

Silk Road sentence sets dangerous precedent

by: Darryl W. Perry

On May 29, Ross Ulbricht was sentenced to spend the rest of his life in prison for having created and operated the Silk Road online marketplace. The Silk Road was a revolutionary website because it was a truly free market, where people could buy and sell almost anything, including illicit drugs, false identification documents and even books; however, there was a prohibition on anything that was meant to harm innocent people.

Before his sentencing, Ulbricht told the court, "I've changed. I'm not the man I was when I created Silk Road. I'm a little wiser, a little more mature, and much more humble." Adding, "I wanted to empower people to make choices in their lives...to have privacy and anonymity," Ulbricht told the judge. "I'm not a sociopathic person trying to express some inner badness." Additionally, nearly one hundred letters were sent to Judge Katherine Forrest urging her to give a lenient sentence. Ulbricht's letter to Judge Forrest asked her to "leave me my old age."

She was not swayed, telling Ulbricht, "The stated purpose [of the Silk Road] was to be beyond the law. In the world you created over time, democracy didn't exist. You were captain of the ship, the Dread Pirate Roberts. Silk Road's birth and presence asserted that its... creator was better than the laws of this country. This is deeply troubling, terribly misguided, and very dangerous." Adding, "There is good in you, Mr. Ulbricht. There is also bad. And what you did with the Silk Road was terribly destructive... It was a carefully planned life's work. It was your opus. You

Abolish legalized theft

by: Darryl W. Perry

Over the last several years, as the debate about ending the drug war has grown, so has the debate about ending a practice of legal theft known as civil asset forfeiture. Civil asset forfeiture, unlike criminal asset forfeiture, does not require the person ever be charged with or convicted of any offense deemed illegal under either federal or state law. Under federal law, property may be seized based upon probable cause that the property was linked to a crime. The property owner can then challenge the seizure, and must prove to a judge that either the property was not used in connection to a crime, or that he was unaware his property was somehow used in a crime.

Unfortunately, this is something that happens all too often. Last month, Joseph Rivers was traveling from Dearborn, Michigan to Los Angeles with \$16,000 and a dream on becoming a music producer. After DEA Agents boarded his train in Albuquerque, Rivers was left with a nightmare. The Albuquerque Journal reports, "A DEA agent boarded the train at the Albuquerque Amtrak station and began asking various passengers, including Rivers, where they were going and why. When Rivers replied that he was headed to LA to make a music video, the agent asked

wanted it to be your legacy. And it is."

Being a hero who made the black market safer is not a bad legacy. However, Ulbricht's conviction and life sentence serve to set a dangerous precedent! Before the trial even began Joshua Dratel, Ulbricht's lawyer, said the case represents "an effort by the government to expand the concepts of vicarious liability over the internet – i.e. what is the responsibility of a website operator for the uses to which people put products sold on that site? – and to demonise certain very legitimate means of personal privacy protection, such as [the anonymising software] Tor and Bitcoin."

There are three simple facts of this case that help explain the dangerous precedent. Ross Ulbricht created a website. People used the website to sell things that other people wanted to buy. Ross Ulbricht goes to jail for life.

When Philip Markoff arranged meetings with people through Craigslist and then killed them; the creator of the site wasn't held liable. When people have been arrested attempting to hire prostitutes through various online classified sites, the owner of the website is not charged with being a pimp. The same rationale should apply to Ross Ulbricht, whose family has vowed to appeal the conviction and sentence. Hopefully, the next court to hear the case, realizes the dangerous precedent set by the judge and jury in the initial case, and kills the precedent!

to search his bags. Rivers complied." Adding that "Rivers was the only passenger singled out for a search by DEA agents."

During the search, a DEA agent found bank envelopes with the cash, which Rivers said he was carrying because he's had problems withdrawing cash from out-of-state banks. Rivers added, "I even allowed him to call my mother, a military veteran and (hospital) coordinator, to corroborate my story. Even with all of this, the officers decided to take my money because he stated that he believed that the money was involved in some type of narcotic activity... I told (the DEA agents) I had no money and no means to survive in Los Angeles if they took my money. They informed me that it was my responsibility to figure out how I was going to do that."

