

THE PSYCHOPATHIC SOCIETY: part 9: The massacre BY the "innocents" alexis dolgorukii © 1998

Nowhere, absolutely nowhere is the Psychopathic nature of American society more clearly revealed than in it's absolute obsession with guns, weaponry and violence for its own sake. This obsession was not even equaled with the Roman's passion for the carnage in their Coliseum. No where, nowhere at all has this ghastly obsession been more clearly demonstrated than in Jonesboro Arkansas. The American Public, by and large, seems to regard violence as the ultimate aphrodisiac! This preoccupation with, and glorification of violence seems to pervade all levels of American society, as does the Idolization of the perpetrators of violence (such as "Bonnie and Clyde", Elliot Ness and "Billy the Kid").

You can put a psychotic person on Prozac, but what can you do to help a psychotic Nation?

I have lived through World War Two, The Korean War, Viet Nam, and the many varying horrors since that "World War", and I have personally witnessed, but not experienced, the ghastliness of the German Extermination Camps, but never have I seen anything as utterly horrifying as the picture on the cover of Time magazine which showed Andrew Gordon at the age of four, smiling happily, wearing camouflage clothing, and holding a rifle, a real one, what a portent of things to come! Seven years later, wearing almost identical garments and carrying another rifle (at least one) he was to participate in a massacre of other children. He was probably smiling equally merrily in the course of the "action".

What happened at Jonesboro is unthinkable, or at least it has been unthinkable until now. But it is no longer unthinkable because we have, all of us, experienced it. While such a happening is now clearly "thinkable", as far as I am concerned, it is NOT acceptable. It cannot be countenanced! If America is ever to be viewed as a civilized country this kind of thing has got to stop. America is the most feared country on the planet. Why? Because of it's obsession with violence!

Who is to blame for this truly mind-boggling event? Are we to blame Mitchell Johnson and Andrew Gordon? I don't think so. Sure, they pulled the triggers and aimed the guns and they are surely responsible for killing five human beings but are they in fact responsible for their actions? I think not, in this case, and so many others, it is not so much who pulled the trigger, but who supplied the

weapon and who made the use of weaponry an acceptable thing. Andrew Gordon at least, was brought up by his parents and Grand parents to view guns as central to his existence.

It was the American obsession with guns and the American total misunderstanding of the Second Amendment which killed those four girls and their teacher. When Mitchell and Andrew pulled the triggers, Andrew's parents and Grandparents and Charlton Heston and his NRA were right beside them encouraging them to exercise their "Constitutional Right" to bear arms; but so too were Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Their films have done more to glorify mindless and gratuitous violence than anything I can think of.

But to be absolutely honest, all of our entertainment media, films, television, and comics stood besides those boys as they murdered their schoolmates. This is the legacy of Sam Peckinpah who first brought gratuitous violence in wholesale lots to the screen. But he clearly was no isolated phenomenon. Prior to his time there was a sort of agreement not to show extreme or sadistic violence on the screen. After Peckinpah there seemed to be no limits to the violence levels deemed acceptable. It has always been a real peculiarity of American society that violence has always been infinitely more acceptable than sex. This is one of the most demonstrably psychopathic aspects of American Society. Perhaps it is the repressed sexuality that is the ultimate cause of the preoccupation with violence.

It was the American obsessions with guns and violence that enabled those two little boys to become the monsters they became for that bloody moment. They aren't monsters now; they are simply two terrified little boys. They aren't entirely blamable for accepting society's fantasies and attempting, all too horribly successfully, to live them out. Oh Mitchell Johnson and Andrew Gordon killed five people, and for that they must be held fully responsible. But the question I wish to address is who shall we hold responsible for the even greater crime that led these two boys to their murderous action?

Make no mistake, these two boys are every bit as much victims as were the five people they killed. Their victims are dead and gone, for them it is all over, for these two boys it will NEVER be over.

The important thing we have to consider is this: will the American obsession with guns and violence ever end, will the carnage ever end, will the American nightmare ever end?

How did the American people ever get caught up in this whirlwind, the cycle of death and violence? There is no other industrialized nation on earth that has this

problem, why then does America have it?

Europe is, and has been, urbane and civilized for over two thousand years. America was settled by people who came from the advanced European civilization and transplanted themselves into a very primitive situation, they brought advanced solutions to primitive problems but in the course of that process they became, themselves, primitives and far less civilized than the civilized people they left behind in their places of origin. This description does not refer to all Americans but to the pioneer types which have always been idolized in America as the "American Ideal". I say this because the men who fomented and led the American Revolution were as civilized and cultured and sophisticated as anyone in Europe. Many of them can be said to have "commuted" regularly to Europe where they were as much "at home" as they were in their home communities. But those men are not the one's Americans chose to idolize.

I believe it was primarily the influence of Andrew Jackson and his followers that led to the establishment of the "pioneer type" of primitive woodsman (and/or the River man") as the American "Ideal Type". Of course this is easy to comprehend when one realizes that from 1620 onwards the first colonists had to survive in a wilderness, and to hunt and fish for a large part of their sustenance. They also had to defend themselves against various predatory animals, and after the people they had found occupying the area got to know them, they had to defend against the Native Americans too. But of course, these folk were subsisting in a howling wilderness. What was true then is not true now.

