

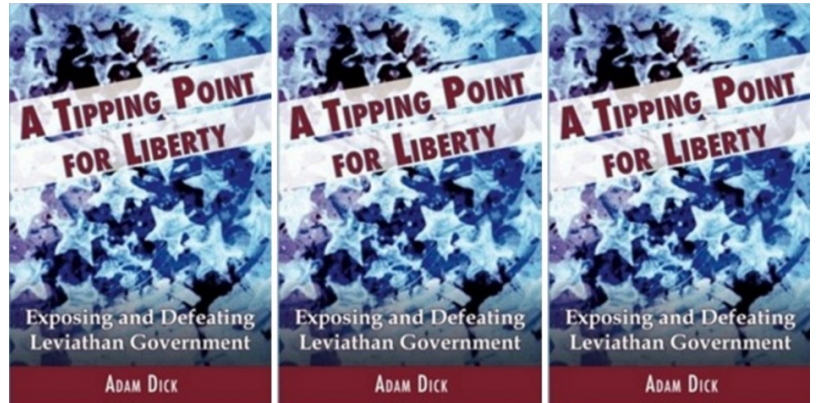


Written by [Laurence M. Vance](#) on October 13, 2016

Review of “A Tipping Point for Liberty”

[A Tipping Point for Liberty: Exposing and Defeating Leviathan Government](#), by Adam Dick, Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity, 2016, 286 pages, paperback.

Adam Dick may not be a household name, but his employer certainly is. For 10 years, Dick worked in Ron Paul’s congressional office as his assistant for correspondence regarding all issues and as his primary aide regarding the issues of drug prohibition, gun rights, property rights, free speech, religion, and the District of Columbia. After Dr. Paul retired from Congress and founded the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity, it was only natural that he would ask Dick to assist him in the endeavor as a senior fellow.



A Tipping Point for Liberty: Exposing and Defeating Leviathan Government (hereafter just *A Tipping Point for Liberty*) collects together over 100 of Dick’s articles written for the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity during the period from 2013 to 2015. The title of the book comes from Dick’s January 14, 2014, article titled “A Tipping Point for Liberty Against Leviathan” that references Malcolm Gladwell’s book *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. Dick explains that the title expresses an optimism that he and Dr. Paul share “regarding the period in time in which we now live.” Although “there is much reason to be concerned about the growth of the police state, militarism, and mass surveillance in America,” Dick believes that “rather sudden changes can occur in political systems that seem nearly omnipotent.” The dark hours for America may be “occurring just before the dawn of liberty.” But Dick is no romantic. He presents no timeline and makes no predictions. Whether a tipping point is near or far, “people who value respect for liberty at home and a noninterventionist foreign policy can continue their educational efforts to lay the groundwork for change.” Dick sees his book as helping to “spread some of the ideas needed to ensure that liberty and peace prevail.”

A Tipping Point for Liberty is easy to read even though its subject matter may make one uneasy: Its 105 articles on about 300 pages are each generally just a few pages long. The book is divided into eight unequal parts, each containing from four to 27 articles. These parts are The Drug War, The Police State, Militarism, Surveillance, Guns, Government Chicanery, Ron Paul and Libertarianism, and This and That. The first four parts are the meat of the book and account for the majority of its content. The book also contains a foreword by Ron Paul and a preface by the author. Because of the nature of the book, there are no footnotes and no bibliography. Within each part of the book, the articles are arranged chronologically. It is very helpful that the original date each article was published is given. But the book is not “old news” that merely chronicles the government’s latest attacks on individual liberty, private property, and economic freedom. Although each article is based on something going on in government or society at the time it was written, the principles of the freedom philosophy that the author adeptly



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applies to each event or issue make the articles just as relevant now as when they were written.

