

MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE[®]

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IN THIS ISSUE: WE CONTINUE OUR DISCUSSION OF HOW HUMANS AND NATIONS DEFINE THEMSELVES BY THE INTERACTING PROCESSES OF VALIDATION AND DIFFERENTIATION, AND HOW DANGEROUS IT BECOMES WHEN THEY ARE APPLIED TO THE CONDUCT OF POLICY IN AREAS SUCH AS RELIGION, AGRICULTURE AND IMMIGRATION.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: WE WILL PROBE OTHER CRITICAL POLICY DIRECTIONS IN WHICH OUR SELF-DEFINITION HAS LED TO FAILED LEADERSHIP AND, AT BEST, QUESTIONABLE RESULTS.

INCOGNITO - PART I

IN OUR FIRST SERIES WE EXPLORED THE INSTITUTIONAL FAILURES THAT HAVE BECOME MORE EVIDENT AND FREQUENT IN OUR COUNTRY OVER THE PAST HALF-CENTURY. WHY BOTHER? SOME OF OUR INSTITUTIONS HAVE BEEN PART OF OUR COUNTRY SINCE ITS EARLIEST TIMES, AND IT IS EASY FOR ALL OF US TO TAKE THEM FOR GRANTED, BUT WE SHOULDN'T. INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE STRUCTURE AND A FRAMEWORK FOR OUR GOVERNMENT.

POLICY IS THE APPLICATION OF GOVERNMENT TO A VARIETY OF PURPOSES, AND IS OFTEN ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH INSTITUTIONS — I.E., THROUGH OUR CONGRESS, OUR JUDICIARY, OUR MILITARY FORCES OR OUR DEPARTMENTS OF JUSTICE, TREASURY, STATE, ETC. AS WE HAVE WEAKENED AND ABUSED THESE INSTITUTIONS, WE HAVE ALTERED OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY POLITICALLY AND CULTURALLY AND HAVE CREATED DIVISION ALONG THESE LINES OF ENGAGEMENT IN OUR SOCIETY. THE RESULT IS POLARIZATION AT MULTIPLE LEVELS WHICH PRODUCES CONFUSION IN OUR DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES, AS WELL AS A BLURRED IDENTITY WHICH IT BECOMES INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO HONOR AND REFLECT.

AND AS INSTITUTIONAL FAILURES PRODUCE BAD POLICIES, SO OUR FLAWED POLICIES BOTH HERE AND ABROAD TRANSFORM THE WAY OUR SOCIETY IS SEEN BY OTHERS AND THWART OUR EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN OUR NATIONAL PURPOSE AND IDENTITY. MANY OF THE PURPOSES WHICH NOW MAKE

CLAIMS AGAINST OUR SOCIETY (FOR EXAMPLE; CAPITALISM, MULTICULTURALISM, SECURITY, DIVERSITY, UNILATERAL MILITARISM AND EVEN DEMOCRACY, ITSELF) ARE ONLY ACHIEVABLE IN VARYING DEGREE, AND OFTEN AT THE EXPENSE OF UNITY.

WE HAVE EMBRACED SOME POLICIES OVER THE PAST FIFTY YEARS THAT YIELDED SOME VERY UNINTENDED RESULTS. OUR THIRTY YEARS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE COLD WAR PAINTED OUR WORLD IN TWO COLORS — BLACK/WHITE OR CAPITALISM/COMMUNISM WHEREBY A CONSTANT WAR OF WORDS AND WEAPONS DOMINATED OUR THINKING, WITH CAPITALISM BEING TRANSFORMED FROM A TOOL TO A GOAL.

WE WERE “THE LAST MAN STANDING” AND ARE FORTUNATE THAT THE SOVIETS’ PARANOIA BECAME A MAJOR FACTOR IN THEIR COLLAPSE. THE COST OF THIS WAR IMPOSED A SUBSTANTIAL BURDEN ON OUR ECONOMY AND GREATLY FACILITATED THE RISE OF CYNICISM IN OUR GOVERNMENTAL PROCESS, AS ANYTHING, NO MATTER HOW TAINTED OR SUSPECT, COULD BE ARGUED AND PURSUED IN THE EITHER/OR, CAPITALIST VS. COMMUNIST ENVIRONMENT. ALONG WITH THE RUSSIANS WE ACHIEVED A PINNACLE OF UNINTENDED RESULTS AS WE UNDERTOOK TO FILL BOTH THE POLITICAL AND THE ECONOMIC VACUUMS OF THE THIRD WORLD. IN TANDEM, WE EMBARKED UPON A RUINOUS POLICY OF BACKING, AND EVEN CREATING, LOCAL DICTATORS TO ENFORCE OUR POLICIES AND PRESENCE,

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AND PAID THEM IN ARMS AND MONEY.

WHILE OUR POLITICAL RHETORIC AT HOME PORTRAYED OUR ACTIONS IN LOFTY TERMS OF RESISTANCE TO WORLD COMMUNISM, THE RESULTS IN THE THIRD WORLD WERE OFTEN QUITE DIFFERENT. MOST OF THE MONEY WE INVESTED IN THIRD WORLD REGIMES WAS DRAWN OFF TO PRIVATE ACCOUNTS OF THEIR ELITES AND/OR PAID TO AMERICAN CONTRACTORS FOR WORK SPECIFIED UNDER CONTRACTS, GRANTS OR LOAN AGREEMENTS. AS FOR THE ARMS, THEY WERE OFTEN USED TO SUPPRESS THE NATIVE POPULATION IN THE RECIPIENT COUNTRIES OR TO FIGHT WARS WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS. IN SOME INSTANCES THEY WERE SOLD ON THE INTERNATIONAL ARMS MARKET FROM WHICH THEY FOUND THEIR WAY BACK TO BE USED AGAINST THEIR ORIGINAL OWNERS. IN THE END NEITHER WE NOR THE RUSSIANS PROVIDED MUCH IN THE WAY OF BENEFITS TO THE GENERAL PUBLICS OF THE COUNTRIES WE SOUGHT TO CONTROL, AND THERE WAS ENOUGH SOUL-SEARING CYNICISM IN OUR ACTIONS TO QUESTION OUR CONCEPT OF SUPERPOWER STATUS.

WITH THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM AND THE END OF THE COLD WAR THERE CAME AN OMINOUS LULL WHICH IMMEDIATELY DREW THE ATTENTION OF THE CORPORATE CAPITALISTS OF THE FREE WORLD. THEIR RALLYING CRY WAS ONE OF GLOBALISM AND FREE TRADE WHICH COULD MAKE USE OF MUCH OF THE SAME MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT AND INVESTMENT TECHNIQUES THAT WE AND THE RUSSIANS HAD PUT IN PLACE TO WAGE THE COLD WAR. A FEW TITLES, PHRASES, LAWS AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS WERE CHANGED, BUT THE ESSENTIAL CAPABILITY OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO MAKE LARGE SUMS OF MONEY FROM GOVERNMENT'S INVESTMENT AND POLICY DID NOT.

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THE "A TRAIN" TO ARMAGEDDON

OF ALL THE MEANS BY WHICH HUMANS HAVE CHOSEN TO DEFINE THEMSELVES OVER THE YEARS NONE HAS BEEN AS CLEAR AND AS CONSTANT AS RELIGION. FOR VALIDATION IT HAS PROVIDED HISTORY, DOGMA, SCRIPTURE, SACRAMENTS, MUSIC, CLOTHING, RANK, COMMUNITY AND THEOLOGY, AND FOR DIFFERENTIATION THERE HAS BEEN WARFARE (EITHER SECULAR OR HOLY) SALVATION (OR ITS OPPOSITE, ETERNAL DAMNATION), AND THE TRUE

FAITH, NOT JUST ONE OF MANY SHADES.

THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE ENDLESS AND CAN BE ACHIEVED IN VARYING DEGREES DEPENDING UPON THE INDIVIDUAL'S EFFORT. THE RESULTS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE LARGER COMMUNITY CAN DIFFER GREATLY SO THAT WHAT MIGHT SEEM REASONABLE AND SUCCESSFUL TO THE INDIVIDUAL CAN THREATEN THE LARGER GROUP OF WHICH HE IS A PART, AS SHOWN BY PASTOR JOHN HAGEE'S EFFORTS TO FASHION NATIONAL MILITARY AND FOREIGN POLICY FROM HIS RELIGIOUS BELIEFS. HAGEE IS THE FOUNDER AND SENIOR PASTOR OF THE CORNERSTONE CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, TX AND HAS BUILT A MINISTRY OF MANY THOUSANDS OF MEMBERS THAT HE ADDRESSES BOTH IN PERSON AND BY BROADCASTS. HE IS ALSO FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANS UNITED FOR ISRAEL (CUFI) WHICH PROVIDES ASSISTANCE AND UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL IN BOTH SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL MATTERS. PASTOR HAGEE IS AN EXTREMELY FORCEFUL AND RECOGNIZED CHRISTIAN CONSERVATIVE WHOSE COMMENTS DRAW NOTICE EVEN AMONG HIS BRETHREN OF THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT. IN HIS MANY WRITINGS AND SERMONS HE EMPHASIZES THESE THEMES, CITING THE BIBLE FOR THEIR AUTHORITY:

- 1) THE LAND OF ISRAEL WAS GIVEN TO THE JEWS BY GOD.
- 2) CHRISTIANS ARE LINKED HISTORICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY TO ISRAEL.
- 3) THE US AND ISRAEL ARE JOINED AND AN ATTACK ON ONE IS AN ATTACK ON THE OTHER.
- 4) GOD FAVORS BOTH COUNTRIES, BUT IF THE US DISCONTINUES ITS PROTECTION OF ISRAEL, GOD WILL WITHDRAW HIS BLESSING FROM AMERICA.

THROUGHOUT HIS WRITINGS PASTOR HAGEE SO FREQUENTLY AND STRONGLY CITES THIS MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP THAT THEY SEEM TO EMANATE FROM THE REALM OF POLICY RATHER THAN THE PULPIT.

IN THE FALL OF 2007 PASTOR HAGEE APPEARED ON THE PBS SHOW, BILL MOYERS' JOURNAL, IN WHICH HE STATED THAT THE US SHOULD "CONSIDER" A BOMBING ATTACK ON IRAN. BY USING THIS WORD HE CAN DISCLAIM EVER RECOMMENDING IT IN DEFINITE TERMS, A TACTIC WELL KNOWN AND REGULARLY USED IN THE POLITICAL/POLICY ARENA. BUT IN REALITY, ANYONE IN PUBLIC LIFE ADDRESSING A TV AUDIENCE OF MILLIONS WHO MAKES SUCH A SUGGESTION DOES SO WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT A MESSAGE OF POSITIVE ACTION IS BEING

DELIVERED.

WHEN QUERIED BY MOYERS AS TO THE BENEFITS AND CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH AN ACT, HAGEE PROJECTED THAT AN AMERICAN ATTACK WOULD PROVOKE AN IRANIAN RETALIATION AGAINST ISRAEL FOLLOWED BY AN ISRAELI RESPONSE THAT WOULD IGNITE THE WHOLE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND. HAGEE SEES THIS AS FULFILLMENT OF THE BIBLICAL PROPHECY OF ARMAGEDDON'S VAST DESTRUCTION FROM WHICH, BY HIS REAPPEARANCE, CHRIST WOULD RESCUE AND DRAW TO HEAVEN THE ISRAELIS AND THE MOST DEVOUT AND DEDICATED CHRISTIANS AS DETERMINED BY BIBLICAL STANDARDS. EVANGELICALS REFER TO THIS COMBINATION OF FINAL DELIVERANCE AND DESTRUCTION AS THE RAPTURE.

THIS SCENARIO OF COMING EVENTS IS NOTHING LESS THAN THE ANNIHILATION EXPRESS, THE "A TRAIN" TO ARMAGEDDON, BUT IT WAS PRESENTED AS MORE THAN JUST A PERSONAL VIEW OF HISTORY TO COME. BY PLACING IT IN THE MINDS OF THE PUBLIC AND PROPOSING IT AS A POSSIBLE COURSE OF GOVERNMENT ACTION. HAGEE IS USING HIS PERSONAL RELIGIOUS BELIEFS TO CREATE OR INFLUENCE NATIONAL POLICY.

IN OUR COUNTRY, THANKFULLY, EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO HIS OR HER OWN CHOICE AND PRACTICE OF RELIGION, BUT THAT CHOICE SHOULD NOT BE EXTENDED TO POLICIES THAT IMPACT THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND A RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF GOOD VS. EVIL SUCH AS HIS IS NOT SHARED BY MANY OF HAGEE'S FELLOW CHRISTIAN CLERGY. ARE THEY TO BE BOUND BY HIS VIEW AND POLICY? OR NON-CHRISTIANS OF OTHER FAITHS? OR EVEN ATHEISTS? ARE THESE TO WHOM WE GUARANTEE FREEDOM OF RELIGION TO BE TOSSED INTO THE FLAMES OF NUCLEAR CONFLICT? HAGEE'S CONCEPT OF HOW BIBLICAL PROPHECY WILL BE FINALLY REVEALED MAY BE TRUE; OR IT MAY NOT BE. BUT IN EITHER EVENT IT IS A MATTER OF PERSONAL BELIEF, NOT GOVERNMENT ACTION OR POLICY.

"IT IS NOT 'MORNING IN AMERICA' YET; BUT IT IS TIME TO WAKE UP."

FOR MANY CENTURIES HUMANS ON OUR PLANET HAVE PRACTICED A VARIETY OF RELIGIONS THAT HAVE DIFFERED IN THEIR DEITIES, METHODS, AND BELIEFS. THEY HAVE ALSO DIFFERED IN THEIR DEGREES OF TOLERANCE FOR OTHER FAITHS WHICH HAS LED THEM TO BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSISTENT PERIODS OF WAR AND PEACE. AS A RESULT, WE NOT ONLY VALIDATE OURSELVES BY OUR CHOICE OF FAITH, AND THEREBY DIFFERENTIATING OURSELVES FROM OTHERS, BUT WE ALSO INTRODUCE A QUANTITATIVE ELEMENT OF HAVING MORE OR STRONGER FAITH THAN OTHERS AND, THEREFORE, BEING SEEN AS "BETTER". THE HAGEE THEOLOGY WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON ISRAEL AND THE US BEING JOINED AS ONE MAKES FOR AN INTERESTING RELIGIOUS DISCUSSION, BUT FALLS FAR SHORT OF WHAT IS NEEDED TO FORMULATE POLICY REGARDING NUCLEAR WAR. THEREIN LIES THE DANGER OF HOW WE ALLOW OUR

PROCESS OF SELF-DEFINITION TO INTRUDE UPON GOVERNMENT POLICY, BUT RELIGION IS NOT THE ONLY AREA OF OUR LIFE WHICH HUMAN NATURE HAS CHOSEN TO PUT TO THIS PURPOSE. OTHERS ABOUND, AND WITH GENERALLY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES. IT IS NOT "MORNING IN AMERICA" YET; BUT IT IS TIME TO WAKE UP.

WHAT IS OUR ROLE? WHAT IS RIGHT?

PASTOR HAGEE'S MESSAGE, WHILE IT MAY REFLECT A CERTAINTY OF PERSONAL FAITH, RAISES SOME VERY DIFFICULT INTERNATIONAL POLICY QUESTIONS THAT IMPACT OTHER NATIONS AND REGIONS BEYOND THE NEAR EAST. THE SPREAD OF MARXIST THOUGHT FROM MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY GERMANY TO ITS GLOBAL PRESENCE TODAY WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY ITS APPEAL TO DISAFFECTED POPULATIONS. IN ITS EARLY YEARS ITS PRIMARY TARGET WAS THE VAST CONCENTRATION OF AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL POVERTY FOUND IN THE MONARCHICAL SOCIETIES SPREAD ACROSS EUROPE FROM RUSSIA TO THE ATLANTIC FROM WHICH IT WAS THEN EXPORTED TO THE US. FOR OVER A CENTURY THE ANGER OF THE DISAFFECTED WAS DIRECTED TO THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES INTO WHICH THEY WERE BORN AND WHICH, IN THEIR VIEW, OFFERED THEM NEITHER JUSTICE, A FAIR WAGE, NOR A MEANS OF EXIT.

THIS DISAFFECTION CARRIED DIFFERENT LABELS FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS SUCH AS CONSERVATIVE/LIBERAL OR STATE/INDIVIDUAL IN POLITICS; AND WAGES, HOUSING OR MANAGEMENT/LABOR IN ECONOMIC ISSUES. ITS LACK OF FAIRNESS, ALONG WITH THE MANY MILITARY AND SOCIAL DISRUPTIONS IT CAUSED, WERE AT THE HEART OF THE LENGTHY SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLARIZATION THAT EXTENDED FROM MARX UNTIL THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE END OF THE COLD WAR.

