2004

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn: Leftism Revisited Study Guide

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CHAPTER ONE: IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY

Outline

A. TWO BASIC DRIVES: IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY [ONE AND THE MANY] (3-5)
   1. Identitarianism: Herd Instinct, Drive toward Conformity: e.g., Nationalistic Gymnastic Organizations
      a. Nostrism: Effacement of Self, Submergence of Ego, But a Clever Multiplication of Egoisms
      b. Homosexuality as Narcissism
   2. Diversitarian Drives: Herd Instinct vs. Romantic Sentiment
      a. Curiosity for the New
      b. History Results from Man's Desire for Change [Sameness of the Ant State or Termite State]
      c. Longing for Otherness: Incarnation of Christ
   3. Modern Times Are More Favorable to the Herd Instinct, Conformity
      a. Identity Is a Cousin of Equality
      b. Result: Identitarianism

B. PROGRAMMATIC IDENTITARIANISM HAS FEAR AS ITS DRIVING MOTOR: INFERIORITY COMPLEX (5-8)
   1. Hatred: Helplessness before One Considered to Be Stronger
      a. Slavish Hatred vs. Masterly Contempt
      b. Cruelty Is the Inferior's Revenge
      c. Spirit of Mass Movements
   2. Envy: Its Complex Psychological Roots
      a. "Zero-Sum" Feeling: "I Am Poor Because He Is Rich"
         1) Assumption: All Good Things in This World Are Finite
      b. Suspicion That Others Feel Superior
   3. Mobilization of Envy Has Been the Key to Political Success for 200 Years
      a. Leftist Theme: Opposition to Privileges of Others and a Demand to Conform
      b. Nonconformist Treated as a Traitor: Confusion of Unity with Uniformity
   4. Sameness Simplifies Matters
      a. Two Obstacles: Nature and Man
      b. Procrustean Bed
   5. Mystery of Personality
   6. Equality as a Poor Substitute for Human Identity

CHAPTER TWO: EQUALITY AND LIBERTY

Outline
A. CHRISTIAN VIEW (9-10)
1. We Are Not Equally Loved by God
2. Grace Is Sufficient, Not Equal
   a. Inequality of Saints and Sinners
3. Equality Does Not Figure in Holy Scripture
4. Too Many Religious Thinkers Try to Bridge the Gap between the Christian Faith and Current Political Notions

B. ADVERBIAL EQUALITY: SEMANTIC TRICKERY (10-14)
1. Why We Should Treat Each Other as Equals
   a. Procedural Equality
   b. Personal Uniqueness
2. Equality before the Law
   a. Differentiation: By Age
   b. By Circumstance
   c. By Gender
3. Equality of Opportunity
   a. Abolition of Arbitrary Discrimination
   b. Insistence on Indiscriminate Wage Rates
   c. One-Man-One-Vote Principle
   d. Equality of Education: Collectivization of Children
4. Equality of Treatment: F. A. von Hayek
   a. Timocratic Principle
   b. Consolations of Failure in an Unequal Society
   c. Psychological Difficulty of Failure amidst Social Mobility
5. Egalitarianism Depends on Force
6. Mutual Hostility of Equality and Freedom
7. Myth of Equality in the United States and Other Moths of National Character
   a. Programmatic Egalitarianism
   b. Brutal Elitism in Professional Life
   c. Competition in Business, Sports, and Politics

CHAPTER THREE: DEMOCRACY AND LIBERALISM

Outline

A. DEMOCRACY (15-17)
1. Democracy Is a Political Form, Not a Social Attitude
2. Definitions
   a. Democracy: Demos (People) and Kratos (Power)
   b. Monarchy
   c. Aristocracy
   d. Republic: Multitude of Forms
3. Question "Who Should Rule?" and Answer "Majority of Political Equal Citizens" Raises Subsidiary Questions
   a. Direct vs. Representative Democracy
      1) Oligarchic School: Pareto, Mosca, Michels
      2) Conscience: Democratic [Delegate] vs. Republican [Trustee]
   b. Majority Rule: Republic as pars sanior [People of Quality or Natural Aristocracy] vs. Democracy as Mob Rule
4. Politically Equal Citizens
   a. Definition of Full Citizenship Is Always Arbitrary
      1) Factors: Gender, Age of Maturity, Age of Military Service

