



# REJOINDER TO HOPPE ON REACTIONARY LIBERTARIANISM

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## ABSTRACT

*Professor Hans-Hermann Hoppe gave a public speech that is filled with errors, misrepresentations, and fallacies. He takes on several main subjects: monarchism, Israel, the Frankfurt School, Donald Trump, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and Javier Milei. This author views all three through the eyeglasses of libertarianism and misunderstands them all. Is he an anti-Semite? He makes many statements that can be construed as such. Read what he has to say and decide for yourself. It cannot be denied Hoppe is regarded by some as a world class libertarian theoretician. His work in democracy and monarchism; in defense of private property rights; his contribution to argumentation ethics; his arguments in behalf of anarcho-capitalism, are usually presented to sustain this stance. Those who support him do so on the grounds of his views on Austrian economics in general, and praxeology in particular. However, when many of this author's premises are analyzed, they do not pass rigorous tests. The subjects treated in the present work are an example of this phenomenon.*

## REJOINDER TO HOPPE ON REACTIONARY LIBERTARIANISM

Hans-Hermann Hoppe gave a lecture titled "Considerations and Reflections of a Veteran

Reactionary Libertarian" at the annual libertarian conference held by the Mises Institute (LewRockwell.com, 2025). Besides his clearly visible anti-Semitic inclinations scattered throughout the lecture, the veteran libertarian

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made numerous historical blunders that simply cannot go unaddressed or unrebuffed. This rebuttal argues that Hoppe's stance is pseudo-historic and pseudo-scientific, built upon selectively chosen examples and ideological biases rather than on a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of history. Through meticulous historical evidence and analysis, we demonstrate that his generalizations are oversimplified, unsupported, and inevitably collapse under scrutiny.

From the very first moments of the lecturer's performance, any thinking individual should have felt sufficiently puzzled to raise a few obvious questions. Yet, curiously enough, neither the esteemed professors in attendance nor their otherwise eager graduate students—not to mention the undergraduate students—bothered interrupting this spectacle with queries, neither during nor at its conclusion. Apparently, the lecturer's overwhelming aura of authority ensured his narrative remained entirely unchallenged.

Yes, we acknowledge this speaker's prominent role in shaping anarcho-capitalism, but let's be perfectly clear: this prominence does not grant him *carte blanche* to mangle historical interpretations. He's certainly no historian, and his simplistic method of categorizing historical events firmly proves this point. His lecture might well have quietly slipped into oblivion—noticed by no one beyond the fifty or so present—but the good folks at the Mises Institute, in their infinite wisdom, decided the world deserved to witness this "masterpiece" on YouTube.

Since apparently nobody present dared to ask Hoppe critical questions, we'll bravely shoulder this responsibility ourselves. Who exactly are "we"? Just three Jews representing three different generations, born in three countries—the USA, the Soviet Union, and Argentina—all supporting Israel. Surely, some observers might quickly leap to the conclusion that this critique is yet another nefarious global Jewish conspiracy aimed squarely at poor German/Turkish Hoppe.

Let's remind ourselves, however: genuine scientific research rests upon three fundamental foundations—observation, logic and classification. Hoppe, in his infinite creativity, proposes classifying wars as either "Monarchical" or "Democratic." Hoppe's analysis contrasts

monarchical wars, which he describes as limited, pragmatic, and easily resolved, with democratic wars, which he portrays as ideological, involving entire populations, and concluding with vindictive peace treaties. He claims this distinction reflects fundamental differences in governance: monarchs, reliant on their own resources, wage restrained conflicts, while democracies, driven by public sentiment, pursue total wars with punitive outcomes.

Hoppe cited the Napoleonic Wars and the Vienna Congress of 1815, claiming that these wars were resolved fairly by "gentlemen," even sparing Napoleon's life. In contrast, he argued that democratic wars result in vindictive peace treaties, such as those following the American Civil War and World Wars I and II. This distinction, rooted deeply in his usual and not original critique of democracy, frames monarchies as inherently restrained and democracies as prone to excess.

But what evidence, what historical records did he draw upon to concoct such a tidy schema? To answer that, one doesn't need a Ph.D.; a decent grasp of middle-school history would suffice.

#### Monarchical Wars: Not Always Limited or Pragmatic

Hoppe's portrayal of monarchical wars as limited, pragmatic, and easily resolved does not withstand historical scrutiny. Many monarchical conflicts were deeply ideological, extended over decades or centuries, involved broad societal participation, and concluded with punitive treaties—precisely the features he attributes exclusively to democratic wars.

The Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) is a prime example of a monarchical war driven by ideology rather than mere territorial pragmatism (Britannica Editors, 2026, February 16). Originating as a religious conflict between Catholic and Protestant states within the Holy Roman Empire, it escalated into a European-wide struggle involving monarchies such as France, Spain, Sweden, and Austria. The ideological stakes of control over religious authority and the soul of Christendom fueled its intensity. Monarchs like Ferdinand II of Austria and Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden framed the war as a divine mission, rallying support through appeals to faith.

Far from being limited, the war's devastation was staggering. Germany's population plummeted from approximately 21 million to 13 million, with some regions losing up to 50% of their inhabitants due to combat, famine, and disease (Heinz, et. al., 2023). Entire towns were razed, and economic collapse followed, with trade routes disrupted and agricultural production greatly halted. This was not a restrained territorial dispute but a protracted ideological clash, lasting three decades and directly contradicting Hoppe's claim that monarchical wars end quickly due to resource constraints. The war's scope and destructiveness rival the "total wars" he associates with democracies, exposing the pseudo-historic nature of his generalization.

The Hundred Years' War (1337–1453) between England and France further undermines Hoppe's thesis (Britannica Editors, 2026, February 13). Spanning an exhaustive 116 years, this conflict arose from dynastic claims, but rapidly evolved into a broader ideological struggle fueled by burgeoning national identities. Monarchs sustained this prolonged war through innovative financing methods, including heavy taxation, international loans from Italian bankers, and the systematic plundering of occupied territories. Brutal battles such as Crécy (1346) and Agincourt (1415), coupled with prolonged sieges like Orléans (1428–1429), resulted in devastating casualties, widespread suffering, and significant economic ruin.

Hoppe argues rather simplistically that monarchical wars are short because monarchs bear the financial burdens personally. Yet, English and French kings adeptly circumvented such constraints by mobilizing resources across their realms, cleverly rallying nobles and commoners alike through appeals to patriotism and divine right. The war's unprecedented duration and brutality, marked by village destruction, famine, and mass displacement, flatly contradict Hoppe's romanticized notion of limited monarchical conflicts. The ideological undertones of national honor and legitimacy further erode his supposed clear-cut division between monarchical pragmatism and democratic ideological fervor.

Hoppe's assertion that monarchs, unlike democracies, do not rely on mass public support for warfare collapses entirely when confronted

with the Crusades (1095–1291). Initiated by Pope Urban II and led by monarchs such as Richard the Lionheart of England and Louis IX of France, these campaigns were unmistakably ideological, and framed explicitly as holy wars to reclaim Jerusalem from Muslim rule. The relentless religious propaganda promising salvation and indulgences galvanized not only knights but also peasants, clergy, and even children, tragically exemplified by the ill-fated Children's Crusade of 1212 (Williams, 2023).

The Crusades spanned two centuries, absorbing vast resources and mobilizing entire societies through feudal levies and ecclesiastical taxation. Such extensive societal mobilization mirrors precisely the mass engagement Hoppe attributes almost exclusively to democratic wars. The deep ideological fervor rooted in religious zeal drove sustained participation, undermining his claim that monarchical wars lacked ideological intensity or widespread public involvement.

