

LMR

BUILDING THE 10%

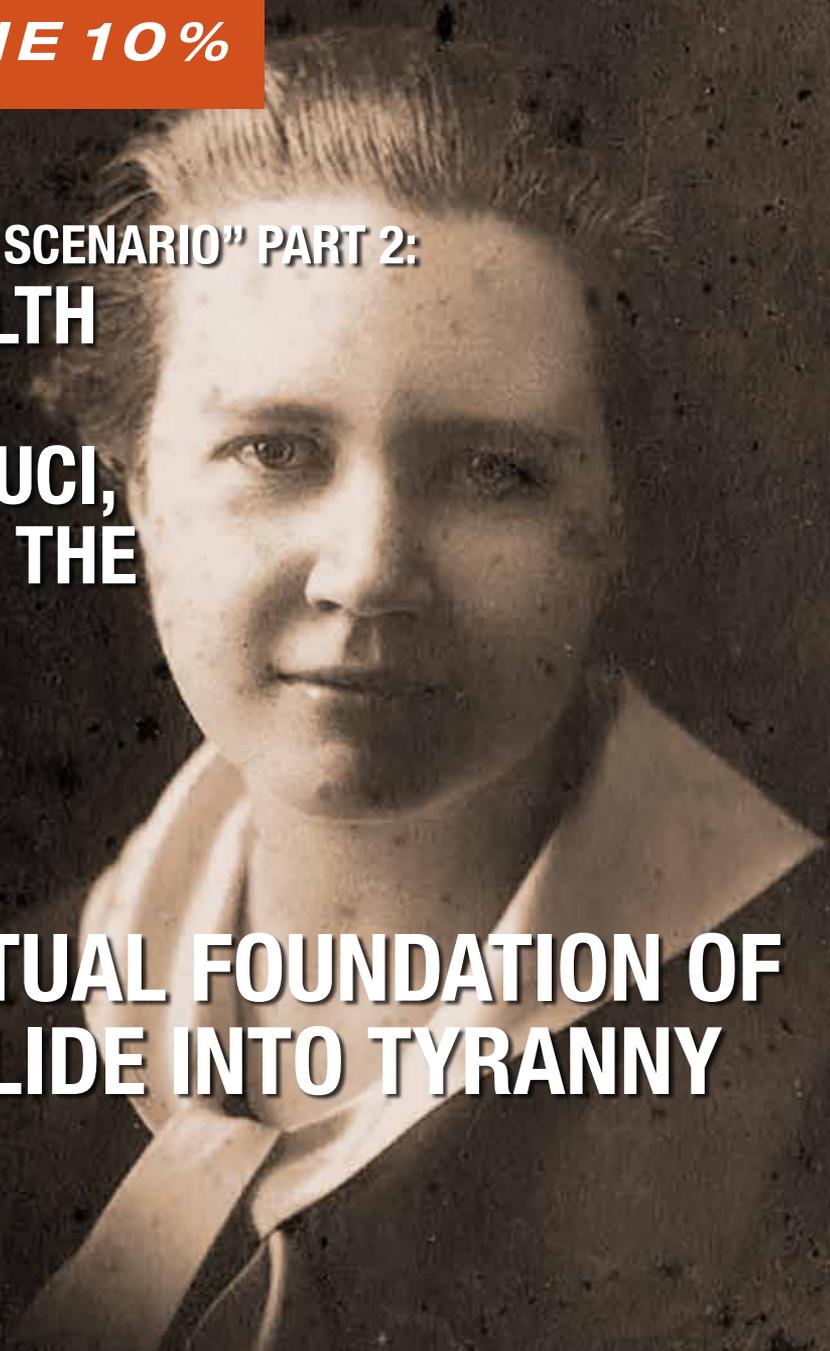
AUGUST • 2020

PULSE ON THE MARKET

Treasury Selling Debt...

