

MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE[®]

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RENEWAL 8

ECONOMICS – AND BEYOND

PART 3

WE CONCLUDED OUR LAST ISSUE WITH A STATISTIC THAT BROKE THROUGH THE LAYERED LANGUAGE USED BY WASHINGTON TO OBSCURE RATHER THAN REVEAL GOVERNMENTAL TRUTH.

OUR STATISTIC LAID BARE THE ENORMOUS EXTENT OF OUR NATIONAL DEBT IN PLAIN TERMS, READILY UNDERSTANDABLE TO ALL, BUT NEVER MENTIONED IN POLITICAL CIRCLES. WE REPEAT IT SO THAT IT CAN BE ACCEPTED AS THE FISCAL REALITY THAT IT IS:

IF THE GOVERNMENT WERE TO HALT ALL SPENDING AND PAY DOWN THE NATIONAL DEBT, NOW AUTHORIZED TO REACH \$16.4 TRILLION, AT THE RATE OF \$100 MILLION PER DAY, IT WOULD TAKE ALMOST 450 YEARS TO ELIMINATE IT; OR AT THE RATE OF \$1 BILLION PER DAY, ONE MONTH LESS THAN 45 YEARS.

AT OUR PRESENT RATE OF SPENDING, CITIZENS AGAINST GOVERNMENT WASTE, A PUBLIC ADVOCACY GROUP, REPORTS THAT OUR DEBT INCREASES AT THE RATE OF \$4 BILLION A DAY.

WE HAD THOUGHT THIS WAS EXCESS ENOUGH FOR EVEN SUPER BORROWING AND SPENDING AT THE SUPERPOWER LEVEL, BUT LAST JULY THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE (GAO) COMPLETED A ONE-TIME AUDIT REQUIRED BY THE DODD-FRANK ACT OF LOAN PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED BY THE FEDERAL RESERVE BANK FROM 12/1/07 TO 7/21/10.

THIS REPORT DISCLOSES THAT \$16.1 TRILLION WAS LOANED TO BANKS AND CORPORATIONS IN THE U.S. AND ELSEWHERE, MOSTLY EUROPE, WITHOUT DEBATE AND WITHOUT INFORMING CONGRESS OR THE PUBLIC.

THAT'S RIGHT; AT A VERY PRECARIOUS TIME WE CHOSE TO REMOVE ANOTHER \$16 TRILLION FROM OUR ECONOMY.

AS THESE LOANS WERE MADE AT NO INTEREST, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THERE HAVE BEEN ALMOST NO REPAYMENTS. THE LARGEST BENEFICIARIES WERE OUR FOUR MAJOR BANKS WHO TOGETHER RECEIVED \$7.8 TRILLION, JUST SLIGHTLY LESS THAN HALF OF THE TOTAL. A PARTIAL LISTING FOLLOWS:

CITIGROUP: \$2.5 TRILLION (\$2,500,000,000,000)
MORGAN STANLEY: \$2.04 TRILLION (\$2,040,000,000,000)
MERRILL LYNCH: \$1.949 TRILLION (\$1,949,000,000,000)
BANK OF AMERICA: \$1.344 TRILLION (\$1,344,000,000,000)
BARCLAYS PLC (UNITED KINGDOM): \$868 BILLION
(\$868,000,000,000)
BEAR STERNS: \$853 BILLION (\$853,000,000,000)
GOLDMAN SACHS: \$814 BILLION (\$814,000,000,000)
ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND (UK): \$541 BILLION
(\$541,000,000,000)
JP MORGAN CHASE: \$391 BILLION (\$391,000,000,000)
DEUTSCHE BANK (GERMANY): \$354 BILLION
(\$354,000,000,000)
UBS (SWITZERLAND): \$287 BILLION (\$287,000,000,000)
CREDIT SUISSE (SWITZERLAND): \$262 BILLION
(\$262,000,000,000)
LEHMAN BROTHERS: \$183 BILLION (\$183,000,000,000)
BANK OF SCOTLAND (UNITED KINGDOM): \$181 BILLION
(\$181,000,000,000)
BNP PARIBAS (FRANCE): \$175 BILLION
(\$175,000,000,000)
AND MANY MORE.

SECRECY AT THE TIME THESE LOANS WERE MADE WAS STANDARD PROCEDURE, AS THE POLITICAL FALL-OUT WOULD HAVE BEEN INTENSE. NOW, WITH SOME TIME HAVING PASSED AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HAVING BECOME ACCUSTOMED

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OR RESIGNED TO OUR STATE OF RECESSION, THE RESPONSE TO THESE ACTIONS, SHOULD THEY RECEIVE PUBLIC MEDIA EXPOSURE, WILL PROBABLY NOT BE AS EXPLOSIVE AS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WHEN THESE LOANS WERE MADE. STILL, IF CHALLENGED, WE ARE SURE TO HEAR THE ARGUMENT THAT THE FRB HAD NO OTHER CHOICE BECAUSE WITHOUT ITS RESCUE SERVICE THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM WOULD HAVE FAILED COMPLETELY.

THERE IS AN ASPECT HERE THAT, WERE THE SUBJECT NOT SO SERIOUS, MIGHT BE SEEN AS HUMOROUS. YOU MAY RECALL THAT SOME OF OUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ALSO RECEIVED BILLIONS OF DOLLARS UNDER THE TARP PROGRAM ON AN INTEREST PAYING BASIS AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION, THE BANKS AND THE MEDIA MADE MUCH OF THE PAYMENTS OF PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST WHEN THEY COMMENCED.

THESE WERE PROMPTED IN LARGE MEASURE BY THE LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS ON CORPORATE COMPENSATION THAT ACCOMPANIED THE LOANS, BUT THE PAYMENT OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF INTEREST BEARING DEBT BECOMES MARKEDLY LESS BURDENSOME IF EQUAL AMOUNTS OF INTEREST FREE FUNDS ARE ACCESSIBLE. IN CIRCUMSTANCES SUCH AS THESE, WE SEE THAT IT IS INDEED POSSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND THE CORPORATE SECTOR TO WORK TOGETHER AND FOR THE LATTER'S OBJECTIONS TO GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE AND EXCESS TO BE MODERATED OR EVEN SUSPENDED.

IN THIS ELECTION YEAR WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER THESE EVENTS WILL DEVELOP MEDIA TRACTION AND DOMINATE OUR NEWS CYCLE EVEN BRIEFLY. THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY THERE IS ALREADY A HIGH RESENTMENT FACTOR IN PLAY BECAUSE OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S BAIL-OUTS AND OTHER POLICIES SEEN TO FAVOR THE WEALTHY. AND THESE LOANS HAVE AN ADDED ANGER ELEMENT IN THAT MANY OF THEM WENT TO FOREIGN ENTITIES AND ECONOMIES. IN THE LIST ABOVE, SEVEN OUT OF THE FIFTEEN ARE NOT US OWNED INSTITUTIONS, AND FURTHER FOREIGN FUNDING ALMOST CERTAINLY OCCURRED BY BIG US BANKS SHORING UP THEIR OVERSEAS OPERATIONS AND SUBSIDIARIES WITH MONEY BORROWED HERE.

SO FAR THIS GOVERNMENT PROGRAM HAS PLAYED OUT THE WAY IT WAS SUPPOSED TO, BUT SUCH PREDICTABILITY IS NOT ALWAYS PART OF ECONOMIC THEORY AND PRACTICE. AND THERE IS ANOTHER LAW — THAT OF UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES — THAT IS EQUALLY POWERFUL AND APPLICABLE, AS WE SHALL SEE LATER.

POLITICS AND MONEY ARE ALWAYS CONNECTED AND THE LARGER THE AMOUNTS, THE STRONGER THE TIES. \$16 TRILLION SPENT WITHOUT ANY CONGRESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE OR OVERSIGHT FALLS QUITE FAR OUTSIDE OUR DEMOCRATIC TEMPLATE AND, BECAUSE OF THE FED'S HISTORICAL INSISTENCE UPON TOTAL INDEPENDENCE, RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THIS POLICY HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH AND/OR APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT.

THE PRESIDENT MAY WELL WISH TO DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM THESE LOANS AS AN ELECTION YEAR POLITICAL CHOICE, BUT THE REVERSE SIDE OF THAT COIN IS THAT HE MUST THEN ACCEPT THE UNREGULATED EXPENDITURE OF MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF MONEY BY THE FED WITHOUT HIS AND OTHERS' KNOWLEDGE. AND THIS FALLS FAR SHORT OF THE MODEL OF A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC WITH CHECKS AND BALANCES THAT WE CLAIM FOR OURSELVES AND PROPOSE TO OTHERS.

WHAT DOES OUR NATION FACE AS WE CONTEMPLATE THESE TWO IMMENSE FIGURES — \$16 TRILLION DOLLARS OF ACCUMULATED, LEGISLATED DEBT AND ANOTHER \$16 TRILLION LOANED, INTEREST FREE, MOSTLY TO PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS HERE AND ABROAD BY THE TWELVE MEMBERS OF THE FRB'S GOVERNING BOARD?

AND WE MUST RECALL THAT OUR \$16T OF RECOGNIZED DEBT DOES NOT FULLY STATE OUR GOVERNMENT'S OBLIGATIONS, AS THERE EXISTS A BROAD RANGE OF CONTINGENT LIABILITIES WHICH UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD ADD MANY TRILLIONS MORE TO OUR NATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.

BUT THESE TWO \$16T FIGURES STAND OUT BECAUSE OF THEIR SIZE AND THEIR ORIGINS. THEY OFFER A COMMENT ON OUR GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE THAT IS SIMPLY IRREFUTABLE. AND AS PROOF OF THIS WE ONLY HAVE TO ASK ONE QUESTION — IF THESE EXPENDITURES, IN THEIR PRESENT SIZE AND FORM, DID NOT EXIST TODAY, WOULD WE CREATE THEM WITH ONE UP-OR-DOWN VOTE? NO AMENDMENTS, NO LOOP HOLES, NO TIME EXTENSIONS, NO HEARINGS OR SPEECHES, NO CAMPAIGNING; JUST ONE CHOICE, ONE ANSWER — YES OR NO.

THESE TWO FIGURES BOOKEND A GENERATION OF FLAWED ECONOMIC POLICY AND PRACTICE. THEY SUPPORT A BROAD COLLECTION OF GOVERNMENTAL LEGISLATION AND INITIATIVES IN WHICH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PURPOSES WERE COMBINED. IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THESE POLICIES, HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL FORCE AND MOTIVATION WAS DOMINANT.

WE CITE A PERIOD OF A GENERATION

BECAUSE THE RECENT PROCESS OF SERIOUS DEBT INCREASE BEGAN UNDER PRESIDENT REAGAN WHOSE "SUPPLY SIDE" ECONOMICS AND "GUNS AND BUTTER" DEFENSE POLICY TRIPLED OUR NATIONAL DEBT WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY MAINTAINED A MOSTLY STABLE PROFILE SINCE THE END OF WWII.

REAGAN WAS WELL MEANING AND SINCERE IN HIS BELIEF THAT HIS LACK OF BUDGETARY DISCIPLINE WOULD BE TEMPORARY AND THAT HIS LOWERED TAXES AND INCREASED SPENDING WOULD CREATE BENEFITS THAT WOULD "TRICKLE DOWN" THE ECONOMIC LADDER AND SPONSOR A WIDE MOVE FORWARD FOR ALL LEVELS OF OUR CONSUMER ECONOMY.

HE WAS CORRECT IN MUCH OF HIS THINKING, BUT RESULTS FELL A BIT SHORT OF HIS "TRICKLE DOWN" EXPECTATIONS, AS MANY OF THE BENEFITS DELIVERED BY OUR SYSTEM TO ITS TOP TIERS TEND TO RESIST THE PULL OF GRAVITY, WHETHER NEWTON'S OR REAGAN'S.

THE DECISION TO INCREASE OUR DEBT LEVEL TO MEET OPERATIONAL OR BUDGETARY DEMANDS HAD BEEN MADE. IT FELT GOOD AND IT TASTED GOOD, AND FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, EAGER TO PLEASE THEIR CONSTITUENTS AND THE GROWING NUMBER OF LOBBYISTS WHO CAME TO CALL, THAT WAS ENOUGH.

AND HERE ANOTHER KIND OF "TRICKLE DOWN" CAME INTO PLAY. IT WAS ONE OF FOLLY WHEREBY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ADDED TO OTHERWISE SENSIBLE LEGISLATION BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR PURELY LOCAL PROJECTS WITH NO VALID CALL UPON FEDERAL TAXPAYER DOLLARS.

AFTER REAGAN, THIS BUDGETARY "VIRUS" WORKED ITS WAY THROUGH THE FIRST BUSH ADMINISTRATION, SLOWED SOMEWHAT IN THE CLINTON YEARS AS TAXES WERE RAISED, AND THEN EXPLODED UNDER BUSH II AND OBAMA.

