

THE GORDIAN KNOT

by Steve McCann

This treatise explores how the government uses legislation and law enforcement to repress and exploit the poor (predominately people of color). It also touches on, though lightly, how the dividing lines between races are exaggerated to the benefit of the government. What I excluded from this piece, because of its tendency to confuse and overwhelm the reader, is the nefarious background that ultimately gave birth to our present situation. Much of this touches very close to home for me, having grown up in the ghettos of Dallas' inner city.

In Solidarity,

Steve

*Steven McCann 2096064
Eastham State Plantation
2665 Prison Road 1
Lovelady, TX 75851*

Mongoose Distro

Should we assume a charitable posture and disavow malevolent motives on the part of the prison administration – a charitable posture indeed – we must assume that the aggressive and abusive behavior of many prison guards is the product of ignorance rather than training. If this is the case, these same individuals would likely also be inclined to repeatedly poke a caged animal with a stick for amusement, for this is the insinuation about prisoners; they are animals; that is why they are in cages.

We hear a lot, these days, about disinformation and misinformation, and as disingenuous as this insinuation about prisoners is, it is the epitome of disinformation, misinformation, propaganda or whatever other name is put to it. It is a fanciful mix of truth, hyperbole and lies. While some few prisoners may have declined themselves to this dictum, they are but a rare few. Most are simply products of their environment, an environment that, to a large extent, our government created. And this is where our story begins.

In 1516, a highly respected gentleman in English society, Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor (the equivalent of the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court), said, “Men are not born thieves; society creates thieves of them and then punishes them for what they become.” Replace the word 'thieves' with 'criminals' and it could ingenuously be proclaimed that at no time in the history of man has this aphorism been more true than it is at present in the United States.

Our government, through legislation carefully designed to grow the police state, has turned the living environments of the nation's poorest citizens into veritable war zones filled with violence and danger, and, in so doing, has made criminals of many who may not have been so otherwise. Then, to further exacerbate this situation, the local police and other law enforcement agencies incline themselves to target these poor neighborhoods for enforcement activities, further enticing and inciting violence. There is nothing like the wisdom of pouring gasoline on an already raging fire. Then, using the press as its brush, the government paints a specious picture of reality that, although false, readily consumed

Racism does exist in our society, and it is perpetuated from all races, not just whites and blacks. And some do use their positions to act out their racial prejudices; we have seen this clearly. But racial antipathy is a learned behavior; it is taught as an ideology and promoted throughout our society as a means to keep us divided as a people, to weaken our voice, and to weaken our ability to put up resistance. Racism does exist in our society, but our society is not fundamentally racist; this is a grand illusion. I cannot, however, say the same about our government, for much of the genuine racism that exists in our society is systemic; that is, it exists within governmental policy. It is then projected onto society by government actors and their actions.

makes for an environment that few would feel safe in. Naturally, people will do whatever they believe is necessary to secure their safety. In America's ghettos, oftentimes, this means carrying and potentially using weapons. Do you see a criminal here? Being surrounded by drugs, and people buying and selling drugs, using and/or transporting them, it is only natural that the subject, often a child, would end up, sooner or later, doing the same. Do you see a criminal here? Can you imagine the inevitable encounters with police and other law enforcement agencies, especially since, as we have already established, impoverished neighborhoods are targeted for onerous enforcement. And this brings us back to our specious painting of reality.

To the casual viewer of the reported news (by this I mean anyone who is viewing but is not intent on analyzing it to learn the untold story that lies within) it would appear that people of color are conspicuously more criminal, and more violent, than the white majority, and prison population data appears to support this notion. But one must wonder if this is an accurate depiction of reality. Accurate or not, this view has been accepted and adopted by many, and it foments racial hostilities and impresses upon the viewer that our society, as a whole, is fundamentally racist, another false representation of reality.

Travel with me through Alice's looking glass, and try this exercise:

Gather all of the crime reporting at your disposal. Separate them into two groups using poverty as the filter. Move all of the material that involves impoverished neighborhoods, or a resident or visitor thereof, to one side. Move all that remains to the other. Closely examine first one group and then the other. Regardless of where in the U.S. you live you will likely find that the poverty group 1) is larger than the other, 2) involves more violence (both from private citizens and from police actors), 3) involves more people of color (leaving the impression that people of color are being targeted rather than the actual target of poverty), and 4) more often involves drugs, to one degree or another. To the casual viewer this group appears heavy laden with racial overtones; the other group suggests no such overtones.

and digested by the populous, most without question or concern for its verity.

The government's actions here constitutes a political Gordian knot which is not all that different from its physical counterpart in history. This knot of deceit is near to, if not, impossible to disentangle enough to be understood, and is no easier to coherently present once one has finally apprehended it. Alexander the Great, rather than untying, cut King Gordia's knot. Bold though I might be, I would say this knot is the work of true criminal genius.