Dick pulls no punches in the first part of the book on the drug war, a futile crusade that he describes as “a decades long travesty the US government uses to expand its power, enrich special interests, and trample liberty.” The drug war has led to “courts being more accepting of the surveillance, entrapment, and other practices outside historic American legal limits that are used regularly in the name of fighting terrorism.” The drug war has been “used as an excuse for vast expansion of police practices including covert surveillance, sting operations, pretext traffic stops, asset seizures without any court hearing whatsoever, and SWAT team raids on homes and businesses.” The drug war has created an “exception” to the Fourth Amendment. Dick takes the view that Americans have the “right” to use drugs without interference from the federal government. He argues that “practical arguments alone stacked from here to the moon will be of little persuasive value so long as the rights argument is not widely accepted.” He sees nothing civilized about the government “arresting people and throwing them in jail for making the choice to use, buy, or sell marijuana.”

Part two of the book on the police state contains the greatest number of articles (27). Two major themes here are the abuses of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the militarization of local police forces. The TSA “PreCheck” program is an “extortion racket” that is no different from “the old extortion rackets of hooligans selling protection from themselves to store owners and raiders from the countryside demanding that residents of a town pay tribute.” The TSA “No Fly” list is “abominable” and violates the Fifth Amendment’s prohibition of the government depriving any person of “life, liberty, or property without due process of law.” Dick faults Congress for attempting to improve the TSA instead of eliminating it and “restoring respect for a significant portion of freedom denied since the beginning of this century.” Huge transfers of weapons and equipment from the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to local police departments have merely helped to militarize them and done little to advance public safety. But this militarization is also being fueled “with billions of dollars obtained through asset seizures that amount to highway robbery under the guise of law enforcement.”

Militarism is the general subject of the 19 diverse articles in part three of *A Tipping Point for Liberty*. Here Dick makes the case that President Obama’s targeted killings via drone strikes are not just illegal and unconstitutional, but also “more active and more flagrant in lawlessness than the program Obama inherited from President George W. Bush.” Dick terms U.S. military spending as “bloated” because it is “nearly equal to the combined military spending of the rest of the world.” Throughout this part of the book, Dick contrasts the noninterventionist foreign policy of the Founders with the reckless and belligerent foreign policy views of the warmongers in both parties, from the leadership on down.

The surveillance state is chronicled and critiqued in part four of the book. Dick describes the surveillance state for what it is: totalitarian. The congressional “reforms” to the federal government’s spying programs merely “provide cover for continuing liberty violations.” Although some congressmen think the National Security Agency (NSA) is collecting too little of our private information, Dick agrees with Ron Paul that government’s mass surveillance program should be ended and the NSA gotten rid of. But it’s not just the federal government that is a spymaster. The feds are also “working with states to expand quickly the use of facial recognition surveillance.”

The most important part of the second half of *A Tipping Point for Liberty* is part five, on the topic of guns. Dick does not simply regurgitate National Rifle Association (NRA) talking points. In fact, he is critical of the NRA for its efforts to “expand both government databases of people’s private information and legal prohibitions on who may purchase and own guns.” Dick praises the state of Kansas for



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adopting a bill to legalize “the carrying of concealed handguns by many people in Kansas without the requirement that they first pay a fee, take a class, obtain a permit, or provide personal information for inclusion in a government database.” But the picture of gun rights in other states and on the federal level is not so rosy. Dick points out that New York has a “No Guns List,” with many of the names listed based on reports the state receives from medical workers. The reports help government bureaucrats determine whether a firearms license should be suspended or revoked or whether a person should be ineligible for such a license in the first place. On the federal level, Dick discusses how the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) sends mental health information about VA patients to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to “aid the FBI in adding individuals to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) list of individuals restricted from owning or possessing guns.” He also explains how the required completion of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives form 4473 violates the First, Second, Fifth, and 10th Amendments to the Constitution.

Aside from part seven of *A Tipping Point for Liberty*, which relates to Ron Paul, the person most mentioned and quoted in the book is Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity advisory board member (and Fox News personality) Judge Andrew Napolitano. Although not the book’s intention, the many references to Judge Napolitano will certainly steer the book’s readers to look into finding out more about him and reading his very important books that defend the Constitution and personal freedom and, like Dick’s work, expose the federal government as the greatest danger to individual liberty, peace, private property, prosperity, and economic freedom.

America is indeed at a tipping point. I agree with Ron Paul’s conclusion in the book’s foreword that *A Tipping Point for Liberty* “is an important tool for spreading the education needed to ensure we can move onward to a world of liberty, peace, and prosperity.”



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