TO PROVIDE PERSPECTIVE AS TO OUR PRESENT STATUS, PUBLIC ADVOCACY GROUP CITIZENS AGAINST GOVERNMENT WASTE HAS REPORTED THAT IT TOOK 227 YEARS FROM 1776 TO 2002 FOR THE U.S. TO ACCUMULATE \$6.2T OF DEBT WHILE IN PRES. OBAMA'S FIRST TERM ALONE WE WILL ADD \$6.4T¹.

IT IS EASY FOR THOSE WHO SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT'S POLICIES TO CLAIM THAT THIS VERY STEEP INCREASE IN OUR DEBT IS DESIRABLE; IT IS CONSIDERABLY LESS EASY, AND IN THE VIEW OF MANY IMPOSSIBLE, TO ARGUE THAT IT IS AFFORDABLE.

THESE ARE SOBERING STATISTICS MADE EVEN MORE SO WHEN WE REALIZE THAT, IN SPITE OF BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES' AND THE MEDIA'S EMPHASIS ON DEFICIT REDUCTION, IT WILL NOT DECREASE OUR NATIONAL DEBT. JUST THE OPPOSITE; AS ANY REDUCTION, UNLESS IT IS TOTAL AND ELIMINATES THE DEFICIT, WILL CONTINUE TO ADD BOTH PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST TO THE DEBT. DEFICIT REDUCTION IS ONE THING, AND CERTAINLY A GOOD THING, BUT ONLY SURPLUSES CAN REDUCE OUR DEBT LEVEL. THIS IS A TRUTH THAT IS WIDELY SUPPRESSED OR IGNORED BY OUR MEDIA AND POLITICAL CLASS, BUT FORTUNATELY HAS BEEN FORCEFULLY PURSUED AND PUBLICIZED BY THE CONCORD COALITION FOR THE LAST QUARTER CENTURY AND, MORE RECENTLY, BY THE PETER G. PETERSON FOUNDATION²

IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT THE LATTER SPONSORED A POLL IN LATE 2009 IN WHICH 66% OF RESPONDENTS

INDICATED THAT WASHINGTON WAS NOT PAYING ENOUGH ATTENTION TO THE DEBT PROBLEM AND 70% SUPPORTED A BIPARTISAN COMMISSION TO DEVELOP BUDGET, SPENDING AND TAX REFORMS TO BE VOTED ON BY CONGRESS³.

UNFORTUNATELY WE HAVE SEEN ALL TOO MANY BIPARTISAN OR BLUE RIBBON COMMISSIONS COME AND GO. THEY LABOR; THEY REPORT; THEY LANGUOR; AND THEN THEY ARE GONE. PRESIDENTS USE THEM AS WINDOW DRESSING MOSTLY, AND SOMETIMES SELECT PARTS OF THEIR FINDINGS TO SUPPORT THEIR OWN POSITIONS BEFORE MOVING ON.

WE HAVE WASTED MUCH GOOD TIME AND TALENT IN MANY FIELDS BY DISMISSING THE WORK OF THESE PANELS BECAUSE, EVEN IN AN ATMOSPHERE AS DENSE AND RESISTANT AS CONGRESS, A GOOD REPORT BY GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERS ENERGETICALLY BACKED BY THE PRESIDENT CAN MAKE A DENT, A DIFFERENCE, AROUND WHICH CONSTRUCTIVE THOUGHT/ACTION CAN GATHER.

A PRIME EXAMPLE OF THIS PATTERN OF FAILURE WAS THE COMMISSION ON IMMIGRATION REFORM HEADED BY THE LATE REP. BARBARA JORDAN (D-TX) WHICH FUNCTIONED FROM 1994-1996. ITS REPORT PRODUCED A MIX OF RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WITH SOME SUPPORT COULD HAVE PREVENTED MUCH OF THE IMMIGRATION LAW MESS WHICH NOW SEEMS TO DEFY SOLUTION. IT GAINED ENOUGH BACKING IN CONGRESS AND AMONG THE PUBLIC TO SUGGEST THAT WORKABLE CHANGE WAS POSSIBLE, BUT PRESIDENT CLINTON WALKED AWAY FROM IT BECAUSE HE DISLIKED SOME OF ITS CONCLUSIONS, AND IT ENDED UP IN HISTORY'S CROWDED GRAVEYARD FOR SPECIAL COMMISSIONS. AS WITH OTHERS, IT DIED BY NEGLECT, ITS BURIAL ATTENDED BY FEW, AND NOW EXISTS ONLY AS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY.

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THE INTERSECTION OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IS ONE OF THE DIRTIEST IN OUR GOVERNMENT. IT EXISTS IN A SHADED WORLD WHERE THE USUAL ETHICAL AND MORAL CONSIDERATIONS OF SOCIETY MAKE ONLY BRIEF AND IRREGULAR APPEARANCES.

IT IS ABLE TO SURVIVE AND DEFY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE IT BECAUSE IT SATISFIES OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES' DESIRES FOR MONEY AND POWER. THE GREAT TRAGEDY FOR OUR COUNTRY IS THAT WE HAVE ALLOWED OUR FAILED SYSTEM TO GROW AND FLOURISH TO THE POINT WHERE, AS WITH OTHER SYSTEMS, AVAILABLE REMEDIES NO LONGER WORK.

THE BURDEN IMPOSED BY OUR IMMENSE DEBT HAS PRONOUNCED NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR ECONOMY, OUR FOREIGN POLICY, OUR SECURITY AND THE SOCIAL CONTRACT BETWEEN THE NATION'S CITIZENS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT. IN ALL THESE AREAS OF OUR NATIONAL LIFE (AND IN THE MANY INSTANCES AND PLACES WHERE THEY MEET) CONTINUING, INCREASING, AND PERHAPS IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE IS BEING DONE ON A DAILY BASIS.

SADLY, THIS ONGOING DAMAGE IS THE PRODUCT OF WILLFUL ACTIONS BY OUR ELECTED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

IT IS THEY WHO HAVE APPROVED BOTH THE LEGISLATION THAT HAS CREATED, AND THEN EXPANDED, MULTIPLE LAYERS OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS WITHOUT REGARD TO COST; AND IT IS THEY WHO HAVE AUTHORIZED THE INCREASES IN OUR NATIONAL DEBT LEVEL THAT HAVE ENABLED THESE PROGRAMS' FUNDING.

NOWHERE IS LAYERED WASTE MORE EVIDENT THAN IN THE SERIES OF PAYMENTS INITIATED BY THE "BLACK FARMER" DISCRIMINATION CASES WHICH ORIGINATED WITH A COMPLAINT AGAINST THE DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE THAT A RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF BLACK FARMERS HAD NOT RECEIVED PAYMENTS TO WHICH THEY WERE ENTITLED. THEY PREVAILED AND WERE AWARDED \$50,000 EACH WHICH WAS ENOUGH TO GET THE GRAVY TRAIN STARTED ROLLING DOWN THE TRACK.

THE ORIGINAL CLAIMANTS WERE JOINED BY OTHERS WITH THE RESULT THAT THE SETTLEMENT FINALLY CAME TO A BILLION DOLLARS. IN THE ELECTION YEAR OF 2008 THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS REVIVED THE MATTER AND ADDED TENS OF THOUSANDS MORE CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION WHICH WERE UNOPPOSED BY REPUBLICANS LEST THEY BE SEEN AS RACIST. THE COST OF THIS SECOND STAGE OF COMPENSATION FOR DISCRIMINATION BY THE DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE WAS \$1.25 BILLION.

THE WHIFF OF THIS KIND OF SPENDING IS LIKE THAT OF BLOOD IN THE WATER FOR SHARKS. RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION SOON SURFACED AND A SIMILAR SETTLEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$760 MILLION WAS CREATED FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER DISTRIBUTION OF \$1.3 BILLION TO FEMALES AND HISPANICS EVEN THOUGH THEIR CLAIMS WERE REJECTED IN COURT. TOTAL COST: \$4.3 BILLION⁴.

THIS IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF A LONG PROCESS GUIDED BY THE DEPT. OF JUSTICE IN WHICH CONTRADICTIONS AND IRREGULARITIES ABOUND.

IT IS NOT UNUSUAL IN INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS, WHEN THERE IS EVIDENCE OF FAILURE IN ONE AREA, TO ALSO FIND IT IN OTHERS, AND THIS MOST CERTAINLY APPLIES TO OUR CONGRESS. FOR, AT THE SAME TIME IT WAS RECKLESSLY BUILDING UP OUR DEBT, IT ENGAGED IN A SERIES OF ACTIONS TO INCREASE ITS OWN REMUNERATION. THIS WAS USUALLY DONE BY PROVIDING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WITH SPECIAL STATUS THAT AFFORDED THEM PREFERENTIAL INSURANCE RATES, RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND EVEN LEGAL TREATMENT SUCH AS NOT BEING SUBJECT TO INSIDER TRADING LAWS.

THIS LAST PRIVILEGE HAS RECENTLY BEEN REPEALED, BUT LARGE EXCEPTIONS HAVE BEEN PRESERVED AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER, IN THE EVENT OF VIOLATIONS, ANY SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY MEASURES OR PUNISHMENT WILL BE HANDED OUT, AND BY WHOM. IN WASHINGTON OF 2012 PROSECUTION OF THE LAW CAN BE AS SELECTIVE AS ITS ENFORCEMENT.

A GUESSING GAME

WE ARE NOW GOING TO ENGAGE IN SOME POLITICAL FANTASY. WE WILL MAKE SOME SUPPOSITIONS AND THEN ASK A QUESTION. THE ANSWERS WILL VARY AND THERE IS NO RIGHT

OR WRONG, BUT THEY MAY PROVIDE A NEW WAY OF VIEWING OUR COUNTRY.

LET'S SUPPOSE THAT BY SOME MAGICAL MEANS NEW CANDIDATES APPEAR THIS YEAR TO CONTEST EVERY SEAT UP FOR ELECTION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE. THAT WOULD MEAN 435 MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AND PRESUMABLY 33 MEMBERS OF THE SENATE, AS IT IS DIVIDED INTO THREE CLASSES ELECTED AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS.

THESE NEW CANDIDATES WOULD HAVE NO FORMAL CONNECTION TO EACH OTHER OR TO THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES, ALTHOUGH THEIR PLATFORMS FOR ELECTION COULD REFLECT SHARED CONCERNS.

THEY WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT MANY OF OUR INTERNAL PROBLEMS ARE ONES OF DERELICTION FROM OUR ORIGINS AND THAT AMERICA, IF IT IS TO SURVIVE AS A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, MUST RESTORE ITS CONSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY.

TO DO THIS, ISSUES AND LEGISLATION MUST BE FRAMED IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST WHICH DERIVES FROM OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONSTITUTION. THIS DOES NOT REQUIRE AN OVERLY LITERAL ADHERENCE TO THE LANGUAGE OF THESE AMAZING DOCUMENTS, AS THE FLOWS OF TECHNOLOGY, DIPLOMACY, HISTORY AND OTHER FORCES HAVE CHANGED OUR LIVES IN SOME WAYS THAT ARE IRREVERSIBLE. BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT AMERICAN GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM ITS SOURCES WITHOUT EXPERIENCING THE POLITICAL AND ETHICAL DYSFUNCTION THAT WE ENDURE TODAY. IT IS SIMPLY EVERYWHERE, AND EATS AWAY AT WHAT WE DO AND WHAT WE ARE.

KEY TO THE REMAKING AND REVITALIZING OF OUR GOVERNMENT IS REFORMING THE CONGRESS AND THIS TASK WOULD HAVE THE STATUS OF "JOB #1" WITH THE WAVE OF NEW CANDIDATES. THEY WOULD, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, COMMIT TO A PROGRAM OF BROAD CONGRESSIONAL CORRECTION THAT WOULD INCLUDE MEANINGFUL REDUCTIONS IN SALARY, AND RETIREMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS. IT WOULD ALSO PROHIBIT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FROM EXCUSING THEMSELVES FROM LAWS WHICH GOVERN THE PUBLIC (I.E., INSIDER TRADING, FOR EXAMPLE) AND WOULD PUT AN END TO THE PERNICIOUS AND FRIVOLOUS 3-DAY WORK WEEK.

THE LATTER COULD BE EASILY ACCOMPLISHED BY BREAKING THE CONGRESSIONAL COMPENSATION INTO DAILY AMOUNTS AND, FOR THE TIME WHEN CONGRESS IS IN SESSION, PAY ONLY FOR THOSE DAYS WHEN MEMBERS ARE PRESENT. THE TUESDAY THRU THURSDAY WORK SCHEDULE WITH TRAVEL ON MONDAY AND FRIDAY IS A FORM OF ROBBERY UPON THE PUBLIC. IT MAKES BAD GOVERNMENT WORSE AND CLEARLY DECLARES CONGRESS' PRIORITIES.