These examples clearly illustrate that monarchical wars often bore ideological motivations, were prolonged and often involve large-scale societal mobilization. Hoppe's daydreamed and overly simplistic views systematically ignore this overwhelming historical evidence, rendering his stance undeniably pseudo-historic.

Furthermore, Hoppe's glowing portrayal of monarchical peace treaties as inherently reasonable conveniently overlooks historical evidence that directly contradicts his idealized narrative. Numerous monarchical treaties, far from being generous acts of noble magnanimity, were explicitly punitive, strategically designed to weaken and punish defeated monarchies.

For instance, the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), ending the Thirty Years' War, starkly contradicts Hoppe's rosy depiction (Britannica Editors, 2026, January 23). While it indeed laid foundations for modern state sovereignty, the treaty imposed significant penalties on defeated powers. The Holy Roman Empire lost substantial cohesion, France acquired Alsace, and Sweden gained territories like Pomerania—all explicitly designed to weaken Habsburg dominance.

The Treaty of Utrecht (1713), which concluded the War of the Spanish Succession, serves as a good example too (Downey & Maypole, 2023). Rather



than providing a magnanimous resolution, it harshly stripped Spain of strategically vital territories, including Gibraltar and Minorca to Britain, and the Spanish Netherlands to Austria; thus, crippling Spain's power and greatly diminishing its international influence. This treaty was less about restoring peaceful relations and more about victoriously redrawing Europe's political map to benefit the winning monarchies, revealing a clear intention to dominate rather than reconcile.

Similarly, the Treaty of Paris (1763), which ended the Seven Years' War, was exceptionally severe towards France (Boundless World History, n.d.). The treaty imposed heavy territorial losses, forcing France to relinquish vast colonial holdings, including Canada and territories in India, significantly weakening its global influence and imperial ambitions. This wasn't an example of restrained monarchical fairness but rather a calculated and ruthless power play by victorious monarchies, aiming explicitly to punish and contain French power.

Even the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), concluding the War of the Austrian Succession, was punitive, compelling Prussia to cede crucial territories to curb its rising influence and ambitions (Britannica Editors, 2025, October 11). Such harsh settlements clearly illustrate that monarchical treaties often mirrored the very punitive traits Hoppe exclusively attributes to democratic agreements, further demolishing his oversimplified binary classification.

Thus, historical evidence abundantly demonstrates that monarchical treaties, far from always being reasonable and restrained, frequently embodied calculated strategies of dominance, punishment, and power redistribution. This starkly contradicts Hoppe's simplistic portrayal and further highlights the intellectual bankruptcy and historical inaccuracies at the core of his thesis.

Democratic Wars: Not Uniquely Ideological or Vindictive

Actually, the notion of 'democratic war' should be placed in quotation marks, as such a classification is absurd on two points.

1. As Natan Sharansky (yes, another Jew) argued in his book *The Case for Democracy*:

*The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny and Terror* (2004), liberal democracies are less likely to go to war with one another. Truly democratic wars are a historical rarity.

2. Most wars classified by Hoppe as democratic were, in fact, initiated by various authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. The fact that a democratic coalition won should not make the war itself 'democratic.'

Nevertheless, we will use his nomenclature for clarity.

Hoppe argues that democratic wars inherently embody ideological fervor, mobilize entire populations, and inevitably end with vindictive peace treaties. However, a nuanced historical analysis reveals a far more complicated reality: 'democratic wars' often encompass mixed motives, involve monarchies or totalitarian regimes, and can lead to constructive outcomes, thereby severely undermining his generalized assertions.

The American Civil War (1861–1865), one of Hoppe's own examples, perfectly demonstrates a blend of ideological and pragmatic elements. While undeniably driven in part by the ideological divide over slavery (Northern abolitionists fiercely opposed Southern defenders of slavery) the Union's primary initial objective was the preservation of territorial integrity, mirroring the territorial motivations frequently seen in monarchical conflicts. President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (1863) served strategic purposes, undermining Confederate power by freeing slaves within rebel territories, thus bolstering Union morale and international support.

Lincoln initially proposed lenient peace terms through his Ten Percent Plan (1863), seeking rapid reconciliation rather than revenge. It was only after his assassination in 1865 that harsher Reconstruction policies emerged, driven by Radical Republicans who sought political leverage and retribution against Southern elites. These context-specific shifts clearly refute Hoppe's simplistic claim that democratic wars invariably conclude vindictively.

Furthermore, Hoppe cites World War I (1914–1918) and World War II (1939–1945) as quintessential examples of democratic wars

culminating in vindictive peace agreements. Yet, both conflicts involved complex dynamics beyond simple ideological motivations. World War I saw significant participation by monarchical and imperial powers such as Nicolas II Russian Empire, Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm II, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire, all driven by expansionist ambitions, nationalism, and militarism.

Hoppe maintains that World War I "... ended as an increasingly democratic war, especially after the Americans entered and the Russian Revolution broke out, the Tsar was executed..." But this is more than passing curiosity. Russia after 1917 was "democratic" forsooth? This will come as shocking news not only to the suffering population, but also to the dictatorial communists. Lenin, as far as the historical record shows, was not ever elected to any office by the Soviet Populace, nor did he require such democratic legitimacy to implement the proletarian dictatorship envisioned in the Marxist framework.

Contrary to the mainstream point of view, we do not consider Germany the sole guilty party in WWI. By the traditions and diplomatic norms of the time, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife was used as a valid pretext for military operations. A deeper motivation behind the decision of the allied cousins in Great Britain and Russia to wage war may have been to contain the growing intellectual, industrial and technological power of the Central European states, particularly Germany, which was beginning to challenge the dominance of the colonial empires.

The harsh Treaty of Versailles (1919), which imposed severe territorial and economic sanctions on Germany, resulted not from democratic vengeance alone but from a combination of security concerns, economic interests, and complex international politics.

World War II, initiated by totalitarian regimes of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union with their infamous partition of Poland also included monarchies such as Imperial Japan and Fascist Italy. The Allies, composed of democratic nations like the United States and Britain, alongside communist Soviet Union (since 1941) and various other mixed political formations, were driven by a blend of ideological, economic, and geopolitical motives. During this war, the scale of atrocities

committed by the Germans, along with the immense death toll and suffering they inflicted, was so great that material retribution alone was deemed insufficient; only a complete purification of national conscience and values - was considered necessary.

The complexity and diversity of democratic wartime motivations and outcomes stand in stark contrast to Hoppe's simplistic dichotomy, thus revealing the pseudo-scientific basis of his claims.

Moreover, Hoppe conveniently ignores cases where democratic nations engaged in limited conflicts with clearly pragmatic resolutions, directly contradicting his oversimplified framework.

In addition, democratic conflicts have sometimes catalyzed constructive geopolitical changes, underscoring their potential for pragmatic and forward-looking outcomes. The democratic-led Marshall Plan following World War II serves as a prime illustration, providing unprecedented economic support to rebuild war-torn Europe, including defeated Germany. This practical approach not only ensured European stability but also strategically countered Soviet influence, demonstrating a level of foresight and practicality completely missing from Hoppe's caricature of democratic warfare.

Thus, when carefully analyzed in their proper historical contexts, both monarchical and democratic wars exhibit complexities and contradictions that Hoppe's overly simplistic classifications fail spectacularly to capture. His sweeping generalizations, far from scholarly, reveal more about ideological bias than any genuine understanding of history, further undermining the intellectual credibility of his entire argument.

