Published on *Adam Smith Institute* (http://www.adamsmith.org)



# Ten reasons why the Left should like the ASI, 4: Personal liberties [1]

Written by **Dr Madsen Pirie** [2] | Wednesday 10 April 2013

*As part of our continuing series, Madsen Pirie discusses some common ground between libertarians and the left.*

**4. The ASI backs the cause of personal liberties.** The Left should welcome the fact that the ASI is firmly libertarian in its outlook, taking the side of those who express a right of dissent, or who choose to follow alternative or minority lifestyles.

The ASI takes a libertarian approach, believing that people are the best judge of what suits their lives. They know more about themselves and their circumstances, and should make the decisions about how they prefer to live. We think people should be entitled to live their own lives, rather than being forced to conform to someone else's idea of how they should live. Provided they do not harm others or seek arbitrary restraints on their liberties, people should live as they choose.

The ASI does not support imposed conformity. It recognizes that people differ in their views of what constitutes a family, or marriage, and supports their right to live by different values. It opposes using state power and state finance to back only certain types of relationship, believing that such choices should be outwith its jurisdiction.

The ASI backs free speech, including the expression of ideas that some might find offensive and insulting. We might prefer to see people exercise courtesy and restraint, but these are not things that the law should impose. A free press will at times overstep the boundaries of taste and decorum, but only a free press uncontrolled by politicians can expose their machinations and follies and therefore restrain their excesses.

blog comments powered by Disqus [4]

**Source URL:** http://www.adamsmith.org/blog/liberty-justice/ten-reasons-why-the-left-should-like-the-asi-4-personal-liberties

**Links:**
[1] http://www.adamsmith.org/blog/liberty-justice/ten-reasons-why-the-left-should-like-the-asi-4-personal-liberties
[2] http://www.adamsmith.org/taxonomy/term/5779
[3] http://disqus.com/?ref_noscript
[4] http://disqus.com