

## What to do with a million dollars

*A short proposal on how to solve a social problem for 1 million dollars*

Let me first assume that the hypothetical one million dollars<sup>1</sup> is available for me at a time when it still has real value, more or less the value as of September 2011.<sup>2</sup>

The short answer to the question what can be done with just one million dollars, I believe, must be: not much. I cannot see any traditional “macro” social problem being solved with such a small amount. Governments, foundations or NGOs are spending figures at least five orders of magnitude larger and they mostly fail to solve any social problem, I dare to say they even produce new ones.

If you think about it, some of the main social problems are caused or funded by government policies. Unemployment, poverty, “war” on drugs, crime rates, victimless crimes and so on. I put it to the reader that less government would lessen these problems or eradicate them.

Approximately 84 % of our laws are made in Brussels (Open Europe 2009); a logical solution thus would be to leave the European Union. Many of EU laws could never have come into force at national level; for a well-documented example of German government’s struggle to raise the VAT, see e.g. (Booker and North 2005), for a mechanism of how this proceeds see (Ibid.) or (Vaubel 2009).

There is no sign of slowing this legislation monster; the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament are pushing ahead unanimously even though that all EU centralized policies fail. The Common Agricultural Policy has failed (Booker and North 2005), the Common Fisheries Policy has failed (Ibid.), the Schengen Agreement has failed (BBC 2011a),<sup>3</sup> the euro is failing big time etc. Yet the EU institutions carry on regardless. As Nigel Farage has put it, “*Let’s have more Europe, let’s have more failure.*” (European Parliament 2010)

I argue that:

(1) Many of the social problems are insolvable within the European Union as the EU legislation is binding for the Member States, and

(2) Many so far unknown social problems are yet to come from the *ever-closer* EU’s policies.

Therefore, we could solve some social problems just by leaving the EU jurisdiction. Most problems of the type (1) would still have to be repealed at national level since are transposed into national legislations. But problems of the type (2) will be solved immediately and problems of the type (1) would become solvable.

There are at least three ways how to help it with one million dollars. First, help a British cause to leave the EU and count on the domino effect that will lead other countries to leave as well. Second, launch a campaign calling for a referendum. Third, fund Euroskeptical political parties.

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<sup>1</sup> Actually, my very first assumption is that we are talking “US dollars” because the “dollar” is nowhere specified in the description of the special project.

<sup>2</sup> This is a disclaimer to pundits like Jan Havel, who is promising to pay one million dollars to the one who will guess correctly when the price of gold reaches one million dollars an ounce.

<sup>3</sup> Other sources for the aforementioned failures can be found easily, I do not want to flood this essay with too many sources.

The third way is the most cumbersome. I do not see Euroskeptical parties gaining majority, let alone constitutional majority, in the Parliament in any thinkable future.

The second way looks legit but there is no guarantee that the political class would not dismiss the calls for a referendum even if it had a petition with — say — one million signatures. However, a law guaranteeing that a petition like that could not be dismissed should be under way according to the coalition agreement. (ODS, TOP 09, VV 2010)

The first way may be the most efficient one. Clear majority of Britons wants to leave the EU (Angus Reid 2011), the Conservative Party is under pressure from the Euroskeptics of UKIP (BBC 2011b) and there are elected politicians calling for such motion (Hannan 2010). It remains unclear if and how soon would other countries, the Czech Republic in particular, follow to leave.

One million dollars could be the decisive marginal sum in either of the scenarios one and two.

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