

Trump's Despicable Statement: Is There Such a Thing as a "Shithole Country"?

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The question should be rephrased to whether there's such a thing as a "shithole" period, and yes, there is, but the stereotypical "Third World" socio-economic and physical conditions that the word often embodies are also widely present in parts of the US.

Another day, another Trump controversy, and this time it's the Mainstream Media going bonkers because of the President supposedly referring to some countries as "[shitholes](#)" and questioning why the government has allowed so many of their people to immigrate to America. Knowing Trump's personality and speaking style, it's believable that he did in fact say this, though what's less believable is the insincere virtue signaling that's sprung up all over social media ever since.

Defining A "Shithole"

Some people are predictably slamming Trump as a "racist", "fascist", and "white supremacist", outraged that he would dare use such language when referring to the "Third World" conditions of Haiti and most of Africa and convinced that he was actually exploiting that as an excuse in order to have the "plausibly deniable pretext" for implying that their majority dark-colored populations are "shit". He wasn't, but that's not going to stop agenda-driven individuals and organizations from pretending that that's what he meant.

What Trump really had in mind was the stereotypically (key word) underdeveloped economic and physical infrastructure in those places, as well as the unstated "backwardness" of their people that he thinks contributes to never-ending violence there. Using the first pair of criteria, the same "shithole" label is also very relevant in objectively describing parts of the US and the broader West as a whole, especially neglected inner-city areas with large minority populations.

The problem is that the idea of "backwardness" is relative, and for as much as Trump and some Americans might think that African-Americans, Haitians, and Africans fit that description, they and others might feel just as strongly that the US in general is a "backwards" place as well, though for totally different reasons. "Shitholes", whether inside the US or elsewhere, are devastated communities whose problems aren't easily attributable to one source and are commonly the result of many factors, some of which aren't the fault of those who were born there into those deplorable conditions.

"Backwardness" Is In The Eye Of The Labeler

"Backwardness", however, is an entirely subjective comparison made at the individual level and used to generalize other people as well as societies, regions, countries, continents, and

even civilizations. Just as some Americans might feel that a different category of their compatriots are “backwards”, so too might non-Americans feel the same about Americans, and whether or not this is “racist” is up to each person to determine on their own. Take for example the US’ well-known racial tensions - some “whites” might think that the “gangsta rap” prevalent in “black” culture is a “backwards” display of social “values”; likewise, some “blacks” might think that flying the Confederate flag is “backwards” behavior stemming from the Civil War period when slavery was still legal.

There are of course uncontested racist examples that can be mentioned in this vein, but such hatred deserves no place in a respectable analysis and therefore shouldn’t be the subject of any discussion.

As for the larger conception of “backwardness”, some Americans firmly believe that Islam is the epitome of this idea, but some of these very same Muslims think that it’s Americans themselves who live a “backwards” lifestyle due to many examples of their cultural behavior being contradictory to the Prophet Muhammad’s teachings. Americans might retort that the “tribal conditions” of Libya, “Syraq”, Yemen, and Afghanistan play a major role in perpetuating violence there (forgetting their own country’s role in this), but these people could just as easily point to the US’ “identity politics” being responsible for why no one has yet to stop the mostly black-on-black gangland killings in Chicago or other big American cities.



Moving From “Shithole” To “Shithole”

Accepting that the objective (economic and physical infrastructure) and subjective (“backwardness”) conditions of a “shithole” can be found anywhere in the world, including in the American heartland itself and especially its inner cities & the “Rust Belt”, it’s time to ponder why people move from “shithole” to “shithole”. This phenomenon is interestingly observable not just in relation to people from foreign “shitholes” immigrating to the US, but also in terms of Americans leaving for other “shitholes” inside their own country.

Foreign “Shitholes”:

Haitians and Africans, to use the examples that Trump was originally referring to, depart from their “shitholes” for America because they expect that their intended destination has higher living standards in the economic, physical, and/or social senses. It’s true that the average (keyword) all-around conditions in the US are oftentimes better than in most other places due to its more effectively functioning civil society, which includes its courts and police, though serious abuses still occur in these spheres. Most attractive of all and capable of getting many immigrants to overlook these very real problems is the country’s currency, the dollar.

The possibility of a “petroyuan” poses a latent threat to the dollar’s worldwide dominance, but for now at least the dollar is still king, and that’s why people from “shitholes” all across the world want to work in America. To put it bluntly, they’d rather be paid in dollars than whatever their national currency may be, and that explains why these migrants oftentimes support their families back home through remittances prior to abusing the immigration system to bring them to the US through legalized “[chain migration](#)” schemes. It doesn’t matter if their physical and working conditions are worse in America than back home in some cases, what’s seemingly most important to them is that they’re paid in dollars.

