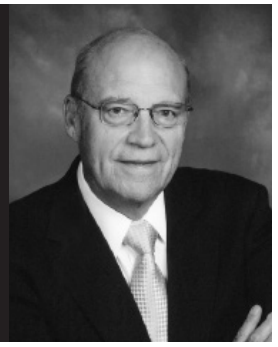




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report



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Volume 57, Number 10

October 2017

The Left Gone Violent

by Ian Tuttle

There is currently, on the streets, smashing storefronts and setting things on fire, a group called Antifa, for anti-fascist. Antifa are not a new phenomenon; they surfaced during the Occupy movement, and during the anti-globalization protests of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Antifa movements began in early-20th-century Europe, when fascism was a concrete and urgent concern, and they remain active on the Continent. Lately, Antifa have emerged as the militant fringe of #TheResistance against Donald Trump—who, they maintain, is a fascist, ushering into power a fascist regime. In Washington, D.C., Antifa spent the morning of Inauguration Day lighting trash cans on fire, throwing rocks and bottles at police officers, setting ablaze a limousine, and tossing chunks of pavement through the windows of several businesses. On February 1, Antifa set fires and stormed buildings at the University of California–Berkeley to prevent an appearance by *Breitbart* provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos. (They succeeded.) In April, they threatened violence if Ann Coulter spoke on the campus; when the university and local law enforcement refused to find a secure location for her to speak, she withdrew, saying the situation was too dangerous.

These and similar episodes call to mind Woody Allen’s character’s observation in the 1979 film *Manhattan*: “A satirical piece in the *Times* is one thing, but bricks and baseball bats really gets right to the point of it.”

All politics is, at some level, a vocabulary contest, and it happens that American politics is currently engaged in a fierce fight over, and about, words. The central word at issue is “fascist,” but there are others: “racist,” “sexist,” and the like. A great many people are currently involved in a turf war, aiming to stake out conceptual territory for these charged words: What is fascism? What isn’t it?

An illustration: In April, Heather MacDonald was physically blocked from an auditorium at Claremont McKenna College, in Claremont, Calif., where she was scheduled to speak. MacDonald is a scholar at the Manhattan Institute, a prominent right-of-center think tank. She is a noted expert on law enforcement, especially the complex relationship between law enforcement and minority communities. She was among the first to theorize that anti-police protests in Ferguson, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and elsewhere have facilitated an increase in urban crime; the so-called Ferguson Effect is now a matter of consensus among experts on both the left and the right. *National Review* readers will be well acquainted with MacDonald; she publishes in these pages regularly.

A group of students from Pomona College, part of the consortium of Claremont schools, penned a letter to Pomona president David Oxtoby, affirming the protest at their sister institution. MacDonald, they wrote, should not be permitted to speak; she is “a fascist, a white supremacist, a warhawk, a transphobe, a queerphobe, a classist, and ignorant of interlocking systems of domination that produce the lethal conditions under which oppressed peoples are forced to live.” MacDonald was not offering any material for substantive intellectual discussion; she was, they claimed, challenging “the right of Black people to exist.”

The last is, to those who are familiar with MacDonald’s work, an odd charge. Among her central claims is that the reluctance of law enforcement to police minority communities has disproportionately affected those same communities; more young black men are being killed by St. Louis PD’s hands-off approach than were being killed by “proactive policing.” MacDonald does not oppose “the right of Black people to exist”; she maintains that it is being threatened by militant anti-police sentiment.

But substantiating accusations that MacDonald is a “fascist, a white supremacist,” etc., is not the point. The point is finding charged language to signify that MacDonald ought to be *persona non grata*, without needing to prove the case.

The outraged undergraduates of Pomona College and Antifa are different in only one regard, albeit an important one: Antifa are willing to employ muscle to achieve their ends.

The purpose of words is, the philosopher Josef Pieper suggested, “to convey reality.” But it is clear that, for Antifa, the purpose is to cloak reality. Antifa’s reason for describing something or someone as “fascist” is not that it is actually fascist (although perhaps on occasion they do stumble onto the genuine item), but that describing it that way is politically advantageous. Likewise with any number of other slurs. Antifa are in effect claiming to oppose everything that is bad—and, of course, it is Antifa who decide what is bad. Hence the organizers of the Inauguration Day protests could write, as their mission statement, that “#DisruptJ20 rejects all forms of domination and oppression.” That is a good monopoly if you can get it.

