

44. Polarized Pundits

When did America become a nation of miscreants, name calling finger pointers, and silent victims? It's more a battle zone than any contemporary medieval oligarchy pumped up on oil profits. Such behavior is usually a clue to major malfeasance. America is a schizophrenic superpower to be feared, holding its bailout of Europe, nuclear trigger, and repeated humanitarian efforts over heads of its allies. America never become that "kinder, gentler, grossly bushier" nation that Dudbubba's dad described. Just the opposite, it's full of screaming extremists, peaceniks and warmongers alike. Loud dissent just fuels this fire. It's more polarized than ever between an amoral minority of churchgoing hypocrites and majority of hard working survivors. Affluence has circled its wagons fearful of aborigines. What next? Armed camps? Beginning to resemble Columbia more than America. This mentality extends into everything. America needs some stabilizing balance before it brings catastrophe. You could really get behind a calm voice pursuing a noble mission.

A wartime American president can no longer be popular, not after America's fiasco in Viet Nam. People will say they support their president and troops during wartime, but what if it's an illegal war waged by mercenaries against practically defenseless guerillas? Self determination is an essential element of democracy, not some other powerful nation telling you what to do. Self determination is something Americans only hope for, license to live mundane lives without military conscription, or taxation for wartime expenditure beyond all means of paying, \$500 billion/year in Iraq alone. Wars make money for select privateers—caterers like Helloburden—those who take bribes and kickbacks, and weapon makers. Then you have to pay to restore peace. Apparently, poll numbers in the low 30's is not enough to initiate impeachment proceedings. So, what is? Congress won't impeach because they fear partisan squabbling, a lame excuse. Representing America at G8 conferences, Dudbubba is openly hostile to heads of member nations. Is that what Americans want? Al knew better. Many believe a small group of extremely wealthy families run everything, present only two candidates of their own to preserve the facade of choice, but maintain identical policies no matter who's elected. Any president that attempts to flex muscles in order to change this arrangement would be forced out from within. Voters are no longer part of this equation.

It's been suggested that societies that travel at the speed of a bicycle are invincible. Americans with superior firepower, speed and tactics could not defeat patient Vietnamese or practically any entrenched insurgency, whether in Middle East or elsewhere. Blowing up bridges, buildings, roads and utilities is not winning; it's just massive vandalism. People regroup and very soon after water again flows. If you kill everyone, what have you won? Access to desert territory and finite resources? There's a slim line between humanitarian aid and imperialism. A nation's renewable strength is in its people. Better to win cooperation, hearts and minds.

Sympathy for anarchists, he had no regard of chains of command, especially when it comes to something as insignificant as a bicycling club. Being its president is nothing to brag about, an honorary not functional title at best; if it were so, why not assign role to someone who could make use of it? Or several worthy people? Who's to know? What difference would it make? We're all presidents! Or a board of directors with rotating chair-people. Better than one megalomaniac. Didn't feel welcome at club functions, but, then again, never witnessed any effort to make anyone feel welcome, except to take advantage of them. How was this unlike anywhere in America? From start, he was held at arm's length by upturned noses as if roadkill. Didn't smell all that bad, really. This continued after tons of volunteering. By welcoming everyone, you'll only attract those desperate for friends, which implies they don't have any; begs the question, "Why not?" Pelaton doesn't need you. People you'd like to know shy away. A few evil examples keep decent folks apart. "Ah, quit your belly-achin'," guilty parties told him. Bicyclists customarily complain; after all, it's all about shared pain, isn't it? Club officers don't understand the term *partnership*, only how to garner credit for themselves.

He persisted, nevertheless, because of his belief in a bicycle's power for global good: better brain chemistry, curtailed energy consumption, drug and tobacco cessation, health boost, improved awareness of local area, less isolation, lower HMO premiums and Medicare payments, mania abatement—his highest priority—and more allies overseas. He simply enjoyed bicycling even if mania part wasn't quite true. Bushmen, communists, poor followers of Islam, struggling Chinese, all look upon energy hogs as corrupt and lazy, and they're right! When you can't feed your family, what's your opinion of motorsports? Humdingers? New York's penthouses? Just makes you crazy; fasting and sacrificing seem ridiculous. Leach's *Lifestyles* are rightly vilified. Leech, indeed, parasite! It's what brought down Shah of Iran, conspicuous Western extravagances

while countrymen all around were starving. Corruption implies intent, malice aforethought. Perhaps president's cabinet had no plans and were actually clueless. Moot, but it sets an example being copied by local sharpies everywhere, a license to steal based on stupidity. Why rail against misguided individuals? Wasn't policy itself the real culprit? Idiots are hopeless. Laws can be fixed.

The West has progressed in just about everything—communications, manufacturing, medicine, space—except cultural appreciation and ethics. How many of your friends are multilingual, mon ami? America just doesn't care enough to make friends, has become World's bully. Making friends is a better strategy than bombing Moslems to occupy their territory or stop buying an ally's produce because of bad decisions of government; only citizens suffer, and, face it, there's an obvious disconnect between citizens and officials. If you didn't much agree with recent American actions, shouldn't you also avoid buying American? Can't turn your backs on United Nations because your nation's ambitions don't match World needs. Where extremism rules, can terrorism be far behind?

Evangelist Pat Rubberdong, in a rather unchristian moment, recorded by impartial witnesses during a public broadcast, called for assassination of Venusia's Socialist President... then denied saying it. Pauline Zong and Shorn Hankie hastily defended this indefensible lie. It's all spin, spun faster and faster, because the end is just over horizon and rolling in relentlessly as nightfall. At least Brits have a name for it, *The Black Dog*, Judgement Day. And he thought Black Dogs only referred to supernatural menaces that guard occult places, as likely to rip out throat of master as some interloper, perhaps another way to describe extremists, whether conservative or liberal.

They say, "Any youth who's not a liberal is heartless; any adult who's not conservative is an old fool." Why allow oneself to be seduced either way? Most people are liberal when young. They'll try every vice at least once. If you try compassion and get burned, you learn to be a little cagier next time, perhaps even collapse into self interest. You progressively become conservative. Espousing this view is just another way of saying, "I have mine; too bad for everyone else." Conservatives create nothing, put nothing back, take too much, wind up by themselves or wrapped in sacramental vestments to justify wrong choices. "My country, right or wrong, love it or leave it." What if it's way more wrong than right? Absolute power corrupts absolutely. Being the most powerful nation on earth means being the most corrupt one. Is that what you want? They waste everyone's life making earning money its most impor-

tant part. But some old fools after a life of accumulation do great good, come full circle to liberal charity, feather their own bed ist, so they won't wind up like him, penniless and pensive. Even if you stand for all that's good in society, you won't get elected. Slightly better than most is a good position to be in.

Forget liberal or conservative, pick progressive policies. Force corporations to stop despoiling small countries as if dumps and toilets. Impose high tariffs on cheap imports. Redistribute manufacturing back to places where products are used, rather than allowing wasteful global shipping. Require waste recycling. Tax corporations and rich. Those who consume or create must be made responsible for cleanup burdens, not income and property tax payers. Progressives don't win elections because voters aren't smart enough to figure out why these things are important. Analytical scientists and thinkers represent less than 1% of population, and so are ill represented in democracies.

Government is made up of politicians with self interests who'll argue that they provide public protection. How do they differ from ordinary extortionists or street thugs? All they do is concentrate wealth to siphon some off, then spend small remainder wastefully. In the process, some good escapes their clutches, but only because they have to keep up appearances to get reelected. Might their exposure to suffering and want build compassion, which transforms all but the hardest hearts? Unlikely, given their sociopathic nature. If politicians don't represent your interests, then they're in your way. Impeach, recall, vote them out. Don't put up with them, since you don't have to. You live in a society supported by surrounding, ubiquitous technology. Ask the next pol you meet if he or she knows the Pythagorean Theory, or whether they can operate a computer or ride a bike, then vote accordingly.

Every time a civic officer picks up a hammer in a token show of compassion for survivors, supporters on right criticize, "Screw earthquake, hurricane, tsunami victims! We can't afford them!" Isn't this exactly what taxpayers dutifully filed for, help from government when in need? Conservatives are easy to spot. They're generally affluent, gain more than anybody from government policies, knock anything that hints of humanitarianism, pay less than their share, and usually buy belts over 40". This is evil, possibly the greatest evil existing today. People consider a lone bank robber or carjacker bad, and rightly have no compunction about sending one to prison. Right wing hate mongers steal 1,000 times as much from entire population, yet they're never suspected, arrested, tried, convicted, or made to pay. Anyone who shows the least mercy they

instantly and rabidly turn against. Ever notice? How can anyone so hate compassion? Only the most guilty. Liberals portray people going to hurricane zones as heroic, when it should be expected, as a matter of fact already calculated in. Just look at gigantic chains of hurricanes whipping across Atlantic every year. Advance planning and government response should be givens. If you happen to see yourself amongst these foul descriptions, feel free to soul search.

