

Who's Pulling the Strings?

Mankind has always been tempted by the Grand Illusion. Whether it was the popular *Styx* song or the popularization of Eastern philosophy in the '60s and '70s, we have always been drawn to issues that seem real but in truth lack any substance.

Witness the emergence of the infinitesimally small and weak North Korea bullying the great United States of America. Such behavior would seem unimaginable to Republican Teddy Roosevelt or Democrat Harry Truman. Most people would not even have North Korea on their radar screen, were they not able to threaten us with the totality of nuclear devastation.

Now, for the first time, Americans can imagine what it would be like to live in Israel, half the size of New Jersey, and threatened daily with destructions from 150,000 missiles aimed and controlled by the worst of homicide killers and funded by the likes of Iran. No one would pay any attention to Iran if it did not have Western money from our gluttonous oil consumption and a bad nuclear proliferation deal concocted by the Obama Administration.

Our illusion is that North Korea, Iran, and all the other bad actors in the world are in control of their own behavior. North Korea is owned lock, stock and barrel by China. Kim Jong-un could not function one day if the Chinese turned off his power. While American Presidents bluster against China for not controlling their unruly adolescent in North Korea, China continues to fund our unacceptable debt and flood us with cheap imports. This did not happen because China is bad, but rather because Americans have an insatiable appetite for cheap goods, low wages, and passing off our exuberant lifestyle on the next generation.

Early in President Obama's term, he created the Simpson-Bowles Commission to try to come up with a long-range future plan in connection with the American economy. The good work of those honorable politicians was immediately shelved by both Republicans and Democrats. Never was a good idea so quickly dumped by the political parties. One thing Republicans and Democrats could agree upon when the Commission report landed on their desks was that it was dead on arrival. Why? No one wanted to touch entitlements like Medicare and Social Security, and heaven forbid that we should, as a nation, address our broken tax system.

We have looked at the enemy, and the enemy is us. If China was not our biggest creditor, and if we were not totally dependent on low-cost Chinese-made goods, Korea would not have blossomed into the threat that it is today. China would have been too afraid to let the rogue regime in North Korea anger the United States. Instead, we are faced with a situation where we will be pushed out of the Far East as a trading partner, while we cower in the corner at the rantings of the Chinese mannequin in Pyongyang.

How is this all related to President Trump's recent administrative recall of the so-called Dreamers Executive Order of President Obama? The term "dreamers" is a catchy phrase

used to incur empathy for illegal aliens who came to the United States as young people and who now deserve our sympathy. After all, it was not their fault that their parents illegally brought them to the shores of the United States. Whose fault was it? It was the fault of greedy Americans who wanted cheap labor, and therefore would never have their politicians enforce our borders or our immigration laws. It is these Dreamers who take care of the lawns, the cars, the golf courses and the homes of both the rich and famous and many average Americans. Republicans who controlled big business and Democrats who were looking for votes were in a kind of conspiracy that encouraged – and still encourages – the importation of cheap labor. To some extent, this is the American Way. Our nation, when it was vast and empty except for Native Americans, who we unceremoniously displaced, wanted immigrants from Western Europe. We also wanted slaves from Africa. We wanted skilled and smart Italians, Germans and Jews. Those immigrants were the grist in the great mills of the Industrial Revolution. Today, we have exported much of our manufacturing industry, and instead we have become a service and high-tech economy. The iPhone software may have been developed in Israel and designed in California, but it is mass-produced in China. This is just the way industry likes it. With globalization, the best and the brightest can be plucked from anywhere in the world, while the product is physically produced in cheap labor markets. Bringing that cheap labor to the United States is a win-win for managers and shareholders alike.

The reason why Republicans and Democrats could not agree on an immigration bill during the Obama years was that both parties had an interest in nothing happening. The people were told that Republicans wanted enforcement of the immigration laws before amnesty, and the Democrats said they wanted amnesty before enforcement. The truth is a different story. What the parties wanted was to create an election issue, while continuing to exploit undocumented immigrants who were paid cash and returned nothing to our tax base. That strategy benefited the greed of both major United States political parties.

President Trump has simply rescinded the Obama attempted “executive legislation” and moved the issue back to Congress, where it could never be properly addressed previously. Will it now? Again, the answer is up to us. Will the safety and security of our nation be more important than the political advantage of publically fighting over sympathetic young immigrants?

It seems that, in the United States we have done a marvelous job of living the Grand Illusion; all our problems are the fault of someone else. North Korea and the debate over the illegal Dreamer immigrants, does indeed have something in common. Both issues appear to be driven by someone easily identified and disdained. The threats of North Korea come from the bad man who rules the nation, while the suffering of “innocent” immigrants is another reason to hate Donald Trump. If we could somehow get our own house in order by addressing our own long-range financial planning while providing amnesty to those who deserve it and tightening our borders aggressively, then we are likely to have some hope of a brighter future. Perhaps it all comes down to partisan manipulation of voter emotions. If that is the case, we will go the way of other great empires that have disintegrated as a result of their own indolence. If we wake up and, as a nation, take charge of our own problems,

utilizing our historic and enterprising problem-solving skills, there is a chance that we can make it to a third century of peace and prosperity for our citizens.

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