

Joseph Backholm: The Truth About Human Nature and Socialism

The election of Democratic Socialist Zohran Mamdani as the next mayor of New York City is making headlines, and for good reason. His plans for the city, including government-owned and operated grocery stores, lean unmistakably toward a communist model. Our friend Joseph Backholm, Senior Fellow at the Family Research Council, recently wrote a concise and worthwhile 10-point reflection on why communism and socialism — government control and ownership of the means of production — always fail.

Lots of piling on Mamdani, but it is worth remembering why communism/socialism (government control/ownership over the means of production) is bad:

1. Misunderstands human nature and implies that people will be virtuous as long as they have enough money. Then, ironically, assumes everyone with money is sinister.
2. Takes from the capable and gives to the less capable, ensuring that resources won't ever be used productively.
3. Destroys competition and consequently destroys innovation.
4. Destroys people's incentive to be productive by denying them the benefit of their labor. It always produces fewer, lower-quality products.
5. Assumes I have the right to other people's property just because they have more than I do. Depends upon and incentivizes greed.
6. Denies people the dignity of having what they earn and earning what they have.
7. Assumes people engaged in commerce always operate with corrupt motives, but people in government never do.
8. While claiming to decentralize power, it always centralizes power with a handful of bureaucrats.

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9. Assumes it's always unjust for one person to have more than another, when real justice means the dishonest and unskilled shouldn't have as much as the honest and skilled.

10. Assumes humanity's natural state is prosperity and rages over the fact that we aren't all rich, when in reality the natural state is poverty & capitalism is the only reason we aren't all poor.

Of course, none of this means a capitalist system doesn't have weaknesses, but it can produce good outcomes and has.

Communism never has because it assumes a world that does not exist and never will.

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