Focused solely on selfish thrills, liberals are fascinated with expatriots gone native, foreign sights and sounds, herbal hallucinogens, hitherto unknown tribes, unusual customs. Guess they all hear primitive drums, enjoy fertility festivals, tribal ritual. Anyone who recreates that quintessential beat interests liberals. Untamed drummers dominate, seduce and win. An intellectual argument that beckons to reason—Zero Population Growth—can seldom overcome basic instincts to indulge and procreate. Despite depletion of resources to support it and laws to the contrary, reproduction is out of control. India's population tripled in 25 years. Neither China nor India can be contained. Among the biggest cities in World are in Brazil and Mexico, not wealthy American and European industrialized countries. It's not blind consumerism that underlies most behavior, but mindless instinct. Fatten against bad times. Preserve species. Reproduce. Arguments supporting any ascendancy of a higher instinct are specious. Prepare to acknowledge, deal with, and descend into a lower form of life. Welcome to Millennium 3.

Do you know what rest-of-world denizens are interested in? America. This nation creates more art, science, and stuff necessary for life than anywhere else. It can also destroy entire earth many times over with its thousands of weapons of mass destruction. Most terrorists don't seem to fear this. Cowards that they are, they hide behind children and women, then primarily target unarmed, neutral citizens who can't retaliate. They mean to exterminate those who have no say in decisions, as if they're working for ones who they should be targeting. Someday they may succeed.

Living within sight of an LNG facility, he could hardly awaken without fear, and for what? He didn't support such actions. It seemed as if he along with everyone living in a *blue state* who voted the wrong way would be their next target. Meanwhile, what nation must America target for total extinction should this nation be attacked again? Perhaps pressure Libya or Syria or Yemen or some other unlikable country; tell them they'll be bombed if ever any 9/11 reoccurs. Enlist their help rousting Al Qaeda goons. Or bomb them preemptively, then likewise extort Saudi Arabia, next in line. A unilateral death blow would seem to end America's worries, at

least if you follow current administration's logic. How can *nuke-em-first* advocates believe that every Syrian is a terrorist any more than every American is a corrupt lazy infidel? Is it so much easier to make enemies than friends?

What's Al Qaeda's strategy? Hide out nearby, right within industrialized nations, while West flattens Old World? Why? So they can return and rule? What do they think, West is going to do their dirty work? If Americans resort to an *us-them* mentality, do they comprehend what this truly means? Reprisals ripe with haphazard devastation, havoc with ecosphere, and mass murder. Isn't this what America is against? Someday World's leaders might smarten up and just purge goons themselves, place pinpoint attacks against them, take them out. United Nations is powerless to sanction such action. Do Security Council Members covertly support Al Qaeda? Games within games go on. Notice that no videotape has surfaced that announces a fatwa against clandestine terrorists who target innocent bystanders, something you'd think would be unavoidable. Perhaps latest crusaders have no need to terrorize, but are simply resolute in completing their mission. Americans have more to lose than those with nothing to lose. Americans are held hostage every day in some way. They'd be better off not being World's employer, father figure, nursemaid, police force, or trading partner; then they'd be like Swedes or Swiss, neutral.

The war on terror against Arab boogey men will disappear when it loses its intrigue as a political mindtrap. You have to make people really fearful to buy into such nonsense. Democrat or Republican, doves or hawks, sides are just useless labels in a never ending conflict. Conflicts only exist because someone benefits from keeping them going. One can't help being subversive if they never have the upper hand. Temporary artificial dips in gasoline prices were just another way to ensure votes. By Inauguration Day, prices had already risen. Scaring people to vote a certain way eventually ceases to be useful to a lame duck. Widespread poverty threatens domestic security far more than foreign saboteurs.

Conservatives troubled him. They not only didn't have any good ideas, they didn't even want to discuss any. Their apologists were everywhere on Internet, radio and television, convenient to argue their ideologies and give an appearance of magnificent service to mankind while they pillage. It's almost as if guilt were catching up with them, and they have to rationalize it away, repeat those lies so often until they're accepted by the weak minded. Conservatism is a dead end. Unless you are constantly thinking of new ways to do things, there's no growth, no innovation, no new

markets, rather stagnation, a spiral downward into oblivion. Being a guarded reactionary just leads to societal decay. Putting another man on the moon is a waste of resources in this scenario. It will never become a refuge for the wealthy, if that's what they're thinking. Space to them is just a political ploy, a way to appear smarter, not a real global goal with important consequences. Particularly worrisome is their absolute faith in elitism. Immigrants aren't stealing meal tickets, it's Republican fiscal policy. They aren't very smart, or they're Machiavellian schemers. People opt for a Republican candidate when they perceive a threat to their imperialistic bent, personal greed, or property ownership. Conservative politics, laws, and more laws were for people who have something to lose, certainly not for bottom dwellers, disenfranchised outsiders, and huggers, who look for any chink, foothold or loophole that lets them siphon off a bit of sustenance. Rules of conduct only work when fair to all parties. His idea of sharing the streets was that bicyclists and pedestrians allow motorists to follow them.

Conservative means a few thrive and many die from misfortune; liberal means everyone ekes out a miserable confused life roaming around muttering. Weighing failures of each course, he had to choose life over death. Somewhere between would surely be superior, an assortment of classes to which one might aspire, but neither extreme. Nobody could choose emperor or homeless beggar. Life isn't about getting a paycheck, pleasing human resource pigeonholers, winning at "Apprentice". Each person studies precisely what he or she wants to because they *lean* into it based on attentiveness, exposure, small moments of self awareness. There had to be alternatives to predetermined, regimented lifestyles that make humans into minions or soldiers in a war to win a zero sum game for somebody else. He'd studied everything, because only then could he get a glimpse of truth and preserve freedom. Naturally, you can't possibly know everything, only those things that stick to your personal psyche. For perspective, multiply all thoughts of seven billion current individuals by hundreds of fractional generations. Fortunately, among them there's more commonality than difference. You can choose to share important threads or unravel Mankind's fabric and hoard materials for yourself. A woven blanket warms better than a pile of conserved string.

There is a scene in *Shindler's List* of a civil engineer, who, tasked with building a new barracks for growing number of detainees, describes why buildings should be located on solid ground, not sand. The Nazi commandant glowers at her—can't take advice from a Jew and woman—and in a paroxysm of hate grabs a Luger

and blows out her brains, then blithely orders ground breaking to resume. Severe intimidation would have been preferable, he shuddered. Was so like senators who don't listen to scientists and specialists who know what they are saying in favor of placating a religious right and reaping political hay for the next election. Crazy notions as *intelligent design* instead of evolution, refusal to adopt the Kyoto Protocol, stem cell research veto, and this new round of bad science forwarded by fringe mercenaries fly in the face of entire international scientific community. Human rights? Americans don't care that prisoners are held without trial for years or tortured. If you take prisoners, you're responsible for their safety, too. Right, contain those bees in their hive, Dudbubba. Such malfeasance was supported with phony vehemence; any reasonable contrary argument brought incensed hostility.

People don't know much, don't want to know, twist facts around their pet positions. Liars bury zingers amongst many undeniable truths, so as to gain some credibility for their outright fictions, as if crashing a party among dignitaries makes them suddenly superior. It does make lies harder to sort out, codicils and footnotes to omnibus bills made law. Used to be Democrats rallied dullards, now Republicans do it. If people don't think, they accept all sorts of evil and horror. What ever happened to notion of leader as father who provides for a family or, any analogous constituency? So many insurrections could be averted with free entertainment, hospital care, potable water, public libraries, reliable electricity, responsible television, safe schools. Fathers seem to know how to escalate conflicts but not how to defuse it, wind down warfare. Why have TV programs shifted lately to fey interests—cooking, decorating, fashions—stuff unlikely to offend? People well led into a proper quality of life aren't plotting civil unrest to raise theirs.

All his marketable skills were useless in this Republican malaise. Used to know how to make money; everything had changed. Could be there's just too much information around? He spent his life in the information business. Believe it or not, he always looked to say more with fewer words, not that words are bad, but they waste time better spent doing something productive. Words are supposed to translate ideas into actions, try to get reader busy. Nowadays words have become weapons, flung from motorists, spewed from conservative talk, worming into your brain during its washing, a humbling realization for a publicist and wordsmith. Created a monster? Words without love are always malevolent, often misogynist as well.

