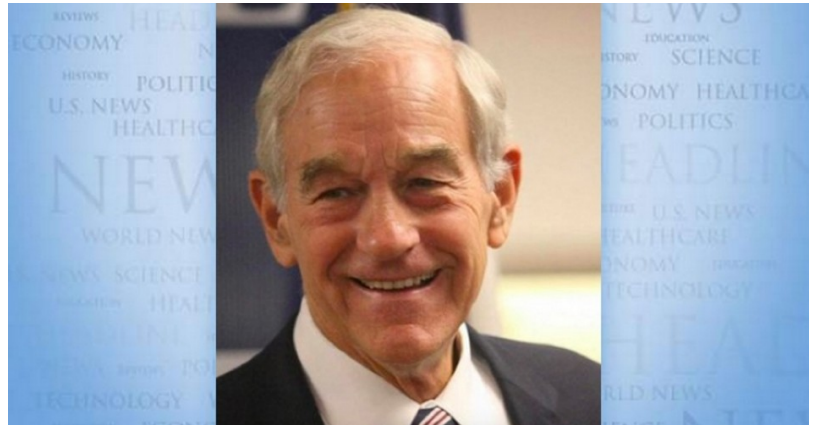




Written by [Ron Paul](#) on April 30, 2018

## Baby Alfie, the Latest Victim of Omnipotent Government

Twenty-three-month-old Alfie Evans, passed away in a British hospital on Saturday. While the official cause of death was a degenerative brain disease, Alfie may have been murdered by the British health system and the British high court. Doctors at the hospital treating Alfie decided to remove his life support, against the wishes of Alfie's parents. The high court not only upheld the doctors' authority to override the parents' wishes, it refused to allow the parents to take Alfie abroad for treatment.



In upholding the government's authority to substitute its judgment for that of Alfie's parents, the high court is following in the footsteps of authoritarians throughout history. Ever since Plato, supporters of big government have sought to put government in charge of raising children. The authoritarianism of a system where "experts" can override parents is underscored by a police warning that they were "monitoring" social media posts regarding Alfie.

Alfie's case is not just an example of the dangers of allowing government to usurp parental authority or the failures of socialized medicine. It shows the logical result of the widespread acceptance of the idea that rights are mere privileges bestowed by government. It follows from this idea that rights can be taken away whenever demanded by government officials or the popular will.

Of course, most western politicians deny they believe rights come from government. They instead claim that government must place "reasonable" limits on rights to advance important policy goals, such as limiting the right to free speech to protect certain groups from hate speech, or limiting property rights to promote economic equality. But, a right by its very nature cannot be limited or abolished and still be a right.

This disdain for a true understanding of rights is found among both liberals and conservatives. Both support a welfare-warfare state funded via the theft of income taxes and the indirect theft of inflation. Both support jailing people for nonviolent actions like drinking raw milk. Many politicians, regardless of ideology, support restrictions on parental rights such as mandatory vaccination laws.

While claiming to support the right to life, most modern liberals not only support legalized abortion, they want to force pro-lifers to fund abortion providers. Both the right-wing neocons and left-wing humanitarian interventionists dismiss the innocents killed in US military actions as inconsequential "collateral damage."

America's Founding Fathers rejected the idea that rights come from government. They instead embraced the view that rights are either granted by the creator or are a basic attribute of humanity.

Since rights do not come from government, government has no more legitimate authority to violate our rights than does a private individual. Thus, if an individual cannot use force to make you help others, neither can the government. If an individual cannot use force to stop you from gambling online or telling un-PC jokes, neither can the government. If an individual cannot use force to stop parents from



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seeking medical treatment for their child, neither can the government.

Widespread acceptance of natural rights and the principle of nonaggression that flows from natural rights is key to obtaining and maintaining a free society. Thus, educating people in the benefits of free markets, individual liberty, and a foreign policy of peace and free trade is key to protecting future Alfie Evanses, and other victims of the welfare-warfare state, as well as to restoring respect for the moral principles of liberty among a critical mass of the people.

*Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.*



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