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Explaining (and Countering) the Growing Allure of Authoritarianism

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Freedom truly is only ever one generation away from extinction. Why?

Because when it comes to politics, we're dealing with human nature. And human nature is a complex, often contradictory thing. Just as it is human nature to seek freedom, it is likewise in our nature to follow strong leaders — even if that leads to the dissolution of our freedoms.

We may not like to admit that truth, but denying the realities of human nature only leads to suffering and devastation; how can we build a successful society unless we're honest about the main factor underpinning a society — the human element?

Indeed, the truth that we, as humans, so often prefer vice and servitude to virtue and liberty is one that has been recognized by the wisest throughout history. James Madison famously wrote, "If men were angels, no government would be necessary," and acknowledged that men are *not* angels and, therefore, government must be framed accordingly.

And the Bible is filled with verses expounding the truth that man's state is a fallen one. As we read in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, "There is none righteous, no, not one." If men were angels — always choosing good over evil — then there would be no need for repentance and the saving power of Christ.

This brings us back to an important question confronting Americans today: Why is there a growing affinity for dictatorship? Why are more and more Americans staring admirably at foreign strongmen and pining for an autocrat here at home?

For there is a certain segment of the hard right, the dissident right, the non-establishment right, that is openly calling for authoritarianism in the United States. The Gen Z-led "America First" movement, of which young streamer Nick Fuentes is the most visible representative, is one of these factions that is vocal about its desire for an American dictator in the vein of Russia's Vladimir Putin.

There is even one segment of this wing of the right that takes the zeal for a strong leader one step further by supporting the creation of a monarchy.

The explanation for this growing phenomenon is, in part, circumstantial. We live in an age of immense stagnation in which so-called Republican and conservative politicians rarely gain ground against the Left — leading to impatience among right-wingers and the desire that someone strong will come in, say "to hell with the intricacies of the system," and just ram the conservative agenda through.

Moreover, many of these right-wingers correctly identify democracy as problematic — just as the Founding Fathers did. Often young, these right-wing activists see that "democracy" is an instrument of the Left as are feminism, transgenderism, and other evils. But what they then do is extend their rightful

contempt for democracy to anything that smacks of democracy — including republicanism.

Yet there is another explanation for dictatorialism's growing appeal, one that goes deeper than the circumstantial factors: Mankind's innate affinity for strong leaders.

We can see this phenomenon play out in the Bible in a way that closely echoes the demands for autocracy by many on the right today.

During the ministry of the prophet Samuel, the nation of Israel was beset with violence, lawlessness, chaos, military invasions by enemy nations, and widespread corruption in the government. In response to this, as narrated in 1 Samuel in the Old Testament, the people of Israel pleaded with Samuel to give them a King.

Though Samuel was reluctant to do so, God told him to grant their wish — warning them that in the future, Israel would suffer under the oppression and corruption that inevitably arise from the rule of a monarch.

Again, "following the leader" is a component of the human social dynamic that is deeply drilled into our psyche. There are many reasons for this.

From the theological perspective, human beings innately seek the fathership and lordship of God; but because men are weak and are led more by their eyes than by the Spirit, they idolatrously put their faith in strong men who stand in the place of God instead of in God himself. God expressed this principle to Samuel when He told the prophet that, by demanding a king, the children of Israel "have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."

From the anthropological aspect, primitive men lived in greater coordination, enjoyed greater safety from wild animals or other tribes, and avoided infighting among themselves when they rallied around the commands of a leader, who was considered the ablest among them. This tendency to collectively cede to the leadership of the strongest or most intelligent remains ingrained in us.

Ultimately, what is the answer to the growing segment of right-wingers who want to see America become a dictatorship?

The answer is to teach and restore real constitutional republicanism and federalism. A republic is *not* a democracy. Unlike a democracy, which is based on the false premise that the majority always chooses what's right, a republic takes into account true human nature — including the truth that men are inclined to autocratic or monarchical forms of government.

This is why a republic actually incorporates elements of monarchy, as well as elements of aristocracy and democracy.

Furthermore, practicing federalism as the Framers intended — not the unconstitutional, centralized, D.C.-driven overreach of federal power we now have — would alleviate people's dissatisfaction with the inefficiencies of Washington. After all, the federal government is supposed to do little — under the Constitution, the states are supposed to be the main drivers of government policy and innovation.

By getting back to republicanism and federalism as the Founders intended, we can cleanse our nation of the evils of democracy while also preserving liberty.

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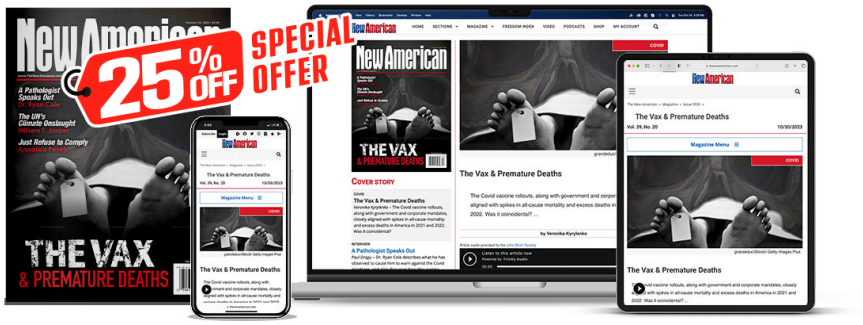

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