

**Restoring Our Future: Embracing American Conservatism and Challenging Chomsky**

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### **Abstract**

Noam Chomsky's 1971 speech "Government in the Future" analyzes the four major political philosophies of Classical Liberalism, State Capitalism, State Socialism, and Libertarian Socialism. Chomsky also outlines his Libertarian Socialist vision for America while debating the many facets regarding the role of the state, corporations, and workers. In this paper, we analyze the same four philosophies, challenge Chomsky's vision, and lay out a nuanced plan per American Conservative tradition to restore the future of America.

## **Restoring Our Future: Embracing American Conservatism and Challenging Chomsky**

*“I find that America is fundamentally a Conservative nation. The preponderant judgment of the American people, especially of the young people, is that the radical, or Liberal, approach has not worked and is not working. They yearn for a return to Conservative principles.”*

*- Barry Goldwater*

The 1971 Chomsky speech revolved around two major items of discussion, the basic matrix of different political economies and Chomsky’s Libertarian Socialist vision for the future. The matrix of political economies is categorized into four main philosophies, Classical Liberalism, Libertarian Socialism, State Capitalism, and State Socialism. He analyzes their underpinnings, philosophers, history, interpretations, and ideas. For his vision, Chomsky speaks extensively on Libertarian Socialism, defending it from the many arguments of unfeasibility and undesirability. He argues against a large state, a view he believes aligns Classical Liberalism with Libertarian Socialism but goes on to say that Libertarian Socialism further advocates for the democratic organization of industrial society. As we will discuss later on, not only is Chomsky’s philosophy completely unattainable for any society, but it also reeks of undesirability in a society that best operates under a free-market scheme that exalts freedom, not the inevitable authoritarianism that manifests with all advertised forms of Socialism.

### **Classical Liberalism**

Classical Liberalism is a philosophy that supports individual rights, free-market economics, limited government, equality, and the overall idea of individual liberty. Liberalism has a rich tradition with many different ideas and interpretations surrounding it, with Locke, Hobbes, and Kant all having many different manifestations of Classical Liberalism, so instead of delving into every single interpretation which would be unhelpful to actually understanding the

philosophy, we need only to analyze its qualities. Firstly, the philosophy covers how nature itself operates. While Locke and Hobbes have different views on the state of nature, Locke's is the one that Classical Liberalism aligns with. Locke believes that in nature without a state, there are certain rights that we recognize and hold no matter what, "For Locke, moral rights precede the contract to create a state." The job of the state is to protect these rights and adjudicate any disputes if one's rights are violated. As we can see, Classical Liberalism from Locke's thought believes the state should have a very limited role in society, while our preexisting rights should be of utmost importance. The philosopher Kant expands on this even more by expounding that the state is not meant to pursue what is good, but simply make sure rights are protected (Hoffman and Graham, 2015, p. 183). Furthermore, since the individual is the recognized body to which these rights apply, there is equality for everyone as group identities are not to be considered by the state. However, the absence of an encroaching government was not just seen as beneficial for the individual, but also for society. Economist Adam Smith provided a majority of the classical and free market economics associated with Classical Liberalism, he argued that society and economy do better with the selfish motivation of the individual driving growth and prosperity (University of Glasgow). These laissez-faire ideas have become the staple of contemporary Classical Liberal thought, with economists like Milton Friedman making sure to connect the idea of liberty with free markets, "Underlying most arguments against the free market is a lack of belief in freedom itself" (University of Chicago, 2012).

Chomsky recognizes Classical Liberalism as a philosophy that, "asserts as its major idea an opposition to all but the most restricted and minimal forms of state intervention in personal and social life." While this aligns with the definition of Classical Liberalism we laid out, he also gets quite esoteric and attempts to align Classical Liberalism with Libertarian Socialism. To

defend his argument, he cites Classical thinker Wilhelm Humboldt who says, “Whatever does not spring from a man's free choice, or is only the result of instruction and guidance, does not enter into his very being, but remains alien to his true nature.” Chomsky cites Humboldt as a way to delve deeper into the freedom and purpose of man. The purpose of man is to be free to choose and create things of their own free will, meaning the government should not intervene against the will of man. Chomsky argues that industrial Capitalism has grown to violate the will of man by simply replacing the feared state intervention with private corporate intervention. As Humboldt said, “If freedom would destroy the very conditions without which not only freedom but even existence itself would be inconceivable.” In Chomsky’s eyes, freedom under Capitalism is not freedom at all as the coercion of the state is simply replaced by coercion of the corporation. This is why Chomsky believes that Libertarian Socialism is the natural evolution of Classical Liberalism, not unrestrained Capitalism.

