

THE DISUNITED STATES' DECOUPLING FROM ITS FORLORN FOREIGN AFFAIRS' ENTANGLEMENTS

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ABSTRACT: The short-term 'reign' of the United States as leader of the world, policeman of the world, is being seriously challenged not only by pundits all over the world but by even political scientists and analysts in the United States itself. In fact, many are seriously opining that the United States is in decline—that it has lost its sense of direction, has taken itself too seriously, and has led the world for its own profit and well-being while disregarding the realities of other nations and peoples. The article attempts to trace the reasons for this sudden reversal of popularity of the DisUnited States of America.

KEYWORDS: foreign affairs, United States diplomacy, world affairs, American history

The Big Pullback, the licking of wounds, is getting into full swing. (Will Americans be sore losers!) Americans are slowly, but surely, coming to the realization that their 'crusade' to corner the world's business squalidness was just a cockeyed day-dream after all. What had started to be an attempt to substitute the threat of a new world war, the third, with Judeo-Christian 'Democratic' Capitalism, in the end, blew up in the faces of the editors of the *Harvard Business Review*, *National Review*, and the gung-ho forces of the Pentagon. The carrot and the stick, the soft power and the hard power, perhaps worked well at the outset. Still, in the end the whole affair sank into a Black Hole of Greed, Corruption, Hedonism, and Incomprehensible Stupidity bringing forth an immeasurable amount of human suffering—perhaps even more than that cre-

ated during the whole of the grotesque twentieth century.

Pulling out of Afghanistan was not a military defeat. It was not some contingency plan gone awry. It was not a tactical nonachievement. It was not a strategic blunder. No, it was worse than that. It was evident that Judeo-Christian ‘Democratic’ Capitalism (*Quod erat demonstrandum*: Western Civilization One [Europe] & Western Civilization Two [the DisUnited States of America]) had for sure slumped into dissolution. In his most crystal clear moments, Marx most lucidly defended the rights of the workers who, throughout the world, had been left naked to be exploited by the employer in a scheme called capitalism where the employee was at the mercy of the employer. An arrangement, a ruse, between the employer and the employee but primed by the employer! Also, Marx rightly said that if you gave the capitalists enough leash, they would eventually hang themselves. They did! And it was the Chinese and the Russians who gave them the rope—*avec plaisir!*

What did the collective consciousness of the DisUnited States accomplish to arrive at this state of disintegration that it finds itself trapped in today? Where and when did it begin to decline—and why so rapidly? Was that Soviet poet right when he predicted that the DisUnited States was like a comet—at first, it burns brightly, but surely it then burns out prematurely? Why had no one told this baby nation not to play with matches?

With the fading away of the British empire, for a while, the world had no hope in having a discriminating policeman on the beat—the only ‘law officer’ was a moustached malignant, necrophilic aggressor who had to be, and would be, eliminated (by the Soviets, stupid!) from the world view. The socio-economic classes could not be left on their own—free to manoeuvre at will. The horribleness of the Second World War necessitated a benign leader, a lighthouse to which all global community members could refer to for sustenance and protection against those nefarious elements that threatened them. It would be a long, arduous road to travel to succeed in creating a worldly detente worthy of everyone’s respect and endorsement. That finish has not been reached.

At the end of the Second World War, the United States put on the mantel of superpower, the world’s parvenue policeman. It also participated—qualified to do so because of its myriad military successes—in the division of conquered lands with other ‘victorious’ war contestants. Not only did the United States, not yet the DisUnited States, not actually comprehend the extent of the real estate it had suddenly inherited, it had to find out where it was, how much territory had been piled up, and then register the number of holdings, giving them legal jurisdiction. This task challenged the number of material possessions acquired by the Vatican in Rome throughout the centuries. Then what?

The dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan was the hideous nonaccomplishment

the baby nation's aggressive foreign policy would ever make and just at the outset of its fledgling history; and, today it is not only that tragedy that irks sixty-per cent (Asian) of the world's population, but also the spectre of the Korean and Vietnam debacles. And what do the Asians say about Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan? They are more than cautious. Wouldn't you be? They observe an arrogant, self-righteous United States, by now the DisUnited States, divorced from reality, their own reality and that of the rest of the world's, quick to be always ethically letter-perfect even when they are not—when they are forever contradicting themselves. Americans are a wonderful people if they are not bombing you; so, who is America not bombing?

