



Focus on Religious Freedom

“Religious freedom is not only that of private thought and worship. It is the liberty to live, both publicly and privately, according to the ethical principles resulting from found truth.”

- Pope Francis, June 20, 2014

Pilgrims, Thanksgiving, and a Failed Socialist Experiment continued:

Few Americans realize that New England's first form of government was collectivism (socialism) and practiced what Karl Marx would promote two centuries later as, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." ⁽¹⁾ The Pilgrims, a pious and decent people, discovered that even the best men cannot thrive under an incentive-crushing system. Within two years of the First Thanksgiving, the colonists had reaped shortages and starvation.

Writing in the *History of Plymouth Plantation, Gov.* William Bradford said that with the survival of the colony at stake, they contemplated upon "how they might raise as much corn as they could, and obtain a better crop than they had done, that they might not still languish in misery." ⁽²⁾ They decided to abandon the collectivist model of government in favor of a more free model. So - they "assigned to each family a parcel of land, according to the proportion of their number, for that end ..." ⁽³⁾

The following year, a happy Gov. Bradford wrote, “This had very good success, for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been ... The women now went willingly into the field and took their little ones with them to set corn; which before would allege weakness and inability; whom to have compelled would have been thought great tyranny and oppression." ⁽⁴⁾

The Pilgrims now wished to work because they got to keep, and then trade, the benefits of their labor. They discovered that freedom is a much greater stimulus than force.

"Instead of famine, now God gave them plenty," wrote Gov. Bradford. "And the face of things was changed, to the rejoicing of the hearts of many, for which they blessed God ... Any general want or famine hath not been amongst them since to this day." ⁽⁵⁾

Thus, the Pilgrims rejected the economic principle and form of government, socialism, that would have led to the end of freedom and especially the end of religious persecution they had traveled so far to achieve. More than two centuries later, Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) would validate their decision when he wrote, ""It is clear that the main tenet of socialism, community of goods, must be utterly rejected since (it is) directly contrary to the natural rights of mankind, and would introduce confusion and disorder into the commonweal." ⁽⁶⁾

Critique of the Gotha Programme, 1875- Karl Marx (1): libertyunderfire.org; townhall.com; historyofmassachusetts.org; History of Plymouth Plantation(2-5); fatima.org, 5/19/20(6)

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Shortened Version:

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(libertyunderfire.org; townhall.com; historyofmassachusetts.org; *History of Plymouth Plantation* (1-3)

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