



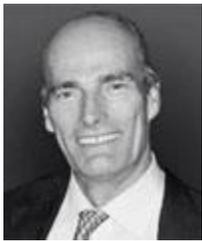
War of the Woke

By Bill Bonner

Friday, September 10, 2021

They mainly attributed the peaceful dominion of religion in their country to the separation of church and state. I do not hesitate to affirm that during my stay in America, I did not meet with a single individual, of the clergy or of the laity, who was not of the same opinion upon this point.

– *Democracy in America*, by Alexis de Tocqueville



YOUGHAL, IRELAND – Does freedom pay?

Thank the long-suffering people of North Korea for their real-world/real-time test. The elite in North Korea has been telling them what to do for more than half a century... with predictable results – grinding poverty... and outright starvation.

And we are grateful. Otherwise, the theory – that the freer the society, the richer the people – would be just a theory... buttressed only by speculation, logic, and anecdotal evidence.

But the test on the Korean Peninsula was almost perfect. Same people. Same resources. Same climate. Same time (the test began in 1953). More or less the same starting position (the U.S. had pulverized North Korea in the war; but so had it smashed up Japan and Germany).

The southerners chose freedom – moderated, as always, by government, social norms, and so forth.

The group in the North went for non-freedom... ruthlessly, sternly enforced by the Kim Il-Sung and then Kim Jong-Il communist governments.

The result? The South Korean economy is now nearly 100 times bigger than the economy of North Korea. The average South Korean has nearly 50 times more wealth.

He will live to an average age of 79, which is 11 years longer than the North Korean male (and a couple of years more than the average man in the U.S.).

And to top it off, the free people of the South are between 1 and 3 inches taller than those in the North, thanks to getting enough to eat.

Conclusion: Freedom makes a big difference in the economic world.

But does it work elsewhere?

Born Unfree

Thomas Jefferson, in a flight of fancy or wishful thinking, wrote that “all men are born free...”

Clearly, they are not. They are born subject to the laws and regulations of the place they are hatched.

In the U.S., *Forbes Magazine* calculated that some 88,899 rules and regulations were brought in from 1995 to 2016 alone, along with 4,312 laws.

And a newborn also has his share of the \$28 trillion national debt. No matter that he had no say in it... and got nothing from it.

Religious Crusades

But Jefferson and the Founding Fathers at least tried to put some things off limits to bossy-pants rulers. We now take religious freedom for granted. But that was not always the case.

Here in Ireland, for example, Catholics were punished, starved, marginalized, burned out, chased out... driven “to Hell... or to Connaught”... and killed outright.

The “religious” wars in Europe – 1522 to 1648 – took the lives of as many as 18 million people. And earlier still, the Crusades against heretics, the Ottoman Empire, and free-

thinkers lasted for hundreds of years – until the last Moor was driven from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492 in the *Reconquista*.

After that, some different religions were tolerated in some places at some times. In Transylvania, in 1568, for example, the Diet – the legislative, administrative, and judicial body – enacted the Edict of Torda. In it, Catholicism, Lutheranism, Unitarism, and Calvinism were permitted, but they drew the line at outright religious freedom.

Jews generally required special permission to live in a city, except in Poland, where they enjoyed substantial autonomy, given to them in the Statute of Kalisz of 1264.

But it wasn't until the founding of the United States of America that real religious freedom was firmly established.

Instead of granting people the right to practice their religion – or “tolerating” them – the idea in the First Amendment is that religion is none of the government's business. The feds can give no permission; they have none to give.

The result? Here, too, freedom paid off. Different sects competed for hearts, minds, and souls... and generally flourished without resort to violence.

Unfree Speech

And how about Freedom of the Press? One of the cardinal values of a free and prosperous society – also guaranteed by the First Amendment – is the ability to say what you think – even if it is idiotic.

But among the dogma of the new Woke Religion is that saying the wrong thing can be almost as bad as violence. If it makes someone feel bad, they say, it is a “micro-aggression,” and should be outlawed.

In the news yesterday was an item from Texas. The University of Texas is being encouraged to eliminate its anthem, *The Eyes of Texas are Upon You*, not because of anything in the song itself, but because “it makes black students feel unwelcome.”

Can you talk openly about race in America today?

How about the coronavirus... and vaccines?

Or sex? You can be as gross and indelicate as you want... but try to talk publicly about the differences between the sexes... and why a man may not be “cut out” to make a good momma... or why you may not be able to turn him into a woman just by hacking off his genitals... and see how far you get.

Say what you really think, and you could lose your job, your career, your friends... and be harassed into hiding.

And it's not the government itself that shuts you up... but the “free press”... and the keyboard warriors on social media!

How so?

Come back on Monday and we'll take a look.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Bonner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill
