What is wrong with the American people? After several years of horrific policy toward the waking world, democracy’s standard bearers seem to be drowning in a lake of selfishness. Distracted, apathetic, or simply dumbed and numbed by unrelenting propaganda, the most admired society on Earth has turned to a wriggling mush of diverging ideals. I fear that American have become what we ultimately deplored, just another despicable cultural hegemony. Here’s a short brief on the matter.

A recent article by James Carden at The Nation prompted me to discuss this unsavory truth today. The title of the piece, “Trump’s Syria Policy: Perpetual War Without Debate”, provides a stunning introduction for my “proofs” of America’s war on peace. But, the reader need not read Carden’s story to understand that the United States has been transformed into a lawless international pirate state. This paragraph is evidence enough our government has gone rogue:

“Currently there are, in the absence of congressional authorization and in violation of international law (since the United States was not attacked by Syria, nor are US troops there at the invitation of the sovereign Syrian government), an estimated 2,000 American troops based in Syria. Given this, it was odd, though hardly surprising, when major US media outlets like CNN carried the news that American occupying troops were acting “defensively” last week when the United States launched a series of strikes against regime forces, killing over 100 Syrian soldiers, in retaliation for an attack on a headquarters of US-allied Syrian Democratic Forces in Khusham. Reports emerged this week that perhaps dozens, if not hundreds, of Russian mercenaries were also killed in the US attack.”
We Are the Enemy

It's high time we face the fact that successive administrations have been operating outside the Constitution of the United States of America. There's no arguing that Obama and Trump blatantly exceeded their authority under that founding document, as well as under the War Powers Resolution of 1973, which limits executive authority to conduct such military actions. However horrific this fact may be thought, these actions are only a symptom of a much deadlier, and more pitiful causal agent – a society in shameful decay, one indiscernible from those of the last days of Rome or Hitler’s Third Reich. What we have witnessed these last thirty years is the corruption and destruction of a dream – a dream very few can even recall. The Cold War, Korea, Vietnam, Iran-Contra, Afghanistan, and Iran and a dozen regime changes taught Americans nothing whatsoever. Today, my people scarcely even noticed the tens of millions ruined or dead on account of America’s corrupt policies toward the world. Not even the Clintons’ graft and misdeeds seem to register as more than a sound bit these days. Rather than parroting the painfully obvious, I should think the reader is wanting more explanation of how in the hell this happened.

For those unfamiliar, it was Karl Marx who gave us the notion of “cultural hegemony,” which is the domination of a culturally diverse society by the ruling class. In such a system of control, the ruling class manipulates the culture of society, altering and shaping the beliefs, explanations, perceptions, values, and mores in such a way as to form a social construct beneficial only to this ruling class. Make no mistake, this is exactly where American society is today – managed to the point of being automated. And while we all grew up whispering how “The Man” was controlling everything, hardly anyone in my country will stand up and raise a voice professing this truth. Please my fellow Americans, do not hazard to argue here – we all know this is the truth we do not want the world to know. The technocrats I harp about, the ruling elites who hide behind their invulnerability, and the local despots allowed to run their urban games, the wheelers and dealers, and the apathetic masses who tolerate them – we’re finally at the predictable end my friends. Rex Tillerson the Exxon king armed with the mighty lever of American military might, now there is a fearsome vision for you, a moving picture image of literal cultural imperialism. “We need gas, we’ll take gas, don’t you try and stop us.”

The Rotten Seed of Mediocrity

And now you might ask; “Where did we go wrong?” Was the assassination of JFK or some other crisis the beginning? Well, the beginning of America’s transformation into a dastardly hegemony does not really matter now. We are here. It is helpful to look at a few signposts though, just in order that we tweak the consciousness of a few. Maybe some analysts would point to Bill Clinton’s role in destroying Yugoslavia. While others will venture back to Lyndon Johnson and America’s biggest disaster, that Vietnam War. But, I can recall a more recent societal disaster for American known as the “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB),” first proposed by former President George W. Bush, and signed into law January 8th, 2002. This disastrous piece of legislation ensured 13 years of dumbing and numbing of America’s youth, with aftereffects reaching into the distant future. NCLB provided Bush and Obama with a monetary lever to blackmail educators into retarding the educational excellence that had made America the envy of the world once. NCLB produced a generation of Americans who can read well and do mid-level math, but who are also social science cripples. We created a generation of sociopaths who could read iPhone instructions and count well. NCLB drowned the excellent student and threw a life preserver for any child who wanted a free ride. NCLB was scrapped just before Obama left office, and it was replaced by Every Student Succeeds Act, which was like closing the gate after the cows have already left. Please understand, the ruling elite have no interest in a new intelligent society, think about it.

