

## Socialism Doesn't Work, But...

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"Socialism" — we all want to be *sociable*, right?

Last week's anti-socialist moment was not limited to the president's promise that America would never go socialist, as I noted this weekend there was also Panera Bread's abandonment of its quasi-charitable Panera Cares ("pay-what-you-want") fast food chain.

Isn't that a bit of a strange connection? *Socialism is not charity*. It's bad because it is force through and through, not because it seeks to help people.

Well, note that while Panera's notion was the same as many socialists', to help the poor.

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Panera's method was to cajole, or "nudge," the better-off to pay enough more to cover the costs of paying less.

Kinda like ObamaCare, but without the force.

And without the force, it failed.



What Panera management discovered is that not only is it very hard to get the message across, it is almost impossible to set up coherent incentives to successfully alter consumer behavior.

Getting incentives right is something that plagues all sorts of socialistic experiments, voluntary or coercive, within a capitalist society.

Take Finland's recent experiment with a Universal Basic Income (UBI).

The idea of that nation's centrist party was to take care of the unemployed beneficiaries' basic needs so they could get back to work.

Well, those who received the basic income were happy enough receiving the moolah. Sure. But "there was no evidence from the first year of the experiment," a report in *Huffington Post* admits, "that the scheme incentivized work." Despite that, socialists in England are pushing for the UBI.

Socialism doesn't work, and socialists would rather not work — except to advance socialism.

This *is* Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.