

The Arrogance of Central Planning



By Anna Von Reitz

Central Planning doesn't work. It doesn't matter if it is the Chinese, the Russians or the Americans doing the planning. It just doesn't work. We have had 150 years of strategic and centralized planning in America, brought to us by the Department of War and then by the Department of Defense.....and.....? It doesn't work.

Are we healthy? No. Are we happy? No. Are we wealthy? Yes, on paper, but..... Are we wise? Well, that remains to be seen.

If nothing else, we should have the self-evident failures and results of central planning firmly in mind. It does not lead to health. It does not lead to meaning, happiness, or fulfillment. It doesn't lead to a cleaner environment. It doesn't lead to contentment, security or peace.

So, what has it led to?

Falling school test scores, de facto enslavement of the work force, neglect of old people and children, wars for profit, environmental pollution, increased real poverty in a larger percentage of the population accompanied by obscene wealth for a few, gross levels of waste and meaningless "consumerism" ---that is, large amounts money spent on things that have no real use or purpose, forty percent of babies born without a father, 3 out of 4 marriages ending in divorce, decayed cities, unemployment, fractured families, drug addiction, diabetes, malnutrition, and the list goes on.

Anyone can see the impacts, so just look. It isn't working. It isn't good.

A few years ago I watched a TED Talk and the guest speaker was a soft-spoken Hispanic man who was a legendary business developer (no, I don't remember his name) and the secret of his success --- which he freely disclosed-- was that he went into dysfunctional places like Inner City Detroit and he asked people about what they wanted and needed and dreamed of.

And they told him.....honestly.

And he made the funds and expertise available to them. And they built it. And it worked.

Who knew?

When a man gets up in the morning and his stomach is growling, do the bureaucrats in Washington, DC, credit him with knowing that he is hungry?

The fact is that we all know what we need and we all have a hierarchy of needs and as one need is satisfied, another arises.

We are always without exception the best judges of where we are in that continuum of needs and also the best judges of what will truly satisfy us.

A bureaucrat sitting in an office 3,000 miles away staring at actuarial tables can't do the job for us. No matter how nice he is or how well-educated or well-intentioned---- people have to wipe their own noses, take their own risks, strive for their own dreams, and seek fulfillment of their own needs.

That's the way it is, and also the way we are. Our answers have to come from within. And they are our own answers-- for us --- they don't necessarily apply to anybody else or any other community in any other place on Earth.

That was the Big Secret of Development Success: ask people what they truly need and want and how they propose to get to that destination, and when they have a reasonable plan, step back, give them the support they need and let them do it.

The word we are searching for all over the world is "decentralization" ---- put the control back in the hands of the individual people and of their local communities and let us have the kinds of discussions that yield good fruit. Let us consider what we need in our own situations, climates, traditions, and circumstances. Let us form our own plans for solving our own problems.

Provide us with the tools we need and the discussion forums to mull things over---- and then stand back. Let America and the whole rest of the world move forward to find meaning and joy and to clean up the waste, criminality, and fraud that central planning bequeathed to us.

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