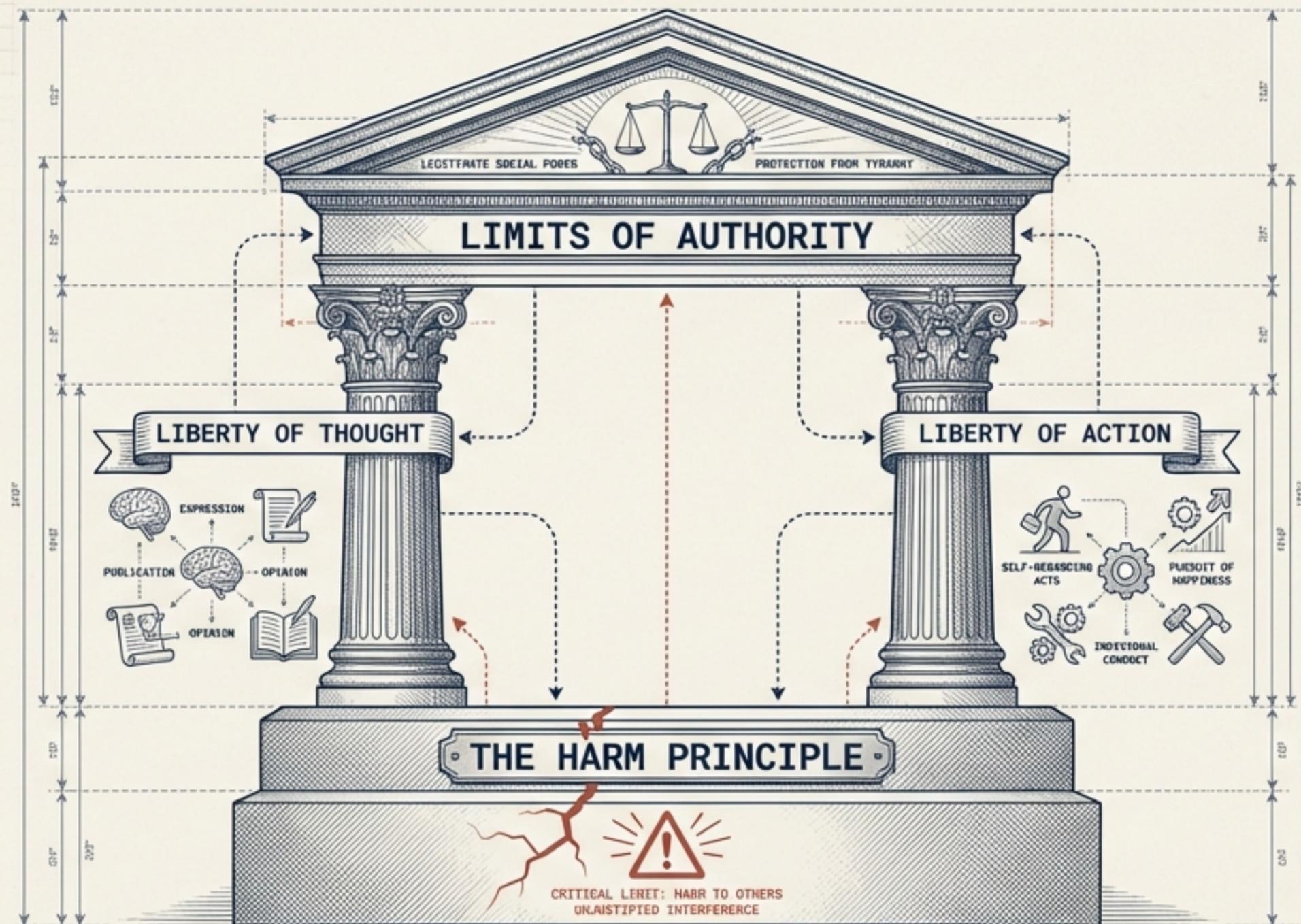


A Blueprint for the Sovereign Mind

An Architectural Defense of Liberty: Deconstructing John Stuart Mill



"Civil or Social Liberty: The nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual."

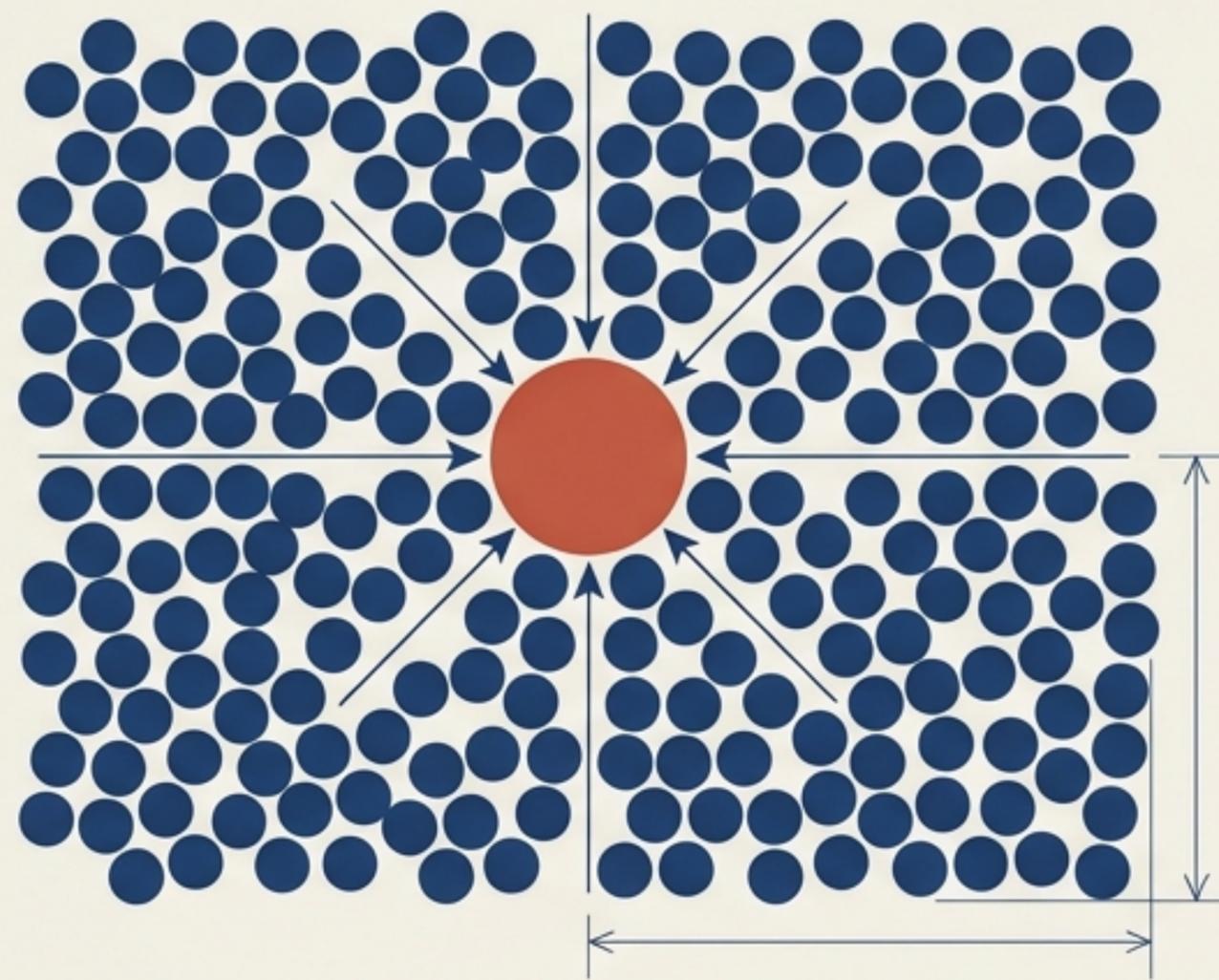
The Evolution of the Threat

THE PAST



Tyranny of the One
Protection against the Ruler.