After over a decade of American kids supposedly being pushed forward, the United States ranks 40th in Mathematics, 25th in Science, and 24th in reading behind many of the countries Donald Trump calls “shit holes.” According to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Latvia, Vietnam, Russia, and even Singapore (1st) beat American students out in math. Even more telling than recent indicators, this report by AARP speaks of an American education system half a century ago that was second to none. When I was a student Americans consistently ranked in the top two spots on the world stage, today 10th is considerate a success by leadership. We need not argue here about test scores and the exactitudes of America’s education system to understand the impacts of this “cultural hegemony” exacted onto Americans. The disintegration of America’s former ideals grows more apparent as we look at such things as the WJP Rule of Law Index, where the US is currently 18th position behind Singapore and others. And if we look at the “Economic Freedom of the World” results we find the U.S. in 16th position behind even Jordan and Chile. Even in areas where America is perceived to excel, such as in press freedom, the country ranks far below many third world or emerging states. Finally, when we examine such measures as the Global Peace Index we see America running 114th behind Rwanda. Yes, you read that correctly, the same Rwanda infamous for genocide.
“Dumbness, to paraphrase the late senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, has been steadily defined downward for several decades, by a combination of heretofore irresistible forces. These include the triumph of video culture over print culture; a disjunction between Americans' rising level of formal education and their shaky grasp of basic geography, science and history; and the fusion of anti-rationalism with anti-intellectualism.” - Susan Jacoby, author of The Age of American Unreason

**“Sieg Heil” - Hail Stupidity**

How many remember the newsreel reruns of Adolf Hitler standing before a multitude of Nazis chanting “Sieg Heil” – the minions of evil thrusting their hands forward in unison to perform the Hitler salute that was obligatory in the Nazi Reich. I remember this as I read the comments in every “Putin bashing” article I read. We have returned to those days, rest assured, for every western media broadcast of Putin hate is emblematic. Putin has a cold, and the new Nazis in America wishes him dead or worse. Most of you probably do not read comments, but you do know the western mainstream versions resonated with a tone we’ve become familiar with. Putin, they said, is either on his death bed or he’d been kidnapped by Pussy Riot fans. Putin is this, or Putin is that, but always Putin is jeered, hated, and detested for reasons that are manufactured. Reading the headlines and the comments underneath, this is what compelled me to study my country’s malignant stupidity. You’d be amazed how many readers of American or British magazines want Putin dead. Meanwhile, Russia eliminates the same people who killed in Paris, London, Brussels, and even the United States. Can you grasp the meaning in all this? Think about Putin smashing ISIL for humanity, and then superimpose this Wikipedia list of atrocities committed by them. If you’ve a conscience and a brain you are asking; “How can this be?”

“I was in tears. Goose pimples rose all over me, my hair stood on end, my eyes filled with tears of love and gratitude for this greatest of all conquerors of human misery and shame, and my breath came in little gasps. If I had not known that the Leader would have scorned such adulation, I might have fallen to my knees in unashamed worship, but instead I drew myself to attention, raised my arm in the eternal salute of the ancient Roman Legions and repeated the holy words, “Heil Hitler!” - George Lincoln Rockwell, founder of the American Nazi Party

I will tell you how this came to be, if Donald Trump was elected by “deplorables” – the liberal Millennials and other world order minions are mental sodomites, even when compared to the most ignorant and bigoted southern redneck. No wonder dead and displaced Syrians matter not. We are a Titanic shipwreck adrift, adrift until we strike a reef and sink. Looking on from clearer eyes, I see now how Karl Marx was a genius in his theories of cultural hegemony, and how unchecked capitalism is wrecking our world. In America, as was the case in Russia about the time of the Czars, the masses depended on working class intellectuals to insulate/defend them from elitist control. So, George Bush’s NCLB dumbing virtually assured there could be no “working class intellectuals.” Meanwhile, those decent citizens who might have called out the ruling class’ political pawns, they’ve been bought off with other aspects of this new dominant ideology of “perceived” empowerment. And in this false empowerment we see domestic and foreign policy goals uncovered. The Tillerson/Exxon war we are about to witness, the utter destruction of traditional values, rampant consumerism taken to new heights, and the myth of American exceptionalism which drugs the high functioning chimpanzees – this is the bitter and stark reality of a once great nation. We must see this, lest we be doomed to it.

I leave you with this from the imminent astronomer, cosmologist, astrophysicist, astrobiologist, author, science popularizer, and science communicator, Carl Sagan:

“The dumbing down of American is most evident in the slow decay of substantive content in the enormously influential media, the 30 second sound bites (now down to 10 seconds or less), lowest common denominator programming, credulous presentations on pseudoscience and superstition, but especially a kind of celebration of ignorance.” Carl Sagan

**Phil Butler, is a policy investigator and analyst, a political scientist and expert on Eastern Europe, he’s an author of the recent bestseller “Putin’s Praetorians” and other books. He writes exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook.”**