CHANGES WOULD ALSO BE SOUGHT IN CONGRESS' INCREASING ACCESS TO OUTSIDE INCOME FROM LOBBYISTS, SPECIAL INTEREST ADVOCACY GROUPS, CHARITABLE AND ATHLETIC EVENTS, SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS, ETC. ON MANY OF THESE OCCASIONS, EVEN WHEN LITTLE GOVERNMENT INTEREST IS INVOLVED, A FEW WORDS MAY BE SPOKEN AND THE CONGRESSIONAL MEMBER RECEIVES SEVERAL DAYS OF TRAVEL, RESORT ACCOMMODATIONS, MEALS, LIQUOR, SPORTS, ETC. ALL AT THE LUXURY LEVEL. WHETHER DESCRIBED AS CONVENTIONS, RETREATS, PLANNING SESSIONS, ROUND TABLES, WORKING

GROUPS, ETC. THEIR HOSTS FOLLOW THE “YOU PLAY, WE PAY” MODEL OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

CONGRESSIONAL COMPENSATION AND PRIVILEGE IS ONLY ONE AREA IN WHICH WE HAVE MANAGED TO POISON OUR GOVERNMENT. THERE ARE OTHERS, FAR MORE IMPORTANT, WHICH OUR CROP OF CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES WILL CITE AS REASONS FOR CHANGE.

THE FIRST, AND PERHAPS MOST LETHAL, IS THE PRACTICE OF SELECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT BY WHICH CONGRESS ARBITRARILY DECIDES WHICH OF OUR EXISTING LAWS IT WILL ENFORCE OR IGNORE. THERE IS NO MORE DAMAGING EFFECT UPON OUR DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT THAN, ONCE A LAW IS DULY PASSED AND SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT, NULLIFYING IT BY LACK OF FUNDING OR SOME OTHER PROCEDURE BY THE EXECUTIVE AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES.

AT THIS TIME IN OUR HISTORY THE MOST NOTABLE EXAMPLE OF SELECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT IS THE FAILURE BY CONGRESS AND THE FOUR PRESIDENTS FROM BUSH I THROUGH OBAMA TO ENFORCE OUR IMMIGRATION LAWS. IT IS A MONUMENT TO GREED, ARROGANCE, CORRUPTION, POLITICAL COWARDICE AND DISREGARD FOR OUR DEMOCRATIC HERITAGE.

ONE OF THE GREAT STRENGTHS OF OUR GOVERNMENT IS THAT WE HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY WITHIN OUR SYSTEM TO CHOOSE A DIFFERENT COURSE IF CIRCUMSTANCE REQUIRES IT, OR IF OUR NATIONAL OPINION CHANGES AND WE WISH TO REFLECT IT. CONGRESS ALWAYS HAS THE POWER TO TERMINATE, MODIFY OR SUSPEND EXISTING LEGISLATION AND, LIKEWISE, THE PRESIDENT CAN ACCEPT OR REJECT BY VETO WHATEVER LAWS CONGRESS PASSES.

WHAT NEITHER THE CONGRESS NOR THE PRESIDENT HAS THE RIGHT TO DO IS TO VIOLATE THE PUBLIC WILL, AS EXPRESSED IN EXISTING LAW, BY ACQUIESCING IN REFUSING TO ENFORCE IT. AND YET FOR TWO DECADES THAT IS WHAT FOUR PRESIDENTS AND THE CONGRESSES HAVE CHOSEN TO DO WITHOUT ANY SIGNIFICANT OBJECTION BY OUR DEPT. OF JUSTICE OR FEDERAL JUDICIARY. AND IT IS JUST ANOTHER SYMPTOM OF OUR DECLINING QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT THAT STRONG, INDEPENDENT, DISTINGUISHED ATTORNEYS GENERAL HAVE BEEN REPLACED BY POLITICAL HACKS OR CRONIES.

SELECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTRADICTS THE DUTIES OF OFFICE WITH WHICH EACH PRESIDENT AND MEMBER OF CONGRESS IS CHARGED:

THE PRESIDENT’S OATH OF OFFICE STATES “I DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR THAT I WILL FAITHFULLY EXECUTE THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. AND WILL TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY PRESERVE, PROTECT AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA”⁵

ALSO, “HE SHALL TAKE CARE THAT THE LAWS BE FAITHFULLY EXECUTED”⁶

AND FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, “THE SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES . . . AND ALL EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL OFFICERS, BOTH OF THE U.S. AND OF THE SEVERAL STATES, SHALL BE BOUND BY OATH OR AFFIRMATION TO SUPPORT THIS CONSTITUTION.”⁷

THIS LANGUAGE DOES NOT SUFFER FROM THE LABORED

LEGALESE THAT MARKS SO MUCH OF OUR CONTEMPORARY LEGISLATION. IT IS NOT BURDENED BY A DENSE GRAMMAR WITH CLAUSES MODIFYING CLAUSES MODIFYING CLAUSES, ETC. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS QUITE PRECISE AND PLAIN IN ITS MEANING.

OUR IMMIGRATION ISSUE IS HOME TO ANOTHER FORM OF ABUSE TO THE TAXPAYER AND TO WHAT MOST AMERICANS MIGHT CONSIDER THE PROPER CONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT. AS OUR IMMIGRATION NUMBERS, BOTH LEGAL AND ILLEGAL, HAVE SHOWN LARGE INCREASES SINCE THE 1965 CHANGE IN OUR IMMIGRATION LAW, NUMEROUS ADVOCACY GROUPS REPRESENTING LATINO ARRIVALS HAVE BEEN FORMED. THEY GO BY THE NAMES OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LARAZA (THE RACE), LULAC (LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS), MALDEF (MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE & EDUCATION FUND), HAP (THE HISPANIC ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS) AND MANY MORE.

THEY VARY SOMEWHAT IN THEIR PRACTICES AND GOALS. SOME CATER TO STUDENTS AND SOME QUITE MILITANTLY SUPPORT THE RETURN TO MEXICO OF THE LANDS IT CEDED TO THE USA FOLLOWING THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR UNDER THE TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO AND LATER THE GADSDEN PURCHASE. BUT THEY ALL SHARE THE DESIRE FOR A DISTINCT LATINO PRESENCE IN THIS COUNTRY.

PRESSURE UPON CONGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION HAS RESULTED IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROVIDING HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS ANNUALLY TO THESE PRIVATE ADVOCACY GROUPS WHOSE POLITICAL PURPOSES RUN STRONGLY COUNTER TO THOSE OF MOST AMERICANS.

THIS IS A PROCESS THAT HAS TAKEN FIRM ROOT IN ONLY A FEW DECADES, BUT WHICH MOCKS SOME OF OUR MOST FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF THE CITIZEN/GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT IT COULD BE A POWERFUL CAMPAIGN ISSUE.

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DEBT, COMPENSATION/PRIVILEGE, LAW ENFORCEMENT — THESE ARE FUNDAMENTAL AND MAJOR ABUSES OF OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. THERE ARE MORE, MANY MORE, LURKING BENEATH THE SURFACE.

THERE IS THE ALICE IN WONDERLAND WORLD OF OUR FEDERAL BUDGETING/STAFFING PROCESS WHICH HAS BECOME WASHINGTON’S STANDARD. IT MAKES NO SENSE, BUT OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES HAVE COME TO ACCEPT IT. IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM IT DEFINES EXPENSE REDUCTION AS NOT ADDING TO ALREADY BUDGETED INCREASES. BY THIS DEVICE, DOLLAR EXPENDITURES AND HIRING SHOW CONTINUING GROWTH WHILE DEPARTMENT/AGENCY HEADS CLAIM REDUCTIONS.

THE LIST GOES ON. AND DOES SO BECAUSE WE ALLOW IT TO. OUR SELF-ABUSE HAS BECOME SO ENTRENCHED THAT OVER TIME IT HAS MANAGED TO CHANGE OUR WAY OF THINKING ABOUT OUR GOVERNMENT AND OURSELVES. TO CHANGE THIS WE MUST REVERSE OURSELVES, WE MUST ESTABLISH A CLIMATE IN WHICH OUR REPRESENTATIVES SEE THEIR ROLE AS ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS, NOT DELIVERING WRONG ANSWERS.

BUT LET’S RETURN TO OUR SUPPOSITION OF THE

APPEARANCE OF A GROUP OF CANDIDATES TO CONTEST FOR ALL 468 CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION — 435 IN THE HOUSE AND 33 IN THE SENATE — WHO WOULD DECLARE IN ADVANCE THAT THESE ISSUES ARE THE ONES THEY WOULD RUN ON. THEY WOULD NOT ENGAGE OTHER ISSUES SUCH AS ABORTION, FOREIGN POLICY, ELECTORAL REFORM, WELFARE, EDUCATION, ETC.; NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT IMPORTANT TO OUR SOCIETY, BUT BECAUSE THERE ARE PRACTICAL LIMITS AS TO HOW MUCH CHANGE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN ANY GIVEN TIME. AND BECAUSE THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK THAT FACES US NOW IS TO REPAIR OUR GOVERNMENT BY ALTERING THE WAY GOVERNMENT SEES ITS ROLE, HOW IT THINKS AND HOW ITS MEMBERS CAN BEST SERVE THE NATIONAL, RATHER THAN THEIR INDIVIDUAL, INTERESTS.

AND NOW THE QUESTION WE ALL MUST ASK IN ORDER TO FRAME THE PUBLIC RESPONSE — HOW MANY OF THE NEW CHALLENGERS DO YOU THINK WOULD BE ELECTED? 200? 350? 500? THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWER. YOUR GUESS WILL ONLY INDICATE WHAT YOU THINK IS POSSIBLE, BUT BY ADDING ALL REPLIES TOGETHER AND TAKING AN AVERAGE WE CAN ARRIVE AT AN ESTIMATE OF WHAT A LARGE GROUP, RATHER THAN AN INDIVIDUAL, RESPONSE MIGHT PRODUCE. SUDDENLY, THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW IMAGE AND MIX IN CONGRESS BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE.

WHETHER THE NUMBER ELECTED FROM THIS HYPOTHETICAL GROUP IS 50 OR 400, OR ANYWHERE IN BETWEEN, ITS NUMERICAL VALUE WILL NOT DETERMINE THE SUCCESS OF THESE CANDIDACIES. FOR, WHATEVER THE NUMBER ELECTED, IT WOULD FORM A CENTER OF AGREEMENT ON THEIR CHOSEN ISSUES, WOULD PROVIDE CONGRESS WITH BOTH A NEW FORM OF POLITICAL ENERGY AND SENSE OF ETHICAL DIRECTION.

THIS BASE OF ETHICAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE WOULD ATTRACT SUCH BROAD PUBLIC SUPPORT AND COMMENT THAT IT COULD NOT BE IGNORED WITHIN CONGRESS OR BY THE MEDIA, AND COULD ACT AS A CATALYST FOR A NATIONAL EFFORT TO DO AWAY WITH OUR PRESENT CORRUPTION AND TO REDEFINE CONGRESS' PERCEPTION AND PERFORMANCE OF ITS DUTIES.

REPEAT! THERE IS NO MORE IMPORTANT TASK FACING OUR NATION THAN TO REPAIR OUR GOVERNMENT, AND, IF WE DON'T, OUR PRESENT CORRUPTION, GREED AND SLOTH WILL ACCELERATE TO THE POINT WHERE THEIR MOMENTUM WILL SWEEP AWAY OUR HERITAGE AND WHAT REMAINS OF OUR FOUNDERS' INTENTIONS.

WE CAN, OF COURSE, POSTPONE, DITHER AND DELAY AND, AS WE HAVE UP TO NOW, NOT FACE THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES AND WHAT WE HAVE ALLOWED TO OCCUR. IF WE ARE LUCKY, AT SOME POINT IN THE PROCESS, IMAGES OF WHAT OUR FOUNDING FATHERS ENDURED AND CREATED MAY PRESS UPON US LIKE DICKENS' GHOSTS IN A CHRISTMAS CAROL. FOR US, LIKE SCROOGE, IT IS NOT YET TOO LATE. WE SHOULD HEED THEM.

EASTWARD TO EUROPE

THE MESS IN WASHINGTON WHICH WE HAVE DESCRIBED IS COMPOSED OF MANY ELEMENTS. ONE WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED AS MUCH AS ANY OTHER TO OUR DYSFUNCTION

HAS BEEN OUR MOVE AWAY FROM CIVIL DISCOURSE AND THE MODERATE EXCHANGE OF OPINION TO THE PRESENT “WINNER TAKE ALL”, “GIVE NO QUARTER”, “TAKE NO PRISONERS”, “GOTCHA” POLITICS THAT DEFINE OUR AGE OF THE IDEOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE (II).