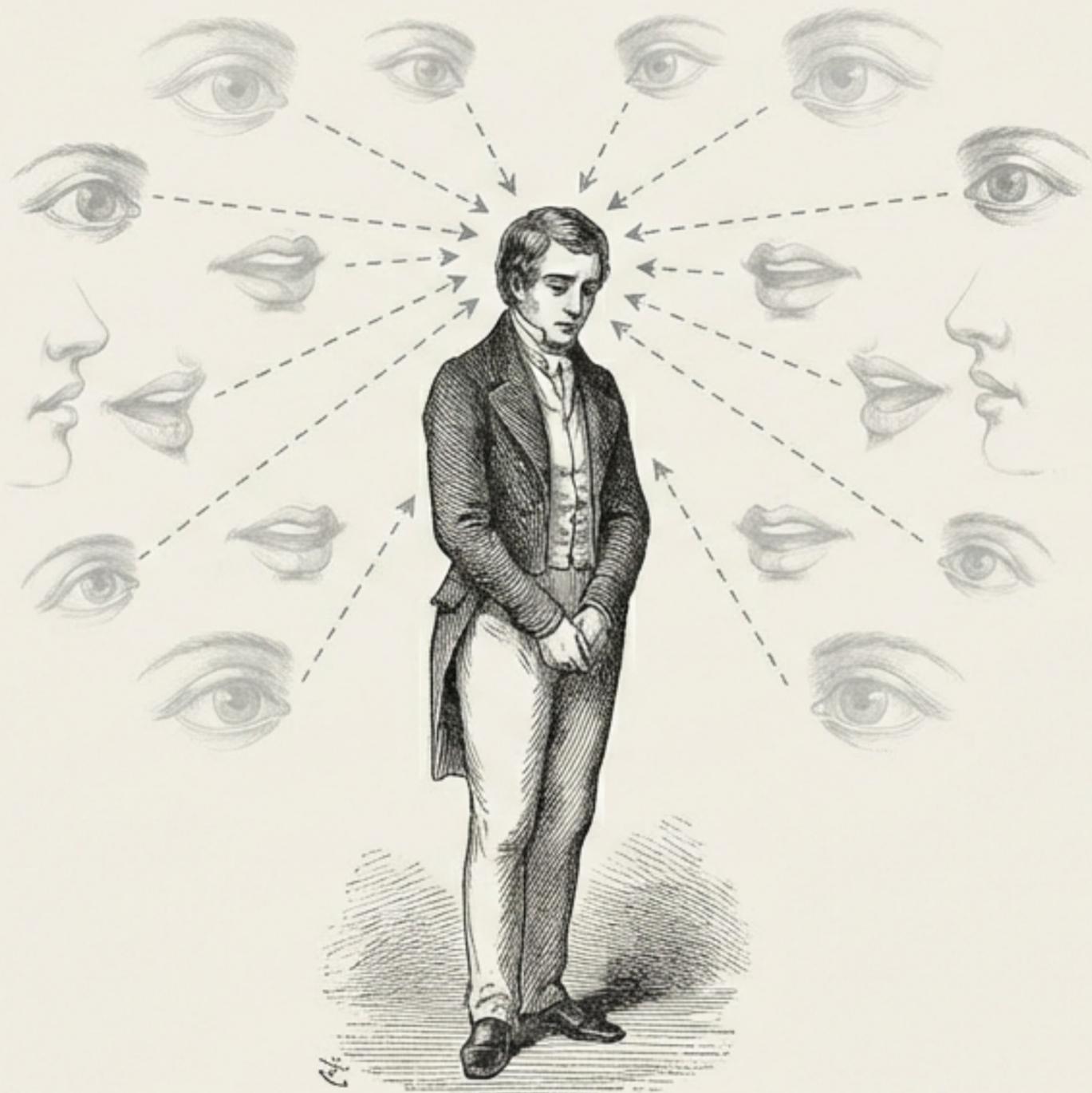
THE PRESENT



Tyranny of the Majority
Protection against Prevailing Opinion.

The "people" who exercise the power are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised.

The Despotism of Custom

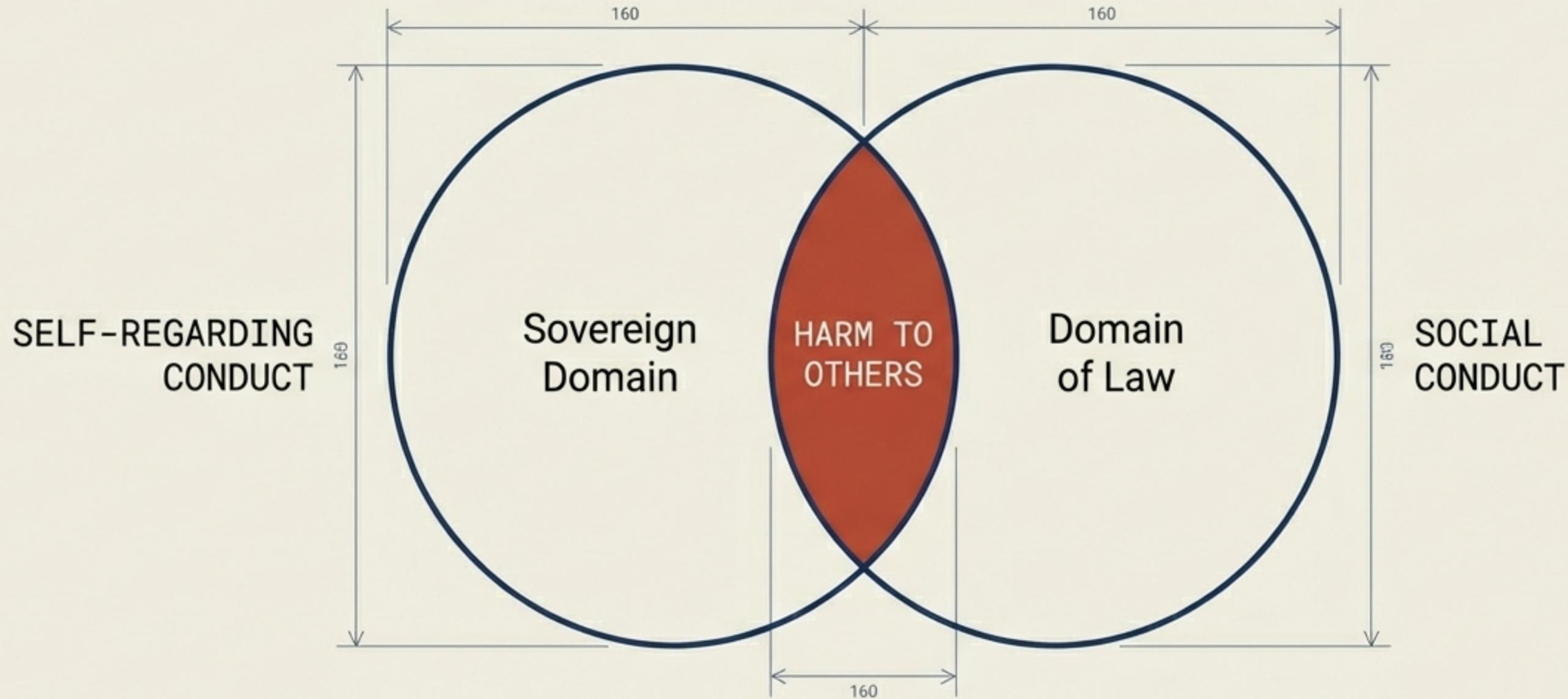


The Danger: The magical influence of custom.

It leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself.

Society executes its own mandates. When it interferes in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practices a tyranny more formidable than political oppression.

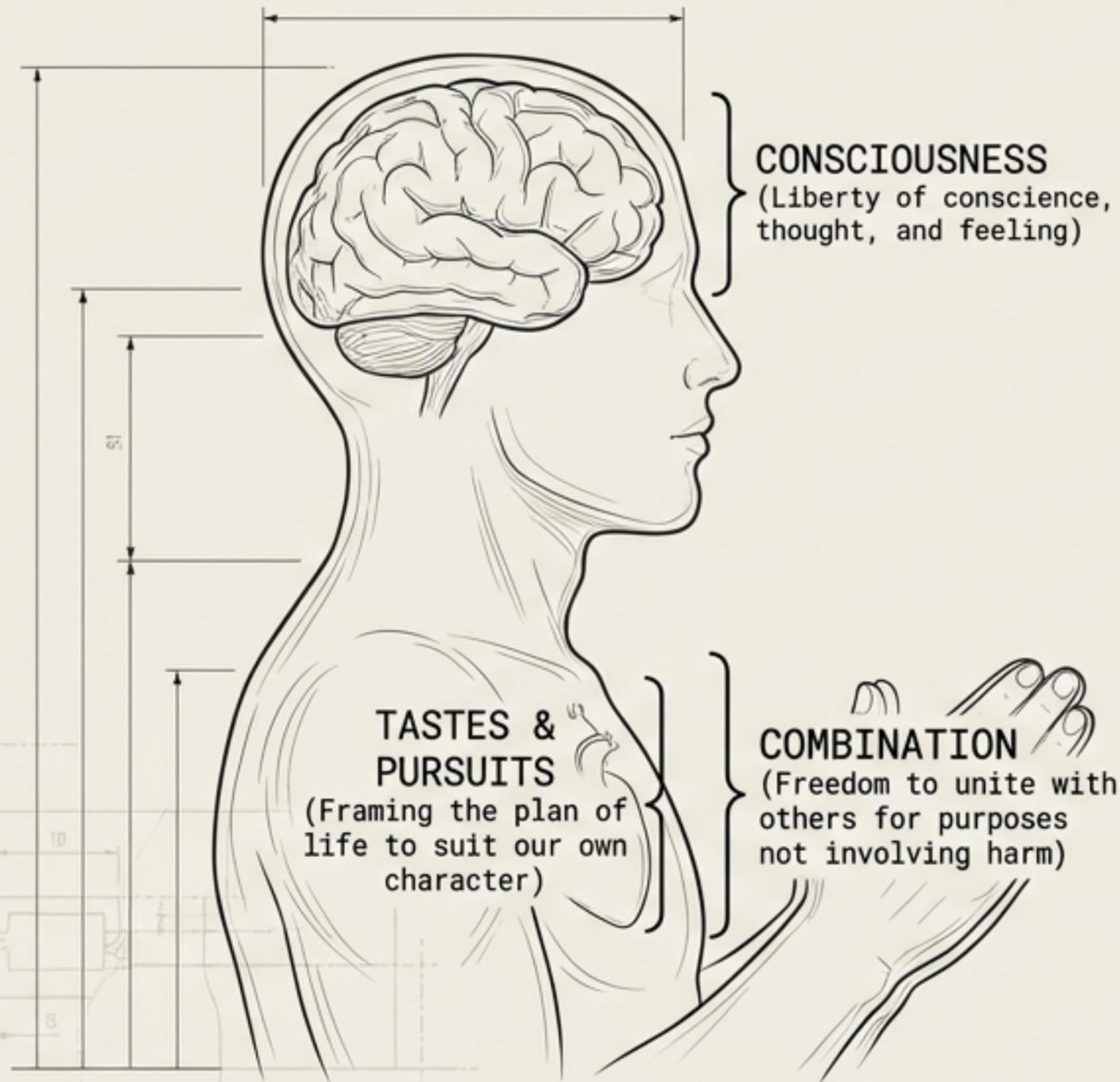
The Foundation: The Harm Principle



The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection.