Roger Scruton, in *A Political Philosophy: Arguments for Conservatism* (2006), examines how the manipulation of language facilitated the Communist enterprise and its myriad evils: “Who and what am I? Who and what are you? Those are the questions that plagued the Russian romantics, and to which they produced answers that mean nothing in themselves, but which dictated the fate of those to whom they were applied: . . . bourgeoisie and proletariat; capitalist and socialist; exploiter and producer: and all with the simple and glorious meaning of them and us!”

What George Orwell called “Newspeak” in his novel *1984* “occurs whenever the main purpose of language—which is to describe reality—is replaced by the rival purpose of asserting power over it.” The latter is the purpose of “anti-fascism.” Who and what are you? A fascist. Who and what am I? An anti-fascist. Them and us, tidily distinguished.

Reality shapes language, but language also shapes reality. We think by means of words. Our perceptions change as the words change, and our actions often follow. Back to the Communists: No one killed affluent peasants. The Party “liquidated kulaks.”

Using words to cloak reality makes it easier to dispose of that reality. Antifa are not satisfied with labeling people fascists; they want them to bleed on that account. On Inauguration Day, in Washington, D.C., an Antifa rioter sucker-punched white nationalist Richard Spencer. Spencer is as near to a prominent fascist as one will find in the United States today, and a bona fide racist (an Antifa twofer). But the imperative of anti-fascism, to reject “all forms of domination and oppression,” applies by an-

ti-fascists’ own inexorable logic no less to Heather MacDonald—or to the Republicans of Multnomah County, whom Antifa threatened to physically assault if they were permitted to participate as usual in the annual Portland Rose Festival parade. Why not punch them, too?

At *The Nation* in January, Natasha Lennard showed how this logic works in practice. “Fascism is imbued with violence and secures itself politically through the use or threat of it,” writes Lennard, quoting from *Militant Anti-Fascism: A Hundred Years of Resistance*, a 2015 book written by anti-fascist blogger “Malatesta” (Errico Malatesta was an Italian anarchist committed to revolutionary violence). As a result, there can be little question of the necessity of “counter-violence”—“as in Ferguson, as in Baltimore, as in Watts, as in counter-riots against the Ku Klux Klan, as in slave revolts.” There are a great many questions ignored here—to take one obvious example, whether the riots that consumed Baltimore in late April 2015 are in any meaningful way comparable to nineteenth-century slave rebellions—but consider for now just the use of “counter-violence.” It depends entirely on accepting the premise that Donald Trump is a fascist. Since fascism is “imbued with violence,” a violent response to the Trump administration is therefore necessary.

This sort of reasoning, such as it is, gets a more extensive workout in Emmett Rensin’s “From Mother Jones to Middlebury: The Problem and Promise of Political Violence in Trump’s America,” published in *Foreign Policy* in March. Rensin purports to assay recent left-wing political violence, but his clear if unstated purpose is to defend it. According to him, questions of ethics—*Is it right to commit violence?*—or of tactics—*Is it wise to commit violence?*—are unhelpful; what matters is why political violence happens. The answer, he says, is “intolerable pressure” on the lives of “the poor and oppressed”; “the intolerable pressure of a hateful and fearful world is always waiting to explode.”

This romantic pabulum conceals a salient fact: The victims and perpetrators of recent violence are hardly who Rensin makes them out to be. “The poor and oppressed” are not students at Claremont McKenna College (est. 2017–18 tuition: \$52,825), and Muhammad Ashraf, the Muslim immigrant who owned the limousine burnt out on Inauguration Day, is not “the company” stamping its vulgar capitalist boot upon the downtrodden. Rensin sidesteps this flaw in his analysis by offering a taxonomy of violence that, conveniently, theorizes away both leftist responsibility and non-“oppressed” victims: According to him, there is violence perpetrated by the

state—e.g., drone strikes, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centers, and the killing of Michael Brown (generally wicked); there is violence perpetrated by right-wingers that is tacitly endorsed by the state—e.g., lynch mobs and white-supremacist murderer Dylann Roof (always wicked); and there is violence that “explodes” from among the “oppressed” (understandable, and who are we to judge, really?).

What Lennard and Rensin are saying, underneath the layers of refurbished revolutionary cant, is that Donald Trump is a grave threat that justifies abrogating our laws against arson and assault—just like all of those other grave threats, from chattel slavery to Ferguson. They are not so bold as to come right out and say it, but they are, in the final analysis, simply claiming that people who think like them should be exempt from the law’s constraints, and that people who do not think like them should not receive the law’s protections. In an article published shortly after Inauguration Day, Lennard complained that prosecutors had brought up about 200 D.C. rioters on felony rioting charges.

We have been through this before.