Hans-Hermann Hoppe's overly simplistic distinction between monarchical and democratic wars stands exposed as a pseudo-historic and pseudo-scientific fabrication, one built more on his flavor of libertarian dogma than any genuine historical scholarship. Monarchical conflicts such as the Thirty Years' War, the Hundred Years' War, and the Crusades clearly illustrate that monarchies were perfectly capable of waging protracted, ideological, and devastating wars that ended in harshly punitive peace treaties.



Meanwhile, democratic (in his classification) wars such as the American Civil War and World War II reveal complexities, mixed motives, and outcomes far more nuanced and occasionally constructive than Hoppe's cartoonish portrayal admits.

Moreover, peace treaties—whether Vienna, Versailles, Utrecht, or Paris—consistently reflect geopolitical context, strategic calculations, and prevailing economic conditions rather than simplistic government typologies. Hoppe's selective interpretation of historical events conveniently ignores ample evidence that blurs the rigid categories he proposes. Ultimately, his analysis is revealed as little more than an ideologically-driven narrative, devoid of rigorous historical accuracy or intellectual integrity.

By carefully examining historical facts in their proper contexts, this rebuttal dismantles Hoppe's superficial dichotomies and affirms the intellectual bankruptcy underlying his arguments. Hoppe's argument is historically inaccurate and grossly oversimplified. It cherry-picks examples specifically to fit his narrative while blatantly ignoring the complexities of historical conflicts.

### 1.1 Patents

Hoppe has undoubtedly made many and important contributions to libertarian theory. However, he has slipped, and slipped badly, when he asserts "the Americans stole all the patents from German industries." Even assuming this generalization is true (which we do not for a minute do), it ignores a basic libertarian perspective on patents as such. This is not the time or place to go deeply into the case for why patents are not legitimate property titles, and, hence, cannot be stolen in the first place. Rather, they should all be rescinded.

Briefly, the case is that they consist of ideas, and ideas are not scarce limited phenomena such as houses, cars, real estate, etc. Pythagoras invents the theorem named after him. Jones, "steals" this idea from the creator. But Pythagoras still "has" this idea in his possession. In contrast, if Jones robs Pythagoras' bicycle, this mathematician no longer has it in his possession. Similarly, bicycle ownership has no end point. This mode of

transportation can be handed on to children and grandchildren, ad infinitum. Patents are typically time limited, unlike any other property. Also, each and every word in every language was invented by someone. If patents were allowed for verbiage, and there was not time limitation imposed, no one could use words in speech. A position that cannot even be articulated is not a very sound position. For an in depth libertarian critique of patents, see (Boldrin & Levine, 2008; Block, 2014, 2020; De Wachter, 2013; Kinsella, 2001, 2008, 2012; Long, 1995; Menell, 2007A, 2007B; Mukherjee & Block, 2012; Navabi, 2015; Palmer, 1989). This is all libertarianism 101. Hoppe should have known better.

### 1. Anti-Semitism?

The word "Jew" appears no fewer than ten times in the course of Hoppe's presentation. The phrase "chosen people," once; ditto for "Judaism," for a total of twelve mentions. This, perhaps, is barely understandable in the section of his talk where he discusses Israel.<sup>1</sup>

But what is the point of harping on the fact that the Frankfurt School "was founded and financed by two people: a German Jew,<sup>2</sup> ... and his son Felix Weil, born in Argentina." Do we really need to be informed that the latter "... inherited about \$400 million in current terms from his Jewish mother." Is it really important that Hoppe inform his audience about "the Institute of Social Research, associated with the University of Frankfurt. All the leading figures of this institute were Jews, just like Felix and his father.... Even though practically all of them were Jewish, they didn't particularly like the Ostjuden—the Eastern European Jews, considered low-life Jews."? And what are we to make of this tidbit of knowledge: "The most famous studies they (the Frankfurt School) produced, funded by Jewish organizations in the U.S..." We are also informed by this author that Javier Milei is "a creation of the Jewish oligarchs in Argentina and has toyed with converting to Judaism." Nor does Hoppe fail to vouchsafe his audience that "Zelenskyy, president of Ukraine—the most corrupt country in Europe, if not the

<sup>1</sup> Some 20% of the Israeli population is of Arab extraction; most are presumably non-Jewish.

<sup>2</sup> This word is emphasized by the present authors.

world, also Jewish, promoted by Jewish oligarchs..."

There are many critics of Zelenskyy. There must be precious few of them who have focused on the fact that he is Jewish. Did this Hoppe claim that the President of the Ukraine compelled the students of this country to study the Talmud? No. Maybe he asserted that this politician is trying to shove the Torah down the throats of the Ukrainian citizenry? We must answer in the negative. Possibly, Hoppe accused Zelenskyy of making matzo, or the bagel or maybe challah compulsory at every meal enjoyed by members of that nation. No, he did not. It would appear that this German/Turkish scholar upbraids Zelenskyy on the basis of none of these charges. Rather, he castigates him, merely, for being of the Hebrew ethnicity. That is not kosher.

Hoppe has suggested that a small group of wealthy, malevolent Jews, leaders of the Frankfurt School are responsible for the "wokism" plaguing Western civilization. However, this author falls into the same trap as did the German Nazis. When the Nazis began determining who could be included in the "pure Aryan race," they initially argued that even a single drop of Jewish blood rendered a person a non-Aryan. But this led to a devastating realization: if one drop of Jewish blood was stronger than five liters of German blood, their ideology was undermined; it faced a logical contradiction. Confronted with this conclusion, the Nazis eventually relaxed the requirements for Aryan acceptance, allowing some few individuals with Jewish heritage to be included.

According to Hoppe, a cohort of Jews from the Frankfurt School wielded intellectual power greater than that of all other Western intellectuals and populations combined. If Jews possessed such a superpower, Hoppe should recognize that his intellectual crusade is doomed to fail.

The truth of the matter is that Jews have been involved in many intellectual movements, including those that opposed socialism in all its

manifestations. Hoppe himself tied his life to two such prominent figures with libertarian philosophical worldviews who became his teachers: Ludwig von Mises and Murray Rothbard. He does not explain why these thinkers failed to shape Western civilization into a libertarian world order. We hope Hoppe will eventually realize that Jewishness is neither the source of all evil nor the key to all good in the world.

Hoppe (2001, p. 218) writes as follows: "There can be no tolerance toward democrats and communists in a libertarian social order. They will have to be physically separated and expelled from society... the advocates of alternative, non-family and kin-centered lifestyles such as for instance, individual hedonism, parasitism, nature environment worship, homosexuality, or communism – will have to be physically removed from society too, if one is to maintain a libertarian order."

The wonder of it is that he did not include Jews as a demographic which should be banished from society.<sup>3</sup> An astute reader will note the absence of one group from this list, a type of person reviled by most who can boast of at least a modicum of civilized values: Nazis. One can only wonder at this lacunae. Is this eminent libertarian author trying to tell us something, here, perhaps unconsciously? One can only wonder.

Why, then, is Hoppe continually harping on people associated with this religion? He does so in contexts where this affiliation is simply irrelevant. Several hypotheses immediately present themselves. One, he is suffering for Jewish Derangement Syndrome. He in effect has Jews on the brain. All too much of his intellectual armamentarium is focused on this one group of people.

Two, he is an out and out anti-Semite. However, it is difficult to entertain this explanation, given that two of his own mentors, Ludwig von Mises and Murray N. Rothbard were both Jews. As well, for some forty years he was a good friend of one of

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<sup>3</sup> Can we interpret this more sympathetically to be asserting that these "undesirables" would only be excluded from a condominium that Hoppe and his ilk would occupy? No. He clearly and unambiguously mentions "society," not anything else. Particularly egregious on Hoppe's part is his mention of

homosexuals in this context. Ralph Raico, Ron Hamowy and Justin Raimondo were all gay, and all made important contributions to our libertarian philosophy. Has Hoppe not even a smidgen of respect for this fact? Evidently not.



the authors of the present essay, and even was his co-author several times (Hoppe & Block, 2002; Hoppe, Hulsmann & Block, 1998).

