ATLAS NETWORK’S COVID-19 PARTNER RESPONSE FUND

ALUMNI IN FOCUS
FROM SEED FUNDING TO POLICY CHANGE
By Anthea Haryoko

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT
GEORGE AND MARILYN PEARSON

WARTIME HAYEKIANISM
By Johan Norberg

THE 2020 REGIONAL LIBERTY FORUMS ONLINE
As we go to press, our world is creeping back toward normalcy after the tremendous disruptions of COVID-19. There remains a great deal we do not know about how to contain this disease, but one of the clear lessons we learned is that top-down mandates should be made sparingly. Letting free individuals take responsibility for navigating risks and trade-offs should be our default presumption as the best way to solve problems.

Across the U.S. and around the world, Atlas Network’s independent partners moved quickly to remove bureaucratic roadblocks that stood in the way of getting health care where it was needed, remove bureaucratic roadblocks that stood in the way of getting health care where it was needed, and how we are dedicated to ensuring the freedom and equality before the law for all people. You make our work possible, and I am humbled by your encouragement and your support as we work together towards a more peaceful and prosperous world.

As I look back on a very unusual Spring, I’m filled with pride about how the Atlas Network team has pivoted. We launched new media products, including our “Talks with Tom” series of live interviews with Dr. Tom G. Palmer, our Upward Globility YouTube series, and our new AtlasNexus podcast, which explores the challenges our partners face. Check it all out at AtlasNetwork.org!

As we started the COVID-19 Partner Response Fund, to which our donor community has generously rallied. Thanks to our donors, we’ve funded more than two dozen crisis response projects with more than $500,000.

2020 is presenting unique and heart-wrenching challenges for our free society we cherish. It is incumbent on Atlas Network and our partners to show how our principles create more resilient communities, and how we are dedicated to ensuring the freedom and equality before the law for all people. You make our work possible, and I am humbled by your encouragement and your support as we work together towards a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Brad Lips
Chief Executive Officer
Atlas Network

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Protectionist trade policies have led to significant food insecurity across Indonesia—and the pandemic has only heightened the problem, as new restrictions to control the spread of the disease have put immense pressure on the country’s supply chains. The Center for Indonesian Policy Studies’ leadership on rice imports and other agricultural policy has helped to break down barriers for the private sector, and now, their efforts during the pandemic are helping to mitigate food supply disruptions. To complicate matters, foreign direct investment is expected to fall as much as 40 percent, creating additional barriers to job creation and prosperity. CIPS’ project “Keeping Markets Open: Fighting the Harmful Myth of Self-Sufficiency” is addressing the harmful global trend towards national self-sufficiency in strategic goods, which threatens to prevent or delay a speedy recovery.

As the COVID-19 lockdown began, CIPS’ research team launched a series of seven policy papers that carry specific recommendations on domestic food subsidies, digital consumer rights, supply chain disruptions, and regulatory mandates that impede foreign investment. With as many as 45 million students displaced by social distancing, the educational needs created by distance learning present new challenges for local schools, so CIPS responded with suggestions that address uneven access to the internet, disparities in teacher quality, and growing opportunities for public-private education partnerships.

To reach leveraged audiences with their research, CIPS started a well-attended webinar series that has drawn hundreds of viewers, including a significant number of legislators who are actively engaged in relevant public policy development, and began publishing an online policy update that reaches thousands of readers in Indonesia and around the world.

One of the challenges of outreach is ensuring that your work is having an impact among targeted audiences, particularly in government and media. CIPS is tracking trends in Indonesian media, monitoring issues related to their efforts and enabling the organization to constantly improve the relevance of their policy briefs, op-eds, and webinars. The organization’s main objective is to prevent harmful protectionist policies to come into or remain in effect.

As 2020 dawned, no one would have anticipated or predicted that a global pandemic would bring the economy at all levels to a screeching halt within the next three months. The world changed quickly, and Atlas Network’s partner organizations in 98 countries responded to the challenges of prioritizing health and safety while respecting human freedom and dignity.

In an op-ed that appeared in CapX, Atlas Network’s Dr. Tom G. Palmer and Simon Lee of Apple Daily wrote that a crisis must not be an occasion for implementing dictatorship. “As we struggle against the viral pandemic, we must not succumb to the authoritarian pandemic.” They wrote. “They are both deadly.” To reinforce the efforts of our partners as they combat the potential for authoritarian pandemics around the world, Atlas Network launched the COVID-19 Partner Response Fund, which illustrates the resilience and effectiveness of our global network as they develop strategic projects that yield important returns for liberty.

As we struggle against the viral pandemic, we must not succumb to the authoritarian pandemic. They are both deadly.

Currently, twenty-five projects have received Atlas Network grants in support of journalism and media, legislative outreach, and research that highlights specific recommendations for deregulation, tax cuts, and other means to help jumpstart faltering economies.

CIPS’ efforts during the pandemic are helping to mitigate food supply disruptions.

To top off this week’s spotlight, we have an exclusive look at how CIPS is working to address the challenges of the pandemic.

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THE INITIAL COVID-19 PARTNER RESPONSE GRANT COHORT

FUNDACIÓN LIBERTAD
ARGENTINA
H+EL Index (Health, Economy and Liberty)—An Observatory for the Argentine Provinces and interactive map will show health and sanitary indicators for each province and assess the economic and legal consequences of public policies on civil liberties, healthcare, and other recovery strategies.

FUNDACIÓN ELÉUTERA
HONDURAS
Lessons from a Temporary Situation: Leaving with Permanent Solutions will target labor reforms that support small businesses, shift government processes online, and streamline medical technology registrations through social media campaigns, webinars, and policy briefings with lawmakers.

CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT & ENTERPRISES
BURUNDI
Kanguka “Wake-Up” Campaign will educate legislators, entrepreneurs, activists, and voters (2020 is an election year in Burundi) on the need for public health policy reform and the relaxation of regulatory constraints on free enterprise. Their work has already contributed to the opening of the border for goods between Burundi and Rwanda and between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY
INDIA
Free to Sell: Farmpreneurs’ Access to Cities in Times of COVID-19 will fight regulations that force farmers to dump their produce by identifying regulatory barriers to sale and transport and will recommend reform opportunities.

FREE MARKET FOUNDATION
HUNGARY
No Stone Unturned will re-establish investigative journalism in Hungary through workshops that help journalists build their skills and understand their rights.

LITHUANIAN FREE MARKET INSTITUTE
LITHUANIA
#Laissez-faire Lithuania will provide an economic deregulation package that empowers the private sector and initiates a systemic revision of regulatory policy designed to prevent government overreach during the crisis.

BENDUKIDZE FREE MARKET CENTER
UKRAINE
Liberty Matters will use video and awards to help the Ukrainian public develop an informed opinion on measures taken by the private sector to facilitate the government’s response to the economic crisis.

MÉXICO EVALÚA
MEXICO
Less and Smarter Regulation to Face COVID-19 in Mexico will expose the inefficiency of government regulations, highlighting the importance of regulatory adaptations, simplifying administrative processes as they relate to crisis management, and establishing mechanisms to facilitate the reopening of the economy after the crisis.

FUNDACIÓN PARA EL AVANCE DE LA LIBERTAD
SPAIN
Healthcare Saves Lives Initiative will push for urgent deregulation, tax cuts, and advocacy for the healthcare industry in Spain, where the COVID-19 crisis has encouraged the Spanish government’s pursuance of healthcare nationalization.

INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
MALAYSIA
Malaysia’s COVID-19 Response will produce a series of webinars, infographics, opinion articles, and policy briefs to build consensus for a liberal “exit strategy” that brings the economy back online, a recovery plan that enables the private sector to expand more quickly, and a campaign to educate the government and the public on the need to avoid regulatory barriers that impede growth.

BETTER CITIES PROJECT
UNITED STATES
Getting Back to Work: A Policy Playbook for Local Government will develop and distribute a playbook of immediately implementable public policies to jumpstart local economies. Better Cities Project aims to have 75 cities adopt at least one of their recommendations in the next 12 months.
PALMETTO PROMISE INSTITUTE HELPS ROLL BACK CERTIFICATE OF NEED REQUIREMENTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Executive Order No. 2020-11, section 4, which temporarily suspends certificate of need requirements for hospital beds in South Carolina, was signed in March by Governor Henry McMaster, opening the doors for hospitals to purchase and receive beds much faster without having to worry about the lengthy and unpredictable process of requesting a state certificate. In January, Palmetto Promise Institute, an Atlas Network partner in South Carolina, produced the Healthcare Freedom Agenda, a report with concrete recommendations for reform that specified repealing unnecessary government obstacles to healthcare access, including certificate of need requirements, and providing lower costs for care across the state.

