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# Capital Letters

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## Government Should Not Transfer Wealth

### **To the editor:**

Because “the only way to fix Social Security’s many problems” is to abolish it, it is disappointing to read articles such as those by Michael E. Tanner (“Social Security Is in Good Shape?”) and Philip Booth (“Britain’s Pension Problem: Government Failure”) in *The Freeman* of May 2005.

Tanner wrote that the only fix “is to change the system from a pay-as-you-go model to one based on savings and investment” and “Those who disagree have an obligation to tell the rest of us how they would deal with the grim demographic reality.”

Booth advises the U.S. to avoid British mistakes and “copy the one thing we have got right—allowing individuals to opt out of the state social-security pension.” If everyone opted out, would there be a system?

It makes no difference, because government to begin with has no business establishing retirement, medical, educational or any other kind of accounts for individuals or groups.

“[T]he grim demographic reality” is that too many people support the idea that government should be involved in retirement, etc., when the purpose of government is to protect life, liberty, and property, and to invoke a common justice.

Government was not created to transfer wealth from workers to nonworkers. Wealth transfers are a consequence of democracy (majority rule) shed of morality.

Individually, as children, I am of the belief that most of us are taught not to steal; when we magically become old enough to vote, we collectively have no moral right to authorize the state or the government to do on our behalf what we personally before would or could not ethically or lawfully do.

Social Security is a moral issue. It is either right or it is wrong for individuals to steal. It is either right or it is wrong for government, acting on behalf of individuals, to steal to fund Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public education, etc.

To me, it is wrong and indefensible.

Government, as noted above, should be limited to protecting life, liberty, and property (taxing [stealing] to accommodate this is bad enough). Anything else is unjustified. Hence, “privatizing” Social Security is merely delaying and putting off what should be done immediately—*abolish Social Security and its offspring*.

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We will print the most interesting and provocative letters we receive regarding articles in *The Freeman* and the issues they raise. Brevity is encouraged; longer letters may be edited because of space limitations. Address your letters to: *The Freeman*, FEE, 30 S. Broadway, Irvington-on-Hudson, NY 10533; e-mail: [freeman@fee.org](mailto:freeman@fee.org); fax: 914-591-8910.