Normally such an assertion would be considered nonsensical if Chomsky were not serious. The idea that somehow Libertarian Socialism is more Classically Liberal than modern-day Capitalism based on an esoteric reading of man’s purpose and intellectual freedom is one that ironically violates Classical Liberalism. Classical Liberalism is an ideology that exalts the individual, Chomsky’s Socialism would prioritize the collective by organizing a society that focuses on the rights and benefits of the “Proletariat” as a whole. This would violate the Liberal focus on the individual, even if there were majority support for a socialist system, the individual’s desires remain the most important. Next, Chomsky mentioned how the purpose of man is to create and Capitalism somehow strips him away of that, the latter assertion is simply not true. The freedom to pursue a passion is a free choice that one can make in a Capitalist society. Now I can predict the counterargument to this, which is that Capitalism may provide

freedom, but it does not provide you with the practicality of actually pursuing that freedom. However, from the rights-based tradition we learned from Kant, Classical Liberalism espouses that while your rights are protected, there is no guarantee of what is good. As a result, there is no guarantee of personal passion under Classical Liberal thought, only the guarantee of your rights.

Now that we have explained Classical Liberalism as a philosophy and analyzed the views of Chomsky, what can be said about the merits of Classical Liberalism? Firstly, Classical Liberalism and its ideas of free markets, rights, and equality have undoubtedly been the major underpinnings of contemporary Western civilization. Our freedom, longevity, and prosperity can be accredited largely to the ideas of Classical Liberalism. However, Classical Liberalism has a fatal flaw, its inability to contend with moral decay. While there are many schools of thought within Classical Liberalism that could argue the government does have the right to intervene on certain social issues; those issues would generally apply to very specific situations like prostitution, in which it can be argued on a Liberal basis that prostitution violates the rights of women (Hoffman and Graham, 2015, 188 and 189). However, it is very difficult to argue that Classical Liberalism can endorse the idea that the government should intervene in situations that do not affect individual rights. As a result, Classical Liberalism does not have any mechanism to combat moral decay.

The Hobbesian pessimism around the state of nature and human action reigns largely true, while there may be preexisting rights, it is foolish to assume that without large institutions like religion and government to unify and civilize us, we would be prosperous. As President Nixon said in 1968, “But there can be no progress without order, no freedom without order, no justice without order” (Nixon Foundation, 2011). Order does not just refer to controlling acts of crime, but also the social order to combat social decay. This means that government intervention

is necessary on issues like abortion, traditional marriage, drugs, gender, and church. A society that abolishes every modicum of tradition and religious morality cannot exist within the realm of stability. Classical Liberalism does not have an answer to the instability of redefining marriage, legal abortion on demand, and abolishing the single most important societal organizer, which is gender. It provides no solution to our moral qualms, and as a result, it remains an incredibly flawed philosophy.

### **State Capitalism and State Socialism**

Now we come to State Capitalism and State Socialism, their similarities and overlap in terms of the role of the state and economics caused Chomsky to speak about both of them in tandem. Now Chomsky has a point here in speaking about them together, they are both essentially state socialism but in different ways.

State Capitalism is a system in which the state controls the economy through nationalization, this means that the economy is filled with a bunch of state-owned enterprises and/or private enterprises with the state having large control through mechanisms like overregulation or state-owned shares. Chomsky describes it more as the government and large corporations working in tandem with one another. State Socialism is a system in which the state controls the means of production. The state will own all industry, resources, and property under this system (Tucker, 1985).

These systems seem so similar in their definitions that it may cause one to ponder how they differ. Well, the differences lie in how they are structured. A State Capitalist system follows a corporate and for-profit model in which the State either owns all corporations or has significant control over all corporations. A State Socialist differs because there is no corporate model, the State simply controls the entire economy directly through its agencies. Another way to simply

put it is that State Capitalism is more decentralized while State Socialism is not. However, the result is still practically the same, the government controls the economy one way or the other.

Chomsky argues that these systems go hand in hand, the government will be centralized at the top with both systems, whether it's a group of corporate CEOs or corrupt politicians, it's all the same. He draws such little difference between State Capitalism and State Socialism, that he uses the United States as the prime example for both systems. He describes how the American government is a system of private power that seeks to spread around the world, this private power grew especially after World War 2 when Chomsky believes a system of defense spending fueled growth began. He quotes Conservative Commentator Alfred Chandler to support his point:

Moreover, the supplying of huge armies and navies fighting the most massive war of all time required a tight, centralized control of the national economy. This effort brought corporate managers to Washington to carry out one of the most complex pieces of economic planning in history. That experience lessened the ideological fears over the government's role in stabilizing the economy.