“During an eighteen-month period in 1971 and 1972, the FBI reported more than 2,500 bombings on US soil, nearly five a day.” So notes Bryan Burrough in his 2015 book *Days of Rage: America’s Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence*, which chronicles the 15-year reign of terror, idealism, and ineptitude of radical left-wing groups such as the Weather Underground, the Black and Symbionese Liberation Armies, and others that began in July 1969 with a bomb in Manhattan and ended in April 1985 with the arrest of the last members of the United Freedom Front in Norfolk, Va. Writes Burrough: “Radical violence was so deeply woven into the fabric of 1970s America that many citizens, especially in New York and other hard-hit cities, accepted it as part of daily life.” When a bomb exploded at a Bronx movie theater on May 1, 1970, police tried to clear the building, but patrons refused to leave, demanding to see the rest of their film.

Sophisticated justifications for violence were part and parcel of this fever. Leftist radicals were immersed in revolutionary literature—Lenin, Mao, Che Guevara, Malcolm X’s *Autobiography*—and those texts were can-

did. In 1963, Frantz Fanon published *The Wretched of the Earth*, the first sentence of which read: “National liberation, national reawakening, restoration of the nation to the people or Commonwealth, whatever the name used, whatever the latest expression, decolonization is always a violent event.” He continued, inverting Christian teaching: “In its bare reality, decolonization reeks of red-hot cannonballs and bloody knives. For the last can be the first only after a murderous and decisive confrontation between the two protagonists. This determination to have the last move up to the front, to have them clamber up (too quickly, say some) the famous echelons of an organized society, can only succeed by resorting to every means, including, of course, violence.”

The preface to the original edition of *The Wretched of the Earth* was written by French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, who was even more bullish about violence: “To shoot down a European is to kill two birds with one stone,” Sartre suggested. “There remain a dead man and a free man.”

Among the dead men was Frank Connor, a 33-year-old banker from New Jersey, killed on January 24, 1975, when FALN, a radical group dedicated to Puerto Rican independence, detonated a bomb in the historic Fraunces Tavern in Lower Manhattan. An interview with his son, Joseph, appears toward the end of *Days of Rage*. About his father’s murderers, Joseph concludes: “They appointed themselves my father’s judge, jury, and executioner. He represented something they didn’t like, so they decided they had the right to kill him.” Moreover, many like them were excused—Weather Underground bombers Bill Ayers and his wife, Bernardine Dohrn, became celebrated academics—because their violence had served the “correct” politics.

Today’s leftists are more gun-shy than their predecessors, but the differences are a matter of degree. Under the aegis of “anti-fascism,” leftist thugs have appointed themselves adjudicators of the fates of Richard Spencer, Heather MacDonald, the limo owner, or Trump voter—anyone they “don’t like”—and in this lawless realm, whatever crimes Antifa commit are not crimes, and their victims are not victims.

One senses, too, that they enjoy the simple frisson of violence. When Lennard writes in her post-Inauguration

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz (1913-2009) has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and Dr. Michael Bauman and is offered free of charge to anyone asking for it. The Crusade’s address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is 719-685-9043. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (CACC is a 501C3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. You may also access earlier editions of *The Schwarz Report* and make donations at www.schwarzreport.org. Permission to reproduce materials from this Report is granted provided that the article and author are given along with our name and address. Our daily blog address is www.thunderontheright.wordpress.com.

Day essay that Spencer's getting punched in the face was "pure kinetic beauty," she is on a spectrum with Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver, who raped white women as an "insurrectionary act," and Dohrn, who gushed over the artistry of Charles Manson's murders. ("Dig it! First they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them, then they even shoved a fork into the pig Tate's stomach! Wild!")

If the first 100 days of his administration are any indication, Donald Trump may well be a fairly conventional president, except in his personal conduct—which, even then, is likely to be more Berlusconi than Mussolini. He is, though no one left of center would dare admit it, arguably the leftmost Republican president ever elected, and his closest advisers—his daughter and son-in-law—were until a few minutes ago lifelong Democrats. But the sort of people who join Antifa are not the sort who interest themselves in such details. No fanatics are.

The impulse toward destruction is deep-seated. Kirkpatrick Sale, in his authoritative history *SDS: The Rise and Development of the Students for a Democratic Society* (1973), writes: "Revolution: how had it come to that? . . . There was a primary sense, begun by no more than a reading of the morning papers and developed through the new perspectives and new analyses available to the Movement now, that the evils *in* America were the evils of America, inextricably a part of the total system. . . . Clearly something drastic would be necessary to eradicate those evils and alter that system."

That describes far more than just the violent fringe of 1970s leftism. It is the stated position, today, of many Antifa and Occupiers and Black Lives Matter supporters, and it is the unacknowledged assumption of many progressive Democrats who would never throw a stone. It is the expressed belief, too, of many who embrace the label "alt-right." It is a weed that, for 50 years, has been taking root.