There is much background information that could be connected to our present situation, but I will not present it here, as doing so would introduce a myriad of confusing detail and would serve to strengthen rather than weaken the knot before us. Let us begin our journey, then, by addressing in more detail, though somewhat reversing the order of the information which I have presented thus far.

What is the essence of this specious picture the government has painted to dupe the public, and why might they desire to do so? How might they accomplish such a thing? The government's painted picture promotes to the public the idea that much of the whole of American society is racist. This is a government taken from Machiavelli's 1513 treatise "The Prince": Divide et impera (Divide and rule). Simply stated, it is easier to rule a divided people than a people united. A divided people can offer little resistance to tyranny. The mechanics of this will become more clear as we progress through the following paragraphs.

Where does the press fit into this scheme? The press reports to the people; this is their business. The public loves stories, especially sensational stories; the more sensational the stories are the better the public's reception of them, and crime reporting is nothing if not sensational. This makes the press the perfect paintbrush for the government's artistry, the perfect vehicle for misinformation distribution. And since it appears to be the press painting the picture, it is they who, in the end, will be held culpable. The government slyly

maintains deniability throughout. There is the possibility that the press is willfully complicit in this deception, but I would prefer to think they are not. This is a judgment, however, that each citizen must themselves consider.

Why do law enforcement agencies target the impoverished neighborhoods for heavy-handed enforcement activities? These neighborhoods (and their residents and visitors) are targeted because it is axiomatic that organized crime is king amongst the poor. It is known far and wide that these areas are infested with drugs, weapons, violence and more, making their constituency and their patrons and guests easy marks. If we have not done so already, here is where we should begin to ask a number of questions, beginning, with, "Why?"

Why are our impoverished neighborhoods infested with drugs and gangs and weapons and violence? Because these are the bedfellows of organized crime, and these areas serve as the throne room. Why is organized crime so regental in poverty, but so pauperous amongst the affluent; why the stark juxtaposition? These areas are heavily populated by society's downtrodden, the disenfranchised, the outcasts, many of whom have been shunned even from birth; they have the least to lose and the most to gain from becoming criminally involved. Here, however, we need to go further and consider not only who is involved, but also what it is that is attracting organized crime. And here is Pandora's Box, just waiting to be opened.

As ineffectual at curbing alcohol use and abuse as vice laws were during Prohibition, so are they at curbing drug use and abuse today. The primary difference being that the lawmakers were oblivious as to the effects such would have, in 1920 when Prohibition was enacted. With Prohibition nearly four decades behind them, however, they were fully aware of the effects when, in 1971, then President Richard Nixon declared the now infamous "War on Drugs". Likewise, the effects of such legislation were well understood in the 1980s, as we entered the "Tough on Crime" era, in the 1990s when the Stupid on Sentencing period was inaugurated, and the effects are no less understood today as our

lawmakers continue to perpetuate this evil.

The government has been phenomenally successful in convincing the public that drug laws make society safer. This is a lie! Drug laws make society less safe, not more. The truth is this: prohibitive drug laws cost society legitimate business opportunities; they cost society legitimate jobs; they cost the government legitimate tax revenue, and they do not stop, prevent or even slow drug abuse. No, quite the opposite is in fact true: prohibitive drug laws exacerbate drug abuse. But the enactment of prohibitive drug laws spawn something far worse: prohibitive drug laws open the door to organized crime, and with it comes gangs, weapons, and increased violence. Prohibitive drug laws hand over to organized crime a business worth hundreds of billions of U.S. Dollars annually, and destroys the lives innumerable individuals, children, as well as adults.

Why would the government do such a thing? From the government's perspective there is much more to be gained – in terms of money and control – from drugs being illegal than from them being legal. While there are private sector jobs lost by making drugs illegal, there are many more jobs created, mostly in the criminal justice field: judges, lawyers, prosecutors, police, jailors, prison staff, court employees, etc., etc. While there are tax revenues lost in this endeavor, several other revenue streams are created: fines, fees, court costs, property seizures (i.e. civil asset forfeiture), federal grant allocations to support state and municipal level criminal justice activities, etc., etc. Prohibitive drug laws exemplify using law and law enforcement as economic development tools, creating literally millions of U.S. jobs, but they also exemplify something far more sinister: they are tools to grow the government, to establish and grow the police state, and to solidify government control over an ever growing populous. This should scare the hell out of every citizen, without exception.

How does this make men, and women, and even children, criminal? The business of recreational drugs being in the hands of organized crime, and organized crime operating (with their accoutrement of gangs, weapons and violence) primarily within the geographical boundaries of poverty