To summarize, Chomsky believes that State Capitalism and Social Socialism are indistinguishable systems that have manifested in the United States with oligarchical control of the political system through corporate influence, and a Capitalist economic system that is fueled by worker exploitation, war, and government control.

The most apt description of Chomsky's views on the manifestation of State Capitalism in the United States would be "conspiratorial." Firstly, as we saw with the definitions of State Capitalism and State Socialism, they are not the same, and Chomsky is doing the listeners a disservice by essentially treating both philosophies as one. Secondly, Chomsky has embraced the



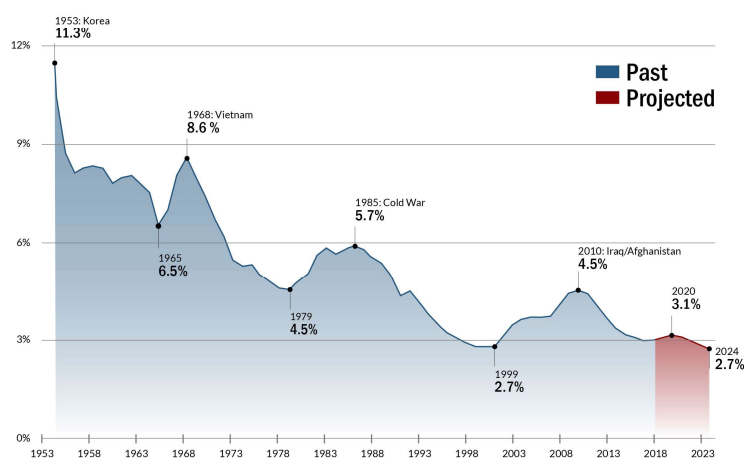
anti-war Socialist conspiracy theories about the United States' military and defense spending. The idea that the United States economy is fueled just by war is ridiculous considering defense spending was declining precipitously in 1970

when Chomsky gave this address. By our spending rates, our economy could have never been dependent completely or even largely on the military (United States Department of Defense, 2018). This disproves the notion that somehow the United States practices "militarized state capitalism."

Lastly, his assertions about our political system point towards corporate control of our institutions, but there's no evidence presented from Chomsky, just conjecture. He also

asserts that the United States' corporate interests led it to invade and destabilize other countries in order to support multinational Capitalism through his presentation of a book called "Political Economy of American Foreign Policy", which he describes as the "manifesto of the American ruling class." Now while this book does assert that more countries adopting Communism would, "reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West." That should not be attributed to some global Capitalist conspiracy, but rather to the fact that Communism is a flawed system that will harm whichever nation it takes hold in. This is why American foreign policy should revolve around making sure collectivist systems that harm local and global economies should be overthrown or destroyed. Chomsky holds these more

### Defense Spending as a % of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)



Source: National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 2019 (Table 6-13); historical and projected GDP from both the FY 2019 and FY 2020 Budget of the United States Government.

DOD funding is near a record low as a percentage of our economy

noninterventionist and conspiratorial views because he believes the current systems are so flawed that they must be the work of some Capitalist cabal of money-hungry CEOs.

Now Chomsky is not incorrect in asserting that these systems are flawed, this paper would agree. The reason State Capitalism and State Socialism are flawed is because of government control of the economy and eventual degradation of rights. Government intervention in the economy has the consequence of helping larger corporations. While it's cynical to assume that the government is intentionally trying to help these organizations, it certainly seems like that is the effect. For example, minimum wage laws are a key example of state-capitalist policy. They disproportionately benefit larger corporations because they have economies of scale and the ability to automate, which drives out smaller competitors, essentially making minimum wage laws the government subsidizing corporations (Forbes, 2024). Chomsky commented on the phenomenon of government-subsidized corporations in a 2011 speech, where he touched on government bailouts and corporate subsidies (Chomsky, 2011). This type of corporatism within State Capitalism and direct control under State Socialism are not good for the economy. As Economist Milton Friedman expounds, the economy grows from voluntary and free-market interactions between individuals and businesses, and when the government keeps attempting to meddle in that, the economy will not grow and people will not prosper (Fraser Institute). Furthermore, freedom is inseparable from economic freedom. This is espoused by the Sharon Statement from the Young America's Foundation, "That liberty is indivisible, and that political freedom cannot long exist without economic freedom." (Young America's Foundation, 2016). This statement describes the obvious, without the liberty to interact in the economy freely, start a business, and become self-sufficient without government, freedom is trampled completely. A just nation needs independent families and businesses to operate in an ordered and traditional society

in which the State does not attempt to constantly decide how the economy ought to function, but rather let the invisible hand of the market as described by Adam Smith take charge. Price controls, minimum wage, excessive taxes, controlling corporations, and controlling the means of production are all an affront to a free and just society.

