

THE PSYCHOPATHIC SOCIETY - PART I

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A "Psychopathic society", what does that mean to say? The definition of the word psychopathic is generally accepted to mean a condition in which an individual lives in a reality which is completely divorced from the common reality. The view of itself, as a national entity, which is common to most citizens of the United States of America, and apparently to almost all of the political figures in that country, is a private reality almost entirely removed from that of the "real world". What politicians say is generally simply hype, but when it isn't, when the politician believes their own hype, and when people and other politicians truly believe what should only be hype, and then one is dealing with pathology. And that's what this diatribe is all about, *pathology*.

What is most important about initiating a discussion of this subject is that the people of the United States are either totally unaware of, or completely ignore, or worse yet, are utterly disdainful of, the effect of their national psychosis upon the inhabitants of the rest of the world. The inhabitants of the rest of the world are sometimes simply amused by the antics of The United States, but far more frequently they are bemused, horrified, terrorized, and very much antagonized by the way the United States is enraptured by the glamour of its own fantasies, and because of that preoccupation with unreality, treats others with contempt, disdain, and arrogance. A broad spectrum awareness of these facts and conditions among the citizens of the United States of America could alleviate this dangerous situation. Were the United States of America to actually be, what it fantasizes it is, the world would be a much safer and happier place. But it isn't! Could it yet become what it believes itself to be? I should like to believe so, but based upon past history and a close observation of present day realities, I am very much more pessimistic than optimistic.

Ever since the actual founding of the nation in 1789 the citizens of the United States have been the happy victims of a fantastic creation of their own making. Most of what they believe about their nation is entirely untrue. The most harmful and self-destructive of these myths is the perception or belief that The United States of America is the "only" free country, or else it is the "most" free country. Neither of these perceptions is even remotely true!

An adjunct to that mythos is the perception that The United States of America is the "best place in the world to live"! Nothing could be further from the truth! There are clearly better places, places that are equally or more free, more just, more compassionate, and far less violent such as The Netherlands, all of Scandinavia, The Czech Republic, Spain, and Germany. At the same time, there are clearly worse places to live, Somalia or Bosnia or Singapore for instance, but The United States of America is far from "the best place to live" and subscribing to the illusion that it is, even though it's perfectly clear that it isn't nearly "The Best Place to Live", is pathological, and quite

perfectly prevents it from being or becoming a better place to live. The most inimical thing about believing one's self or one's nation to be "perfect" or even near perfect, is that one is then absolved of the responsibility of improving. To believe any one or any corporate thing perfect is completely pathological.

What is "Freedom"? Is it the right to vote? No it isn't! The responsibility of voting is a duty and responsibility and privilege of a free people, but hardly always. The citizens of Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union got to vote but what good did it do them? The people of Iraq recently participated in an election but what was it but a sham? An electoral process doesn't really have anything to do with either liberty or freedom. So what does?

Liberty or "Freedom" is probably best measured, not by a relatively illusory political freedom, but by the degree of freedom of individual and personal choice and freedom of movement which a society provides (not permits but provides) its citizens. It is delineated by the number and variety of choices available to all citizens. It is that liberty to make personal choices that led the people who came to America of their own free will to do so. But not all came to America of their own volition. There were many who were indentured, there were many who were "transportees" and there were many who came to the prison colony that became Georgia and Alabama. Choices had nothing at all to do with these immigrants!

The hagiographers of The United States of America claim that freedom of choice, freedom of opportunity, and absolute freedom of movement are available to all. It's not true, the impoverished and ill educated have none of those things! Their freedom of choice is limited by their ability to afford food, clothing, housing, education, medical care, and movement. No hungry person is free! No one in subsidized housing possesses freedom of movement. No one without medical insurance has any kind of liberty at all! Any society which ignores those facts is living in a fantasy. Most of the Social Democracies in the world are very much more democratic and provide their citizenry with very much more in the way of freedom of choice than does the United States. As they say in Texas; the United States is "all hat and no cattle".

The most accurate way to judge a nation is by its myths and its heroes.

The United States began its history totally enmeshed in fantasy and pseudo-theology! That admixture of politics and religion in the self perception of the government and people of the United States is one of the primary causes of the existing problem. Ronald Reagan used to enthuse about the "City on the Hill" perception of his country. It's sad, but entirely true, that the United States of America is not, and never was "A City on a Hill" in the sense that it could actually rather than propagandistically serve as an exemplar to others. The United States of America began its history with an economy which was very largely based upon the institution of slavery. what kind of a "City on the Hill" is that? The wealth of which the hagiographers of the United States Of America so loudly brag was based initially upon smuggling and slave labor and subsequently, when

that proved economically unviable, upon sweat shops and the depredations of "Robber Barons", what kind of a "City on the Hill" is that?

How does that notion of "A City on the Hill" square not simply with slavery but with America's subsequent oppression of those people when economics and political realities "turned them loose"? They were no longer slaves, that is true, but how "free" were the victims of America's Apartheid, or Jim Crow? There can be no denial that in The United States of America minorities do not have absolute freedom of choice and liberty of movement. What kind of "City on the Hill" is that?

The freedom of opportunity of which the people of the United States of America are so very proud is certainly not entirely a fantasy, but is it not true that much of this "opportunity" is now, and historically always has been, the possession of the predatory, the unethical, and those driven by "fire in the belly"? Where is all that "opportunity" for the kind, the gentle, and the caring? Where is all that "opportunity" for those whose ancestors did not come from Europe?

