

# The State of the World\*

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## G8 Meeting

I first want to say a few words about the current G8 meeting, and then talk about major conflicts in the world. This will cover much of the world situation, a reflection on global capitalism, and the US Empire and its imminent demise and what will happen after that.

The G8 meeting is actually an act of sabotage, and in my view a deliberate one. It sabotages and undermines the UN. In 1975, the meeting was established as a small forum for intimate meetings between 3 leaders from each participating country. However, from a purely economic agenda it has become much more, incorporating a lot of UN agenda items (security issues and global warming etc.) and thereby actually hijacking the subjects of global importance to about 8 countries only. Russia, which was invited under Yeltsin, is the black sheep in the community. Also, not inviting Chindia is a guarantee for sabotage, as is talking about Africa without having even one African representative present. The good news is that there were one hundred thousand demonstrators, and the bad news is that there were some violent idiots.

If the nonviolent majority could practice the technique of twenty nonviolent encircling every violent one in a nonviolent way, incapacitating their capacity for violence, it would be an enormous feat. There is, however another piece of what I would call bad news; the one hundred thousand were without constructive, positive ideas. I've gone through the whole rigmarole of the slogans. Personally, I don't like the slogans against globalization; there is no way in the world to stop globalization because it is driven by things we all love: communication and transportation. We are not going to turn that backwards. A good slogan would be "another globalization is possible", spelling out that we can have a better globalization as opposed to the economically exploitative process we know.

So, having said that, we have dark days in front of us. We have impending climate and economic disaster and on top of that a political military issue, the so-called Shield. There isn't hardly a person in the world who believes it is against Iran. It is a part of a policy started in 1996, counter-posing against each other, on the one hand NATO and AMPO (the US-JAPAN arrangement), and on the other hand the SCO countries, the biggest alliance in human history: the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, with 6 full members and three observers. The six members are China, Russia and four

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of the former Central Asian republics, excluding Turkmenistan. The three observers are India, Pakistan and Iran. Together, it's about 50% of humanity, confronting a relatively small country called the United States of America, with only three hundred million, not a very impressive size these days.

I have said this, knowing that of the ten points of the Project for the New American Century - written by people who are still in power, although there is an erosion among them - point number 7 is to change regime in China. I am of the opinion that whatever be the method, that the Chinese will rather do the change of regime themselves, and are not enthusiastic about being encircled. It is the major conflict confrontation of the world today, between NATO/AMPO and SCO, and since it is the major one, it is also the one least talked about. The Shield has to neutralize missiles from Russia and China. I think Putin understood this correctly in Munich, seeing it in the light of the cancellation of the Anti Ballistic Missile treaty, which was a cornerstone of peaceful development during the Cold War. This treaty was canceled unilaterally by the United States. The anti-missile capacities in the Czech Republic and Poland come on top of the breaking of promises made to Gorbachev at the end of the Cold War by both the US and NATO: namely, that the Soviet Union would withdraw from Eastern Europe, including Eastern Germany, and the United States would not fill the vacuum. The United States had filled almost every military base and enrolled, practically speaking, all former Warsaw Pact countries in NATO. That has heightened the tension immensely. Whether it will dominate the Heiligendamm (G8 meeting) meeting, I do not know, but I would imagine that it could be quite important. The guess is that the US would do anything they can in order to bribe the citizens of the villages selected in Poland and the Czech Republic with large amounts of money in order not to demonstrate against their presence. So, G8 spells only bad news, as introduction to the six conflicts:

## Six Conflicts

### 1. Economic Contradiction: Global Capitalism

Let me just say a word about global capitalism. The two antidotes to the market mechanism that have been effective have been, on the one hand, a welfare state, and on the other hand, protectionism. Microcredit, you can forget about, these are small drops in the bucket, giving relief to some small groups. The countries that practice it most, Bangladesh and Bolivia, are still at the bottom, economically speaking. The combination of selective protectionism and welfare state, that is the real stuff. The way Japan did it, the way Taiwan did it, the way South Korea did it, the way Hong Kong did it, the way Singapore did it, the way Malaysia did it, with considerable success. You find in the whole of the East Asia/South East Asia conglomerate countries that have been doing exactly this. That is important, and the neo-liberal free market syndrome is of course against that. They are doing everything they can to eliminate the two factors. That means that the global market place becomes a vertical assembly line for the transportation of capital from the bottom to the top. And this works with three mechanisms: monetization, privatization and globalization, border-free market, of which globalization is the least important. The most important is monetization, set-

ting a monetary price on everything. It is the most important because it means that those who have no money have no chance, and they are about one billion in number. Their option, and this is very clear, is to join the ranks of the dying; 125000 dying every day with 25000 starving and 100000 dying from preventable and curable diseases: The cure exists but it has been monetized. User's fees in Africa are a disaster. All of this is known today! Adam Smith warned against unmitigated markets; David Ricardo warned against unmitigated labor markets in periods with high labor supply, saying that it would have lasting unemployment as a result, and extreme poverty among labor.

