

How to make a totalitarian regime

Our country is under control of a new regime and we are gonna help make a plan on how to make it an authoritarian state. Therefore we need to set some new rules and norms. For all this to work it needs a way to balance between being hard on the people or even feared, but still get romanticised. This is our proposition on how to get an authoritarian rule in our country.

Trust between citizens

For us to make a totalitarian regime we must break the trust between the citizens. This incurs less riots and will make the new rule go more smoothly as no one feels like they have the freedom to talk about it. Our take on it is to make nobody trust each other. We will do this by having a snitch program. The snitch program would work the way that there would be a system where everyone could report each other for not following or supporting the regime. When people report each other, no one would know who to trust. You would never know if your neighbour would tell the regime if you didn't follow it.

People you trusted before the regime are no longer to be trusted. The risk of being taken by the regime is too high. So we would try to make the social capital lower with making a strike program. Get more if you snitch; you get rewards for snitching. This will make it "easier" to not trust for example your friends, because they can make false accusations about you to the state for bigger rationing.

The contact hypothesis suggests that interpersonal contact between groups can reduce prejudice. According to Gordon Allport, who first proposed the theory, four conditions are necessary to reduce prejudice: equal status, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support¹. Two important words to focus on are; common goals and equal status. They might have a common goal which is to get the most rewards by snitching. However in this new regime the citizens may choose to have contact with the others, but only for their own equal status.

¹ (Elisabeth, 2020)

Researchers have acknowledged that intergroup contact can backfire², especially if the situation is stressful, negative, or threatening which it is in our case. In order to get rewards people can threaten each other but many citizens might feel threatened by this regime. In this way of getting rewards for snitching, some individuals may develop more power and reward than others. Following this, those individuals that benefit from this snitch program of society, they would tend to work to maintain and enhance their power.

That brings us further to the conflict theory which focuses on the competition among groups within society over limited resources. Conflict theory views social and economic institutions as tools of the struggle among groups or classes, used to maintain inequality and the dominance of the ruling class³. Drastically changes and development is highly needed in this new totalitarian rule. The theorist Marx believed that societal conflict is the key to such big changes.

Competition is an important overwhelming and constant factor in every interaction between the citizens. Competition exists as a result of the totalitarian regime where the society compete for intangible resources⁴. For instance dominance, social status or in this case getting rewards. In this way of getting rewards for snitching, some individuals may develop more power and reward than others. Following this, those individuals that benefit from this snitch program of society, they would tend to work to maintain and enhance their power. Nationalism can get more and more established in this new regime and become a really powerful factor in that case.

²(Pettigrew, 2006)

³ (Hayes, 2022)

⁴ (Hayes, 2022)

Social Capital

According to Robert Putnam, social capital is the sum of norms, trust, and networks in society. These connections can be embodied in organisations—churches, bowling leagues, reading groups, the United Way—or in less-structured exchanges, such as dinner with friends or chit-chat around the office coffee machine. They merit the name “capital,” in his view and that of other social scientists, because they have value, specifically in improving the productivity of individuals and groups.¹

In a totalitarian state, people work so much they don't have time for other things and whatever they do outside of work is regulated by the state. There is a low level of social confidence and a tendency to maintain “close” rather than “remote” social ties. Also, because of the ‘snitch program’ nobody wants to really talk to each other. The main theory behind the study is the dictatorship theory of missing social capital. It argues that dictatorships - especially totalitarian ones - destroy social capital. Some dictatorships such as the Communist ones even create conditions that favour the building of negative social capital. When dictatorships are abolished, social capital may develop negatively and act as a brake on economic development

Hierarchical organisations

Under totalitarian rule, traditional social institutions and organisations are discouraged and suppressed. Thus, the social fabric is weakened and people become more amenable to absorption into a single, unified movement. Participation in approved public organisations is at first encouraged and then required. Old religious and social ties are supplanted by artificial ties to the state and its ideology. As pluralism and individualism diminish, most of the people embrace the totalitarian state's ideology. The infinite diversity among individuals blurs, replaced by a mass conformity (or at least acquiescence) to the beliefs and behaviour sanctioned by the state.³

Benito Mussolini, the Italian fascist leader, mentioned regarding totalitarianism that "Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state."⁶A planned economy is

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⁶ Wikipedia, 2022

present which means everything is under the control of the state. Also, there is a closed homogenous system. In the meantime, a high nationalism and a pledge to the fatherland can be observed.