TODAY A NEW POLARIZATION GRIPS THE WORLD. WITH THE GROWING WEALTH OF RUSSIA, CHINA AND INDIA AND THE FINANCIAL UNIFICATION OF EUROPE THE OLD ECONOMIC POLARIZATION NO LONGER COMMANDS THE ATTENTION IT ONCE DID. BUT THE DISAFFECTION IS STILL THERE AND NOW FINDS AN OUTLET FOR ITS CLAIMS IN THE RELIGIOUS POLARIZATION BORN OF ISLAM'S DETERMINED EXPANSION. THE LATTER IS NOW TRULY A GLOBAL RELIGION THAT HAS HAD THE ABILITY TO TAP INTO THE WORLD'S EVER PRESENT DISAFFECTION, CAPTURE IT AND CONVERT IT TO FUEL ITS RELIGIOUS PROGRESS.

UNFORTUNATELY, IN THE PROCESS IT BECAME A TEMPTING TARGET FOR EXTREMISTS ELEMENTS WHO HAVE COMBINED ISLAMIC SPIRITUAL FERVOR WITH A MARXIST OVERLAY AND HAVE CREATED A MESSAGE WITH IRRESISTIBLE APPEAL TO THE MILLIONS AROUND THE WORLD WHO KNOW NO LIFE OTHER THAN THE HOPELESSNESS OF UNANSWERED ANGER, ENVY AND ISOLATION. THIS MERGING OF MARX AND MOHAMMED YIELDED A MARKETING MIRACLE FOR ISLAM.

BUT THERE WERE TWO OTHER TIMELY CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ENABLED OUR PRESENT GLOBAL RELIGIOUS POLARIZATION.

THE FIRST, WITH CENTURIES OF PRIOR SUCCESS, WAS IMPROVED WEAPONRY WHICH FOR THE EXTREMIST SECTS' PURPOSE TRANSLATES INTO SMALLER, LIGHTER, MORE POWERFUL EXPLOSIVE DEVICES THAT CAN BE CARRIED ON THE BODY OR DETONATED REMOTELY.

THE OTHER TECHNOLOGY, OF COURSE, IS BROADCAST TV. THINK BACK, FOR A MOMENT, TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY LABOR UNION ORGANIZER WHOSE EFFECTIVENESS IN PITCHING HIS MESSAGE WAS LIMITED BY THE TIME, SPACE AND SCHEDULE OF THE WORKPLACE. MEETINGS WERE NOT ENCOURAGED AND OFTEN PROHIBITED AT THE PLANT, AND THE ORGANIZER WAS FREQUENTLY BEATEN, ARRESTED OR BOTH. ADDITIONALLY, THE LOCAL NEWSPAPERS' INTERESTS WERE USUALLY ALIGNED WITH THE COMPANIES THAT MADE AND ADVERTISED PRODUCTS SO THAT PRESS COVERAGE OF LABOR ISSUES TENDED TO BE BRIEF AND OCCASIONAL UNLESS DISTINGUISHED BY VIOLENCE OR OTHER NEWSWORTHY EVENTS.

“IN A SITUATION THAT CALLS FOR HARD OBJECTIVITY SOFT BIAS IS NOT AN ANSWER.”

FAST FORWARD TO TODAY WHEN MASS MURDER OR MAYHEM ON LAND, SEA OR IN THE AIR IS ALMOST INSTANTLY AVAILABLE ON TV SCREENS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD VIA MUSLIM OR WESTERN NEWS BROADCASTS. THE IMPETUS AND HOPE THAT THIS PUBLIC EXPOSURE GIVES TO THE FACELESS, BUT FAITHFUL, MUSLIM POOR ARE INCALCULABLE, BUT CAN BE SENSED IN THE IMAGES OF THEIR MASS DEMONSTRATIONS WHERE EMOTION AND FERVOR RULE. THE BEST WAY TO COUNTER THE BENEFITS OF TECHNOLOGY FOR THE EXTREMISTS WOULD BE TO PUT IT TO OUR OWN ADVANTAGE, BUT THEREIN MAY LIE A PROBLEM. OUR OWN MEDIA WITH THEIR EXTENSIVE SKILLS MAY TREAT GLOBAL ISLAM'S GROWING REACH AS AN ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS ISSUE TO BE GIVEN “SOFT” TREATMENT. IN A SITUATION THAT CALLS FOR HARD OBJECTIVITY SOFT BIAS IS NOT AN ANSWER.

POLICY IS RARELY AN EASY TASK, AS CONFLICTS ARE MANY AND SOLUTIONS FEW. BUT TWO QUESTIONS, IF ASKED, CAN ELIMINATE A LOT OF EARLY ERROR. WHAT IS OUR ROLE? AND WHAT IS RIGHT? THESE ARE QUESTIONS TO WHICH PASTOR HAGEE FAILS TO PROVIDE PERSUASIVE ANSWERS. HE ADVISES GOVERNMENT TO ENGAGE IN AN ACT THAT WILL BRING ABOUT THE AGONY OF NUCLEAR WAR BASED ON HIS PERSONAL RELIGIOUS BELIEFS. WE SHOULD NOTE HERE THE EXTENT TO WHICH INDIVIDUAL INTEREST IS PLACED BEFORE THAT OF THE COUNTRY. THIS IS SCARY, BUT VERY MUCH PART OF OUR TIME.

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EVANGELISM IS NOT THE ONLY WAY WE USE RELIGION TO DEFINE OURSELVES. OTHERS, INVOLVING A LESS LITERAL READING OF THE BIBLE, ARE NOT AS EXTREME, BUT CAN BE

EQUALLY USEFUL. RELIGION, LIKE LANGUAGE, IN ITS VARYING INTENSITY CAN EITHER JOIN OR SEPARATE US. AT ITS CENTER LIES THE HISTORICAL DEBATE BETWEEN ITS COMMUNITARIAN POTENTIAL FOR UNITY AND THE DEEP DIVISIONS THAT ARISE FROM INDIVIDUAL DEDICATION TO DOGMA. UNFORTUNATELY RELIGION'S HISTORICAL RECORD EMPHASIZES THE MANY WARS THAT HAVE BEEN FOUGHT IN ITS NAME FOR POLITICAL AND TERRITORIAL PURPOSES AND WHICH CONTINUE IN OUR PRESENT TIME.

TODAY THE CHRISTIAN WEST IS A SECULAR SOCIETY IN WHICH “THE GOOD LIFE” DOMINATES THE AFTERLIFE. IN THE POP CULTURE LANGUAGE OF THE INTERNET MAMMON CAN BE SEEN TO GET MORE ‘HITS’ THAN GOD. THIS IS A RELATIVELY RECENT TURNAROUND, AS FOR MOST OF ITS EXISTENCE CHRISTIANITY EMBRACED THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN LIFE AS A DAILY STRUGGLE WITH SATAN OVER WHOM ONLY CHRIST AND HIS FOLLOWERS COULD TRIUMPH. THE BATTLE WITH SATAN MAY TAKE PLACE ON EARTH, BUT ITS PENALTIES OR REWARDS ARE NOT DISPENSED UNTIL AFTER DEATH.

OUTSIDE THE SPIRITUAL REALM, RELIGION IN OUR TIME CONTINUES TO BE THE SOURCE OF PROLONGED AND BLOODY CONFLICT. THE PROTESTANT/CATHOLIC WARS IN EUROPE REACHED THEIR ZENITH IN THE HORRENDOUS CRUELTY OF THE CARNAGE IN 17TH AND 16TH CENTURY ENGLAND. AT THAT TIME THE PROCESS OF SELF-DEFINITION BY VALIDATION AND DIFFERENTIATION WAS SPREAD THROUGH ALL LEVELS OF THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULATIONS AND WAS VERY MUCH A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH. RELIGION AND LIFE (BOTH HERE AND HEREAFTER) WERE DOMINATED BY FEAR OF UNREASONABLE AND EXTREME VIOLENCE WHICH ONLY BEGAN TO MODERATE IN THE 18TH CENTURY AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT.

THIS MODERATION OF PROTESTANT/CATHOLIC OPPOSITION WAS ABLE TO CONTINUE UNTIL THE LAST CENTURY WHEN VIOLENCE FLARED UP AGAIN IN IRELAND. THIS WAS THE SAME WAR, THE SAME WORDS ABOUT SUBSTANCE AND FORM; ONLY THE WEAPONS CHANGED. THEY ARE NOW QUICKER, MORE POWERFUL AND ARE DESIGNED FOR USE AGAINST THE GENERAL PUBLIC. SUCH A RELAPSE INTO INTRAFaITH HOSTILITIES SHOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED, BUT IT DID.