...Fed Buying It

CDC Bans Evictions



**THE GLOBAL “LOCK STEP SCENARIO” PART 2:
THE WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION,
DR. ANTHONY FAUCI,
BILL GATES, AND THE
ROCKEFELLER
FOUNDATION**

by L. Carlos Lara

**THE INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATION OF
THE WEST’S SLIDE INTO TYRANNY**

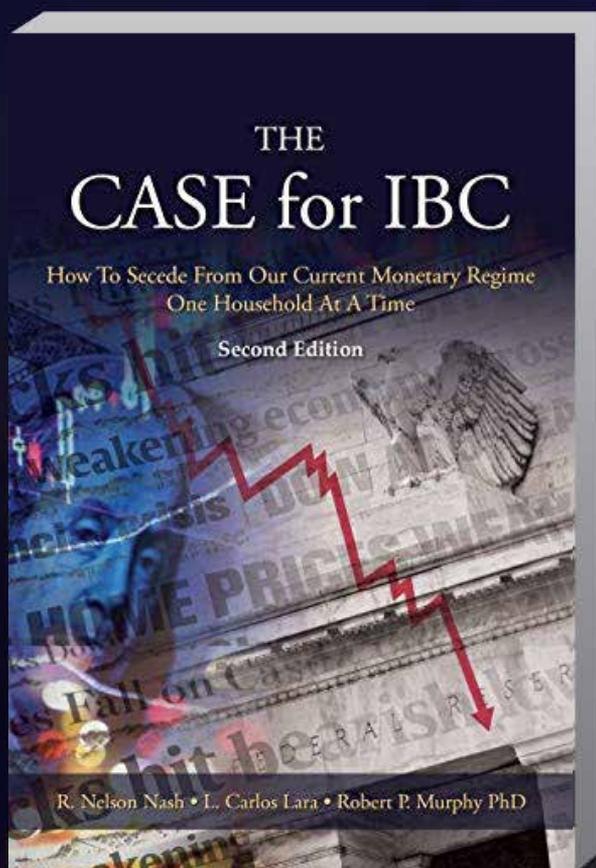
PART 2 OF 3

by Robert P. Murphy

HATE STATISM, LOVE THE STATIST

Interview with Dick Clark

Something is FUNDAMENTALLY WRONG with our financial system.



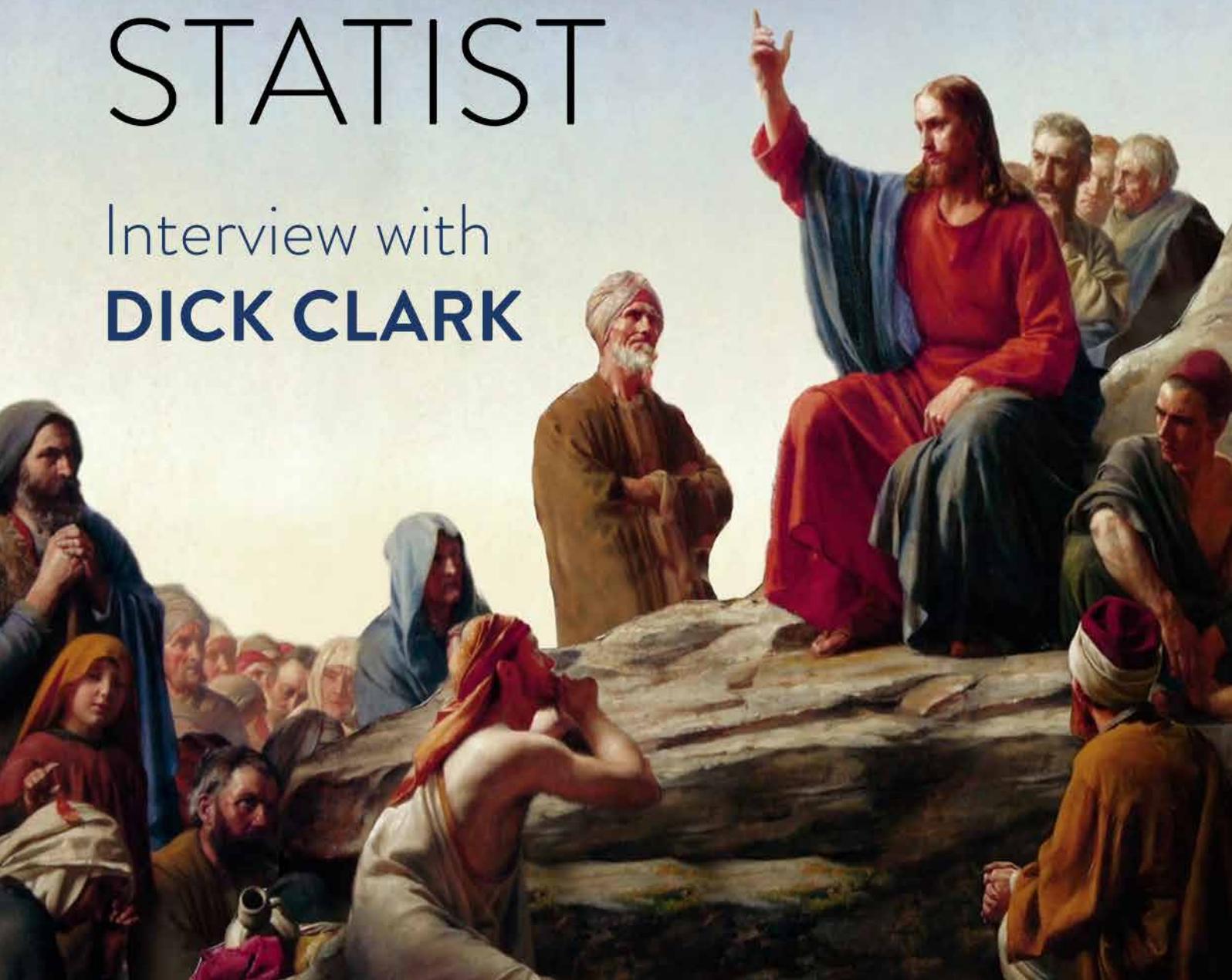
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HATE STATISM, LOVE THE STATIST

