

Feasible Utopia? Eugenics vs. Marxism

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The implosion of the Soviet Union is now generally perceived as more than the collapse of a country or empire, but as the failure of an ideology, of Marxism everywhere. The breakdown of a worldview is always an event that supersedes specific events, for the “fire in the minds of men” burns far hotter than the kindling of accidental historical specifics.

Actually things need not necessarily have developed in so bleak a fashion for “the country of victorious socialism,” but its leaders, who were just as poorly advised as our own, foolishly resolved to match their opponent’s poker bids, knowing full well that he was sitting on a bottomless sack of chips. The upshot was a financial confrontation in which – it is claimed – Marx’s heirs *inevitably* had to lose. But if the Soviets had just been satisfied with being able to destroy us only once, or even limit themselves to five times over, it is we who would have eventually been bled dry by our own “military-industrial complex.” (One could even argue that this is precisely what is happening now, when our military sorely lacks a worthy global challenger capable of openly flinging down the gauntlet; instead of a splendid army of mounted knights, its opponents are a ragtag handful of economy-class tourists armed with “box cutters.”)

Our thinktanks and stupefyingly expensive intelligence services so abjectly failed to predict the Soviet collapse that the very words “intelligence” and “thinktank” ought to be perceived as oxymorons. But why would they have made a prediction that would have stripped them of their *raison d’être*?

In the stock market there exist no such phenomena as “lucky winners” or “stupid losers”; there are only “wise winners” and “unlucky losers.” Nevertheless, it is remarkable by any standard that not one of these bureaucrats lost his job or was even reprimanded. And, like the wise winners on the stock market, the same people who earlier preached gloom-and-doom domino theory now reason that the Soviet collapse was *inevitable* because the system was rotten. Note that this “inevitability” vision is quite different from that of the above-mentioned doomed poker-bid strategy that was simply one choice of many possibilities.

Still, the “inevitability” argument is not without validity. It’s Rousseau versus Hobbs all over again, with Hobbs coming up on top. We as a species have maximized our evolutionary survivability by devoting our total resources to our own selves and our immediate offspring, while at the same learning to collaborate with other members of society in collective efforts. Sociobiologists dryly explain altruism as mutually advantageous reciprocity; i.e. it’s just tit-for-tat. To quote a popular song, “what’s love got to do with it?” But the Soviets placed their bets on creating the “new man” – the Stakhanovite true-believer, devoted to his fellow man. After all, that strategy works handsomely for the altruistic bees, ants and termites.

Soviet planners came up with any number of rational ideas – urban planning instead of chaotic suburban sprawl, mass transportation rather than paving the country over out of addiction to the automobile, universal medical coverage, an educational system in which post-secondary students not only studied free but even received stipends, massive spending on infrastructure, a universal portable pension system. There was even an excellent system of returnable bottles and jars. Rather than building four gas stations at

one intersection and have Gucci and Sachs temples of female vanity populated largely by elegantly dressed but bored sales staff, production and distribution was centrally and, hopefully, scientifically organized. The Soviets had no need of a Lady Bird Johnson to tear down billboard blight; there were no billboards, at least not of the commercial variety. And there was relative equality of income – no media billionaires whose wealth and power permitted them to make anonymous decisions that rendered the electoral process secondary in significance. Moreover, they could not perpetuate inequality by leaving such fortunes to their children as to permit them to become the slavemasters of other children for a thousand generations.

Was it not paradise on earth? Well, not exactly. When Zambians and Bangladeshies gushed over the glorious order they found in the U.S.S.R. (and, by their standards, they were right), thoughtful Soviets either responded that the Soviet Union was a dreary, impoverished police state or they bit their tongues out of fear of police informers.

The communist utopia was eviscerated by its innate contradiction with biology. Shield most people from unemployment, and the majority do not abruptly burn with desire to better serve their country. Instead they virtually stop working. Almost nothing functioned well in the Soviet state or its vassals. On the one hand, the populace was confident that it would be maintained, at least on its impoverished level, from cradle to grave, and at the same time the people saw no possibility to escape that poverty. The result was a society whose sum national product would have been largely “culled” as a production glitch by even a mediocre capitalist company. And, when all is said and done, the wealth of a nation is the sum of individual efforts.

Still, the economies of the eastern bloc could have survived. Utopia functioned on a dystopic level, but it functioned. Collapse was ultimately probable, but not *inevitable*.