When someone asked the Islamic Prophet Muhammad to impose price controls, he said “[I want] to meet God without having to answer for some injustice that [I] might commit in this respect” (Journal of Political Economy, 1994).

### **Libertarian Socialism**

Libertarian Socialism is a philosophy that supports the public organization of society through self-governance and public ownership. It rejects the idea of a state and political systems, seeing them as authoritarian, violative of individual rights, and eternally corrupted by Capitalist interests. Furthermore, they oppose Capitalism, private property, and private ownership of the means of production. Libertarian Socialists envision a society in which everyone is free from state and corporate oppression and exploitation, instead, society will be publicly organized and cooperative instead of having any type of hierarchy (Libertarian Socialism, n.d.).

Chomsky subscribes to the philosophy of Libertarian Socialism, believing it to be the philosophy we should follow as a society. He starts his remarks on Libertarian Socialism with sharp criticisms of State Socialism, believing that the State under State Socialism would simply be an oppressive class, an alternative to the bourgeoisie of Capitalists. He cites British Communist William Paul in his criticisms of State Socialism:

The revolutionary Socialist denies that State ownership can end in anything other than a bureaucratic despotism. We have seen why the State cannot democratically control

industry. Industry can only be democratically owned and controlled by the workers electing directly from their own ranks industrial administrative committees.

This public democratic organization is referred to as “Council Communism” by Chomsky, which he believes may be the natural future of Revolutionary Socialism. These ideas may seem very anarchist as they are anti-state, and Chomsky analyzes this in light of the fact that Marxists and Anarchists have had a history of enmity. The main point of difference between Anarchists and Marxists seems to be their use of the state, while Anarchists want to destroy the state immediately, Marxists wish to use the State to establish a worker’s revolution and destroy Capitalism. This Marxist criticism of Anarchist “naivety” was best shown by Chomsky in a letter written by German Marxist Friedrich Engels:

The anarchists put the thing upside down. They declare that the proletarian revolution must begin by doing away with the political organization of the state. . . . But to destroy it at such a moment would be to destroy the only organism by means of which the victorious proletariat can assert its newly conquered power, hold down its capitalist adversaries and carry out that economic revolution of society...

Chomsky himself places uncertainty on who’s right amongst the two opposing factions.

Chomsky summarizes Libertarian Socialism at the end of his explanatory remarks by saying:

The libertarian socialist goes on to insist that state power must be eliminated in favor of democratic organization of industrial society, with direct popular control over all institutions by those who participate in—as well as those who are directly affected by—the workings of these institutions. So one might imagine a system of workers' councils, consumers' councils, commune assemblies, regional federations, and so on.

This definition by Chomsky does give us more insight into the practicality of such a philosophy, which he incidentally speaks more about during the counterargument portion of his remarks.

Chomsky recognizes two main counterarguments, firstly that this system runs contrary to human nature, and secondly that it is fundamentally inefficient.

He cites Kant and Rousseau to defend the idea that man should be free and that we are not born for eternal servitude. An important quote he cites from Kant helps sum up Chomsky's views on human freedom, "To accept the principle that freedom is worthless for those under one's control and that one has the right to refuse it to them forever, is an infringement on the right of God himself, who has created man to be free." He believes human history has clearly shown that man is born to be free, not to be ruled by benevolent autocrats, and therefore human nature would not run contrary to Libertarian Socialism.

Chomsky argues that Capitalism uses workers as tools to further power, profit, and growth, instead of the true need of humans, which we need as individuals. He disputes that we need to define "efficiency" in such materialistic ways as it doesn't align with our needs as humans and instead aligns with greed.

### **Challenging Chomsky's vision**

As a self-avowed Conservative and Free-Marketer, Chomsky's vision does not describe a free society, but rather an unattainable one that is a smokescreen for Authoritarian Socialism. The main two points of contention with Chomsky's vision are its attainability and desirability.

