



Retirement *Lifestyle*
Advocates

RADIO PROGRAM

Expert Interview Series

Guest Expert: Selwyn Drake
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Dennis Tubbergen:

Welcome back to RLA Radio. I'm your host, Dennis Tubbergen. Joining me on today's program is first time guest, Mr. Selwyn Duke. Selwyn is a longtime journalist and commentator, his website is selwynduke.com. That's S-E-L-W-Y-N-D-U-K-E, selwynduke.com. He writes for The New American. His work has also appeared in the Hill, the American Thinker. He is a frequent radio show guest and commentator, and it's my pleasure to welcome him to the program. And Selwyn, thank you for joining us today.

Selwyn Duke:

Dennis, it's great to be with you. How are you?

Dennis Tubbergen:

Doing well, thank you. Hey, let's jump right in. You wrote a piece about, I think it was titled, The World Without the West, and very interesting about how you discussed that Western civilization is really under attack. Can you describe a bit for the listeners, first of all, what motivated you to write that piece?

Selwyn Duke:

Yeah, absolutely. Well, Western Civilization has been under withering attack for a long time now from the so-called left. This states back many decades. I think it was in the eighties already, that we had that chant, "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Western Civ has got to go," on college campuses. But what really motivated me, Dennis, was that so often we will see defenses of the West, but that still has really the posture or the tone of being defensive. And my focus here is that I want to mount an offensive for the West because the truth is, there's nothing to be defensive about. The West is the greatest civilization that has ever graced this planet, bar none. And we shouldn't be defensive at all. We should be very proud of it.

Dennis Tubbergen:

So, Selwyn, you talk about these attacks against Western civilization, certainly college campuses. It's no secret that they are leaning far, far left. And you mentioned that, and I think that's probably getting worse. Can you describe just a couple examples of the types of attacks that we're seeing?

Selwyn Duke:

Yeah, absolutely. Well, there was a while back, I have this in my essay, this YouGov poll that found that 42% of, I think it was young people in the UK, believe that the UK was founded on racism and remains structurally racist. Now, that's so silly because when England was founded ages ago, there was

basically only one race there. People back then didn't even have the concept of racism that we do today. And then you had, I think this soccer head, Gianni Infantino, this is in my piece too, he was addressing that they were having some kind of an event in Qatar, and people were criticizing that because they were saying, Qatar, I know they call it Qatar nowadays for some reason. The Middle Eastern country abuses human rights, and he got very, very defensive. And he said, "Well, the West has no business talking. For 3,000 years we have been abusing people."

And it's just so nonsensical because the truth is that for 3,000 years, not really that long, but 2000 years, we have been civilizing the world, starting with the Ancient Greeks, maybe 2,500 years ago. We fought against Islam, which threatened actually to overwhelm the West at one point. So we can go on and talk about how the West has transformed the world. But those are a couple of examples right there. And of course, the main raps against the West, Dennis, as you know, would be things such as slavery and colonization and the violation of human rights and more recently climate change.

Dennis Tubbergen:

Well, let's dig into those, Selwyn. If you're just tuning in, I'm chatting today with Mr. Selwyn Duke. His website is selwynduke.com. You can read his work at The New American as well. So, Selwyn, let's talk about slavery. You say that as a rap against the West. Isn't that really a rap against the West?

Selwyn Duke:

Well, you see, here's the issue though, and I put it this way. Really, this is the only line you need to refute this criticism. Westerners might not have been the first to practice slavery, Dennis, but this is for sure, they were the first to end it. And that's a striking fact of history because you have to remember that slavery was once ubiquitous throughout the world. It was widely accepted anywhere and everywhere. No one questioned it until Westerners came along. Really, I would say for the first time, I know of in the 1,500s already, where you had, I think it was a Catholic clergyman who was questioning it in the Spanish court. He was talking about the mistreatment of South Americans. But anyway, you go on in history, and then you see that Britain outlawed slavery. And in fact, in 1777, already a year after we declared our independence, there was an effort to outlaw slavery in Vermont.

And they did do it in part. And of course, then we outlawed slavery subsequently. So, the truth is that today there is slavery, but it's not perpetrated by Westerners. We see slavery in places such as Africa and the

Middle East. In fact, I think this is a correct statistic that there are perhaps more slaves in the world now than there have ever been. I'm not sure about that, but I believe I did read that. But it has nothing to do with the West. We ended it. And again, that's something we can really hang our hats on and that we should be very, very proud of. And by the way, I'll point out Kamala Harris, as I'm sure she has ancestors who were slave owners and slave traders, I believe. So, it's a very, very complicated picture when you talk about slavery.