Difficult, but far from impossible. What is the other side of this argument? It is that Hoppe would not be the only anti-Semite to make exception for some favorite Jews. For example, Hitler, himself, no Jew-lover, he, also did so (CNN, 2012). So, given that making exceptions for some Jews certainly didn't absolve Hitler from being an anti-Semite, it cannot per se absolve anyone else either, including Hoppe.

## 2. Egalitarianism

Then there is the fact that Hoppe is continually railing against great wealth, not stolen, but earned honestly in the market place. He here reveals himself as some sort of egalitarian.<sup>4</sup> For example, he sniggers at Zelenskyy as a “huckster, running around collecting money to ruin his country...” But “huckster” is merely a denigration of “entrepreneur.” It is similar to using the “N” word for blacks, or the “K” word for Jews or the “B” or “C” word for females. Here is yet another instance; he sneers at Frankfurt School creator “Hermann Weil, who immigrated to Argentina and became the *wealthiest*<sup>5</sup> grain dealer in the world...” And again: he “built a building for them, paid the people employed there quite well—these people were enormously *wealthy*—and established a network of countless socialist friends all over Europe.” He complains that “those influential at this (Frankfurt) institute came from very *wealthy* families: Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm,<sup>6</sup> all had *wealthy* businessmen as parents.” And again, a deprecation of “Max Horkheimer, became very influential—a theoretician from a *wealthy* family.” We are not yet finished, not by a long shot. Hoppe continues this diatribe in favor of egalitarianism: “Felix (Weil) studied in Germany and became very rich.” Here is some more along these lines: “Marx came from a well-off family, but his financier Engels was the son of a very rich industrialist.” Nor is Hoppe yet finished with his diatribe. He complains of the Frankfurt scholars that “They were very smart about their finances... They lived a luxurious life.” Is there supposed to be

something per se wrong with that? Not from a libertarian perspective, one would have thought.

A rich socialist might be ipso facto a hypocrite. Not because he is rich, but because he is a socialist! Unless there is something inherently vicious in being rich (in conjunction to being Jewish, we add), which is apparently what Hoppe has in mind.

To summarize this point: it is more than passing curious that Hoppe would be so bitterly opposed to the mere amassing of wealth and luxurious living. This is hardly compatible with the libertarianism he elsewhere so eloquently and effectively espouses. What could possibly explain this phenomenon? Jewish Derangement Syndrome? Israeli Derangement Syndrome? What leads him to so seriously misconstrue libertarian theory? We leave the answer to this question to those better able to answer it than we Jewish authors.

## 3. Mr. Javier Milei

According to “historian” Hoppe: “Mr. Milei ... is on record saying he was largely inspired by Murray Rothbard and myself.” Now, it is one thing for a historian to get his facts wrong with regard to events that took place not years ago, not decades ago, not centuries ago. This is forgivable, understandable, comprehensible, given that time waits for no man. The further back one goes into the past, the more difficult, other things equal, it is to ascertain the truth.

However, here we catch our “historian” making an error laden claim with regard to the very recent past. It is also more than a bit self-serving on his part. President of Argentina Javier Milei mentions only Rothbard and Hoppe as mentors? Not true not true at all. As a matter not of historical fact, but that of practically the present day, this free market politician credits those two alright, but, in addition, the following: Walter Block, Jesús Huerta de Soto, Philip Bagus (Block, 2023; Freedman, 2024).

Says Hoppe of Milei: “I felt, given that he cited me as one of his inspirations, I was perfectly entitled

<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the Frankfurt School, he tells us that his earliest mentors were members, has had a greater effect on his thinking than he realizes or will admit.

<sup>5</sup> Emphasis by present authors

<sup>6</sup> These are the bad guys, get it. They are of *wealth*.

to criticize him.<sup>7</sup> I didn't deny he had to make compromises—some accused me afterward, 'Don't you realize he can't do everything immediately? There's a parliament and all that.' Of course, I was aware you have to make compromises, but they shouldn't be contrary to your ultimate goals."

But this is more than passing curious. Hoppe's native language is not English, so perhaps he does not realize the meaning of the word "compromise." If it is a true compromise, of course it must necessarily be "contrary to your ultimate goals." If it were not so, then it would not be a compromise at all. Rather, it would be the attainment of your favored option. For example, A wants to sell a shirt to B for \$100, but the latter is willing to pay, only, \$50. A compromise would be anywhere between \$51 and \$99. But every number with no exceptions that lies in between these latter two dollar amounts is contrary to the "ultimate goal" of both parties. In a compromise, neither party gets what he aims at.

Hoppe is incensed that Milei has not rid Argentina of its central bank. The former claims that the latter, therefore, cannot be a libertarian. But no members of the Chicago School, such as Milton Friedman and George Stigler, wanted to "End the Fed" as did Ron Paul. True, Friedman and Stigler are not anarcho-capitalists. But they are certainly libertarians! Ditto for James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock of the Public Choice School of thought. In castigating Milei for the continued presence of the Argentinian central bank, Hoppe is in effect claiming not that this man is not a libertarian, but has not yet fully implemented anarcho-capitalism. Javier is a magnificent libertarian, but he is not a magician. He has no magic wand. All he has on his side is magnificent grit, intelligence, purpose, and a libertarian vision.

While we are handing out compliments, we must also further congratulate Hoppe: he is excellent in terms of reading people out of the libertarian movement. One of the present authors is a case in point (Hoppe, 2024), and for a rebuttal see (Block & Futerman, 2024). Mr. Milei is a gift to supporters of our philosophy. He names his dogs

after libertarian greats. He talks the right anarcho-capitalist talk. Is he 100% on board with every jot and tittle of laissez faire capitalism? No one is, no one can be, since the leading lights often disagree with one another on these matters. Thus, no one can qualify in this regard. Does Hoppe welcome him to our movement? No. He begrudgingly approves of some of his steps, but reserves most of his comments for denigrating him. Is this any way to build a movement? Our author seems more interested in restricting entry to it than promoting libertarianism.

Hoppe castigates Milei for not repudiating Argentinian debt, a la Rothbard. He fails to appreciate that this is a very radical step. We know of no survey of libertarians on this matter, but our back of the envelope assessment is that, oh, 5% of our movement would approve. This is a bridge too far for virtually all libertarians. It constitutes a wildly unfair litmus test to apply to the president of this great South American country.

Our author quotes Milei as stating: "I'd rather cut off my arm than raise taxes"—then he raised several taxes and still runs around with two arms." True, enough. However, this libertarian hero lowered many other taxes, and thus deserves the full use of his arms, Hoppe to the contrary notwithstanding.

Argentina before Milei, was on the brink of hyperinflation, replete with absurd regulations, with numerous deficits, unemployment, etc. In other words, Argentina was on the brink of economic collapse before Milei took up the office of presidency. As of the present writing, only a few short months later, the economy of this country is greatly improved (Bourne & Falcone, 2025; Brattström, 2024; Buenos Aires Times, 2025; Hall, 2025; Ma, 2025; Ventura, 2025).

The real problem for Hoppe in this regard is that Milei is a friend of Israel and the Jews. He could privatize everything to the last road, river, central bank and government building in Argentina and Hoppe would still find grave fault with him on libertarian grounds.

