THE PICTURE PERFECT GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC: THE SOCIALIST IDEAL

This is not a state prison, it is a prison state!
Welcome to East Berlin, 1977. When you want to leave, just cut the fences, creep carefully across the mine field, jump the crash barrier, race across the "kill zone" (careful of the barbed wire entanglements), and scale the wall – without being shot.

TO BE PERFECT OR NOT TO BE AT ALL: HOW WE HAVE ALLOWED THE IDEAL TO BECOME THE ENEMY OF THE GOOD (OR GREAT).

There is an old adage warning against allowing the ideal to become the enemy of the good. We need to heed it, because enemies, today, are using the ideal to destroy the good – and the great. Outraged voices shout that America is not great, and never was great. What they mean, without seeming to realize it, is that America is not perfect. So what is? Socialism? Ha! Only in theory, preached by well paid “intellectuals” of the Left. Perfection is an ideal, and ideals are never achieved in this world; we couldn’t even agree on what is ideal. If only the perfect in nations and governments can be tolerated, there will never be any for long. Rather, there will be chaos, and arising out of that chaos, tyranny. Tyranny has its admirers, of course – the would-be tyrants.

“Good” and “great” on the other hand, are terms with meaning; subjective, yes, and comparative, but not unrealistic. People do define, in their own opinions, the good and the great. Unfortunately,
generations have had their faces buried in America’s flaws, real and contrived, with no reference to redeeming qualities, or comparison to the experience of other peoples. No one has ever seriously claimed that the USA was perfect, without spot or blemish; no one but an ignorant fool would claim any people, government, or political system (achieved in reality, as opposed to theory) was perfect. To deny that America is “great”, and by implication, not “good” because it is not perfect is a logical fallacy and a false and misleading argument that should not go unchallenged in public discourse.

How do we define “good” and “great” though. Let me suggest a simple, pragmatic test – walls, or any kind of frontier barriers. Which nations have barriers to keep their own people from leaving, and which have barriers to keep other people out. Put aside any question of the ‘rightness’ of borders and simply examine the question of whose people want to escape and go somewhere else, and those who don’t.

Years of observation have taught us older folks this generalization – people always try to leave the socialist “workers’ paradise” and flee to capitalist countries. East Germany was the most notorious prison state a few years ago. Thousands of people were killed trying to escape. Every evening, the news carried the tally of those shot that day. All the other Communist countries were the same however. We have seen the Cuban “boat people” escape at the risk of their lives, the Vietnamese “boat people”, the half starved straggling few who escape North Korea; but it is the same everywhere extreme socialism takes hold: from Soviet Russia, the Peoples Republic of China, P. R. of Albania, P.R. of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania, and so on through the litany of Communist/socialist countries to the killing fields of Cambodia.

Most of the once Communist nations have thrown off the shackles of Communism, all have deserted Marxist/socialist dogma. Venezuela is the latest victim of socialism (“Democratic Socialism” they call it this time). The once prosperous nation is now starving and those people who can, are leaving. There, it is their neighbors who are beginning to erect barriers against the exodus of Venezuelans sick of poverty, corruption, and tyranny.

Where do these disaffected migrants go? They go where they will have more freedom, more opportunity, and a better standard of living. Those things they find “good”. They find them primarily in the once Christian, more or less capitalistic, western world. Up until the recent mass migrations from North Africa to Europe, the USA was the most desired destination of migrants, and where the chance opens, we still are.
“Great” is a superlative, meaning rising above the rest. By the pragmatic definition of the country offering the most good to the most people being “great”, the United States of America is great.

Those who dispute that conclusion do not do so from fact, logic or experience, but from their own personal motives, their own personal ambition, their own personal demons. We need to remember that.

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