

words, like *tax relief*. And the progressive has to go into a paragraph-long discussion of his own view. The conservative can appeal to an established frame, that taxation is an affliction or burden, which allows for the two-word phrase *tax relief*. But there is no established frame on the other side. You can talk about it, but it takes some doing because there is no established frame, no fixed idea already out there.

In cognitive science there is a name for this phenomenon. It's called hypocognition—the lack of the ideas you need, the lack of a relatively simple fixed frame that can be evoked by a word or two.

The idea of hypocognition comes from a study in Tahiti in the 1950s by the late anthropologist Bob Levy, who was also a therapist. Levy addressed the question of why there were so many suicides in Tahiti, and discovered that Tahitians did not have a concept of grief. They felt grief. They experienced it. But they did not have a concept for it or a name for it. They did not see it as a normal emotion. There were no rituals around grief. No grief counseling, nothing like it. They lacked a concept they needed—and wound up committing suicide all too often.

Progressives are suffering from massive hypocognition. The conservatives used to suffer from it. When Goldwater lost in 1964, they had very few of the concepts that they have today. In the intermediate fifty years, conservative thinkers have filled in their conceptual gaps. But our conceptual gaps are still there.

Let's go back to tax relief.

What is taxation? Taxation is what you pay to live in a civilized country—what you pay to have democracy and opportunity, and what you pay to use the infrastructure paid for by previous taxpayers: the highway system, the Internet, the entire scientific establishment, the medical establishment, the communications system, the airline system. All are or were paid for by taxpayers.

You can think of taxation metaphorically in at least two ways. First, as an investment. Imagine the following ad: