

WHITE PRIVILEGE

By Jim Wagner

Imagine all the people living for today! Oh, you may say I'm a dreamer. But I'm not the only one.

A dreamer? No, John Lennon! While the whole world recognizes you as a musical savant, I am sorry to say that in practical terms as well as in the more esoteric socio-economic sense, you were not a dreamer. You were a stumbling idiot. Try it! Try living only for today! People actually committed (if one could rationally employ that term) to "living for today" would do very few things: Inebriate, satiate, regurgitate, recreate, copulate, vegetate. Have I missed any? They wouldn't even procreate. If truly living for today, who would be at the trouble or expense of children? Children are quintessentially for tomorrow. They are, as Ronald Reagan so eloquently put it, "an alimentary canal with a happy appetite at one end and no responsibility at the other." But isn't that the point of living for today? No responsibility? There are, of course, millions of people right now doing exactly that. And what do we call them? That's right, children.

If "all the people" were truly living for today, what would we have as a society? Businesses to supply our daily bread? I doubt it! There are only two businesses I know of that provide any return at all in a single day. Drug dealing is one of them. I'll bet you can think of the other. Roads? There might

be a trail to the nearest brothel, but as been said many times, the road to Rome wasn't built in a day. Hospitals? We build hospitals in anticipation of our eventual infirmity. People who need hospitals today are singularly incapable of building them. Schools? Of course not! Assuming that a few abhorrent conceptions might slip past the pleasure police, it would still be a crime to provide for their future. People living for today, if they were to be at all consistent with that base aspiration, would take no measures at all to provide for their own futures or anyone else's.

Conversely, there are people who have the wisdom and foresight to provide not only for their own futures but also for the future safety and comfort of those other fortunate souls for whom they have taken responsibility. Such people live explicitly "not for today." They sacrifice today for a better tomorrow. When a farmer puts his crop in the field, he knows he will not taste the harvest for many months. When a working mother puts her savings in a small business, she does not expect to see any return at all for a considerable time. When a student signs up for medical school he knows that he will work exceedingly hard while living meagerly for many years before he sees his name on a door.

Likewise, when a soldier gives his life on a field of battle he trades his own future for that of his people. We used to honor

that. For all responsible living there is a common process toward a common end. We call the common process sacrifice. As Merriam Webster puts it, sacrifice is "the surrender of something for the sake of something else." We sacrifice our pleasure, luxury and comfort today for the prosperity and wellbeing of ourselves and our children tomorrow. That used to be extolled as "delay of gratification." Thoughtful people everywhere in the world still make that sacrifice because they understand that in the long run it will be worth it. If not for themselves, they do it for those they love. Some work under unspeakable conditions. Some endure humiliating abuse. Some put their children in makeshift boats and set them adrift, hoping that like Moses they will one day find a promised land. They do these things for love. Love is sacrifice. We too often err in failing to recognize that. But what do we call the common objective or end toward which all such sacrifice is directed? In a word, privilege. Privilege is the name of that "better life" responsible people seek. It is the life advantage we gain by foregoing the joys and pleasures attendant upon what John Lennon so poetically described as "living for today." It is the transmissible benefit we acquire by living for tomorrow. Privilege is the farmer's full barn, the working mother's satisfaction that she is in control of her own destiny, the young student's eventual

shingle proudly displayed on an office door. People who do not recognize the worthiness of passing along such privilege to the next generation are not dreamers. They are monsters! We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States....

Those are our founders' words. Do they sound like the promise of people "living for today?" Today does not last very long, and no one lives forever. Our founders established a nation to secure blessings "to themselves and their posterity." That is, to transmit the advantages they earned by their own sacrifices to those who would come after them. To afford a good life, in other words, to their children. To us! And they did not just talk about these things. They fought and died for them. They built a nation and endowed us with citizenship in it. But what is citizenship?

Again in a word, citizenship is privilege. Or it should be. Citizenship is a status that endows upon a generation the right to the fruits of its ancestors' labor, an inheritance that conveys to those now living the benefits of their parents' sacrifice. But citizenship, when it is beneficial, also invests the living with certain obligations. The first among these is gratitude, which can best be expressed through loyalty. The second obligation is like the first, a sacred duty to "pay it

forward" to those for whose existence we are responsible. To renounce our birthright, to repudiate those blessings now disdained as privilege, is treason. And unlike privilege itself, that is something very much to be ashamed of.