ON THE BROADER, INTERFAITH SCALE WE ALSO FIND THE CHRISTIAN WEST EMBROILED IN A WAR AGAINST MUSLIM OPPONENTS IN IRAQ, AND THERE ARE OTHER CONFLICTS IN AFRICA AND ASIA IN WHICH THE MUSLIM FAITH AND ITS AGENDA FOR EXPANSION PLAY A DOMINANT ROLE. IT HAS BEEN USEFUL FOR WESTERN GOVERNMENTS AND THEIR LEADERS TO DESCRIBE THESE MUSLIM ENGAGEMENTS AS LIMITED TO SMALL AND EXTREME GROUPS ON THE FAR EDGE OF MUSLIM LIFE AND WORSHIP, BUT IN THE MUSLIM WORLD THEY SEEM TO HAVE A SOMEWHAT WIDER ACCEPTANCE WHICH INCREASES AS THE RESULT OF OUR EXTENDED OCCUPATION IN IRAQ. THE MESSAGE OF THE QURAN IS A MIXED ONE AND CAN BE TAKEN AS A CALL TO RELIGIOUS ARMS AND WARFARE. THOSE WHO HEAR THAT CALL, AND THEN ADD TO IT THE MARXIST OVERLAY OF REPRESSION AND RESENTMENT, COME READILY TO THE CAUSE OF A GLOBAL INSURGENCY THAT WILL BRING THEM SPIRITUAL, ECONOMIC

AND POLITICAL RESPECT. WHILE IRAQ HAS SERVED AS A FLASH POINT, BASIC MUSLIM/JUDEO-CHRISTIAN DIFFERENCES HAVE GONE UNCHANGED SINCE THE CRUSADES, AND, AS IN THE PROTESTANT/CATHOLIC DIVIDE IN IRELAND, HAVE NOW REAPPEARED IN A HIGHLY EXPLOSIVE FORM THAT COMBINES OLD ANGER WITH NEW WEAPONS.

THERE CAN BE NO CLEARER EXAMPLE OF OUR NEED TO DEFINE OURSELVES BY VALIDATION AND DIFFERENTIATION THAN IN THESE TWO CONTROVERSIES. IN IRELAND THIS NEED IS SO POWERFUL THAT THE OVERARCHING LINKAGE OF CHRISTIANITY IS DIMINISHED AND ITS DETAILS USED AS THE BASIS FOR DIFFERENTIATION AND CONFLICT.

OUR INVASION OF IRAQ WHICH WAS SURE TO HAVE REPERCUSSIONS BEYOND ITS BORDERS INTO THE EXTENDED MUSLIM COMMUNITY WAS THE HANDIWORK OF G. W. BUSH, AN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN WHOSE PROCESS OF SELF-DEFINITION DEPENDS HEAVILY UPON HIS CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL BELIEFS. AT A TIME WHEN THE LOSS OF LIFE IN IRAQ AND THE PUBLIC'S DISSATISFACTION WITH HIS PRESIDENCY WERE AT VERY HIGH LEVELS HE WAS ASKED WHETHER HE HAD CONSULTED HIS FATHER. THE PRESIDENT'S REPLY INDICATED THAT HIS CONVERSATIONS WERE WITH A HIGHER FATHER THAN HIS EARTHLY PARENT. HERE IS THE TEXTBOOK, LAB TEST PROOF OF SELF-DEFINITION BY VALIDATION AND DIFFERENTIATION, AS IN ONE BRIEF ANSWER HE SIMULTANEOUSLY ELEVATES HIMSELF BY ASSOCIATION WITH GOD AND DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF FROM ALL OTHERS WHO LACK HIS SPECIAL STATUS AND ABILITY. THE PROBLEM WITH PRES. BUSH'S SELF-DEFINITION, AS WITH PASTOR HAGEE'S, IS THAT HE FAILS TO SEPARATE IT FROM HIS POLICY DECISIONS.

“IN OUR NUCLEAR AGE REALITY SUGGESTS THAT THE NEXT TEST WILL BE THE LAST ...”

LOOKING BACK TO THE CRUSADES OF THE 11TH, 12TH AND 13TH CENTURIES WHEN ADVANCED WEAPONRY CONSISTED OF SWORDS, SPEARS AND MACES, BOTH CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM FORCES ENGAGED IN ACTS OF EXTREME BARBARISM AND CRUELTY WITH NEITHER HAVING AN ADVANTAGE. SINCE THEN WE HAVE PROGRESSED TO THE PIKE, LONGBOW, RIFLE, MACHINE GUN, TANK, SUBMARINE, ROCKET, ETC. — AN IMPRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WITH NO SHORTAGE OF TESTING OPPORTUNITIES. IN OUR NUCLEAR AGE REALITY SUGGESTS THAT THE NEXT TEST WILL BE THE LAST, AND YET THOSE NATIONS, OR GROUPS, WITH THE ABILITY TO DO SO CONTINUE TO PRODUCE OR OBTAIN IMPROVED WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY. THE YEARS SINCE THE CRUSADES PROVIDE A SENSE THAT THE CHRISTIAN WEST HAS MELLOWED AND WILL NOT REVERT TO ITS FORMER VIOLENCE, BUT IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT OTHERS WILL SHARE OUR RESTRAINT.

ISLAM IS GENERALLY A MORE COMMITTED RELIGIOUS FORCE TODAY THAN CHRISTIANITY. IT REQUIRES WORSHIP FIVE TIMES A DAY AND PROJECTS IMAGES OF EARTHLY SATISFACTION

IN THE AFTERLIFE (I.E., 72 VIRGINS IN HEAVEN AWAIT THE MARTYR). MUCH AS OUR FOUNDING PURITANS DID ALMOST FOUR CENTURIES AGO, ISLAM DICTATES CULTURAL EXPRESSION SUCH AS JUSTICE, DRESS, MUSIC, VISUAL ARTS, ARCHITECTURE, DIET ETC. AND WHEREAS WE HAVE MOVED AWAY FROM THESE RESTRICTIONS, ISLAM HAS NOT ONLY RIGIDLY MAINTAINED THEM, BUT HAS COMBINED THEM WITH MARXIST VICTIMIZATION THEORY.

WE MAY SEEK SAFETY IN CITING THAT WE ONLY CONFLICT WITH ISLAM'S EXTREME MINORITY, BUT THAT MINORITY HAS A GLOBAL POLITICAL ACTION CAPABILITY FAR BEYOND ITS NUMBERS THAT DERIVES FROM BOTH RELIGION AND REPRESSION WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR INSTANT IGNITION. THESE FACTS SEEM VERY CLEAR, AND YET THEY DO NOT SEEM TO BE SUFFICIENTLY REFLECTED IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY.

THE USE OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN PURSUIT OF PERSONAL DEFINITION HAS A LONG HISTORY WHICH SOCIETIES IN THE FUTURE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FORGO, AS MORE OFTEN THAN NOT IT BECOMES JUST ANOTHER WAY BY WHICH WE ABUSE OUR INSTITUTIONS. THESE ABUSES ARE NOT IMAGINED. THEY ARE REAL AND ARE READILY FOUND IN OUR MEDIA, SCHOOLS, COURTS, CONGRESS, DEPT OF JUSTICE AND OTHER AREAS THAT CONSTANTLY MOLD OUR SOCIETY. THE END RESULT OF THIS ABUSE IS THAT IT CONTAMINATES, WEAKENS AND MISDIRECTS THE FORCE OF THESE INSTITUTIONS IN A WAY THAT CAN BLUNT THEIR PURPOSE OR EVEN RENDER THEM USELESS.

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CULTURES ARE VALIDATING MECHANISMS AND PEOPLE COALESCE AROUND THEM. LINES OF DISTINCTION ARE FORMED AND PROVIDE A SENSE OF US AND THE OTHER WHICH ENCOURAGES THE FORMATION OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER CENTERS. THESE LINES OF DISTINCTION THEN CREATE, MAGNIFY AND MULTIPLY BOTH GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES. RELIGION HAS BEEN A PRIME EXAMPLE THROUGHOUT OUR RECORDED HISTORY, AS WE HAVE NOTED IN THE PROTRACTED CHRISTIAN/MUSLIM AND PROTESTANT/CATHOLIC STRUGGLES, BUT IT IS ONLY ONE OF MANY. OTHER VALIDATING SOURCES AND TECHNIQUES HAVE PLAYED OUT IN UNCOUNTABLE TRIBES, NATIONS, EMPIRES AND COMMUNES IN THE COURSE OF OUR CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

OUR FORM OF DEMOCRACY POSES A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE IN THIS AREA. BECAUSE IT LACKS THE PERVASIVE CONFORMITY OF MORE AUTHORITARIAN SYSTEMS IT TOLERATES A MUCH GREATER EXERCISE OF THE VALIDATION/DIFFERENTIATION FUNCTION. AND THE CURRENT STATE OF OUR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT ONLY COMPOUNDS THE PROBLEM. OUR DEMOCRACY BEGAN WITH THE PHILOSOPHIC VALUES CITED AND CLAIMED IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. THEN, IN OUR CONSTITUTION, WE ESTABLISHED A GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE OF INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS DESIGNED TO DELIVER THESE VALUES, ONE OF WHICH WAS OUR BICAMERAL LEGISLATIVE

CONGRESS, TO THE PEOPLE. IN THE PROCESS WE PORTRAYED OURSELVES AS “A NATION OF LAWS” AND HAVE CONTINUED TO DO SO EVER SINCE.