Note: His own good, either physical or moral, is NOT a sufficient warrant.

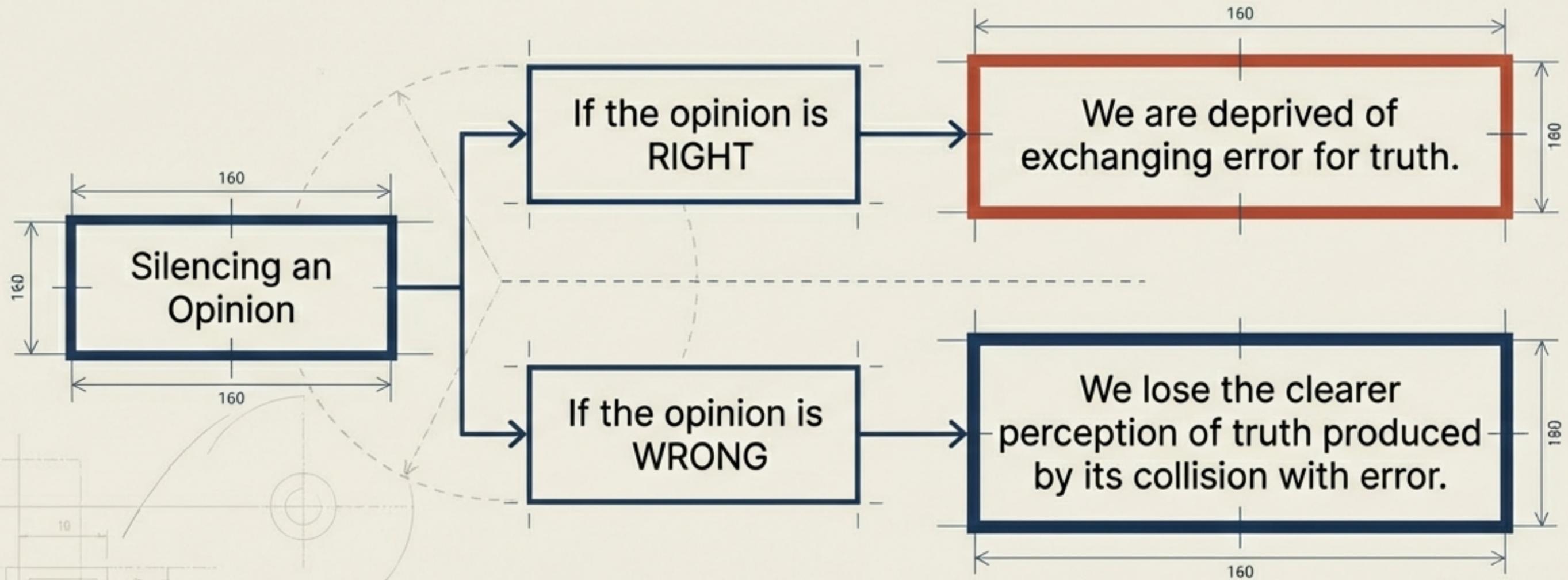
The Domain of Human Liberty



**“Over himself, over his
own body and mind,
the individual is
sovereign.”**

The Robbery of the Human Race

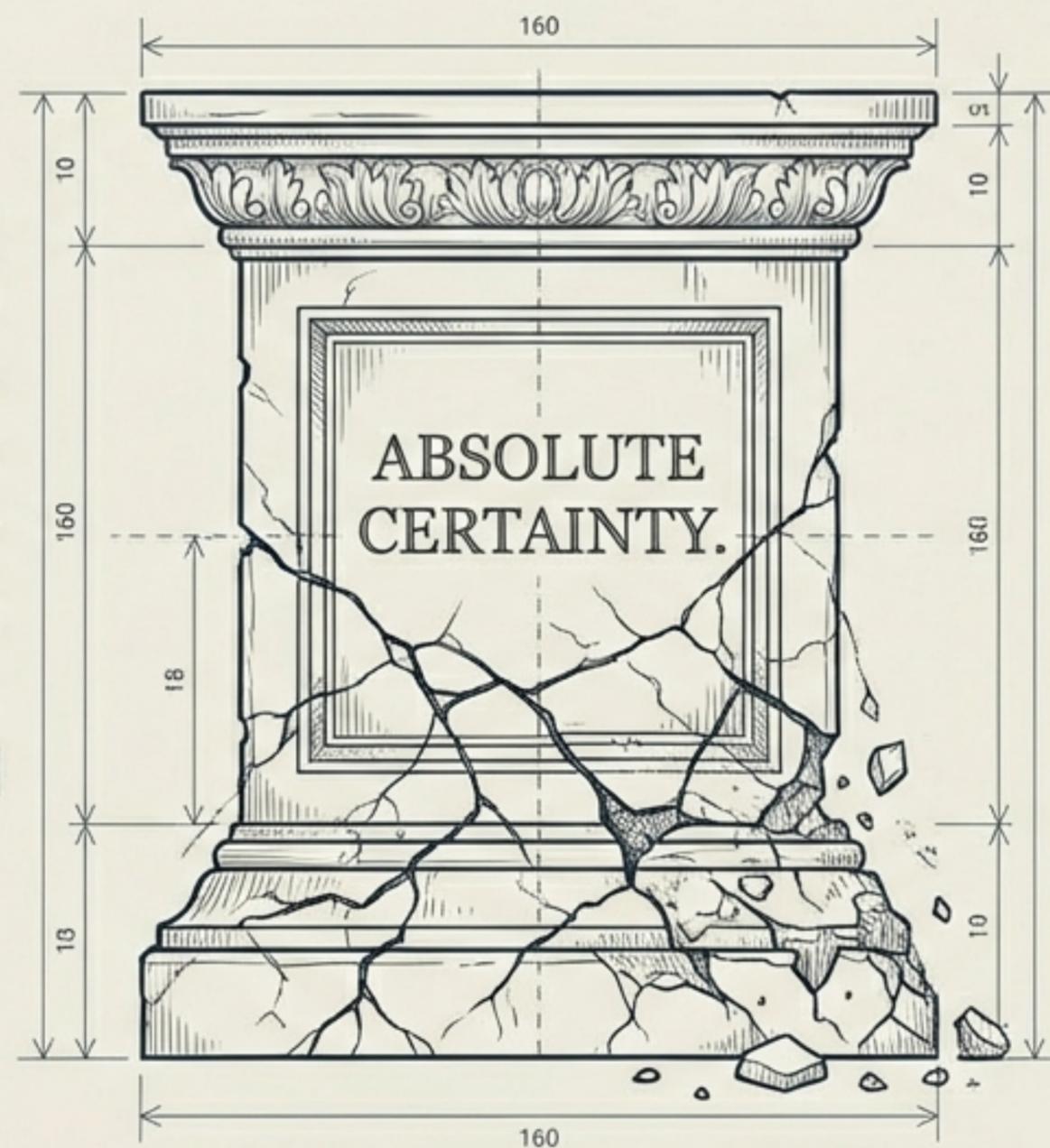
Why silencing an opinion is a crime against the future.



It robs posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it.

The Assumption of Infallibility

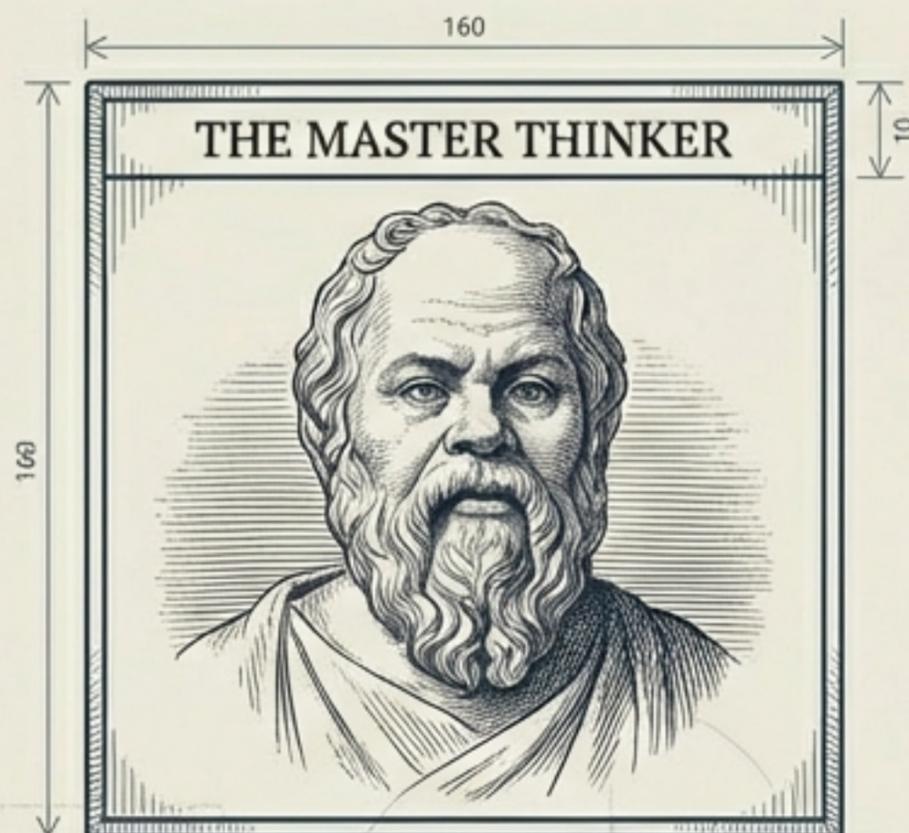
To refuse a hearing to an opinion, because you are sure it is false, is to assume that **YOUR certainty** is the same thing as **ABSOLUTE certainty**.



