

Role of Government

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One of the basics of Fantasy Free Economics is that institutions and individuals are treated according to how they function and not how they are defined. So, it is natural that I explain the role of government in a different light than is generally popular.

What is the role of government in our lives?

Government is always given a lofty definition and noble purpose. The one below is typical.

*“The **role of government** is to balance communal and individual good. This is only possible when society is*

*governed by the principles of morality and justice, law and order, under one G-d — The Rebbe. Over the centuries, the human race has experimented with many forms of **government**. [The Meaningful Life Center](#)”*

Something like the above may be the legitimate role of government but how many lifetimes need a person live before any government in the world is witnessed performing that role? How many governments in the history of the world devoted time and energy to balancing communal and individual good? I can't think of any. Perhaps you can. There may be an outlier in the universe that I have missed. Is the government of the United States balancing communal and individual good? Has it ever?

The disciplines of economics and political science are constructed around lofty definitions of government and it is treated as normal that governments do these things. Actually, it would be abnormal for any government to do such things. What is studied are systems that don't exist in the real world.

So, what is the role of government in society? The role of government is what it does, who it serves and what it accomplishes. Right now, the United States government is used to organize the population, homogenize opinions, and pass laws that transfer wealth and income from citizens without political power to more influential citizens with massive political power.

We are currently on the eve of an enormous economic crisis. It is important that ordinary people understand that the ostensible purpose of government is completely different than the purposes it is used for. Do not expect the country's leaders to respond in ways that will improve life for ordinary people. Representation in government is transferable. Voters elect representatives but with respect to actual representation, they get outbid almost immediately after an election is over.