American “Shitholes”:

The same cynicism is what drives some Americans to move from one “shithole” to the next in search of what they naively believe could be a “better life” that would allow them to finally live the “American Dream”. People from the “Rust Belt” can’t easily move to the California coast without already having a job lined up because it’s too prohibitively expensive for them to do so, which is why they sometimes spend all of their meager savings and even borrow money from their families to make what they hope would be a life-changing trip for the “better”. Unfortunately, due to their limited means, they oftentimes find themselves trading one “shithole” for another because of their economic inability to climb out of the social gutter that they usually have to inhabit in order to barely make ends meet there.

“Chain migration” is the exception once again because having a family member or close friend in the destination state could help the internal migrant cut down on costs by splitting living expenses with their hosts, thus helping the whole household. Each person could then more quickly save up money and begin planning for their next step in life as they attempt to “climb the ladder of success”, provided of course that they’re willing to sacrifice on their social conditions for the time being in order to make it possible. This could entail living in very cramped conditions inside what are popularly described as “ghettos” (colloquially known as “the hood” in the US), which are usually characterized by the proliferation of drugs, violence, and naturally, the seemingly never-ending consequent cycle of poverty.

Dollar Delirium:

The common thread explaining why many people (whether foreigners or Americans) move around from “shithole” to “shithole” within the US is because they’re infected with “dollar delirium”, or the fallacy that a higher gross income automatically translates to a “better life”. For people coming from the “shitholes” of inner-city [Cleveland](#) or the rural villages of the Congo, simply earning more money is assumed to be the secret to “succeeding” in life, overlooking the fact that their desired destination also has higher living expenses that may in some cases leave them with a proportionately lower disposable income than if they just stayed home. This might not bother them so long as their basic needs are taken care of and they still have some money left over to spend on entertainment or save for later, but others might come to regret it if their social expectations aren’t adequately met.

The Social Solution To All “Shitholes”

Silk Roads:

Not everybody moves because they want to “get rich” or make a “quick buck”, since buying the newest iPhone isn’t as important to some people as having a stable and respectable livelihood for themselves and their families. “Shitholes” don’t typically provide this, or at least not in a way that satisfies most people, which is why they decide to move elsewhere in search of a “better life”. It would be wrong to imagine that immigrants, whether foreigners to the US or Americans within it, are all “greedy”, and the “safest assumption” is that they’re motivated by social push-and-pull factors more so than economic ones.

That said, an obvious solution to migration presents itself in the form of encouraging socio-economic development in migrant-originating areas, which is exactly what China’s One Belt One Road (OBOR) [global vision](#) of New Silk Road connectivity and [Trump’s infrastructure](#)

[plan](#)- both of which are conceptually compatible with one another - aspire to do. A comprehensive strategy involving local, state/provincial, and national governments alongside state-owned and private businesses is the only conceivable way forward, but it'll still take a while to yield results even if the most masterful plan was flawlessly executed, which is in any case unlikely.

Belief System Compromises:

Because this solution will take a long time to implement, if ever, the next best thing is to discuss the details of the infrastructural and metastructural social reasons behind migration. Social infrastructure can be described as schools, healthcare, and welfare benefits, for example, while social metastructure is culture and its related intangibles. Most socially motivated migrants are willing to compromise on social metastructure in order to reap the benefits of its infrastructural counterpart, meaning that they'll "grin and bear it" if they dislike their new cultural conditions so long as they receive their expected access to certain "hard benefits" such as what they believe to be a better education system and state subsidies.

Considering this, it makes sense why people who hate America's cultural-political system still migrate there because they're tacitly compromising on their (sometimes publicly proclaimed) beliefs in exchange for receiving expected economic and social infrastructure "rewards", and the same goes for Americans migrating to other states or countries. To reference the example mentioned earlier in this analysis, some Muslims think that American culture is "backwards", but they're willing to deal with it if the pay and social infrastructural conditions are right.

As for Americans, an "enlightened" liberal might escape from California's dysfunctional society to seek refuge in the rural "backwaters" of a "red state's" much more stable one despite their new destination restricting abortion and therefore being "ideologically incompatible" with one of their core beliefs. Another domestic example could be a conservative from "Middle America" moving to the liberal dystopia of New York City in the hopes of finding a better job. As for external manifestations of this "social compromise" in action, elderly Americans who look down upon what they may believe to be the "backwards" people of Latin America might "suck it up" and retire in that region simply because it's more affordable.