UNITY HAS BEEN A KEY CONCEPT IN OUR EXTRAORDINARY VOYAGE FROM COLONY TO INDEPENDENCE TO NEW NATION TO SUPERPOWER. IT IS A POWERFUL FORCE THAT HAS BEEN ABLE TO MAKE OR BREAK THE GRAND DESIGNS OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERS THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF HISTORY.

AMERICA'S UNITY HAS BEEN GREATLY DIMINISHED IN RECENT YEARS AS WE HAVE DIVIDED OURSELVES ALONG LINES OF UNYIELDING SELF-INTEREST AND ENDLESS ARGUMENTS OVER MATTERS BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE. THESE DIVISIONS THREATEN OUR FUTURE AND REPAIRING THEM WILL BE ONE OF THE KEY TASKS OF THE “NEW CENTURIONS” SHOULD THEY COME TO POWER.

IN OTHER PLACES, NOTABLY EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST, UNITY IS IN A STATE OF FLUX AND IS BEING PUT TO SEVERE TESTS POSED BY POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL CHANGE.

WHILE THESE FORCES HAVE ALWAYS ACTED UPON HISTORY, IN THE PAST THEIR EFFECTS COULD BE MODERATED BY TIME AND DISTANCE. NO LONGER IS THIS TRUE, AS THE REPORTING AND VISUAL IMAGING CAPABILITIES OF COMPUTERS AND TELEVISION OFFER INSTANT NEWS AND, OFTEN WITH IT, INSULT, OFFENSE, ENMITY AND THREATS. THE WORLD IS BOTH SHRINKING AND GETTING MEANER.

EUROPE'S EXPERIENCE OF VARYING DEGREES OF UNITY IS FAR DIFFERENT FROM OURS. FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, AND THE DARK AGES THAT FOLLOWED IT, EUROPE BEGAN TO REBUILD ITSELF IN WAYS THAT REFLECTED THE ROMAN MODEL OF CENTRAL AUTHORITY.

ECONOMIC VALUE AND POWER LAY IN THE POSSESSION OF LAND AND IN MANAGING IT SO THAT IT COULD PROVIDE FOOD, WORK AND OTHER BASICS FOR THE POPULATIONS, AT FIRST SMALL AND THEN LARGER, THAT COLLECTED AROUND IT.

EXPANSION OCCURRED BY PURCHASE, MARRIAGE OR ACTS OF AGGRESSION AND, AS RECENTLY AS THE 17TH CENTURY, THE GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE WAS DOMINATED BY MULTIPLE PRINCIPALITIES HEADED BY PRINCES, DUKES, KINGS, BARONS, ETC. THERE WAS LITTLE SENSE OF UNITY EXCEPT AT THE ROYAL COURTS' LEVEL FROM WHICH FLOWED THE MARRIAGES AND HEIRS NEEDED TO KEEP THE SYSTEM GOING.

IN ADDITION TO BRIDES AND BABIES THIS SYSTEM PRODUCED ELEGANT BALL GOWNS, SOME GREAT MUSIC, STRIKING ROYAL UNIFORMS AND A CONSTANT ROUND OF SOCIAL, ATHLETIC, CULTURAL AND ROMANTIC ACTIVITIES. IT WAS A COZY WAY OF LIFE, BUT LACKED ANY COMMON, CENTRAL UNITY. AND IT WAS UNABLE TO WITHSTAND THE GROWING COMPETITION AND NATIONALISM THAT ACCOMPANIED THE EXPANDING TECHNOLOGY, POPULATION AND COMMERCE OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION.

THE TWO WORLD WARS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY QUITE LITERALLY TORE THE WORLD APART AND SET IN MOTION FORCES THAT LINGERED LONG AFTER THEIR PEACE TREATIES WERE SIGNED. IN SPITE OF THE EFFORTS OF MANY WORLD LEADERS, THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS FELL FAR SHORT OF ITS INTENTIONS AND THE UN SEEMS TO BE SUCCUMBING TO A

SIMILAR FATE. UNITY IS NOT A WORD THAT COMES TO MIND IN DESCRIBING WORLD GOVERNMENT.

AS GERMANY HAD BEEN THE AGGRESSOR IN BOTH WORLD WARS, FOLLOWING ITS SURRENDER IN 1945 SOME EUROPEAN LEADERS BEGAN TO THINK THAT ANOTHER RESURGENCE OF GERMAN FORCE TO SETTLE REAL OR IMAGINED ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND TERRITORIAL GRIEVANCES MIGHT BEST BE FORESTALLED BY ALLOWING, RATHER THAN OPPOSING, ITS MEMBERSHIP IN THE VICTORS' CIRCLE.

THE EARLY STEPS WERE TAKEN BY THE COAL AND IRON AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE GRADUALLY EXPANDED TO INCLUDE OTHER PRODUCTS WITH THE RESULT THAT THE CONCEPT OF A UNITED EUROPE WAS TESTED AND MODIFIED UNTIL ITS ACCEPTANCE CAME TO BE SEEN AS BOTH POSSIBLE AND LIKELY.

EUROPE'S ORIGINS WERE VERY DIFFERENT FROM OURS AND ITS ATTEMPTS TOWARDS UNIFICATION HAD TO OVERCOME DIFFERENCES IN CULTURE, LANGUAGE, CURRENCY, RELIGION, ETHNICITY, CLASS, POLITICS AND PRIOR HISTORY FROM WHICH WE WERE LARGELY SPARED.

IT WAS HOPED BY THOSE WHO PUSHED HARDEST FOR THE EU THAT ITS COMMON BENEFITS, WHEN COMBINED WITH A MASSIVE ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGERIAL STRUCTURE, COULD IMPOSE REAL UNITY — FISCAL, MONETARY AND POLITICAL — UPON THE MEMBER STATES, AND THAT ITS SYSTEM OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION WOULD PROVIDE THE AUTHORITY NECESSARY TO WITHSTAND MOST FORMS OF DISSENT.

BUT UNITY IMPOSED HAS A DIFFERENT SHAPE, TASTE AND FEEL TO IT THAN UNITY ACHIEVED. CRACKS APPEARED — SOME HISTORICAL AND SOME RESULTING FROM ISSUES THAT REACHED BEYOND EUROPE TO OTHER COUNTRIES AND CONTINENTS.

THE EU REACTED AS MOST BUREAUCRACIES WOULD. IT CRANKED UP ITS MULTI-LINGUAL PRINTING PRESSES AND ISSUED A FLOOD OF REPORTS, REGULATIONS, ANALYSES, QUOTATIONS, ARTICLES, PRESS CONFERENCES, ETC. BUT DOUBT HAD SURFACED, AND BENEATH THE FAÇADE OF UNITY IN BRUSSELS DEEP SEATED HUMAN DIFFERENCES OVER POLICIES AND PRACTICES HAD BEGUN TO STIR AND SPREAD. AS IN MANY BUREAUCRACIES, POLICIES CAN SEEM MEASURED AND FAIR TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WHILE THEIR PAIN IS FELT LOCALLY.

THIS IS ONE OF OUR TIME'S CONTINUING FAILURES. THE PEOPLE, MEANS, AGENCIES AND INTENTIONS OF THE WORLD'S LEADERS DRAW A SHARP CONTRAST TO THE ACTUALITY OF WAR AND TERROR THAT PLAYS OUT IN AFRICA, ASIA, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST. FOR WHATEVER ITS REASONS — RELIGION, DRUGS, OIL, ETHNICITY, TERRITORY, WATER, FOOD, MONEY — UNITY REMAINS ALMOST AS ELUSIVE AS IT HAS IN THE PAST. THIS IS PARTICULARLY EVIDENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST WHERE ITS CONFLICTING MIX OF ELEMENTS, ATTITUDES, RESOURCES AND GOALS RESISTS ALL ATTEMPTS TO CREATE A PEACEFUL ALIGNMENT.

BUT IT IS EUROPE THAT IS OUR MAIN FOCUS. WITH THE ONSET OF THE RECENT GLOBAL RECESSION, SOURCES OF REVENUE FROM WHICH EUROPEAN NATIONS HAD COME TO EXPECT STEADY GROWTH BEGAN TO DECREASE. HAD THIS CHANGE BEEN MET WITH PROMPT AND DETERMINED CUTS IN BORROWING AND SPENDING BY ALL EU NATIONS, THE MOMENT MIGHT HAVE

PASSED WITHOUT DAMAGE, BUT WITHIN THE EU FRAMEWORK THERE EXISTED REAL DIFFERENCES IN FISCAL ATTITUDES, PRACTICES AND LIQUIDITY. AND NATIONAL FINANCIAL MATTERS WERE STILL VIEWED BY MOST GOVERNMENTS AS WITHIN THEIR SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY. BEFORE LONG, CONCERNS BEGAN TO SURFACE AS TO SOME COUNTRIES' ACTUAL SOLVENCY.

THE FIRST DANGER SIGNALS CAME FROM PORTUGAL, IRELAND, GREECE AND SPAIN (PIGS) WITH ITALY ON THE EDGE. IRELAND MADE THE NECESSARY CORRECTIONS IN SHORT ORDER AND, AFTER RECEIVING BAIL-OUT FUNDS TO DEFLECT ITS CRISIS, EMBARKED ON A LONG TERM AUSTERITY PROGRAM TO REBALANCE ITS ECONOMY.

THE OTHERS DID NOT RESPOND AS QUICKLY, AS THEY FACED MORE DIFFICULT POLITICAL CHOICES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES THAN IRELAND. THERE ARE SOME STRIKING SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THESE COUNTRIES. ALL OF THEM HAVE BORDERS THAT ARE COMPLETELY OR MOSTLY FORMED BY ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN SHORELINES. AND THEY ALL HAVE A NATIONAL CHARACTER THAT IS RECOGNIZED AS MORE OUT-GOING, LIGHT-HEARTED, FUN-LOVING AND ROMANTIC THAN THOSE OF CENTRAL OR NORTHERN EUROPE.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF IRELAND, FROM THE IBERIAN PENINSULA TO TURKEY THEY BEAR THE CLEAR IMPRINT OF MEDITERRANEAN CULTURE AND HISTORY.

IN THE NORTH, THE THREE LARGEST ECONOMIES ARE THOSE OF GERMANY, ENGLAND AND FRANCE. THE BORDERS OF THE LAST TWO ARE PRIMARILY SET BY THE ATLANTIC OCEAN AND THE NORTH SEA WHERE LIFE, CHARACTER AND CULTURE DIFFER FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN MODELS. GERMANY HAS VERY LITTLE COAST LINE AND A TEUTONIC HERITAGE THAT SETS IT APART FROM BOTH ITS SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN EU PARTNERS.

IN THE GOOD, OLD DAYS OF THE MONARCHIES UNITY WAS STRENGTHENED BY MARRIAGES AND BIRTHS, AND MANY DIFFERENCES, WHEN THEY AROSE, COULD SEEM TO SOLVE THEMSELVES OR COULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL THE NEXT ROYAL WEDDING, FUNERAL OR CORONATION BY WHICH TIME OTHER MORE PRESSING MATTERS MAY HAVE ARISEN.

FROM ITS INCEPTION, THE EU PRACTICED A SOMEWHAT SIMILARLY SOFT APPROACH TO ITS MEMBER'S DEBTS BY LENDING CASH OR BY BUYING THE BONDS OF ITS MEMBERS. FUNDS PROVIDED COULD COME FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES — EITHER THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK, THE MEMBER NATIONS' CENTRAL BANKS OR A VARIETY OF LEADING BANKS AND CORPORATION WITHIN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

THE FIRST REAL CRACK IN THE EU'S FAÇADE OF UNITY CAME WHEN GERMANY, AS ITS DOMINANT ECONOMY, VOICED OBJECTION TO HAVING TO INCREASE ITS OWN LENDING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EU'S SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR THE INCREASINGLY FREQUENT SHORTFALLS AND BORROWINGS OF AT RISK MEMBERS SUCH AS PIGS.

GREECE, THROUGH A COMBINATION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES, BECAME THE POSTER BOY FOR THIS CRISIS OF FAILURE OF EUROPEAN UNITY, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS. MEDIA COVERAGE WAS INTENSE AND 24/7. MEETINGS OF EU AND NATIONAL LEADERS WERE HELD IN FRANCE, GERMANY AND BELGIUM WITH SESSIONS THAT LASTED THROUGH THE NIGHT. TEMPERS FLARED, MOTIVES

WERE QUESTIONED AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF GREECE WAS FORCED TO RESIGN.

