Liberty and Unemployment

From Deirdre McCloskey in Reason Magazine, The Myth of Technological Unemployment

> *Helping the poverty-stricken is laudable. But we can't subsidize 1.7 million people a month. Nor is job retraining a good idea when directed from above: The wise heads in Washington don't know the future, and they'll end up teaching people to be machinists for companies that won't exist. Workers themselves know best how to retrain and relocate, as did the hundreds of thousands who moved to North Dakota during the brief oil boom there. We want the labor force to be as flexible as the capital force. And for that we need liberty, not government programs.*
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> *In the spirit of John Rawls, we should ask which society we'd rather enter at birth, without knowing where within that society we'd end up. One in which all jobs are protected, bureaucrats decide who gets subsidies and who doesn't, and the economy slides, as France has, into stagnation and high levels of youth unemployment? Or one in which labor laws are flexible, individual workers decide their own futures, and the economy lifts up the poorest among us?*
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> *Choose, and then quit worrying about technological unemployment.*