A TASTE OF TRADITION IN LITHUANIA

More than 100,000 Lithuanians currently benefit from simple licenses that make small business ownership easier—but these simple licenses are under threat. The story of the Lithuanian Free Market Institute’s efforts to defend this legal gateway out of the shadow economy is online at PovertyandFreedom.org.

OPEN MARKETS ARE THE BEST ANTIDOTE AGAINST THE COVID-19 CRISIS

In an op-ed for Atlas Network, Center for Indonesian Policy Studies (CIPS) Executive Director Rainer Heufers looks at the benefits of open trade as the best way to avoid food insecurity, particularly in a time of crisis. As a result of CIPS’ efforts, the Ministry of Trade is implementing Regulation 27/2020, which allows garlic and onion imports to enter the country without an import license letter. In April, Indonesian President Joko Widodo implemented new regulations to expedite the import process for food, raw materials, and other strategic items.

THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT: ITS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Whether you are new to the freedom movement or a long-time fellow traveler, you’ll find insights in this monograph on Atlas Network’s worldwide project to protect and enhance the freedom of others. From his perspective of twenty years with Atlas Network—which serves as a hub for more than 500 organizations, materials, and other strategic items.

IMANI DOCUMENTARY SHOWS THE POVERTY-SOLVING POWER OF OPPORTUNITY IN GHANA

A new documentary produced by IMANI Center for Policy and Education reveals how the opportunity to start a small business offers a sustainable path out of poverty. The premiere of the 30-minute documentary was accompanied by the launch of an exhibition of photographs depicting different dimensions of poverty and unemployment.

BRINGING TRANSPARENCY TO CHILE’S VAT SYSTEM

Through videos and media outreach, Fundación Pensa made the case for value-added tax (VAT) transparency to business leaders, student activists, and other influential leaders—and calls for reform forced the government to act. A new law requiring every retail receipt in Chile to display the associated VAT on each product purchased will go into effect in August.

TUNE IN TO ATLASNEXUS, OUR NEW PODCAST!

AtlasNexus showcases the work of incredible freedom champions who are changing lives around the world by strengthening their communities, empowering individuals, and advocating for classical liberalism. Hear the latest Tuesdays at 12 p.m. ET on your favorite podcast channels or at AtlasNetwork.org.

COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION RESHAPES THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN PENNSYLVANIA

Commonwealth Foundation’s “The Fighting Chance Philly” initiative has led to the passage of two new laws which are designed to reduce prison time for non-violent misdemeanor offenders, eliminate the stigma of former non-violent offenders, reduce a backlog in parole, and provide better services to local probation departments. Commonwealth fought for change through a media blitz, leveraging a variety of platforms in order to build local support for restructuring the state’s criminal justice policy. The law sealing criminal records for non-violent misdemeanors to aid in employment and prevent recidivism is the first of its kind in the nation.

MONTREAL ECONOMIC INSTITUTE PROMOTES TAXI Deregulation AND HEALTHCARE REFORM IN QUEBEC

Montreal Economic Institute (MEI) was instrumental in advancing legislation to make it easier for ride-share entrepreneurs to compete with the taxi industry. MEI’s research is also at the core of new legislation to empower “super nurses” with more authority, which will relieve some of the stress on the overburdened Canadian healthcare system and result in better services for all.

Matt Warner on THE EDITORS PODCAST

On The Editors, a National Review podcast, Atlas Network’s Matt Warner and Rich Lowry, Editor of National Review, discuss the ways economic freedom leads to less poverty, what Jeffrey Sachs gets wrong, and new opportunities for individuals in the developing world.

AtlasNexus is the first of its kind in the nation.
George Pearson served for many years on the Board of Atlas Network, and he and his wife Marilyn are longtime supporters of the Institute. Our first Board Chairs, and our current Board Chairs, are members of the Pearson family. In 2018, Marilyn and I were honored to be awarded the Freedom Dinner Medal, given by Atlas Network. In 2019, I was honored with the Freedom Dinner Medal of Honor, and Marilyn was honored with the Freedom Dinner Medal of Merit.

