

America's cities are dying in a 'woke' world

The once great Chicago, San Francisco and DC

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If the wages of sin are death, surely the wages of “woke” must be the death of America’s cities.

Take Chicago. It has the best architecture, those beloved and once again hapless Cubbies, a truly Magnificent Mile on the shore of Lake Michigan, deep-dish pizza, Harold’s fried chicken, and a wonderland of a Navy pier.

Yet to enjoy any of these Windy City treats is to risk a carjacking and the crossfire of warring gangs. Chicago is the carjacking capital of America, and its most ganginfested city.

Chicago’s “sanctuary city” status has left it at a tipping point into chaos because of the open-border policies of President Biden. Fully one-third of Chicago’s projected \$538 million budget deficit for 2024 flows from its flood of illegal aliens.



Meanwhile, over 10,000 migrants are scattered across the city in temporary shelters or, get this, housed in Chicago police stations. These poorly educated illegal aliens are crowding out Black and brown Chicagoans at the lower end of the labor market, driving down wages and sparking angry confrontations.

Then there is the roller coaster, trolley car ride of a city where excrement literally does roll downhill: San Francisco. In this moral desert of Rep. Nancy Pelosi and Gov. Gavin Newsom, homelessness, public defecation and drug addiction are now Frisco’s finest art.

The “woke” failure I have witnessed up close and personal is my once beloved Washington. I went to Bethesda Chevy Chase High School across the D.C. line in Maryland. I spent countless days honing my basketball skills — and learning all I’ve ever needed to know about race relations — on the predominantly Black D.C. playgrounds. The nights I spent with my girlfriend at the Howard Theater rocking to Motown are among my life’s fondest memories.

Today, however, D.C. is dead to me. I am a Florida resident and return to the D.C. swamp only occasionally to deal with my legal issues.

To refresh, U.S. v. Navarro is a landmark case destined for the Supreme Court. In contradiction to the Justice Department’s own more than 50-year policy, I am the first White House adviser ever to be charged withstanding up to Congress in defense of executive privilege and the constitutional separation of powers. But the specter of a possible two-year prison term — I’m to be sentenced on Jan. 25 — is not what has soured me so thoroughly on D.C.

What has soured me is Washington’s descent into “woke” hell. It began shortly after the Wuhan virus pandemic started in early 2020. Mayor Muriel Bowser would lock down the city longer than almost any other in America — and then double down with a mandatory vaccination policy.

This one-two punch rapidly accelerated the hollowing out of Washington's business districts and commercial real estate already reeling from a pandemic spurring suburban flight and a remote worker explosion. Channeling her inner Angela Davis, Ms. Bowser then threatened desperate commercial real estate landlords with building takeovers.

Ms. Bowser likewise followed the lead of other "woke" cities — Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Seattle, et al. — in slashing millions from D.C.'s police budget while seeking to turn police departments into social worker centers. The result has been an exponential increase in the crime rate — surprise, surprise.

Washington's Metro rail system has also suffered dramatically from declining ridership as people have fled the city and remote workers no longer need to ride tin cans to work. Yet Ms. Bowser has made it all so much worse by refusing to meaningfully crack down on the numerous scofflaws who regularly ride the Metro rails free of charge.

These scofflaws not only deprive the system of needed revenue, but they also often terrorize paying customers. The last time I was on the Metro, I almost got caught in a gunfight crossfire — just saying.

A clueless Ms. Bowser — please look in the mirror, Muriel — is now up in arms over the recent announcement by Ted Leonsis, the owner of the Washington Capitals hockey team and Washington Wizards and Mystics basketball teams. His Monumental Sports & Entertainment conglomerate plans to move out of the downtown Capital One Arena to a state-of-the-art arena in Alexandria, Virginia.

And who can blame Mr. Leonsis: What once was a vibrant, family-friendly environment around the Cap One center has, under Ms. Bowser's "woke" leadership, descended into a cavalcade of pimps, hookers, dope dealers, beggars, betting parlors, pickpockets, grifters, and violent homeless schizoids. While the police force now shows up in greater numbers, it is willing to show any of that force, much less make any arrests, because of the "woke" dictates from on high.

Here's the unintended comic coda: Shortly after the Capital One Arena closing announcement, the Metro announced another type of closure. This was the temporary closing of the Gallery Place Metro stop, the critical Red Line stop that brings people in from the Greater Washington area to Capital One Arena. If Mr. Leonsis and company needed another excuse to beat feet, this ill-timed closure surely provides that.

As the Terminator might say: "Hasta la vista, baby." Not just to Washington as we once knew it, but to every "woke" city in America.

Peter Navarro served in the Trump White House as manufacturing czar and chief China strategist.