



## Trump`s Concussed Confused America



WRITTEN BY: ASHOK DHILLON

Trump came out of 'Right Field' and hit America on the side of its head, leaving it concussed and confused. America has been increasingly confused for some decades now, not really knowing how to deal with being the global hero after the Second World War, and more recently the World's only 'Super Power'. But since Trumps` election, that sense of confusion has grown regarding its leadership role, and its own cherished value systems.

Aided and abetted by a President who makes it a point of saying and doing everything that shatters the stereotypical image of what Americans imagine their country to be, and what the World expects of it, America's confusion with its identity has grown exponentially. The veneer of democratic & liberal values for which America had become known has been decidedly damaged, and with its current spate of struggles, it is behaving very much like someone with a major concussion, increasingly irrationally.

The latent racism which was indelibly a part of America's history, but had been covered by the noble intentions of its written Constitution (*even though the writers themselves were slave owners*) has broken out into the open, in all its ugliness, in spite of the constant preaching of the excerpts – 'Land of the Free', and, 'All Men are Created Equal'. The generally ignored open secret has been dramatically spotlighted by Trump's opening salvos about Mexicans, Muslims and Black lives, so that now it festers in the open, in the glare of daily Presidential tweets, the battles between the ultra conservatives (*alt-Rights*), the 'multi-colored/immigrants', and the white progressives (*or as Trump recently labeled them, the alt-Left*). In a very real way America is reliving its old civil war regarding the old issues of racial inequality.

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The image of a tolerant America, being the land of the free and the equal, is being systematically shredded by the shootings of unarmed and often innocent black men, the mass deportations of illegal immigrants, restrictions on travel from certain Muslim countries, and most shockingly, by the suppression of voting rights of non-whites in parts of America. When the leader of the free World, and of all Democratic countries, denies equal voting privileges to certain of its citizens, because of their color or racial background, it strips the remaining vestiges of its claims to be 'Leader of the Democratic and Free World', definitively. And ironically, the political party that is enabling Trump in his destruction of 'American values' is the Republican Party, which was formed, originally, to oppose and fight slavery.

The battle for the soul of America is on, and at the moment Trump is winning. He is leading the country from one American image (*myth*) destroying battle to the next with his speeches, actions and the aggressive endorsements of climate change deniers and public protection regulation busters. And by the not-so-subtle endorsements of the undefendable, such as the White Supremacists, neo-Nazis and the KKK, the almost inevitable acquittal of shooters in the police force of the unarmed and the innocent, and now more recently, by the Court-busting pardoning of Sheriff Joe Arpaio.

Trump has gleefully brought up all the latent ugliness of the American society and flung it in the face of liberal Americans and the rest of the horrified watching World, and by doing so, shattered the myth of American exceptionalism, and its uniqueness in the World as a racially and economically fair and equitable country.

In matters of foreign policy and relations, things aren't that much better...

There too, Trump is a concussion to the collective American foreign relations psyche. The wars of the past that he inherited, namely Iraq and Afghanistan, need to be wound down and withdrawn from. But desperate to appear as the winning-est President, Trump is upping the ante in the existing wars, in spite of the haranguing he gave to the former Presidents for being there.

As for Iran, it will of course want to retaliate, and that would make the World a more dangerous place.

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## Afghanistan

The fact that Donald Trump reversed his oft-stated policy on Afghanistan is no news; he flip-flops regularly, but the policy that he did eventually succumb to, upon serious pressure from his Generals, was in fact his only choice. America has once again boxed itself into an unwinnable war, where the only option is not to lose too embarrassingly; hence the minimum additional troop expansion to keep it all going... and going.

Afghanistan at this time is unfixable because of the rampant corruption of its Government, the fractious nature of its society, the historical warlike nature of its people, and the ability of the Afghan fighters to outlast all invading armies, including America's.

So the best that America can hope to achieve is to keep the appearance of partial victory going, and to not let the whole Country fall into the resurgent Taliban hands (*they control an estimated 50% of the country*) and try and prevent it from going totally extreme Islamist after 16 long costly years.

That, maintaining some semblance of the status-quo by attempting to keep the Taliban at bay, in America's longest running war, is unfortunately going to cost America still more, in time, money, and in additional American lives.

Trump in giving his reasons for changing his mind regarding Afghanistan, and sending in more troops, declared that America was not going to be engaging in 'Nation Building' anymore, but is going to Afghanistan to 'Kill Terrorists'. What he didn't mention, yet most people with the minutest knowledge of Afghanistan's history already know, historically, the Afghans are pretty good at defeating invaders, regardless of their technological superiority.

So under Trump, America is upping its engagement in a prolonged expensive war in Afghanistan with potentially diminishing returns, along with a troublesome friend/enemy Pakistan that still rankles as an ever dangerous thorn in the collective sides of both the U.S. and Afghanistan to boot.

Additionally, Trump is getting America deeper into Syria, and that is a losing proposition. In Syria he is arrayed against Assad's allies, Russia and Iran, who have shown to be more effective there than America and its NATO and Arab allies. In Syria, America is once again entering an untenable situation from which things can only get more difficult, with Russia holding the upper hand.

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And then there is North Korea.

For decades former American Presidents have been forced to negotiate with North Korea because an all out open war had proved to be unwinnable (*and that was before North Korea had acquired Nuclear capability*), and hence the decades old standoff at the demarcation line (*known as the DMZ*).

Now along comes Trump and thinks he can stop North Korea cold with bold statements of 'not happening' to its ongoing missile program. All that 'false bravado' did was to encourage and embolden North Korea's equally irrational Kim Jong Un, who accelerated the testing program, resulting in the latest possible *hydrogen bomb* test. It was a brazen slap in Trump's face. In his many bluffs being called, Trump has been reduced to first flattering, then imploring, and now shaming China, in an effort to stop North Korea.

Additionally, to make sure the 'Looney Tunes' continues in his Administration, loud and clear, he keeps threatening something more than diplomacy going forward, even though 'his Generals' have assured him that a military option for North Korea is not really feasible. Now, there is open dissention in the senior-most-ranks of his advisors towards his bellicose rhetoric.

As for America's closest allies, and NATO, they don't know what to make of an errant America that seems to have lost its bearing, and is gyrating wildly between the requirement to lead, and its current Trump stated wish to retract.

From the fiasco of what is euphemistically known in the U.S. as 'health care', to immigration bans, deportations, to resurgent racism and White Supremacy, to militarization of the police force, to transgender discrimination and homophobia, to misogyny, and voter suppression - America, internally, is in a race to an uglier underdeveloped past.

And externally, rather than learning from the mistakes of its past wars (*post Second World War*), starting with Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, and now possibly Syria, Trump is enjoying his ability to rattle sabers and act and talk tough, knowing he is safely ensconced in his glided arm chair playing the tough Commander-in Chief, with not a care to the additional misery his amateurish aggression will cause America and others.

Under Trump, America seems to have lost its collective sense of balance and rationality and is acting very concussed and confused.