Rivers was not charged with any crime in connection with this incident. Sean Waite, the head DEA agent in Albuquerque, said, "We don't have to prove that the person is guilty. It's that the money is presumed to be guilty."

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Every Thursday – NH Seacoast Liberty Meetup: rotates weekly between Dover, Exeter & Portsmouth – 7:00pm
(location varies, check ShireCalendar.FPP.cc)

KEENE

Every Sunday – Social Sunday: McCue's Billiards & Sports, 12 Emerald St. – 6:00pm

LAKES REGION

Third Saturday of the month – Lakes Region Porcupine Meeting: New Hong Kong Buffet 12 Old State Rd Unit 3, Belmont – 12:00-2:00pm

LEBANON

Last Tuesday of the month – Upper Valley Porcupines: Ziggy's Pizza, 254 North Plainfield Road, West Lebanon – 6:00-8:00pm

MANCHESTER

First Saturday of the month – Merrimack Valley Porcupines: – 11:00am (location varies, check ShireCalendar.FPP.cc)

MANCHESTER

Every Tuesday – Taproom Tuesday: Murphy's Taproom, 494 Elm St. – 5:00-7:00pm

MANCHESTER

Every Sunday – Shire Bitcoin Meetup: – 6:00-9:00pm
(location varies, check ShireCalendar.FPP.cc)

NASHUA

Every Wednesday – Freedom Forum discussion: Barnes & Noble, 235 Daniel Webster Highway – 7:00-9:00pm

NASHUA

Every Sunday – Nashua Liberty Meetup: Martha's Exchange, 185 Main St. – 6:00-8:00pm

NEWMARKET

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Submit your events to editor@fpp.cc – please send event information by the final Sunday of each month.

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by: Darryl W. Perry

In some ways, 2013 seems like it was yesterday, and in other ways it seems like 2013 was an eternity ago. On March 12 of that year, the US Supreme Court issued a 5-4 ruling in the case of *Clapper v. Amnesty International USA* that the plaintiffs lacked legal standing to sue the NSA. Justice Samuel Alito wrote in his opinion, the plaintiffs' argument that they have the standing to challenge the program was based on a "highly speculative fear." He also wrote they "have no actual knowledge of the Government's ... targeting practices," and "can only speculate as to how the Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence will exercise their discretion in determining which communications to target."

Roughly two months later, Edward Snowden revealed what Amnesty International had alleged: the NSA had been spying on millions of Americans without cause or warrant. Then in December of 2013, US District Court Judge Richard Leon issued a ruling saying that the NSA program was "almost Orwellian" and "I cannot imagine a more

by: Darryl W. Perry

In an interview with the New York Times, the Chair of the FEC, Ann M. Ravel, said she's given up hope of stopping or prosecuting abuses in the 2016 presidential campaign. The paper reported that she was resigned to the fact that "there is not going to be any real enforcement" in the coming election. Additionally, Ravel said "People think the FEC is dysfunctional. It's worse than dysfunctional."

Why is the FEC worse than dysfunctional? The FEC, from its creation in 1974, was designed to be dysfunctional, and operate in a perpetual state of gridlock. This is because the six commissioners, who serve staggered 6-year terms are appointed by the President and approved by the Senate, and no more than three Commissioners may belong to the same political party. While it's theoretically possible that the Commission could have members who are independents, or members of alternative parties, there has never been a Commissioner who was not a Democrat or Republican. Over the years, many of the early regulations/prohibitions on campaign finance have been struck down or narrowed by the US Supreme Court. However, there are still campaign finance laws that serve to hinder campaigns of minor party and independent candidates, but I digress.

NSA spying ruled illegal; what's next?

'indiscriminate' and 'arbitrary invasion' [of privacy]." Adding, "Congress should not be able to cut off a citizen's right to judicial review of that Government action simply because it intended for the conduct to remain secret." Leon also ruled the "plaintiffs have standing to challenge the constitutionality of the [spying program]."

