



MEMBERS' FORUM

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## Adding to the 'Woke' Lexicon

By Tom Zades, Editor

Along with systemic racism it looks like we can now add “systemic poverty” and “longstanding systemic health and social inequities” to the ‘woke’ lexicon. Per an article on New Year’s Day by Fox’s Houston Keene, the State of New York said it will prioritize non-White people in distributing their low supply of COVID-19 treatments. They used these new ‘woke’ phrases in explaining why they are creating these priorities.

They should first ask: “Why are supplies low?” With so many months to plan and act, how has the “Brandon” administration managed to leave COVID treatment supplies in – well – short supply?

But to address these new terms, doesn’t “systemic poverty” mean that our nation’s equal opportunity/free enterprise system – a system that has created more wealth than the world has ever seen before - creates poverty as a byproduct? That poverty is built into the system?

This is one of those “zero-sum game” ideas that, in order for one person to gain, someone else needs to lose. It is a fundamental misunderstanding of the profit motive, specifically, and the free enterprise system in general. The creation of wealth in our system benefits everyone – although some more than others. Socialism has been described as the equal sharing of poverty, while Capitalism has been described as the *unequal* sharing of prosperity.

The charge of “systemic poverty” is really the complaint that we are not all sharing equally in the benefits of Capitalism. But really, do you want prosperity or equality? As a system, we can’t have both. As individuals we can meet our own needs or we can ask the government to do it for us. If we

choose the latter, we are saying that we can't compete, or don't want to compete, in a system that isn't "fair," meaning "equal."

I wonder if the term "systemic laziness" would ever catch on.

## TIDBITS

The February 2022 issue of Reader's Digest includes a quote by "beloved satirist"\* P.J. O'Rourke: "The Democrats are the party that says government will make you smarter, taller, richer, and remove the crabgrass on your lawn. The Republicans are the party that says government doesn't work, then they get elected and prove it."

To that last point I would add that in recent years the mainstream media has not allowed the government to work under the Republicans, although a lot of things still got done under President Trump. That was incredible.

\* I put "beloved satirist" in quotes because I've never heard of him.

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