Firstly, Libertarian Socialism is not practical and as a philosophy, it outlines a utopian society that is unattainable for us to achieve. As an ideology, it believes in the destruction of the state and its hierarchies, with society working cooperatively with no such thing as private property. However, asking one simple question destroys the basic framework devised by

Libertarian Socialists, “What if someone decides to start his own business?” The reason this question is so important is because it debunks every foolish assumption of Libertarian Socialism. Do you use the power of public will or Worker’s councils to destroy this new business enterprise? If so, the libertarian and freedom aspects of this ideology have been violated since force is being used by a Council or the people against a free member of society. Do you let the man run his business? If so, your Socialist society has collapsed into an Anarcho-Capitalist one in which everyone has the freedom to do anything. This takes us to the reality of Libertarian Socialism, it’s not possible. This is simply because Socialism as an ideology is fundamentally Authoritarian and has to be enforced through force, freedom is incompatible with an ideology that claims we must voluntarily work together even though there’s never been a point in human history in which that has worked. People have individual dreams, and Socialism’s idea of crushing those dreams through collective servitude can only be done through the force of government.

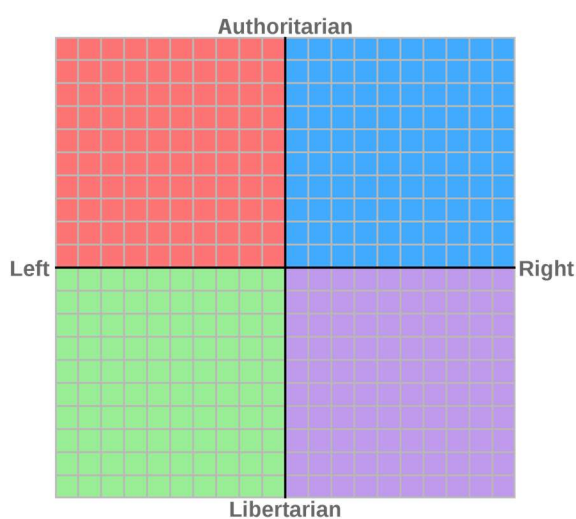
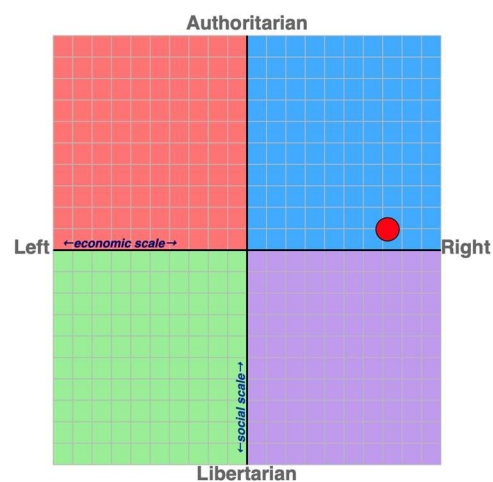
Lastly, we must cover the desirability of Libertarian Socialism and Chomsky’s vision. Is it desirable to have a society in which your freedom to create a business, own property, and create things with your name on it, is taken from you? Chomsky expounded the idea that Capitalism takes away the creative purpose of man and turns man into robots for profit, but in reality, Socialism takes away an individual’s freedom to become whatever they want, to own whatever they, and to pursue what they want. The idea that are being exploited is nonsense, people have the freedom to choose whatever work they want. The issue with Socialism is that it attempts to get rid of the freedom to fail by creating some cooperative society with hierarchy, but that strips a man of his natural inclination to compete and succeed, the freedom of success is taken away from individuals under Socialism. It is self-evident, that Libertarian Socialism is not

desirable because it is a fundamentally authoritarian ideology that strips man of his natural purpose of success, and instead attempts to create this forced society in which everyone is the same, everyone is a robot. As Winston Churchill said to the House of Commons in 1945, “The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings. The inherent virtue of Socialism is the equal sharing of miseries” (Hillsdale College, 2016).

## Political Compass

The Political Compass is a visual tool to map different ideologies and people along the political spectrum. The Compass works along two axes, an economic one running from left to right, and a social one running from top to bottom. The matrix is similar to the matrix of political philosophies described by Chomsky, which is why it helps us

map those philosophies using the four quadrants. However, these quadrants do not fully fit in the philosophies we outlined as the added social axis doesn't describe political organization regarding the economy, but rather social issues like abortion and gay adoption. Regarding our four political philosophies,



Classical Liberalism is in  
Quadrant 3, State Capitalism

is in Quadrant 1, State Socialism is in Quadrants 2, and

Libertarian Socialism is in Quadrant 4.