Hoppe reserves his most serious criticism of Javier Milei for the foreign policy of the latter. He

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<sup>7</sup> What? It would be impermissible for people Javier does not cite as mentors to criticize him?



asks: “What’s the Austro-libertarian position on foreign policy? We’re neutral—we stay out of foreign countries’ business, don’t engage in entanglements, we’re a peace party, we don’t want war, we’re non-interventionists.”

First of all, and Hoppe really should know better, there is no such thing as an Austrian economic point of view on foreign policy. Praxeological economics is entirely a positive science, while foreign policy is totally a normative discipline. Never the twain should ever meet.

What of libertarianism? Secondly, this philosophy most certainly is not a “peace party.” Hoppe’s understanding of this perspective, of which he is one of the undoubted leaders, is seriously flawed in this regard. We libertarians want justice, not peace. If unduly attacked, we are not necessarily pacifists, as per this author. We fight back. We engage in defensive wars. Mr. Libertarian, Murray N. Rothbard, favored what he regarded as just wars.<sup>8</sup> We most certainly do “want war” when pounced upon by evil enemies. What is the alternative? Surrender?<sup>9</sup> Is that what Hoppe recommends, and as a supposed libertarian requirement? For shame.

As for “entanglements” there is no incompatibility with the freedom philosophy for two small countries entering into an alliance against a predatory nation. For example, suppose Lichtenstein and Monaco made a treaty with one another such that in case of an invasion of either one of them, the other would support its partner. Is this antithetical with libertarianism? Not at all.

Hoppe’s articulation of neutrality is rooted in the dogma that prioritizes non-interventionism as a safeguard against state-driven aggression. In his lecture, he explicitly states, “We stay out of foreign countries’ business. We do not do any entanglements with other countries... we are non-interventionists”. This stance aligns with the non-aggression principle of libertarianism, NAP, which prohibits the initiation of force and, by extension, precludes involvement in conflicts beyond one’s immediate sphere of voluntary association. For

Hoppe, this neutrality is not merely a pragmatic choice but a principled rejection of imperialism and centralized state power, which he views as inherently tied to war and coercion.

Theoretically, the NAP provides a clear binary: aggression is impermissible, and non-aggression is obligatory. In bilateral relations—say, between two agents or countries—this principle appears straightforward. However, as Gindler (forthcoming) argues the NAP’s simplicity falters in multi-agent scenarios, where the presence of a third party introduces ambiguity.

A rigid mathematical logic was employed to demonstrate that when a third party witnesses a violation of the NAP (e.g., one agent aggressing against another), the principle yields a “NULL” result—neither mandating intervention nor enforcing neutrality. This NULL state is not synonymous with neutrality but reflects an inherent ambiguity that permits varied interpretations and actions. Hoppe’s insistence on neutrality as the default stance thus rests on an unexamined assumption, one that the NAP itself does not unequivocally support.

In order to eliminate ambiguity, it is necessary to add an explicit clause addressing multi-agent interactions to the definition of the NAP. For example, the following axiom has been proposed: *Everyone has the right—but not the obligation—to assist anyone, provided there is explicit or implicit consent from the victim to do so.*

But as long as ambiguity remains, one can adopt different interpretations as to how the NAP applies in multi-agent situations. Hoppe defaults to a position of neutrality, yet he immediately violates this stance of his when analyzing real-life scenarios.

In addressing Israel’s conflict with Hamas, Hoppe abandons any pretense of neutrality, offering a scathing critique of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. His characterization is not a neutral observation but a morally charged judgment, implying a clear stance against Israel. Hoppe’s statements violate the very rule of

<sup>8</sup> He maintained that the thirteen colonies were justified in engaging in a revolutionary war of secession against England, and that the South was warranted in fighting the North for its right to secede.

<sup>9</sup> Pacifism of the sort here recommended by Hoppe is compatible with libertarianism, but by no means required by this philosophy.

neutrality he outlines—“we stay out of foreign countries’ business”—by actively engaging with and condemning Israel’s actions.

This deviation is particularly striking given the complexity of the Israel-Hamas conflict. Israel’s military operations, often framed as responses to Hamas’s rocket attacks and terrorist activities, involve a web of historical, political, and ethical considerations that defy simplistic categorization as “genocide.” Hoppe’s failure to acknowledge this complexity, coupled with his emotive rhetoric, suggests not a dispassionate application of the NAP but rather selective moral outrage. If neutrality were truly his guiding principle, he would refrain from such pronouncements, leaving the conflict to its participants.

Hoppe’s treatment of the Russo-Ukrainian War further illustrates this logical inconsistency of his. He expresses sympathy for Russia, framing its 2022 invasion as a “provoked war” resulting from NATO’s eastward expansion and American interference. He justifies this position by arguing that Russia perceived a threat from NATO’s proximity, a concern he deems legitimate by analogy: “What would Americans have done if the Chinese had stationed troops in Mexico or Canada?” Conversely, he vilifies Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, calling him “a huckster ... a clown installed by Jewish oligarchs,” and accuses him of “ruining his own country” by conscripting citizens into a “meat grinder.”

This stance is thus far from neutral. Hoppe not only takes sides—favoring Russia over Ukraine—but also invests emotionally in the narrative, wishing for America’s “defeat” in the conflict. By opinionating about Zelenskyy’s leadership and Russia’s motives, Hoppe again breaches his own rule of non-engagement, revealing that his neutrality is conditional rather than absolute. This selective alignment with Russia, juxtaposed against his condemnation of Ukraine, mirrors the ambiguity in the NAP’s third-party application, where the absence of a clear directive enables ideological bias to dictate action.

Does Hoppe want to keep the libertarian movement to himself? To not allow the entry of brilliantly promising until recently outsiders such as Milei? Maybe banish them from libertarian “society?” That is no way to build a movement. Milei is the freshest breath of fresh air to adorn our

libertarian movement in not years but decades. Hoppe offers him but the back of his hand. Not the present authors, not us. We appreciate a gift from the gods.

#### 4. Donald Trump

Hoppe waxes eloquent about Milei befriending Trump. He castigates him for so doing on the ground that “Trump’s not a libertarian; he’s a protectionist and war-maker, sending money to Israel, bombing the Houthis, Syrians, involved in Ukraine up to this day.”

This is highly problematic. Yes, it cannot be denied that Trump loves tariffs, and implementing them is incompatible with libertarianism. However, he has already fired thousands of bureaucrats. If he replaces the income tax with tariffs, and perhaps a revenue neutral VAT or sales tax, it really becomes difficult to get up a full head of libertarian steam against him on this matter of tariffs (Block, 2025C).

A “war-maker?” Trump is a man after the heart of the pacifist Hoppe. The president of the United States worked out the Abraham Accords, trying to make peace in the volatile Middle East. He is now heavily involved in trying to end the war between Russia and Ukraine. What planet is Hoppe writing about? It is certainly not the third rock from the Sun.

As to the Houthies, they are making it all but impossible for commerce to be conducted on international waters. Is Hoppe opposed, also, to ridding the planet of the analogous Barbary Pirates? Does his pacifism have no limits? Our objection, of course, is not to his sudden turn toward this doctrine. It is his equation with it and libertarianism. He is free to adopt any policy he wishes. However, we wish he were not in a position to drag down the libertarian philosophy with him. This is the very same charge he makes against Milei.