But you do not govern our universe with projectiles alone. In the American DNA, there exists a keen sense of the import of psychology. (Psychological warfare is one of the masterstrokes of the Pentagon: "Once you've got them by their b***s, their hearts and minds will follow.") The military-industrial complex is more about making money than giving out medals and counting MIAs and KIAs. It had to be money, that cure-all, that would be the rallying cry of Judeo-Christian 'Democratic' Capitalism. In the hearts and minds of all Americans, the thoughts of George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) are brainwashed: "The universal regard for money is the one hopeful fact in our civilization, the one sound spot in our social conscience. Money is the most important thing in the world. It represents health, strength, honour, generosity, and beauty as conspicuously as the want of it represents illness, weakness, disgrace, meanness, and ugliness." It would be money—lots of it!—that the American government would print and employ to cajole, blackmail, influence, to do what was necessary to get its way, wherever it went. Marx had to be eliminated from the 'literature,' and he was supplanted by types monkeying Milton Friedman. (See *The Philosophy of Money* authored by Georg Simmel [1858-1918]).

The material exigencies have been taken care of with paper, eventually, without value, Monopoly \$\$\$, play money, the Americans had to go for the incorporeal features of the human being, the psyche. They were obsessed with demonstrating to the world that they were as good as, even better than, all others—especially the Europeans whom they had left in disgust and even ire.

When the first colonists from Europe landed on American soil, they did not bring many of their European possessions on the long journey across the Atlantic Ocean. They came with almost nothing; but, they did bring dictionaries and Bibles. The only literature the early Americans possessed was the fire and brimstone of their Christian bibles. Those Good Books would set the tone of the American self-righteousness that would define its *raison d'être* for doing what Caesar and Napoleon themselves had failed to do. The fervency to be in the right—even, obviously, fanatically so—characterizes still today the DisUnited States' quest to be the best (exceptionalism, superiority, and confirmation complex) in everything they try to fulfil. The very people who escaped the economic and political cruelty of the Old World in the New would do everything to imitate the capriccios of their ancestors in the Old World. To add insult to injury,

the neophyte Americans were haunted with an inferiority complex. After all, had not the ex-Europeans, now colonists, been profiled throughout the world as drunks, psychiatric problems, criminals, adventurers, cowboys? These marginals would spend the rest of their short History attempting to establish their exceptionalism and superiority. They were out to out-Europe Europe—at any cost. Relying on a Christian-Judaic utopia, they have exhausted themselves in doing so. Oh, if only America had been colonized by the humane principles of Confucianism and its idea of sincerity and not the hateful, bellicose Christianity! (“No kingdom has ever had as many civil wars as the kingdom of Jesus Christ.” Montesquieu (1689-1755); *Persian Letters*, 1721.) Pope Francis ought to know by now that most people in the world do not believe that Mary was a virgin when she conceived Jesus Christ.

A *modus operandi* had to be instituted. You just can’t occupy, at first, a nation with military aggression. That’s old school. Teddy Roosevelt tried the carrot, then reverted to the stick to get his way. No, the carrot had to be more convincing, more economically efficient, more *simpatico*. It had to be ‘soft power.’ Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Rock n’ Roll, basketball, American football, Hollywood, television—all those attributes which had established America’s ‘good guy’ presence on the world stage. The cops always captured the criminals. If they had not shot them dead, the handsome actor always married the beautiful actress. What a Happy Hunting Ground we all could enjoy!

For a long time, dictators, presidents, drug lords, generals, and prime ministers were inveigled into accepting dollars to join in on the big splash of Judeo-Christian ‘Democratic’ Capitalism. These “leaders” had to be converted to conform and believe. Many of them sent their sons and daughters to Harvard to study for MBAs, suck up the American ‘Culture,’ imitate it, and bring it home to the masses in their own countries. Harvard alumni and alumnae begged their fathers to monkey the Americans and get richer doing so. Significant infrastructure and building deals were talked about. The hope in a new future was the dream of many developing countries, and American economists were on the spot to cajole and advise and offer hope... *provided!*

The initial contacts by the American businessmen had to be, naturally, with the privileged classes of the countries they had desired to bring to the brim with Cokes and french fries. Usually, these leaders were already wealthy and keen on installing hamburger joints, Coca-Cola distilleries, and even supermarkets. The Rockefeller family had built the CADA food chain in Venezuela and later had sold it to well-off Venezuelans. Again, the Rockefeller dynasty constructed the ESSELUNGA chain of supermarkets in Italy, afterwards selling it to flush Italians. As long as the rich were getting richer, the poor were getting poorer. This goody gumdrops arrangement functioned very well for the few until the rabble, the poor, came to understand that their Big Macs and Diet Cokes were making their rich fellows comfortable while they were slaving to keep alive as best they could. In some countries, the antagonism became so severe, and arms dealers rushed in to sell rifles and grenade launchers and tanks and

jeeps, *ad infinitum*, to quell the rambunctiousness of the *hoi polloi* naturally stimulated to renegade by Marxist doctrine and Leninist diatribes. With the passing years, the hostility matured and nurtured, and the asymmetry of power, between the ruling classes and masses became distorted, out of control. The DisUnited States began to look like the fool it really was—the fall guy who had taken on the task of putting the world aright. The only solution was to sell more arms. (As one dumb Jesuit theologian has put it so succinctly: ‘God works in strange ways.’)