Sacrificing For The Next Generation:

The last "solution" to the world's "shitholes" is the passive one that's been employed since time immemorial, and that's migrants sacrificing their living standards by knowingly accepting that they'll likely spend the rest of their lives in suboptimal social conditions in order to give their descendants that are born there a "better chance" at "climbing the ladder" and "succeeding" in ways that their parents weren't ever able to. This is the quintessential story of most American immigrants throughout history and especially from the late-19th century until the present day, and it also describes why many [civilizationally dissimilar](#) migrants are willing to put up with Europe's different social metastructural standards in spite of this contradicting the strict requirements of their religion.

Another relevancy of this principle is when Americans migrate from their rural "shitholes" to urban ones, or from one "hood" to another in different cities, hoping that their children can

seize the socio-economic opportunities there that their parents either weren't able to or which didn't exist in their hometowns.

Sacrificing for the next generation doesn't "solve" the problem of "shitholes" – it ignores them – though sometimes there are "activists" who try to change things for the better in their own "shitholes" or the ones that they just moved into, but their freedom of action is severely constrained by the laws of their host society. Muslim migrants [wanting to impose](#) sharia in their new European neighborhoods or build mosques there are increasingly finding it more difficult to do so, but they still have it comparatively better than a Syrian Christian refugee that somehow ends up in a Gulf Kingdom and wants to hold public church services or build their own house of worship there.

In America, social and workplace activism is the most common form of struggle for people who have been born and raised in "shitholes" or internally migrated to them, and while they have a greater chance of succeeding with their cause inside the US than "shithole"-inhabiting people elsewhere in the world, it's becoming increasingly more difficult by the year for them to do so.



The Myth Of "Equality"

Theoretically and in terms of "international law", all countries and cultures are "equal" to one another as seen from the eyes of the UN and its related UNESCO body, though in reality many people have their own personal preferences and accordingly believe that some countries and cultures are "better" than others. Someone indoctrinated with "[American Exceptionalism](#)" might truly think that the US is the "best" place on earth by all measures, while [some Muslims](#) might think that their own societies are the "best" to live in for cultural-religious reasons. Each of these two might have nothing but disdain for the other, but that's their personal right, in fact, whether one agrees with it or not. It's up to each individual to judge on their own whether this or any of its manifestations constitute "racism", though it must be noted that there are indeed some [undeniable examples](#) of racism that should [always](#) be condemned.

That said, screaming "racism", "fascism", and "supremacism" just because someone has an individual opinion – no matter how disrespectful and offensive, though given that it doesn't objectively conform to any of those three aforementioned terrible terms – is hypocritical because one can be certain that the person casting the stones also has their own "hierarchical" views on something or another, even if they're more "politely" expressed. The Haitians and Africans that Trump so derogatorily described as coming from "shitholes" might think that some parts of their home region are "better" than others, just as they apparently think the US is the "best" because they'll willing to leave their homelands to migrate there. The same can be said for Americans who favor one place of living within their own country over another, for whatever given reason, whether it's the "shithole" that they moved to or their new place of living after escaping from a "shithole".

Mixed Motivations For Migration

It's crucial to understand that those who migrate from one "shithole" to another don't always believe that everything in their place of residence is the "best", but might be willing to "compromise" on certain aspects of it either due to "dollar delirium" or because they

intend to sacrifice for the next generation. For example, it's entirely natural for immigrants to retain their native culture and values inside their homes while trying to publicly assimilate and integrate into their host societies at large, such as some Arabs do when migrating to the West or some Westerners do when moving outside of their civilizational sphere (or even within it, with Poles being a perfect example). The complexity of the millennia-long phenomenon of migration means that there's no simple explanation for why people decide to move away from their place of birth, with each instance being unique and usually motivated by multiple factors.

Concluding Thoughts

At the end of the day, using the word "shithole" to describe somewhere is a crass way of making objective points about economic & physical infrastructure and socially subjective ones about "backwardness", but nevertheless is the right of every individual to use according to their taste so long as they're not promoting actual racism or any of its related toxic ideologies such as fascism or supremacism. It's not just Trump and "whites" in America who use this term, but other people across the world employ it or whatever the local analogue is in their language when making similar types of comparisons, and even in the absence of actual words, internal value judgements about other countries and cultures are still being formulated. It's natural for people to have their own personal hierarchy of national-cultural preferences no matter how "politically incorrect" it may be to openly admit in some societies, meaning that the concept of the "shithole" is here to stay whether one likes it or not.

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