#### 5. Ukraine and Zelenskyy

Hoppe has claimed that Ukraine is the most corrupt nation in the world. Given that the country is currently led by a “Jewish” president, this seems to be, in his view, an aggravating factor—though he does not state this explicitly. Yet even in this assertion, Hoppe misleads his audience. According to Transparency International’s



*Corruption Perceptions Index* (2024), the most corrupt country in the world is not Ukraine, but South Sudan, which ranks last at 180th. Ukraine, by contrast, holds a mid-tier position at 105th and has shown steady improvement in recent years. It even places above Turkey (107th), the very country Hoppe has chosen as his place of residence. Russia, ranks significantly lower at 154th, placing it indeed among the most corrupt countries globally.

When we shift from corruption to broader indicators of political and civil liberties, Freedom House offers a reliable and widely recognized assessment (Freedom House, n.d.). Their March 2025 report evaluates 208 countries and territories, assigning each a score from 0 to 100—where 0 represents the least free and 100 the most free. According to this framework, Gaza receives a score of 2, Russia 12, and Turkey 33. All three are classified as “Not Free.” Ukraine, by comparison, scores 51 and is designated as “Partly Free,” while Israel, with a score of 73, is categorized as “Free.”

As a matter of concern, it is rather striking that a self-professed libertarian—someone who champions unrestricted economic and personal freedoms—would choose to reside in a state as authoritarian as Turkey while criticizing far freer societies such as Ukraine, Argentina, Israel, and the United States.

Hoppe’s recent commentary, including the lecture in question, suggests a curious inversion of values. One is reminded here of Marx’s materialist proposition that “being determines consciousness” (Marx (1859 [1977])). In Hoppe’s case, this may well be a fitting lens through which to interpret his evolving worldview.

Hoppe has made a provocative claim, accusing Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of being a puppet of what he calls the “Ukrainian Jewish oligarchy.” According to Hoppe, Zelenskyy’s rise to power was orchestrated by “Jewish oligarchs” within Ukraine who promoted his candidacy to serve their interests.

Given that there are relatively few oligarchs of Jewish descent in Ukraine, it is possible to examine the publicly available data to evaluate

this assertion. To ensure a thorough analysis, this exploration will not only focus on oligarchs but also include other wealthy and influential Jewish figures in Ukraine, providing a broader picture of their potential involvement. It seems unlikely that Hoppe’s claim relies on secret sources; rather, it appears to be a product of his interpretation—or perhaps imagination—of known events and relationships.

It is true that Ukraine’s political landscape (as that of Russia) has long been shaped by the influence of oligarchs—wealthy individuals who have accumulated vast fortunes through industries such as media, energy, banking, and manufacturing. These oligarchs have often used their resources to sway political outcomes, backing candidates or parties that align with their business interests or ideological leanings. Given that there are relatively few oligarchs of Jewish descent in Ukraine, it is feasible to examine publicly available data to evaluate this assertion.

One figure worth considering is Mykhailo Brodskyy, a businessman, politician, and media owner whose career offers insight into Ukraine’s intersecting worlds of commerce and governance. Brodskyy founded *Obozrevatel.com* a widely visited online news platform that has established him as a significant player in Ukraine’s media sphere (Dumont, 2023). His political journey includes a stint in the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine’s parliament, from 1998 to 2002, followed by his role as Chairman of the State Committee for Regulatory Policy and Entrepreneurship until its dissolution in 2014.

Beyond media and politics, Brodskyy has been involved in various business ventures, including real estate and trade, reflecting the diverse portfolio typical of Ukraine’s elite. If Brodskyy were part of an oligarchic effort to propel Zelenskyy to power, one might expect his media outlet to have championed Zelenskyy’s candidacy during the 2019 election. However, *Obozrevatel.com* maintained a neutral stance, offering no clear editorial bias toward Zelenskyy over his main rival, incumbent President Petro Poroshenko. There are no records of financial contributions, public endorsements, or behind-the-scenes alliances linking Brodskyy to Zelenskyy’s campaign. His lack of overt support suggests that he did not play a significant role in promoting Zelenskyy’s rise,

casting doubt on his inclusion in Hoppe's alleged "Ukrainian Jewish oligarchy."

Similarly, Volodymyr Groysman emerges as an unlikely supporter of Zelenskyy. Groysman's political career is deeply tied to the *Petro Poroshenko Bloc*, under which he served in the Verkhovna Rada from 2014 to 2019. Rising to become Chairman of the parliament and later Prime Minister, Groysman was a key figure in Poroshenko's administration, overseeing economic reforms and navigating Ukraine's challenges during a period of conflict with Russia. Given that Zelenskyy ran against Poroshenko in the 2019 election, positioning himself as an outsider challenging the establishment, it is implausible that Groysman, a loyal Poroshenko ally, would have backed Zelenskyy's candidacy. After Zelenskyy's inauguration, he called for the Cabinet's resignation, prompting Groysman to submit his own. Although the Verkhovna Rada rejected it, requiring Groysman to remain in office until a new government was formed, this episode underscores their political opposition rather than collaboration. While both men share Jewish heritage, this cultural connection does not translate into evidence of political support or influence (Gryvnyak, 2021). Groysman's tenure as Prime Minister and his subsequent return to private life offer no indication that he played a role in Zelenskyy's ascent, à la Hoppe.

Victor Pinchuk, the son-in-law of former President Leonid Kuchma, brings a different perspective to this analysis. As a prominent oligarch and media proprietor, Pinchuk controls several television channels, including *ICTV*, *Novyi Kanal*, and *STB*, which collectively wield considerable influence over public opinion. However, during the 2019 election, these outlets adopted a neutral posture, refraining from endorsing either Zelenskyy or Poroshenko. Some thought that Pinchuk likely supported the *Holos* party because their advertisements were cheaper for *Holos* than for others (Polianska, 2019).

Pinchuk's broader profile reveals a sophisticated operator: his wealth stems from steel and pipe manufacturing through his company *Interpipe*, and he has cultivated an international reputation through philanthropy, notably via the *Victor Pinchuk Foundation*, which hosts events like the *Yalta European Strategy* conference.

Post-election, however, investigative reports suggest that Pinchuk adapted to the new political reality. Individuals linked to him gained positions within Zelenskyy's *Servant of the People* party, as well as other groups like *Strength and Honor* and *Batkivshchyna*, indicating a strategic effort to maintain influence after Zelenskyy's victory. This maneuvering reflects opportunism rather than pre-election support, suggesting that Pinchuk did not promote Zelenskyy's candidacy but rather sought to benefit from his success after the fact.

In stark contrast, Vadim Rabinovich stands out as an outright adversary of Zelenskyy's. A businessman and politician, Rabinovich co-led the *Opposition Platform — For Life* party, which has consistently aligned with pro-Russian interests. In the 2019 election, he opted not to run for president, instead throwing his support behind Yuriy Boyko, who garnered 11.67% of the vote in the first round, finishing fourth. Rabinovich's media ventures, including ownership of the *NewsOne* channel (later sold), amplified his political messaging, but there is no hint of support for Zelenskyy—quite the opposite. In February 2021, Rabinovich launched impeachment proceedings against Zelenskyy after the government shut down three pro-Russian television channels, accusing him of authoritarianism. By April 2022, Ukraine's National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption branded Rabinovich a "collaborator" and "pro-Russian politician," citing his absence from Ukraine during Russia's invasion and his statements blaming the West and Ukraine for the conflict. In July 2022, Zelenskyy revoked Rabinovich's Ukrainian citizenship, alongside others, due to his possession of Israeli citizenship (Liphshiz, 2022). Rabinovich's consistent opposition, from the election through subsequent years, makes it absurd to consider him part of any effort to install Zelenskyy as a puppet, as Hoppe would have it.