Fast forward to May 7, 2015, a three judge panel of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the NSA's bulk collection program was illegal. The US government claims the data collection was operating under Section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act. However Judge Gerard Lynch wrote the text of the USA PATRIOT Act "cannot bear the weight the government asks us to assign to it, and that it does not authorize the telephone metadata program."

What is the future of the NSA bulk collection program, which is set to expire June 1? Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has already introduced a bill to extend the illegal program, without modification, by five years. Ron Paul writes, "If past practice is any lesson, Congress

Abolish the FEC

In the past seven years, the commissioners of the FEC have voted 3-3 at least 200 times. These tie votes have prevented formal regulations, but have also allowed de facto policy. The New York Times reported last year, "Campaign lawyers of both parties say the deadlocks have profoundly, if informally, affected the rules governing campaigns," adding, "The splits are consistent enough in spelling out the likely direction of enforcement... that they now advise clients that a 3-to-3 split comes close to official commission policy." And current commissioner Ellen L. Weintraub said, "The few rules that are left, people feel free to ignore."

Why then should a worse than dysfunctional commission, in which the chair says there is not going to be any real enforcement of its regulations, exist in the first place? Quite simply, it shouldn't! Further, there is the argument that the US Constitution does not even authorize the existence of the FEC. It can be argued that since Article 1 Section 4 of the Constitution authorizes Congress to regulate federal elections that it can regulate candidate financing of their campaigns. Roger Pilon, in 1997, wrote for CATO, "regulation must conform to restraints imposed by the First Amendment to the Constitution. And here, the Supreme Court has said repeatedly that, under the First

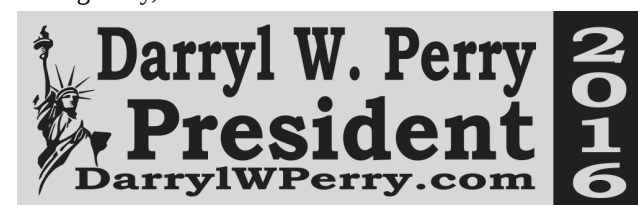
will wait until the spying program is about to expire and then in a panic try to frighten Americans into accepting more intrusions on their privacy."

What does this mean for Edward Snowden, the man who blew the whistle on the illegal spying program? Edward Snowden should be treated like a hero, not a criminal. Though, if I were a betting man, I'd be willing to wager that no employee of the NSA who participated in the illegal spying will be punished, and that Edward Snowden will be the one person to face any charges for his role, being a whistleblower, in the illegal NSA spying program. This is not unprecedented: the only person incarcerated in connection with the CIA torture program was the man who exposed the torture program!

Editor's note: the US Senate failed to pass an extension of Section 215 before the June 1 deadline. However, a vote on the USA FREEDOM Act was scheduled for June 2, and at press time was expected to be passed by the Senate. The USA FREEDOM Act previously passed the House by a vote of 338-88.

Amendment, campaign contributions and expenditures are protected speech." Protected speech is just that, speech that is to be protected from regulation, if protected speech could be regulated, it would not be considered protected speech! Further, Article 1 Section 4 authorizes only that Congress can regulate the time, place, and manner of holding elections, not the financing of campaigns for those elections.

Pilon added, "the [Supreme] Court has said that regulations of political contributions and expenditures will be upheld only if they achieve a compelling governmental interest by the least restrictive means." It's obvious that FEC regulations carry no compelling governmental interest. Therefore, the FEC as a federal agency, along with its regulatory structure and system of subsidizing campaigns and conventions of the two factions of the Ruling Party, should be abolished!