The natural and necessary institutions—chief among them civil society and the law—that make it possible for people to live together peacefully and prosperously require a degree of freedom. Inevitably, grifters will swindle and demagogues will charm. But those determined to subvert these institutions fail to see, or refuse to see, that the most likely alternative to the principle of equality under law is a form of "domination and oppression" worse than anything they currently oppose.

The remedy to outbursts of political turmoil is not to wantonly tear down what fragile order exists, or to impose some new, ill-conceived order by force. Power, at least in the long run, does not grow out of the barrel

of a gun; Mao was wrong. Legitimate and stable political power is rooted in the healthful loyalties that temper destructive political passions. Rightly ordered affections—toward God, country, and one another—promote the civic friendship in which citizens work side by side to promote one another's best interests, and by which inevitable disputes can be resolved with a minimum of conflict. When Lincoln urged that "we are not enemies, but friends," he was stating a necessary condition of the American republic.

The Antifa ideology can produce only enemies.

—*National Review* online, June 5, 2017

Antifa at Berkeley

by Editors, *The Wall Street Journal*

Politically charged street brawls broke out in Berkeley, California, on Sunday, with police arresting 13 charming participants on charges including assault with a deadly weapon. One Twitter video showed masked activists kicking a man curled in fetal position on the ground; the beat-down stopped only when a journalist, Al Letson, shielded the man with his body. "I was scared they were going to kill him," Mr. Letson said.

As Charlottesville drew attention to the worst elements of the far right, Sunday's melee revealed an increasingly violent fringe of the radical left that has received far less media coverage, much less criticism. It's called Antifa, pronounced "An-tee-fa," which is short for "anti-fascist."

Antifa members sometimes claim their movement spans the globe and dates to the 1920s and '30s, citing the 1936 Battle of Cable Street, where protesters shut down a march by the British Union of Fascists. But in the United States and Britain, Antifa grew in the 1980s primarily out of the punk rock scene. As Nazi and white supremacist skinheads became a bigger part of this largely un-policed subculture, far-leftists met violence, calling it self-defense.

As it grew beyond punk, Antifa's adherents organized through the now-defunct Anti-Racist Action network and now sometimes through Torch Network, as well as other less visible groups. Many activists also aligned themselves with the broader anti-globalization movement. But Donald Trump's election has become the catalyst launching Antifa into a broader political movement.

The Antifa members we've interviewed shun the

Democratic Party label, saying their activism constitutes its own political orientation. They're mostly anarchists and anarcho-communists, and they often refer to fellow protesters as "comrades." Adherents typically despise the government and corporate America alike, seeing police as defenders of both and thus also legitimate targets.

The anti-fascist anarchist website CrimethInc.com recently summarized its philosophy: "In this state of affairs, there is no such thing as nonviolence—the closest we can hope to come is to negate the harm or threat posed by the proponents of top-down violence . . . so instead of asking whether an action is violent, might do better to ask simply: does it counteract power disparities, or reinforce them?"

Antifa's activists use the Orwellian-sounding notion of "anticipatory self-defense" to justify direct confrontation. That can include violence, vandalism, and other unlawful tactics. Many draw a false moral distinction between damaging private property and "corporate" property.

Antifa activists have also developed their own moral justification for suppressing free speech and assembly. As anarchists, they don't want state censorship. But they do believe it's the role of a healthy civil society to make sure some ideas don't gain currency.

So they heartily approve of the heckler's veto, seeing to shut down speeches and rallies that they see as abhorrent. Antifa activists also search for and publicize damaging information on their targets or opponents, or launch campaigns pressuring their bosses or companies to fire those opponents.

Words don't constitute violence, despite what Antifa activists believe. But there are dangerous ideas and practices, and the radical left has embraced several of them. Democracies solve conflict through debate, not fisticuffs. But Antifa's protesters believe that some ideas are better fought with force, and that some people are incapable of reason.

Implicit in this view is that Antifa alone has the right to define who is racists, fascist, or Nazi. It's a guerilla twist on the culture wars, when a macroaggression must be met with a macroaggression.

Antifa has also widely embraced "Black Bloc" tactics, including disguising themselves with black garb and covering their faces with bandanas and balaclavas. It's not a good look for a supposedly anti-authoritarian group to show up in uniform, like the KKK in white hoods, much less armed with batons.

Which brings us back to Berkeley. This weekend two right-wing groups sought to hold peaceful rallies.