The Surkis brothers, Ihor and Hryhoriy, add another layer to this inquiry. Known primarily for their dominance in Ukrainian football—Ihor as president of *Dynamo Kyiv* and Hryhoriy as a former vice president of the *Ukrainian Football Association*—their influence extends into commercial business. They co-owned *Ukrenergoconsulting*, a firm tied to energy and construction, and held stakes in media, including the TV company *TET*. In the 1990s and early



2000s, they were associated with the "Kyiv Seven," a powerful oligarchic clique. Their political leanings have historically favored pro-Russian figures, such as Viktor Medvedchuk, rather than reformist candidates like Zelenskyy. During the 2019 election, no evidence suggests they supported or promoted Zelenskyy's campaign. Their business empire and connections, while formidable, do not align with Zelenskyy's anti-establishment platform, making their involvement in his rise improbable. In February 2022, they reportedly left Ukraine through Hungary, carrying significant sums of money (Hungary Today, 2022).

The most compelling case involves Ihor Kolomoisky and his business partner Hennadiy Boholyubov, whose ties to Zelenskyy have fueled significant speculation. Kolomoisky, a billionaire oligarch, owned the *1+1 Media Group*, which aired Zelenskyy's hit show *Servant of the People*. The series, in which Zelenskyy played a teacher-turned-president fighting corruption, aired for years before the election, boosting his public profile and embedding his image as a relatable everyman. During the 2019 campaign, *1+1's* coverage was perceived as supportive of Zelenskyy, leading to allegations that Kolomoisky backed his candidacy (Williams & Zinets, 2019).

Kolomoisky's influence stems from his ownership of *PrivatBank*—nationalized in 2016 amid fraud allegations—and other ventures in energy and aviation. Boholyubov, his long-time partner, shared in these enterprises, though his role in the election is less well documented. Despite this media exposure, Zelenskyy and Kolomoisky have both denied any puppet-like relationship. Since taking office, Zelenskyy has distanced himself from Kolomoisky through decisive actions: in September 2023, Kolomoisky was arrested on charges of fraud and money laundering and remains in custody at present (Voitovych, et.al. 2023). In February 2025, Zelenskyy imposed sanctions on both Kolomoisky and Boholyubov, accusing them of threatening national security. Boholyubov fled Ukraine using forged documents to evade prosecution tied to the *PrivatBank* case.

Some conspiracy theorists argue that Kolomoisky's arrest is a ploy to shield him from U.S. extradition, but this notion falters given Ukraine's reliance on American aid during the ongoing war, which gives the U.S. ample leverage

to demand his transfer if desired. The Kolomoisky connection, while notable, appears more opportunistic than controlling.

Zelenskyy's path to the presidency is best understood through the lens of public support rather than oligarchic machination. Before politics, he was a celebrated comedian and actor, founding the *Kvartal 95* comedy troupe and starring in *Servant of the People*, which premiered in 2015 and ran through 2019. The show's premise—a principled outsider upending a corrupt system—mirrored the frustrations of many Ukrainians, amplifying Zelenskyy's appeal. In December 2018, he launched his candidacy under the *Servant of the People* party, named after the series, emphasizing anti-corruption and reform. His campaign relied heavily on social media and grassroots momentum, targeting voters—especially younger ones—tired of traditional elites. The election unfolded in two rounds: on March 31, 2019, Zelenskyy won 30% of the vote, advancing to a runoff against Poroshenko. On April 21, he secured over 73% of the vote, a landslide reflecting widespread disillusionment with the status quo. Voter turnout exceeded 60%, with Zelenskyy dominating across regions, from urban centers to rural areas, underscoring his broad appeal.

This overwhelming mandate suggests that Zelenskyy's rise was driven by a populist wave, not a coordinated oligarchic plot (Mashtaler, 2021). While figures like Kolomoisky provided platforms that enhanced his visibility, and others like Pinchuk sought influence afterward, the evidence does not support Hoppe's narrative of a "Ukrainian Jewish oligarchy" pulling strings. Brodskyy remained neutral, Groysman opposed him, Rabinovich fought him, and the Surkis brothers exhibited no involvement. Kolomoisky's role, though significant, is countered by Zelenskyy's subsequent actions against him. Neither Ukrainian nor international investigative journalists have uncovered a conspiracy aligning with Hoppe's claim. Instead, Zelenskyy's victory reflects a public craving for change, channeled through a charismatic figure who leveraged his fame and message effectively.

Hoppe's accusation, while bold, lacks the empirical foundation to hold up under scrutiny,

appearing more as a speculative leap than a substantiated truth.

## 6. Israel

In the view of our author, Milei's "greatest friend of all is Netanyahu—a mass killer involved in genocide. For a critique of this unhinged claim see (American Jewish Committee, 2024A, 2024B; Anti-Defamation League, 2023; Block, 2024A, 2024B; Florida Holocaust Museum, 2024; Ostrovsky & Pavlovski, 2024; Pletka & Soleimany, 2024; Pollard, 2024; Rullo, 2024). I can't understand how any libertarian would defend him, but Milei danced in the streets with him."

Full disclosure here. If ever the present authors were offered the opportunity to "dance in the streets" with Netanyahu, we would immediately bone up on our dance lessons.<sup>10</sup>

What is genocide? It is defined as "a crime committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, in whole or in part." (UN Article II of the Genocide Convention, 1951) Certainly, purposefully aiming to kill women and children would be a paradigm case of such a despicable act. Clearly, the atrocity perpetrated on Israel by Hamas on October 7, 2023 would more than qualify in this regard. These monsters purposefully murdered and kidnapped civilians, many of whom later died in captivity. Does Hoppe call out this terrorist organization for that crime against humanity? To ask this is to answer it, but we will offer an explicit response: he does no such thing.

What is the case for the claim that Israel, too, is guilty of such a war crime? Yes, some 40,000 plus Gazans have been killed since that infamous date. But whose fault is that? Clearly, it must be laid at the door of Hamas, not the IDF. This Iranian backed group places its military hardware in schools, hospitals, residential areas, and then in effect dares to the Israeli military to destroy them. What does the IDF do first? Bomb these places? No. Instead, it drops leaflets on these areas, in an attempt to preserve civilian life. The average army kills nine civilians for every enemy fighter. The IDF record? Almost a one-to-one ratio (Block, 2024C).

That is to say, the Israeli military is more concerned with *not* committing genocide, and successful in this regard, than any other army. On this general question, see Block (2024A, 2024B, 2024C).

Hoppe clearly takes the side of Russia vis a vis Ukraine. But has not the former country killed many civilians of the latter? Our author, surprisingly, shockingly, condemns Israel for these unfortunate deaths, but not Russia.

Here is Hoppe on his high horse once again, playing fast and loose with the facts: "Israel can do whatever they want in the minds of Germans and Europeans because of the Holocaust 80 years ago." The actual situation is far different. Germans, along with other Europeans, have been vociferous in their condemnation of Israel's defensive war. For example The ICC has declared Netanyahu a war criminal. It is located in The Hague, Netherlands, which, the last time we looked, was located in Europe. The United Nations has been one sided in its denunciation of Israel; most European nations have supported this institution's numerous and almost unanimous votes condemning Israel.

As for Germany, the same applies. Weinthal (2024) reports that "... Germany's Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock Blamed Israel, Not Terrorists, for Endangering Hostages Held by Hamas. According to this journalist: Michael Blume, the German Christian Democratic Union commissioner stated: "Right-wing extremists from Israel, the U.S. and Europe, and also the Netanyahu government, use the accusation of antisemitism in an inflationary way and exploit it." In the view of the Middle East Eye (2024): "... most Germans oppose continued Israel arms sales." Then there is this report (von der Burchard 2024) on the matter: "German Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck on Saturday accused Israel of breaking international law by continuing its offensive against Rafah... 'It must not do so,' Habeck said at a citizens (sic) dialogue in the German capital. 'Of course, Israel must abide by international law,' he said." Then, there is the undeniable fact that "German Chancellor Olaf Scholz warns

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<sup>10</sup> Two of the present authors were honored that the Prime Minister of Israel wrote a forward to one of our books.