TODAY WE ARE ANYTHING BUT “A NATION OF LAWS”. IT IS NOT THAT THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF LAWS. THERE ARE PLENTY, BUT THEY ARE OFTEN NOT ENFORCED OR FUNDED, AND WE HAVE COME TO ALLOW LOCAL LAWS TO TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER NATIONAL ONES IN AREAS WHERE THE LATTER CLEARLY APPLY SUCH AS IMMIGRATION, VOTING, LABOR, SECURITY, ETC. THE IDEA THAT WE MIGHT LOOK TO CONGRESS FOR EITHER PHILOSOPHICAL OR LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP IS ONE WHOSE TIME NO LONGER EXISTS. PUBLIC OPINION CAN BE EXPRESSED TO AND CAN REACH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, BUT THEN IT HITS A KIND LEGISLATIVE CEILING, AND BECOMES MIXED AND MANGLED BY THE WAR OF WORDS AND IDEOLOGICAL BATTLES THAT DOMINATE CONGRESS. PUBLIC ACCESS IS MORE CONCEPT THAN FACT, AND NOT EVEN A VERY SUCCESSFUL ONE. THERE ARE MESSAGES THAT CAN PENETRATE THE LEGISLATIVE CEILING AND DO SO ROUTINELY, BUT THEY ARE THOSE OF THE SPECIAL INTERESTS WHO KNOW THAT ENTRY FEES OPEN DOORS AND PERMIT ACCESS TO THE CURRENTS OF MONEY AND POWER THAT FLOW THROUGH AND AROUND THE CONGRESS.

* * *

“OTHER VOICES, OTHER ROOMS”¹

AT THIS MOMENT IN OUR POLITICAL HISTORY AN OBJECTIVE LOOK AT ISSUES OTHER THAN RELIGION WILL REVEAL THE EXTENT TO WHICH PERSONAL DEFINITION IS USED TO FURTHER POLICY WHICH THEN CREATES A PROBLEMATIC OR NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCE. PASTOR HAGEE DOES NOT STAND ALONE.

IN AGRICULTURE, CONGRESS HAS PASSED LEGISLATION THAT PROVIDES RICH CROP SUPPORT AND SUBSIDY PROGRAMS FOR FARMERS THROUGHOUT AMERICA. WITH A VERY RECENT SENSITIVITY THE WHITE HOUSE HAS THREATENED A VETO, NOT BECAUSE OF ITS AGRICULTURAL PROVISIONS, BUT BECAUSE IT CONTAINS TOO MANY EARMARKS FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL LOCAL PROJECTS. MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT BUSH WHO SUPPORT THIS BILL HAVE CLAIMED THAT IT PROTECTS OUR SMALL FARMERS, BUT, IN FACT, THEIR BENEFITS FROM IT ARE MINOR, AS BY FAR THE GREATEST PART OF ITS FUNDING PROVIDED BY AMERICAN TAXPAYERS GOES TO FARMS WITH INCOMES OVER \$250,000, AND SOME THAT ARE MEASURED IN THE MILLIONS.

“THE SMALL ‘FAMILY FARMER’ DOES NOT LIVE HERE.”

THESE MEGA FARMS OPERATE WITH MANY TYPES OF NEW

AND EXPENSIVE EQUIPMENT INCLUDING TRACTORS THAT COST OVER \$500,000, COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND A 24/7 CAPABILITY TO IRRIGATE HUNDREDS OR THOUSANDS OF ACRES OF LEASED OR OWNED LAND. THE SMALL “FAMILY FARMER” DOES NOT LIVE HERE. HIS ROLE IS TO CLAP, IF HE HAS THE TIME AND ENERGY, WHEN THE HEROES DRIVE BY. OUR LARGE-SCALE AGRICULTURE IS AN EXTENSION OF CORPORATE AMERICA WHERE WE FIND THE SAME VALUES AND TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED IN THE PURSUIT OF PROFIT. FARMING IS A TOUGH BUSINESS, BUT THE CUSHION PROVIDED BY THE CAPITAL OF MEGA FARMS GREATLY REDUCES THE RISK. CAPITAL CAN PERFORM ITS TRANSFORMATIVE MAGIC EQUALLY AS WELL ON THE FARM AS IN THE EXECUTIVE SUITE.

AND THERE’S ANOTHER STRIKING SIMILARITY BETWEEN THESE TWO WORLDS. BOTH THE MEGA FARM AND THE MEGA CORPORATION ARE ENABLED IN THEIR GROWTH AND SUCCESS BY GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE LENDING SOURCES, SUBSIDIES, TAX RELIEF, PRICE/PRODUCTION SUPPORTS, ETC. WHERE MONEY AND POWER CONGREGATE, CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT IS OFTEN LONG AND STRONG, AND YET GOVERNMENT CAN BE A USEFUL PARTNER, ESPECIALLY IF SILENT.

THE ROADS TAKEN TO MONEY/POWER BY POLITICIANS AND CORPORATE LEADERS ARE QUITE DIFFERENT, PRIMARILY BECAUSE POLITICIANS HAVE TO BE ELECTED BY PUBLIC PROCESS, BUT THEY BOTH CLEARLY SHARE THE ENJOYMENT OF THE CHASE AND ITS REWARDS. AND THERE’S NO NEED TO GO MUCH FURTHER THAN THE NEXT FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN AT A WEALTHY DONOR’S HOME TO OBSERVE HOW EASILY POLITICIANS VALIDATE AND DIFFERENTIATE THEMSELVES BY THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH THOSE WHO INHABIT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF CORPORATE SUCCESS. THE EASE AND FREQUENCY WITH WHICH POLITICIANS TRANSFER TO FOUNDATION OR CORPORATE WORK AFTER LEAVING ELECTORAL POLITICS IS YET ANOTHER REFLECTOR OF THESE TIES THAT BIND.

* * *

EVERY PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN PROVIDES OCCASIONAL MOMENTS WHICH, ALTHOUGH THEY MAY NOT BE SIGNIFICANT, CAN OFFER INTERESTING INSIGHTS. FOR SEN. JOHN MCCAIN SUCH A MOMENT OCCURRED EARLY IN HIS CAMPAIGN WHEN HE STATED BOTH THAT WE MAY HAVE A MILITARY PRESENCE IN IRAQ FOR THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS AND THAT IN THE NEAR FUTURE THERE WILL BE OTHER WARS OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT FOR WHICH HIS MILITARY EXPERIENCE COULD OFFER THE BEST LEADERSHIP.

SEN. MCCAIN DESERVES HIGH PRAISE FOR HIS MILITARY SERVICE AND HIS ABILITY TO ENDURE AND SURVIVE HIS CAPTIVITY IN VIETNAM. THE LATTER WAS AN INCREDIBLE ACHIEVEMENT OF GREAT CHARACTER AND STRENGTH. HE NOW FINDS, HOWEVER, THAT HIS CAMPAIGN IS RESTRICTED IN MANY AREAS BY HIS AND PRES. BUSH’S PREVIOUS VOTING RECORDS, AND HE MUST SEEK AREAS OF COMMENT THAT DO NOT CONFLICT WITH THEIR PAST. IN THE TWO STATEMENTS ABOVE HE IS SAYING

“ELECT ME BECAUSE I AM A WARRIOR; I’VE SPENT MY LIFE IN MILITARY SERVICE.” AND SO HE HAS. THE MILITARY, MUCH LIKE THE CLERGY, IS A CALLING IN WHICH ONE STARTS EARLY AND GENERALLY STAYS LATE, AND DEMANDS A HIGH DEGREE OF COMMITMENT.

SEN. MCCAIN BY WORD AND ATTITUDE LEAVES NO DOUBT THAT HE DEFINES HIMSELF BY MILITARY SERVICE AND VALUES WHICH POSE NO PROBLEM FOR HIM AS A ONE-VOTE MEMBER OF THE SENATE. HOWEVER, IN THE WHITE HOUSE AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, OR AT SOME OTHER HIGH POLICY LEVEL WHERE DETERMINATIONS ARE BY DECREE, NOT BY VOTE, THE TOTALITY OF MILITARY IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION MAY LESSEN POLICY OPTIONS AND RESULTS.