Their leaders—Patriot Prayer's Joey Gibson, a Japanese-American, and Amber Cummings, a transgender Trump supporter—explicitly denounced racism. Amid fears of violence, both cancelled their events. Antifa showed up anyway, outnumbering and terrorizing any right-wingers or Trump supporters who dared show their faces.

Antifa views itself as fundamentally reactionary, as a necessary opposition to corrosive ideologies. But because your foe is a really bad guy doesn't mean you're inherently a good one. Movements are defined not merely by what they oppose but by what they do. Antifa's censorious criminality resembles the very political behavior it claims to fight. The mainstream left ought to denounce it as much as the right should reject white supremacists.

—*The Wall Street Journal*, August 29, 2017, p. A 14

The Fruits of Socialism

by Charles Scaliger

Socialism—the systematic dilution of private property rights and free enterprise by government—has become, in widely varying degrees, the order of the day in most of the world. The entirety of Africa is socialist, and so, with the exceptions of the United Arab Emirates, Singapore, and perhaps several other of the East Asian "dragons," is Asia. Communist China, with its enclaves of capitalism in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and certain other cities benefiting from the willingness of Western factories to take advantage of local cheap labor, might appear to be a glaring exception, but life for hundreds of millions of Chinese living outside such privileged enclaves is as impoverished as ever, even if no longer as severe as under Chairman Mao and his fanatical socialist shock troops.

Europe is socialist, too—more so perhaps in the eurozone than elsewhere—and nowhere in Europe, save perhaps in Switzerland and a few tiny free market havens such as Andorra and Malta, can the economic system be characterized as other than socialist. Unfortunately, much the same can be said of the New World, with significant degrees of economic freedom and opportunity remaining only in Canada, the United States, and Chile, although all three of those countries also have a strong socialistic bent. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the closest thing to free market enclaves remaining in the world are to be found in the East Asian "dragons,"

especially Singapore; in the United Arab Emirates, particularly magnificent Dubai; and in the various micro-state tax havens in Europe, such as Andorra, Monaco, and Liechtenstein.

Because many modern socialist countries have not reached the extreme circumstances of Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, Germany under the Nazis, or the former Soviet Union and its many client states behind the Iron Curtain, it is tempting to dismiss a “little” socialism as a vexing but harmless inconvenience. To those of us living under varying degrees of European “democratic socialism” or its close kin, American “progressivism,” socialism can even appear to be benign, because post-Cold War socialism is not (yet) as totalitarian as the Stalinist regimes of the former Eastern Bloc and Mao’s Communist China. There are exceptions, of course: Cuba remains a bastion of old-style Stalinism, Venezuela now appears to be following Cuba into the socialist abyss, and North Korea is probably the most totalitarian socialist hell on Earth still in existence.

But most socialist countries today have not yet attained such extremes. And for Western countries with vast amounts of wealth accrued from previous generations of free market capitalism, socialism appears, for the time being, to be an affordable conceit.

However, for billions of people throughout the optimistically styled “developing world,” socialism is a dreary reality. Such countries mostly adopted socialism before accruing capital for socialists to squander, and as a result, socialism has kept them in permanent impoverishment. But because most such countries have not erected Iron Curtain-style borders to isolate them from the free world, nor possess fearsome arsenals of weapons of mass destruction, their plight—unlike the former Eastern Bloc countries—passes largely unnoticed in the West. We are aware, in abstract terms at least, of their poverty, persistently low standard of living, and seemingly intractable corruption. We may travel freely across their borders as tourists, but usually keep ourselves insulated from their socioeconomic realities.

It is often claimed that such poor countries owe their poverty not to socialism but to corruption. But corruption is the universal byproduct of socialism. Well does this author remember the shock among leftist elites after the collapse of Communist East Germany in 1989. Erich Honecker, East Germany’s longtime communist dictator, was often lionized in the Western press for his alleged personal austerity and ideological sincerity. But when the Berlin Wall came down, the sordid reality of Honecker’s personal life—the swank foreign villas and

dissolute lifestyle—came to light, to the consternation of socialist true believers.

None of which is to say that corruption is absent from non-socialist regimes. But socialism is to corruption what Petri dishes are to microbial growth. And nearly all developing countries have adopted socialism as their political system.

