

MISES: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY 1982 - 1993 UPDATE

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All passages quoted in this bibliography contain some reference to the works and ideas of the late Ludwig von Mises. Thus it should prove to be a useful tool for scholars interested in studying and analyzing his writings. It reports what others think about Mises, how they understand him and how they interpret his teachings. It will lead students to the writings of both Mises' supporters and critics.

The passages cited furnish insight into the differences between Mises on the one hand and on the other hand Schumpeter, Hayek, Rothbard, Rand, Robbins, Lachmann, Friedman, Buchanan, the modern hermeneuticians, etc. Some quotations criticize Mises' theory of the business cycle and others his methodology. Some quotations comment on the debate over economic calculation under socialism, while others discuss the implications of Mises' utilitarianism for morality.

It is apparent from a number of quotations that the ideas of Mises and of his fellow "Austrians," are beginning to challenge, irritate and seek into mainstream thinking. For instance.

David Horowitz, a 1960's left-wing political activist who was raised believing in the "socialistic dream," commented on the 1989 downfall of Communism. "But while we [socialists] were being wrong, others all along had been right. . . . ¶Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich von Hayek, and other liberal theorists of a free market economy are the true prophets of the reality before us -- of socialist bankruptcy and Communist retreat. . . . Socialism makes men poor beyond their wildest dreams. . . . The only way to wake up from the nightmare is to give up the dream." (1989, p. 106).

Robert Heilbroner, author of the widely used text, *The Worldly Philosophers*: "Mises passed the stinging judgment that socialist[s] 'want people to play market as children play war, railroads, or school. They do not comprehend how such childish play differs from the real thing it tries to imitate.'" (1990, p. 122) "I just don't buy the practicality of his [Mises'] theory of praxeology. I can't take his book *Human Action* seriously. He said socialism is impossible, and he turned out to be right. But he was not terribly convincing to me." (1991, p. 138)

Alvin Toffler, author of the best-selling book, *The Third Wave* (1984), wrote: "But central planning depended on knowledge, and as early as the 1920s the Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises identified its lack of knowledge or, as he termed it, its 'calculation problem,' as the Achilles heel of socialism. ¶How many shoes and what sizes should a factory in Irkutsk make? How many left-handed screws or grades of paper? What price-relationships should be set between carburetors and cucumbers? How many rubles, zlotys, or yuan should be invested in each of tens of thousands of different lines and levels of production?" (1990, 131)

Risto Harisalo, a professor of economics in Finland: "Although Karl Marx is so far held as a genuine friend of the poor and miserable, it is possible that Ludwig von Mises will take his place. In spite of the claims that socialism and statism have a more virtuous morality than the free market economy, they have been unable to solve the problem of world poverty and deprivation. . . . ¶For millions of really poor and uneducated people in the Third World, Ludwig von Mises is an ally who has demanded abolition of privileges which secure the positions of the affluent and rich minority and protect them from unconditional competition." (1991, p. 137)

Gabriel J. Zanotti, in an article published in Argentina on "The Christian Philosophy and the Thought of Ludwig von Mises": "We should not expect Saint Thomas to be a great economist and/or Mises to be a great metaphysician. The plain truth is that Saint Thomas was a great metaphysician and Mises a great economist. Let us ask of each of them only the great truths in which they dedicated themselves with such intensity and combine their contributions. Then we shall see that the metaphysics of Saint Thomas is the best foundation for Mises' economics." (1986, p. 54)

Israel Kirzner, NYU professor: "As Mises . . . had explained as early as 1922, there is nothing in the economist's approach which implies absence of moral restraints. There is nothing amoral or 'uncivilized' in the economist's perspective. Truly sensitive natures, Mises pointed out, need not be dismayed by the economist's way of putting things. 'Called upon to choose between bread and honour, [such truly sensitive natures] will never be at a loss how to act. If honour cannot be eaten, eating can at least be foregone for honour. . . . Properly understood self-interest does not exclude altruistic motivation; it depends on purposefulness, but not on any selfishness of purpose.'" (1990, pp. 117-118)

Paul C. Martin, writing in a Hamburg (Germany) newspaper: "A young man dies in Berlin and we ask 'Who is to blame?' The answer is easy: the State. . . . ¶The blame rests on the State as Supreme Bureaucrat who imposes housing and rent controls on us." Martin discusses rent control in the light of a Mises quote on price controls: "The Roman Empire foundered because the spirit of liberalism declined. . . . And so, it will be with us." (1982, p. 11)

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, U.S. Senator from New York, when interviewed on MacNiel-Lehrer program on why Communism failed: "I think you have to go back to those Austrian economists who said they could not produce a pricing system so they never knew what anything was worth. And absent a pricing system, they -- basically they had no information in their system." (1991, p. 141)