, [1970] 1993).

<sup>30</sup> The best anthology of articles from this perspective can be found in Edward P. Stringham, *Anarchy and the Law: The Political Economy of Choice* (Oakland: The Independent Institute, 2007). It includes a number of lively debates between ‘free market anarchists’/‘anarcho-capitalists’ and ‘minarchists’ (proponents of the minimal state). In addition to those titles mentioned especially in Note 26, also see ———, ed., *Anarchy, State and Public Choice* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2005), Roderick T. Long and Tibor R. Machan, eds., *Anarchism/Minarchism: Is a Government Part of a Free Country?* (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Publishing 2008), Bruce L. Benson, *The Enterprise of Law: Justice without the State* (San Francisco: Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy, 1990), Hans-Hermann Hoppe, *Democracy: The God That Failed: The Economics and Politics of Monarchy, Democracy, and Natural Order* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers 2001), Hoppe, “Fallacies of the Public Goods Theory and the Production of Security,” Hans-Hermann Hoppe, ed., *The Myth of National Defense: Essays on the Theory and History of Security Production* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2003), Murray N. Rothbard, “Society without a State,” in *Anarchism: Nomos XIX*, ed. J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: NYU Press: 1978), Jeffrey Rogers Hummel, “The Will to Be Free: The Role of Ideology in National Defense,” *The Independent Review* V, no. 4 (Spring 2001), Jeffrey Rogers Hummel and Edward P. Stringham, “If a Pure Market Economy Is So Good, Why Doesn’t It Exist? The Importance of Changing Preferences Versus Incentives in Social Change,” (*working paper, Mercatus Center, George Mason University*), no. 9 (April 2009). The most comprehensive collection of scholarly articles can be found online at:

<http://www.analyticalanarchism.net/literature/>

<sup>31</sup> David T. Beito, Peter Gordon, and Alexander Tabarrok, eds., *The Voluntary City: Choice, Community, and Civil Society* (USA: The University of Michigan Press, 2002).

society more generally. In addition to national defense, the issue of roads is the other quintessential “but how would the market provide that?” good. If the chapter by Daniel Klein in the previous book does not completely satisfy, one should certainly consult Walter Block’s extremely comprehensive book on the privatization of roads and highways.<sup>32</sup> Law and justice is something else that allegedly can *only* be provided by governments. If one is in agreement with this contention, the extensive scholarship of Bruce Benson, as just one example, should perhaps be investigated.<sup>33</sup> And finally, the existence of mercenaries and the outsourcing of the provision of violence has a *long* and diverse history and dates back thousands of years. As P.W. Singer states, “hiring outsiders to fight your battles is as old as war itself.”<sup>34</sup>

### Principles and Economics of Free Market Defense

If the defining characteristic of States is their coercion, for markets it is voluntarism. Firms and entrepreneurs on the free market *must* obtain their revenue through peaceful means, to the extent that they do not, they are by definition not part of the market. Individuals engage in trade because they expect to benefit. Trade, then, at least in the *ex ante* sense, is mutually beneficial—if one did not expect to profit in some way from an exchange, one would not engage in it to begin with.

Though there is a rather extensive literature on the subject<sup>35</sup> that goes into more substantial and technical detail, this very brief outline essentially captures the key principles that underlie a voluntary and free market in defense. Despite the repeated cries of “market failure” and the accompanying pronouncements of the alleged need of the State’s initiatory violence, a free, stateless society is one where all goods and services—even “national defense”—*must be provided voluntarily*. This contrasts to the ‘protection’ we now currently enjoy under the State which, as I have alleged and attempted to show, is more comparable to a protection racket.

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<sup>32</sup> Walter Block, *The Privatization of Roads and Highways* (Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2009).

<sup>33</sup> See his excellent and extremely thorough book, *The Enterprise of Law: Justice without the State*.

<sup>34</sup> P.W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), 19. Though his entire book is valuable for the general argument made in this paper, see esp. Ch. 2 on the history of the privatization of military operations.

<sup>35</sup> See esp. Bruce L. Benson, "Can a Stateless Society Survive?," *Formulations* III, no. 11 (1996), Karl T. Fielding, "Nonexcludability and Government Financing of Public Goods," *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 3, no. 3 (1979), Hoppe, ed., *The Myth of National Defense: Essays on the Theory and History of Security Production*, ———, *The Private Production of Defense*, Hummel, "National Goods Versus Public Goods.", ———, "The Will to Be Free: The Role of Ideology in National Defense.", Hummel and Stringham, "If a Pure Market Economy Is So Good, Why Doesn't It Exist? The Importance of Changing Preferences Versus Incentives in Social Change.", Roderick T. Long, "Defending a Free Nation," *Formulations* II, no. 6 (1994), Robert P. Murphy, *Chaos Theory: Two Essays on Market Anarchy* (New York: RJ Communications LLC, 2002), Murray N. Rothbard, "Defense Services on the Free Market," in *Man, Economy, and State with Power and Market* (Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2004), Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, Tannehill and Tannehill, *The Market for Liberty*.

One wonders whether the entire question of State provision of national defense, or, at least, the foregoing analysis, could have simply been substituted with one of Rothbard's distinctive and pithy observations:

...suffice it to say that any argument proclaiming the right and goodness of, say, three neighbours, who yearn to form a string quartet, forcing a fourth neighbour at bayonet point to learn and play the viola, is hardly deserving of sober comment.<sup>36</sup>

### **Conclusion**

We have seen that there are significant problems when it comes to State provision of national defense and that the market mechanism may not be such a failure as it is made out to be. Further analysis *and* promotion of this radical alternative to State provision of national defense is certainly to be welcomed as a continuation of the status quo may result in more defense than we bargained for.

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<sup>36</sup> Murray N. Rothbard, "The Fallacy of the Public Sector," in *Egalitarianism as a Revolt against Nature* (Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2000), 142.

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