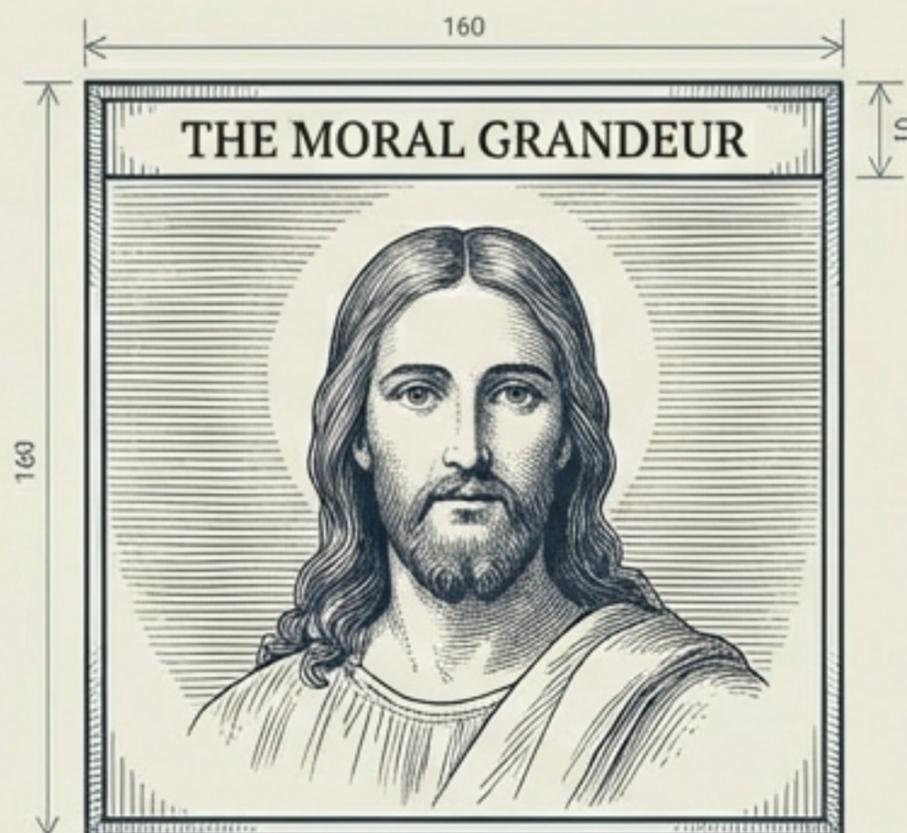
Ages are no more infallible than individuals. Every age has held many opinions which subsequent ages have deemed not only false but absurd.

The Verdict of History

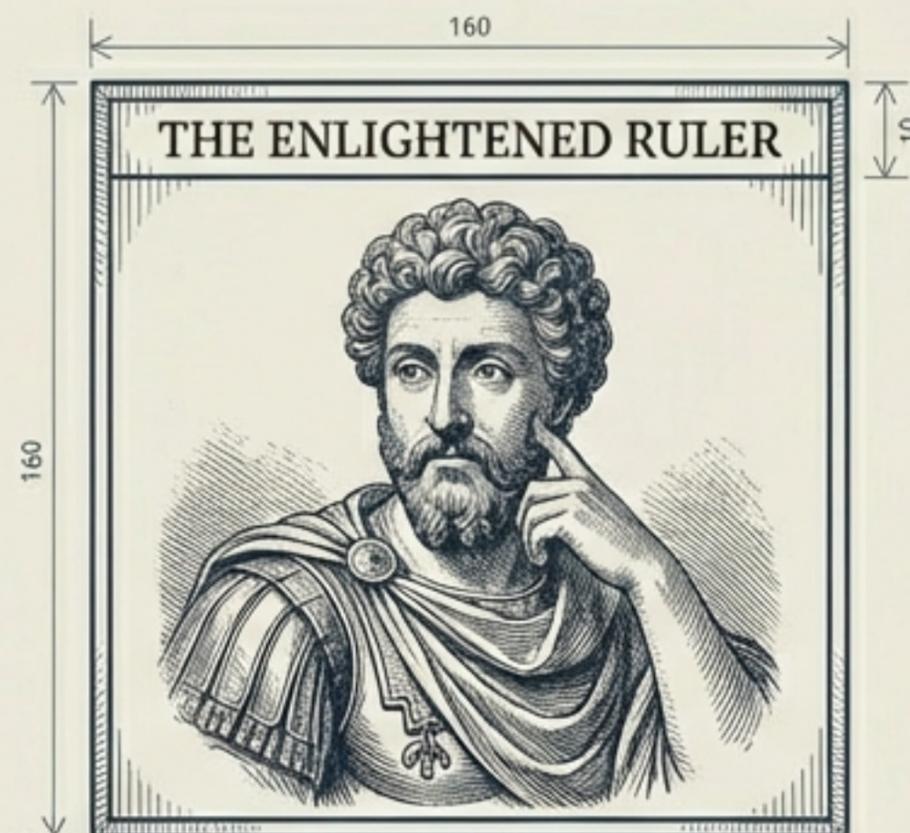
Why Good Men Kill Truth



Executed for Impiety.



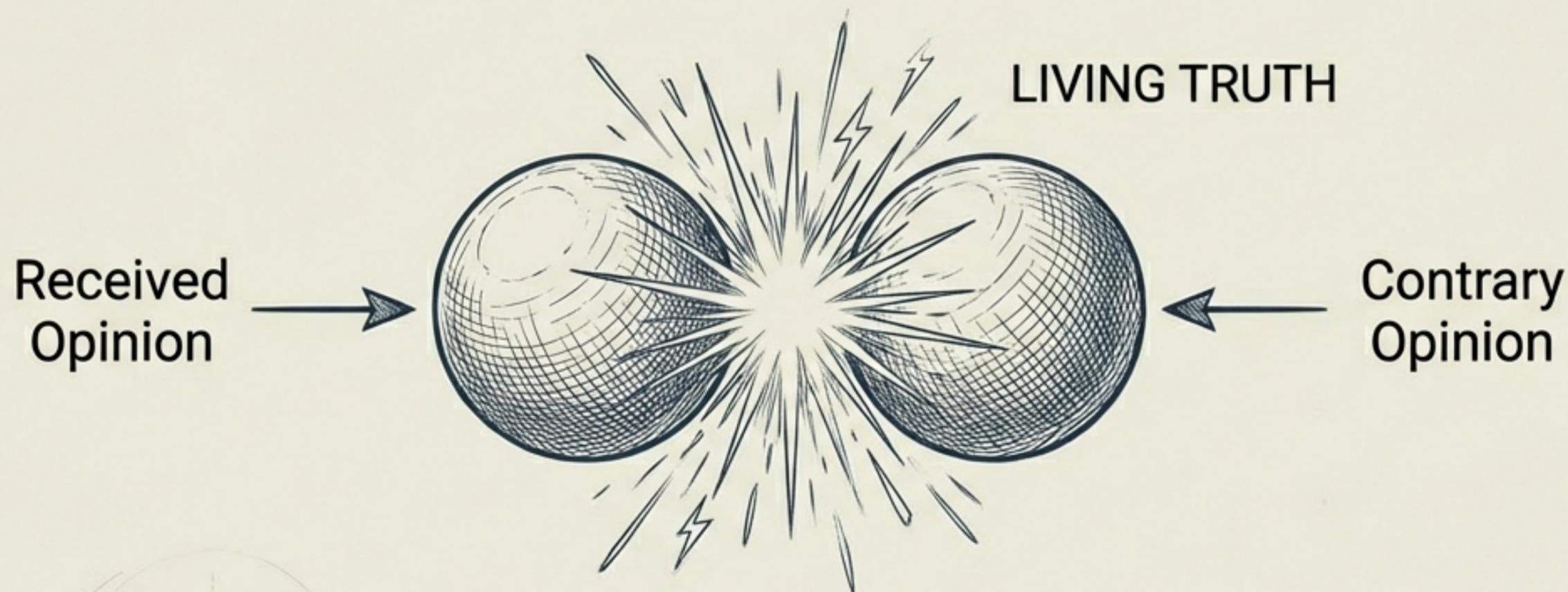
Executed for Blasphemy.



Persecuted Christianity as a duty.