George: When I was a freshman at Grove City College, I took a course on Austrian Economics. I became involved in the Austrian Economics movement and was happy to accept Atlas’ invitation to join the Board.

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George: I have one last question for you two—out of all of the things that you’ve witnessed in the story of Atlas Network over the decades, what are some of your fondest memories?

Marilyn: My fondest memory is when Atlas was conceived. Anthony Fisher came to Wichita to meet with Charles Koch and present his concept of a think tank to nurture other think tanks. I still remember the conversation between these two giants. At that time Fisher had a turtle farm in the Cayman Islands and Koch owned the Matador Cattle Ranch. In their conversation they were comparing which animal had the least waste—the cow or the turtle. As they talked in detail about the consumable elements of each animal, they agreed that over 95% of each animal was useful in some way. Fisher got the last word in when he claimed that turtle toes made the best shoes.

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STORIES OF HOPE SHARED IN NEW ONLINE VIDEO SERIES
UPWARD GLOBILITY

Dr. Tom G. Palmer has spent decades of activism in carrying the ideas of freedom to millions of people around the world. Atlas Network's new series Talks with Tom gives him the chance to draw from his vast storehouse of knowledge and experience as he engages with scholars, journalists, economists, and other fascinating thinkers about the challenges faced by today's advocates of liberty.

Dr. Palmer, who is Atlas Network’s Executive Vice President for International Programs and George M. Yeager Chair for Advancing Liberty, opened his address book and reached out to Atlas Club members to join in on hour-long conversations using the Zoom platform. With the need for economic recovery around the pandemic on everyone’s minds during the first four installments, guests Dr. Vernon L. Smith and Dr. Deirdre McCloskey spoke of the importance of markets as the way to fight communism by raising living standards and opportunities in the Third World.

Upward Globility, a new video series produced by Atlas Network that explores how people flourish when they are free to make choices that unleash innovation and change, launched on YouTube on June 1. In the first two episodes of the series, filmmaker Dugan Bridges and series host Vale Sloane worked with South Africa’s Free Market Foundation and the Beacon Center of Tennessee to share their stories about how a single, powerful idea can transform the lives of people in need. “Our goal is really to draw attention to the innovative, creative vision of people who are making the world a better place,” said Bridges.

Sloane spent time in Mokwa, South Africa, meeting with locals who had just received title to their homes through Free Market Foundation’s Khaya Lam project. He also spoke with FMF’s Leon Louw and Temba Nokuthunzulu about the history of the project, which works with local government to transfer titles to people who have never been able to afford the cost of homeownership. Nokuthunzulu quotes Nelson Mandela’s words from his book Long Walk to Freedom: “A man is not a man until he has a house of his own.”

For the second episode, Sloane and Bridges met with the Beacon Center of Tennessee for hot chicken and a full Southern breakfast—complete with buttered biscuits—to visit a transitional home for recently incarcerated women. Beacon Center’s efforts to help create job opportunities for people leaving the state’s broken criminal justice system inspired This is Living Ministries to establish a program to help women escape a deepening cycle of poverty as they reintegrate into society. Taylor Dawson of Beacon Center told Sloane that the organization’s long history of promoting public policies that save taxpayer dollars while ending recidivism means that “on the individual level, you’re changing people’s lives by giving them an opportunity.”

Upward Globility is online at AtlasNetwork.org and on Atlas Network’s YouTube channel.

Jon Basil Utley, whose tireless work in support of a free and peaceful world for all spanned more than six decades, passed away in March at the age of 86. Utley’s fierce opposition to communism and passionate anti-war convictions fueled both his professional work and his philanthropy, and he cultivated a network of allies who shared his principled belief in individual liberty, free markets, and the rule of law. As a baby, Utley escaped from the Soviet Union with his mother, anti-communist intellectual Freda Utley, and during his lifetime, he dedicated much of his energy and resources towards opposing foreign military interventions, and was tireless in defense of freedom and justice for all.