THE MILITARY’S PLANNING AND EXECUTION FUNCTIONS ARE FAR DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF FOREIGN POLICY. IN THE LATTER, NUANCE, AND ITS EFFECT UPON FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE, IS EVERYTHING, AND OFTEN DELIVERS THE TRUE MESSAGE NOT FOUND IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS. SEN. MCCAIN’S STATEMENT THAT WE MAY HAVE A MILITARY PRESENCE IN IRAQ FOR MANY YEARS SEEMS TO OFFER A MILITARY JUDGMENT THAT SUCH A PRESENCE COULD ASSURE THE US OF MEETING ITS CURRENT GOALS, BUT FAILS AS REALISTIC FOREIGN POLICY WHICH HAS TO OPERATE WITHIN MUCH SHORTER TIME FRAMES AND MUST CONSIDER THE THRUST AND PARRY, TRUST BUT VERIFY, CARROT AND STICK AND OTHER DUAL ACTION TECHNIQUES THAT WILL BE CALLED FOR IN DEALING WITH IRAQ’S NEIGHBORS.

THE SIX NEOCON ARCHITECTS OF THE IRAQ OCCUPATION ALL SEEM LIKELY TO HAVE VIEWED THEIR POLICY IN TERMS OF SELF-DEFINITION AND VALIDATION. TO SOME EXTENT THAT MAY ALWAYS BE TRUE IN THOSE WHO SEEK THE ROLE OF PUBLIC LEADERSHIP. WITHIN LIMITS IT CAN BE TOLERATED, BUT IN EXTREMIS CAN BE FATAL. IT IS A FLAW RARELY SUBJECT TO SELF-CORRECTION, AND IN A DEMOCRACY ITS ULTIMATE CONTROL LIES IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.

* * *

“THE MEDIA IS THE FLAME FOR THE POLITICAL MOTH.”

ANY EFFORT TO ANSWER THE QUESTION “WHO LOST AMERICA?” MUST EXAMINE THE VASTLY CHANGED ROLE OF THE MEDIA OVER THE PAST HALF CENTURY DURING WHICH BOTH ITS CONTENT AND ITS REACH HAVE GREATLY ALTERED OUR CULTURE. IN CONTENT, IT HAS PROVIDED A PARALLEL TRACK TO THE DUMBING DOWN OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM WITH A RELENTLESS FOCUS ON SEX AND VIOLENCE AND MULTIPLE COMBINATIONS THEREOF. ITS REACH NOW ENABLES A 24/7 ASSAULT BY TV BROADCAST, NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, INTERNET, MOBILE ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS, CABLE, ETC. OF PRODUCT FROM AROUND THE WORLD DIRECTED TO EVERY SEGMENT OF OUR POPULATION. AND THERE IS ANOTHER WAY BY WHICH OUR MEDIA CAN

INFLUENCE AND CONTROL OUR POLITICAL DESTINY. THE MEDIA IS THE FLAME FOR THE POLITICAL MOTH. THE ATTRACTION OF MEDIA EXPOSURE TO POLITICIANS IS A POWERFUL, ADDICTIVE AND SOMETIMES FATAL FORCE THAT MUST BE PURSUED. SOME POLITICIANS ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS AT CONTROLLING AND DIRECTING IT, BUT ITS USE IS A MUST AND HAS BECOME BY FAR THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY OF GETTING THEIR MESSAGE OUT AND BRINGING MONEY IN.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, IT HAS BECOME A MEANS OF SELF-DEFINITION. FOR POLITICIANS WITH THE WEAKEST INTELLECT, PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE, VALUES STRUCTURE, GRASP OF LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVE TRUTH OR OTHER INNER RESOURCES IT OFFERS A REFUGE WHERE THESE WEAKNESSES CAN BE CONCEALED BEHIND THE CROWDS, THE HOOPLA, THE CANNED APPLAUSE AND LAUGHTER, THE “SOFT LOB” QUESTIONS AND THE CAREFULLY SCRIPTED AND REHEARSED DIALOGUE AND ANSWERS. EASILY AND CHEAPLY PURCHASED MEDIA COVERAGE, MOSTLY NOTABLY TV, NOW OFFERS SUBSTANDARD CANDIDATES A FORM OF POLITICAL SLEIGHT OF HAND WHICH IN TOO MANY INSTANCES HAS DECEIVED OR CONFUSED THE NATION’S VOTERS. UNLESS THE LATTER BEGIN TO PAY MORE ATTENTION AND DEMAND MORE FROM BETTER CANDIDATES THE QUALITY OF OUR GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO DECLINE TO A POINT WHERE LIVE POLITICAL COVERAGE MIGHT WELL BE REPLACED BY WEST WING RERUNS.

* * *

THE IMMIGRATION ISSUE IS LIKE KUDZU. IT APPEARS QUIETLY, SPREADS QUICKLY AND PROVIDES A “HANDLE” FOR A VARIETY OF LEGAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC OBJECTIONS MANY OF WHICH DERIVE FROM THE OBJECTORS’ NEED FOR SELF-DEFINITION. PERHAPS THE MOST OBVIOUS EXAMPLE IS THE CHOICE OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS TO OFFER SANCTUARY TO ILLEGALS IN OPPOSITION TO OUR FEDERAL LAW. THIS ACT OF CIVIL DEFIANCE IS BASED ON THE MORAL SUPERIORITY OF GOD’S LAW AS PUT FORTH IN CHRIST’S TEACHINGS, AND THOSE WHO JOIN IN SANCTUARY EFFORTS DEFINE THEMSELVES BY THEIR COMMITMENT TO COMPASSION, EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF RESISTANCE TO THE LAW OF THE LAND.

BUT AGAIN, THE PERSONAL VALUES THAT DEMAND VALIDATION ARE NOT UNIVERSAL AND THE POPULARITY OF SANCTUARY AS A SOCIAL OR POLITICAL POLICY IS NOT AS EVIDENT IN NON-CHRISTIAN GROUPS AND EVEN LESS AMONG THE IRRELIGIOUS. IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO OVERESTIMATE THE NUMBER AND WAYS BY WHICH THE MANY FACETS OF THE IMMIGRATION ISSUE PROVIDE RECEPTORS FOR THE SELF-DEFINITION PROCESS. THEY ACT AS A SORT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MAGNETIC FORCE CAPABLE OF BONDING INDIVIDUAL EMOTION TO DIFFICULT POLITICAL CHOICE. THIS PLAYS OUT VERY DANGEROUSLY IN OPEN IMMIGRATION’S IMPACT ON OUR POPULATION. OF ALL IMMIGRATION’S NEGATIVE EFFECTS POPULATION IS THE MOST NUMBERS SPECIFIC AND, IN ADDITION,

HAS GIVEN HARD EVIDENCE OF ITS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL FOR DISLOCATION. KEEP KUDZU IN MIND.

“AMERICA WILL JOIN THE EASTER ISLAND SCULPTURES LOOKING FOR HELP THAT WILL NOT COME.”

POPULATION IS THE UMBILICAL CORD THAT FEEDS POLITICS, AND FOR A COUPLE OF CENTURIES NOW WE HAVE HAD THE BENEFIT OF KNOWING THAT IT INCREASES GEOMETRICALLY AT A MUCH FASTER RATE THAN THAT OF RESOURCES THAT ARE FIXED OR ONLY INCREASE ARITHMETICALLY. TODAY, ESTIMATES FROM BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SOURCES INDICATE THAT, IF IMMIGRATION CONTINUES IN ITS PRESENT FORM, WE CAN EXPECT A POPULATION INCREASE FROM IT ALONE OVER THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS OF BETWEEN 60 AND 120 MILLION. ENTER THE KUDZU CURVE! EXTEND IT FOR ANOTHER FIFTY YEARS AND OUR AMERICA WILL JOIN THE EASTER ISLAND SCULPTURES LOOKING FOR HELP THAT WILL NOT COME.

ANY SUCH INCREASE WOULD CREATE A NEW POLITICAL REALITY IN THE COUNTRY, AS IN HYPHENATED TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AMERICA ASSIMILATION OF THE KIND WE HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST IS NO LONGER THE RECOGNIZED GOAL. WITHOUT IT MULTIPLE POLITICAL CONSTITUENCIES WILL FORM THAT WILL LACK A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE AND MAY PUSH FOR SELF-SERVING LEGISLATION SUCH AS THE RETURN OF OUR SOUTHWESTERN STATES (AZTLAN) TO MEXICO, OR RETROACTIVE REPARATIONS FOR THE PERIOD SINCE WE ACQUIRED THEM IN 1848. IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, WE SHOULD EXPECT THESE CONSTITUENCIES OF MOSTLY THIRD WORLD ORIGIN TO FIND OTHER WAYS TO DIRECT MORE OF THE NATION’S WEALTH AND FAVOR TO THEM.

