

Impact of Bad Leadership: End of the Republic

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When we discuss the term leadership, we often envision someone with a plan, sharing that plan and working alongside those they are responsible for. What we do not expect is for people to declare themselves leaders and then implement draconian rules that they and their ilk do not follow. Yet, we have a generation of politicians that declare themselves leaders, inflate their own egos, dictate who and who cannot survive, shut down whole sections of government, then go the next step and allow their families, or themselves, and their hand-chosen, to ignore those same rules.

Leadership is about helping people find the light at the end of the tunnel. It is not about declaring that you will inform people when you will issue your next edict. A leader provides information that allows each level to plan and implement. A very poor manager will hold the reigns tightly, increase stress, ignore pleas and laugh when they find out how much pain their bad planning causes.

Where do we see conditions as we are seeing them now? These are the very same types of political animals that we were warned about during the Cold War. This describes the Saddam Hussein and Adolf Hitlers we were warned about decades ago that we were taught to watch out for. The same as the Russian Social Democrats, and the smaller group led by Leon Trotsky under the guise of supporting the worker on the ground. Trotsky was taught and implemented draconian measures that included the understanding that every person under his leadership was a tool to live or die as he saw fit. The October Revolution in 1917 finally led to the 'All-Russian Communist Party.'

Somehow, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, we have been watching a rapidly changing credo in the United States in which we demonize what we always held dear. That accelerated on September 11, 2001, with the '9-11' attacks on the USA in which a group of terrorists had an impact on the United States that drew us into a number of ground wars and the acceptance of a loss of liberties in exchange for safety. To this day it is nostalgic to visit some countries where you can walk to your gate within minutes of arrival versus extremely intrusive inspections of your person. With cries of 'the terrorists will win,' we threw away privacy, rights and even founded the FISA courts to secretly decide who we could spy on or listen to.



Figure 1: Teaching a class in Wuxi China circa 2002

In 2002, I remember visiting Beijing and traveling through Wuxi, my host warned me when dropping me off at the local hotel: “don’t do anything you don’t want people to see; don’t say anything you don’t want people to hear; and, don’t access the internet if you don’t want to share what’s on your computer.” Even then the feeling was oppressive. I remember in 1996 fighting to prevent the World-Wide Web, during its infancy, from falling into regulation. It was to be a new frontier of freedom of expression. Now, less than 25 years later, we freely give away our information and allow corporations and governments to listen in, track us, and, most recently, rumblings of active tracking and removal of freedom if we happen to come in contact with an ‘undesirable.’

Prior to World War II, the United States was a good Capitalist country, often seen as a very young nation where freethinkers were celebrated. While there was fear, that fear would turn towards creation. The great minds revolutionized the entire World. Edison, Tesla, Wright Brothers, Einstein, we literally lit the planet. When problems occurred, the country united and worked together with a common goal.

Then we return to 9/11. What happened? We were told to go, spend, act as if nothing happened, or ‘the terrorists win.’ So, we did. We threw away our freedoms and embraced new technologies. We moved anything that we saw as inconvenient, such as manufacturing, overseas even faster than the 1990s. We decided everyone must join in the fun! Why do you need to work to succeed? The economy grew and noise about turning the United States away from a productive economy to a service economy gained ground in the halls of Congress and the Whitehouse. And, yet, manufacturing and small businesses grew. People celebrated the latest app, millionaires and billionaires were made – Smart Phones came into being. GPS became normal. The ability to track someone by satellite became normal. The mapping of the planet by a tech giant became normal.



Figure 2: Visiting the Whitehouse to help push through the Perkins Reauthorization Act for Technical Education (CTE)

Across the period from 2008 to 2009 the World discovered how fragile the United States economy had become. Shortly after, the President of the United States decided he knew what cars people wanted and directed General Motors to walk away from trucks and SUVs resulting in the first time that the great GM fell away from first place. Prior to that decision, few pickup trucks and SUVs existed in the USA by foreign manufacturers. But a politician decided what we the People were going to have. So, Toyota and others dove in and served the market for what the People really wanted. In effect, an academic turned leader decided he knew what was right and that the auto giant owed the People, when, in fact, it was a rushed bill to bail out Wall Street that caused automotive to fail, followed by steel and all of the supporting industries. In all, however, far fewer businesses were impacted than during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As we recovered from the 'economic downturn' life returned to normal. Divisions between the People became deeper, aligned along poorly educated political lines. By 2015, industry had enough calling for the government to stop dictating the concept of the imagined need for college and related debts and discovered that the country had not produced enough skilled workers to prop up the concept of the service economy. I was there. The shock when staff on both sides of Congress realized that the people that were with the professional society I was with represented major manufacturers that hired a great many people in the United States, not abroad. Unfortunately, the Bureau of Labor Statistics were producing data that left much to be desired as, for instance, the number of industrial electricians that were reported as being open nationwide just covered the needs of one location of one of the companies that were present. The result was the concept that we did not need people that were skilled craftspeople.

Information. Good leadership requires good and accurate information. Most companies, let alone government, will react poorly with bad information and make decisions that do serious damage. Then, as the information trickles in, will grab tightly to the bad decisions in an effort to not show weakness. Distractions become the order of the day. Create divisions, leak bad information, make accusations, tell people not to look behind the curtain because the Emperor has no clothes.

Fear sells. Ensure that information is produced and spread that paralyzes a people that is worn out from realizing what is going on with their elected officials. Tell them that they are heroes for doing – well – nothing. The American spirit was still shining through and entrepreneurs, who we have demonized for years, started coming up with ways to survive. The emperors immediately grasped on too many of the ideas and presented them as their own.

In World War II and during the Cold War, we were taught to shelter in place. However, the times to hide under your desk and tuck your head between your legs were measured in a very short period of time. People stood up and started building bomb shelters. Defensive and offensive missiles were built, the military was strong and prepared. You were not asked to sit in hiding. You were told to be active. To exercise and prepare should the country be attacked or invaded.

Now, we are ordered to stay out of the sun. Hide away for months. Let everything we've individually built for the potential of retiring slip through our fingers. Be told that if we attempted to exercise our rights as United States Citizens that we would be thrown in jail while criminals are released. It has suddenly, by decree of individuals, become illegal to be lawful. It has become illegal to perform your trade unless it has some cause for the government or 'greater good.' We are living under a group of Trotsky's.

When we look back at the dying embers of the Republic. What will we remember? Or will we? Indoctrination has started. Attempting to be productive makes you a dissident and your fellow citizens

are being rewarded with promises of immunity to turn you in. You get reprimanded for attempting to socialize and, instead, are now told to do the opposite of what we were told only a few months ago – stick your head into your electronic device, cover your features, stay away from your neighbor and report any dissidents.

Academics are paraded in front of us with mathematical models that do not match. Numbers related to causes of death do not match. Even the supposed numbers of the dead cannot be shown to be accurate. In a time of images, we only hear of what is going on while our masters stand on stage and admonish us for wanting to be free.

We managed to allow the shutdown of the checks and balances. In most places only a single branch of government is running – the administrative branch. We watch as poor voting choices because the puppet masters got us to dance with promises of shiny things in order to place them in positions of power to load the checks and balances with their choices.

So, again, we are told to bow our heads and hide – grounded from society, trading our freedoms and need to be productive for a few baubles. I suppose its irony – the founders of America did the same to the American Indians who were here before us. A few trinkets in trade for an entire lifetime of work. Yeah, that's fair.

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