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Socialism and the equal sharing of Misery.

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In Puerto Rico, we must change the current view from some that capitalism is wrong for Puerto Rico to those that say so; in my opinion, view **Socialism is the equal sharing of resources, when in fact, it is the equal sharing of hunger, dependency, unemployment, inequality, and Misery as you will read below.**

The more we read or watch news stories in Puerto Rico, the more we have become canvassed with a rant of rich against poor, of those who have succeeded against those who have not. Many preeminent Columnists have a leftist flair or inclination that borders into communism. While, for one, we must respect each person's political views or tendencies, we must wonder to what extent these leftists, including press or media personalities, would venture to life and work in a place that lives their leftist views each an every day, nations like Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Russia, North Korea, China or Belarus.

Cuba

One of the closest examples and a favorite among local leftists is Cuba, and the sheer attractive nature of the nation makes us wonder why they have not moved there.

In Cuba, the average monthly salary equals \$148.73 per month or \$1,784.76 per year, which is more or less what an entry-level per-hour employee makes in a month.

Also, according to the website Reporters Without Borders, the Island nation of Cuba remains the worst country for press freedom in Latin America, with a rank of 173 out of 180, and is outranked by China, Iran, and North Korea. The Government closely monitors all television, radio, and newspapers. The Constitution prohibits privately-owned press. All independent journalists are kept under surveillance to diminish their ability to perform their jobs.

Nicaragua

Another great example is Nicaragua; the average monthly salary equals \$307.81 per month or \$3,693.72 per year, which is more or less what a manager makes monthly.

Since President Daniel Ortega came to power, the independent media has endured censorship, intimidation, and threats. Journalists are constantly stigmatized and subjected to harassment campaigns, arbitrary arrests, and death threats and remain among the worst countries for press freedom in Latin America, with a rank of 160 out of 180. Most of the best journalists have had to flee the country. There are practically no independent media within the country due to a strong wave of repression that the Daniel Ortega regime launched against opposition politicians, civil organizations, and independent media. The media that continues to report on government abuses are digital, with most of its journalists in exile.

Venezuela

The last example is Venezuela; the average monthly salary equals \$53 per month or \$636 per year, which is more or less what many workers make here in a week.

After the arrival of Nicolás Maduro in 2013, government policies against pluralism in the media increased; the official monopoly on the imports of paper and printing supplies resulted in the disappearance of the printed editions of dozens of newspapers, remains one of the worst countries for press freedom in Latin America, with with a rank of 159 out of 180. A blurred policy for granting or revoking concessions for radio broadcasting decimated the sector, with 200 radio stations closing. The Venezuelan Government practices a sustained policy of blocking news content on the Internet, affecting all independent media portals. The leading independent media are *Radio Fe y Alegría*, *Efecto Cocuyo*, *Unión Radio*, *El Estímulo*, *El Pitazo*, and *El Diario*.

Remembering The Bill of Rights

As we consider the liberties granted to us by the U.S. Constitution, we thought it prudent to remind ourselves of the Bill of Rights' power and some of its amendments.

1. First Amendment: Congress makes no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting its free exercise. It protects our freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and the right to petition the Government to redress grievances.

2. Second Amendment gives citizens the right to bear arms.

3. Fourth Amendment protects citizens from unreasonable search and seizure. The Government may not conduct any searches without a warrant, which must be issued by a judge based on probable cause.

4. Fifth Amendment provides that citizens not be subject to criminal prosecution and punishment without due process. A Citizen may not be tried on the same set of facts twice and is protected from self-incrimination (the right to remain silent). The Amendment also establishes the power of an eminent domain, ensuring that private property is not seized for public use without just compensation.

In the nations, we described, none of these rights protect their citizens, much less the press. We often wonder how easy it must be to have a leftist or socialistic bias in a nation that protects your rights as a citizen or member of the press.

Moreover, the columns or radio programs many of these leftist bias media members have would not be possible under the leftist's regime they so vehemently venerate, respect, and highlight. Instead, if not all had they been living and working in Cuba, Venezuela, or Nicaragua by now, they would have left for the United States seeking political asylum to be protected by the very Bill of Rights every Puerto Rico, USA citizen enjoys.

Sadly more and more these days, we read or watch programs where reporters disdain successful entrepreneurs, calling most of us "Colmillus" or "Bourgeoisie."

Too often, most speak as if we lived on two different islands when we are one country; we share the same soil and dreams and face the same problems and challenges.

Puerto Rico is a mix of groups that coexists and intertwines. We are all parts of the puzzle in which we must seek solutions to create sustained development and economic growth for Puerto Rico. We must ever forget that each sector is the strength of the other, so it is our responsibility as Puerto Ricans to work together.

Transforming Puerto Rico is the Key

For more than 20 years, my life's work has been to promote Puerto Rico's Transformation into a sustained growing economy with ample opportunities for all citizens to develop their future, whether as an entrepreneur, teacher, Chef, Plumber, Electrician, nurse, Doctor, or Business owner. The Transforming Puerto Rico Foundation has developed the Puerto Rico First Goals, which are the basis for Puerto Rico's transformation.

- **Goal 1:** Transform Puerto Rico into a country with robust economic development and sustained 4% growth over the next ten years.
- **Goal 2:** Transform our industrial structure into one in which employment in activities related to a knowledge-based economy with not less than 25% within ten years.
- **Goal 3:** Create 300,000 new jobs in the private sector within ten years.
- **Goal 4:** Increase the labor participation rate to 55% within ten years.

- **Goal 5:** Reduce the unemployment rate to 5% within ten years.
- **Goal 6:** Close the development gap; the gap is created by the percentage of GNP that represents consumption, and the rate that represents the investment, in Puerto Rico far exceeds that of our peers.
- **Goal 7:** Reduce the government apparatus by transferring to the private sector any corporation, operation, or service that the private sector can perform more efficiently- by moving to a governance structure that is characterized by the following: employing no more than 15% of the employed workforce and a Consolidated Budget that does not exceed 25% of GNP.
- **Goal 8:** Transform the education system from primary to university level into one focused on entrepreneurship, trades, and transformation.

Remember that **"Transformations are marathons, not 100-meter races"** To accomplish them; we have to work together without losing sight of the fact that the role of the private sector is vital. We cannot forget that the private sector is made up of the cashier, the construction worker, the office worker, the clerk

the construction worker, the office worker, the nurse, and yes, also the engineer, the doctor, and the businessman. Indeed, the private sector represents the backbone that supports the economy. This puzzle represents 80% of the country's labor force, with over one million workers and a payroll of **\$31 billion annually**. The private sector works hand in hand with municipalities, non-profit entities and also makes up 83% of the economy's total income.

Undoubtedly, there is a fair perception of what some call the 'big interests' or "Grande Intereses" in Spanish, and yes, we all create jobs and risk our capital every day to have a genuine "Big Interest" in making Puerto Rico the best place to work and life in the world.

In conclusion, Sir Winston Churchill said it best in a speech on October 22, 1945, in the House of Commons, saying, **"The inherent vice of capitalism is to distribute benefits unequally. The inherent virtue of Socialism is the equal sharing of Misery."**

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