THIS CONTINUING CRISIS BECAME ONE OF HIGH DRAMA AND RATHER LOW POLITICS IN WHICH THE IMAGE OF EUROPEAN UNITY TOOK A HARD HIT BECAUSE IN THE END THE ARGUMENT RESOLVED ITSELF INTO A CONFRONTATION OVER MONEY AND POWER BETWEEN THE LARGER, STRONGER ECONOMIES AT STAGE CENTER AND THEIR SMALLER AND WEAKER NEIGHBORS ON THE PERIPHERY.

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BUT EUROPE'S PROBLEMS ARE MANY, AND MOST OF THOSE THAT HAVE POWERED THE PRESENT CRISIS ARE SEEMINGLY MORE URGENT AND MORE SPECIFIC THAN UNITY. THEY HAVE TO DO WITH MATTERS THAT TOPPLE GOVERNMENTS AND IMPOSE PAIN ON WHOLE POPULATIONS WITHOUT ANY SEMBLANCE OF FAIRNESS.

THEY DEAL WITH DEBT AND ITS REPAYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT, INFLATION, RISING TAXES AND SHRINKING PENSIONS, FOOD SCARCITY, DIMINISHED HEALTH CARE AND OTHERS. THESE ARE TOPICS OFTEN OBSCURED BY THE BUREAUCRATIC LANGUAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES' PRESS RELEASES, BUT THEY SHED THEIR OBSCURITY AND BECAME THE CUTTING EDGE AT THAT LEVEL WHERE CRISIS AND PEOPLE MEET.

IT WAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT GREECE WOULD RECEIVE ANOTHER BAIL-OUT PACKAGE OF 140 BILLION EUROS WHICH WOULD STAVE OFF ITS LOOMING BANKRUPTCY AND EXIT FROM THE EU. THAT IS AN OVERSTATEMENT. GREECE'S INSOLVENCY IS A CONTINUING DRAMA BY ITSELF AND ALSO PART OF A LARGER PROBLEM.

THE FIVE PERIPHERAL COUNTRIES (PIGS PLUS ITALY) ARE FACED WITH DEBT REPAYMENT OF €700 BILLION THIS YEAR AND €400 BILLION NEXT YEAR, A TOTAL OF OVER €1 TRILLION!

WITHIN THE EU STRUCTURE THERE IS AN ENTITY CALLED THE EUROPEAN FINANCIAL STABILITY FACILITY (EFSF) WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO GIVE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO MEMBER STATES SHOULD THEY NEED IT. BUT IT ONLY HAS ABOUT €450 BILLION ON HAND⁸ — FAR SHORT OF WHAT'S NEEDED — AND RAISING NEW FUNDS AT TODAY'S LOW RATES HAS LIMITED ITS ABILITY TO HELP.

IN THE ARGUMENTS AND EVENTS LEADING TO THE FORMATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE EU, THE GREATER EFFORT AND EMPHASIS WAS PLACED ON ITS POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND CHARACTER. EUROPE'S REAR-VIEW MIRROR STILL SHOWED TWO WORLD WARS WITHIN ONE GENERATION, AND THE POSTWAR PERIOD WAS DEEPLY MARKED BY BITTER BATTLES FOR POLITICAL DOMINANCE BETWEEN COMMUNISTS, LIBERALS, LABOR PARTIES AND THE MORE ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY OPEN SYSTEM FAVORED BY DEMOCRATIC/CAPITALISTIC PARTIES.

EVENTUALLY, THE CONCEPT OF UNION WON OUT AND ENABLED THE FORMATION OF THE EU'S REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IN BRUSSELS. WITH IT IN PLACE, POLITICAL LEADERS FELT THAT THE MEANS WOULD BECOME AVAILABLE TO DEAL WITH THE ARRAY OF PROBLEMS THAT ACCOMPANIED UNION, INCLUDING MONETARY POLICY AND

METHODS.

MONEY MATTERS INVOLVE HARD BARGAINING AND TOUGH POSITIONS, AND THOSE INVOLVING EU ADMISSION AND ADOPTION OF THE EURO WERE NO EXCEPTION. IN THE END ONLY ENGLAND REFUSED TO EXCHANGE ITS HISTORICAL POUND STERLING FOR THE EURO. THIS WAS AN EXERCISE OF STYLE AS MUCH AS MONETARY CHOICE, AND, BECAUSE IT FAILED THE TEST OF UNANIMITY FOR THE BRUSSELS BUREAUCRATS, IT BECAME A STRIKING POINT AND FRUSTRATION AROUND WHICH CRITICISM OF ENGLAND COULD REGULARLY ASSEMBLE AND BE EXPRESSED.

AS THE EU PROSPERED AND EXPANDED, THE DIVISION BETWEEN ITS THREE LEADING ECONOMIES (GERMANY, FRANCE AND ENGLAND) AND THEIR SMALLER COUNTERPARTS BECAME MORE PRONOUNCED. THE LEADERS WERE CALLED UPON TO PROVIDE FUNDS WHEN REQUIRED BY MARKET FLOWS OR BY THE BORROWINGS OR BUDGET FAILURES OF OTHER MEMBERS.

GERMANY IS THE UNQUESTIONED POWER HOUSE OF THE EU. IT IS A HIGHLY INDUSTRIOUS AND INDUSTRIALIZED NATION, A WORLD LEADER IN EXPORT TRADE AND SKILLED IN EVERY STAGE OF THE COMMERCIAL PROCESS — DESIGN, ENGINEERING, PRODUCTION AND MARKETING. ITS TEUTONIC CULTURE AND HERITAGE SETS IT CONSIDERABLY APART FROM ITS MEDITERRANEAN NEIGHBORS, AND IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT IT TOOK STRONG EXCEPTION TO FUNDING THE EXCESSIVE SPENDING AND BORROWING OF OTHERS.

GREECE HAS OBTAINED ITS BAIL-OUT PACKAGE, BUT AT A HIGH POLITICAL AND SOCIAL COST. THE RIOTING SHOWN ON TV DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS IS THE PUBLIC SYMPTOM OF ECONOMIC PAIN THAT WILL BE FELT BY MILLIONS OF GREEKS AS JOBS, PENSIONS AND COMPENSATION ARE LOST AND TAXES RISE.

JOB LOSS IS THE MOST PAINFUL CONSEQUENCE OF THE AUSTERITY IMPOSED BY THE EU'S NEW REGULATIONS, AS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL IT DOES AWAY WITH ANY HOPE FOR THE PRESENT OR THE FUTURE. OUR NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS JUST OVER 9%; SPAIN'S ALMOST 23%.⁹ IT IS EITHER A VERY UNUSUAL OR A VERY FORTUNATE POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION THAT CAN ACCOMMODATE SUCH AN ECONOMIC DISTORTION.

THE GREEK PROBLEM HAS BEEN TOLERATED BY THE EU BECAUSE IT WAS PREFERABLE TO TURN AWAY AND TO CONTINUE TO FUND THE GREEK IMBALANCES, RATHER THAN ADMIT THE INCREASING PROBABILITY OF A GREEK DEFAULT AND WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EU.

AGAIN, WITH THE MOST RECENT BAILOUT, RELIEF HAS BEEN BOUGHT, BUT THERE IS A GROWING BODY OF EUROPEAN OPINION THAT BELIEVES THAT THE FISCAL, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF GREECE'S RESCUE WILL TURN OUT TO BE MORE THAN THE COUNTRY CAN ENDURE, AND THAT DEFAULT AND SEPARATION FROM THE EU ARE INEVITABLE.

THE PROBLEM WITH THE COMMON CURRENCY IS THAT IT MUST HAVE ONE VALUE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETS, BUT WITHIN THE EU IT IS EVALUATED DIFFERENTLY BY RICHER AND POORER MEMBERS SUCH AS GERMANY AND GREECE. GERMANY REGARDS GREECE WITH JUSTIFIABLE RESENTMENT FOR ITS IMBALANCES AND THEIR EFFECTS UPON THE WHOLE. GREECE LOOKS TO GERMANY FOR MONEY, PATIENCE AND HOPE.

THIS IS NOT A SUSTAINABLE POSITION, AS THERE ARE TOO MANY HUMAN AND FISCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR

OUR ISLAND ANCESTOR

ERROR. THE BAIL-OUT PROCESS, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN SO REPETITIVE THAT IT HAS ENABLED GREECE'S CO-MEMBERS TO ACCLIMATE THEMSELVES TO THE POSSIBILITY OF DEFAULT AND THE CRACKING OF THE EU MEMBERSHIP SHELL. ATTITUDES, THOUGHT AND EXPLANATORY LANGUAGE ARE NOW TAKING SHAPE AND BEING ENTERTAINED SO THAT DEFAULT CAN BE DESCRIBED IN LESS THAN APOCALYPTIC TERMS WHEN IT OCCURS.

AND AFTER THE FALL? MARKETS ARE RELENTLESS IN SEEKING OUT WEAKNESS AND WILL TURN TO OTHER COUNTRIES. IRELAND SEEMS TO HAVE A MANAGEABLE REHABILITATION PROGRAM, BUT IF CONDITIONS THROUGHOUT THE EU WERE TO DEGRADE MORE, IT COULD BE BACK ON THE IMMEDIATE ENDANGERED LIST WITH PORTUGAL, SPAIN OR ITALY TO FOLLOW.

BUT SPAIN AND ITALY ARE AT A LEVEL WHERE EVERYTHING CHANGES — TOO BIG TO BE BAILED OUT AND TOO ESSENTIAL TO THE CONCEPT OF THE EU TO SEE HOW IT MIGHT SURVIVE WITHOUT THEM. MOREOVER, WERE A PROCESS OF DETERIORATION AS PRONOUNCED AS THIS TO TAKE PLACE, IT WOULD PROBABLY BE ACCOMPANIED BY A MAJOR DIFFERENCE IN OPINION BETWEEN THE BRUSSELS BUREAUCRACY AND THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBER STATES. THAT WOULD MAKE CONCERTED ACTION EVEN MORE DIFFICULT.

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WE ARE NOT FACING THE SAME PROBLEMS WE USED TO AND WE ARE NOT LIVING IN THE SAME WORLD. SOMEWHERE A TRIP WIRE TRIPPED AND THE GLOBAL DEBT STRUCTURE (PERSONAL, CORPORATE, CIVIC, NATIONAL) COLLAPSED. POLITICIANS AND ECONOMISTS NOW WRITE AND SPEAK WITH A DIMINISHED AUTHORITY ABOUT THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE, ALTHOUGH THEY TRY TO SUGGEST GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM.

BUT THERE ARE NO QUICK FIXES, NO MAGIC FORMULAE, NO INSTANT LEGISLATION. THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN POISONED BY THE ACTS OF MANY AND CANNOT BE EASILY CLEANSED. IT CAN MAKE SOME REPAIRS BY ITSELF AND TIME CAN MAKE OTHERS, BUT THE EFFECTS OF OUR GLOBAL PLAGUES OF DEBT AND SPENDING WILL BE WITH US FOR A LONG TIME.

FOR EXAMPLE, DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PLANS TO REPAIR OUR ECONOMY EXTEND TEN YEARS WITHOUT SHOWING A BUDGETARY SURPLUS. THEY CALL FOR DECREASING, BUT STILL SIGNIFICANT, DEFICITS WHICH MAY BE THE BEST THAT IS POSSIBLE. IT'S TRUE THAT WE ARE THE LEADING ECONOMY OF THE FREE WORLD, BUT IT IS NOW ALSO A VERY FRAGILE WORLD OF MIXED MOTIVES AND BELIEFS. PERHAPS THE OLD POLITICS AND ECONOMICS WILL NO LONGER BE SUFFICIENT, BUT WHAT WILL REPLACE THEM?

WE LOOK AROUND US AND EVERYWHERE, IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, WE CAN DISCERN ATTEMPTS TO IMPOSE UNITY — THE EU, UN, THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (PERHAPS THE MOST RESTRICTIVE OF ALL), THE THREE DESERT RELIGIONS (EACH SEEKING A DEFINITIVE TRUTH THAT WILL DIMINISH THE OTHER TWO), THE MULTICULTURAL BABBLERS, AND THE MESSENGERS OF SCIENCE (BOTH VALID AND FALSE). THE TROUBLE IS WE INHABIT A DISUNITED WORLD.

THIS ROYAL THRONE OF KINGS, THIS SCETPERED ISLE, . . .

THIS BLESSED PLOT, THIS EARTH, THIS REALM, THIS ENGLAND

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, RICHARD II

AT THIS TIME THERE MAY BE NO PLACE ON EARTH THAT DISPLAYS THE CONFLICT BETWEEN UNITY AND DISUNITY AS CLEARLY AS IN OUR PARENT COUNTRY, ENGLAND. LIKE RICHARD II, IT IS A DRAMA OF MANY PARTS THAT IS TAKING PLACE IN OUR FULL VIEW. TODAY IT PLAYS IN ENGLAND; TOMORROW, PERHAPS, ELSEWHERE. THERE ARE LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM IT AND WE SHOULD PAY ATTENTION.