Another facet of the United States’ megalomaniac obsession to hold court for the world’s commercial interests was the notion that we could unite into one sizeable moneymaking family that would see all of us living happily ever after in that Happy Hunting Ground. In the eyes of one New York journalist, the planet would become ‘flat,’ and just and equal for all.

Two convulsive broadsides would push this Laputan castle in the air asunder. The first was John Kenneth Galbraith’s (1908-2006, Canadian economist; author of *The Affluent Society* [1958]; and, the one who wished to his dying hour to be bequeathed with the Nobel Prize in Economics), who once quipped: “The task of a government is to guarantee that the poor have enough to eat and enough work so that they do not disturb the rich. Only a very stupid conservative is truly conservative.” This paternalistic jibe—even ‘stupid’ as it has turned out to be—is a modern-day take on the Romans’ plug, *panem et circenses*; and, both the Romans and the owners of the East India Company (1601) would infuriate the disciples of Marxism and Communism, and eventually, those patriarchal bromides would boost the sales of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848).

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels stimulated the world’s workers to unite and tear down the injustices of the capitalistic system. They wanted to create an atmosphere where all might enjoy a fair shake and not just JKG’s conservatives. But what had happened in the end was that the workers of the world united to become capitalists—not Marxists or Communists!

It had been evident to John Kenneth Galbraith that capitalism could survive *if* ‘the great unwashed’ might have their basic needs, and maybe a little more, to make them feel they were participants in the Judeo-Christian ‘Democratic’ Ballyhoo, and not under the thumb of a sweatshop tyrant or some IRS bureaucrat. There had to be The Boss (Robber Baron?) to keep things in order, under control. The rank and file had to be kept docile for capitalism to function. Too many cooks spoil the broth.

Globalization changed all that. An African in his hut in the Sahara desert could now connect with his stockbroker in Manhattan and click the stock options he wished to own at the New York Stock Exchange. Capitalism had begun to run amuck—JKG’s worst nightmare. Implicit in JKG’s mind was the idea that the success of capitalism would be its demise. How could everyone in the world (3,000,000,000 of us in 1960;

8,000,000,000 in 2025) live on a Happy Hunting Ground? Today, Harvard professors continue to believe in the blessed future of capitalism. Even Mark Zuckerberg! He keeps spreading The Word: Hope in Friendship, Fame, & Fortune—for all of us, thanks to him. All we are left to do is keep praying for the goodies to be delivered to every villa, penthouse, house, hut, and park bench throughout the world by you know who!

Still, there was the other horrific barrage: Globalization's real dilemma was that the 'developing' countries were pilfering as they had been taught to by the "developed" countries since 1601—and even better so. The capitalist world was not on its way to finding a satisfactory solution to this quandary, and none is in sight. "The tyrant grinds down his slaves, and they don't turn against him; they crush those beneath them" (Bronte 2000 [1847]: 144). The capitalist world sinks, farther and farther every day now, into a Black Hole of Greed, Corruption, Hedonism, and Implacable Stupidity. Alain Minc, the author of *Le Nouveau Moyen Âge* (Editions Gallimard, 1993), predicted that Europe, especially without the United States-Nato duo, would turn into a continent of roving criminal organizations. How much do you want to bet?

Where does this leave our once beloved DisUnited States? In the Americas! The 'Americans' will no longer be referred to as 'Americans,' but 'North Americans!' And they will be looked upon nostalgically as some sort of museum piece. In those 'banana republics' is where, there, they will regroup, set a new course hopefully much more sagacious, read again the Bible where St. Paul says that "charity begins at home," and thumb their way through Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* and come to that page where he says, I paraphrase, fight to win foreign wars and when you do go home and don't stay depleting the resources of your own citizens. The latter have to pay for your overseas' gambles. North Americans are about to study Spanish, and it might be wise of them to lobby (GOING OUT OF BUSINESS sale!) to transfer the Vatican to Coral Gables, Florida.

Have a nice nightmare!
It's a jungle out there!

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Anthony St. John was born in Brooklyn, New York on 7 October 1944. He was educated at St. Bonaventure University, The University of Miami, and the University of Florida. He specialized in Philosophy, American Literature, and English Literature. He was a journalist for The Hollywood Herald, Miami Herald, and The Gainesville Sun. He was the copy editor of The Daily Journal, Venezuela's English-written newspaper. He is an author, poet, and essayist. He served in the Vietnam "War" as an Artillery first lieutenant. His *The Hippie Lieutenant* is a first person account of his experiences in Vietnam. Mr. St. John has lived in Italy since 1983.

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