

1% Elites Destroyed Our Cities. Mamdani Is Just the Latest One. - Joel Kotkin

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SUMMARY

The discussion centers on the political dynamics in major cities like New York and Los Angeles, highlighting a divide between the elite governing class and the working-class populace. The speakers argue that the current governance prioritizes "luxury beliefs" over practical issues affecting everyday citizens, leading to a disconnect and ineffective policies.

- The political landscape is shifting, with socialists and moderate liberals clashing, often labeling each other as extremists.*
- City leaders live in a protected elite bubble, disconnected from the realities of working-class life.*
- Governance focuses on abstract issues like climate change rather than immediate concerns such as homelessness and infrastructure.*
- Public employee unions have gained significant power, influencing city governance and policy decisions.*
- The rise of "wokeism" is seen as a self-serving pursuit among the elite, rather than a genuine concern for marginalized communities.*
- Class issues are emphasized over race, with a call to address poverty and opportunity as primary concerns.*
- The political machine in cities like New York and Los Angeles is dominated by a coalition of elite interests and public unions, making it difficult for moderate candidates to succeed.*
- There is a growing concern about the implications of prioritizing identity politics over effective governance, especially in diverse urban settings.*

The fights in the big cities today are between socialists and moderate liberals or even fairly liberal liberals >> who get called fascists now, >> right? I mean, it is it is just astounding like that Colin Wright, you know, the left keeps shifting and the center moves so that you're now a right-winger and so is everybody else. >> But um you have this thing where you have these large cities like Los Angeles or or New York. New York's going through this with the Mum Donnie craziness.

The people that are at the center in governance, they live essentially a cloistered 1% protected life in guarded neighborhoods. They have no notion of what it's like to be a working-class person and take public transit. They only do it for a photo op. Um, their kids are all in these elite schools. I mean, it's the Hunger Games. And then they have luxury beliefs like your fellow Manhattan Institute friend Rob Henderson. Um >> Well, he he writes about that. Yeah.

>> Yeah. [clears throat] And and they and so like they're governing on the basis of horseshit. Like, oh, I'm a city, but I'm going to prioritize climate change. It's like even if you're right about climate change, which you're not.

Cities can't do anything about climate change, bro. What are you doing? Fix the potholes. Get the help help the homeless. So, how do you understand the emergence of Hunger Games governance in all of these cities? Because it's it's crazy >> because the 1% group you're talking about is first of all, a lot of it's inherited. Um, particularly, you know, cities like New York, San Francisco, I think, has the highest percentage of people who are with inherited wealth.

Um, LA has some. Um, basically the real the the the two parts of the crazy coalition, if [laughter] you will, the public employee unions, they are they've become absolutely you, you know, and they were not founded as being really radical organizations. Actually, oddly enough, they've become big anti-ionists. They were all founded by Jews, almost all of them. Um, and so you have the the teachers unions, the public employee unions who are organized and in Los Angeles, they run the city.

That's it. There's no question. That's the machine. They've got the people to come out in the field. And now that that, you know, I think a lot of them were divided whether to support Cuomo, which was the old corruption as opposed to the new corruption. Uh, now they've gone for the new corruption. Um, so you got that and then you've got this group that we started talking about in the beginning. You've got these people who've gone through the woke colleges, um, have all the luxury beliefs, very often are from upper middle class families, make make not enough money to live in decently in New York, and that's Bondami's base.

I've heard um a a concept that I imagine you've encountered more than I have because I've only gotten it kind of indirectly that wokeism um I have a book in my office I haven't yet read I think that I think the title of which is we've never been woke. >> Oh yeah that's a good book. >> Yeah. So I I haven't read that book >> and it's written by a leftwinger. So it's >> and so I think I think his thesis as I've heard it summarized and and there's other folks here is that really what's going on is a battle between essentially the people you talked about earlier this sort of middle elite that are aspiring to be the commanding heights of the culture >> right >> and they're just oneupping each other and it has nothing to do with anything but selfish pursuit >> of the next rung up that social status ladder.

>> Exactly. Yeah. I I think that's and and that >> they don't care about the poor. They don't care about people of color. That's all. They just are like, "How can I look better so I can get my Goldman Sachs job, >> right?" And of course, you know, and and and look, it's like, you know, people always talk, you know, all the race stuff, you know, they and and I say, "Well, how does DEI helping upper middle class black kids get into Harvard? How does that solve the problems of the South Bronx? I I I don't seem, you know, I think that the problem is poverty and that should be addressed. You know, I I you know, it's very complicated. I'm not about to say how you do it, but the issue is class. I think the focus on class and the focus on opportunity is where we should be at completely. and and this idea that you because we now have a big enough ethnic upper middle class that you could you could supply those schools with with enough black and Hispanic kids forever. Well, that is what they are, right? So, Claudine Gay, the the discredited plagiarist um monster that tried to destroy Roland Frier making more money than probably the two of us combined.