## Restoring Our Future

The model that America should pursue is not the Libertarian Socialist model or even the mixed economy model we have right now, but instead, a model that goes back to the Classically Liberal roots of our nation while upholding the philosophical teachings of American Conservatism. The modern-day underpinnings of American Conservatism come from thinkers like Barry Goldwater, William F. Buckley, and Frank Meyer, who all espoused the belief in limited government, economic freedom, and traditionalism. This ideology started becoming more mainstream in American politics during the mid-twentieth century, and the ideology can best be explained by Conservative Commentator William F. Buckley:

Among our convictions: It is the job of centralized government (in peacetime) to protect its citizens' lives, liberty and property. All other activities of government tend to diminish freedom and hamper progress. The growth of government (the dominant social feature of this century) must be fought relentlessly. In this great social conflict of the era, we are, without reservations, on the libertarian side. The profound crisis of our era is, in essence, the conflict between the Social Engineers, who seek to adjust mankind to scientific utopias, and the disciples of Truth, who defend the organic moral order. We believe that truth is neither arrived at nor illuminated by monitoring election results, binding though these are for other purposes, but by other means, including a study of human experience. On this point we are, without reservations, on the conservative side (National Review, 1955).

Returning to this ideology expounded by Buckley, which can be best described as a child of Conservative and Libertarian thought, is crucial to an orderly and prosperous society that does not have the deep flaws of decay or collectivism adopted by folks like Noam Chomsky. It's



important to recognize that our system is not plagued by Christian nationalism or Capitalism, but it is plagued by a large government that overreaches its boundaries, takes away our freedoms, and endorses social decay. Our system sets folks up for failure by increasing dependence on government instead of increasing self-dependence. As a result, we have created a State-dependent system with no room for faith, leading to an atomizing ignorance amongst our population, a recipe for societal disorder. As President Trump said at the 2018 State of the Union, “Faith and family, not government and bureaucracy, are the center of the American life” (Trump: Faith and..., 2018). The only way to restore America’s future is found in three main ideas that we have unfortunately forgotten, Decentralization, Freedom, and Order.

### ***Decentralization***

Firstly, the United States is a highly centralized system, we often forget the important words of the 10th Amendment, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, were reserved to the States respectively, or to the people” (Reagan Presidential Library, n.d.). We are a Constitutional Federal Republic, and it is important to understand that America cannot succeed with a large Federal government telling its 330 million inhabitants how to live (United States Census Bureau, n.d.). The people of Texas and California are different, so let them be different and handle their affairs locally. This is not to say that the State should not have authority, it should hold its authority granted by the Constitution. However, the authority granted by the Constitution is limited. Now, why is decentralization so important for restoring the future of America? As the Late Justice Scalia said, “Structure is everything” (Cato Institute, 2016). Government is made by man and should work for man; it is incredibly dangerous to have a system in which power is constantly centralized in one person or one body. The many philosophies we covered: State Capitalism, State Socialism, and Libertarian

Socialism, generally lead to despotic authoritarianism as we saw with the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China. Keeping to our roots by ensuring the Republican structure of our government is crucial to staying free and solving problems. The defense of a decentralized system and states' rights are best expounded by 1964 Republican nominee and Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater:

There is a reason for its reservation of States' Rights. Not only does it prevent the accumulation of power in a central government that is remote from the people and relatively immune from popular restraints; it also recognizes the principle that essentially local problems are best dealt with by the people most directly concerned (Goldwater, 1960, p. 29).

Now practically, what would decentralization mean? It would mean sending many systems and programs down to the states. Welfare and entitlements should be sent down to the states with a block grant structure, large national programs like Social Security should either be privatized or abolished entirely while guaranteeing the retirement of those who have already paid in, and the Department of Education should also be abolished. As James Madison said in Federalist No. 45, "The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in State governments are numerous and indefinite" (Madison, 1787). The states are the ones who should be handling most affairs, not the federal government.