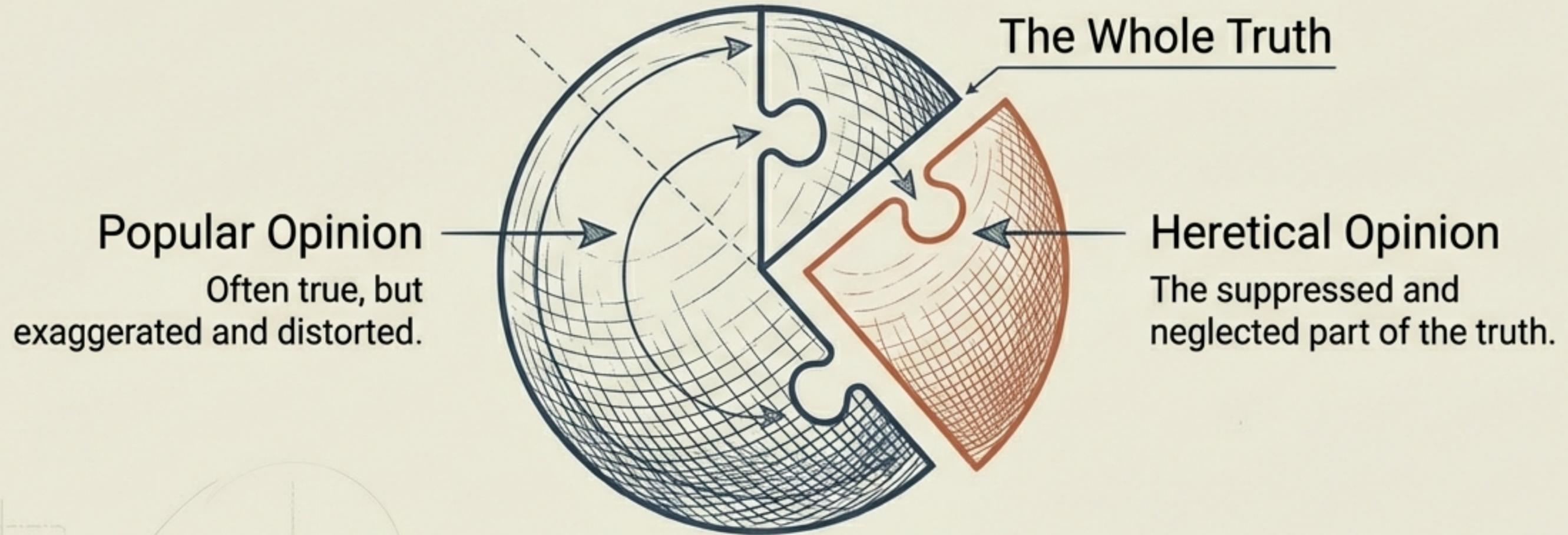
These persecutors were not bad men. They were the best of their time, acting on certainty. If they could be wrong, so can we.

The Value of the Devil's Advocate



Truth, if not debated, becomes a dead dogma, not a living truth.
He who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that.
Even the Catholic Church admits a "Devil's Advocate"
at the canonization of a saint.

The Fragmentation of Truth

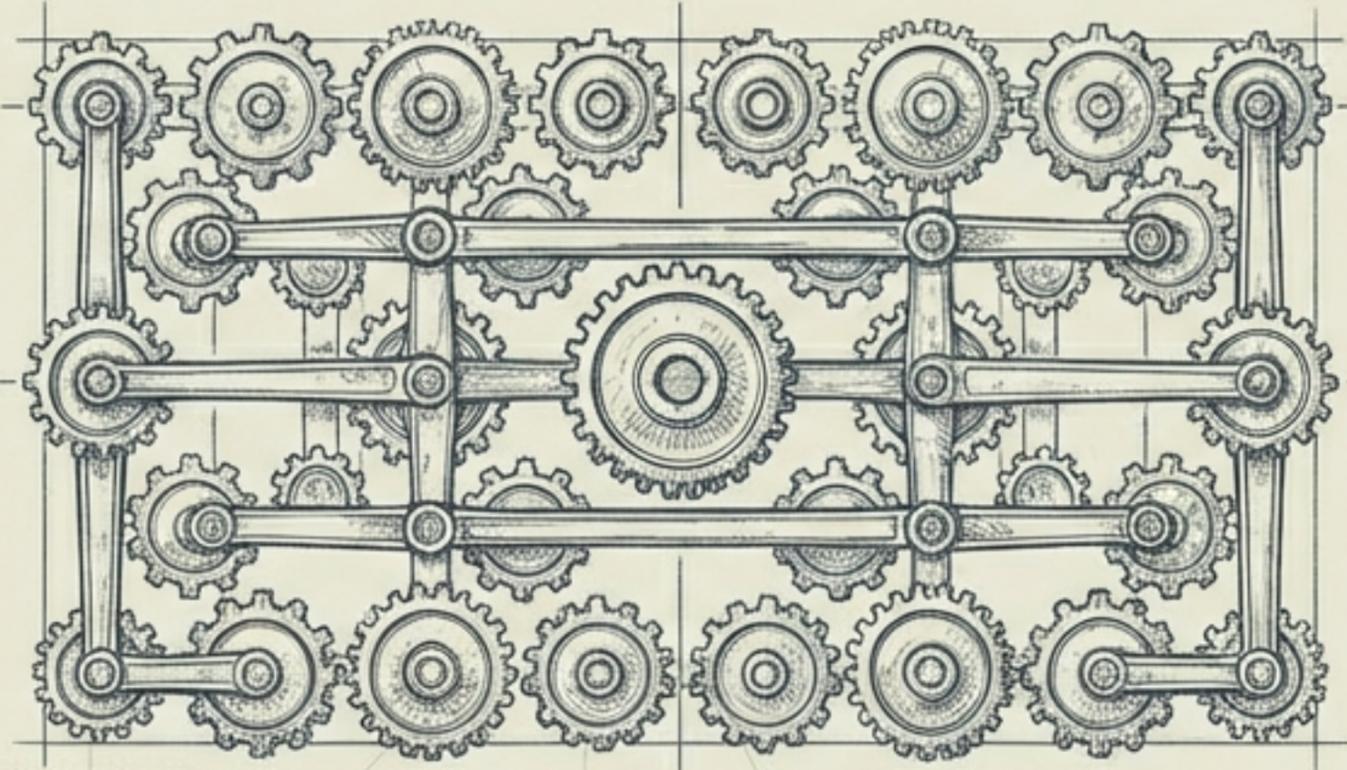


Heretical opinions are generally some of these suppressed truths bursting the bonds which kept them down.

In politics, a party of stability and a party of progress are both necessary elements of a healthy political life.

The Tree vs. The Machine

THE MACHINE



THE MACHINE

Built after a model. Set to do prescribed work.

THE TREE



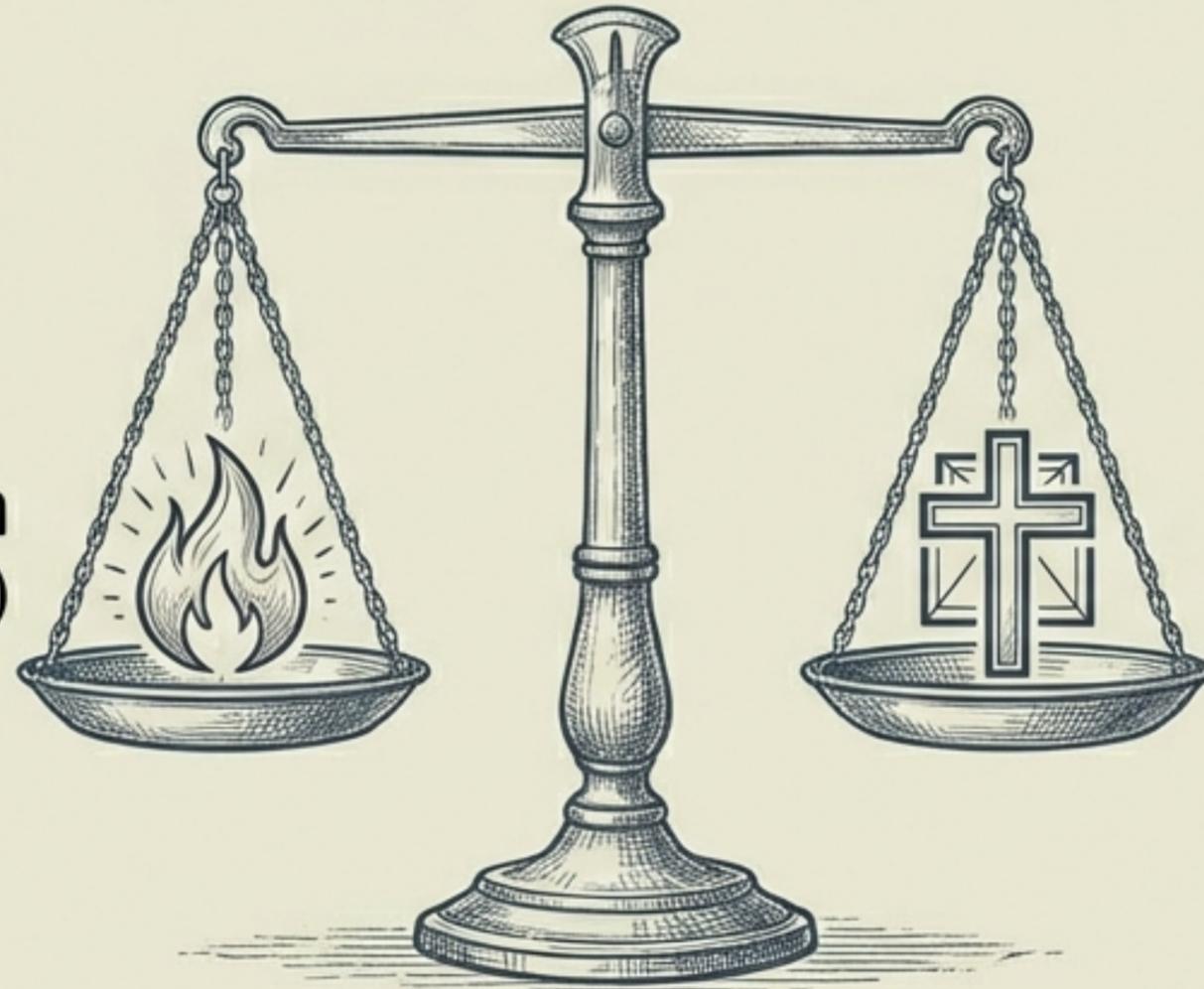
THE TREE

Requires growth and development on all sides.