Who or perhaps "what" are "America's Heroes"? When I say "America's Heroes" I don't necessarily mean her medal of honor winners, what I mean are "heroes" around whom there has arisen a mythos. I mean cultic heroes.

I'll start with "The Pilgrims"; their mythos is perpetuated every year at Thanksgiving time. Some of my ancestors came over on the Mayflower so perhaps I can leap where angels fear to tread. Those early settlers were hardly admirable they were fanatics, bigots, and the gleeful oppressors of anyone who had ideas different from their own, they gladly accepted gifts of food and local knowledge from the indigenous inhabitants, and then equally gleefully eradicated them when they got in the way of Caucasian expansion. The long sad history of America's indigenous inhabitants subsequent to the arrival of Europeans in North America is hardly exaggerated when described as a kind of holocaust.

Then there's "The Father of His Country", there's certainly more myth than reality here. While I admit that there are very few people today who give any credence at all to the "Cherry Tree Myth", I must ask what kind of a man was George Washington? And the answer is that he was a cold, distant, slave-owning aristocrat who regarded any familiarity at all as a kind of offense against his status and position. A totally ambitious and land hungry robber baron who used his military and subsequent political positions as a base from which to take possession of immense swaths of land. He was also a relatively incompetent General. Had it not been for Nathaniel Greene we'd still be English Subjects.

Another of America's mythic heroes is General Douglas Mac Arthur, whatever else he may have accomplished in World War II (and some of that is questionable) what he needs to be remembered for is presiding over America's own Tiananmen Square

Massacre during the depression when the jobless veterans of World War I marched on Washington during Hoover's administration demanding their pensions and jobs, they were gunned down by General Mac Arthur in total disregard of Presidential orders to the contrary. What does this say of the "best country in the world"?

Then we come to America's preoccupation with Cowboys, outlaws, and gangsters. Make no mistake, Billy The Kid, The James Brothers, and Al Capone are cultic heroes to an inordinate number of American's. Today, in some segments of society, Ghetto Gangs and Cocaine Dealers are "heroes". The "gunslinger", the outlaw, whether in cowboy persona or gangster persona is an important part of the American Id. If this is not true why are America's motion pictures and television screens filled with an obscene level of continuous and unending violence? If this is not true why are America's streets filled with an obscene level of continuous violence and bloodshed? Why else is gun ownership a matter of near religious fervor in The United States to the horror of the rest of civilized society? What other country has the kind of problems America does with grammar school children carrying guns to school and shooting other children and teachers with no compunction at all? What do children dead in their schoolyards have to contribute to "The Best and Most Free country in the world"? America's absolute fascination with guns and violence absolutely guarantees the demise of even borderline democracy. America's fascination with guns, violence, and the enshrinement of the violent as heroes and role models is one of the clearest indications of the psychopathic nature of American Society.

There are so many indications of pathology in American Society that one wonders why no one has been publicly addressing the questions. One really doesn't know where to start. What about the "County supremacy Movement" and their shadow images the "Militias? Anyone familiar with their myths and fantasies must be aware that this is not political independence they're displaying but pathology. To believe there are Russian Divisions hiding in the "salt mines beneath Detroit" is not a mark of ignorance and stupidity but rather a clear indication of insanity! But even if it were simply ignorance and stupidity, what kind of "City on the Hill" has such a large population of ill educated people?

What about the "Religious Right"? This is not a new phenomenon. America was largely settled by religious extremists. There has always been a "Religious right" in the United States. What kind of sane society produces such a number of ignorant fanatical bigots? What kind of sane society stands idly by while those same fanatics trample the ideal of church-state separation? What kind of sane and rational society permits a small but loud minority to seize control of one of the major political units and attempt to remake the nation in their lunatic image?

People who see "Jesus" on rusty refrigerators, "Satan" under the bed, or on soap wrappers, and who get totally discombobulated when a building has the street number 666, are insane. Anyone who believes a "Preacher" (who earns 146 million dollars a year) can "turn away a hurricane" because he and "God" are good buddies is also

insane. Or very, very stupid.

The Fundamentalists are potentially violent, presently volatile, and both potentially and presently inimical to the continuation of even the limited freedom and liberty available to Americans. It is my fear that when they finally realize that they do not have sufficient support among the people to get what they want (A Theocratic State) through the ballot box, they will, in concert with the various militia movements (the membership overlaps) attempt Mao's dictum regarding power's source as "the barrel of a gun". This result would not be sad; it would not be "unfortunate" it would be catastrophic for the entire world. Why? Well just think of this: a pack of fanatic lunatics in command of an enormous nuclear arsenal, lunatics moreover, with an absolute addiction to Armageddon!

To anyone not encapsulated in America's fantasies, this is what America looks like. To many of the world's citizens this is what America has always been. In 1957, while I was living in Europe a friend of mine said to me in regard to the then extant situation of U.S.A. vs. U.S.S.R. that to most Europeans it was largely a case of "a plague on both their houses". He went on to say that it was America they feared most because it was an adolescent cowboy with thermonuclear bombs instead of six-shooters. It is not a pretty picture. It is also a terrifying picture. It is even more frightening because I can see of no way at all to make reality intrude upon the fantasies of the American body politic.

"Whom the Gods would destroy they first make mad". The United States of America is on the verge of self-destruction. Any person, or corporate entity whose perception of self and reality is entirely encapsulated in and by fantasy and myth, and whose avoidance of reality and addiction to euphemism has become an art form, is on the verge of self-destruction.

Is this a "Jeremiad"? Of course it is. Is it necessary? You decide.