Netanyahu against Rafah attack.” (Al Jazeera English, 2024).

So much for Hoppe’s false claim to the effect that Germany is unanimously a supporter of Israel in its present war due to guilt over past occurrences. Cannot this man get anything right, even as concerns recent history?

## 7. Federalism

Hoppe’s next “contribution” is to support decentralization versus centralization, and in the name of our philosophy. Again, he reveals an abysmal ignorance of what he is talking about. He states:

“Another tendency: all states try to centralize—centralization means more loot. Austro-libertarians favor decentralization.” He does so on the ground that the former is worse since: “you can’t vote with your feet.”

What error does he commit here? First of all, he again confuses the normative with the positive. Austrians qua Austrians have no view, none whatsoever, on the normative question of which is to be preferred, centralization or decentralization, federalism or anti-federalism. Praxeology is a value free discipline that has no preferences for either of these alternatives.<sup>11</sup>

Secondly, the proper libertarian position is neither of these two options. When President Ronald Reagan threatened to cut off financial aid to New York City unless it ended its socialistic rent controls, the libertarian position supports centralism, not decentralism. When President Joe Biden intimidates a city for not expending DEI<sup>12</sup> programs, we switch gears, and become decentralists. The point is, libertarians support whichever level of government is more libertarian on any given issue. The level of centralization, federalism, is strictly speaking irrelevant. For a more in depth treatment of this Hoppean error, see (Block, 2025B) and (Block & Kinsella, 2005).

Opines Hoppe: “The U.S. expanded NATO continuously. After the Soviet Union broke apart,

NATO’s purpose was supposedly gone—it was to defend against a Bolshevik takeover. When that was no longer possible, Russians withdrew from East Germany, but Americans didn’t—they expanded closer to Russia. Russians considered it a threat—what would Americans do if China stationed troops in Mexico or Canada? They’d start a war in weeks. Russians warned, ‘Don’t get too close,’ especially about Ukraine.”

This author reserves his venom for Israel, since it (because of its defensive actions) unintendedly killed many Gazan civilians. But Russia did kill Ukrainian civilians in the war. Yet, nary a word emanates from his lips about this latter situation. No charges of “genocide” are to be heard. One wonders at his inability to see any parallels here whatsoever.

In the view of this libertarian leader: “... one word about Israel—it rules U.S. foreign policy.” After all, the only civilized country in the Middle East is the single greatest recipient of US foreign disbursements. And, under the second Trump Administration, the US is no longer forcing this country to fight its enemies with one hand tied behind its back as occurred under Biden.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, American foreign aid<sup>14</sup> to all Arab countries put together is a multiple of that accorded to this one nation (Block, 2025A). Moreover, the US maintains good relations with bitter enemies of the Jewish State, such as Qatar. “Ruling” US foreign policy is more than a ridiculous accusation.

Let us conclude. This was a disgraceful rendition of the application of libertarian principles to a whole host of issues. Hoppe should be ashamed of himself. Just what is his problem with Jews? Some of us are mighty fine folks.

A word about the Mises Institute. They have run hundreds, maybe thousands, of essays attacking Israel. Not a single solitary one articulates the case for the other side. That is not explicit anti-Semitism. It is anti-Israeli-ism.<sup>15</sup> They invite Hoppe to give a speech at one of their functions. That is

<sup>11</sup> This repeated error of his is particularly puzzling since there are few scholars who have made a greater contribution to praxeology than Hoppe. How, then, can we explain this basic error of his, now repeated for a second time?

<sup>12</sup> DEI stands for “Didn’t Earn It.”

<sup>13</sup> Check that. One and three quarters hands.

<sup>14</sup> Apologies to Peter Bauer

<sup>15</sup> It is not compatible with the best traditions of scholarship, but that is entirely a different matter. And,

not anti-Semitism either, despite his past record on this matter. Who knows, people can change their minds. However, after this blatantly anti-Semitic speech, the Mises Institute chose to publish it. They thus gave it their imprimatur. That is anti-Semitism. Did they offer anyone such as any of the present authors an opportunity to rebut this talk? That is not their way.

Anti-Semitism is not an ambiguous term, although it could be wrongly used. Not *everything* critical of Jews is Anti-Semitic but some things indeed *are*. It implies a form of hatred that essentially shares the same structure as Anti-Zionism. According to *refusenik* Natan Sharansky (yes, the same “Jew” we mentioned above), Anti-Zionism can be identified by the 3 Ds: Delegitimization, Demonization and Double Standard. Anti-Semitism follows the same path. The first implies that Jews, as such, are inherently, uniquely, flawed (especially compared to other groups). The second means that Jews ultimately are the source of all evil, hence the language used to describe them includes the worst slanders. The third is to place an obsessive focus on Jews or their actions, or their associates’ actions, and applying to them a different standard than the one utilized with regard to the rest of the world. Manicheism is another feature of Anti-Semitism, as everything evil comes from Jews, while nothing good comes from them as such.

It is important to point out that Anti-Semitism does not necessarily lead to favoring the mass murder of the Jews. Historically, they were either expelled, expropriated, treated as second class citizens, or confined in Ghettos. Apart from the (not few) instances of mass murder, rape, torture and violence against Jews for 2,000 years, Anti-Semitism has been mostly of the former kind. Eliminationist Anti-Semitism of the latter kind, of which Nazism was its lowest point, is far from being the only type of Anti-Semitism that exists. Now with this in mind read the previous paragraph

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to be sure, there is a relation between Anti-Zionism and Anti-Semitism.

again and think if Hoppe’s speech fits this bill or not.

The reason why Hoppe offers no evidence for his claims is because that is how the conspiratorial, and especially the antisemitic, mindset, works. It uses a sort of *a priori* reasoning (Futerman and Block, 2023) or (in Hoppe’s own terminology) extreme rationalism. The axiomatic principles of this hatred are the 3Ds mentioned above.

Hence, evidence won’t do. For the Hoppean mind, absence of evidence is *not* evidence of absence, and at the same time *anything* pointed as evidence is *good* enough. It is inherently unfalsifiable.

Think about it. What qualifies as a “Jew” to Hoppe? How is Zelenskyy’s “Jewishness” relevant to his other characteristics? Would not the same perfidy that Hoppe applies to Zelenskyy’s Jewishness (or its associates, such as Milei) also smear Mises and Rothbard? What is the matter with “Jewishness” as such? The truth is that Hoppe is a classic Anti-Semite. To the Judeophobic Mayor of Vienna 120 years ago, Karl Lueger, was attributed the quote: “I decide who is a Jew” (Ebeling, 2005).

Undoubtedly, Hoppe still has in high regard both Mises and Rothbard *despite* their having been Jews. This is precisely why he has scarcely mentioned the fact that they were Jews throughout his work, apart from a biographical curiosity. But when giving a talk about what is wrong with the world, “Jews” are on center stage, in a speech resembling a “libertarian” adaptation of the well-known forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. If the Mises Institute sees no problem with that, they would do well in re-reading Mises own *Omnipotent Government*, Part III, Chapter VIII. After all, it is the sign Mises Institute that appears behind Hoppe throughout his talk. Not Hoppe Institute.



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