>> Oh, she definitely is. So for those who don't remember this was the she was among the three women at at the

congressional hearing um uh from Penn Harvard and I think Colombia if I'm remembering correctly might have been NY I think it was Penn Col it was Penn Harvard and I think Colombia basically like what are you doing with this what's happening on your campuses in 2023 um she's just a silver spoon kid she's not she's not DEI she's a upper upper middle class person who acted like she's part of some social justice movement, but she's got more in common with people that make make way more money than me and my family than anyone that she claims that she's part of the movement of. It's just all for show.

>> And of course, a lot of times you'll you'll find, you know, I see this with with Latinos, it'll end up being somebody from Central America or South America, more likely who's from the upper classes themselves. um who end up speaking for particular groups. I mean, there's there's definitely, you know, what's going to be really interesting to see is when does the woke people run into the real class warriors and where how does that break down? And, you know, that's going to be fascinating to watch because, you know, if if if your mom don what your working-class constituency that you think you have is very different than what your woke want. you know, what are you going to do when when he they close down the charter schools? Who do you think goes to the charter schools in New York? They're African-American and Latino kids. And it's like it's um like what do you [laughter] what do you do? Like you do realize that if you make the buses free, it will be filled with people who are using it as temporary housing, harassing the actual workingclass people that can that that need to take it to work, >> right? And everyone that need takes the bus to get to work knows that.

So I don't think you care about those people because you do know like you I have to assume these people know that their policies are corrupt and horrible because they're putting them forward. So I get to assume that they know their outcomes. That's the way I like to think about it. Like you're not just ignorant. There's something else going on, >> right? I mean, maybe you are ignorant, but I'm not going to give you that benefit that you're just ignorant, right? Oh, yeah. Giving away giving away buses for free won't it won't turn into housing for for for nut jobs that want to stab women like, >> right?

>> And then the dough fund, which was this program that I featured in a documentary I did with Arthur Brooks that you've probably seen these guys. They're like wearing the blue jumpers. They they're often off the street or out of prison. And this thing helps these guys by getting clean and sober. It it it requires something of them. Okay, we will give you a job. You will clean the street. You'll get your act together. You got to stay clean.

And they it's an incredible program. And of course, that got attacked also by Bill Delasio who's in con >> I don't [clears throat] know because it's like they were asking them to have standards. They were not just taking every demented bum off the street. It's like they couldn't let in actual deranged people. I had to h like the the desire to always go for the people who actually probably deserve to be in prison and treat them like a victim when they've murdered people seems like the thing that makes the left utterly crazy to me.

>> Yes. I absolutely and particularly what I find bizarre is women who are clearly most exposed you know uh and and and we know we've seen you know circumstances in Europe quite often and and they happen here too you know um who who's who's vulnerable elderly you know my brother and I both both you know you know pretty strong guys and you know but 20 years ago I didn't worry too much you know I mean because I'm not a

good we're not a good target. I'm 72 years old. I'm I'm kind of a target.

>> Yeah. >> You know, so you start to feel that kind of, you know, and and the fact that that that that you know, you talk about people who, you know, you know, want to reduce the number of police, you know, oh, there's there's there's domestic abuse. I was talking to a guy at the gym was a a cop and he, you know, he's talking about domestic abuse and he says, cops say it's the most dangerous situation. You know, you got some lunatic guy with a gun who's just beaten his wife and you're going to go and you're going to send the social worker.

I mean I mean that's >> and [laughter] the social workers like it's not just a full employment program for communists that are getting out of these universities, >> right? That's exactly what it is. And >> that's what it is. And and and the problem Mandami is going to have is it's one thing to to to be a lunatic in, you know, Madison or or uh um or Austin or or Ann Arbor, you know, you can kind of get away with it because it's kind there's a lot of homogeneity and there's, you know, and there's a a certain tolerance and people have to be in these places because there state capitals and and they have, you know, the major university, you that um but that doesn't work in in in in in in a big city like New York filled with you know new and recent immigrants with a welldeveloped multigenerational underclass you really going to try that there I mean you know it is it was one of the most remarkable things in my lifetime when I was in my se when in the 1970s I would go into the city you know I went all the time And it was scary and you started looking behind all the time during that Giuliani and and and Bloomberg era with with you know particularly uh you know with a really good policing Bratton.

>> Yeah. >> It was like a whole new experience. Like you didn't even think about it as being a problem. You got you got on the subway at at at 34th Street and you and and you went down to Greenwich Village. You didn't think twice that that was a problem. here. This is an interesting question about that moment and whether we can get back to that. It seems like tell me if this makes if this is true.