He who does anything because it is the custom,
makes no choice.

In Defense of Strong Impulses

Pagan Self-Assertion
(Vitality, Energy)

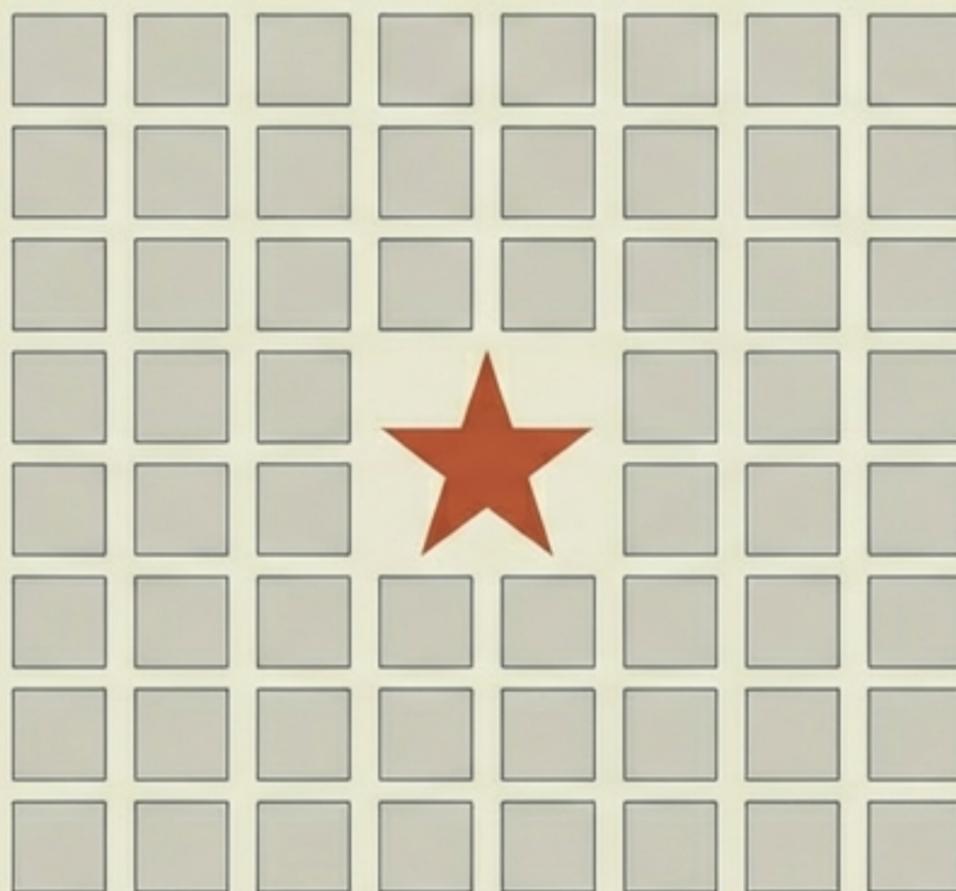


Christian Self-Denial
(Control, Conscience)

It is not because men's desires are strong that they act ill;
it is because their consciences are weak.

Strong impulses are but another name for energy.

The Necessity of Eccentricity

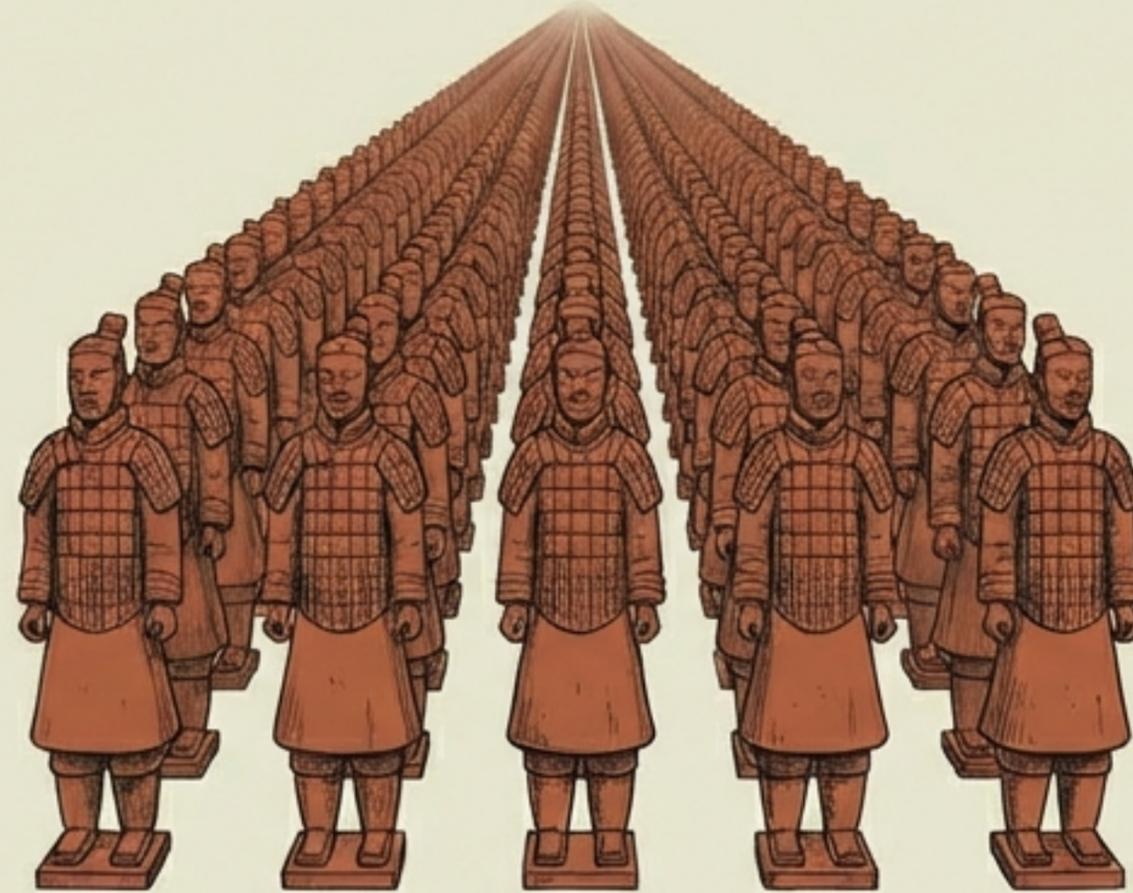


Genius can only breathe in an atmosphere of freedom.

Originality is the one thing unoriginal minds cannot feel the use of.

Precisely because the tyranny of opinion makes eccentricity a reproach, it is desirable that people should be eccentric to break that tyranny.

The Warning: The Chinese Ideal



The Trap: A nation can possess wisdom and talent, yet become stationary if it succeeds in making all people alike.

The Modern Threat: Europe is advancing toward this ideal. Different ranks and professions now read the same things, see the same things, have the same rights.

Limits of Authority: Persuasion vs. Coercion

Tools of Society

For Self-Regarding Faults



Mechanisms:
Advice, Instruction,
Avoidance.

Consequence:
Distaste or Pity.

Persuasion

For Social Faults



Mechanisms:
Legal Penalty,
Moral Reprobation.

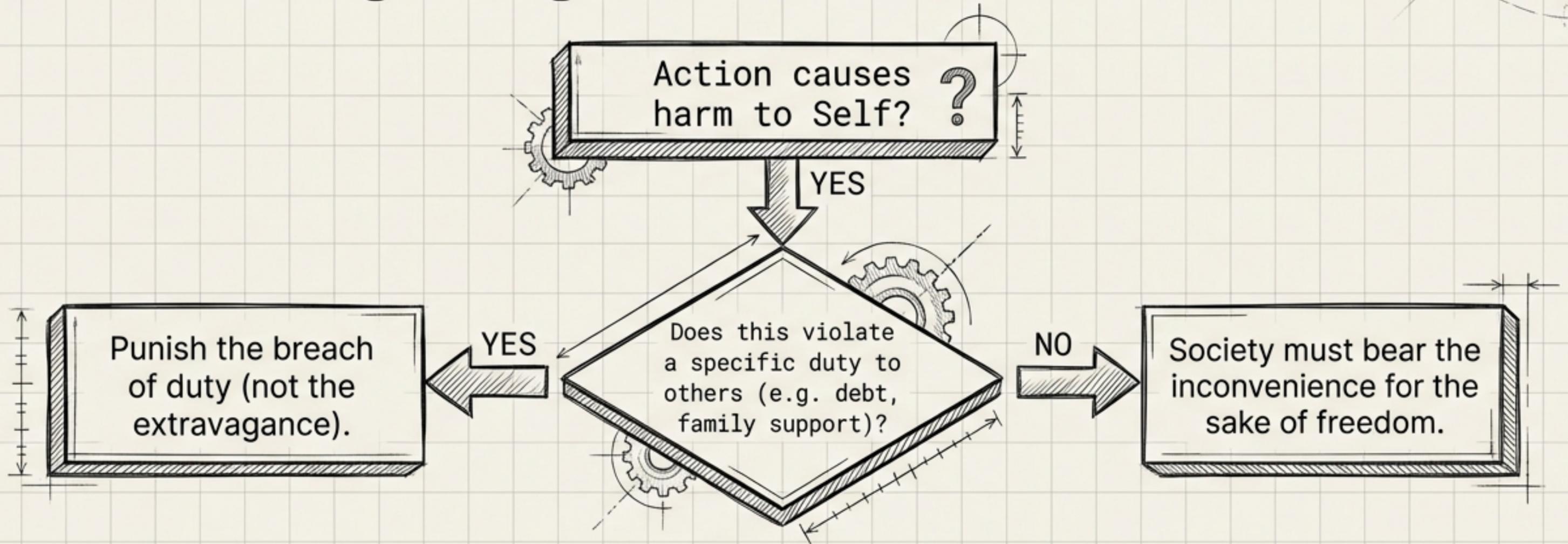
Consequence:
Punishment.