This was how Dudbubba held onto a slim constituency—compassionless dupes, overly proud ass kickers, and people who want for nothing. There was no mandate for Dud's administration, surely no democracy, more an oligarchy; lost popular vote with extremely low voter turnout. Unwashed masses might have been too busy working 2 or 3 jobs just to survive. Then 9 months after taking office, either staged or was helpless to stop only foreign attack on continental America in nearly 200 years. Way to go!

Howie Cant and Rush Limburger worked overtime after Kirky's speech was better than they foresaw, better than puppet's they supported. Kirky pushed voter's buttons, created a platform, basically said, "That's right! I *am* for people! Not for killing them. Not busting family finances; not tax breaks for the rich." That's when Kirky's popularity spiked—when masses dared to hope—then, in retreating, it waned. Did you notice? Disengage and you're done. But it was all rhetoric, anyway. How could it be genuine? Dud and Kirky are both billionaires. Kirky's military service was minimal (4 months) although spectacular (6 combat medals). Trumps Dud's (2 weeks active, 1 AWOL report). But that was long ago. What could they do now? Ancient glory doesn't translate into a detailed plan for creating a future. Possibly these were the most dissatisfactory presidential debates in history, hardly worth hours of television viewing. When no platform is promoted, no promises made, there's never a mandate. Without a clear platform, not some vague generalities, candidates are free to do anything at all, despoil at will, once they attain office. Presidential elections has been a fun carousel for two for a sole brass ring with no strings attached. Nobody should vote for angry adversaries who make faces and roll their eyes. Childish. They prove themselves too impatient to carry heavy mantle of government. Can't someone run who's delighted to be selected, eager to serve, grateful for a chance to surmount so many challenges?

There was 2 Americas, the land of privileged and those who drag on their coattails, and the rest: anguished minorities, dreamers, quiet majority, seekers of social justice. He began to think it wise to simply split up United States into something Lincoln was trying to avoid. There'd be choice again. The privileged would swarm South, vacate congested, dirty Northern cities, and wrest slaves from Asia, Mexico, and South America, since they'd no longer be able to force Americans into those roles. Remaining America in Northern states, which have for centuries absorbed unique sensibilities and melded them among their own, would benefit from diversity as entire country once did, gradually become

a boiler room for progress and a brighter future for humanity as a whole. A fantasy, to be sure, but one can benefit by considering what isn't feasible, which exposes underlying weaknesses and suggest directions. Einstein called it a *thought experiment*.

Desperate politicians promote a panacea of math and science education, as if that might solve some problem. If citizens won't study them on their own, what will forcing it upon them do? Many are incapable of logic. At this terrible juncture, he'd vote for anyone who'd make any distinct promise and guarantee to step down if their promise wasn't fulfilled. Even better, promise to tax corporations, imports, the wealthy; institute a special tax for those who incorporate offshore. Stifle trade? Absurd! Let any company that wouldn't pay extra to play in World's biggest marketplace choose instead to develop trade with some other nations. This would nicely serve everyone's interests.

Heard Dentist Mudler, as cynical a comedian as you can find. To him Dud represents a hair trigger temper, which Mudler superficially admires, more fun to mock. Totally irresponsible. Comedians target stereotypes for laughs. Tony Hancock mocked pretensions and zealots 40 years earlier in films like *The Rebel* where Hancock's character used a bicycle to "paint" bad art; in TV sitcom Tony complained of a bike path coming through foyer. Anything serious will always be fair game for ridicule. He once made a bad joke about colorful characters you meet who ride busses, overheard by a Polish couple, Miary Jednostka and Rower Szereg; unbeknownst to him, they were both bus commuters and didn't appreciate. Humor seldom cares who's injured or insulted, and sanitized jokes aren't funny. Best to poke fun of yourself if ego allows it. He found it very sad that anyone would prefer a leader who makes snap decisions without benefit of facts because of which innocents die. This is such a World, where being America's president means you can negatively affect everyone globally. Nations shouldn't allow it.

Both dad and Dud squandered their chances with another 4 years of irrationality and war, stifling progress. America needs to make friends overseas. Hadn't he been saying this for ages? In such a Democratic state as his, there's almost no point in voting. He only voted to offset any squandered votes for 3rd party candidates. When Republican returned, he expected more of the same reprisals his state had been suffering. Government contracts didn't come its way, local economy suffered, Republicans got even for a lack of voter support. Can't play the game of electing a Republican Governor in hopes that can stem payback. Never works. They'd need to go all out Republican or Democrat. Back a winner; let some other

state suffer for a change. This is Mudler's way, hedge your bets, only give an appearance of conservatism to counter comedic image, narcissistic posturing hiding simpering opportunism. Cowardly and unprincipled, but the hugger way; get what you can, if you can.

Must question what these hypocrites have done. They bought a bunch of radio apologists to spin lies: Bufatcan, Duke Nukem, Fellwell, Pat Robosay, Shorn Hankie, and such reactionary knee-jerks. Radio is a fine way to reach people, theater of the mind. But they use it to paint phony pictures with words that you don't comprehend and push emotional buttons of which you weren't aware. These guys were always *screaming* about how stupid Democrats are, who, if they hadn't noticed, weren't in power, so weren't causing malaise over which they're gnashing their teeth. They just needed a scapegoat other than themselves. Republican party is always right, and anyone who doesn't agree is a moron, according to them, morons themselves. Like pufferfish, they bully as camouflage because they have no brains. This administration screwed up so many times even journalists lost count. But Republican radio just won't let go. Liberals can be just as belligerent and biased, if they choose to be; is this what a nation needs? He knew exactly what they were doing, after having been in publicity forever. They were using brainwashing techniques, latest tactic in their War Against Terror, their terror being losing all their easy money in a Worldwide insurrection. When people fear they might lose, they contrive enemies that don't exist, grasp at straws, reach for panic buttons, talk faster and louder. Dismissive tags of conservative, left, liberal, or right must go away. It's goal is to conquer by dividing. Left/right polarization only benefits those who take sides in a war over money and power, things nobody except psychos really needs.

"Editors and journalists are primarily storytellers." Laughable. They should be scrupulously recording events as they happen. That means investigations and noisome toil. No, it's so much easier just to make it all up, sound plausible, and who cares? Power brokers can drag any fossil for a fee out of academia to testify to a pack of obvious lies before Congressional Committees, particularly economists, who'll quote seemingly contradictory facts as evidence against any action, because unchanging paralysis suits their agenda, while seizing their assets for redistribution doesn't.

In political theory, a *republic* is any nation where governmental power comes from some of its people's say so. Obviously this doesn't happen in dictatorships, monarchies or oligarchies. In these, powerful groups might organize to overthrow or subdue a ruler; supposedly this results in *democracy*. Republic is a maligned,

overused term, more for nations without separate states. America calls itself a federated republic, where states have limited autonomy to defy federal statutes. But what happens when voters elect a legislature and president who no longer serve constituents? Pre-WWII Germany slipped from a republic into an autocratic atrocity in no time. In a truly democratic republic, citizens have all the say, should they choose to use it. If organized, they can bargain collectively, declare peace, invoke progressive utilization, impeach, recall politicians, and withhold support. As long as they sanction polarized parties and stray from middle, they fritter away any say.

What did he see at job fairs? Among the few legitimate recruiters, there are always several trolling for guards: body, prison, security. Of course, military always looks for a few good men with lives to waste on somebody's zero sum game. It worked for awhile. With no domestic policy to speak of, Dud had no voter credibility. You don't need any if you fix elections in states where absentee ballots can be mislaid, chads can be hung, friends and relatives run everything. The fix is on. Your team can even win and you lose your bet based on point spread. Fixes aren't confined to sporting events, but to businesses, casinos, government policies, and whatever's important enough to ensure they profit and you don't.

Atlantrick magazine ran a story on how difficult an opponent China would be. Nonsense! A solo submarine with a half dozen tactical nukes could completely wipe out China's entire military infrastructure and population within minutes even as a 2nd or 3rd strike. Moslem extremists are seen as more a threat since they have no distinct base against which to retaliate, merge with civilians and scenery. Unless a subterfuge by more powerful nations, extremism serves only its own interests; nations need to unite against it, whether its clandestine sleeper cells coiled to plant WMDs, or national administrations openly belligerent about it. But disengaging from involvement in backwaters makes more sense, incites less hatred, keeps tactical capabilities secret from enemies.

