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Diminishing Liberty World Order

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Liberty is described as a condition in which a man's desire regarding his own person and property, is unopposed by any other's desire. John Locke, an English philosopher and physician, used the same core idea:

*"All men are naturally in a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave or depending upon the will of another person."*¹

Gorge Orwell, in his novel 1984, discussed about the infringement of citizens' rights. It is a dystopian novel published in June 1949. The story takes place in imagined future, year 1984, when much of the world has fallen victim to perpetual war and propaganda. The main idea is that in totalitarian regime, government or Big brother is all pervasive. Thought crime is death in this regime. One cannot question on anything and must obey whatever the state orders to do. People being hypnotized, implementation of laws without laws etc., are the other characteristics of the socio-political ethos, which to a great extent, are manifested in many societies even now. According to the data, out of 7.6 billion people, 37% people say that they do not feel free which is a surprising figure in the wake of new world order of liberal democracy which is based on globalization, freedom of speech and expression, religious freedom, human rights etc.

In the early 20th century, Soviets offered the world a politico-economic and governance system, socialism, based on a single party rule and operating through all powerful state that controlled all aspects of life. On the other hand, the Western countries espoused democratic liberalism with limited role of state, primacy of individual rights, freedom of speech, freedom of press, religious freedom with the aspiration to eliminate social inequalities etc. In 1991, after the collapse of Soviet Union, the belief that the world had finally found the ideal model based on democratic liberalism of governance gained wide acceptance.

The move away from the Soviet model picked up force with the popularity of the "Washington Consensus". It is a set of 10 economic policy prescription considered to constitute the standard reform package promoted for developing countries. The prescriptions encompassed policies in such areas as macroeconomic stabilization, economic opening with respect to both trade and investment, and the expansion of market forces within the domestic economy.

A system which was considered as the ideal model of governance, even adopted by communist societies like Russia and China, sadly is now on decline. There are indeed several illiberal versions of democracy that are in existence around the globe. The countries which were once the flag bearers of the system are now going towards anti-globalization and transforming into totalitarian societies. Multilateralism, supremacy of the international economic institutions, security alliances and liberal political norms are four main pillars that solidify the liberal world

¹<https://www.freemansperspective.com/what-is-liberty-exactly/>

order. These four pillars mediate relations among countries, prevent conflict between major powers and promote the spread of democracy and human rights. The United States President Donald J. Trump is rejecting and undermining all these basic tenets. The current U.S reluctance and disinterest to consolidate this order is a matter of concern given the preponderant role it plays in shaping the world political and economic destiny. USA also has imposed tariffs on multiple imports from around the world and especially from China to the negation of democratic liberalism which advocates free trade. BREXIT rise of majoritarianism, lack of religious freedom, especially for the Muslims and other minorities, Islamophobia etc., are clear manifestation of the departure from the liberal democratic order. While the world may need another model for governance, the fact is that instead of totally abandoning the world order that has served most of the world well, efforts should be made to preserve and prolong the essential parts, at least. No one pretends that the liberal world order is perfect. To paraphrase Winston Churchill,

*“The liberal world order is the worst form of order except for all those others that have been tried.”*²

²<https://www.cfr.org/blog/world-order-dead-long-live-world-order>