State authority should be made hierarchical with a single leader at the top. Below the leader there will be a group of ministers that answer directly to the leader, and must follow every order they are given. Each of these ministers will have a similarly autocratic control of their department, and this will continue further down (High-ranking bureaucrats will dominate lower-ranking bureaucrats). The different ministers should be given slightly contradictory orders. This will force them to compete against each other to fulfil the leader's wishes. This will lower their solidarity, reducing the chance that they will cooperate against the leader's authority.

Control over organisations

In a totalitarian state, we can observe a hierarchical system. Also, the Adolf Hitler principle is that you should make people work against each other to get your favour. People think they are free organisations, but actually everything is controlled, everything is corrupt.

The complex interactions between the power forms that lie on each side of the divide shape, to a large extent, the dynamics of modern societies. In the twentieth century the prevailing trend could be called 'statism,' for it saw a considerable enlargement of the scope of state action. In totalitarian systems, this trend suppressed all institutional limitations upon that action, and threatened the existence itself of society as a separate realm. In other systems, it pushed back considerably the boundaries of that realm, but this in response also to demands originating from it. For instance, economically underprivileged strata sought to maximise the import of citizenship and to reduce that of their market position; many economically powerful groups sought the state's assistance in securing their profits and stabilising or correcting the market itself, which for various reasons had lost its self-equilibrating capacity. A further component of the trend consisted in the strategies of groups (sections of the 'political class,' public employees, members of the so-called 'new professions') whose livelihood and whose opportunities for a greater sway on policy depended on an expansive definition of the state's role.

Control over public opinion

In an authoritarian rule it is important to have control over public opinion. By that we mean the government wants to have control over public opinion because they want the people to be united and not have a strong opposition in the population. Our proposition to the new regime is that they take control over media, television, radio and make limitations on the internet. This will make it harder for the people to get information that speaks against the regime.

With control over the media we can control what people write about the regime online and about the outside world. And if they get access to information from other sources; the government needs to make it clear that all other information except theirs is fake. The regime needs to convince the people that they are the one sitting on the truth and all other media is fake news. To make it seem more likely that the “outside” are lying, the regime must also paint a picture of the rest of the world as a bad place. We want to make the people think that everyone likes our regime. They need to make conspiracy theories about their neighbour countries and the rest of the world; make it seem like their country is doing much better and treats their population much better than their neighbours.

By making the outside world the ‘enemy’ there will be a ‘us mentality’ for the other people in the country and a ‘them mentality’ for the rest. ‘ If you are not with *us*, you are with *them*’. With “enemies” outside our country there will be no need to have conflict inward, if we have the “outside” conflict. So control over the media and making conspiracy theories about the outside world will give the regime control over public opinion.

Conclusion

To conclude the points we made in the text; our proposition to the new regime for reducing trust between citizens is to introduce the snitch program, and to reduce social capital we make the people work so much that they don't have much free time. If they do, the activities are organised by the regime. Because of the snitch program few people want to talk and socialise, in fear of being falsely accused of not supporting the regime. Our proposition on how to build hierarchical organisations in our regime; with one leader on top. Our regime must also ensure control of organisations by letting the people think that the organisations are free, but they are actually corrupt. To ensure control of public opinion we suggested that the regime take full control over the media and make conspiracy theories about the “outside”. With this strategy the regime will be able to get an authoritarian rule in the country.

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