It seems like you had 19 the 1960s and this radical new left with the peace and and and and Vietnam and and the and the I mean you know the civil rights movement some of which is obviously I think very good >> right sort of breaking down things that needed to be broken down especially state laws like people seem to forget that this was state laws it was government. It wasn't like but but but you have the civil rights movement. You have cities burning. You have this emergence of this left-wing radicalism, the postmodern weirdos and all that stuff.

And then it seems like two decades 70s and 80s, really it's the 70s actually. The 70s is horrendous. >> Yes. >> Right. utterly horrendous stagflation, you know, the end of hope for the country. New, you know, >> de-industrialization, >> de-industrialization, uh, new, there's the New York Post, like go to hell New Yorker, like, you know, because New York needs a bailout and President Ford is like, "Nah, I'm not doing that."

>> Um, and what comes next is something that seems impossible today. you have like a Republican prosecutor that comes in as mayor of New York City, Rudy Giuliani, right? And at the time when I, you know, he was the mayor when I first moved to New York City and he was popular and then even before 911, after 911, he had like he was like the America's mayor and all this stuff, but >> it seems like we sit here 25 years later and the

mayor is a communist.

>> Yes. Well, you know, that's a loaded term. Certainly a a mar a Marxist and >> wants to seize the means of production, right? He says it, >> right? >> Could we get back to a world where there's like a law and order Republican that's the mayor of New York City? Is there are we in the new 60s right now still or are we in the 70s now? What where are we? >> It it depends. A lot of things. If there's um if the rest of the country does reasonably well and New York lags, I think there'll be more of a if there's a general deterioration, then Mandami may say, "Hey, look, I've got the formula for the country. It's just these evil Republicans in Washington are making it impossible for us to have, you know, these things." You know, I I don't know. I mean the pro the the the the problem and we we know we deal with this in Los Angeles as well. Like how did Rick Caruso lose to Karen Bass given that anybody who goes to LA knows how much it's declined. I love Los Angeles. It is it is heartbreaking to go into that city.

>> Karen Bass also a fan of Cuba and and and part of essentially communist revolutionary trips to Cuba. So like >> Exactly. So, so here's Rick Caruso, successful developer, spends, you know, God knows how many millions of dollars, gets beaten, and not close. I mean, she really beat him. And um she's going to run for reelection after the fires, after they clearly screwed up, and she'll be reelected easily, you know, cuz she says, "Well, I'm running against Trump and I'm running against ICE." and and you sit there saying, you know, also I I wonder what the opinion in South Los Angeles African-American communities are about ICE. It would be very interesting to know uh because you know, you know, I I just think that there but this this political machine is in such power and you don't have the sociological base.

See, when Giuliani ran, when when Reirden ran, when Bob Laneir ran, you had a lot of middle class people of all races living in the city, and they had a very different view. you've lost those middle class families. So now you have you have >> you just have the woke elite zombies >> and and people work for the government, people dependent on the government and and then you've got this elite class that somehow, you know, stands around and watches this all happen. I heard with regard to that um battle between um you said it's Caruso.

>> Yeah. >> Yeah. Caruso and and Bass that there was a this was a firsthand account from a from a witnesser to this focus group in Los Angeles ahead of that election. They were asking about all the policies and everything and and the um and the two uh candidates were abstracted. I think I'm telling this kind of stylistically correct. It might not be exactly right. And the whole room which was almost entire well it was a mixed group I think but the room was basically on board with the program of Caruso.

And as soon as it was they were told that the that the opponent whose views and policies they all opposed was a black woman all the white people in them were like well we got to vote for the black woman. Like it was like a total race guilt. And he watched this happen in the room and he was like, "So wait, you're going to prioritize this person's skinde identity over the success of your city because of social signaling pressure." Like what?

>> I know. And you know, you're talking about a city now that's maybe about 8% black. Used to be 15. You know, I mean, you know, >> it's getting it's getting more left as it gets less diverse, >> you know. See, but the

problem is we're getting to a point that in big cities like New York, Los Angeles, it's impossible to run as a moderate. I'm not talking about a conservative. I'm talking about a moderate, a middle of the road, a a an Ed Cotch, >> right? I don't think you can run as an Ed Cotch in in New York anymore. There aren't enough voters to do that. So, you know, I stopped voting for the for Democratic candidates locally because I knew that they would vote the way the teachers unions told them to vote, >> you know. So, I I I think that there's a a a process that's going on where the the the crazies on the left, you know, they call the groups have almost veto power over everything. So, you know, Mandami is going to shut try to shut down or limit the charter schools. He has to because the teachers union orders it.

>> Oh, and in this case, I think he agrees. >> I agree. >> Even though he went to a \$70,000 private high school, >> right? >> Um, and what >> I know. >> If you like this clip, you should check out the full video and all the other great content we've got at Dad Saves America. So, be sure to hit the like button, subscribe, and ring that bell so you won't miss our new stuff as it drops each week.