CAN THIS COME TO PASS? AND WHY IS IT CONSIDERED A VERY REAL POSSIBILITY BY MANY AMERICANS? FOR AN ANSWER IT IS ONLY NECESSARY TO TURN EAST TO EUROPE. WE HAVE SEATS, FRONT AND CENTER, TO OBSERVE THE DEADLY RESULTS OF UNCHECKED IMMIGRATION IN FRANCE, GERMANY, ENGLAND, SPAIN, HOLLAND AND ITALY WHERE THE FORMER COLONIAL POWERS ARE BEING SWAMPED BY CONSTANT THIRD WORLD ARRIVALS, MOSTLY FROM AFRICA OR THE NEAR EAST, AND MOSTLY MUSLIMS.

“. . . THE EUROPEAN NARRATIVE IS A BIT AHEAD OF US.”

THE RESULT HAS BEEN EXTREME VIOLENCE IN THE STREETS WITH RANDOM ACTS OF MURDER, RAPE, TORTURE AND EXTENSIVE PROPERTY DAMAGE. TO LOOK AT THE EUROPEAN HISTORY, TO LISTEN TO THE ARGUMENTS ON BOTH SIDES, TO OBSERVE THE RESULTS AND THEN TO THINK THAT “IT CAN’T HAPPEN HERE” IS SHEER FOLLY. BUT HISTORY CAN ONLY TEACH

US, IF WE LET IT! EUROPE AND AMERICA HAVE MANAGED TO SHARE SOME SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL EVENTS — THE ALMOST TWIN REVOLUTIONS HERE AND IN FRANCE, THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, AND WWs I & II. AND, WITH ALMOST EERILY SIMULTANEOUS TIMING, CONGRESS IN 1965 PASSED THE IMMIGRATION REFORM ACT THAT TOTALLY TRANSFORMED OUR PROCESS WHILE GERMANY INITIATED LEGISLATION THAT INVITED LARGE NUMBERS OF TURKISH MUSLIMS TO ENTER, WORK AND BECOME CITIZENS. NOW ALMOST FIFTY YEARS LATER, THE RESULTS OF THESE TWO RELATED AND FATEFUL EFFORTS TO ACCOMMODATE THIRD WORLD DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS WITHOUT CONSIDERATION OF LONG TERM DAMAGE TO THEIR OWN SOCIETIES ARE PLAYING OUT IN OUR FULL VIEW WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT THE EUROPEAN NARRATIVE IS A BIT AHEAD OF US.

IS OUR GOVERNMENT, ARE WE OURSELVES, SO ANESTHETIZED THAT THE PAIN OF THE EVENTS IN EUROPE DOES NOT REGISTER HERE? TIME PASSES, AND NOT TO OUR ADVANTAGE. UNLESS WE CHANGE OUR POLICY WE WILL CONFRONT THE QUESTION OF OUR OWN SURVIVAL WITH PROGRESSIVELY FEWER OPPORTUNITIES AND MEANS TO SECURE IT. THAT WE SHOULD REACH SUCH A POINT IS UNTHINKABLE, BUT CERTAINLY POSSIBLE, AND PERHAPS EVEN PROBABLE, AS OUR NATIONAL POLICY HAS BEEN CONTROLLED BY THE PERSONAL BELIEFS AND IDENTIFICATION MECHANISMS OF THE ELITES IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND CONGRESS FROM THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TO THE PRESENT. AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, IN SPITE OF THE EXPRESSED WILL OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

* * *

RECAP

PASTOR HAGEE, THE MEDIA, THE PROVIDERS OF SANCTUARY, AND OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES ARE JOINED. THEY ARE THREADS THAT MAKE UP AN INTRICATELY INTERCONNECTED WEB OF CAUSE AND EFFECT THAT HAS BEEN FORMED OVER THE LAST HALF CENTURY AND WHICH NOW DOMINATES THE EXERCISE AND POLICIES OF OUR GOVERNMENT, AND THREATENS ITS EXISTENCE AS A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC CONSTRUCTED ON A BASE OF ANGLO-SAXON LAW, RELIGION, HISTORY, ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY. IN THE BEGINNING SOME OF THESE WERE ELEMENTS OF CHOICE; OTHERS OF CHANCE. TODAY, THEY ARE ALL CHALLENGED BY A VARIETY OF FORCES THAT MAKE CLAIMS TO IMPOSE MULTICULTURALISM, TO EXPAND MEXICO’S TERRITORY AT THE EXPENSE OF OURS AND TO SWING OUR NATIONAL COURSE SO THAT AN EVER INCREASING SHARE OF OUR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BENEFITS IS DIRECTED TO THE NON-NATIVE, THIRD WORLD CONSTITUENCIES TO WHICH WE HAVE ASSIGNED SPECIAL PRIVILEGES.

THIS WEB IS CIRCULAR WHICH PROVIDES EQUAL STRENGTH TO ALL PARTS. AS WITH MOST PROBLEMS OF OUR

CURRENT WORLD, POPULATION IS A KEY FACTOR AND A GOOD STARTING POINT. AT THE END OF WWII OUR POPULATION WAS 150 MILLION AND CONSISTENT WITH THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF OUR HABITAT. TODAY IT IS AROUND 330 MILLION AND CHALLENGES OUR ECOLOGICAL STABILITY. MUCH OF THIS RECENT GROWTH HAS BEEN DUE TO THE INFLUX OF IMMIGRANTS FROM HIGH FERTILITY CULTURES.

“ . . . CONSUMER PURCHASING THAT ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT 70% OF OUR GDP.”

DURING THESE SAME YEARS WE EXPERIENCED AN UNUSUAL TECHNOLOGICAL EXPLOSION THAT ENABLED US TO MAKE AND SELL AN ARRAY OF NEWLY DEVELOPED PRODUCTS BOTH HERE AND TO FOREIGN MARKETS. THE THIRD ELEMENT THAT COMBINED WITH POPULATION AND TECHNOLOGY TO COMPLETE OUR ECONOMIC GROWTH CAPABILITY WAS MARKETING IN GENERAL, AND THE MEDIA IN PARTICULAR. IT HAS A MULTIPLIER EFFECT AND WAS ABLE TO GENERATE THE STEADY GROWTH IN CONSUMER PURCHASING THAT ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT 70% OF OUR GDP. FROM THEIR EFFORTS OUR MEDIA WERE ABLE TO CREATE ENORMOUS WEALTH AND POWER — AND TO RETAIN A HEALTHY SHARE FOR THEMSELVES. OUR PROLONGED POSTWAR ECONOMIC BOOM WAS LARGELY THE RESULT OF THESE THREE FACTORS — MORE CONSUMERS FROM MORE POPULATION; NEW TECHNOLOGY FROM GOVERNMENT, ACADEMIA AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR; AND THE MIRACLE OF MODERN MEDIA MARKETING.

TWO CAPABILITIES WITHIN THE MEDIA INDUSTRY APPEARED ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY AND DRAMATICALLY CHANGED ITS ABILITY TO SERVE ITS USERS. THE FIRST WAS THE ARRIVAL OF TV AS A NATIONAL, COLOR MEDIUM FOR ADVERTISING AROUND THE CLOCK. THIS WAS A NATURAL EVOLUTION FROM PREWAR PIONEER EFFORTS AND IT PROVIDED THE BROADCAST MEDIA WITH A PROFITABILITY EXPLOSION THAT HAD NOT BEEN AVAILABLE FROM RADIO. BUT THERE WAS A CATCH. AND IT WAS THAT IN ORDER TO DERIVE REVENUES FROM 24/7 COMMERCIALS THERE ALSO HAD TO BE 24/7 PROGRAMMING — I.E. PRODUCT, AND 24/7 PRODUCT MEANT THERE WOULD BE A LOT OF CHEAP, “QUICK AND DIRTY” PROGRAMS. IT WAS INSTANTLY RECOGNIZED, BUT RARELY ACKNOWLEDGED, THAT TO HAVE A CONSTANT AND READY SOURCE OF SUCH PRODUCT WOULD REQUIRE A MASSIVE “DUMBING DOWN” OF THE MEDIUM. SLAM DUNK! DONE; NO FURTHER QUESTIONS; MEETING ADJOURNED.

THE SECOND MEDIA INDUSTRY CAPABILITY OF ENORMOUS CONSEQUENCE WAS TECHNOLOGICAL AND HAD ITS GREATEST IMPACT ON DIRECT MAIL AND PRINT MEDIA ACTIVITIES. THIS WAS THE ADOPTION OF OUR ZIP CODE SYSTEM WHICH HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE TO TARGET AND REACH EVER SMALLER GROUPS TO THE EXTENT THAT INDIVIDUAL OFFICE BUILDINGS OR OTHER DESTINATIONS CAN NOW HAVE THEIR OWN ZIP CODES. THIS ABILITY OF ZIP CODES TO PROVIDE DEMOGRAPHIC DISTINCTION HAS REVOLUTIONIZED THE VALUE AND REACH OF MARKET RESEARCH WHICH CAN NOW CREATE MORE SPECIFIC

MESSAGES DESIGNED TO MOTIVATE THESE SMALLER AND MORE DISTINCTIVE AREAS OF PURCHASING POWER.

