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The worldwide movement toward "limited authoritarianism," already well under way but dramatically accelerated by the coronavirus, is driven by the elite consensus that ordinary people cannot be trusted with so much freedom.

"Limited authoritarianism" is the best phrase for what the elite have in mind. They have decided that a growing list of topics are simply off the table. Consensus has been reached, and no further input from voters will be permitted on those topics.

This is a natural consequence of the progressive ideology, which is inherently authoritarian, although it peddles itself in the early stage with lots of jibber-jabber freedom and liberty. Progressives by definition believe that the growth of the State can never be reversed.

Every time the State grows - taking more money from the private sector, issuing regulations, criminalizing activities that used to be free - it is declaring that the people can no longer be trusted to make certain decisions. This is the inescapable logic of statism.

You can't be trusted to spend that dollar wisely, so the State will take it from you. You can't be trusted to make those decisions about your health care, so the State will make them for you. You can't be trusted to sell your own labor, so the State will control employment.

The best way to get people to go along with this constant dwindling of their liberty is to make them distrust and fear each other. That way, the State can posture as their loving defenders, keeping them safe from the predations of other free people.

As we move into the era of limited authoritarianism, the previous steady erosion of liberties and theft of money is no longer disguised with gentle maternal language. Now it's time to firmly establish a hard core of power that voters must obey, and can never dream of controlling.

The next steps toward authoritarianism simply can't be disguised as loving, maternal government taking good care of its child-citizens. It requires a level of obedience - the most important resource in a statist system - that simply cannot abide resistance, or even dissent.

There will be too many designated losers in the next step, too many reductions in the quality of life for everyone, and the people have to stop daydreaming about controlling the elite with their votes. They must accept the limits of "democracy."

The emerging consensus among the global elite is that "democracy" can only be saved by sharply limiting it. Our mighty global institutions and their accords cannot be subjected to the will of selfish, short-sighted, foolish, voters with nationalistic inclinations.

Many ideological vehicles have been driven toward this destination, most obviously climate change, which explicitly asserts that people cannot be free to make decisions - or cast votes - that would "harm the Earth."

And then the pandemic arrived, and every gas pedal on those ideological vehicles was slammed down to the metal. The global elite now believes, almost universally, that only authoritarian governments can deal with such a massive crisis. Disobedience and dissent are dangerous!

That pandemic mindset will not be allowed to dissipate. It's too politically useful. We will soon hear of many other "crises" that are just as bad as Covid-19 and demand the same sort of "unified" response, meaning no dissent or dissidence can be allowed. This has already begun.

As statism shades into authoritarianism, the ruling elite will say they're still acting in the public interest, using their superior intelligence and wisdom to make the dwindling field of individual liberty more secure. The playground of democracy grows smaller, but safer.

The difference is that it will be made increasingly clear that voters no longer have a say about these important topics. Even the polite fiction of restraining power with your votes will be abandoned. There will be no pretense that the authoritarian core serves at your pleasure.

The most obvious manifestation of this, now well under way, is the crackdown on dissent. Once you lose the right to vote against power, it follows that you should no longer be allowed to disagree with it. Such disagreement is pointlessly dangerous and counterproductive.

Pointless dissent against the authoritarian core serves only to dilute that precious resource of obedience. You can't change anything - you're not allowed to vote against the great consensus of the ruling class - so your dissent is just aimless vandalism.

The Western world generally has constitutional restrictions on how vigorously the State can suppress dissent, or how much behavior it can compel, because it is still required to pretend the people get to vote on everything and are supreme over their government.

"Limited authoritarianism" gets around this by using corporate power and political activists as instruments of control and obedience. The State has powerful partners in the private sector who will enforce decrees that could not be issued lawfully.

The authoritarian core is almost fully formed now, its hard shell forged during the pandemic. Free people have been taught that disobedience and free speech are dangerous. There are fewer decrees you can argue against, and increasingly, fewer

you can vote against.

Remember, always: Those who tell you that only a bigger, richer, less democratic State can deliver peace, health, and justice are saying that YOU cannot be trusted to find those things. After Covid-19, after the 2020 election, you will be trusted with much less. /end