Having spent years living in impoverished socialist countries, in some cases learning their languages and becoming well acquainted with their people, this author has studied “democratic socialism” by experiencing it firsthand. Since this is the phase of socialist degradation that the United States is now entering, as the effects of persistent socialism begin to significantly degrade our standard of living, it is useful to consider some of the universal characteristics of incipient socialism, the near-universal prelude to the barbarities of totalitarianism that will eventually follow. These characteristics are much easier to discern in poor countries that have never been wealthy and which therefore have no artifacts, such as modern factories and infrastructure, left over from more prosperous times, as is the case in many European countries. In perennially poor countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the following effects of socialism unalloyed by erstwhile capitalism are on full display:

1. Everything breaks easily. In a predominantly socialist economy, there is little competition, and so manufacturers (including, of course, state-run concerns) have little incentive to monitor or improve the quality of their products. Accordingly, most Westerners quickly learn that, although socialist countries possess the same technological know-how, in theory, as developed countries, they typically do not make full use of it. Plastic goods in particular are always much more fragile, and the plastic itself tends to be of perceptibly lower quality and to degrade much more quickly than in a free market economy. Household appliances, furniture (particularly mass-produced plastic chairs and tables), tools, machinery, motor vehicles, and so on, are alike in need of frequent repairs and replacement. Essential items such as water pumps, toilets, and showers, which are exposed to water as a matter of course, are especially unreliable.

2. There is very little variety available for purchase in all but the highest-end stores. Most consumer products, from toothpaste and toilet paper to hand tools, are manufactured by state run monopolies, which produce one brand of middling quality at best.

3. Few foreign-made things are available, except for high-end items, such as motor vehicles, that the local economy does not have the assets to produce. Because

socialists are certain of the adequacy of socialism to provide necessary goods and services, would-be foreign competitors are almost always rigorously excluded from local markets. This is because superior foreign goods would create pressure on socialized domestic manufacturers to improve their products—something that government-run entities, with their perverse incentive structures, are always loathe to do.

4. There is no respect for the law. An almost universal trait of poor socialist countries is the appalling disregard for laws, something even casual foreign visitors take notice of the first time they experience the chaotic and lawless traffic in such countries. This is because under socialism, the law is used as an instrument for plunder. The central rationale of socialism is the alleged need for the state to redistribute wealth, which it does effectively—but not from the rich to the poor. Instead, because of the perverse incentives built into socialism, such governments always arbitrarily redistribute wealth from private citizens to the government and certain select cronies, and do so more or less at the whim of the state, with none of the restraining influences of limited constitutional government. The law and the state therefore command no moral authority.

This is one reason that Mexicans and citizens of many other poor socialist countries do not regard illegal immigration to the United States as morally objectionable; the entire notion of law and order as moral goods to which we owe allegiance is ludicrous to those for whom the government and the law are nothing more than means for the few to plunder the many, and for the privileged to preserve their status at the expense of everyone else. We hear much in the news about the lawless behavior of many illegal immigrants (many Mexicans living illegally in the United States see no reason to get a driver's license, for example), but this is completely predictable given the cynical perspective on law that socialism encourages. Many of those same illegal immigrants have no problem taking advantage of welfare laws in the United States to procure welfare, education, and other “free” benefits—since with such they are using the law and the government in the manner to which they are accustomed, namely, as a means to plunder everyone else.

5. Dishonesty and corruption are the orders of the day, and not just for the government. Americans visiting countries in the “developing world” are often taken aback by the degree to which even ordinary citizens are willing to cheat foreigners. At first enthralled by how friendly and helpful everyone appears to be, foreign visitors soon realize that many people who treat them with courtesy

and interest are in fact only angling for money. Invitations to dinner and spontaneous help with directions on the street turn out to be thinly veiled sales pitches for money. Throngs of aggressive touts are fixtures wherever foreigners tend to congregate. And prices charged by street vendors and taxi drivers are far in excess of what locals pay. Government officials, of course, are almost all corrupt, in many countries unwilling to discharge any of their official duties without a bribe. And public transportation attractions such as museums, archaeological sites, and national parks typically charge tourists from wealthy countries many times what they charge locals; in the country this writer is now visiting, the total entry fee for a foreigner visiting a national park or other government-run site is about 25 times what locals must pay.

All of this is part and parcel of the social and moral order—or lack thereof—encouraged by the irrational and immoral structure of socialist government. Where everyone plunders everyone else using government as an intermediary, many even in the private sector will conclude that cynical exploitation of one's fellow men is necessary and morally justifiable.

6. A disproportionately large sector of the economy is dedicated to tourism. Socialist economics are not designed to produce wealth via the accumulation of capital, so they need to find other sources of funding. A time-honored way to do this is via tourism, the socialist-approved method of attracting foreign money. Tourists from abroad love poor socialist countries, since many of them boast appealing tropical climates, pristine beaches, and very affordable pricing. A vacation on the beaches of Mexico or the Dominican Republic is generally much more affordable for average Americans than a stay at Palm Beach or Malibu. Who of us would not prefer to spend a week in a hammock or five-star hotel for the same cost as a couple of nights in the local Motel 6?