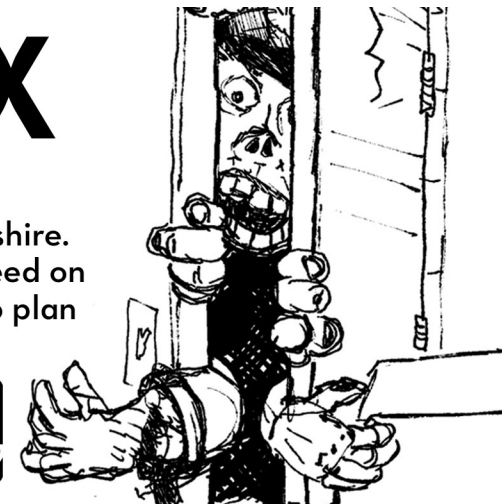


SURVIVOR MAX

by Davi Barker

11-year-old Max is surviving an undead plague alone in New Hampshire. Slow-moving and non-thinking, the "lamebrains" hunt the living to feed on their flesh. He must apply his Porcupine Freedom Scouts training to plan his escape, but first he must prove that he's too smart to die.

SurvivorMax.com



5 Reasons It Doesn't Make Sense to Tell People, "If you don't like America, leave!"

by: Joe Jarvis

I've been noticing lately a lot of people saying, "If you don't like America, get the heeellllll out!" Part of this could be due to the whole flag-stomping thing going around the internet. Clearly those walking on the flag wanted to elicit the very response they are getting.

I don't think that stomping on the flag is a good political tactic, because I am interested in changing hearts and minds, not pissing people off and creating more tensions. But I have a huge problem with the whole, "If you don't like it here, get out!" mentality.

First of all, I was born here. Just because some thugs in DC claim they own 3.8 million square miles between two oceans, taking up almost half of North America—one of only seven continents on Earth—does not mean it is my responsibility to leave if I don't like the force they regularly use against me and my fellow human beings. Most people that tell others to "get out if they don't like it here" also claim to believe in private property. So what they are saying, is that the government's right to boss me around supersedes my right to simply live peacefully on a piece of land that I maintain as my home, without hurting anyone else.

Secondly, someone is going to turn that phrase around at some point. Examples: "Oh you don't like taxes? Well it is our civic duty, so if you don't want to pay for America, get out!" or "If you don't like the President the people elected you can get out!" or "If you don't like regulation from the EPA, FDA, or Department of Energy, why don't you move to Somalia where there is no regulation?" Disagreeing with something, and even going to extremes in using free speech to get your point across, does not mean you have no business living anywhere from sea to shining sea.

Third, telling someone to leave sort of implies that there is somewhere to go. You are telling me I must choose between a few hundred governments, each using a varying degree of unjust force to rule? There is nowhere I can go and be left alone. Every piece of inhabitable land on Earth

has been claimed by some coercive violent group who will force me to follow their arbitrary rules if I move there.

Fourth, for a long time, America stood for something good: free speech, free markets, life, liberty, and property. But now that it has gotten this bad, instead of trying to improve it, instead of pointing out what went wrong, I am supposed to leave because I disagree with whatever group? And as for disrespecting the flag, what happened to free speech? What happened to: "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend with my life your right to say it"? When you tell someone to leave because you think they have disrespected what America stands for, you are forgetting what America stood for: FREE SPEECH! I'm sorry, but a piece of cloth is not more important than actual freedom.

Fifth, you might be angry that I just called the flag a piece of cloth. You might claim it is not just the piece of cloth, but what it stands for that matters. You might bring up the countless people who have died, "for me" or "fighting for my freedom" or "protecting my rights".

The other day I was at work, and a coworker thanked a woman for her service in the military. Her reply was priceless: "Well I get paid". We all must do a cost benefit analysis, and in a dangerous profession, you need to weigh the risk with the reward.

If someone thinks 30 grand a year is worth it to risk their life killing whoever the American government decided needs to be killed this year, don't drag me into it. It is already my (stolen) money being used to fund the destruction, don't add insult to injury by telling me that I should be grateful.

Maybe during the Revolution the flag stood for freedom, or protecting us against foreign aggression. Hey, maybe even during the War of 1812. But if you haven't noticed, our soldiers are not defending the homeland, or protecting the borders. They are in various foreign countries, and at this point, it is getting hard to keep track of which one's

A pardon for Ross Ulbricht

by: Darryl W. Perry

In 2013 Ross Ulbricht was arrested for allegedly operating the black market website Silk Road. In early 2015 he was found convicted in what was essentially a kangaroo trial, where his attorney was prevented from presenting evidence of government corruption in the case, because of an ongoing investigation. Two of the federal agents investigating the case have since been arrested for fraud and money laundering.

