

Two Fervent Supporters of Israel

A conversation/debate between two fervent supporters of Israel: one a libertarian economics professor, the other a politically conservative Orthodox Rabbi.

By Rabbi Dov Fischer and [Walter E. Block](#)
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A Debate (Reinhard Sebastian Zimmermann, 1875)

Introduction:

The two co-authors are Dov Fischer and Walter E. Block. ([“Launching Missiles; What if Liechtenstein or Monaco played Gaza and sent bombs into Germany or France?”](#) *The American Spectator*)

Conversation/debate (via email):

DF: The walls have ears. Have you had a problem lately with the [Mises Institute](#) over Israel?

WB: May I ask the source of your “ears?” Where’d you come upon this information? Yes, I have a lot of *tsturis* with them. I used to be a senior fellow there, no more. Here is some [information](#) on that sad state of affairs. Scroll down to #13.

As to Hoppe’s attack on my support for Israel which you mention above, here is [my response](#) to him. And [here, on Youtube](#), too.

DF: If so, what’s cookin’ –and how, if in any way, can I help? ([link](#))

WB: How can you help? My first thought was that anything you wrote other than defending Israel would be a waste of time, given the present dire situation of that country and your magnificent support of a strong IDF. Then, I thought, but defending my views on Israel against these unwarranted and unjustified attacks on me from libertarians would also be to defend Israel, if only indirectly. So, if you think it

worthwhile, please do so.

DF: I note that you defend Israel from a libertarian perspective. Ayn Rand literally changed my way-of-thinking and life for the better, but I am not a 100% libertarian. I do support anti-prostitution laws, laws protecting the unborn, and do not support "gay marriage," etc.

WB: Do you also support laws that imprison unmarried adults going to bed with one another?

DF: Nope.

WB: If so, then, what, 95% of the population would end up in jail. Let us stipulate that you do not support such a law.

DF: So stipulated.

WB: Then, it would be legal for unmarried adults to go to bed with one another.

DF: Yes, in a secular society.

WB: That's if no money changes hands. How's about if the man buys the woman flowers, dinner, a movie ticket, etc. which cost \$50. Should he go to jail for that?

DF: Nope.

WB: If so, 95% of the population would end up in jail. Stipulate that you do not support such a law.

DF: So stipulated.

WB: Now, let's consider prostitution: instead of buying her flowers, dinner, a movie ticket, etc. which cost \$50, he gives her the \$50 instead. You are now on record as claiming it would be just to imprison such a man. Yes, far fewer than 95% of the male population does that, but, I fail to see any relevant difference that just law ought to take into account between these last two cases. Evidently, you do. What is the relevant difference in your view?

DF: I see prostitution as a matter of societal morality, primarily because God says so. I also believe it damages marriages. It can destroy neighborhoods, where streetwalkers operate. It denigrates the holiness of the sex act between husbands and wives, weakening that act as a long-term glue that helps couples remain bound despite their differences and annoyances. In a marriage, it also is a man secretly spending money on an expenditure that would so anger his wife that he needs to keep it secret or later spend hush money to keep it secret.

I don't need for johns to be arrested, nor for prostitutes to be arrested, but I support laws by which a society expresses its professed values and morality, aiming at a higher standard

than many privately live up to.

WB: Why all of a sudden are we discussing marriage? We were talking about a single man and woman. He buys her flowers, dinner, etc., which cost \$50 they go to bed, no legal problem on your part. Now, instead of buying that stuff for her, he pays her \$50 and suddenly there's a legal problem? Why? What's the legal difference between \$50 cash money and that value of goods and services?

DF: It's a religion thing, a belief in Torah prescribed morality. But I do agree, regardless, that neither should be arrested to face imprisonment. Rather, a fine of, say, \$100 like a jaywalking ticket in a prostitute context. That is, the society thereby puts forth its desired values. It also maintains a level of harmony in family life.

WB: If you insist upon inserting marriage into our discussion, consider the following: A married man buys his wife flowers, dinner, etc., which cost \$50 they go to bed, no legal problem on your part. Now, instead of buying that stuff for her, he pays her \$50 and suddenly there's a legal problem? Why? What's the legal difference between \$50 cash money and that value of goods and services for a married couple?

DF: It is a religious thing. Marriage is part of a morality system that, if enforced, assures that kids will know who the father is and that the society will know the kid's tribal affiliation (e.g., Kohen? Levi?). It imposes responsibility on the male to offer the woman a basic set of protections.

WB: There is, there can be no, relevant difference between cash and such goods and services. I don't support gay marriage either; that is not a requirement of libertarianism. But, I oppose imprisoning adults for engaging in consensual homosexual behavior? Do you? Why?