Clever plus glib doesn't yield wise. Backing the rich is clever, because, even when they don't get reelected, they still spend plenty trying. Poor people can't afford publicists. Take the French, who suddenly find themselves victimized by their former friends, America's enemies. The very nations they stuck up for are now extorting them. There's gratitude! Incarcerated their journalists over grade school policies. When will this rudeness end? Hair bonnets are not the kind of thing you kill people over. Yet Chiraqi, a small player who repeatedly kyboshes peace treaties, resists, won't be held hostage. If he had to choose, he would've immediately

agreed, got back his journalists, then thrown some Moslems extremists in France into concentration camps. Serves them right. Might work in America with Christian political fundamentalists, too. Gandhi did say, though, "An eye for an eye; soon we're all blind." Don't target religious innocents, just loonies and nazis who claim divine rights, drape themselves with crosses and robes, while they deny, despoil and grab. God must be furious. Divine right is the last desperate ploy of subjugators who hope to get you to comply with whatever delusion they hold as self-profitable. They should worry about saving their own soul.

He considered publishing his political observations before 2004 election. If after, readers might accuse him of sour grapes or say he was pandering to winner. Into next cycle, Democrats again donned the cape of *change*, Republicans wrapped themselves in reactionary *Reaganism*. Didn't matter, really. Truth existed outside time. Then again, who'd base their voting decision on what he had to say? He was no Michael Moore or less, vapid filmmaker, who, if only half of what he documented was close to truth, was totally justified to be incensed. As Sinéad O'Connor testifies from personal experience, "These are dangerous days/To say what you feel is to dig your own grave." How did she become so politicized? But partisanship itself is encouraged, legitimizes proceedings. With a veneer of democracy, dissidents are allowed to spout as long as status quo is maintained. Polarized voters will never be swayed, each blindly supporting their ideologue after years of conditioning. In the end, independent votes will always be the key electorate. Despite any psychobabble of oppositional defiance, independents think for themselves, the only ones with any integrity left; they won't be pegged into any neat hole, proactively pursue democracy, *even if there is none*. Anchor Cronkite was an independent; many believe he had chops to assume Presidency, but didn't want to. Who would? Only people who lust for power make a target of themselves unnecessarily, other than those who are already dying and don't give a damn.

Before rulers allow any candidate by their tollbooth, they'll calculate the effect he/she would have on voting populace. Any Shrillery who might represent self-autonomous action will only be allowed to the gate, but not through. An Obomanation will get cash plus a speed pass to give hope to a disenfranchised class. A golfing Tiger among politicians, he'd be a Pyrrhic victory, representing Okra, not you, but won't beat the conservative Macaination who supports industrial automation and white male domination, not in this nation. Conservation at this point generally caters to

the wealthy, creates tax paid buffer zones around privileged estates, saves no whales. Americans will be forced to choose between two sell outs. You'll get no change, nor, heaven forbid, improvement. An average Huckleberry or brainy Nadir will always be ground under Big Man's wheels. The election of lame duck Dub, culpable on every account (drugs, lies, sex and stupidity), proves you don't need to be a boy scout or war hero to get anointed and never impeached, you just have to agree to do whatever you're told. Leadership is dead, but costly charade of tax paid campaigning continues. Why go through it? Systemic change is what's truly needed, but you won't see that anytime soon. Scorched earth and sky is more likely. America, you have your work cut out for you.

A president is nothing more than a symbol of prevailing policies, whether a Rhodes scholar or road warrior, not anyone important, more a sap, someone at which to point a finger. This is easier than naming stealthy agency heads and cabinet officials, who actually enact and enforce policies, which mostly benefit combat zone caterer Haulabundle and other kickback scam virtuosos, who later seek to relocate headquarters to Dubai so they can beat corporate taxes. Chainese, Cheesyrice, Renomator, Rummiefield, Wolfenstein, none of them were any more memorable than convicts on a Texas chain gang, unless they later become President, as did ex-CIA Director Bushmaster, who ordered agency's complete dismantling and subsequent death of many loyal agents. Repeter's Principle never had a better example. Those who can, do; those who can't, teach; those who can't teach become politicians, and those who can't do anything at all ascend infinitely high. Those who do badly in positions of political power ascend to Cabinet posts, vice presidency, and, ultimately if they are very, very inept, President of the United States, or, worse, dictator or even emperor, where they are in position to do the greatest harm. Stranger than fiction, but a fact of life. As proof, he seemed to be running exactly opposite, getting smarter, growing more aware, and headed directly into a dustbin of disregard and oblivion.

There seemed to be a conspiracy against America's identity. What is treason? Isn't it selling out your people's best interest for personal gain? Presidents sit on a treason fence with every resolution or veto. Whatever they start with good intentions might turn bad. Governance almost demands a Coolidge *hands off* approach. Founders made Constitution changeable to handle unforeseen issues. But it can't be turned into a revolving door where some are passed and others ushered out. It must remain equal and fair to all citizens. Today, treason talk is reserved for individuals who tear up

their passports and talk trash about America, not actual Constitution violators. You may grumble about your rights being violated, but only if you're willing to extend those rights to an asylum seeking refugee or green card holder. Why do you think they're marching in demonstrations? Freedom is very tricky. Americans are only free to honor their commitments and seek new responsibilities. Today this means contribute or starve.

FDR and team had to deep think freedoms, the very essence of what it means to be American, amidst a depression and World war. When you practice them you accept duties inherent. He freed himself from tyranny of daily motor commutes to a difficult, draining, thankless drudge simply by exercising his right not to burn long chain hydrocarbons, a sacrilege to some. This meant commuting an extra hour every day, hauling clothing in and out, leaving early enough to take a shower before work. He did so willingly, but coworkers hated it, made them feel bad about lack of exercise, laziness, motor lust, smoking. When rational supporters of his innocuous behavior left, majority rabble ruled him out. Just as well, because he didn't want to share himself with those who remained. Never want to go where he wasn't welcomed as family. Functioned fine among reasonable adults, even when there's only one or two scattered among a crowd. Hard to find such people, but they somehow find each other. Rather do without and go solo than mollify crude, despicable, mean, wasteful dullards. Is this too much to ask? Those you embrace remake you in their images. Actually, *want* had yet to set in; spent very little anymore; didn't need much. As a *freedom from*, *want* must be defined as hunger or pain. Sure, he sensed loss, possibly betrayal. He'd become so much calmer and focused, though, austerity was worth it. Wasn't ashamed to speak truths, even confront his spirituality. Might sound like rationalization, but felt true. Grasp at straws you find some give sweet nectar.

It had become obvious country couldn't continue catering to conservatives. Can't import everything its people need; makes them vulnerable to container borne risks. America must make things for itself, trade goods and services among Americans, until nation gets back on its feet and security is achieved. Why not levy a punitive tariff on imported automobiles? Retaliate? They won't allow America-made products to be sold there. As an executive at Chrysler, Iacocca once said, "I could sell as many minivans as I could make in Japan, but they don't allow them into their country." America is such a great nation, its workers have always competed despite uneven playing fields. All things being equal, it'd crush other economies and rival states, not a worthwhile end. Instead,

America adopts open policies and permits free trade, when it isn't free anywhere else. Rivals build their plants in America, bypass these tariffs, and do exactly what he said, "Make it where you sell it." They take chance in a nation of laws that government won't just take over their plants, just as they would if given a chance. Amidst complex financing and stock ownership, profits dribble away into a few select coffers either way. Average Americans pay for everything. This arrangement can't last. Chrysler was already absorbed by Mercedes. General Motors is considering a merger with Renault. Soon all industry will be multinational, outside any notion of laws.

Why subsidize rest of World? Why not let other countries suffer growing pains at their own expense? Is this America's responsibility? Terrorists' objectives are to disrupt any exchange that might elevate local masses emotionally, fiscally and spiritually beyond their obsessive control. Trouble also draws financial aid. They're just playing all of you, pure and simple. Their followers are deprived suckers duped into thinking they're fighting for glory or honor. When leaders don't create stable employment, recruits take next best opportunity offered, kamikaze mercenaries; pay stinks, and so do benefits, but at least retirement in poverty isn't an issue.

What America should be actively exporting is euthenics, science of ensuring human wellbeing by improving living conditions. This assumes, of course, practicing it at home. If your not safe riding a bike, can nation have its priorities straight? Why tolerate automotive created civil unrest, crime, urban blight, and unsustainable road expenditure? To curry America as a leader among nations they'd need corporate integrity, financial securities reforms, and a host of new business regulations, so more stakeholders can share in profits. All of these pale in comparison to an entire population fully enjoying freedoms to which they're currently entitled but in many ways denied. Africans living under despotic rules comes immediately to mind, but Americans exhibit same symptoms of an inability to regulate those to whom they've subrogated authority. Tolerance of privilege leads to despotism.

