

In asking myself why I am opposed to Sovereign Deed I came to the following conclusion. Comments welcome

p.s. This supplements the other general philosophy arguments to be found at: <http://www.straitspeace.org/position.html>.

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What is wrong with privatized disaster relief?

Privatized disaster relief, such as that proposed by Sovereign Deed is not just another business, like private security or health insurance. Disaster relief works in times of disaster when there are too many injured to adequately administer to all. In such situations public relief agencies have to practice triage. That is, they have to make a principled decision about whom to save and who would die. The general principle of triage is that one should adopt a plan that tries to save as many people as possible.

Triage plans can be evaluated on two levels: first, whether they conform to the general principle or not; and second, how they actually work in practice. Disaster relief services for the elites fail in the first case, because they operate on a different principle, save only those people who can afford the services.

Disaster relief services for the rich may also fail in the second case when they impede public relief services that operate on the general principle of triage, with the result that lives are unnecessarily lost.

Disaster relief services are fundamentally different from other private services like health insurance and private security. First, such services do not receive public assistance and tax money. Second, while health insurance may provide faster and better medical services no one in this country will be refused medical treatment in a life or death situation. Likewise, private security guards may provide their clients with greater protection, but this is in addition to that which is provided by public agencies and which is presumed to be sufficient.

This leads to the conclusion that no public support at the federal, state or local level be given to any type of disaster relief service such as Sovereign Deed in the form of tax relief, subsidies and staff time.