WHEN THE TIME CAME TO COMMIT TO THE EU, ENGLAND, OR RATHER THE UK, HELD A THOROUGH DISCUSSION AND EXAMINATION OF ITS BENEFITS/DRAWBACKS AND THEN OPTED FOR POLITICAL UNION AND MEMBERSHIP, BUT DID NOT EXCHANGE ITS CURRENCY FOR THE EURO. THE LOSS OF THE POUND STERLING'S HISTORICAL AND ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE WAS SIMPLY TOO HIGH A PRICE FOR CONVERSION.

ENGLAND HAS ALWAYS HAD A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE OF EUROPEAN MATTERS THAN ITS CONTINENTAL NEIGHBORS. SET IN THE SEA OFF EUROPE'S NORTHWEST SHOULDER AND SEPARATED FROM IT BY ONLY TWENTY MILES AT ITS CLOSEST POINT, ISLAND ENGLAND DEVELOPED ITS LAWS, POLITICS AND CULTURE IN ITS OWN UNIQUE WAYS AND FORMS. AND, WHILE IT ENGAGED IN MANY OF THE WARS THAT RAGED BACK AND FORTH FROM FRANCE TO RUSSIA AND FROM NORWAY TO EGYPT, ITS HOMETLAND WAS MOSTLY SPARED AS A BATTLEGROUND AFTER THE NORMAN INVASION AND CONQUEST IN 1066 BY WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

IT DEVELOPED AN ISLAND FORTRESS MENTALITY AND DESTINY WHICH LED TO ITS BECOMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY THE FIRST TRULY GLOBAL SUPERPOWER, TAKING TERRITORY AND LEAVING CULTURE IN ASIA, AFRICA, AUSTRALIA, AND NORTH AMERICA.

FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS ENGLAND HAD WAGED WAR ON THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT AND THE SEAS THAT ENCIrcLED IT WITH ITS MAJOR POWERS — FRANCE, SPAIN AND THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN STATES THAT BECAME GERMANY — AND YET MAINTAINED THAT EXTRA MARGIN OF DIFFERENCE THAT COMES WITH BEING AN ISLAND.

THE BUREAUCRATIC MIND RANKLES AT THE PROSPECT OF ANYTHING LESS THAN FULL COMPLIANCE AND ENGLAND'S REJECTION OF CURRENCY UNION, WHILE ACCEPTING POLITICAL LINKAGE, WAS OF MAJOR CONCERN. THE FINANCIAL VIEW FROM BRUSSELS ACROSS THE CHANNEL WAS OF A TABLE SET FOR EIGHT WITH ONLY SEVEN CHAIRS.

THE FACT AND SPIRIT OF THIS ABSENCE WOULD WORK ITS WAY THROUGH MANY DISCUSSIONS, TOPICS AND MEETINGS OVER THE YEARS — SOMETIMES OVERTLY AND AT OTHERS MORE SENSED THAN RECOGNIZED.

ON OCCASION THE BRUSSELS GOVERNMENT MIGHT LEAD ITSELF TO BELIEVE THAT THE UK POSITION WOULD CHANGE

AND THAT FULL UNION WAS AT HAND. BUT IT FAILED TO NOTE THAT THE POUND STERLING WAS THE BANNER AROUND WHICH ALL EUROSCEPTICS RALLIED AND THAT THEY REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT SECTION OF BRITISH OPINION WHICH SHOWED NO SIGNS OF BEING WON OVER.

THE EU AT BRUSSELS SEES ITSELF AS A UNIT, A SINGLE, UNIFIED ENTITY, BECAUSE ITS EXISTENCE AND ITS FUTURE DEPEND UPON THAT VISION TAKING PRECEDENCE OVER ALL OTHERS.

BUT REALITY, AND PERHAPS HISTORY, SUGGEST THAT BRUSSELS' VIEW IS A FLAWED AND DESPERATE ONE BECAUSE THE YEARS OF PUSHING UNION CANNOT CONCEAL THAT ITS MEMBERS ARE SEPARATE, SOVEREIGN STATES AND WILL ALWAYS HAVE THE OPTION OF ACTING IN THEIR OWN INTEREST RATHER THAN THAT OF THE GROUP.

AND, AS THE EU'S MEMBERSHIP HAS GROWN, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE SELF-IMAGES HAS BECOME MORE PRONOUNCED. ALTHOUGH THE PRESENT CONFLICT HAS THROWN LIGHT INTO THESE SHADOWY CORNERS, NO MAJOR CHANGES ARE CONTEMPLATED. THE EU, HOWEVER, WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CLAIM REAL UNION UNTIL THESE OPPOSITE CONCEPTS ARE EITHER JOINED OR ELIMINATED.

THERE IS NO ADVANTAGE OF ONE OVER THE OTHER IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCE, AND IN THEIR PURSUIT THE OLD VOICES OF NATIONALISM MAY WELL BE RAISED AGAIN. IT IS THE BEAST THROUGH WHOSE HEART "UNION" MUST DRIVE THE WOODEN STAKE, BUT IT HASN'T HAPPENED YET.

THE TERM "GREEK DEBT CRISIS" HAS BEEN USED TO PORTRAY A SPECIFIC LOCALITY FOR EUROPE'S PROBLEMS AND TO SUGGEST THEY CAN BE ISOLATED AND RELEGATED TO ONE COUNTRY. CERTAINLY, GREECE HAS BEEN PLAGUED BY OVERSPENDING AND LAX FISCAL POLICIES WHICH CARRY THEIR OWN CONSEQUENCES FOR GREECE'S PEOPLE AND POLITICS. BUT OTHER CONSEQUENCES CAN EXTEND FAR BEYOND GREECE'S BORDERS BY WREAKING HAVOC UPON THE WIDE CIRCLE OF BANKS THAT HAVE CONTINUED TO LOAN FUNDS TO ATHENS EVEN AS THE RISK HAS INCREASED. THESE INCLUDE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANKS WHICH, LIKE THEIR PRIVATE COUNTERPARTS, WOULD BE FORCED TO ENGAGE IN A SIGNIFICANT ASSET WRITE-DOWN WERE GREECE TO DEFAULT.

THE PRESENT EUROPEAN CRISIS IS MADE UP OF MANY PARTS. IT INVOLVES SOVEREIGNTY, POLITICS, NATIONAL CHARACTER AND ATTITUDES THAT SURVIVE FROM THE TIMES OF THE MONARCHIES, AS WELL AS MORE PROSAIC ELEMENTS SUCH AS INTEREST RATES, PERCENT OF GDP, ASSET VALUES, DEBT STRUCTURES AND CURRENCY VALUES.

ALL THESE ACT, REACT AND INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER INSTANTANEOUSLY AND IN FULL VIEW OF THE WORLD THANKS TO OUR MODERN COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY. WE CAN LOOK BACK WITH A SENSE OF ROMANCE AND ECONOMIC WONDER TO THE HEY-DAY OF THE ROTHSCHILD BANK IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH AND EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURIES WHEN VAST WEALTH WAS TRANSFERRED BY HORSE DRAWN COACHES OR WAGONS IN THE DARK OF THE NIGHT. THEY CARRIED BOXES OF THE GOLD OR SILVER UPON WHICH COMMERCE AND WEALTH THEN DEPENDED AND WHOSE ACTUAL POSSESSION WAS A CRITICAL FACT OF ECONOMIC LIFE.

"THE OLD GHOSTS OF NATIONALISM, GLORY, BLOODLINES, HISTORY AND POWER WILL NOT FADE AWAY ON COMMAND. "

THE EU NOW HAS TWENTY-SEVEN MEMBERS ALL OF WHOM WERE PERSUADED, FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, TO PLEDGE THEMSELVES TO UNION. BUT UNION, EUROPEAN OR OTHER, IS NOT AN INSTANT, ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL MATTER. AND IT IS NOT ONE THAT IS EASILY IMPOSED. THE OLD GHOSTS OF NATIONALISM, GLORY, BLOODLINES, HISTORY AND POWER WILL NOT FADE AWAY ON COMMAND. LIKE DNA, THEY ARE POWERFUL AND PERSIST; AND, OFTEN UNKNOWINGLY, STILL DETERMINE OUR ACTIONS.

* * *

ENGLAND'S CURRENT PLIGHT IS MORE DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX THAN ANY OF ITS FELLOW EU MEMBERS. FIRST, AS WE HAVE NOTED, IT IS A HYBRID MEMBER, HAVING OPTED FOR MONETARY INDEPENDENCE BY REJECTING THE EURO AND MAINTAINING THE POUND STERLING AS THE CURRENCY. AND YET, IT IS A POLITICAL MEMBER OF THE EU AND THE EU IS BY FAR ITS LARGEST TRADING PARTNER.

AND THE ELEMENT OF CONTROL, OR LOSS OF SOVEREIGNTY, WHICH IS PERVASIVE IN THIS MATTER, EXTENDS ACROSS THE CHANNEL AND GRIPS ENGLAND WITH THE SAME FEARFUL PRESSURE THAT IT EXERTS UPON MEMBERS ON THE CONTINENT.

AT THE EU SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN DECEMBER, GERMANY AND FRANCE PUSHED FOR GREATER CONTROL OVER THE FINANCES AND SPENDING HABITS OF GREECE, PORTUGAL, SPAIN AND ITALY BY MAKING IT MANDATORY FOR GOVERNMENTS WITH EXCESSIVE DEBT RATIOS TO SUBMIT THEIR NATIONAL BUDGETS AND QUARTERLY RESULTS TO BRUSSELS FOR REVIEW AND/OR APPROVAL, WITH HEAVY FINES TO BE APPLIED TO THOSE WHO FAILED TO MEET THEIR ASSIGNED GOALS.

THIS WAS AN UNDERSTANDABLE CONCERN FOR FRANCE AND GERMANY BECAUSE, AS THE EU'S LARGEST ECONOMIES, EACH SUCCEEDING FAILURE WOULD DRIVE THE BALL OF FISCAL RESCUE DEEPER INTO THEIR COURT.

BUT, NOT WITHSTANDING THE LOGIC OF THEIR POSITION, IT AGAIN OPENED UP THE WOUND OF CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN STATES.

THE BRITISH PUBLIC HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY DIVIDED OVER BRITAIN'S EU STATUS AND PRIME MINISTER DAVID CAMERON KNEW THAT HE WOULD FACE OPPOSITION AT HOME FOR WHICHEVER POSITION HE TOOK. AT FIRST HIS VOTE AGAINST THE PROPOSED BRUSSELS LEGISLATION WAS THE ONLY ONE, BUT HE WAS QUICKLY JOINED BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC. THIS STEP WAS SEEN BY MANY AS COMPARABLE TO JULIUS CAESAR'S CROSSING OF THE RUBICON. IN EUROPE IT WAS MET BY PETTY THREATS, INSULTS AND A SENSE OF BETRAYAL; AS WELL AS A PREVIOUSLY SUPPRESSED RECOGNITION OF THE

EMERGING FRAGILITY OF THE EU STRUCTURE, AND, PERHAPS, EVEN ITS CONCEPT.

THE BRUSSELS BUREAUCRATS AND THEIR HANDLERS HAVE LOST A ROUND, BUT ARE STILL VERY ACTIVE AND ENTRENCHED. STILL AND ALL, THEIR VIEW AHEAD INTO THE FUTURE IS SOMEWHAT LESS SETTLED THAN THAT OF THEIR PAST.

AT HOME, BRITAIN FINDS ITSELF BALANCED ON THE HORNS OF TWO DILEMMAS, EACH CAPABLE OF DESTROYING THE NATION'S PRECARIOUS POLITICAL BALANCE. BOTH ARE ISSUES INVOLVING NATIONAL PRIDE, SOVEREIGNTY, CULTURE AND, THEREFORE, HIGH EMOTION.

THE FIRST IS THE EU VOTE WHICH HAS HEARTENED ENGLAND'S VERY VOCAL AND DETERMINED EUROSCEPTICS WHO HAVE OPPOSED EU MEMBERSHIP FROM THE BEGINNING AND WHO SEE THEIR POSITION VALIDATED BY RECENT EVENTS. THEIR GOAL REMAINS TO WITHDRAW FROM THE EU WHICH THEY HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH BY A NATIONAL REFERENDUM.

CAMERON, OF COURSE, MUST ATTEMPT TO HOLD TOGETHER HIS COALITION GOVERNMENT, AVOID A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE WHICH, IF LOST, COULD BRING IT DOWN AND MOVE AHEAD TO THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION. THIS IS A TOUGH ENOUGH ORDER IN ITSELF, BUT WAIT, THERE IS MORE.

AND NORTH TO THE HIGHLANDS

IT IS SCOTLAND, WITH WHOM ENGLAND HAS SHARED A BORDER FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS SINCE THE ACT OF UNION IN 1707, THAT NOW THREATENS ENGLAND WITH A FORM OF INTERNAL DISUNITY MORE PAINFUL AND MORE DAMAGING THAN THE EU CONFLICT.

