

The victimhood protestors

From the colonial era until at least the end of World War I and the rise of progressivism, America was populated almost universally by rugged individualists who believed fundamentally in being industrious, achieving success by benefiting others through one's industry, and saving one's earnings in the hopes of not only bettering one's own life but also the lives of future generations of Americans. In stark contrast to those who gave birth to and defended with their lives American liberty and free enterprise are the youthful masses of protestors and supporters of Bernie Sanders, Black Lives Matter, and the new Black Panthers. Many youthful and impatient Americans among the loudest in their complaints against the rest of humanity think they are entitled to have their earthly wants, needs, and interests paid for by others and express disdain, indeed revulsion, at all whose labors have resulted in wealth or power.

We can find these souls who view themselves as entitled without the need for work in all sorts of positions (from students at Ivy League schools who decry free speech unless it is in support of their ideological preferences to Black Lives Matter protestors who condemn those in government and industry as "white supremacists" and demand redistribution of their income to Black America).

Whether the entitled come in the form of millennials upset about speech they do not like who demand censorship, faculty resignations, and more "safe spaces" on campus or protestors who demand redistribution of income and an exception from the criminal laws, all share one thing in common. They all want something for nothing. They want the most productive and highest earning elements of society to be forced to finance the least productive and lowest earning elements of society and, more particularly, to satisfy their wants and needs now.

They offer nothing in return. Indeed, they are indignant at the notion that they might be required to work and save in exchange for wealth or that they might be asked to listen patiently with maturity or humility to a view they do not share. They want ownership, operation, and control without experience, industry, and self-improvement. Theirs is a world of temper tantrums and consternation at what they do not have as opposed to intelligent reflection and diligent pursuit of dreams. They have learned early in life that loud complaints if maintained in apparent earnest cause all manner of folks to show concern and give them that something for nothing they seek.

So they condemn the president of a university and, rather than be expelled, they are rewarded with the president's resignation. They demand that all wealth be redistributed from those who earned it to those who have not, and they are then invited to meet the President at the White House (a President who proclaimed to leaders of industry that they "did not build that," meaning they are not entitled to the benefits of their own labor). They loudly complain that they want free health care, free education, and a middle class income not derived from earnings and savings but from government redistribution of wealth; folks like Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton pander to them, promising those very costly benefits at the expense not of them but of a dwindling sector of productive Americans. Theirs is the extended hand accompanied by the never ending whine of victimhood.

Short-sighted, as all socialists are, they do not comprehend or, if they do, do not care, that dismantling the rich to redistribute to politically preferred others always reduces what is above and never raises what is below. For the sake of a freebie, they would destroy the engine of free enterprise which has given them far more promise than any government program ever could. For the sake of hearing their own views crowed back to them, they would destroy the bill of rights.

The transformative power of industry and improvement has not only given them the gift of being born into a nation with a higher standard of living (even higher for the poorest among us compared to the poor of yesteryears) and with greater opportunities for success than any generation before, it has given them essential freedom, that most precious gift of all. Yet, given these great benefits, they take them for granted and condemn the sources from which those benefits come; worse, for the sake of serving their selfish demands, they would confiscate others' wealth and forfeit everyone's freedom.

In a nihilistic fashion, courting anarchy, they tear down religion, industry, and government but offer no sustainable alternatives. They do not care that their demands if satisfied would sacrifice others' careers, wealth, or freedom. Indeed, they appear not to care that their demands if enforced upon the rest of us would require a form of government in which their own protests would be silenced, their freedom forfeited, and their fate would be predetermined, to toil in mediocrity. They are wanton and reckless.

Like spoiled children, they seek a revolution against the very institutions that have given them security (the police), income (employers), and freedom (defense of the Bill of Rights). Few of them share the same ideology; most largely communicate in unintelligible rants.

Each bellows demands that would, if compared one to another, be in contradiction. Each wishes in essence to be a dictator, and so none wishes to take orders or even abide by the strictures each prescribes for all others. They lay the foundations for anarchy, wittingly or not, and beget ruination, and they threaten the very survival of the nation and of liberty itself. They are a generation lost to liberty and opportunity.

One can only hope that the trials of life will chasten these individuals, that an epiphany will descend upon them after an

age of foolishness and cause them to realize with more maturity that the America they have inherited is grand and extraordinarily precious, that the loss of that America is a loss that leads ineluctably to tyranny and slavery, and that the most wretched slave among us is he who unwittingly through ignorance forges his own bonds of slavery.

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