DF: No, they should not be imprisoned or arrested. But the society should not grant its imprimatur by certifying "gay marriages."

WB: Why should some adults who go to bed with one another (lesbians, homosexual men) be jailed, but not heterosexuals? What rights did the former violate that the latter did not?

DF: I do not support jailing any of them.

WB: As to abortion, the correct libertarian view in my opinion is evictionism, not either pro-life or pro-choice. (Libertarians are very divided on this issue. Ron Paul takes the former position, Murray Rothbard the latter). Why do you reject evictionism (this is the view that the pregnant woman may evict her fetus at any time, but never kill this preborn child)?

DF: In brief, I believe human a life starts at 40 days in the womb. Therefore, I have no problem with abortion in the first 40 days. After that time, I believe it is killing a life, albeit not a fully matured life. So it should be forbidden, but I would not imprison the woman, maybe the killer doctor. I would oppose the state forcing doctors to do abortions against

conscience.

Gotta get ready for Shavuot tomorrow night. *Chag Same'ach*.

WB: Much as it pains me to have to correct an eminent rabbi on a Talmudic matter...

DF: I am always open to becoming better educated.

WB: I fear I must. You rely upon 40 days, when the heart starts beating, for the fetus to become a human being. No. In Jewish law, the fetus does not become fully human until he graduates from medical school! Or law school. When I got my PhD in econ, my mother plaintively asked, "Now will you go to law school?" Sadly, I disappointed her.

DF: When I got smikha and began my rabbinic career, my horrifically awful first in-laws (I finally divorced from her and them, thank God, and then met and married the love of my life) did the same: "Now will you go to law school?" Alas, I was not as strong then as I am now. My bad. Lesson learned.

WB: Why do you reject evictionism? Here is some [material](#) on that. [Here](#), and [here](#), too.

You are not a libertarian; I am. But on the most important issue of the day, we are FULLY 100% united: Israel.

Only libertarians get into heaven.

DF: There is a movie titled "All Dogs Go to Heaven." Who am I to say?

WB: I look forward in the afterlife to having lots of great discussions with you.

DF: God willing.

WB: But, first, I've gotta get you to leave conservatism, and embrace libertarianism, the one true political faith.

DF: Good one! ROTFL! (I never before ever used that acronym. First time.) The dear libertarians who faithfully voted the party line in 2020 made the difference in several swing states like Arizona, Georgia, etc. –giving us Biden/Kamala in the White House and a Democrat Senate majority. Thanks to the Libertarians we now have White House initiatives in the works for government mandates barring gas stoves and so much else that truly invades our personal freedoms and property rights.

WB: I'm sure you'll take my silliness in the way I mean it: friendly teasing between friends.

DF: Of course. I even rolled on the floor laughing.

WB: By the way did you know my Lubavitcher rabbi mentor, the late Lipa Dubrawsky? He and I had many discussions on similar

issues. I greatly miss him.

DF: I am sure he was special. Many of them are. I am not in the Chassidic orbit, though.

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Walter E. Block is Harold E. Wirth Endowed Chair and Professor of Economics, College of Business, Loyola University New Orleans, and senior fellow at the Mises Institute. He earned his PhD in economics at Columbia University in 1972. He has taught at Rutgers, SUNY Stony Brook, Baruch CUNY, Holy Cross and the University of Central Arkansas. He is the author of more than 600 refereed articles in professional journals, three dozen books, and thousands of op eds (including the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and numerous others). He lectures widely on college campuses, delivers seminars around the world and appears regularly on television and radio shows. He is the Schlarbaum Laureate, Mises Institute, 2011; and has won the Loyola University Research Award (2005, 2008) and the Mises Institute's Rothbard Medal of Freedom, 2005; and the Dux Academicus award, Loyola University, 2007. Prof. Block counts among his friends Ron Paul and Murray Rothbard. He was converted to libertarianism by Ayn Rand. Block is old enough to have played chess with Friedrich Hayek and once met Ludwig von Mises, and shook his hand. Block has never washed that hand since. So, if you shake his hand (it's pretty dirty, but what the heck) you channel Mises.

Rabbi Dov Fischer, Esq., a high-stakes litigation attorney of more than twenty-five years and an adjunct professor of law of more than fifteen years, is rabbi of Young Israel of Orange County, California. His writings on contemporary political

issues have appeared over the years in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Jerusalem Post*, *National Review*, *American Greatness*, the *Weekly Standard*, and in Jewish media in America and in Israel. He can be reached [here](#), [here](#), or [here](#).

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