The beauty of tourists from a socialist perspective, of course, is that they bring their money, spend lavishly, (by local standards)—and then go home, content in the belief that they have spent their money to help some poor country. Tourists do not set up businesses or compete in any way with local manufacturers or with the government, and therefore pose no threat to institutionalized socialism. But tourists do not create the type of wealth that can change the countries they visit. Instead, they help perpetuate an economy most of whose limited resources are channeled into the hospitality industry, funding the construction of hotels, tourist-oriented gift shops, tour guides, and the like.

But none of these things improve conditions in the non-tourist economy very much. American tourists in places such as the Dominican Republic are often amazed at the juxtaposition of five-star resort hotels and professional tour services with the grinding poverty of the locals living within a stone's throw of the tourist zone. To be sure, some of the locals benefit from tourists buying local goods, taking guided tours, and enjoying zippi-ness, snorkeling, and deep-sea fishing, and many other things. But most such benefits are temporary and do not change the reality of the local economy, which is that it is nearly impossible to start a business, accumulate capital, or make ends meet. This is why, despite the fact that Mexico and the Dominican Republic are studded with popular tourist resorts brimming with American visitors, many ordinary Mexicans and Dominicans prefer to live and work in the United States if at all possible.

7. Immigration is strictly prohibited under most circumstances. Socialist governments love foreigners who come, spend their money, and then go home. They do not, in general, like foreigners who immigrate and seek to earn a living within their borders. For most such countries, the only way to become a legal resident is by marrying a local or by being sent there by a foreign government or company to work—and even then only if it can be proven that no local is being deprived of a job by the foreign worker. This is because socialists regard employment, like everything else in the economy, as a zero-sum game. Only so many jobs are available, goes the flawed reasoning, and if foreigners take them, there will be none left for the locals. This is actually true to a certain degree in a socialist economy that creates virtually no wealth and very few jobs. Under such regimes, it is perhaps more accurate to say that most people have assignments rather than occupations, occupying state-approved posts that can be shuffled but seldom multiplied. Thus immigrants are not regarded as potential sources of new capital and new jobs, but instead as selfish interlopers occupying coveted posts within a static economy whose limited fruits are to be reserved for locals.

8. Police are everywhere. Because of the general disregard for law and order, socialist governments require huge contingents of police, usually including military police armed with military-style weaponry, to reign in the chaos. Checkpoints are frequent, and ubiquitous highway police typically have unlimited authority to stop and question anyone, anytime, for any reason—or for no reason.

9. National ID cards are compulsory. Even the least authoritarian socialist governments rely heavily on na-

tional identity cards (or internal passports) to keep tabs on what everyone is up to. Such cards are mandatory, and it is usually illegal to leave your home without one. This is because under socialism, institutional distrust is a two-way street. Just as citizens in socialist countries hate and distrust their government and the laws, for reasons already given, so too do socialist governments distrust their own citizens, as evidence by the universal expectation, under socialism, that private citizens prove their identity to the state whenever required to do so.

10. You can't drink the water. Despite advances in modern water purification and treatment, you still can't safely drink tap water in most of the developing world. This is not for lack of technical expertise. It is a direct consequence of an inadequate tax base for building sewage treatment plants, covered sewers, and water-quality monitoring systems. In poor countries, public sewers are largely uncovered and leaky, and groundwater contaminated, even in less-populated areas. As a result, most tourists (and locals) must consume huge amounts of bottled and boiled water.

11. Public infrastructure, including electrical grids, highways, and bridges, is totally inadequate. The country where this author is currently staying, and which he has visited numerous times, is well watered and intersected by many large rivers—yet electrical blackouts are quite frequent and often last an entire day. During the run-up to the monsoon, when conditions are especially hot and dry, the use of air conditioners is often curtailed by local authorities because of the strain they place on the feeble electrical grid, and scheduled daily blackouts during the hottest hours are routine. Once the rainy season begins, long power outages occasioned by electrical surges during thunderstorms are frequent.

As a result, it is difficult to do business without spending heavily on electrical generators. The only places where foreigners can be guaranteed continuous access to electricity are at the largest and most expensive hotels,



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which maintain banks of generators that often run for hours or days at a time to keep air-conditioning, television, water pumps, and Internet services functioning while the outside world shuts down and waits for the electricity gods (i.e., the government) to restore access to the modern world.