Utley’s engagement with Atlas Network was grounded in the example set by his mother as she introduced him to the world of ideas. “She always supported or defended the oppressed,” he said. “Of course, I saw misery, poverty, and terrorism during my career when I worked in Cuba, Colombia, and Peru. Many people learned from Hayek about the impracticality of central planning, but I came to Atlas Network because of its support for free markets as the way to fight communism by raising living standards and opportunities in the Third World.”

Atlas Network honors his legacy of courage and integrity with our ongoing institutional commitment to freedom, prosperity, and peace.

Jon Basil Utley, and his tireless efforts for freedom and peace around the world

“Over the decades I knew Jon I always was swayed by his clear-eyed commitment to the cause of liberty and the evils of tyranny. His personal and family experience were a source of strength to him and an inspiration to those who knew him.”

– DAN GROSSMAN, Atlas Network Board Member

“Jon fought for freedom his entire life. Over the decades that I knew him, he was kind and gentle, intelligent and thoughtful, but above all he was passionate about defending the freedom of everyone. The arrest of his father, who was imprisoned, tortured, and executed by the Communists, and the flight with his mother from the USSR had an impact on the course of his whole life. He didn’t want anyone, anywhere to be treated as a disposable asset of the state. Jon inspired and helped people on every continent and he never, ever gave up. We miss him terribly. Atlas Network’s many partners remember and honor him by continuing his campaign against unlimited power, terror, violence, and oppression.”

– TOM G. PALMER, Atlas Network Executive Vice President and George M. Yeager Chair for Advancing Liberty
I became aware of the ideas of liberty when my boss asked if I want to join a think tank he was starting. I didn’t know what a think tank was or did at the time but I agreed to join because the prospect of working towards social impact was exciting.

By Anthea Haryoko
Head of External Relations | Center for Indonesian Policy Studies

Whenever someone asks me, “How did you get involved with the freedom movement?”, I always say, “By accident.”

I wasn’t fortunate to come across classical liberal ideas in university. As a student of arts and social sciences, my experience was a typically ‘lefty’ one; the familiar protests against patriarchal systems oppressing women, capitalism keeping people poor, and the like. I wanted to do work that enabled people to improve their lives, but the ideas to tackle issues such as women’s empowerment and poverty elimination during this time usually left me with more questions than answers.

The opportunities afforded by Atlas Network were not only through trainings, but also through the chance to compete. It will always be a source of pride to have gotten up on stage in front of hundreds of people to deliver a winning pitch at The Shark Tank competition in New York City.

The Center for Indonesian Policy Studies (CIPS) started in 2015 with a team of five, made possible with the help of Atlas Network’s seed funding for start-up think tanks. Since then, Atlas Network has opened up a plethora of opportunities; not just for CIPS as an organization, but for my own professional development.

It was through Atlas Network’s Think Tank Navigator training and Liberty Forum in 2015 that I was introduced to the ideas of classical liberalism. I was met with new perspectives on how a developing country like Indonesia can pursue development to enable its citizens to find lasting prosperity. The lingering questions I had during university now had more logical and sound solutions.

The workshops have shaped the way CIPS communicates, and the videos we’ve since produced have attracted more than 140,000 viewers.

As CIPS grew as an organization, so did the need to focus on management and leadership.

In 2018 I participated in the Mentorship Program in a more senior position. I was connected with Beverly Hallberg from District Media Group, and with her wonderful mentorship and guidance, I was able to develop ways to lead an effective External Relations team. Because of this mentorship CIPS has developed strong communications outreach capabilities that have strengthened our reputation amongst Indonesia’s policymakers and key stakeholders. We now can boast that every month our papers are being downloaded 1,000 times and our messages are in the media on average 100 times. Our events in 2019 also attracted over 2,000 people. The impact of this led CIPS to gain the acknowledgement and appreciation from direct advisors to the Indonesian President.

It’s not an exaggeration to say that Atlas Network’s support has been an indelible factor in the development of CIPS. Since the first seed funding we received five years ago, our policy ideas are now able to reach the highest levels of government. I’m excited to continue being part of the network and explore more ways to work together with allies to bring more freedom and prosperity for Indonesia.

Left: Anthea delivers her winning pitch in the 2016 Think Tank Shark Tank competition in New York City.

Anthea at the 2018 Lights, Camera, Liberty training in Los Angeles.

