



You love capitalism. Really – you do. And you can’t stand big government. Really – you can’t.

Don’t believe me? Then I’ll just have to prove it to you.

Do you use an iPhone? Android? Macbook? PC?

Read on a Kindle?

Watch TV and movies on Netflix? Videos on YouTube?

Shop on Amazon?

Listen to Spotify?

Search on Google?

Send money on Venmo?

Grab a ride with Uber?

Drive with Waze?

Book a room with Airbnb?

Are you on Facebook? Or Instagram? Or Snapchat?

You probably use many, if not all, of these things, and, if you’re like me, you love them. In today’s world, they’re practically necessities. Where do you think they came from? From entrepreneurs with great ideas and the freedom to test them in the marketplace. That is what is known as . . . capitalism.

Now consider some other things you probably use:

Have you been to the DMV?

Gone through airport security?

Mailed a package at the Post Office?

Called the IRS customer service line?

Or called any government office, for that matter?

What’s different? Why is going to the Apple Store so fun, but going to the DMV so painful? Because one has nothing to do with the government, and one is the government. One needs to satisfy its customers to survive and grow. One doesn’t.

The purpose of government is not to create products. And we don’t expect it to. But if you thought about it for a few moments, you’d realize you don’t want the government involved in just about anything private business can do. That’s because profit-motivated individuals have to work to please their customers. You. Government agencies don’t have to please anyone. Call that IRS service line, if you doubt me.

Can you imagine if Steve Jobs had to seek government approval for every new design of the iPhone? We'd have been lucky to get to iPhone 3G.

Look at Uber. Just a few years ago, summoning a private driver in a few minutes who would take you where you wanted to go was truly a service available only to the wealthiest people. But now, thanks to capitalism, private rides are an affordable option for ordinary people all over the world. Until Uber came around, if it started to rain in, say, Manhattan and you wanted a grab a cab, good luck. Too many rain-drenched people and too few cabs. Uber had a better idea. Rain falls. Demand for rides spikes. Raise prices to incentivize more Uber drivers to hit the road. Ride-in-the-rain problem solved.

Airbnb is another example. Only a few years ago, if you were going on vacation with your friends or family, hotels were just about your only option. But hotels are expensive, and often don't provide all that much in terms of space, amenities, or interesting neighborhoods. If you wanted to, say, find out if individual homeowners were making their homes or apartments available for a few nights, you'd have to scour internet postings. But then Airbnb came along, giving anyone with a computer or smartphone access to over 2 million homes in 190 countries. You can find places with hot tubs and pools; or, if you're on a tighter budget, you can rent a room, or even just a couch.

Government never could have done this. What motivation would it have? How would it even know we wanted services like Uber or Airbnb? We didn't know it, until risk-taking entrepreneurs made it possible. Thanks to capitalism. And no thanks to government which, more often than not, just gets in the way.

Why? Because the government's knee-jerk reaction is to regulate and control everything it can regulate and control. Otherwise, what would be the purpose of many government agencies and all those bureaucrats?

Cities across the world are putting up barriers to slow down or shut down services like Uber and Airbnb. Rulemaking may be the only area where the government shows creativity. Economic growth has the best chance of happening in the absence of that rulemaking.

As economist Adam Thierer explains, the internet, to use just one important example, was able to develop in a regulatory climate that embraced what he calls "permissionless innovation." This approach to regulating allows entrepreneurs to meet their customers' needs without first seeking government approval.

In sum, almost everything you enjoy using is a product of capitalism; almost everything you can't stand is a product of big government.

So, do you love capitalism? Of course you do. You practice it every day. It's time to preach it.

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