Interview with
DICK CLARK



Dick Clark is a committee legal counsel for the Nebraska Legislature and an attorney in private practice specializing in firearms law. He holds a B.A. in English with minor studies in philosophy from Auburn University. After serving as librarian of the Ludwig von Mises Institute for three years, he completed his J.D. degree from Suffolk University Law School in Boston, Massachusetts. After law school, he moved to Nebraska to work as a policy advisor to Governor Dave Heineman. He has served as director of research at the Platte Institute for Economic Research and the Institute for Economic Inquiry at Creighton University.

Clark is the author of two short books, *Fighting Back: Libertarian Essays on Resisting the State* and *On the Ticket: A Political Outsider's Look at the Election Ballot in the United States*. His articles and essays have been published at LibertarianStandard.com, LewRockwell.com, and Mises.org.



LARA-MURPHY REPORT: How did you discover Austrian economics?

DICK CLARK: After my freshman year at Auburn University, I was hired by a private dormitory to work as a Resident Advisor. I started my job that summer, and the dormitory happened to be where the Mises Institute summer research fellows were housed. I met an NYU grad student named Bob Murphy. I was a philosophy student, and we ended up discussing politics and ethics. Bob convinced me of the correctness of libertarianism on ethical grounds first. Later, I had the opportunity to attend the Mises University seminar, which was my proper introduction to Austrian economics. I bought copies of Hazlitt's *Economics in One Lesson* and Rothbard's *The Ethics of Liberty*. After that, I started to understand how markets can achieve better outcomes than states and — importantly — can avoid committing large-scale injustices in the process. In total, I attended about a dozen seminars at the Mises Institute, and I had the wonderful opportunity to work in the Institute library for several years between college and law school.

LMR: One of your early work experiences was policy advisor to Governor Dave Heineman of Nebraska. How did a Rothbardian end up working in government, and did the experience alter your views?

DC: After I graduated from law school and took the bar exam, I went to work for Ron Paul's Young Americans for Liberty doing field work in Las Vegas. During

my time in Vegas, I met a fellow from Nebraska who knew about the job opening in the governor's office there. He told me that the Nebraska Constitution made it hard for politicians to borrow money, and that there were prospects for making the state even more pro-market.

Rose Wilder Lane wrote about Nebraska in her 1943 *Discovery of Freedom*:

“[T]he only American who can honestly object to the size of the national debt, no matter how large it is or how dangerous, is a Nebraskan. Nebraskans do not permit their politicians to put them into debt. A Nebraskan controls his money. Any Nebraskan who is in debt, put himself there. The Constitution of Nebraska does not permit the politicians in Lincoln to contract a debt for other Nebraskans.