Sadly, the citizenship of many nations, even today, is a curse. Instead of benefits for their people such nations insure slavish living conditions, endless travail, hopeless longings, and despair for the future of their children. (I am thinking of Cuba, Venezuela, North Korea, all socialist nations that by definition intentionally prevent their people from living for and sacrificing for the future—for "their posterity." Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany, Communist China, socialist nations also, were responsible for the death, in round numbers, of one hundred million people. Those who lived under those regimes fared little better.) Such citizenship incurs no duties, except when possible to resist.

"From each according to his means to each according to his need." That is the theory of socialism as expressed by Karl Marx. Sounds noble, right? But here's the problem. Under such a system the harder you work, and the more you sacrifice, the less your children will "need." You will have "means," but no method of conveying that means to your children. Instead, you will be forced to convey it to the children of others who have need precisely because they themselves were not willing to work and sacrifice as lovingly as you did. And who will decide who has the prevailing need. Government bureaucrats will decide, of course, just as they do now! Whose children do you imagine they will favor? Will it be yours or their own? Under such a system most people actually do "live for today." What else is there!

Through all of history some nations and peoples have been better than others at creating a desirable citizenship and transmitting that privilege to their heirs. Though the Roman Empire is today regarded as tyrannous, in its time and considering the alternatives, its citizenship was highly prized. In recent centuries it has been the European peoples who, through good government, industry, innovation, and sacrifice have been able to convey the greatest blessings to their posterity. Two things most markedly distinguish those nations. The first is a tradition of liberty based on the recognition of the inherent dignity of man. Their peoples have, for a very long time, been free to enjoy and pass on the fruits of their own labor. The second is that by an accident of history those peoples happen to be white. And so the advantages they have acquired and passed on are disparagingly referred to by the covetous and the malcontent as "White Privilege."

It will be objected by those whose forebears did not transmit to them very much of either liberty or prosperity that white people acquired their privilege unfairly through wars, enslavement, "exploitation," and other forms of "oppression." Had these benighted people the "privilege" of a better education, or even a casual grasp of history, they would understand that injustice toward other peoples has been endemic to humanity and is not the exclusive province of any single race. Wars? The greater part of Black Africa today is embroiled in vicious tribal warfare. Enslavement? Islam took far more slaves out of Africa than Europeans ever did, and yet today black Americans are giving their children Muslim names. Perhaps more to the point, it was white people who put an end to worldwide slavery. Exploitation? The Japanese systematically gang raped 100,000 Korean "comfort girls" throughout World War II, and scarcely any of those girls survived. Oppression? The Ottoman Turks drove 1.5 million Christian Armenians into the Syrian Desert where those not crucified along the way were left to die. Their crime? They cried out for freedom.

If white Americans have so badly mismanaged their privilege, then why are there now people from one hundred and sixty eight different nations—almost exclusively people of color—lined up at our southern border trying to get in? Why is the United States the most diverse nation on earth? It strikes me as noteworthy that those among us so bitterly complaining about "white privilege" are free at any moment to leave. And for that matter, the vast majority of them came here voluntarily. What nation of color can a white person go to, collect benefits of every imaginable sort, and then complain about the injustice of it all?

White privilege is not a thing to renounce or be ashamed of. It is a testimony to the industry and providence of our ancestors. It is a testament to the fidelity of fathers and mothers willing to sacrifice because they loved, of patriots willing to serve and of soldiers willing to die. It is a thing to be treasured, to be carefully husbanded, and to be passed on as best we can. And yes, it is a thing to be shared, within reason, according to our means, and using our own best judgment. But what perverse and unnatural parent would not want to provide to his children the benefits of his own efforts and achievements? Privileges earned by those who bore us are ours, white or otherwise, and how we choose to share them is for us to decide. Because—and we would do well to recall this more often—if we squander our hard earned privileges we forfeit a great and generous civilization. And no one, white or otherwise, will benefit from that.



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SHOTS FIRED IN OSHAWA

Police are investigating after shots were fired at a residence in Oshawa on Wednesday morning.

On Wednesday, July 28, 2021, at approximately 2:15 a.m., members from Central East Division were dispatched to the area of Wayne Avenue and Somerville Street for reports of the sound of gunshots. Officers attended and located casings behind a home. No injuries were reported.

A vehicle was observed leaving the area shortly after the time of the shooting. There are no further descriptors at this time.

Anyone with home security or dash-cam video at the above location, or anyone with new information about this incident is asked to contact D/Cst. Shaw of the Central East Division Criminal Investigations Bureau at 1-888-579-1520 ext. 2712.