

Freedom Matters

A News & Opinion Paper

Dane County, Wisconsin

Preserving Property Rights

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Our republic limits government to securing individual unalienable rights to life, liberty, and property. These rights are eroded by legislatures, and by courts complicit with them. To encourage wise jurists and journalists to help, *Freedom Matters* dedicates itself to the fight to restore that republic.

Falk's "Attain Dane": Part 5 Will We Support Data or Politics?

by Bob Bowman

With data contributions by John Oltman

Data from the U. S. Census Bureau offers a healthy dose of realism to counter the fallacies of Falk's so-called land use planning. Last issue, *Freedom Matters* presented a graph of Dane County growth plotted against decades of years. Here, those same data are plotted as number of people added per decade versus the county's total population in each decade, to show raw numbers.

Dane County's growth was low in the 1830s, was 20,000 per decade in the 1840s and '50s, and fell to near zero in the 1860s (the U. S. Civil War). From 1870 to 1920, Dane's growth was about 10,000 per decade. It doubled to about 20,000 per decade in the 1920s and '30s. Since 1940, it has fluctuated between 40,000 and 60,000 per decade, averaging right at 50,000 per decade. Thus, growth has been flat for 60 years, and is projected so out to 80 years. **Forget Malthus and his doubling of the population every generation. He was wrong.**

Why wrong? As noted last issue, U. S. **birth rate** is now **below replacement** and except for immigration, the U. S. population will peak by 2030 and decline thereafter. If this likelihood comes to pass, Dane County will top out below one million, and do it before 2100. Since we can control immigration better than birth rate, it is up to those governing this nation and this county as to the county's ultimate population.

As land use planner Mike Slavney was frank enough to point out, March 4, there is no shortage of land in Dane County to hold up to 3.5 million people. Hence, Dane County is far from having a shortage of land if its ultimate population falls short of one million. In a word, right now, the data on birth rate, immigration and related statistics favors Dane County not reaching or exceeding one million in population, ever. Neither Falk nor Slavney present any evidence to the contrary.

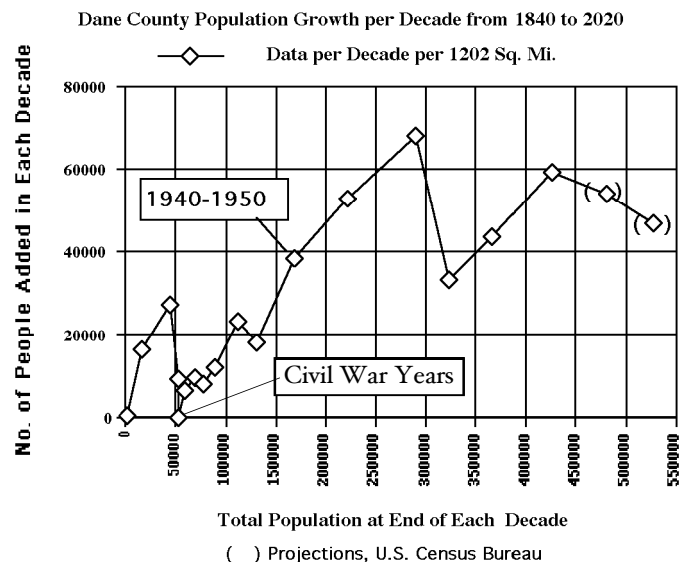
Half-truths about population are serious fallacies that cripple Falk's "Attain Dane" arguments. Given that, and the disasters that can occur to decimate population, we should not abandon our freedoms to allow central control by a few elitists who present us with half-truths and guesses as reasons that we should trust them to do better for us than our own decisions can do.

Another fallacy is Falk's invitation to the attendees at her second "Attain Dane" meeting that they act as land use planners and decide where Falk should allow residential housing to be built. How it must gall land use planners to discover that they have wasted years getting trained in their arcane art, when untrained citizens have the innate ability to create sound land use plans for Falk and crew to use. If citizens are capable of that, they don't need planners, or Falk, to do it for them.

Land use planning perforce is **economic planning**, and history has taught us over and over that not even the most trained planners have the ability to decree central planning that produces viable economic systems. If the citizens of this county give Falk and crew the right to manage the county by central planning, the result will be the bankrupting of the county, and the resulting poverty couldn't happen to a more deserving population.

How do we assure good land use planning? We use the market model. We make the people who use the land pay the cost of their use, as well as reap the profit of it. When that accountability is at work, without governmental interference or bailouts, then we get the best stewardship of resources. Paying the cost means paying for any **material harm** that the land use causes. It does not mean paying for regulations imposed on land users for common good other than avoidance of harm. The **public as a whole** must pay for the common good.

Central planning will kill our prosperity. Be wise. Kill central planning instead. Keep prosperity.



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