

History Has Clearly Spoken: The Vision of Mamdani for NYC and America Will Fail

The election of Zohran Mamdani as the Democrat nominee for mayor of New York City, has set off a firestorm of controversy. Although he calls himself a “Social Democrat,” his statements carry a ring of Marxism. For example, he has called for eliminating private property ownership, and in its place, implementing government-run housing for everyone. He has also called for a government-run chain of grocery stores. These and other statements have led to many, including Donald Trump, to warn that he is a communist.

Winston Churchill said, “Those who do not learned from history are doomed to repeat it.” If he is to push forward with his proposals, Mamdani and his supporters will have to ignore the long history of socialism’s failures. In fact, everywhere socialism/communism has been tried, it has utterly failed, including right here on American soil.

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Before the old Soviet Union, Cuba, and Venezuela, the Pilgrims, who established Plymouth Colony in New England in the fall of 1620, at first attempted a socialist/communist style of living. They disbanded it, however, when it became obvious that their community could not survive with such a system.

Socialism Forced on Them

The Pilgrim’s journey to America was funded by a group of venture capitalists who provided the ship and supplies for

their journey to the New World. In return, the Pilgrims agreed to live communally with no private property until the debt was paid. Everyone would receive the same compensation for their work, with everything above their basic necessities going into a common fund to be used to pay their creditors.

In other words, there was no inequality. Income produced by farming, fishing, and fur trading would be spread around and evenly divided among members of the community. There was only one economic class of people in this system.

William Bradford, who served as governor of Plymouth for many years, told of the challenges of this socialist system and how it almost destroyed their community (Hyatt, 1726: The Year that Defined America, 23-26). Drawn from Bradford's account, here are four important lessons that Mamdani would do well to learn.

Lesson #1: Socialism Destroys Initiative and Innovation

Under this socialist system, everyone received the same compensation for their work. No matter how hard or how little they worked, all received the same income. With no reward tied to their labor, initiative was destroyed, and everyone put forth their least effort.

Why work and dream when you are trapped in a socialist system that mandates equality of outcome for everyone? This socialist system destroyed initiative, innovation, and entrepreneurship, and almost destroyed the Pilgrim community.

Lesson #2: Socialism Fosters Irresponsibility

Young men, Bradford said, resented getting paid the same as

older men when they did so much more of the work. As a result, they tended to slouch and slack since they knew they would receive the same no matter how hard they worked.

Knowing they would receive the same no matter how hard or how little they worked, the women often refused go to the fields to work, complaining of sickness and headaches. To have compelled them to go, Bradford said, would have been considered tyranny and oppression.

With no individual reward tied to their labor, everyone gave their least effort. Irresponsibility became obvious throughout the community, and many became gripped with a sense of hopelessness.



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Lesson #3: Socialism Extinguishes Hope and Generates Strife

This socialist system led to a widespread sense of hopelessness. With everyone locked into a closed economic system, there was nothing individuals or families could do to improve their personal lot. Feeling caught in a trap, bickering and strife began to emerge.

The older men, Bradford said, felt they deserved more honor and recompense because of their age and resented getting paid the same as the youngsters in their midst. The young men, on the other hand, resented getting paid the same as the older men when they often did more of the work.

This sense of hopelessness and the ensuing strife drained energy and discouraged innovative thinking and led to very serious complications for the community.

Lesson #4: Socialism is Incompatible with Human Nature

Bradford believed that socialism did not work because it runs counter to human nature as created by God. In Scripture, God rewards individuals for their labor and good works. Capitalism works because it is compatible with the reality of human nature and the world in which we live.

I will never forget visiting eastern Europe shortly after the fall of the Soviet Empire. I was struck by the grey, drab environment. Even the buildings seemed so plain, flat and lackluster. Communism had obviously extinguished the fires of creativity and innovation.

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To Survive, They Had to Change

When it became obvious that lack and perhaps starvation would be their lot, Bradford and the leaders of the colony decided to make a change. After much prayer and discussion, they dispensed with that part of the agreement with their creditors that required them to live communally until their debt was paid. In its place, they implemented a free entrepreneurial system that included private ownership of property (Hyatt, 1726: The Year that Defined America, 23-26).

They Experience the Blessing of Free Enterprise

According to Bradford, they divided the land around them, allotting to each family a certain portion that would be theirs to work and use for their own needs. Bradford said

there was an immediate change. The young men began to work much harder because they now knew they would eat the fruit of their own labors.

There were no more complaints from the older men for the same reason. And now the women were seen going into the fields to work, taking the children with them, because they knew they and their family would personally benefit.

Instead of lacking food, each family now grew more food than they needed, and they began to trade with one another for furnishings, clothes and other goods. They also had enough excess to trade with the Natives for furs and other items. In short, the colony began to prosper when they got rid of their socialist form of government and implemented a free, entrepreneurial system. Of their experience with socialism, Bradford wrote:

This community [socialism] was found to breed much confusion and discontent and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort . . . and showed the vanity of that conceit of Plato's, and applauded by some of later times, that the taking away of property and bringing in community into a commonwealth would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser than God (Hyatt, 1726: The Year that Defined America, 23-26).

Compassionate Capitalism

Once they embraced a free entrepreneurial system, the Pilgrims had no poor in their midst because they were both an innovative and a compassionate people. As Christians of the Reformation, they sought to live out the words of Jesus to “love your neighbor as yourself” and they generously assisted those who suffered loss through sickness or death.

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Theirs was a voluntary charity rooted in the teachings of Jesus, not something imposed by a centralized, authoritarian government. Capitalism, undergirded by a vibrant Christianity, is what made America the most powerful and prosperous nation in human history and is the key to her future prosperity.

The lessons from history are clear about socialism. They serve as a flashing red light warning anyone moving in that direction to STOP now! If, therefore, we desire the best for the greatest number of people, then we must reject Mamdani's vision of a government-mandated socialist system for New York City and America.

Dr. Eddie L. Hyatt is a historian, Bible teacher, and revivalist. This article is derived from his books, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity* (Charisma House) and *1726: The Year that Defined America*, both available from Amazon and his website at .