

Spectrum of Governments

2025 0416

Tom Cuba

Last week I erected a VERY non-scientific poll to see how people view the concept of fascism. The responses were broadly similar, yet generally nondescript. A few respondents went into great detail, while others went completely off the rails to rant about something or someone else.

I will now attempt to offer at least a working understanding.

These labels that we put on governmental structures are nothing but placebos designed to allow us to feel as though we know what we're talking about when we really don't. Some of the labeled types, such as Theocracy, don't even fit the placebo. So here goes.

Each of these 'types' of government exist along a spectrum defined by the tug of war between total freedom and total control. There are no distinct points to define each of them. Sort of like the colors in a rainbow.

At one end, that of total freedom, there is uncivilized anarchy. No rules and no consequences. At the other, is total control: The Matrix.¹

Monarchy, Communism, Socialism, Fascism, Republics, Democracies, are not single points on the spectrum, but a band along the spectrum. Capitalism and Theocracy are not on the spectrum at all, but are components that may be more or less prevalent in each.

I go into this because each new piece of legislation and each new Executive Order, each new treaty, each new tax, and so on can be seen to move the needle along the spectrum regarding the way we practice governance in the United States. The movement can be towards freedom or towards control.

The sweet spot along the spectrum is that in which personal freedom is maximized while interpersonal conflict is minimized. Finding that sweet spot is why we have laws at all. The laws and conventions are there to restrict the eventuality wherein one person's act of freedom restricts or impacts that of another.

That's just my take on things.

¹ The Matrix is a 1999 science fiction movie in which the computers have absorbed all of man's cognition and humankind is trapped inside a computer generated false reality.