

Versions of Fundamental Transformations

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In the pages of [*Rebane's Ruminations*](#) (est 2007) I have excoriated the country's Left for the kind of fundamental transformation of America they seek to bring about. My liberal readers invariably misinterpret this opposition to include my opposing both fundamental transformations and Americans' ability to fundamentally transform, either through legal or extra-legal means. I oppose neither. What I do oppose is the Left's objective of a socialist cum communist regime for a fundamentally transformed America. My opposition to the means they employ is only motivated by their intended destination, as confirmed through their statements, writings, and public policies.

My fellow conservetarians and I have a fundamentally different worldview or ontology of what kinds of beneficial liberal governance are possible in this universe, or specifically those formed by our Homo Sapiens species – in short, our differences with the liberal Left's view of the same cannot be more fundamental. To understand the basis for this, we have to take a short detour into the field of systems science, since part of the conservetarian condemnation is that the Left subscribes to a distinctly unscientific ideology that is unworkable on this planet, and most likely in our universe.

First, for some decades now, the systems sciences have provided their technical toolsets to endeavors far beyond the hard sciences and fields of engineering in which they were developed and put to use, where they have provided our civilization with all the wonders with which we are now completely at ease. Today these technical tools are not only embraced by the softer sciences like sociology, economics, psychology, and other 'life sciences', but these tools, used within the context of systems science principles, have provided the ONLY means by which advances have been made in these fields. It is only in the political arena where science is ignored, grossly misunderstood, or misconstrued. And this definitely includes the collectivist ideologies of governance.

In the topic areas that comprise systems science the student quickly learns that the most powerful way to understand the realworld is through the abstraction of 'systems' - descriptive, analogical, and operational - which when synthesized provide an accessible structure of reality that can be successfully analyzed and profitably manipulated. Nature does not neatly divide itself into a collection of systems with crisp boundaries, sets of identifiably comprehensive inputs, and observable outputs, along with known rules for transforming inputs into outputs (the system's transfer function). Such a view or concept of nature is generated only by intelligent critters with objectives ranging from survival, to garnering wealth, to discovering an ever deeper understanding of what is. And to be sure, different critters having different objectives can easily view the same hunk of realworld within the context of a set of differently configured systems with all that entails. In sum, we humans synthesize specific system structures to serve our own purposes for good or ill.

The easiest kind of system to conceive and understand is the comprehensive linear system with prescribed inputs and outputs, and an assumed easy to formulate and compute transfer function. (For now, think of 'linear' as providing outputs proportional to inputs.) The key word here is 'comprehensive' which invites the system thinker to have the system be overly expansive, handle lots of inputs (known and unknown), and deliver an equally large set of outputs (known and unknown). With such a picture of reality at hand (e.g. the operation of an economy or the educational performance of a curriculum in a school system), the desire then is to twiddle with the knobs on the transfer function and play with various inputs and their values, to get the system to predict and produce an acceptable, good, or even the best output.

To accomplish any of that in the political arena of governance requires that there be some common understanding of how the system outputs map into a quantitative measure of 'good' so that competing tweaks and inputs can be evaluated to determine which is better or, hopefully, best. This quantitative measure of good is called a 'utility function' or 'figure of merit' (FOM). The formulation of such an FOM is completely subjective (there science is silent), and is therefore a political enterprise. And therefore, its development is usually passed over, simply because people cannot agree or don't want that part of system operation to become transparent. This means that the system will be operated according to the happenstance of who currently holds political power. Which, in turn, means that ignorance rules. And recognizing this, the ignorant do their best to insulate themselves from any and all bad results which such system operation will inevitably produce. This is the real face of politics.

Nature in its manifest complexity has avoided all this by evolving through the creation and integration of countless small functional units which we may characterize as lots and lots of very tiny systems. This approach distributes both control and knowledge over wide areas, and lets these little systems function with very simple transfer functions (requiring less computation and stored data) and simple FOMs. In nature systems, that attempt to evolve into large centrally controlled complexes, break, often catastrophically. The sustained richness and robustness in nature comes from the complex capabilities that arise from cooperative functioning of all the interacting little systems. We techies label such an unpredictable capability as an *emergent property*, such unpredictable properties also emerge in artificially contrived systems.

For example, emergent properties are almost mystical and wondrous in their kind, number, and workings. So much so, that no one could predict all the things that, for example, a simple molecule would be capable of which consists of an oxygen atom combined with just two hydrogen atoms, oriented at 105 degrees apart and sharing their single electrons with the oxygen's 8 electrons. Putting these atoms together creates a magnificent molecule capable of unimaginable and unpredictable feats when these combine into their solid, liquid, or gaseous states.