Ulbricht's lead defense attorney Joshua Dratel wrote in a court filing, "In contrast to the government's portrayal of the Silk Road web site as a more dangerous version of a traditional drug marketplace, in fact the Silk Road web site was in many respects the most responsible such marketplace in history, and consciously and deliberately included recognized harm reduction measures, including access to physician counseling. In addition, transactions on the Silk Road web site were significantly safer than

traditional illegal drug purchases, and included quality control and accountability features that made purchasers substantially safer than they were when purchasing drugs in a conventional manner."

Meghan Ralston, a former harm reduction manager for the Drug Policy Alliance says Silk Road was "a peaceable alternative to the often deadly violence so commonly associated with the global drug war, and street drug transactions, in particular."

Despite the improprieties in the investigation and the trial, and despite the fact that Ross Ulbricht actually made the black market safer, he will be in prison for a minimum of 20 years. The Ulbricht family has said they plan to appeal the conviction, however they shouldn't need to do so. Ross Ulbricht should be pardoned, as should all non-violent drug offenders!

did what.

We are at war with Saudi Arabia for funding terrorists right? Oh wait no, they are our ally who we fund, and we are at war with Afghanistan for... having mountains to hide in? We're at war with ISIS... or is it Syria? First we helped ISIS, now we don't like them, yea that's it! And then we are drone bombing anyone who might be a terrorist in any country, or if they attend the wrong wedding.

The ironic part to me is that many of the people most pissed off about the flag stomping, are people who claim to believe in the founding fathers and Constitutional government. Why are they more angered by the flag being disrespected than by the fact that what the flag stood for has been eviscerated by our government?

If the flag represented freedom of speech, freedom from oppression, life, liberty, and property, the meaning of the flag has long since died. If the flag reminded us that freedom cannot be traded for security, or that a standing army would erode our rights, or that the best government governs least, then the flag has no meaning, because these things have been forgotten.

The people stomping on the flag are not stomping on those ideals, they are stomping on a hollow shell that was desecrated long ago by our government. People apparently didn't have the energy to tell the politicians, bureaucrats, and government agencies to "get the hell out" when THEY were symbolically stomping on the flag.

So if you want to tell someone to "get out", tell it to the people in government who ruined America. Don't tell it to the people are are trying to point out how bad it has gotten.

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Joe Jarvis was born in 1989 in suburban Massachusetts, and along with two older sisters, was raised by two loving parents. He considers Ayn Rand a major influence, having devoured her non-fiction Objectivist writings as well as the fiction classics *Atlas Shrugged*, and *The Fountainhead*. Joe aspires to pick up where Rand left off in a sense, but hopes to appeal to a larger audience with less preaching, and more consistency in bringing the non-aggression principle to its logical conclusion: eliminating government altogether. Joe aspires to spread his knowledge and views of a better future through fiction, including what he considers to be his first of many, *Anarchy in New England*.

Abolish legalized theft

continued from page 1

It's the money, or the car, or the house, or the bottles of vintage wine, or really anything that a government agent wants to seize, as long as the agent claims there is probable cause to suspect that the property was connected to a crime. Since 2001, federal, state, and local agents nationwide have seized \$2.5 billion in cash from almost 62,000 people – without warrants or indictments. As stories like the one of Joseph Rivers make headlines, the criticism of civil asset forfeiture will continue, and hopefully will bring about a change in the laws that allow government agents to steal from people. The federal policy change announced earlier this year, is of little consequence, as it only limits the ability of state and local officials to use the federal adoption method of civil asset forfeiture. There are a variety of reforms that are needed to completely prevent legalized theft by government agents, not the least of which is requiring a conviction before a seizure can occur, and also repealing all crimes that are nothing more than vices.