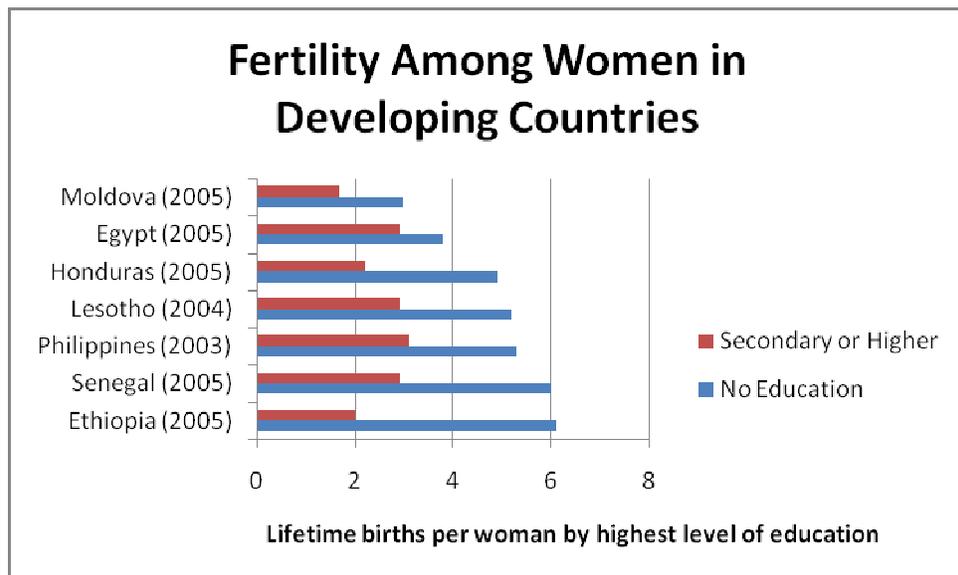
This brings us around to the new Utopia, one that is not new at all, but which has been mercilessly driven underground for four decades now: eugenics.

Not surprisingly, the attempts of eugenicists to manage biology are also resisted by biology, just as in the case of the Soviets and for the same reason: we are the products of an evolutionary process which lends us a certain proficiency at reciprocal cooperation, but our altruism is directed largely at our own offspring. Those of our ancestors who devoted time and effort to persons other than their own children (or even to their own parents) had fewer surviving children.

In a purely technical sense eugenic utopia is easily achievable. Even the ancient Egyptians knew the central rule of genetics – *like breeds like*. Eugenics basically involves encouraging greater fertility among the genetically advantaged and discouraging fertility among the genetically disadvantaged. It’s as simple as that... and as incredibly difficult. While people care deeply about their children and grandchildren, they are explicitly indifferent to the well-being of distant future generations: “What have future generations ever done for me?” In discussing eugenics, I must have heard this exasperated but dishearteningly sincere spontaneous exclamation a hundred times. Let us look at the price to be paid for this indifference.

- a) The goal of medicine is to eliminate the very mechanism that created and maintains us. Medical breakthroughs let almost everyone survive... to reproduce and pass on one’s problems to future generations. Either we replace cruel natural selection with kind scientific selection, or we increase the burden of genetic diseases imposed on future generations.

- b) Intellectual genetic variance within our current population is so broad as to exclude the overwhelming majority of our beloved fellow human beings (and their children) from participation in culture and civilization, but society's elites actually prefer to have cheap workers and certainly do not want competition. "If the man digging ditches is smarter than me," their logic runs, "he'll take my job, and I'll have to pick up the shovel." It's no accident that slave-holders everywhere preferred not to educate their slaves.
- c) The central concern of eugenics, going back to the nineteenth century, has been and still is the negative correlation between intelligence and fertility. Most studies have been devoted to the developed countries, but those populations are shrinking. By contrast, the "less developed" world is projected by the Population Reference Bureau to add another 2,632,000,000 people by 2050.¹ India alone may reach two billion.² Even though the PRB normally goes out of its way to avoid qualitative demographics, this year its *2007 World Population Data Sheet* provides data on contrasting fertility patterns in a selection of less developed countries³:



Granted, the less developed countries are great pits of unequal opportunity, and thus the correlation between fertility and education is not nearly as high as in the developed countries, but at the same time it would be preposterous to suggest that it is zero. Whatever that correlation is, the fertility patterns displayed in the chart reflect the fears of eugenicists as expressed for over a century now with regard to the developed nations. The trend is unambiguously dysgenic.

The acceptance or rejection of Darwinism and rational human ecology represents a choice of far greater import than did the confrontation between Marxism and capitalism. This is a question, not of prosperity, but of survival. If communism was an attempt to improve the quality of life, eugenics is about survival. If we fail to implement it, as impossibly utopian or for whatever other reason, we are doomed. It's as simple as that.

John Glad is the author of the most read book ever written on the topic of eugenics: *Future Human Evolution: Eugenics in the Twenty-First Century* (Hermitage Publishers), available free online in abridged version as <http://whatwemaybe.org>.

¹ *2007 World Population Sheet*, Population Reference Bureau.

² Is India's Population Heading Toward 2 Billion? <http://www.prb.org/Reports/2007/IndiaProjections.aspx>, Population Reference Bureau, accessed September 23, 2007.

³ Source: ORC Macro, MEASURE DHS STATcompiler (www.measuredhs.com, accessed June 15, 2007).