Dennis Tubbergen:

So, let's get into the next point that you made, colonization. And when you read accounts of this, depending on, of course, who's writing the account, it's that the colonization really displaced innocent people, it made their lives worse. I mean, from my limited perspective, that's the rap. What's your response to that?

Selwyn Duke:

Well, the truth is that there's no correlation at all between having been a colony and poverty. In fact, Walter Williams, the late college professor, late economics professor, who if it matters to people is black, talked about this on many, many occasions. He would point out that there were countries that were never colonies or were colonies for only very short periods of time that are grindingly poor today, places like Nepal, for instance. And then you have places that were colonies that are as rich as can be. Our country, the United States is one of them. You have Australia, you have Hong Kong. I mean, there are just so many. The list goes on and on and on. The truth is that if you want to put it in perspective, Dennis, you have to remember that most lands were colonized at some point. I mean, the same rap that we see against the West today, these complaints could also have been made about the Romans 2000 years ago when they were conquering many of our ancestors.

They conquered Europe. They were in Germany, Germania at the time, for 20 years, not that long, but they were in England. And of course, France, which back then was Gaul and Spain, which back then was Iberia, I believe. But the point is, is that all these people could have said the same things. They could have said, "Well, oh, these Romans, they're trampling our culture. They're imposing their values upon us. Were oppressed." But when we look at the big picture now, Dennis, what do we say? We say in reality, we have to say that a lot of positive came out of that because Romans spread their superior culture. They spread Christianity throughout the West. They built tremendous infrastructure, aqueducts and amphitheaters, roads.

It's just striking. They brought technology to these areas. So, you have to look at the big picture. The colonization itself, of course is not a good thing.

It's part of man's inhumanity. It's a man. But you have to understand that every cloud has a silver lining, and if you're going to assess history, you have to do it logically and fairly. And when doing this, here, I'll mention Thomas Sowell, he's another economics professor, thankfully still with us, also a black fellow, he's addressed this issue. And what he pointed out is that whenever you had a situation where a superior culture was colonizing an inferior culture, it was the latter that always over the long-term benefited for the aforementioned reasons because the superior culture would bring superior technology and whatnot.

And the truth is that is a major way in which throughout history, civilization was spread. And you could see that in more recent times when the West went to Africa and other places. Yes, I mean there was brutality, there were injustices, but also, they transferred Western culture to these places. And I in fact had an African friend, he was from Zambia, and he was talking about this years ago with me, and he said when he was in school, they were debating this, and he took the position that the colonization was actually a good thing. The British were in his land because again, they spread modernity throughout it.

Dennis Tubbergen:

Selwyn, we have in this segment, about two and a half minutes left, so I'm not sure we'll get through this entire topic, but you mentioned violation of human rights, and certainly when you start looking at a lot of the rhetoric that is floating around today, that certainly seems to be an escalating criticism of Western culture.

Selwyn Duke:

Yeah, it certainly is. And really, it's very funny here because if you look at the sins of the West, well, they're universal things, like slavery we mentioned, and war, well, also the violation of human rights. These are things that all civilizations have been guilty of. But here's the funny thing, when people criticize the West on this basis as being guilty of violating human rights, they can only do that within the context of a world that the West has established. And what I mean is that the West birthed our whole modern concept of human rights to begin with. We couldn't even render this criticism if the West hadn't done that. This concept of human rights did not exist. It's a product of Western minds in the main. So, as I was saying, yes, the sins we talk about of the West are the sins of all mankind, but the

triumphs are all their own. And again, that's a very, very striking fact of history and undeniable if you operate within the realm of logic.

Dennis Tubbergen:

Well, my guest today is Mr. Selwyn Duke. His website is selwynduke.com. That's S-E-L-W-Y-N-D-U-K-E, selwynduke.com. He is a journalist and commentator. You can read his work also at The New American. I will continue my conversation with Selwyn Duke when RLA Radio returns, stay with us.

I'm Dennis Tubbergen, you're listening to RLA Radio. I have the pleasure of chatting today with first time guest on the program, Mr. Selwyn Duke. His website is selwynduke.com. He is a frequent commentator on many different radio programs. He is a journalist with many years of experience. You can read his work at The New American.