“The Nebraska Constitution made it hard for politicians to borrow money, and that there were prospects for making the state even more pro-market.”

Nebraska has fine roads, fine schools, every public institution that anyone can desire. They are paid for. Nebraska has the most beautiful State capitol in this country; it cost ten million dollars, paid down, cash on the barrel head. Every penny of ten million dollars is right there, transformed into beauty and utility in metal and marble and glass. When Nebraskans spend ten million dollars for their State, they get ten million dollars' worth; they do not get six million dollars' worth and let the balance evaporate in interest paid to creditors. Nebraska has no public debt.”

I was already a radical anti-statist when I moved to Nebraska. What I learned in my job in the governor's office is that institutions and not people are what make government bad. The people who work in the state apparatus generally mean well. The problem is not that the state is staffed by a bunch of psychopathic misanthropes — it isn't. The problem, as identified by Mises and others, is the

institutional incentives that shape the decision-making of those bureaucrats. In popular Christian terms, I was reminded to “hate the sin but love the sinner.” With that said, I am no less cynical about statism today than I was when I first rejected it twenty years ago. I am more optimistic about the statist. In my experience, very few of them have an ideological framework by which to understand the world and analyze how their proposed policies affect it.

LMR: One of your books is on election procedures. Can you summarize your findings?

DC: People used to vote on fewer things in public elections. However, when they did vote, the traditional American model was for voters to bring their own ballots. The introduction of the Australian (government-printed) ballot in the waning years of the nineteenth century in a sense crystallized the dominant parties in their entrenched positions of electoral privilege. We have seen the parties shift



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in their stances since then, but the party organizations themselves have been remarkably resilient, and I think that has a lot to do with the hurdles created by government control of the ballot and strict rules for ballot access.

LMR: Your legal work centers on defending the rights of gun owners, and we understand there is an interesting insurance element. Can you elaborate?

DC: One of my first jobs as a teenager was teaching rifle and shotgun-shooting at a Boy Scout camp. I am a gun owner, shooter, hunter, reloader, and I carry a concealed handgun almost everywhere I go. My private law practice has focused on firearms-related legal matters from the very beginning. But I was a gun nerd before I ever became a gun law nerd.

A couple of years ago, I was approached by a company that promotes a product to people who keep guns for self-defense. Basically, this company allows people

to pay a monthly fee in exchange for a criminal defense attorney being provided in the event that they are involved in an incident where they have to use defensive force. In some states, this is done via a pre-paid legal services business model, and in others it is marketed as insurance. When a member is involved in such an incident, it is my job to provide them with emergency legal guidance during the immediate aftermath. After that, I either represent them in the subsequent criminal case or find a local attorney who can help them — all at no additional cost to the member. I also teach seminars on the laws of self-defense, firearms regulations, and related topics. That benefits the company by reducing the incidence of claims, and it helps members avoid legal trouble in the first place.

LMR: Finally, you are co-author of a forthcoming book on libertarianism and Christianity. What do you think is the most common misconception in this area?



“I agree with his central idea: that man’s justice is inferior to God’s justice, but his characterization of libertarianism was laughably wrong.”

DC: The first big misconception is about what libertarianism is. Libertarianism is fundamentally anti-compulsion. Pastor Tim Heller recently published an article entitled “A Biblical Critique of Secular Justice and Critical Theory.” I agree with his central idea: that man’s justice is inferior to God’s justice, but his characterization of libertarianism was laughably wrong. He thinks that libertarians deny the existence of wrongdoing outside of government, that we do not care about the poor, and that our defense of property rights somehow conflicts with God’s sovereignty over all creation. Dispelling these misconceptions is a big part of the struggle in reaching Christians about the blessings of liberty. Libertarians see the problems in the world. Rather than ignoring them, we just argue that peaceful, market solutions (including the Church!) are superior to violent, state action in addressing social problems.



Note: The economists and financial professionals interviewed in the LMR are given the freedom to express their views, without necessarily implying endorsement from the editors.



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