



Written by [Daniel Natal](#) on September 2, 2022

Power Dynamics

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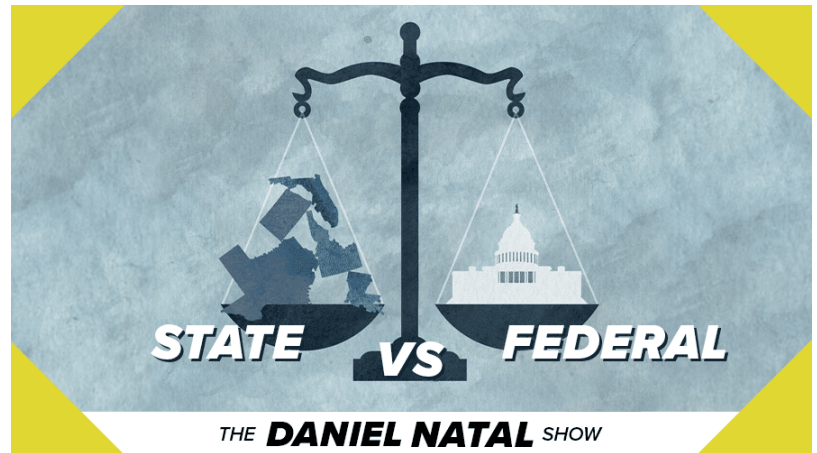
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In the Middle Ages, the end of the age of serfdom left millions of former serfs uprooted from their former plantations. Wandering around the countryside, they either turned to beggary or crime to survive. England reacted by instituting The Poor Laws: a sort of proto-welfare system. The rootless were given a stipend—but only on condition that they return to the town of their birth and remain tied to that locality. After the end of the Civil War in the United States, a similar phenomenon occurred. W.E.B. Dubois wrote quite frankly of the explosion of crime that took place subsequent to the end of the feudal system in the South. Much as England did, the American government responded with welfare payouts and vote plantations. As the Fourth Industrial Revolution gets under way, and technocrats fear A.I. displacing millions of workers, a recurring fear is gaining traction of the resulting explosion in crime and social decay. The solution? Universal Basic Income. And, just as in the case of England in the Middle Ages, the strings that come attached to the money is being locked into an open-air prison called a Smart City. How did the power dynamics shift to allow this to happen?

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