And Selwyn, prior to the break, we were talking about some of the knocks, if you will, some of the raps against Western civilization. We talked about in the first segment, slavery and colonization and the violation of human rights, you made some terrific points, but here comes a big, big topic, a bit controversial today, and that is climate change.

Selwyn Duke:

Yeah, yeah, it certainly is. And of course, that's another criticism mounted against the West, that's somehow, we're inordinately responsible for this. Now, even if you subscribe to the anthropogenic climate change thesis, which I don't, the bottom line is that the West does not present the problems with respect to environmentalism, rather it reflects the solutions. The fact is that here, I provide this example in my article. Now you have certain countries that are trying to cash in on this scam, and so they're asking for climate reparations. I believe Pakistan was doing that, and people were talking about the floods that they had in Pakistan, how they're supposedly due to climate change caused by the West, so we're responsible, so we have to pay. Well, here's the truth. The truth is that I believe it was in 1947, Pakistan was about a third covered with forest, a third forested.

Now that's down to 1/20th of the nation, and that is of course, because the Pakistanis have deforested their land. They haven't managed it well, and that has allowed there to be flooding because you've got a lot of rainwater runoff from the mountains, you can have floods. That is the reason why they had those floods. It has nothing to do with the West. But here's the bottom line, okay. Before I just get away from climate change a little bit, let me say,

you have to realize that CO2 is not a pollutant. It's actually a gas that's necessary for life on earth. Some people call it plant food, and even if you do think it's a threat, you should realize that it's China and India, really that are the biggest polluters now. Or at least China, I mean, these are countries that are creating new coal-fired power plants on a regular basis.

Again, I don't have a problem with it, but that's what's happening. Meanwhile, China, we heard recently is funding climate change efforts in the US probably because they know it's going to hobble our economy and they want to put us out of business. But anyway, my point is this. Let's talk about the environment in general. You have to remember that there are two prerequisites for having a good environment. One is prosperity, and the other is freedom, Dennis, in the sense of being able to choose your own leaders. Now, why is that? Well, if you can't choose your own leaders, you can't hold the government accountable. And when you can't hold the government accountable, history tells us that the tyrants that control things will absolutely run rough shot over the environment. We don't have a lot of time, but I can give you an example or two.

You had Stalin and the Soviet Union. He drained the Aral Sea until it was 10, 15% of its original size. You had Lake Karachay and the Soviet Union that became so polluted with nuclear waste, which was being dumped into streams and rivers. That fed into it that it said if you would've stood on its banks for an hour, you might've received a lethal dose of radiation. Probably an exaggeration. But the point is that the lake now is under concrete because it was so badly polluted. Those are just two examples. In contrast, you take a country like ours, the United States, we have more forested area now than we did a hundred years ago, unlike Pakistan. Our water and air are cleaner than they were 60 years ago. Part of the reason for that is that we can choose our leaders, we can hold them accountable, and that all these yields a better environment because Dennis, no one wants dirty air and water.

Okay, now let's move on to prosperity. Why is that a prerequisite for a good environment? Well, it's very simple. An old Chinese proverb tells the tale here, and it goes like this, "When there's food on the table, there are many problems. When there's no food on the table, there's only one problem." And of course, what that means is that when people are starving, when they're suffering privation, they're not worried about clear cutting the rainforest. They're not worried about killing the last white rhino. They just want to survive, they want to feed their kids, they want to put shoes on their feet. The truth is, whether we like it or not, conservationism, which I like to call it,

not environmentalism, is a luxury of people who are comfortable. And we should be good shepherds of the earth. But that is the reason why you'll see that the freest, most prosperous countries such as ours have the best environments and the least free, least prosperous ones have the worst environments.

It's crystal clear, and this again, exonerates the West because the truth is the prosperity that we've brought to the world and the governmental systems that provide freedom, representative government have allowed us to, among other things, have cleaner environments than they have in countries such as China and the former Soviet Union and many third world countries where you see that their rivers are clogged with plastic. And by the way, plastic in the ocean is a problem, but only 1 to 3% of it originates from the US. Most of it comes from coastal third world countries that have poor waste management systems.

Dennis Tubbergen:

I'm chatting to Mr. Selwyn Duke, his website is selwynduke.com. You can read his work at The New American as well. Selwyn, there seems to be this, I'm just going to call it a relentless narrative. From my perspective, it seems to be very orchestrated against prosperity, against freedom, and certainly that seems to have been accelerating here over the past few years. Give me your opinion as to the state of health when it comes to the principles of Western civilization that we've been talking about.