To pursue a policy of preemptive strikes before enemies do means you must have a clairvoyant cabinet. Who is going to strike? Are they state sponsored? Define "tit for tat"? Whatever happened to "Innocent until proven guilty"? Who do you punish after a suicide bombing? Just a mess to clean up. If Dud's dad hadn't decimated CIA, perhaps there'd be some intelligence to go on. They don't want intelligence; wouldn't know what to do with it. Without covert operations infiltrating enemy ranks, such a policy sounds more like paranoia. Could it be America has no serious

threats at this point? Fear of reprisals among nations who witnessed what America is capable of as evidenced by Bosnia, Iraq, Somalia, while not successes, decisive costly blows from which nations can't recover without help. Other nations dread internal costs and fear losing foreign aid or trade status. The best policy America can pursue is a healthy domestic economy, from which flows tax dollars, which enables foreign assistance, fortifies front, makes friends rather than enemies. Anything that impedes a healthy middle class needs to be mercilessly removed, like cancer.

Exercise all your rights to act responsibly: assemble peacefully, bargain collectively, boycott, circulate petitions, go to church of your choice, shoot a hesychasm arrow of prayer to God from your heart, but, significantly, speak your mind, only make sure it's your *own* mind, not just what's been drummed into you by spin doctors, among whom he regrettably had to admit he once was. All institutionalize input serves someone other than you.

It all comes down to how you feel about yourself. Happy in your skin? Then, you're probably not out smashing World. He guessed he qualified as an anarchist of sorts: found nothing wrong with dissent, especially when it serves common good and stays reasonable, and knew it always takes two extreme sides to escalate into violence. You can always walk away when others don't get you, mistreat, or take advantage. Foes and friends both lose patience. Cooperation paves a 2-way street. Life's too short for bosses, CEO's, dictators, lawyers, mean spirited idiots, and tyrants. Sick bullies can be quarantined. Let people do whatever they like as long as it doesn't inflict suffering on others. Others may be dull and inconsiderate but should always be deemed essentially good. The right stones, when cut and polished, become priceless gems. Dissent shows true colors. There's so much potential for pain, gems don't emerge naturally; discord makes them withdraw. You have to afford allies a chance to rise to an occasion, explore their better self, extend brotherhood and good will, unfold their faith. As long as people read, reason, and repeatedly make an effort to interact, all is not lost. When you don't frame issues as absolutes, there's always room for compromise and fair exchange.

"There are no problems, only challenges," he recalled being told by some boss. An authority is only someone who has completed all steps at least once, since practically nobody else has. Doesn't raise your confidence much. *Authority* supposed to mean person who *wrote the book* on a topic, someone who intimately knows, who's considered every influence. There are topics that defy scrutiny: behaviors driven by abstract emotions, content of whale

songs, ecological balance, effects of foreign substances on a mind, one's own heart's desires, tomorrow's weather patterns. Challenges that cannot be met quickly become problems, rebound to bite you on the ass. The best way to avoid problems is prevent them, which translates into, "Work really hard and tirelessly, and you'll have no problems." Nonsense. You put two people in a room, soon there's trouble. If you build cities below sea level in paths of hurricanes, devastation follows. There is only 1 challenge, getting people to work well together. This only happens when they share the same goal. The rest are details that fall into place.

Put Americans back to work. Why? They are the most heavily armed population in World; you don't want to mess with them. No wonder people scream for gun control. How about guy who drove a tank to destroy Granby, Colorado? Seems they put in a cement plant next to this man's home despite all protests. So, accused leveled a council member's businesses, homes, and several other buildings, and town hall before committing suicide. See what happens when you push people to the brink? Domestic terrorism. Was it worth it? If they really wanted a cement plant, they should have gotten everyone to sign on, including accused; honorably buy guy out, otherwise, forget it. Commerce is keen, but people have rights. You can't just bulldoze them over and expect them to take it. People may have differences in opinions and still get along, but it takes someone with brains to resolve conflicts and realize compromises with which everyone can live. If you fail, bring in an unbiased arbiter. You could accuse town council, but you know they'll never take the rap. Has any member resigned?

Among the most honest, thoughtful provoking portrayals he'd ever seen, Sean Penn starred as Sam Byck, would be honest salesman and sad loser. He couldn't decide if Byck was barely intelligent, driven to dementia by an insane nation, or made sensitive by uncaring people, maybe all 3. This film, based on a true account, hauntingly captures the state of mental depression for someone who actually pays attention, listens to media, and tries to do the right thing. Unfortunately, all that sends Sam to attempt *The Assassination of Richard Nixon*, who was then President. Although Sam, stupid or stubborn, does everything wrong, and suffers consequences, viewer cannot help but empathize with Byck's expectation that everyone—*zebra coalitions*—must share in the American Dream, if, in fact, there's any such thing anymore. Screwed by bureaucracy, business, marriage, and relationships, Byck is driven to a final act of desperation, which, of course, ends badly. In the end, you're faced with a frightening fact that there are countless potential Bycks

glowering impatiently, plotting to be remembered, when society could do more to mitigate suffering that forces desperate acts. One might ask, isn't it another form of violence to let people fall through the cracks of indifference? Violence begets violence.

What does it mean to be a loser. Grow a beard? Ignore hygiene? Never amass much? Pick the wrong side in every conflict? Powerful individuals determined to hold on to wealth will derail any effort to redistribute it fairly because it's too dangerous an example. Success is too easy: Suck up all the more whenever anyone in on top nods approvingly; work tirelessly to amuse masters and monarchs; write only what justifies and vindicates greed. Why not? You wind up dead and forgotten anyway, like England's poet Laureate, James Thomson, Newton's apologist, royal lackey who made a good living doing something as simple as rhyming permitted words. Shakespeare was better, having skewered aristocrats as often as possible. All great literature subverts status, topples institutions, ultimately levels playing field but results in class struggle.

When America breeds its own terrorists, shouldn't its citizens question domestic policies? And what of international policies that cause dissent? This War Against Terror should have started with introspection. Why has America failed to enfranchise and gain support Worldwide? Or is America fighting against its own image? France, Britain, Saudi Arabia, The G8 countries, who all desire power to rule to a planet, don't want America, with its all too easy acceptance and democratic principles, to have any role, unless it's a role of way paver for their ambitions. America should consider a way to be less subservient and more independent. Dependence on Middle-eastern oil makes every action there a national security threat. The only thing as individuals Americans can effectively do anything about is *dependence*: cut back, conserve, find other ways.

Lately America has become preoccupied with fighting bogeymen, at great expense, rather than shoring up its greatest strength—middleclass earning and spending. Economics of American life were a subject of constant talk. No issue gets debated more hotly than those that whack your wallet. Monkeywiz extols free trade, says it's ultimately good, caves into a Republican platform of greed, but Gomory, Baumol, Delong and Cohen point out the realities, millions of Americans discharged because of global insecurities, increased productivity, and source inequalities. Privatizing, outsourcing and offshoring employment had become a major trend missed by last round of statistics gathering. Statisticians are always years behind, 20-20 hindsight.

This administration doesn't consider how much trouble you can get into if you're not working for a living. Idle hands are the devil's workshop. Self-employment includes dealing drugs and prostitution, while those more ambitious turn to extortion and Ponzi schemes. You can even get into trouble while working. Democrats introduced a job bill, but because of anti-middleclass Republican policy it languished for almost a decade in Congress. Greed for land, lust for violence, screwing constituencies with impunity are things more addictive than drugs, music and sex combined, in fact, become a permanent lifestyle with no chance of withdrawal. Makes personal failings seem like victimless crimes, except to resort to drugs is to say yes to slavery, your own.

In a mad Shakespearean effort to wash their hands spotless of slave blood, governments privatize industries, let someone else abuse workers, while they subrogate responsibilities for functions like port safety. Only makes sense. Then, when WMDs are inevitably smuggled in and used, they can deflect disrepute and specify a target. "All those Arabs' fault!" In this flawed plan, a single lunatic can start World War III. Any group or nation is comprised of any number of distinct parties, many responsible, some guilty, some innocent, some plainly irresponsible. America grows its own terrorists, who've struck in Columbine, Oklahoma and elsewhere.

Everyone occupies some position on a Spectrum of Involvement, from extremes of *Grasping, Me First Greed* through [$><$ = transition] *Good of Community Before Personal Interests Altruism*:

emperor $><$ dictator $><$ insider $><$
 capitalist $><$ opportunist $><$
 apathetic $><$
 activist $><$ soldier $><$
 patriot $><$ terrorist $><$ martyr

At various points in life, even from moment to moment, each person may transform. An infant is more like a dictator than an activist. Circumstance and passions push people between notches. Otherwise most settle under opportunist or remain unaware, as Americans who don't vote or lose all ambitions, a sensible stance if you're able to scrape by and have no real opportunities anyway. Rarely are individuals called to be martyrs, then it's usually their own choice. Rather than accept any role, since there's never any requirement to do so, you ought to blend them, carry all within, give each its due, understand all perspectives. How else can you combat extremism? Sometimes you'll need to get militant or self serving; knowing how and when are important.

