

Is The Great Illusion In Ruins?



by Victor Davis Hanson

In 2021, Joe Biden was elected after a bitterly fought campaign that deposed the incumbent Donald Trump. Democrats eventually captured, for a time, both the House and Senate, ensuring the most left-wing government in modern American history.

Americans were then set to witness a great experiment. For the first time in their lives, a truly radical socialist program would supposedly fundamentally transform the way America dealt with the border, immigration, the economy, race relations, foreign policy, energy, law enforcement, crime, education, and social questions such as religion, gender, abortion, and schooling.

In a sense, we were all to be lab rats of sorts, to be experimented on by the radical left and their various critical theories. Now in the last year of the Biden term, we can see the results of that experiment—and the unfortunate disasters that followed.

But first, how was such a radical move to the left even possible in a center-right America?

The Democratic nominee, Biden, had earlier united the left, but only through a Faustian deal. The handlers of a nearly non compos mentis Biden had ushered all his 2020 primary rivals out of the primary races in unison.

But in exchange for their exits that ensured Biden the nomination, the left took over his general campaign—in which

Biden was virtually relegated to his basement—and then set his agenda.

Who was running things?

The mysterious architects of White House ideology included, inter alia, the omnipresent, now-Washington-DC-dwelling Obamas, the old socialist gadfly Bernie Sanders, the fossilized tribunes of the black and Latino congressional caucuses, the DEI firebrand Squad, and the neo-socialist scold Elizabeth Warren.

As a result, for one of the few times in American history, the hard left now had undreamt of power. And it was enhanced by a chorus in our compliant media, academia, corporations, the administrative state, foundations, entertainment, and popular culture.

So we were all to embark on a great adventure led by the foot soldiers of DEI, the Chicken-Little green extremists, the critical race and critical legal theory crowd, the modern monetary theorists, the woke commissars, the transgendered zealots, Antifa, BLM, the hate-Israel lobby, and the Trump Derangement Syndrome media sorts.

Ostensibly, America was to be reset financially, economically, socially, culturally, militarily, and politically. The nation would be arbitrarily divided into oppressors and oppressed—with one caveat: hyper-rich, left-wing white architects had to be exempt from the damage inflicted on those they targeted. Thus, like Orwellian pigs who walked on their two hind legs, they were free to fly their private jets, get their kids into racially quota-bound Ivy League schools, burn lots of fossil fuels to heat and cool their massive homes, and be protected by their walls, security details, and zip codes from the crime wave they would soon unleash on others.

Now, as we enter the fourth year of the great experiment, America is \$35 trillion in debt, borrowing \$1 trillion every

100 days. Home mortgages are at 7 percent. Key prices for food, insurance, rent, and fuels are 30-40 percent higher than when Biden entered office.

The nation has been humiliated and emasculated abroad. Racial relations are the worst in a half-century. The military is in virtual receivership. Biden is polling about 40 percent approval and is behind in key swing states in most of the 2024 polls.

As a result, the Biden administration is furiously trying to find a way to release more of its hated oil and natural gas on the world market. It stopped refilling the strategic petroleum reserve that it had earlier drained to lower gas prices before the 2022 midterms.

So it will quietly pump more oil and gas, appease Iran in fear of a war in the oil-producing Middle East, plead with the once "pariah" Saudis, and order the Ukrainians not to hit Russian oil installations—all to get more oil produced to lower November 2024 gas prices.

It will head nod to eliminating fossil fuels, mandating EVs, banning natural gas stoves, and subsidizing more inefficient wind and solar farms. But it now realizes that its green agenda on its watch will wreck the United States economy and throw the left out of power. So it pivots to an old-fashioned "Drill, World, Drill" mantra—at least until the election is over.

Biden fulfilled his agenda of getting 10 million illegal aliens into the United States by destroying the southern border. The point was to swarm America with poor, unaudited migrants, all in need of massive federal and state assistance, all supposedly now loyal to their entitlement benefactors. Who could stop them from voting as repayment to their enablers in the new age of 70 percent mail-in ballots, same-day registration, inadequate authentication and audit of

ballots, third-party vote harvesting, ballot curing, and Zuckbucks pouring into key precincts to absorb the work of the registrars?

Most of the illegals went to Texas and Florida, key swing states that the left still thinks it can flip to blue status. Long term, the 10 million will recalibrate congressional districts to favor neo-socialist agendas. Short-term, millions of new arrivals unlawfully may still try to vote in 2024.

Any who object to or publicize this agenda will be dammed with boilerplate smears of “election deniers,” “voter suppressions,” “racists,” and “xenophobes,” Yet all that said, the administration is now desperately trying to distance itself from its greatest “new Democratic Majority” border success, given that public opinion abhors what Biden had done at the border to the country at large.