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Bottom left: Rainer Heufers (executive director of CIPS), Sarita Sapkota, Anthea, and Joyce Lim.

Bottom right: From left to right: Rainer Heufers, Sarita Sapkota, Anthea, and Joyce Lim.

Anthea welcomes attendees to the 2018 Asia Liberty Forum in Jakarta.

Bottom: Anthea with students of a school that has benefited from CIPS’ work.

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Bottom right: From left to right: Rainer Heufers (executive director of CIPS), Sarita Sapkota, Anthea, and Joyce Lim.
Move Online in 2020

The Regional Liberty Forums

A POWERFUL PIVOT

ATLAS NETWORK

SUMMER 2020

ASIA LIBERTY FORUM

In the first of four online forums, Calixto Chikiamco, president of Foundation for Economic Freedom in the Philippines, kicked off Asia Liberty Forum by welcoming a group of more than 140 think tank leaders and spokes of the challenges that COVID-19 is presenting for free-market institutions. Yazal Jaf of the Centre for Civil Society (CCS) delivered the opening keynote on concreto plans of action that free markets and liberal societies can take during a time of pandemic.

Prashant Narang of CCS won the 2020 Asia Think Tank Shark Tank competition with his plan for “Lawyers for Liberty,” a legal aid campaign designed to empower street vendors to fight the system when their livelihoods are threatened by official harassment. CCS will receive $10,000 in seed funding for the project. Malaysia-based Islam and Liberty Network won the 2020 Asia Liberty Award for their faith-based Muslim Case for a Free Society project. “Islam and liberty are often perceived as opposites,” said Ali Salman of Islam and Liberty Network in his acceptance speech. “We have built an intellectual basis for a Muslim case for religious, political, and economic freedom.”

AFRICA LIBERTY FORUM

At a time when confidence in government is waning, strong advocates for liberty can play a critical role in shaping solutions for change. More than 350 enthusiastic participants tuned into Africa Liberty Forum Online for an engaging program in English, French, and Arabic that was filled with history, new success stories, and great ideas about the ways in which economic liberty can transform the lives of billions of people. South African podcaster Big Daddy Liberty and Atlas Network’s Magatte Wade spoke of the enormous potential for Africa to thrive—an idea that was echoed by Dr. Nouh El Harrouzi of the Arab Center for Research in his closing Toast to Freedom: “If we want to go quickly, we go alone. If we want to go far, we go together.”

The Africa Liberty Award was presented to a smiling Aimaible Manirakiza of CDE, who thanked his team, local journalists, and other advisors and shared how CDE’s programs are educating local audiences about freedom in the Great Lakes region.

LATIN AMERICA LIBERTY FORUM

Over 100 attendees from among partner organizations in 17 Spanish-speaking countries brought ideas, concerns, and strategies for success to Atlas Network’s first online regional forum held entirely in Spanish. Dr. Roberto Salinas León, the director of Atlas Network’s Center for Latin America, led discussions of a post-COVID-19 future and the implications that economic recovery will have on liberty in Latin America, particularly the challenges of authoritarian governments in the region. María Corina Machado, a former member of the Venezuelan national assembly and 2012 presidential candidate, kicked off a full day of speakers with an update on the current state of corruption and her hopes for Venezuela’s return to prosperity.

In response to the changing needs of our partner network during the COVID-19 crisis, Atlas Network’s “Powerful Pivots” session highlighted the work of three Atlas Network partners—Fundación Éleuterio in Honduras, México Evalúa in Mexico, and Fundación Libertad in Argentina—that are focusing on reducing regulation, using digital outreach, and laying the foundation for recovery. The winner of the 2020 Latin America Liberty Award was Costa Rican think tank IDEAS Labs for their #TicosConCorona initiative, which has successfully slashed luxury pensions in the Central American nation.

EUROPE LIBERTY FORUM

The diversity of Europe’s experience during COVID-19 set the agenda for discussions at the 2020 Europe Liberty Forum Online, as questions of authoritarian government, freedom of the press, and public health have created new context for action. More than 125 advocates of liberty signed on to Atlas Network’s Zoom platform to share ideas and talk about the ways they are responding to the challenges of the lockdown, citing better e-governance options, new opportunities for digital education, and a willingness by government to deregulate in order to spur economic growth.