Selwyn Duke:

Well, unfortunately, we're leaking oil and we're running on fumes, as I'm sure. I mean, the truth is that the things that made Western civilization great, have to a great degree been discarded, and we have been descending into an abyss of immorality, a lack of virtue, and really that is the solution. But what are the signs of what we're talking about? You look at the things that we're consumed with today, the sexual devolutionary agenda, as I call it in schools. I mean, instead of teaching kids reading, writing and arithmetic and basic truths, we're exposing them to drag queens. We're talking about how girls and boys can change sexes at will, claiming that that's possible. We are pedaling to kids, DEI and critical race theory, demonizing white people, demonizing Western civilization, telling kids that good is bad and bad is good. That is what is going on, and we have to right this ship, and if we don't, as sure as night follows day, we will fall. Make no mistake about it.

Dennis Tubbergen:

So, Selwyn, you use the term right the ship. Let me use that term in your view. First of all, can the ship be righted? And then secondly, what has to

happen and what would you anticipate the timeframe needs to be to reverse a lot of the things that we're seeing?

Selwyn Duke:

Yeah. Well, Ronald Reagan said, "It only takes one generation for freedom to be lost." And Yuri Bezmenov, the Soviet defector pointed out that the process of demoralization, the undermining of the morals of a target civilization takes about 15 years because that is how long it takes to inculcate one generation with the wrong ideas. Okay, so basically, theoretically, you could reverse this probably in one generation. I'm not saying it's probable or easy, but theoretically you could do that. Now, what needs to be done? Well, let's diagnose the problem. Our founding fathers talked not just about liberty, Dennis. People don't focus on this. They don't realize it. They talked about liberty as prerequisite also, which is what? Virtue in the people. They use that term virtue over and over again. To quote Edmund Burke, who was not a founding father, he was an Anglo-Irish philosopher, but he put it beautifully.

He said, it is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forged their fetters. Again, our founding fathers expressed the same idea in different words. If we become brutal and savage, as I think Thomas Jefferson put it, I'm paraphrasing now, we will have more need of masters, and people who need masters rest assured will get them. So, what is the solution? Well, if the problem is a breakdown in morality, demoralization, then the solution is moralization. Well, how do you do that? I put it this way. If morality came in a jar, Dennis, what would be on the ingredients label? The virtues would be. What is virtue? Virtue refers to that objectively good set of moral habits, and there are many of them. It's the opposite of vice, of course. There is courage, diligence, hope, faith, love, so, so many others.

There's a platitude of them. But when you understand this, Dennis, everything becomes clear because it's no longer a mystery. How do you help a child to grow into a moral person? You inculcate him with the virtues, and you model them. Just like if you want to teach good tennis, you come to understand what the principles of tennis are, and then you model those and you inculcate those. Virtues are the principles of morality. How do you right the ship of civilization? Well, again, you encourage people to cultivate virtue in themselves, and if they do that, the liberty will take care of itself because again, as Edmund Burke said, if we descend into a vice ridden mentality, if we become savages, we're not going to enjoy freedom no matter what we want. We're not going to have the prerequisite for it. But if we are a virtuous people, then we don't have to worry about that.

Liberty will take care of itself, and that must be understood because everyone wants to talk about freedom on my side of the aisle especially, and that's fine, but if you don't tend to what's necessary to enjoy that freedom, you will not enjoy it. An animal living in civilization cannot enjoy freedom because he's an animal. He's going to be in a zoo or he is going to be on a leash. A little toddler cannot enjoy much freedom because he still is not civilized. If you give him adult freedoms, he's going to hurt himself or others. If we are nothing but overgrown toddlers, then we're going to have to be controlled by an outside force. As Marcus Aurelius, the famous Roman emperor said, "Stand direct, or you'll be made to stand direct." You can't get around that truth.

Dennis Tubbergen:

Well, that's a great place to end it. My guest today has been Mr. Selwyn Duke. His website is selwynduke.com. You can read his work at The New American. Selwyn, very much a pleasure to catch up with you today. Enjoyed the conversation, I know the listeners will too. Love to have you back down the road as well. Thank you for joining us.

Selwyn Duke:

Thank you, Dennis. I really appreciate the invitation, and I wish everyone a very, very merry Christmas.

Dennis Tubbergen:

We will return after these words.