So it floated a phony “bipartisan border security” bill in hopes of luring naïve Republicans to support a stealth de facto amnesty agenda that would have still allowed 5,000 illegals in a day rather than the now customary 10-15,000. The hope was that when it failed (and the left knew it would), to blame Republicans for what the left had wrought.

Biden knows destroying the border will ruin America for generations to come, costing billions of dollars in subsidies and legal and policing costs to integrate the massive influx. So until the election, it is thrashing about, claiming that it never did such a thing at all. Its duplicity is again proof that the open borders agenda was hated by the public, a human catastrophe, and not sustainable before an impending election.

Biden’s foreign policy is also in ruins. Biden destroyed deterrence in an effort to beg, appease, and buy off America’s enemies to behave and not cause an election-losing war. But the more it fled from Afghanistan in humiliation, the more it appeased Russia as it massed on Ukraine’s border, the more it

snored as a Chinese spy balloon traversed the United States, the more it put early holds on aid to Ukraine, the more it assured Putin a “minor” offensive into Ukraine would not elicit a US response, so all the more it convinced Putin that he could take Ukraine without an American pushback, the Chinese to threaten Taiwan, and Hamas to prepare for massacring Jews.

So here we are in Ukraine with nearly 800,000 dead, wounded, and missing Ukrainians and Russians. The administration has no clue how to stop the Verdun that its appeasement birthed. The entire therapeutic approach to foreign policy lies in ruins.

Ditto the Middle East. National security advisor Jack Sullivan’s “quiet” portfolio that he inherited from the Trump administration simply blew up. Biden is now scrambling to stop the Israeli response to the encircled Hamas remnants, trapped in their last redoubt in Rafah.

Biden is now replaying the 1950s CIA-stereotype of the “Ugly American,” as he does his best to overthrow the Netanyahu government, and to allow the trapped Hamas remnants to escape and claim they defeated the Zionist entity, despite butchering more Jews in a single day than any time since the Holocaust. No matter: the Biden administration is stealthily communicating with the Israeli opposition concerning the best joint strategies to force Netanyahu out. Mass protests in the streets of Tel Aviv attest to the success of destabilizing the current Israeli government.

Team Biden whispers to the media about slow-walking or stopping key arms shipments, abdicating America’s once protective role in the UN, or encouraging the “international community” to go after Netanyahu for “war crimes” for accidentally hitting a civilian team in Gaza. (By such logic, are Biden and Gen. Mark (“righteous strike”) Milley equally culpable for being in charge when a US strike in Kabul blew up 10 innocent civilians by similarly mistaken targeting?).

Meanwhile, Biden keeps courting Muslim-American Michigan voters, who repay his appeasement with cries of “Death to Israel! Death to America!”.

The release of violent criminals and an uptick in property crimes, murders and assault follow a similar script. The Biden administration outsourced criminal justice to defund the police/critical legal theorists at the federal, state, and local levels. No bail arrests led to violent offenders released the next day. Thousands were let go from jails and prisons.

The word spread in the criminal community that in the new Biden years, there were no real consequences, no serious punishments for violent assault or major felonies.

So in 2021-2023, crime exploded. When it reached the point of making life unlivable in the major cities and began to max out, the administration declared “crime is declining”—in the same way that hyper-inflation supposedly did so on the economic front.

After spiking the prices of key food staples, insurance, fuel, and interest rates, such hikes could not go too much higher without destroying outright the American way of life. So as the rate of inflation slowed, Biden bragged about “lowering inflation”—but not the 30-40 percent higher food prices since his own inauguration.

The common denominator for these disasters is the embrace of left-wing “theory.”

Critical legal theory mandates that jurisprudence is a construct. Laws have no morality since they favor the powerful. The latter use “white privilege” arbitrarily to invent crimes and punishments to protect their own power hierarchies. All that nonsense has now led to a pre-civilizational free-for-all in our dirty, dangerous, and dysfunctional cities.

Modern monetary theory—printing lots of money to spread around to those who have none while diminishing the value of money of those who have it—only led to hyperinflation and high interest rates.

When DEI theories were unleashed on the military, potential recruits hesitated, and thousands quit. After Pentagon grandees virtue signaled their fear of “white rage” and “white privilege,” after DEI made promotions and assessments often contingent on race, gender, and sexual orientation, and after the new military was humiliated in Afghanistan, it found it could no longer deter the enemy, recruit sufficient soldiers, or win back the confidence of the American people.

In all these cases, the woke genie left the bottle—and won’t go back in. So it will be hard for the administration to assure a long-suffering public that things are just wonderful, much less to reverse these policies, if indeed they are reversible, before November.

Expect instead nonstop distraction as the left beats the January 6 horse to death, calls for abortion on demand, and waits for its underling judges, prosecutors, and juries to jail or bankrupt Trump and therefore do what balloting cannot.

In other words, the long-awaited Great Fundamental Transformation finally got its moment, crashed, and now has torched the nation—middle-class Americans most of all.

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