### ***Freedom***

Renowned Conservative philosopher Frank Meyer (1996) once wrote "A free economy is a condition of political freedom because it is an aspect of political freedom" (p. 161). Freedom is a concept found in America's founding documents, and it is arguably the most important value

we have as a nation. However, our commitment to freedom is waning. This is largely because we do not attribute economic freedom to our understanding of freedom anymore. Instead, folks have started to believe that if the government does not provide a service like healthcare or education, that is a violation of their freedom. This is a misunderstanding of the word “freedom,” which means “the state of not being subject to or affected by (a particular undesirable thing)” (Merriam-Webster). This brings us to the collapse of freedom in the United States, particularly the collapse of economic freedom. Even with that collapse, individuals may wonder how constant government intervention in the economy through higher taxes and regulations, “anti-freedom” per se. Well, this is answered best by Conservative author Paul Kengor (2014):

The more the government takes in taxes, the less freedom the individual has with money earned. If the government increases your taxes by 50 percent, you lose that much more money-money that might have been used to reduce a mortgage, pay off student loans, purchase a car, buy groceries, do home repairs, fix a broken dishwasher, hire a plumber or electrician, replace a lawn mower or do landscaping, or give to charity. When the government takes that money, you lose the freedom to use that money. As for regulations, excessive regulations hinder or even halt the ability to open or operate a business, which, incidentally, provides jobs for others (p. 12).

To expand on Kengor’s explanation, the government violating the ability of an individual to start a business or buy things using the money they have earned goes back to the definition of freedom. The government—an undesirable thing in this situation—is restricting a free citizen’s right to use their resources to better their own lives. There are many real-life examples of these anti-freedom government policies. Regarding taxes, the Estate Tax—also known as the “Death Tax”—is a great example of the government stripping away freedom from American citizens.

The Estate Tax is a tax on transferring property at the owner's death, this affects family farms all across the nation that own large plots of land but do not have large accumulations of wealth or profit margins, this means many farmers and ranchers are forced to sell huge amounts of their property or business just to avoid bankruptcy (American Farm Bureau Federation, 2024).

Regulations-wise, a key example of the opportunity-destroying regulatory state is the fifty-employee tax penalty of Obamacare. One of the provisions in Obamacare about employers is regarding the number of employees a business employs, if you have 50 or more employees, you must provide health insurance for all of them. If you do not provide insurance, you must pay a tax penalty. Many employers choose to not grow their business over 49 employees because they are not able to pay for insurance or the tax, these employers are called 49ers because they are stuck at 49 employees because of an intrusive government regulation (Cato Institute, 2012).

Furthermore, government intrusion into the economy—by taxing and spending—also hurts economic growth, Milton Friedman described this phenomenon to Congressmen in 1993.

“There's a certain total amount of resources that the United States has available to it, call it a hundred, if government spends 50, only 50 is available for private enterprise to use or private individuals to use for consumption and production and saving investment” (Milton Friedman, 2015). The government's constant intrusion into the economy through tax and spend policies, not only takes away Americans' freedom to use their money however they see fit, but it also reduces private investment and consumption, which is what boosts economic growth and prosperity (National Bureau of Economic Research, 2000). As Kengor (2014) mentioned, “The economy [needs] to be freed in order to perform.” (p. 45). However, it is not correct to state that the government has no role at all in the economy: health, environmental, and anti-fraud regulations are still necessary for societal well-being, as well as some form of tax to fund our justice system,

military, and bureaucracy. Balance is necessary, but right now our system is overwhelmingly unbalanced on the side of big intrusive government.

Moving forward, what needs to be done right now to free this economy and maximize economic freedom for America? Firstly, the federal government needs to abolish a whole host of unnecessary taxes that burden the American citizen, this includes the: estate tax, corporate tax, capital gains tax, and payroll tax. The national government should only have one tax, a flat income tax of 15-20% on everyone besides those making below 36,000 dollars a year. Secondly, the regulatory state needs to be dismantled. The federal government simply has too many regulations to even craft a comprehensive countermeasure, but such a countermeasure would consist of getting rid of many business regulations like the ones mentioned previously within Obamacare, as well as other anti-competitive laws like the Jones Act which restricts how cargo can be transported (Cato Institute, 2018). Lastly, the welfare state and non-defense government spending needs to be cut. Similarly to the decentralization plans, a bunch of programs would need to either be cut, sent down to the states, privatized, or abolished, this includes Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Department of Education, Obamacare, the Small Business Administration, the Davis Act, the Rural Housing Development Service, and many more (Heritage Foundation, 1997). Regarding the states, it would be less problematic for them to run programs unlike the federal government since it would be more local and therefore in the hands of smaller communities, but emulating the federal government would be preferable to maximize liberty. Under these many changes to the state, we would move dramatically closer to the Classically Liberal view of government while still recognizing the government's crucial role in Defense, Justice, and Order. This free-market system would help America be freer and less shackled to government control.