5. Two Pillars of Democracy: Majority Rule and Political Equality
   a. Proportional Representation

B. LIBERALISM (17-22)
   1. Freedom Has Nothing to Do with Democracy as Such
      a. Majority Leniency toward Defeated Minority Is Tolerance
      b. Ideologically Systematized Majority Tolerance Is Liberalism
   2. Illusion of Democratic Self-Government
      a. Lottery Analogy
      b. Forced Choice between Pre-established Candidates
   3. "Self-Government" Is an Understandable Dream
      a. Democratism Is a "Paradisiacal" Movement
         1) Loss of Golden Age Seen as a Conspiracy
      b. Hardship of Being Ruled by Another (Servitude) Can Only Be Dissolved in Love
         1) Paradox: How Can We Love Those We Hire and Fire Like Obnoxious Menials?
         2) Pejorative Meaning of Politics and Politician in Democracies
   4. Tolerance as the Essence of Liberalism
      a. Its Virtue Entails Self-Control and an "Ascetic" Attitude
      b. Its Limits: Revolutionary Anarchists, East Indian Thugs, People’s Temple
      c. Arbitrariness of Tolerance
      d. Unprincipled People Only Have Indifference: e.g., Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., and Franklin Delano Roosevelt
   5. Readiness to Compromise Is the Quintessence of Parliamentary Life on a Democracy
      a. What Is Meant Is Liberal Democracy
   6. Proper Understanding of Liberalism
      a. Question: "How Should Rule Be Exercised?"
      b. Answer: In Such a Way That Each Citizen Enjoys the Greatest Possible Amount of Personal Liberty"
      c. Limit of Liberty Is the Common Good: Arbitrariness, Relativity
   7. Genuine Liberalism: Democracy as Well as Monarchy May Be Liberal
      a. Examples of Liberal Monarchs
      b. Examples of Democratic Illiberalism
      c. Myth of Absolute Monarchs: Limitation by Corps Intermédiaires (Local Parlements in France, Landtage and Stände in Germany)
      d. Monarchs Always Stood on Thin Ice
      e. Totalitarian Tendencies Exist in Democracies That Are Not Present in Absolute Monarchies, Less So in Mixed Government
   8. Totalitarian Democracy
      a. Isms That Menace Liberty Call Themselves Democratic
      b. Genuine Liberalism Rarely Becomes a Mass Movement -- Conservatism Never
      c. Tocqueville: Danger That Democracy May Evolve into Oppressive Totalitarianism
CHAPTER FOUR: RIGHT AND LEFT

Outline

A. CLEARING THE SEMANTIC RUBBLE (23-25)
   1. Traditional Meanings of Right and Left
   2. Biblical Uses
   3. British Parliament
   4. French Parliament
   5. Germany: Nazis Seated on Extreme Right for Their Nationalism (a Byproduct of the French Revolution)
   6. Nationalism Is Identitarian
   7. Mislocation of the Nazis Has Hardened a Semantic Confusion That the Extremes Meet

B. RIGHT VS. LEFT (25-27)
   1. Right Equates with Freedom: Need for Lebensraum (Living Space) for Personal Development
      a. The Great Menace: Mass Collectivist Movements and the Mad Ambition of Oratorically or Literarily Gifted Intellectuals
   2. Right Is Identified with Personal Freedom and Respect for Tradition: Free, Organically Grown Forms of Life
      a. Utopianism Is Reactionary, Not Progressive, and Seeks to Return to an Assumed Golden Age
   3. Left Is the Enemy of Diversity
      a. Uniformity Is Stressed in All Leftist Utopias
      b. "One" Is the Keynote

C. APPLICATIONS OF THIS DICHOTOMY (27-3)
   1. Structure of the State
      a. Leftists: Strong Centralization
      b. Rightists: Federalism, Principle of Subsidiarity
      c. French Provinces Broken into Dependent Departments
   2. Education
      a. Leftist Is Always a Statist
   3. Religion
      a. Leftist Wants Undivided Allegiance
         1) Atrophy of Religion by Driving It from the Marketplace
         2) Asphyxiation of the Church through State-Control
      b. Leftism Is Basically Materialistic
      c. Provident State: Extension of Government and Dependency
   4. Exceptions to the Rule: Leftist Inroads into the Right
      a. Spain: Falangists vs. Carlists, Catalan Anarchists
      b. Metternich Regime: Reaction to French Revolution
      c. Maurrasism: Monarchism Blended with Nationalism
   5. Making Semantical Sense:
      a. Right: Freedom, Personalism, Variety
      b. Left: Slavery, Collectivism, Uniformity
      c. American vs. European Liberalism
      d. Confucius: If Words Lose Their Meaning, People Lose Their Liberty