And shaky power grids are but one of many systemic problems associated with impoverished socialist countries' infrastructure. Socialist governments are completely unequal to the task of keeping infrastructure up to date, because—thanks to general impoverishment—they lack the tax base to do so. Not only that, public funds more often than not keep politicians and their retinues in the lap of luxury, while spending on public works languishes. As a result, roads are usually narrow, unevenly paved, potholed, choked with traffic, and mostly devoid of traffic lights, resulting in extraordinary travel times even for short distances. Sidewalks are all but non-existent, bridges are in appalling states of disrepair, and trains and public buses are dirty, crowded, and seldom punctual. Where this author now resides, a typical 50-mile trip takes about two hours in a car or taxi, and even more by train or bus. In urban areas, the roads are better, but choked with constant traffic jams, whereas in rural areas, the traffic declines—but so does road quality.

None of this, it bears repeating, is because of any lack of theoretical expertise in road building or power-plant construction. It is purely a consequence of general impoverishment, which stems from such countries' lack of capital formation.

12. Violent political demonstrations and other forms of civil unrest are common-place. Standard advice in all the tour guide books and State Department fact sheets for Americans abroad is to avoid political rallies and demonstrations. This is not so much because foreigners will be targeted directly, but because such events in socialist countries so often deteriorate into pitched battles with police and among rival factions. Such tactics as stone throwing and the destruction of motor vehicles and other private property are routine, and bystanders sometimes get caught in the middle. Elections, if held, are particularly perilous, because locals are well aware of the sham of voting in a thoroughly corrupt system where outcomes are often determined by underhanded means.

These, too, are direct outgrowths of the widespread contempt for civil authority under socialism. People feel chronically frustrated and helpless within a system that prevents them from achieving their God-given po-

tential, yet presumes to dictate to them where they can live and work, what they can buy and sell, and whether or not they will even have access each day to modern essentials such as electric power. Frequently such frustration boils over into popular rage—energy that too often ends up supporting still more radical leftist policies, as if recourse to revolutionary Marxism can somehow palliate the ills caused by its milder ideological kin.

In this way, democratic socialism constantly incentivizes ever-more radical (and totalitarian) reactions to the grinding poverty that never seems to go away. People marinated in socialism, unfortunately, seldom have the ability to see any alternative other than to “purify” the existing system—which purification always means empowering those who are more doctrinaire, more authoritarian, more intolerant, and, in the long run, far more oppressive than their predecessors.

Many, if not most, of the above characteristics of “socialism lite” (and this is by no means an exhaustive list) are already beginning to manifest themselves in the United States. As the United States becomes more socialized, both at the state and national level, government net revenues plummet as more and more money needs to be allocated from taxes to service massive debts. Infrastructure crumbles, the rule of law deteriorates, and political unrest becomes more and more commonplace. As governments desperate for revenue continue to raise taxes and run up more and more debt to cover spiraling expenses, the standard of living of ordinary Americans is in slow but discernible decline. The realization is settling over America that the salad days of the 20th century—the great postwar economic expansion that enriched nearly everyone up to the end of the 1990's—may never return. But as is in the developing world, few in America appear to recognize that the remedy is to abandon socialism and restore economic freedom. President Trump, who professes belief in capitalism, having benefited mightily from his own business success, is unlikely to fundamentally alter America's socialist course—as his repeated insistence on not only repealing, but also replacing, America's newly minted socialized healthcare would attest. The proper-and constitutional-remedy for destructive socialist programs such as ObamaCare is repeal, followed by reliance on the free market to furnish the most effective remedy possible. But to date, not a single socialist “welfare” program in the United States, from the New Deal to the present day, has ever been repealed. Socialist programs once enacted create im-

mediate groups of dependents who then fight tooth and nail to preserve their benefits. And when such programs inevitably fail to meet expectations, political pressure arises to solve the failures inherent in socialism with still more socialism (as with the current agitation to replace ObamaCare with a single-payer system).

For this reason, entrenched socialism is very difficult to dislodge, although it has been done. Chile under Salvador Allende was on the high road to full-blown Marxist socialism in the early 1970s, and is today one of the world's freest and most prosperous countries. But it took a military coup led by Augusto Pinochet to destroy the Marxist cancer that had been on the point of transforming Chile in a South American Cuba. Chile today is very similar to its South American neighbor Argentina in climate, and greatly inferior in population and natural resources—yet Chile is a model of a stable, free market economy (although leftism is once again beginning to make inroads), whereas Argentina remains an economic basket case, a victim of decades of relentless, ubiquitous socialism.

If we continue along our present course the day will soon come when Americans no longer have reliable electrical grids, drinkable water, drivable roads, or productive economic sectors other than recreation and entertainment—and such “Third World” conditions will be but a mild prelude to the depredations of full-blown socialism to follow. May America reverse course, lest we share the lot of the “huddled masses” to whom we once gave refuge.

—*The New American*, August 21, 2017, p. 25-29