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Addicted to Welfare

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In his book "Civilization: The West and the Rest," historian Niall Ferguson writes: "We are living through the end of 500 years of Western ascendancy."

What is amazing is that Europe is now going through the same thing that the Soviet Union experienced in 1991 — namely, the collapse of its socialist economy. Socialism does not necessarily entail the gulag and collective farms. Socialism is when you redistribute other people's money. But the problem with other people's money is that it eventually runs out.

Western socialism is driven by an ultraliberal philosophy — one that is masked in pseudo-humanitarian trimmings and whose most important social question is: "What more can the government and the rich do to help the poor?"

But for some reason they never ask: "What should the poor do to help themselves?"

In this sense, the public reaction to the London riots is even more revealing than the riots themselves.

The trigger for the riots was the Aug. 4 death of Mark Duggan, a 29-year-old purported

gangster who was shot by police attempting to arrest him. Half of the British newspapers were filled with quotes from Duggan's relatives claiming what a fine, upstanding young man he had been, that the London cops were wrong about him being a gang member, and that they killed him for no reason.

The other half of the newspapers quoted social workers lamenting the horrendous plight of the poor, hungry and desperate rioters who were "condemned to a darkness where their humanity is not even valued enough to be helped."

All of this is reminiscent of how the liberal media report from the world's hot spots. For example, if an Islamist fanatic kills a few "infidels" and then gets a NATO bullet to the head, a television crew of Western "infidels" all too often rushes to the scene to film the fanatic's weeping family curse the bloody NATO forces for killing innocent civilians.

The only really critical reaction to the London riots came from the United States, where the idea of a welfare state has been strongly discredited by conservatives and supported in one form or another by most voters.

Only the United States has Fox News, which said: "Britain makes it absolutely, blindingly clear that it is liberal social welfare policies [that have caused the problem].⊠And they have turned a good chunk of their native population into animals.⊠They are absolute animals.⊠They are not humans with free will. They eat, they screw, they drink."

Fox News is correct in the sense that the welfare state is rife with injustice. The main injustice is that honest working people pay taxes that are redistributed in the form of welfare to people like Duggan and his girlfriend, who bore four children out of wedlock.

Duggan, like almost all welfare recipients, became addicted to those government handouts as a drug addict becomes fixed on heroin.

The policeman who pulled the trigger on Duggan had only one child, whereas Duggan fathered four. The world can probably tolerate a ratio of one gangster for every policeman. But if in the next generation there will be four Duggans for every policeman, that will mean the end of law and order.

Yulia Latynina hosts a political talk show on Ekho Moskvy radio.

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