

Presentation of the Faith and Liberty award to Alexandre Soares dos Santos

F. A. Hayek on how some liberals alienated religious people, by Dr. Alejandro A. Chafuen, [www.chafuen.com](http://www.chafuen.com), June 24, 2014, Estoril Political Forum

I first fell in love with liberty, I then fell in love with God, then I realized they were the same thing. I have tried to devote my life to defend both things. I conduct my work for liberty as President of Atlas, next year it will be thirty years at the organization. I conduct my work on Faith at the Acton Institute, next year it will 25 years. My book "Faith and Liberty" has two editions in Polish, and the recent Czech edition, carries an introduction by Dominik Cardinal Duka. You can understand why I feel so honored to moderate this ceremony which recognizes the contribution of Alexandre Soares dos Santos.

Let me share with you what a great champion of liberty, F.A. Hayek, wrote about the cost of separating Faith and Liberty, "It is, I think, important that we fully realize that the popular liberal creed, more on the Continent and in America than in England, contained many elements which on the one hand led many of its adherents directly into the folds of socialism or nationalism and on the other hand antagonised many who shared the basic values of individual freedom but who were repelled by the aggressive rationalism which would recognize no values except those whose utility (for an ultimate purpose which was never disclosed) could be demonstrated by individual reason and which presumed that science was competent to tell us not only what is but also what ought to be. Personally I believed that this false rationalism, which gained influence in the French Revolution and which during the past hundred years has exercised its influence mainly through the twin movements of positivism and Hegelianism, is an expression of an intellectual hubris which is the opposite of that intellectual humility which is the essence of true liberalism and which treats with respect those spontaneous social forces through which the individual creates things greater than he knows. It is this intolerant and fierce rationalism which in particular is responsible for the gulf which particularly on the Continent has for several generations driven most religious people from the liberal movement and into truly reactionary camps in which they felt little at home. I am convinced that unless this breach between true liberal and religious convictions can be healed there is no hope for a revival of liberal forces." (Hayek, Proceedings of the 1947 Mont Pelerin Conference, Report on Aims and Organization of Conference, Tuesday, April 1st Morning session, p. 30)

When I was 26, in 1980, I was invited to join the Mont Pelerin Society created by Hayek. At the time, I was the youngest member ever. Hayek had deep respect for those who became wealthy. It is those who have become independently wealthy who could think out of the box and support efforts like Mont Pelerin, or, I will say, like the Estoril Political Forum. Mr. Soares dos Santos, is a prime example of the individuals who Hayek thought essential. If very wealthy individuals would not emerge from the market, Hayek was open to create them by a lottery.

The Faith and Liberty award is not determined by Lottery, but by merit. I will ask Manuel Braga da Cruz to present this prize.