Coercion

We can warn a man his conduct is foolish; we can avoid his company. But we cannot punish him for the fault itself, only for the harm it does to others.

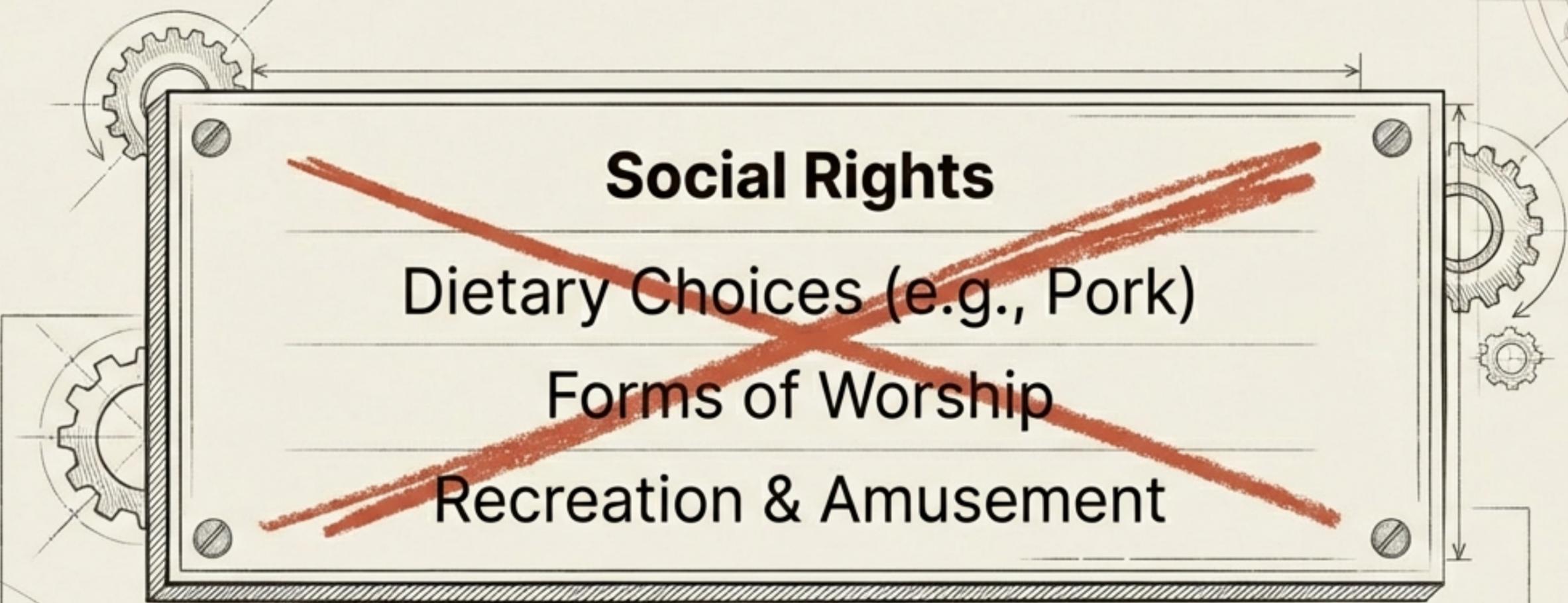
The “Constructive Injury” Fallacy

Refuting the argument that “No man is an island”



Society has the whole period of childhood to educate a person.
If it fails, it shouldn't treat the adult as a child.

The Overreach of the Moral Police



Social Rights

~~Dietary Choices (e.g., Pork)~~

~~Forms of Worship~~

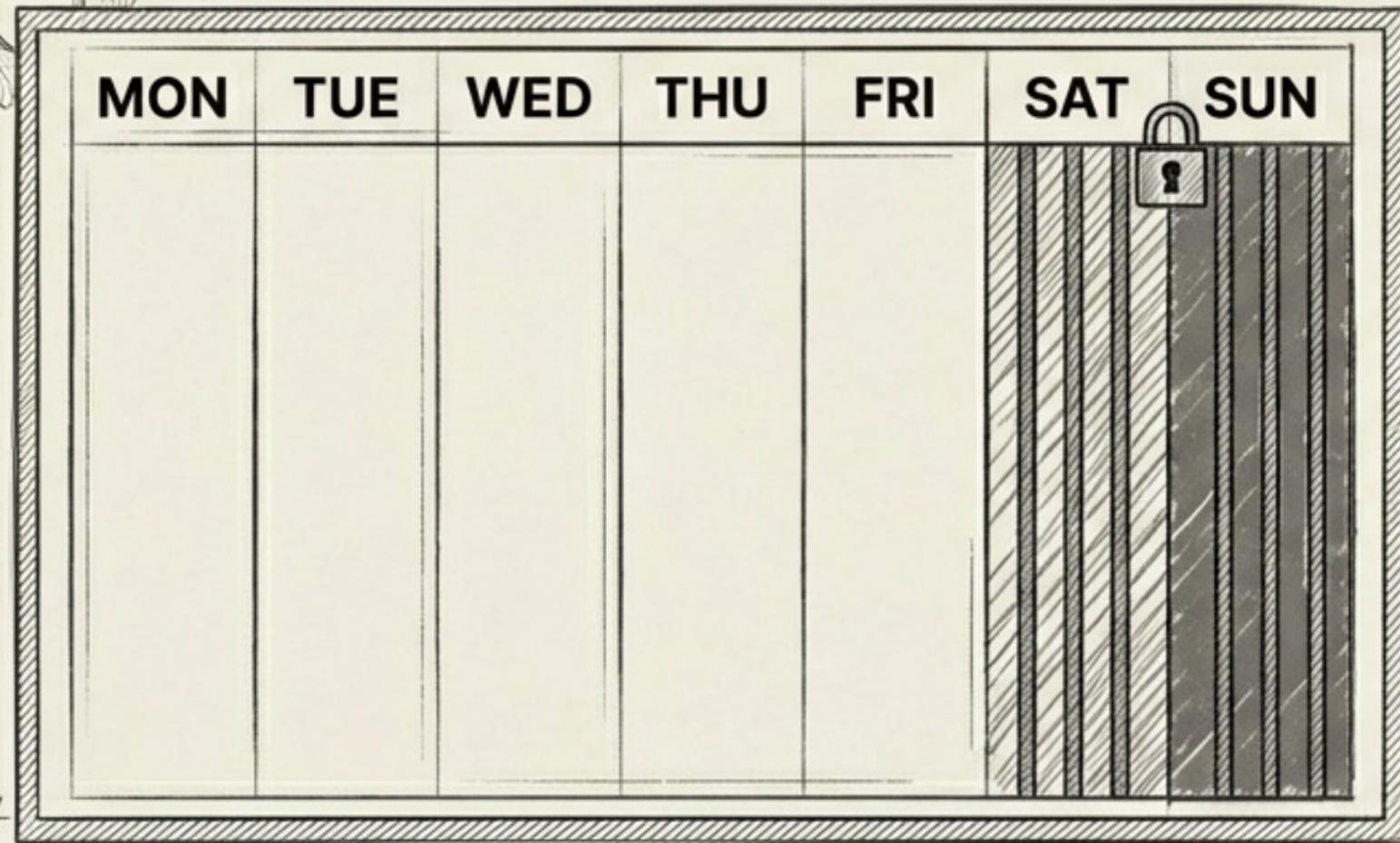
~~Recreation & Amusement~~

→ The Dangerous Doctrine: The claim that 'my social rights are invaded by your social act' ascribes to all mankind a vested interest in each other's moral perfection.