With this understanding we may look ahead and anticipate equally marvelous outcomes from what emerges from the combination of tens/hundreds of smaller, simpler, in- and inter-dependent social jurisdictions. Unfortunately, our sad history speaks to us across generations of murdered millions and even more millions of destroyed lives, confirming that collectivists have understood neither systems nor its science. And today there is no indication that they have gained such understanding as they plan to deliver ever more massive and complex leviathans of governance.

However, while not versed in the vagaries of systems sciences, our Founders understood the intrinsic weaknesses that manifest themselves in large and complex centrally controlled human organizations (which today we may understand better as ‘systems’). They instinctively knew how difficult it would be to predict the performance of any assemblage of government bureaus and agencies often working at unknown cross-purposes to each other, and being insulated from the elected politicians representing the people. After all, it was our Founders who perceived a government acting as the servant of the people, and not the other way around, that would provide a social order which could deliver the benefits of life, liberty, and successful pursuits of happiness. And so they bequeathed us American federalism, a system of distributed government consisting of states and local governments, each enabled in its own domain to pursue its own ends according to its own lights, all the while aware of what neighboring Americans of similar means and powers were achieving. And the whole system coordinated by a prudently small central government of limited powers that kept its attention mostly on the outside world in order to secure the nation.

De Tocqueville during his 1830s visit to our new republic recorded his amazement at how little Americans in their towns and villages paid attention to the central government in Washington DC. He observed that on the whole they paid scant attention to those distant politicians and bureaucrats, being able to handle their own affairs locally through county and state governments.

So, let’s return to the modern versions of regicide, revolution, and reform. Are any of them intrinsically evil? If so, within what scope – globally across nations and cultures, or provincially within nation-states and their component jurisdictions? And most specifically, is the ability or even the existential capability cum threat to violently overthrow the U.S. government really anti-American and unpatriotic as some Americans claim? According to my lights, the answer to that lies in what Americans view as the portents of allowing the current form of governance to endure and evolve organically; or alternatively, the portents of a future that results from a rapid and violent fundamental transformation of today’s America.

To be more specific, if at some future time Americans view the then ongoing political happenings promise to transform us into something that, say, ranges between a Venezuela and Maoist China, then there is no doubt that most of us will be reaching for our shootin’ irons and assembling in the town squares. A lower chance of that happening will be if our politics promises to turn us more slowly into an oligarchic and corrupt Russia or today’s China. This is the danger of the path through so-called ‘soft autocracy’. And I’m afraid that we are already a sufficiently inattentive and unread people, that we will most likely allow ourselves to be led quietly into a future that replicates the socialist governance of South Africa or its wealth-redistributed northern neighbor Zimbabwe – soft autocracy on the march.

So, who are these people who want this dark future for America, and how can we know them? I want to end this little dissertation with a couple of practical litmus tests, drawn from the hundreds available, that serve to reliably identify anti-American collectivists. The first may be called [‘Opportunity v Outcome Madness’](#). In this version the collectivists argue that America is a systemically racist nation because the races – here white, Asian, black – are not ‘equally’ represented in any of a number of professions, starting with the STEM sector. And the

collectivists' measure of 'equally' can range anywhere from population proportionate to actual numerical equality. This litmus test has two complimentary versions – 1) identification of inequality by rejecting equal opportunity in favor of equal outcome, and 2) prescription of remedies to achieve equal outcomes with laws and regulations enforced through draconian uses of government force.

The second litmus test has more recent provenance – namely, the strong new assertion by the Left that merit is “an inherently racist construct designed and centered on white supremacist framing.” (more [here](#)) I believe that the existential result of passing laws and regulations to expunge merit as a qualification for advancement, acceptance, or even appreciation in our society, will result in a population consisting of a homogeneous gray amalgam of double dummies that will not even approach the threshold of mediocrity. With this tenet of leftwing ideology in force, starting from early childhood, America can forget about maintaining its historical positions of world leadership in literally any sector of technology, commerce, or the arts.

Eliminating this “racist construct” from the lives of our nation’s citizenry is undoubtedly the most devastating anti-American initiative that our Left has now begun to foist on the country through its active soft autocracy program. You can bet the ranch that in that brave new world, the governing elites will continue to embrace merit within their conclaves.

These are the people who divide us, and from whom we would be divided if we could.