Fact gathering from the wrong slice of timeline is another way to skew results. Quoting statistics from 10 years ago, done throughout this book for want of current data, may exaggerate or minimize extent of problem. Conservatives are competent result skewers, maybe their only skill. Being a conservative, all Dud's domestic, fiscal and international policies had so far failed. Imagine, giving a tax break to the wealthy? What was the advantage of giving 15,000 individuals \$50,000 when you could have instead given 240,000,000 individuals \$3 apiece, \$30 million less in total, which everyone knows would have been spent instead of hoarded. What a slap in the face to honest, hard working Americans! Extorts from middle majority and hands it over to fringe wealthy. Isn't that unconstitutional? Why give anyone a tax break? Why not offer prizes for innovation or rewards for good deeds? Sweden has that foundation originally endowed by Nobel. The fact that US Government waited 10 days to send any help to survivors of Hurricane Katrina shows another policy, Homeland Security, is a total farce. National guard is busy fighting foreign battles that marines and rangers should be. Dud hadn't had 1 policy success in 8 years, batting .000. Ball players batting less than .200 are benched or replaced. Besides, who wants a leader named *George*? Wasn't it King George who patriots rebelled against to form this nation? With a Constitutional right to recall, another revolution isn't necessary.

Another half-wit sellout on cable television pled his case over a slide that asked, "Why should affluent be punished?" Its claim was that the affluent, who pay all taxes, should expect good roads, public service, and special breaks. Oops, a major flaw in this argument: These affluent, by definition, are a small minority who don't pay biggest share, in fact, have at their disposal numerous ways to evade, such as hedge funds and real estate speculation. The fact they pay tax attorneys 6 figure retainers shows how much they evade. Surely, all revenue should go to good purposes, and those who earn the most should pay at a significantly higher rate. They can afford it. Blaming poor is plainly stupid, when causes lie with corporations and people of privilege, who pay progressively less.

Heated arguments on social justice comfort and conversely alarm. One should expect taxpayers to question where money goes, put legislators in their place, serving public good, and stay involved. Apathy serves unilateral interests: no oversight equals unconstrained grabbing. But logic applied is weak. Sticking to playbook, slickest spokesmen on both sides bristle with morality over their position, as if it were the only position, as if hundreds or thousands of viewpoints couldn't coexist. It's obvious they want more than

their share. Anarchists who inevitably rise up become pawns of power brokers. They only hurt masses, thus consolidating power. A centrist stance, with endless compromises, suffers from exhaustion, impatience, and seduction—time honored forms of political interaction. Democratic Senator Lotto was vilified for trying to get extremists in Congress to work together on what they could condone; “herding cats” he called it. Consensus is wonderful, cooperation potent, but shoving dictatorial, self-serving viewpoints down throats of the masses is not. All your judgment of right and wrong is just persistent hostile persuasion rattling around your skull. Does it help you? Sure. If you remain wary in fear of trespass, they can’t snap a trap shut on you so readily. Those without codes of conduct make easy prey. The stance, “I’d be happier, richer, safer if everyone agreed with me,” is cowardly, lazy, stupid, and wicked. These games don’t work. People find common ground together, discover what they can agree on, make that somehow mutually productive, or wars are fought. Courtesy cures ills. Polarity causes pain. FDR’s freedoms were such a consensual pact, where each agreed it applied personally but not necessarily mutually. No, tyranny is tyranny, no matter who is facing down muzzle of a gun.

A decade ago the rich convinced everyone that the worst horror was welfare fraud, people to whom you give child support, who then spend it on r-arm bandits, pornography, substance abuse, or vapid frolics while children went hungry. Honest citizens were incensed. Laws were enacted. Articulate and idle rich had an easy time convincing busy and, by definition, less crafty middle class to approve restrictions that affected them alone. Slyly, rich began to sidestep their share altogether, so social welfare was shifted onto back of hard workers, making it seem all the worse. Actually, welfare isn’t a problem; anything that redistributes wealth is good, especially among the poorest, who spend every penny they get their hands on, which drives economy forward. Two-thirds of welfare recipients are children, innocents, not defrauding anyone, perhaps pawns of parents who work system, but nonetheless deserving. If you’re doing exceptionally well, what do you care if they collect from you to distribute among needy? Corporate welfare and high bracket tax breaks are much more of a problem, and undeserved CEO compensation, which reduce bottom lines and thereby cost lower class livelihoods. It takes a thousand wage earners to make up tax evasion by one ex-President, Reagan, or ten thousand for an offshoring of a single multinational. The bigger a target, the easier it is to hit, you’ve got to admit. But will arrow stick? Too bad distance provides an impenetrable shield.

If giant corporations only paid their rightful share, more recipients could be placed on welfare. After all, their sins of omission put millions on welfare. As a water analogy, one can do nothing about rainfall, which benefits all life when within tolerances. The rich cause droughts, revolution deluges. Without sufficient SEC oversight, corporations have managed to reduce their dividends to practically nothing, instead have become funnels that effectively concentrate flow unilaterally into discrete reservoirs. No wonder they abhor organized labor. Individual welfare or job creation would be better, create a steady watershed of spending. Recipients might not buy items that companies want to sell, but at least it fosters transactions in general, unlike corporate welfare, which you already know goes directly to Boards of Directors and foreign investments. Congress always found it easier to take from than give gratefully back to the wonderful nation who've supported them. Where's the partnership?

Why couldn't everyone not gainfully employed by government or private business receive a small stipend, barely enough to live on? People would learn to be frugal and satisfied for awhile. Let them augment it with marginal self-employment as they see fit. Once certain tax thresholds were passed, welfare for them would be phased out. There would be no penalty, as now, for succeeding. People would be less fearful of failure, wouldn't ruin their lives pursuing uncertain ventures trying to survive, i. e., writing diatribes. Chronically lazy substance abusers would discover merits of advancing themselves, instead of unsuccessfully competing for unattainable opportunities. Society wants recipients off the dole because of expense, but if corporations paid their share, there would be a surplus to fund this program. Corporations could chose to either pay a higher percentage of federal revenue or offer more jobs, just the opposite of current incentives.

Obviously, everyone can't beg on street corners, or collect welfare, or work for organized charities or foundations. Someone has to create wealth that gets distributed. People begin to think of themselves as the work they do, define themselves by their occupation. What a mistake! At any moment a livelihood might be pulled out from under you like a rug. Then what, you don't exist? Unlike prior generations, workers today can't expect to keep a post forever. Socialism is dead, and he wasn't sure that was good. Ideas are exceptionally cheap things. Every fool has them. Systems that work well for a long time are exceedingly rare: country, military, schools are in disarray. Need a new economic system, something less demotivating than communism, less heartless than capitalism,

more humane than socialism. The lie is that it's, "One not another, take your pick." Totally false. Not only can all coexist, they are complimentary when balanced, practically essential components of a complete system. Art collectives, farm cooperatives and other pink tinged arrangements serve society very well.

Working for a living stinks in most ways anyway. He'd rather collect. After all, he earned it, paid in for over 30 years. He had dug deep and mined a million dollars the hard way, an hour at a time. But what did he have to show for it? Modern expenses drained away every cent, made him a crazed philanthropist peeing on community garden. After contributing for so long, collecting gave him a few grand, far less than he paid in, better than nothing, but practically nothing, barest sustenance while you look for work at McDonald's, which you can't refuse, or they stop paying. It resembled accidental death policies, which provide just enough to bury you should you die doing their bidding. Fortunately, menial labor bosses didn't want him. They saw his resume and shrunk away in fear he'd supplant them. There wasn't much else available that didn't require special certification. He couldn't be an air traffic controller, doctor, or a pharmacist. But he could be President of United States, not such a difficult job after all, it seemed. You at least need C's in college (he never cumed less than B+), don't have to succeed in business (all his were moderately successful), don't need to read (read constantly), don't require any concern for anyone or their culture (studied all from Paleolithic to modern around globe), need not speak any foreign languages (slightly knew several), and speaking sentences in English need not be complete or make any sense (filled entire filing cabinets with acceptable output). He reckoned he could run as an ultraconservative, take matching funds, with which he could call it a day, retire to Bahamas. After all, that's what they let CEOs do with other people's money. For a platform all he'd have to say is, "I want your vote. Whatever you want, I want to give it to you." Isn't such pandering equivalent but more succinct to what's being promised by others? Keep it simple.