THIS APPROACHING DANGER GOES BY DIFFERENT NAMES DEPENDING UPON THE PERSPECTIVE FROM WHICH IT IS VIEWED. DEVOLUTION, RESIGNATION, SECESSION AND WITHDRAWAL ARE A FEW, BUT, WHATEVER ITS NAME, IT IS AN ACT OF SEPARATION THAT WILL INFLICT WOUNDS WITH RAW, EXPOSED CULTURAL AND POLITICAL FLESH ON BOTH PARTIES.

SCOTLAND'S MOVE TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE HAS BEEN IN EFFECT IN VARYING DEGREE FOR THE LAST HALF-CENTURY, AND IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY DUE TO A LESS THAN BALANCED VIEW OF SCOTLAND'S PLACE IN THE UK BY ENGLAND. THIS WAS REGULARLY AND MOST CLEARLY EXPRESSED IN MATTERS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BY FAVORING LONDON AND THE SOUTH OVER EDINBURGH AND THE NORTH.

THIS LONG RECORD OF PREFERENTIAL POLITICS ENCOURAGED THE GROWTH OF THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY (SNP). PRIME MINISTER (PM) JOHN MAJOR, WHO SUCCEEDED MARGARET THATCHER, FORESAW THE WIDENING RIFT BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORS AND IN 1992 HE URGED ENGLISH VOTERS "TO WAKE UP BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE; THE UNION IS IN DANGER."¹⁰

THE POLITICAL TWISTS OF THIS ISSUE OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS BETWEEN THE ENGLISH CONSERVATIVES AND LABORITES AND THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN EDINBURGH ARE TOO MANY AND COMPLICATED TO TRACE HERE. SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT SCOTLAND'S NEWLY ELECTED FIRST MINISTER IS ALEX SALMOND OF THE SNP WHO HAS CALLED FOR A

SCOTTISH REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE IN 2014 WHICH, IF SUCCESSFUL, WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY NEGOTIATIONS WITH ENGLAND IN A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD AND, FINALLY, SEPARATION BY THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT'S ELECTIONS IN 2016.

AS MUCH OF THE INTENT AND PRACTICE OF "UNION" BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES HAS BEEN AFFIRMED AND REAFFIRMED BY LEGISLATION, REGULATION AND JUDICIAL DECREE OVER ITS THREE HUNDRED YEAR LIFE, THE PROCESS OF SEPARATION WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX. AND BOTH SIDES MUST APPROACH THEIR TASK ALWAYS REMINDING THEMSELVES THAT STATEMENTS, SENTENCES, PARAGRAPHS, RULES, DECREES, ETC. OFTEN HAVE FAR GREATER AND MORE DISRUPTIVE LOCAL CONSEQUENCES THAN THEIR SPONSORS IN THE HALLS OF GOVERNMENT CAN ANTICIPATE.

PM DAVID CAMERON IS AS SURELY FIGHTING ON TWO FRONTS AS HITLER DID IN WWII, AND FOR ANY LEADER, POLITICAL OR MILITARY, THIS IS NOT A PREFERRED POSITION. THIS STRUGGLE IS STREWN WITH POLITICAL MINEFIELDS THROUGH WHICH CAMERON WILL HAVE TO MANEUVER WITH AGILITY, SKILL AND SENSITIVITY TO AVOID OFFENDING THE VERY DETERMINED AND OPPOSITE VOTING BLOCS IN BOTH COUNTRIES.

BENEDICT BROGAN DESCRIBES THE SITUATION AS:

"THE SOLUTION SURELY MUST LIE IN DISCRETION, COURTESY AND A DISCIPLINED AVOIDANCE OF ANY LANGUAGE THAT AMOUNTS TO QUESTIONING SCOTLAND'S CAPACITY FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT, ITS ABILITY TO PROSPER, OR ITS WILLINGNESS TO REASON. THAT SCOTLAND COULD BE A SUCCESSFUL, MODERATELY WELL-OFF INDEPENDENT NATION IS NOT IN DOUBT AND SHOULD NOT BE MISREPRESENTED. WHATEVER THE QUESTIONS THAT MUST BE ASKED ABOUT THE DETAILS OF PARTITION, BE IT THE ALLOCATION OF NATIONAL DEBT, THE DIVISION OF DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT, OR THE FEASIBILITY OF CURRENCY UNION, MR. CAMERON MUST AVOID BEING LURED INTO ANY COMMENT THAT WILL ALLOW HIM TO BE PORTRAYED AS AN EVIDENTLY ENGLISH PRIME MINISTER."¹¹

THERE IT IS; AND NO SMALL ORDER BY ANY MEASURE. AN EXAMPLE OF THE EXTREME DIFFICULTY OF SOME OF THE DECISIONS MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE FOUND QUITE READILY IN HIS REFERENCE TO "THE DIVISION OF DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS".

BRITAIN'S NUCLEAR DETERRENT IS LOCATED ON THE RIVER CLYDE IN SCOTLAND WHERE TRIDENT SUBMARINES ARE HOUSED AT FASLANE AND THEIR MISSILES NEARBY AT COULPORT. THE SUB BASE COULD BE MOVED TO A SOUTHERN LOCATION IN ENGLAND, BUT THE MISSILES AND THEIR WARHEADS ARE STORED, MOVED AND LOADED BY SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT THAT DOESN'T EXIST ELSEWHERE IN ENGLAND. AND THEY ARE HOUSED IN HARDENED CONCRETE BUNKERS WHICH WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND COSTLY TO REPLICATE.

THE RESULT IS THAT IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS OVER INDEPENDENCE THE SNP WOULD HAVE A DECIDED ADVANTAGE BECAUSE BRITAIN NEEDS COULPORT AND THE SNP CAN SET ITS OWN PRICE.

THE CAREFUL WORDS OF MODERATION REQUIRED OF PM DAVID CAMERON DO NOT APPLY TO ALEX SALMOND WHOSE

BACKGROUND AND INTERESTS LEAN TOWARDS SOCIALISM. BUT EVEN DISCOUNTING HIS POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY, HE WILL BE BANGING THE DRUM VERY LOUDLY TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE SNP'S NEWLY DOMINANT POSITION VIS-À-VIS ENGLAND AND HIS PART IN HAVING ACHIEVED IT. THE MARQUIS OF QUEENSBURY RULES ONLY WORK WHEN BOTH PARTIES OBSERVE THEM.

THERE ARE OTHER COMPLICATIONS NOT LIMITED TO ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND WHICH INVOLVE THE EU'S REGULATIONS FOR ITS MEMBERS. ANY THIRD PARTY WOULD ADD TO THE CONFUSION, BUT THE MULTI-LAYERED BRUSSELS BUREAUCRACY AND ITS THOUSANDS OF PAGES OF OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS ARE ALMOST ASSURED TO DELIVER FEWER RESULTS AT THE COST OF MORE TIME AND MONEY.

FOR INSTANCE, ONE EU MINISTER RECENTLY RAISED THE POSSIBILITY THAT AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO RETAIN THE POUND STERLING AND THAT PASSPORT CHECKS MIGHT BE REQUIRED ALONG THE ENGLISH/SCOTTISH BORDER. SNP LEADER SALMOND SCOFFED AT THIS OPINION, BUT THERE ARE SOME VERY ARCAINE RULES IN PLACE AND IT IS LIKELY THAT SALMOND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO OVERRIDE THEM.

TIMETABLE? IT'S ANYONE'S GUESS, AND WE'RE PROBABLY DEALING WITH YEARS, RATHER THAN MONTHS. TWO? FIVE? TEN? WHO KNOWS? THE SITUATION IS ONE IN WHICH WHAT ONE SIDE HOPES IS POSSIBLE CONFRONTS WHAT THE OTHER SIDE SAYS IS IMPOSSIBLE. AND IT'S QUITE POSSIBLE THAT IN THIS CASE AN AGREEMENT REACHED BY SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND COULD RUN AFOUL OF THE EU'S WEB OF REGULATIONS REGARDING RELATIONS BETWEEN ITS MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBER STATES.

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SETTING ASIDE THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFERENCES (AND THE HUMAN AMBITION WHICH OFTEN DROVE THEM) BETWEEN THESE TWO "NEXT DOOR" NEIGHBORS, THEY WERE THE HEART OF THAT VAST GLOBAL ENTERPRISE KNOWN ORIGINALLY AS THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND NOW IN ITS REDUCED VERSION CALLED THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THERE IS SOMETHING VERY SAD ABOUT THE SEPARATION OF THESE TWO NEIGHBORS WHO HAVE SHARED SO MUCH HISTORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.

THEY FOUGHT SIDE BY SIDE IN TWO WORLD WARS AND OTHER LESSER ONES. SCOTTISH SHIPYARDS BUILT THE SHIPS THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE ROYAL NAVY AND THE ENGLISH MERCHANT MARINE TO EXTEND BRITISH RULE, CULTURE AND LAW TO THE MOST DISTANT PARTS OF THE WORLD. AND SCOTTISH VENTURE CAPITAL'S ROLE WAS SECOND TO NONE IN PROVIDING THE INVESTMENT CAPITAL FROM WHICH EXTERNAL TRADE AND INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT WOULD EVOLVE.

INCREASINGLY WITH THE BEGINNING OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY AND THE IMPROVEMENT IN TRAVEL COMFORT AND SPEED AFFORDED BY RAILROADS, ENGLISH COMPANIES EXPANDED THEIR PRODUCTION AND MARKETING FACILITIES TO SCOTLAND. AND DROVES OF

ENGLISH TOURISTS AND SEASONAL VACATIONERS HEADED NORTH TO FISH FOR SALMON AND TROUT, TO STALK DEER, TO SHOOT GROUSE, TO TAKE THE HIGHLAND AIR AND TO BE CHALLENGED BY THE SUBTLETIES OF SCOTLAND'S EXCEPTIONAL NATIVE GOLF COURSES.

IN RETURN SCOTLAND SENT ENGINEERS, ACCOUNTANTS AND SCIENTISTS TO ALL PARTS OF THE EMPIRE, PUT SMOKED SALMON, LAMB, BEEF AND GROUSE ON ENGLISH TABLES, CLOTHED ITS NEIGHBOR (AND OTHERS) WITH NEARLY INDESTRUCTIBLE TWEEDS HOME WOVEN IN THE COLORS OF ITS LAND AND CLANS, AND DISPATCHED ITS AMBASSADOR OF GOOD CHEER TO CLUBS, BARS, HOMES, HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS AROUND THE WORLD IN THE FORM OF SCOTCH WHISKY.

"THIS IS A TICKLISH POLITICAL MOMENT.
IT NEED NOT BE A STUPID ONE."

SCOTTISH POLLS SHOW THAT CURRENT OPINION ON INDEPENDENCE IS EVENLY SPLIT AND THAT THE REFERENDUM COULD GO EITHER WAY. IN SUCH A CIRCUMSTANCE, PM CAMERON MAY BE FORCED INTO SOME STRONG NEGOTIATIONS AND EXPENSIVE CONCESSIONS TO MAINTAIN THE UNION. IF THAT, INDEED, IS THE RESULT, A MORE INCLUSIVE ATTITUDE AND BALANCED VIEW OF CROSS-BORDER RELATIONS WOULD BENEFIT BOTH GOVERNMENTS. THIS IS A TICKLISH POLITICAL MOMENT. IT NEED NOT BE A STUPID ONE.

PM CAMERON'S POSITION IS AS PERILOUS POLITICALLY AS CIRCUMSTANCE CAN CONTRIVE. NO MATTER WHAT DEVELOPS ON THE CONTINENT, THERE ARE TWO MAJOR BLOCS OF DOMESTIC VOTERS WHO ARE PRESSING TO HAVE THE SCOTTISH AND EU MATTERS SETTLED BY POPULAR VOTE WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

THESE ARE HIGHLY EMOTIONAL ISSUES WHICH INVOKE HISTORY, TRADITION, WEALTH AND SOVEREIGNTY. TO INCUMBENT POLITICIANS WORDS SUCH AS PLEBISCITE AND REFERENDUM HAVE THE RING OF TERROR TO THEM, FOR A SINGLE ISSUE VOTE CAN BRING DOWN A WHOLE ADMINISTRATION AND ITS PROGRAMS.

CAMERON MUST NOW FACE THE PROSPECT OF TWO, NOT ONE, OF THESE MAJOR TESTS AND THEY WILL COME AT A TIME WHEN THE UK ELECTORATE LACKS ITS FORMER COHESION IN MANY ASPECTS OF ITS POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE.