The first American, who, while a real person, became both an American Icon and part of the American fantasy was Daniel Boone, who is alleged to have killed a bear with his hunting knife. His mythos was followed by (among others) those of Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett, knife wielding gun, toting rowdies, ruffians, and killers who were, and are, regarded as "heroes". This led insensibly into the complimentary mythos of the gun toting "Cowboy" and the "Outlaw" who also became part of the American Myth and who were equally heroes to the American People. It is perfectly clear that Billy the Kid is an American heroic Icon, as is Jesse James. Both of these men are viewed as heroes even though they were cold blooded murderers and thieves. The Marshall who eventually killed Jesse James is reviled as a coward and villain. This continued up until "Prohibition" which gave rise to criminals like Al Capone and his ilk who are, in some parts of the population referred to as heroes.

How is this possible in a civilized country?

Let's look at it. Even though America is the most powerful and richest nation on the planet, and even though even ordinary American's life on a scale

unimaginable in the rest of the world, for some reason Americans like to view themselves as "outsiders" and to some degree "outcasts". Now this has both good effects and bad effects. The primary "good effect" is that Americans, by and large, tend to view the Underdog with sympathy, the bad effect is that they tend to view outlaws as Underdogs.

Earlier in this essay I referred to the complete misunderstanding of the Second Amendment of The Constitution; let's examine that statement:

" A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

Now, it is clear to me that this amendment must be reviewed in light of the time context in which it was produced, and in context with the attitudes and beliefs of the men who produced this document.

There are two particular items that must be held in mind when discussing this document.

The first of these is that this is an 18th century document, produced by 18th century intellectuals. The 18th century was called "The Age of Enlightenment" and produced a certain mind set and world view in the minds of many of those who were sufficiently educated to be part of that "enlightenment". This means that the American Constitution was based primarily on certain assumptions that were part and parcel of that enlightenment. The second is that it was a distinctly contemporary document which was produced following a successful Revolution, a revolution which typified and embodied the assumptions of the period.

One of the strongest legacies of the American Revolution, one which was most urgently felt by the framers of the Constitution, was the absolute socially and politically and fiscally negative results inevitably accruing to the existence of a standing army of any kind. The framers of the American Constitution were, almost to a man, adamantly opposed to permitting the existence of a professional military. The framers of the American Constitution all firmly believed that a Professional Military Class was an entirely anti-Democratic thing, and they were 100% correct in that estimation. They would have been horrified were anyone to have given them a fore view of our Pentagon and "Defense Establishment. It would have seemed a total failure of "The American Experiment". The existing "Military-Industrial Complex" currently extant would have been a monster to them, just as it was to Dwight Eisenhower.

Now, believing as they did that standing armies (and navies) were antithetic to a free society, they naturally turned to the source which fought and won the

Revolution....militias. Militia, was the 18th century term for what we today call the National Guard. These were citizen soldiers who volunteered for a specific period of service in an official organization well regulated by the state governments. When their terms of service were complete, they returned to their homes and normal livelihoods to continue to be the productive citizens of a democracy.

Militias militate against the existence of a standing army. If you have the one, it is deadly to have the other. Why is it deadly? It is so because sooner or later they will inevitably come into conflict with one another. This eventuality is clearly portended in our American Society today. The many totally unregulated and self-appointed "militia groups" existing throughout the United States all claim that their primary purpose is to "defend Freedom from the Government", they also declare that they exist to interpose themselves militarily should the "Government attempt to take our guns away". The Marine Corps, which is a problem in and of itself, seems to see itself as an independent entity separate from the Government. This is evidenced by the recent remarks by a Marine Colonel to the effect that the Marines would "side with the people" in the event the Government attempted to disarm the people.

Now, to be totally frank, that this subject is even being discussed implies very strongly that the American Democratic experiment has already failed. A Democracy is, as Abraham Lincoln so clearly defined it: "A Government **OF** the people, **BY** the people", now, as long as this remains true without exception or modification, a Democracy survives. At the moment when the people begin to perceive the Government as "them" and themselves as "us" a Democracy is dead or at least dying. In America today, and for quite some time past, many people perceive themselves as separate from, and antagonistic to, "the Government".

A populace bristling with guns, and America has an estimated 200 million guns that we know about, is no Democracy. If people so deeply distrust their government that they feel they must arm themselves against it, then it is no Democracy. It is not even a Republic, but is rather the precursor of a totally hostile anarchic environment, and that problem is always followed by a totalitarian solution. Unfortunately, a Democracy where more than 50% of the eligible electors forfeit their vote is also no Democracy.

Let's look at that amendment again and see where and how it has been misrepresented to the public and misunderstood by so many members of that public.

"A WELL REGULATED MILITIA, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

The key words are "a well regulated militia" and eight other words that are not written but were clearly understood at the time and should also be understood today. Those eight "missing words" are: ***"in the context of a well-regulated militia"***. These "missing words" were so well understood that it was assumed they were unnecessary because "everyone" knew this to be the case. That they were "left out" may cause the entire dissolution of the American Democratic Experiment. The second amendment should have read:

"A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms in the context of a well regulated militia, shall not be infringed."

In any case, it should, indeed it must be read that way today if we are to survive as a truly Democratic Nation.

Not one of the framers of the constitution, nor any of the founders of the American Nation ever envisioned a nation in which each home was an armed fortress. Nor could they have envisioned the vast changes in the character and harmfulness of the weaponry that would be devised in the 250 years dividing their milieu from ours; nor could they have envisioned or imagined our vast entertainment and information media, the purveyors of violence in late 20th century America. But no matter what "Rambo" is a direct descendant of Daniel Boone, and so too are Andrew Gordon and Mitchell Kennedy and that is America's tragedy and its doom.