In his lifetime, there had been two incumbent presidents who failed to secure reelection; 2 impeachments—Nixon left on his own, Beaton finished in disgrace; one president who never ran for office, Forp, was instead assigned this role, presumably for stealthy services rendered during Warren Commission; and another who lost popular vote but got in anyway, twice. It's been a succession from abdicating crook, clumsy klutz, CIA spook, panderer to property owners, to a total buffoon. Several vice presidents weren't subsequently nominated for president or failed to win. What does

that say about their administration's track record? Or confidence in office itself? Is this any way to run a democracy? Can they ever restore dignity to Presidency? Republican, Democrat, liberal, conservative are all a bunch of meaningless labels. Politicians shift their allegiance to garner vote majority. There's no platform, just a corrupt minority that says whatever it must to keep masses at bay.

How do you go about reforming elections? Term limitation is a bad approach. This means pols run only for short term gain, in and out, steal what they can as fast as they can. Nothing productive gets done. It takes almost 1 full term just to get organized in Congress. Competency testing and ethics screening would be better. Why can't parties run candidates who make promises, then let them stay if they keep their promises; with score cards everyone moves forward. The reasons are clear. Elections are run on PAC money. Lobbyists, particularly representatives of foreign interests, contribute to campaigns and expect favors in return. Without election reform, nation will soon be completely sold out, if not so already. Curtail campaign spending, fund elections with tax dollars only. Conventions, for example, are nothing but big shindigs at public's expense; they've long since ceased being event to select a candidate, now done by primaries in a majority of states. Get rid of conventions, nothing more than time killers and tax paid advertisements. Get rid of elections altogether. Assign representatives randomly from pools of prescreened citizens.

Powerful interest groups always existed. One in particular, labor unions, used to be equivalent to a 3rd political party, using their endorsement to garner support for labor. President Reagan's mission was to bust unions in the name of fighting socialism. Ron's real agenda was to scatter union members and upset a notoriously anti-Republican power base. Sure, powerful unions became corrupt; Kennedys were looking to clean them up. But Reagan succeeded and membership dwindled. From >37%, now <10% of workers are represented. This benefits nobody but boards of directors, who as a result take more than their share of profits. They cry buckets over having to share with lowly workers. They get their pabulum peddlers to say, "Nobody has anyone to blame but themselves." That would be true on a level playing field. But you can't succeed against national policies, unless you decide to take matters in your own hands or insist they are repealed. Organized crime only exists because governments are even more crooked, set an example.

Corporate taxes as a percentage of federal revenue have reached an all-time low. Under Eisenhower Administration, corporations paid >35%; now, 50 years later, they pay <7%. They incorpo-

rate in Bermuda or Cayman, neglect their duty to society, and succeed in making the highest profits in industrial history. Meanwhile they don't pay dividends anymore, because they don't have to, stole trillions of dollars from small investors and employees. It stinks. Puts all revenue pressure on individuals. He couldn't think of anything that he did that would offend anyone; he didn't support any of what incenses. Yet he and millions like him were included among terrorist targets? Surely, he was not the government; even those who work in government disagreed with current administration. Too bad they don't target the real enemy, boards of directors. They've achieved what's impossible, defied gravity. Define *trickle down*. What pedestal do they put themselves on? Percentage wise, how many cars do a few billionaires buy compared to all other classes? When corporations pay practically nothing in investor dividends or public contributions, what's the point in investing? Or buying their products? Funneling more to a highest tier just diverts it from active circulation, which is what benefits an economy the most, steady cash flow among those who need it. Now it's all *trickle up*. Staples as automotive and heating fuel, food and product transportation, health care, and information access—all of which should be free—account for a big chunk of any bourgeois budget, after inexorable bureaucratic and insurance expenses. This ensures profits for a few but hampers discretionary spending. Retailers are hurting, not surprisingly, survive by selling cheap imports.

What's done is done for a reason. How it's done is important, so effect becomes what you want, something that serves the greatest good. Somehow, this attitude, "If it's good for me it's good for America," once a bit of Al Capp's Bullmoose humor, is now what rules. It's too easy for megalomaniacs to rise into power, run roughshod over Constitution, then get away with it. Mental disorders plague 25% of population, perhaps every fourth President. Do people need a paranoiac or obsessive with a hand on the nuclear trigger? He used to think that aberrant behavior arose from knowing too little. The more he knew or suspected, the worse things seemed. Only by raising a stink can you call combatants on both sides to arms, create a power imbalance, get ahead, profit. Time to remove any such profit motive. Time to divvy up all resources evenly, make luxuries expensive and necessities free.

From administration's side, they only hear what boards of directors say, "Give my business a break and we'll create a workforce, which you can then milk to death." Meanwhile, CEOs take more and more of profits, which are already at an all time high, and largest corporations pay an all time low of their share of

tax burden. They reformulate in foreign countries without restrictions or tax liabilities; those who don't instead sell out to European holding companies whose main purpose is to redistribute American GNP to a weaker European Union. He concluded that USA was under attack on multiple fronts in fulfillment of Khrushchev's threat to "bury America" economically. Stock ownership is supposed to be democratic, with 1 vote per share owned, but poison pills protect majority owners, who get 10 or more votes per share, which negates any majority say-so. The notion that individuals can share in robust earnings by holding stock had all but become a cruel joke with ubiquitous fund mismanagement, puny dividends, stock swindles, and tip-of-the-iceberg executive indictments.

About all America had still going for it was entrepreneurial innovation, start up companies made up of corporate castaways whose sole purpose was to find chinks in administrative lunacy and federal regulations and carve out lucrative niches. These included marketing substances and vitamins that don't come under FDA regulation thereby evading clinical trial process, as do snake oil salesmen. Self employment was a way to create opportunities that federal-industrial complex no longer offered, while practitioners roll up expenses to pay even less tax. So "giving business a break" just removes more wage earners from tax pool, increases share for an already overburdened group, and redistributes funds to wealthiest few. They don't really need federal policy to get or stay rich, it's just easier than earning it, because John Q. Public is such a sucker, if not in marketplace, definitely in political arena. All this makes it plain you don't have to get bopped on your head to be stolen from. Muggers can't get much from you anyway if you don't carry around bearer bonds or precious objects.

Innovation in the 20th century was characterized by finding ways to apply electricity and fossil fuels. Innovation in 21st will involve harnessing genetics and living organisms, although competitive states already recognize this as a threat and have summarily banned such imports. They've yet to find uses for all elements on the periodic table, even though alchemists long ago mapped most of their properties. People are still hoarding diamonds (just carbon, after all, bought with death and torture all around) and gold (inert but pretty, though a tolerable conductor). Perhaps the 22nd will be devoted to curing the disease of greed which makes masters, slaves and thieves of people.

Not only was he not against government, he actually worked for government once, even voted regularly. Everyone should get registered and show up warts and all on election day. Government

constitutes a lot of hard working people doing wonderful things for everyone's benefit, provided their hands aren't tied. Government isn't the current administration. Dud and dupes are trying to eviscerate environmental laws, gut bills which provide funds for bike paths, and push for bigger, thirstier vehicles using scare tactics of driver, if not bicyclist, protection. This only sells more petroleum. Despite noodling around on an mtb, Dud has been the most anti-bicycling president in history. Censorship, a dominant tactic of totalitarian regimes, was preferred by these bike haters. "Car right!" takes on new reactionary meaning.

Candidate Acme Nadir spoke and he patiently listened. Chronically deselected, Acme had no chance of winning, negative poll numbers, but surely did have something to say. Supposedly conducting a model campaign, was doing everything on funds donated by individuals, taking no PAC money, up front about backing, most of which, curiously, came from Dud supporters. Wanted to represent how things *ought to be*, not *policy for sale*. Nadir might make a good advisor, someone who'd clean up cesspool, but was hapless and hardly affected election results, though they were pretty close, which was why candidates who can't carry electorate assist vote splitters. He especially liked 1 thing Nadir said, "Politics is serious business, not something to be left to corporations for profit." Nadir was against NAFTA's bad quality, cheap imports, job exports, as well as excessive military spending, lack of responsibility to vast majority, not registering 100 million voters, 2-party system; was for a *no vote* and tax reform. Half of those eligible don't bother to register, mostly disadvantaged and poor, and this fixes elections in favor of powerful rich. Half of nation's budget goes to military when there's no major enemy anymore. It's no secret America leads China, England, France and Russia as the biggest producer of weapons and so has a vested interest in keeping wars brewing. A *no vote* would toss out candidates and start over if they can't draw enough *yes votes*; if this passed, country might go for years without a chief executive, perhaps not much of a loss considering current regime. Voters don't respond to rational platforms, prefer smiling liars.