THESE ARE VEXING TIMES FOR CAMERON. IF HE CAN EMERGE FROM THESE TWO CONFRONTATIONS RELATIVELY UNSCATHED, HE WILL HAVE MANAGED TO PULL OFF A MAJOR POLITICAL MIRACLE.

SALMOND HAS BUILT UP A GATHERING FORCE OF PUBLIC AND MEDIA ATTENTION WHICH ALLOWS HIM TO MANIPULATE THE ISSUE TO HIS ADVANTAGE. BUT NOTHING IS FIRM NOR ASSURED AT THIS POINT. AND JUST RECENTLY THE SHETLAND AND ORKNEY ISLANDERS HAVE INDICATED THEIR SUPPORT FOR UNION.

THESE ISLANDS ARE HOME TO SCOTLAND'S MOST NORTHERN AND SPARSE POPULATIONS, BUT THEY ARE ALSO THE HOME BASE FOR THE UK'S NORTH SEA OIL INDUSTRY AND SPEAK

WITH A STRONG VOICE ON ECONOMIC MATTERS.

CAMERON'S PLATE NOW IS LONG ON ISSUES AND SHORT ON GRAY, AND IN THE COMING MONTHS HE WILL HAVE TO PAY CLOSER AND MORE FREQUENT ATTENTION TO SCOTLAND. OUR PRESENT SENSE IS THAT THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF SHARED HISTORY, BOTH GOOD AND BAD, WILL PREVAIL AND THAT THE PRO-UNION FORCES WILL EMERGE AS WINNERS.

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IN THE EU AND THE UK WE HAVE SEEN EVIDENCE OF UNITY FRAYING AND COMING APART UNDER ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE EU'S CASE IS RECENT AND, ALTHOUGH ITS MEMBERS HAD VOLUNTARILY JOINED TOGETHER, ITS OPERATIONAL ARM IN BRUSSELS, CHARGED WITH ISSUING AND ENFORCING REGULATIONS, HAS BECOME A MUCH STRONGER FORCE THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS. THERE HAS NOT BEEN TIME ENOUGH TO ASSIMILATE CENTURIES OF PROUD, NATIONAL HISTORIES.

SCOTLAND/ENGLAND IS SOMETHING VERY DIFFERENT. THEY HAVE BEEN JOINED BY LANGUAGE, GEOGRAPHY, POLITICS, PROSPERITY AND PERIL; AND YET THEY NOW FIND THEMSELVES VOTING ON SEPARATION.

UNITY COMMANDS SO MANY ALLEGIANCES THAT ITS DEVELOPMENT TIES IT TO MULTIPLE PARTS OF ITS SOCIETAL STRUCTURE. AT THE INDIVIDUAL AND AT THE GROUP LEVEL THESE TIES REACH OUT, LEAP OVER CHASMS OF MISUNDERSTANDING, REGATHER, AND THEN VEER OFF IN NEW DIRECTIONS, EVER MORE FIRMLY EMBEDDING THEMSELVES IN OUR THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS. IN THIS WAY IT IS ABSORBED AND BECOMES A CULTURAL COMPONENT.

NATIONAL UNITY IS AN INTERESTING EXPRESSION OF THE NATIONAL WILL AND CHARACTER FOR WHICH WE CAN FIND AMPLE EXAMPLES IN OUR OWN BRIEF HISTORY. IT CAN GROW AND DEVELOP AND GIVE COMFORT AND STRENGTH; AND IT CAN JUST AS EASILY ERODE AND SHATTER, LEAVING A DIVIDED AND WEAKENED STATE.

FOLLOWING THE RATIFICATION OF OUR CONSTITUTION, AND THE FORMATION OF OUR GOVERNMENT IN 1789, THE CONSIDERABLE ENTHUSIASM OF OUR INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT BECAME FRAMED BY OUR GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE AND PRODUCED A SURGE OF UNITY THAT WOULD PREVAIL UNTIL THE START OF THE CIVIL WAR IN 1861.

“OUR INSPIRING UNITY OF THE
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONSTITUTION
ENDED AT FORT SUMTER, SC.”

BUT, ALTHOUGH THIS UNITY WAS A MAJOR ELEMENT IN SUCH FOUNDATIONAL EVENTS AS THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE AND OUR EARLY WESTWARD EXPANSION, IT WAS SUBJECTED TO STEADY ATTACK AND EROSION BY THE HIGHLY EMOTIONAL AND DIVISIVE ISSUE OF SLAVERY. FOR, EVEN AS WESTERN STATES

WERE BEING ADDED, THE SLAVE VS. FREE ISSUE BATHED THEM IN BLOOD AND VIOLENCE. OUR INSPIRING UNITY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONSTITUTION ENDED AT FORT SUMTER, SC.

THE HALF CENTURY FROM THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR TO THE START OF WWI WAS A CONTRADICTIONARY PERIOD FOR OUR NATIONAL UNITY WHICH TOOK ON A NEW EXUBERANCE FROM COMPLETING OUR WESTWARD EXPANSION TO THE PACIFIC, ESTABLISHING NATIONAL BORDERS AND BECOMING A TRUE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC/MILITARY POWER. WE DISPLAYED A STRONG SENSE OF PRIDE, PATRIOTISM AND CONFIDENCE WHICH BOTH CAPTURED OUR EMOTIONS AND OBSCURED JIM CROW RACISM AND ABUSE, AS WELL AS AN EXTENSIVE SERIES OF BLOODY AND VIOLENT (AGAIN) LABOR/MANAGEMENT DISPUTES.

AMERICA'S UNITY CONTINUED TO GROW AS WE EMERGED AS VICTORS FROM WWI AND UNDERTOOK A DECADE OF CELEBRATION IN THE 20S. WITH THE CRASH IN 1929, AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION THAT FOLLOWED, OUR UNITY OF ENTHUSIASM AND ACCOMPLISHMENT VANISHED AND WAS REPLACED BY ONE OF FEAR AND PAIN.

WWII, VICTORY AND OUR POSTWAR PROSPERITY PRODUCED ANOTHER SWING OF THE PENDULUM WHICH, AS IN 1861, WAS SHATTERED BY THE VIETNAM WAR'S SOCIAL/POLITICAL DIVISIONS AND THE CONFLICTING DEMANDS HERE AND ABROAD MADE BY THE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES WE HAD TO CREATE TO SERVE THE COLD WAR AND OUR LEADERSHIP OF THE FREE WORLD.

UNITY HAS BEEN IN SHORT SUPPLY IN AMERICA AND ELSEWHERE EVER SINCE. LOOK AT ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND AFRICA, FOR EXAMPLE, WHERE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS GRIEVANCES HAVE BEEN CRYSTALLIZED AND SPREAD AROUND THE WORLD BY THE TECHNOLOGIES OF OUR MASS MEDIA. IN OUR INCREASINGLY DISUNITED WORLD THE EXPRESSION OF SUCH GRIEVANCES ARE NO LONGER PEACEFUL PURSUITS. RATHER, THEY ARE INFLAMMATORY, OFTEN HOSTILE TO THE POINT OF VIOLENCE AND ACCOMPANIED BY THE USE OF THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED WEAPONS.

UNITY AMONG PEOPLE, AS OPPOSED TO NATIONS, HAS A BETTER CHANCE OF BEING SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE IT EXISTS ON A SMALLER SCALE WITH MORE PERSONAL, AND LESS INSTITUTIONAL, CONTACT, BUT HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO PRODUCE BETTER RESULTS. HERE, MANY OF THE SAME FLAWS IN OUR NATURE — GREED, LIMITLESS AMBITION, CORRUPTION, BETRAYAL, DISHONESTY, DOMINANCE, CRUELTY, SELFISHNESS, ETC. — ARE ALSO AT WORK AND ARE DEADLY ACCURATE IN FINDING THEIR TARGETS.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENUINE UNITY IS A GRADUAL PROCESS. WHETHER ON THE INDIVIDUAL OR THE NATIONAL LEVEL, IT IS A CULTURAL AFFAIR. AND, WHEN IMPOSED BY WAR OR POLITICS OR SOME OTHER MASS METHOD, IT IS BOUND TO FAIL. THE FIRST ACTIVE INGREDIENT, THEN, IN ANY SUCCESSFUL UNIFICATION IS THAT IT MUST HAVE TIME AND PERMISSION, AS IN ASSIMILATION, TO EVOLVE.

THE NEXT ACTIVE INGREDIENT IS THAT ALL UNITY REQUIRES THE PARTIES BEING UNIFIED TO SURRENDER PARTS OF THEIR SELVES AND/OR STATUS. ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL THIS MOST OFTEN TAKES THE FORM OF LOSS OF SOVEREIGNTY OF VARYING FORMS AND AMOUNTS.

AT THE INDIVIDUAL SCALE, THE BAG CAN BE MIXED — EGO, STATUS, SECURITY, PRINCIPLES, AND FREEDOMS — BUT IT CANNOT BE AVOIDED.

HERE, SPECIAL ATTENTION SHOULD BE PAID TO CHINA. REMEMBER, UNITY IS A CULTURAL PROCESS. IT REQUIRES SOME SPONTANEITY AND CANNOT BE PRODUCED ON DEMAND. THE CHINESE CULTURE IS THE ONLY ONE ON OUR PLANET THAT HAS EXISTED CONTINUOUSLY AND SEPARATELY FOR OUR FIVE THOUSAND YEARS OF RECORDED HISTORY. OTHERS HAVE MERGED, HAVE BEEN CONQUERED AND DESTROYED, OR HAVE DISAPPEARED BECAUSE OF INTERNAL FAILURES.

THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT CHINA HAS ALWAYS ENJOYED A UNIFIED STATE. IT HAS FOUGHT AND SURVIVED MANY BATTLES, SMALL AND LARGE, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL, AND WE HAVE WITNESSED SOME OF THE MOST VICIOUS AND DEADLY WITHIN OUR OWN TIME. WARS, REVOLUTIONS, FAMINES, DISEASE, POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS ALL HAVE PLAYED THEIR PARTS IN CHINA'S HISTORY AND WROUGHT PAINFUL CHANGE AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER. ITS CULTURE HAS ENDURED.

MEANWHILE, HERE IN THE U.S. OUR UNITY CONTINUES TO BE UNDER ATTACK BY MULTICULTURALISTS INTENT ON EXPLOITING FOR THEIR OWN ADVANTAGE THE CULTURAL, ETHNIC AND RACIAL DIFFERENCES AMONG OUR POPULATION.

THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING GOVERNMENT HELP IN THE FORM OF FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL PREFERENCE FOR THEIR CONSTITUENTS AND HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OVERCOME MOST FORMS AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION BY BRANDING THEM AS DISCRIMINATORY AND RACIST.

IN THE LAST CENTURY EUROPE HAS BEEN A LABORATORY FOR POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE, SOME WELCOME AND SOME NOT, THAT HAS REACHED US. THE MULTICULTURALISTS HAVE BEEN KEY PLAYERS IN THIS "TRADE".

IF WE VALUE OUR OWN UNITY, WE SHOULD PAY CLOSER ATTENTION TO MULTICULTURALISM'S WIDENING FAILURE IN EUROPE, AS IT PLAYS OUT THERE, AND NOT BE BROWBEATEN BY ITS SPONSORS' "SOUND AND FURY".

ECD 4/20/1



END NOTES

- ¹ E-NEWS FROM CAGW 2/21/12
- ² CONCORD COALITION, 1011 ARLINGTON BLVD, STE 300, ARLINGTON, VA 22209 703-894-6222 WWW.CONCORDCOALITION.ORG
PETER G. PETERSON FOUNDATION, 712 FIFTH AVE – 48TH FLOOR, NYC, NY 10019 WWW.PGPF.ORG
- ³ CONDUCTED BY HART RESEARCH & PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES 11/16-18
- ⁴ MIDDLE AMERICAN NEWS 2/12
- ⁵ THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES ARTICLE III, SECTION 1
- ⁶ IBID – ARTICLE II, SECTION 3
- ⁷ IBID, ARTICLE VI
- ⁸ THE TELEGRAPH, LONDON 2/8-2/14/12
- ⁹ IBID
- ¹⁰ IBID 2/1-2/7/12
- ¹¹ IBID

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MR. AULT IS RETIRED FROM BUSINESS, A GRADUATE OF YALE UNIVERSITY, AND THE AUTHOR OF A RETAIL FOOD STUDY (LA ROCHE & Co. NYC, NY 1957) WHICH DESCRIBED THE EMERGENCE AND GROWING DOMINANCE OF THE SUPERMARKET IN AMERICAN FOOD RETAILING; AND EMINENT DISDAIN: THE TRIUMPH OF CYNICISM OVER INTEGRITY IN 21ST CENTURY AMERICA. (AUTHORHOUSE, BLOOMINGTON, IN 2009)

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OUR NEXT ISSUE: WILL BE DEVOTED TO A MIX OF POLITICAL MATTERS.

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