The Spanish think tank Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad (Fundalib) won the 2020 Europe Liberty Award for Índice de Libertad Económica de las Ciudades Españolas (Index on the Economic Freedom of Spain’s Cities), which evaluates municipal data that impacts the economic freedom of cities throughout Spain and makes recommendations that will strengthen local economies.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Atlas Network’s events team pivoted quickly to the global lockdown, convening the forums in two-day virtual formats instead. “With so many partners unable to travel, our goal was to make sure that we were able to reach our partners with great content as well as provide opportunities for them to ‘engage and exchange’—our 2020 theme—with each other,” said Chelsea Schick, Atlas Network’s director of events. “The online conference was a new model for all of us, and we learned so much about how to make them work for our needs.”
Hayekianism

Wartime

closed, when businesses shut down and country after country entered lockdown. I know many of you did too. This is a scary moment in time.

Also, I had just finished writing a new book script, called Open: The Story of Human Progress. It was due in September, about how we create progress historically but also how we destroy it. Unfortunately, the conclusion that I reached, and I fin-
ished it before the pandemic, was that our open societ-
es and great civilizations historically were undermined in
times of crises—great depressions, foreign invasions, natural disasters, and pandemics. So there was some
careful timing!

We've seen this before. When the world is
crunchy, people start thinking that they can't allow their neighbors to have some
freedom to go about their own business, and you start blaming the outside world because any foreigner, anyone who's dif-
ferent, might be dangerous. You begin to turn against a strongman to protect us and
take control.

And we want governments to assume new powers—control and surveillance rather than open societies. Wartime so-
cialism rather than free markets. Self-suf-
ficiency rather than international trade.

We've seen this before. When the world
was shut down in Sweden, the one country that did not shut down borders and continue doing normal business, was that this was open societ-
es. They stepped up to the challenge, and to the change.

No economy car and no central planner could have ever
to change, adapting, and restructuring
to their business models, production processes, and supply chains—to keep food on the shelves, to procure necessary supplies, to keep production going, and to help those in need.

And produce lots of things that we didn't know that we
needed. And produce lots of things that we didn't know that we
needed. So if you really have to do something, you're able to
what they're doing there. The only difference is that this all-
lowed some openness for local knowledge and individual
needs. So if you really have to do something, you're able to
do it. Which I think has served Sweden well.

I think of all this, this wartime Hayekianism, this wartime spontaneous development and adaption to new circum-
stances in the shadow of the wartime authoritarianism of many governments, should be a lesson and an inspiration in our work ahead. That all these regulations, these per-
mits and license requirements, and bans—the roadblocks on the way
to change, adapting, and restructuring that we always need, but need more than ever. They are ways of stopping people from using their local knowledge and their local talent and a way to re-
place it with the limited knowledge of a few people on the top. And that's not just wrong—it's dangerous.

And let me just tell you over the past few days and weeks, I've seen what you all are doing to fight this, in your commu-
nities. And I'm impressed by that, and I'm hopeful. Because if you can con-
tinue doing that, and if we continue to compare notes [and learn from each other's accomplishments and how they can be
applied locally], we might just get out of this stronger—as
a liberty movement and as societies.

Because again, these are difficult times. But in the words of
the great philosophers Coldplay: “Nobody said it was easy”!

It’s when it’s most difficult that our ideas are needed the most.
And that’s also what turned Hayek and von Mises and Ayn Rand and Milton Friedman into legends—and that they were brilliant thinkers, but also that it wasn’t smooth sailing.

That they faced an uphill battle. Some steep odds. And they went straight at it and they persisted.

So I’d like to conclude these brief remarks by thanking you, extending all my gratitude to you for all the amazing work
that you are doing. Thank you for not just standing by watch-
ing our whole world fall apart, and just stare at it blankly.

Because—to borrow another literary inspiration—the world
is a fine place and it’s worth the fighting for. So let me raise a metaphorical glass and I raise one for you for the work you’re
doing for freedom. And good luck!
“Atlas Network’s trajectory is good, and its future is promising. Our confidence in Atlas Network’s current success and its anticipated growth is why Marilyn and I make annual gifts and have become legacy donors.”
— GEORGE PEARSON