THE END RESULT OF THESE COMBINED FORCES OF POPULATION, TECHNOLOGY AND MARKETING GROWTH WAS THE SUSTAINED ECONOMIC ADVANCE OF THE POSTWAR PERIOD WHICH ELEVATED OUR NATIONAL AND PERSONAL WEALTH/POWER TO NEW LEVELS.

LOOKING AT THE NEW MEDIA/MARKETING TECHNIQUES, COULD THERE BE A MORE INVITING STAGE SET FOR THE ARRIVAL OF MILLIONS OF ETHNICALLY, CULTURALLY, AND GEOGRAPHICALLY MIXED IMMIGRANTS? AS THE PURSUITS OF POLITICS AND COMMERCE ADAPTED TO THE LIMITED LANGUAGE (MOSTLY SPANISH) OF THE NEW ARRIVALS, THE GOAL OF ASSIMILATION RECEDED. SPECIFIC GROUPS IN SPECIFIC AREAS COULD BE EASILY REACHED WITH CULTURALLY AND/OR POLITICALLY SPECIFIC MESSAGES. COMMUNITIES DIFFERED SUBSTANTIALLY IN THEIR ABILITY TO ATTRACT OR ABSORB THE GROWING IMMIGRANT POPULATION, BUT IN THOSE AREAS WHERE CIRCUMSTANCE ENCOURAGED CONCENTRATION IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF BRIEF TIME BEFORE POLITICIANS (OFTEN FORMER IMMIGRATION ATTORNEYS) APPEARED TO REPRESENT THE NEW CONSTITUENCIES IN THEIR MOTHER TONGUE AND TO BUILD THEIR REPRESENTATION ON THE ISSUES OF THE IMMIGRANT AGENDA. AS THESE COMMUNITIES GREW IN NUMBER AND IN SIZE THEY BECAME ABLE TO ENGAGE IN AND BENEFIT FROM OUR “GERRYMANDERING” PROCESS, WHICH IS PRACTICED NATIONALLY BY BOTH MAJOR PARTIES, EVEN THOUGH IT OPPOSES DEMOCRACY IN SPIRIT AND PRACTICE AND MAKES POSSIBLE THE EXISTENCE OF “SAFE SEATS”.

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THE CONNECTION

THIS CHAPTER TOUCHES UPON SOME VERY SENSITIVE SUBJECTS — RELIGION, IMMIGRATION AND WAR AMONG THEM — BUT, AS IMPORTANT AS THEY ARE, IT IS NOT ABOUT THEM. IT IS ABOUT GOVERNMENT AND HOW FAR OUR PRESENT SYSTEM AND PRACTICE HAVE FALLEN FROM THEIR ORIGINAL INTENTION AND FUNCTION.

THE GOAL OF GOVERNMENT MUST BE GOOD GOVERNMENT ITSELF. THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED AND KEPT IN BALANCE ONLY BY ENLIGHTENED POLICY WHICH MUST SERVE BOTH OUR LESSER AND LARGER INTERESTS HERE AND ABROAD. IN OUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCE, POLICY IS RARELY ANYTHING OTHER THAN A FREQUENTLY EXCHANGED HOSTAGE IN OUR POLITICAL WARS. IN THESE THE DECISIVE COMPONENT IS OFTEN REVEALED, WHEN THE IDEOLOGICAL CURTAIN IS LIFTED AS IN THE WIZARD OF OZ , TO BE OUR OWN BUMBLING NEED FOR RECOGNITION, DEFINITION AND IDENTIFICATION.

THESE MAY EXPLAIN SOME OF OUR PERSONAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL FAILURES, BUT THEY CANNOT SERVE AS THE FOUNDATION OF GOOD GOVERNMENT. FOR THAT, WE

MUST UNDERTAKE A NATIONAL RENEWAL, ALTHOUGH WE MAY NO LONGER HAVE THE WILL, OR THE TIME, OR THE MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH SUCH AN EFFORT. BUT, IF WE DON'T, WE WILL BE FACED WITH MORE WAR, MORE DEBT, MORE POPULATION, MORE IMMIGRATION, MORE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION, MORE POLARIZATION, MORE CLIMATE CHANGE, MORE DRUGS, MORE GANGS, ETC. THE LIST GOES ON. THIS IS NOT SUMMER BEACH READING, BUT IT IS OUR REAL IMAGE, OUR "PORTRAIT OF DORIAN GRAY" .

THERE IS A CHOICE TO BE MADE, BUT, TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF SUCCESS, IT MUST BE A NATIONAL CHOICE, AND IN OUR CURRENT CONDITION THAT MEANS THE PROCESS OF RENEWAL MUST BE INITIATED BY THE PEOPLE. THOSE WHO LOOK TO THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS FOR ANSWERS WILL BE DISAPPOINTED, AS THE REAL PROBLEM IS ONE OF INSTITUTIONALIZED FAILURE BY REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS ALIKE, AND THE ONLY FORCE NOT BOUND BY THEIR AREA OF FAILURE AND YET POWERFUL ENOUGH TO REFORM OUR SYSTEM IS THE VOX POPULI.

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BACK TO THE FUTURE?

AS WE EDGE TOWARDS THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE TITANIC'S MEMORABLE VOYAGE, MANY CHANGES ARE APPEARING IN OCEANIC PLEASURE TRAVEL. TODAY'S CRUISE SHIPS ACCOMMODATE SEVERAL THOUSAND PASSENGERS AND OFFER A RANGE OF SPORTS ACTIVITIES THAT CAN INCLUDE ROCK-CLIMBING WALLS AND BUNGEE JUMPING. THE CRUISE EXPERIENCE IS HEAVILY WEIGHTED IN FAVOR OF SHOPPING AND AMUSEMENT PARK PLEASURES WITH MULTIPLE RESTAURANTS AND BARS WITH 50+ TV SCREENS SO THAT NO SPORTING EVENT OR CELEBRITY SHOW NEED BE MISSED.

OCEAN TRAVEL BEGAN AS POINT A TO POINT B TRANSPORTATION. THEN AS AIR TRAVEL CAME TO DOMINATE TRANSPORTATION, THE CRUISE TOOK OVER. YOU LEFT POINT A, VISITED OTHER PLACES AND STAYED ON BOARD UNTIL RETURNING TO POINT A. NOW THE OBJECTIVE SEEMS TO BE TO TAKE POINT A TO SEA WITH YOU SO THAT "YOU NEVER LEAVE HOME". AS THESE CRUISES ARE MARKETED AS FAMILY EVENTS, A HIGH DECIBEL NOISE LEVEL FROM CHILDREN AND INESCAPABLE SOCIALIZATION AT ALL TIMES ARE ALMOST ASSURED.

BUT WAIT; ONE NEW, OR RATHER OLD, TWIST HAS BEEN REPORTED. IT IS THE SEPARATION OF PASSENGERS INTO SEPARATE ECONOMIC CLASSES WHERE SPACE AND FACILITIES ARE DIFFERENT AND ACCESS TO THEM RESTRICTED. IN THE HEYDAY OF TRANSCONTINENTAL MARINE TRAVEL IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY THERE WERE THREE CLASSES — FIRST, CABIN AND STEERAGE WITH DIFFERENT PRICES, CREWS, MENUS,

AREAS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EACH. THE NEW DIVISION MAY NOT BE SO BROAD, BUT IT CERTAINLY REPRESENTS A MARKETING STEP AWAY FROM THE EGALITARIAN, "ONE SIZE FITS ALL" MODEL THAT HAS HELD SWAY FOR THE LAST FEW DECADES. IS THIS A FAD, OR A TREND? A NEW DIRECTION, OR A DEAD END? ONLY TIME WILL TELL, BUT IT IS CERTAINLY AN INTERESTING TURN-AROUND.

MEANWHILE, IT SEEMS THAT PEACEFUL MORNINGS ON DECK IN LOUNGE CHAIRS WITH BOUILLON OR SHERRY SERVED AT 11:00 ARE EITHER GONE OR GOING. WHAT DO YOU WEAR FOR BUNGEE-JUMPING? HOW ABOUT THE APRICOT VELOUR WARM-UP SUIT WITH ALL THE NASCAR CORPORATE LOGOS? DONE DEAL!

END NOTES

¹ TRUMAN CAPOTE

² FRANK BAUM

³ OSCAR WILDE

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