



CHAPTER 12 | Laissez faire, laissez passer

Laissez faire is an economic and social belief system based on the philosophy of non-intervention. Intervention is defined for the purposes of this book as the intervention of human action, in this case by politics and government, through the application of coercion and violence. Laissez faire is based on the idea of personal freedom, free market and natural processes. Characteristic of laissez faire is the freedom of people to give substance to their lives as they see fit, without an intervening group of people with their relentless flow of commands, prohibitions and undesirable products and services. Today, there is no longer any practical or intellectual impediment for people to take back control of their own lives. Around the laissez-faire society there are a number of obstructing beliefs. These are not based on facts, but are rooted in false assumptions and propaganda by pro-state philosophies, such as social democracy or communism. For a good understanding of this belief system, it is first of all important to realize that the state cannot organize matters such as education, science, health care, public housing or security better or cheaper than private initiatives in a free market environment. The fact that the government has acquired the monopoly in these areas does not mean that they by definition also belong there or that they can no longer be organized by the people themselves. Seen from its nature, the government is not equipped to be educational, service-oriented or organizing. As already mentioned, the government is 'an agency of coercion'. It is a legislative and regulatory machine. It is, in the end, exclusively aimed at exerting coercion and violence against its citizens in favour of its political rulers. That really is the only characteristic that distinguishes it from the rest of society. After all, the government is nothing more than a collection of private individuals, who behave themselves statesmanlike, but who govern others. In recent decades it has become clear that the more the state interferes in these matters, the poorer their quality becomes. And the more taxpayers' money it costs to maintain this incompetence and malpractice. As a result, children are less educated and indoctrinated than ever before. And healthcare has turned into a bureaucratic nightmare at the expense of helping patients. There are classic liberals who claim that the state has an interest in organizing the things it monopolizes as badly as possible. This means that its role in these areas remains guaranteed. Another reason for the government's underperformance has to do with the fact that it does not function as a monopolist in a free and competitive market. As a result, it does not receive any signal from the market regarding the quality and price of its products and services or the actual needs of its customers. It doesn't have competitors either. This is also the reason why public authorities are concerned with form rather than content. With budget instead of costs. Once again, the only thing that distinguishes government from the rest of society is that it enforces obedience by threatening or exercising coercion and violence. In the market sector, on the other hand, it is all about providing added value, freedom of choice and voluntariness. In the private sector, substance takes precedence over form. It's centred around output and added value.



Murray N. Rothbard (1926-1995) writes in his book 'The Ethics of Liberty' that a government is nothing more or less than a thief by forcing its citizens to pay tax to it. And a murderer by fighting imperialist wars through its armed forces, in which innocent civilians are always killed. Against laissez faire it is mainly argued that in such a society the law of the strongest will apply. If this means applying or threatening to apply the strongest coercion and violence to others, then this is forbidden behaviour, which could be punishable under criminal law. Why would criminal law not apply in a laissez-faire society? If this means that these 'strongest' people are economically active and they treat other people (customers, employees or business relations) unreasonably or provide them with bad products or services, then it is to be expected that they will be confronted with the consequences of their actions. For example, if the media pay attention to this and customers, employees and business associates choose to work for another company or for a competitor. If reference is made here to the abuses during the Industrial Revolution, then this has been a chapter in history that will not be repeated because people and society have developed onwards. If this means that the welfare state, as we know it today, will come to an end, then it may well be so. This would be replaced by an economic system which, by its very nature, has full employment and is wealth-creating. On the other hand, it is questionable whether it is really civilized to deliberately teach people, as is currently the case, that they cannot survive without government aid. Or that they should not take responsibility for themselves. Why is it civilized to imprison people in a poverty trap? What added value does it have for society to cultivate victimhood? To what level of prosperity does victimization actually lead us? Could there be political morality involved? The state has an interest in making as many citizens as possible dependent on it. This broadens its power base. Of course, in a laissez-faire society, there will also be a social security system. This will only be on a different basis. It will be empowerment based. Empowerment in the sense of using and developing personal qualities and capacities to actively shape one's own life and that of the community of which one is part, both economically and socially. Patience and victimhood are ideas of the human mind. You do not encounter them in nature. Ever seen a penguin or a group of antelopes behave pitiful? It is in the nature of every living being and therefore also of humanity to participate actively in life, based on one's own qualities and capacities. In a completely free market economy, there is work for everyone. Everyone brings its own value to the marketplace. For the really needy, there is still the safety net of charity. There is no better private initiative than charity, because people want to do good. Why would this be absent in a laissez-faire society? Probably the opposite will happen because the state's broad social safety net is lacking and people will feel more personally responsible for the well being of others. In a laissez-faire society, people will have net more money at their disposal. After all, there will be no, or much less, taxes to pay to the government. Even in the present day, where in the Netherlands about 35% of the gross national product is spent on social protection and the tax burden is more than 50% of the gross income, everyone still finds resources to support those in need. In addition, in any



society there will always be relative poverty compared to the average standard of living. In today's 'Western' society, 'poverty' has been moralised by politicians as undesirable. However, a situation of relative poverty or scarcity is inextricably linked to human life. Just as abundance is. Without poverty or scarcity, there is no sense of wealth and abundance. This contradiction cannot possibly be solved by human action. Just as the idea of 'government', so the ideas associated with the philosophy of laissez-faire - freedom and free market - can flourish in our society in the same way. Where there's a will, there's a way. It goes without saying that old existing frameworks will be replaced by new ones. That is the way innovation and human evolution works. Man is creative and intelligent enough to realize this transition gradually. First of all, it is important to realize and accept that, from the nature of man, he should live in complete freedom. Only from this base can a person achieve full self-development and emotional and spiritual maturity. It is the task of every individual to focus on his sovereign self. You are your own king. You are your own authority. You don't need others to tell you what to do or how to feel. You know what is good for you and you wish to have the liberty to realize it. The laissez fair society enables people to do this. The individual is then free to make those choices that he expects to increase his happiness and well-being. In the system in which power is exercised over him, man is actually hindered in his development. He is then in fact a slave. The intention is to see and let go of this duality by choosing for yourself and thus for humanity.