As President Ronald Reagan said, “As government expands, liberty contracts” (Kengor p. 45). However, under these plans, the government would contract and liberty would expand.

### ***Order***

The final piece to the puzzle of restoring the future of America is order. Frank Meyer (1996) once wrote:

The free capitalist economic order does not in itself and cannot in itself move towards virtue. It does not and cannot directly inculcate virtue; but it does, by foreclosing state control of the economy and guaranteeing the possibility of individual economic independence to some and free economic choice to all in an economy of high productivity, conduce to freedom for the person (p. 140).

Decentralization and Economic Freedom, clearly aligning with Classical Liberal thought, is not enough for a society to prosper, and this paper would be remiss to ignore such an important part of restoring the future of America. Going back to decentralization, the federal government would not be the institution that would guide virtue and enforce order, but rather the state governments. This is because the federal government cannot be trusted with such power and responsibility, neither does it have the constitutional right to guide virtue and enforce order.

Order can be best defined as “a state of affairs in which the laws and rules regulating the public behavior of members of a community are observed and authority is obeyed.” (Merriam-Webster). This refers to the social order that would need to be kept in check by the state governments while also not violating the rights of man and becoming despotic. Yet why is keeping social order so important? In the words of President John Adams, “Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other” (John Adams Academy). Our nation is a free one, but that is not a license to do whatever

you may please, if it were, then society would slowly collapse with no moral rules guiding it. This type of social anarchy is inherent in philosophies like Classical Liberalism and Libertarian Socialism, which is partly why they are not desirable.

Firstly, virtue can be defined as, “behavior showing high moral standards.” (Merriam-Webster). These high moral standards are rooted in the Christian vision of nature and destiny. While a theocracy is not desirable, laws rooted in preserving social order through Christian morality are desirable. Secondly, we must distinguish guiding virtue by upholding the social order versus despotically forcing virtue upon individuals. Examples of forcing virtue on individuals are things like banning divorce, forcing individuals to marry, and limiting personal expression. These ideas are antithetical to our nation’s commitment to freedom and would not be successful as “No community can make them virtuous... Unless men are free to be vicious, they cannot be virtuous” (Meyer, p. 148). However, this viciousness is within the moral order, Meyer (1996) described it as “Virtue in freedom.” (p.163). This means we leave man to be free so he can discover virtue on his own while still requiring some legal baseline for the social order. This social order would consist of restricting drugs, banning prostitution, and upholding traditional marriage. As Kengor (2014) stated regarding the views of Reagan, “Freedom without faith begets license and invites vice rather than virtue” (p. 16). The line between despotism and ordered liberty is not always an easy one to find, but it’s necessary to find so we can pursue a nation that exalts freedom as well as faith.

We have discussed the desirability of the American Conservative approach to our current State Capitalist system, but what is the possibility of such a change unfolding? Unfortunately, it’s not very likely our system will shift towards Conservatism, or even Chomsky’s Libertarian Social for that matter. As Reagan said, “No government ever voluntarily reduces itself in size.

Government programs, once launched, never disappear. Actually, a government bureau is the nearest thing to eternal life we'll ever see on this earth!" (Goodreads). The historical precedent that shows the state will ever downsize or change economic systems is scant. While we have seen cultural victories that have contributed to a more virtuous social order, like the overturning of Roe v. Wade, the popular will of people through polls and referendums has shown that a large conservative shift to the social order does not seem possible in the foreseeable future. Some type of popular revolution also seems unlikely considering our institutions are already decentralized in many ways, making it difficult to hold some type of popular revolution. This nation is also very divided, meaning a revolution would only represent a small group of people, putting its chances of success in serious doubt.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has analyzed the four major philosophies mentioned by Noam Chomsky in his 1971 speech "Government in the Future." Furthermore, we have analyzed and critiqued Noam Chomsky's views on these philosophies and whether his views—especially regarding Libertarian Socialism—hold merit. However, this paper has concluded that none of these four ideologies would be desirable for the United States to implement, instead an American Conservatism from the traditions of Buckley, Meyer, and Goldwater would be the more desirable and possible for the United States to implement even if it's improbable due to contemporary circumstances. American Conservatism consists of decentralization, freedom, and order. This paper strongly advocates for the implementation of Conservative policy in the United States to free our economy, decentralize our political system, and order our society.

***"Our country is in decline. This decline is not inevitable. It is a choice." - Ron DeSantis***



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