

America as a 'Workers' Paradise

Distinctions between the First, Second, and Third Worlds have blurred in contemporary America as government competence stretches in odd and tyrannical directions while leaving the basic functions of government untouched. This misalignment of priorities could well serve to delegitimize the government in the eyes of many of its citizens.

The post-WWII political landscape was simple. There was the "First World" of nations in the West—the U.S., UK, France and so on—characterized by political and economic freedom, capitalist prosperity and the rule of law. Then there were Communist dictatorships (the "Second World") where government exercised near total control over its citizens with all-powerful secret police, state domination of the media, and politically driven law enforcement. Rounding out the picture was the "Third World" notable for horrific poverty, sprawling slums, rampant disease, crime, children picking through garbage dumps, non-functioning public services, and brutal dictatorships.

Experts assumed an inevitable transition whereby Third World nations (even Communist countries) would, eventually, become First World nations. Unfortunately, this Third-World-to-First-World transition has not occurred as experts anticipated. Specifically, America today seems to be combining key elements of Communist-style dictatorships with Third World human misery to create a mind-boggling hybrid.

Most evident is the slide toward enhanced state power once associated with communist dictatorships like the [German Democratic Republic](#) (East Germany) or, at its worst, the [Red Guards](#) of Communist China. Totalitarian creep, so to speak. Examples are legion and are too numerous to list in full in

any article of reasonable length. Among other things this encroachment includes the politicization of the FBI and the intelligence agencies, government permissiveness as social media companies censor and defund organizations disputing government claims, exaggerating crises to expand bureaucratic control, and political show trials such as the [Derek Chauvin charade](#). It also includes the transformation of K-12 education into indoctrination, the rewriting of history (*The New York Times*' "1619 Project"), state co-optation of the mass media, encouraging mobs to terrorize ordinary people, manipulating elections via questionable regulations, and an Orwellian obsession with criminalizing language. Will America soon be a "Wokers'" Paradise?

Unfortunately, this totalitarian creep arrives without the benefits, albeit minor, of the now-defunct Communist police state. Yes, visitors to the old Soviet Empire were appalled by shabby block apartment buildings, lines to buy toilet paper, and walls with ears, but on the plus side, one escaped Third World human misery. East Berlin was dreary and offered only lousy restaurants, but those walking on its central *Alexanderplatz* did not fear stepping on human feces or being slashed by a crazed mugger.

Today, however, parts of the U.S. combine the worst of the Second and Third Worlds. In San Francisco and other supposedly First World cities, dozens of ill-kempt, homeless drug addicts might invade your front yard, pee on the trees, and pitch tents. Trying to evict them is a risky business. Yes, the state-run stores in the old East Berlin had empty shelves, but the odds of your Trabant being carjacked with you in it were zero, and the Stasi happily ignored your choice of pronoun.

The contradictions of present government power are staggering. Yes, American scientists can decode the human genome, but our public officials are paralyzed when confronted with hundreds of druggies sleeping in parks. But of all the contradictions the most disturbing is the disconnect between all the energy

devoted to stamping out constitutionally protected *political* dissent versus curtailing humdrum criminality. Why can't we re-deploy all those Facebook "fact checkers" who ferret out suspected racism, transphobia, and sexism to help cities plagued by aggressive panhandlers? Why should PayPal agonize over whether entirely legal commentary sites have violated some fuzzy ideological standard instead of devoting their energies to help stop the rampant shoplifting bankrupting small businesses?

These are cockeyed priorities and their pursuit may ultimately delegitimize government authority. Physical protection is the first obligation of any government, and chasing imaginary enemies inflicting imperceptible harm undermines its core mission and reduces its credibility. Imagine the chagrin of those watching the secretary of defense announce that combatting white supremacy is the Pentagon's number one job, while thousands of illegal immigrants stream unhindered across the southern border smuggling drugs and child prostitutes. The military showcases its billion-dollar state-of-the-art F-22 fighter jet, but is outsmarted by children illegally immigrating from El Salvador. Comical, to say the least, and, after a point, can anybody still respect the military? Or its bumbling commander-in-chief?

Here's the winning slogan for the 2024 presidential election: "If we can send a man to the moon, even Mars, we can certainly stop people from crapping on the sidewalk. Vote for me."

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