People vote for candidates endorsed by major parties as if buying a brand name product, pick one who conforms to what their neighbors pick, as if that seemed sensible. They're too preoccupied to bother with a process set up so nobody understands what candidates stand for. Candidates each do their own daily polls to discover what trigger points garner the most immediate support, and that's the only thing they harp about, constantly shifting as

election day draws closer. Important issues never get discussed, like candidate's ability to solve problems or value of rationality. A spelling bee would be more helpful than a debates they now participate in. Doggedly maintaining a particular stance will be spun as inflexibility. Seeking common ground will be called waffling.

Glad someone was bringing up this dirt on a national stage, but nobody cares. Nadir was diametrically opposed to Democrats. Cartier all but dismantled raider cult by hiring a bunch of them, who promptly shrank economy and toppled administration. In the Alice in Wonderland realm of politics what might seem to make sense may not; 1 step forward sets you back 2. Not unexpected, Nadir still holds a grudge. Howling and moaning about trivial inconveniences goes on daily, but doesn't do any good. Sure, shout out your demons; more will follow. They let you say anything, air it all, but reel you back in when you approach edges, border where it matters, force field between everyone and these illuminati. Controversy, disorganization, dissent, polarization serves those in power. The key thing they fear is consensus leading to positive action, gathering shards, splinters and twigs of people into an unbreakable bundle. No, no, not that! Can't allow self rule... Anarchy!

What do teens do naturally, before society drums it out of them? They congregate, learn from each other. Some begin as children, get a head start. This is how humans normally relate: Find what interests them, get absorbed in it, surpass limits of their innate skills. Doesn't suit profiteers. He recalled 1 of the few paintings passed down of Rene Descartes. What was Rene doing? Conversing, exchanging, expanding influence, improving society, solving riddles of existence among minds similarly attuned, starting a scientific age. Rene was a zealous doer on all planes, mental, physical and spiritual. Props, Rene. What a life! Truly 5th dimensional. Congregation, harmony, growth, realignment, union: this was what life is all about, not polarization, separation, strife. It will never be as hard to get along as power brokers want you to believe.

Individuals had reverted to the same pettiness as the 2-party system because there was no apparent way for them to do anything about the horrible governmental policies destroying their country. Interior department bars Gulf gas exploration leases because someone overseas says so; ties everything up with environmental studies and interstate gerrymandering. Florida will get more than its share, because Dud's brother is governor. In a newsworthy case hardly mentioned, compared to Mickey Jerkson Pederasty Trial which seemed to dominate airwaves forever, New Empire Attorney General, Elliot Spittle, sued a succession of big brokerage houses,

insurance companies, and pharmaceutical concerns and won. Spittle gained gigantic settlements, paid up to \$850,000,000 back to those bilked. Even more important were statements of guilt for price fixing, unethical, even criminal, behavior, and pharmaceuticals still marketed after testing had proven them ineffectual and dangerous. The horror of this is that these private enterprises are all regulated by federal agencies, which continue to deny any wrongdoing even after settlements. What are they in Washington, asleep? No, it was dumb chic, know nothing, lay back, let this market economy regulate itself. Lazy, stupid stewardship. In most countries, crucial industries, particularly energy, are government run to ensure fair distribution.

If not for government regulations, there would be no affirmative action, civil rights, collective bargaining, minimum wage, organized labor, potable drinking water, recalls of tainted meat, social security, worker benefits, and years of progress people now enjoy brought about by legendary liberals. Raw sewerage would still flow in unpaved streets. Today's liberals exercise their privileges to excess, instead of fighting battles required to stay on top of these necessities. Conservatives would bring back fox hunts, slavery, and women in bare feet. With corporate profits at an all time high, dividends at an all time low, you've got to realize the new market economy is built at the increasing expense of consumers and stakeholders. This will surely bring a backlash in renewed collective bargaining, an intense reevaluation of socialism, worker strikes, the very things capitalists fear most. The only way to end World poverty is to give up the delusion of market economies as savior. Outlawing slavery does not equal emancipation. A hungry man is not free if trapped in a tortured body. Freedom is that middle state between getting and giving where opportunities exist for all, economic homeostasis.

Shuffling jobs to wherever people are hungry would be noble if they'd be paid comparably. Shoot for social justice. Take any operation, do a headcount, offshore to an equal headcount or hire many more workers at the same cost, not enslave foreigners for more enormous profits. Instead, capitalists exploit hunger and want. Offshoring ought to be regulated by the United Nations or prosecuted in the name of crimes against humanity.

Easy to identify the devil incarnate whose name was Milton Friedmensch, rabid market economist, self proclaimed Republican (with a big R), though closet libertarian (with a small l). From frying pan to fire, it's as if Milton in 92 years hadn't figured out how people can be free under capitalism, which, of course, they can't.

Milton was a major contributor to an anti-utopian fantasy of constant fiscal conflicts, Darwinian eat or be eaten, which purports to deplore governmental spending. What sort of tormented toilet training did Milton receive? A simplistic theory was what dunces like Reagan and Thatcher were looking for, then created an illusion of prosperity by running up unprecedented government deficits focused on military-industrial complexes while cutting social programs. Money is a layer of complexity an average person doesn't need, creates a need for accountancy, banking, guns, hoarding, insurances, lotteries, security, servility, strong boxes, timepieces, wallets and worries. Guaranteed minimal entitlement with opportunities to elevate oneself would work much better. If you want cable television, you'll just have to get a job.

Wouldn't it be great if people wore the colors associated with their predominant properties? Like someone who is truthful wearing bluejeans or having a blue aura. If a liar dons those same jeans they'd change to green or yellow, either jealous or cowardly, respectively. Those in black would be stingy and unfair; red would be angry, hot, warlike; purple, noble; white, blank, evil and false; dusky white, deadly and sickly. Well, physics don't suddenly change on whims; this borders magical realms. For Cherokees, colors were associated with the 4 compass points and had additional symbolic significance. Blue represented North, which meant cold, defeat and trouble. If you lived in Northeast after 2004 election, this made perfect sense. White was for South, and represented warmth, peace and happiness, a sort of smugness for having contributed to narrowest of victories. Bloating on it and brandishing a white flag of forthrightness, they turned against childhood cartoons sent to classrooms with hints of open-mindedness; can't stand that they might inadvertently recommend reasonable treatment of homosexuals and inferior races, they felt. Red rises from East, the Sacred Fire: blood, guts and success, too sure of itself. Black sets in West with associations akin to yellow, which meant death, strife, trouble, well ahead of terrorist alert system. Over hundreds of years, symbols hardly seem to change even when situations are totally unlike. There's no magic. A long ride will make you feel dreamy and sleepy, likely to muse on outmoded shaman's totems, but that's just chemical physiology not ghost dancing. Prayer is better than sleep, but only when neither exhausted nor sated. Even apostles couldn't stay awake. Does it matter? It's entirely plausible that colored auras do exist, but so out of tune with their senses people aren't able to see. They hardly notice they are worse off after decades of middleclass erosion. A crab will put up a frenzied fight to avoid a dip into

boiling water, but put it in cold and gradually raise temperature to boiling and a crab will not notice it's been cooked. Many who would do you harm know this tactic, gain trust and wear you out. You're already being slowly boiled alive with increasing institutional trickery, political mischief, and rampant pollution.

Among laws, political correctness, punishment crazed witch hunts all you have left are ideas you can harbor quietly near your heart but say nothing about; takes courage to merely allude to such things in these dark days. Aren't aged whimsy and intoxicated ramblings easily discredited? From a legal standpoint, nobody who's not indemnified against prosecution would ever say anything that could be construed as derogatory against any individual or organization. Civil codes make it possible for felonies and misdemeanors to go unchecked while justice gets obscured. Criminals clever enough to know all the loopholes or so barbaric as to deploy hitmen get away with it. If you always let people fend for themselves, they'll soon find they don't need you. This especially applies to governors and presidents. General public possesses all the power should they choose to use it, something that will always be suppressed, because collective bargaining aligns with communism, labor union demands, or whatever balances or checks of boards of directors' unbridled greed.

Nothing gets better when pundits are polarized. It's like traffic snarled in an intersection, where no driver wants to give a right-of-way. Someone has to back up. Society was leaning too far right, completely ignoring left. Leaning leads to toppling. Balance on either side appears a necessity: artistically organized, fiscally conservative, logically spiritual, precisely communicative, and so forth, heart and mind contributing equally. When you can't improve process by replacing people involved, you might make it impossible for them to influence process, as entrenched powers do. There's a 3rd neglected alternative, change process itself. As long as people drive SUVs—and everyone else into the ground—nothing he did or said mattered. For him it was only important to record this time. Should a historian later wonder what was on the mind of a nobody casually observing and suffering repercussions of Republican, unilateral, wasteful policies at the beginning of New Millennia America, they'd have a source. That is, if they could stand reading a long, sad complaint, not quite futile, but almost.

