

Well, it appears that we have a teachable moment. Usually the teachable moment is for the non-libertarians we're trying to convert, but this time it's a little different. This time, we have a teachable moment for libertarians, who consider themselves to be anarchists, who advocate for closed borders. And I don't mean closed borders as the private property owner deciding that some people are not allowed to enter his land. I mean that there are libertarians who favor the state enforce some degree of control over the lines that make up state borders at least until a better environment materializes.

That's pretty "interesting," I know, but these people exist.

One of the people sympathetic to this idea, Eric July of the libertarian-themed band Backwordz, was on his way to a gig in Canada with the rest of his bandmates when they were stopped and held at the border going into Canada.

They were denied entry into the country. They were turned around. They have to cancel their date in Toronto.

One of the members of the band had a DUI on his record and, according to Canadian law, enough time had not passed to allow him entry into the country with that mark on his record.

The border was closed to them.

Justifiably, Eric July was not at all happy about what had happened. That seems like a ridiculous rule to have in place. But more importantly, an uninvited third party, the government of Canada, stepped in between Eric July and the venue that was supposed to host Backwordz. Without any actual authority to do so, they prevented the concert from occurring even though none of the private property owners involved had any issue over the arrangement.

But hey, the state's gonna state, right?

The ironic part here is that Eric July is not against the state doing exactly what they did to him in some special circumstances that he approves of. The argument from the closed borders libertarians is not that they necessarily want the current state borders enforcement, but rather they advocate that the state enforce the borders in the way that *they* see fit. The problem with this is that even if the state were interested in trying to come up with the best arrangement possible, it is not capable of solving the economic calculation problem since it is operating outside of the market's normal price signals and principles of supply and demand.

But maybe more importantly, the problem is that the state is not made up of altruistic people who selflessly just want the best outcome for its citizens and who disregard any incentives of using their power in a corrupt manner. Is it likely to happen that the state comes up with a just solution to any given problem? I'll defer to Hans-Hermann Hoppe in *Democracy—The God That Failed* (emphasis added):

*The best one may hope for, even if it goes against the "nature" of a democracy and thus is not very likely not happen, is that the democratic rulers act as if they were the personal owners of*

*the country and as if they had to decide who to include and who to exclude from their own personal property (into their very houses).*

In other words, if you expect the state to solve your problems, you're going to end up disappointed. You can wish that the state act in the way you see fit all that you want, but it is out of your control and is instead subject to the whims of more than likely ethically unsavory people who have a very poor incentive structure. These people are more likely than not going to use their power against you.

So it's ironic that the libertarians who advocate that the state control the borders would mock people who favor gun control since the gun control advocates assume that the state would never use that power against them. Or consider the people who want the government to engage in surveillance because they assume that they would never use it for nefarious purposes. If you think that the mere existence of the NSA is a huge problem but are willing to let groups like the DHS and ICE operate, you've got some serious contradictions to work out.

The libertarian open borders advocates argue that the state should not control the borders because they understand that the state is an uncontrollable monster and should be stripped of any and every power possible. There is no way to tame it. Just look at how George Washington handled the Whiskey Rebellion.