→ The public considers only its own preference. ←

Application I: The Sunday Question

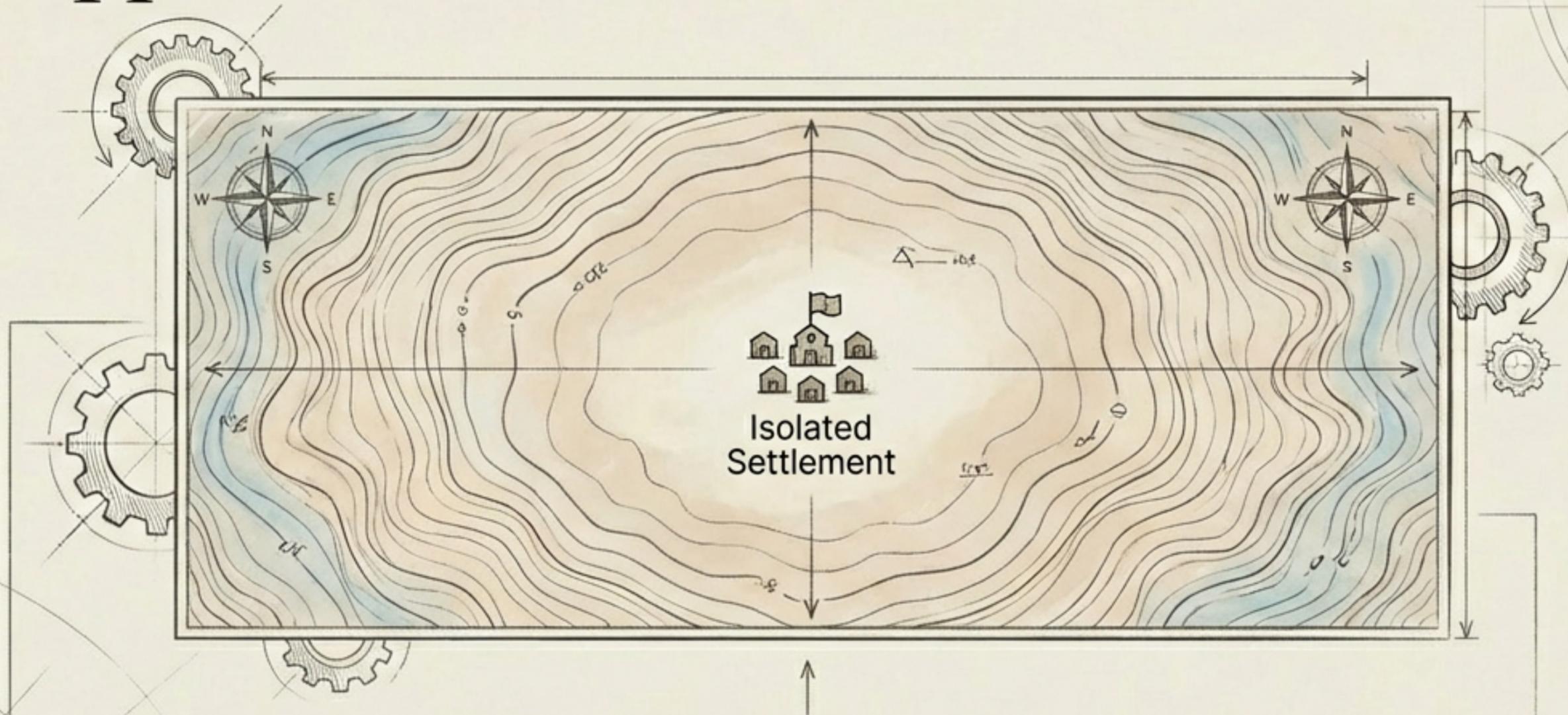
Legitimate:
Suspending
industry to
guarantee a
common day
of rest.



Illegitimate:
Banning
self-chosen
amusements
or recreation.

"Deorum injuriae Diis curae"
(Injuries to the gods are the gods' concern)

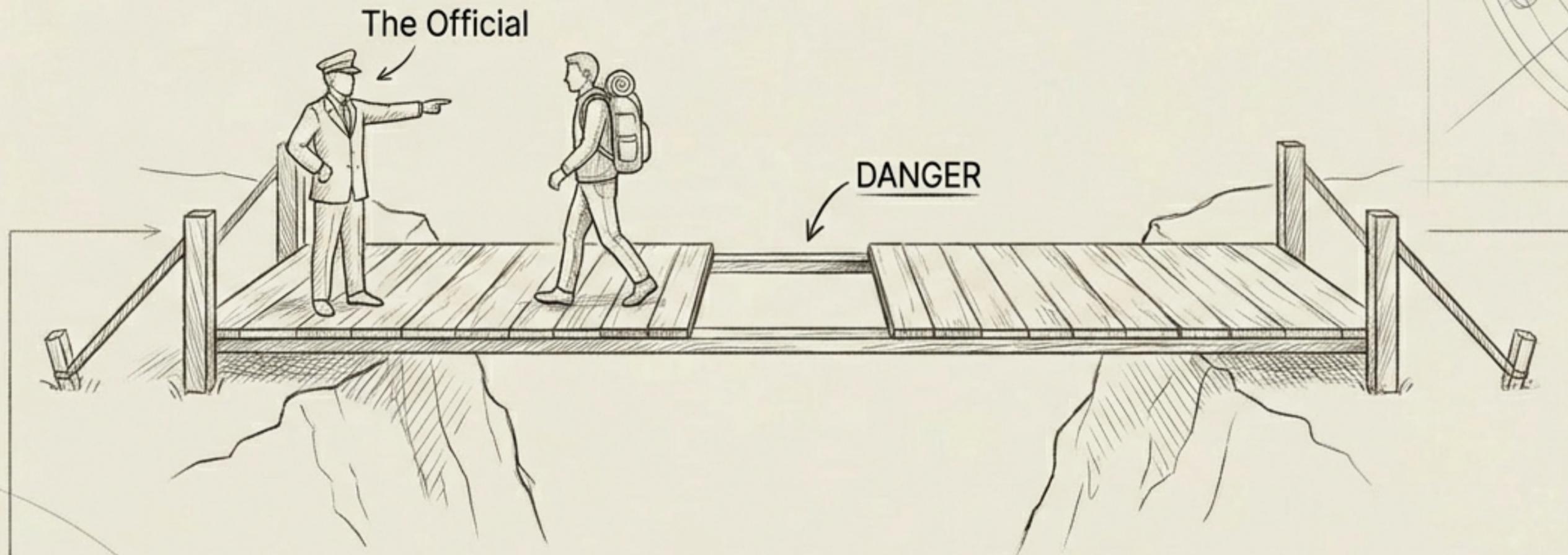
Application II: The Case of the Mormons



Polygamy may be disapproved, but as a voluntary relation between adults in an isolated community, it cannot be forcibly suppressed.

We have no right to march into a community satisfied with its own laws to force them to be "civilized".

Application III: Trade, Poisons, and Prevention

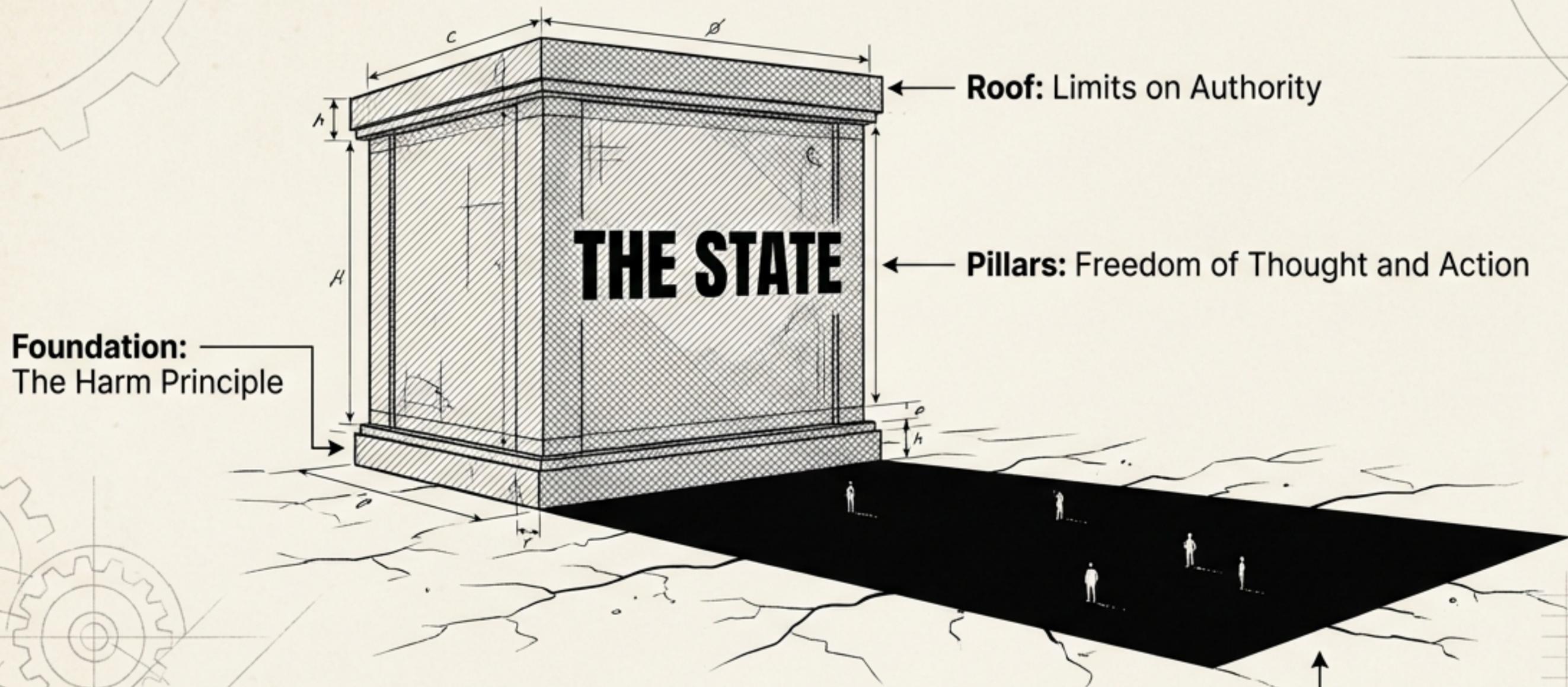


→ The Preappointed Evidence Theory: You can label poison "Poison", but you cannot ban it.

If a man is crossing an unsafe bridge, you may seize him to warn him. But once warned, if he proceeds, that is his right.

← "Liberty consists in doing what one desires."

The State That Dwarfs Its Men



"The state that dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments... will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished."

The Logic of Liberty