From global capitalism as it is operating today, we can expect no solution to these problems. So let me then add the kind of approach that I, as one person, would advocate; taming capitalism, by introducing at the same time about fourteen other types of economies. In other words, it is a little bit like the thinking about energy: we don't say an unconditional no to hydrocarbons, but we introduce 6, 7, 8 other methods. The energy profile becomes complex. Time does not permit me to get into all fourteen, I'll not do it, some of you have the manuscript and my book *A Life-Sustaining Economy* is close to completion. The point I am arguing for is a pluralistic economy. There is no single formula that covers all the alternatives, and the pluralistic profile must be adjusted to the preconditions in space and time.

## **2. Military Contradiction: Terrorism and State Terrorism**

Number two on this list is the military contradiction between terrorism and state terrorism. The USA state contradiction on terrorism has now entered military intervention number 73 since the Second World War; Number 73 being what they are doing in Lebanon right now: killing Palestinians. There are 470000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, almost half a million, scattered in camps from the north to the south. We now know the number of the people who were driven out of the territory that became the Jewish state during the Naqba, the Catastrophe: the number of Palestinians driven out was 711000, very far from 'a couple of thousand'. It is a huge number for a small nation. Some of them, not necessarily in that period, found their way to Lebanon. This is number 73 and the number of people killed in overt Pentagon-driven military action after the Second World War is now between 13 and 17 million. The number of people killed in covert action is at least 6 million. The number of people killed by structural violence could be 125000 people per day, but for that the USA is not alone responsible. What the USA is responsible for is giving the military cover for that economic system. You can go through the total amount of interventions, 243, since Thomas Jefferson started, and you will find that almost without exception the interventions are triggered by some political action that sounds like it might lead to a redistribution of wealth and power somewhere in the world. So, you get this endless pairing: intervening when the Sandinistas are in power but not when Somoza is in power, intervening when Chavez is in power but not when, for instance, Jimenez is in power. Both of them were darlings of the International Monetary Fund, a solid pillar of exploitation.

*Iraq:*

Right now the major arena is Iraq, the coming arena may be Iran. One particularly gifted journalist, Andreas Zumach, has written an article saying that for the Iran war everything is prepared. It is totally wrong to assume that because the US has problems in Iraq it will not attack Iran. I will also say that it is totally wrong to assume that the US is losing in Iraq. You will only assume that if you assume that the major goal of the United States is a cohesive Iraqi entity that has some semblance to parliamentary democracy. If you look at the real goals, oil and military bases, they may even be winning. There could be an oil law, the chances that it could be passed are not that small. And it is the Paul Bremer concept they are working on that essentially presupposes that the oil resources are put on the global market, bought up by the five big companies, with 100% repatriation of profit.

It is sometimes pointed out that the US Empire is not colonial. That is correct. They had colonies in the past, after they in 1898 stepped into the Spanish empire and acquired some major indigenous problems. One interesting thing about colonialism, however, is that it gave colonizers some paternalistic sense of responsibility. This is absent under imperialism.

Let me just add one point to this. I find the idea of pulling out of Iraq one of the most cowardly, dishonorable ideas I can imagine, so let me immediately formulate an alternative. Shed the uniform, and start helping the Iraqi people you have brutalized. Compensate, apologize, you have a lot of infrastructure at your disposal, you US army could still do a decent job. And one of the worst proposals in addition to that, is to say "Just go to your bases and stay there". Those bases are for the coming war with SCO, that's why they are there. Have a look at the analysis of the length of the runways and you will see the purpose behind them.

Let me come back for a second to the idea of pulling out, which in my mind is such a bad idea that we could expect it from the US. What it means is that you pull out so that you don't suffer any humiliating defeat. You make yourself unavailable for defeat. I can understand the reason, it is not difficult. The 30th April 1975, the humiliating defeat in Vietnam became a major trauma. To avoid that situation is the priority of course, pulling out better than to continue killing, but, I just think one should call a spade a spade: no way is cut and run as peaceful action. We shouldn't, I would say, contaminate the concept of peace with cowardice, trying to "save face" after having killed 750000 so far. Multiply that by 10 for the bereaved – the persons who feel the loss of a friend, a spouse, a brother, a sister, a child, a parent, a colleague, a neighbor – multiply 750000 by 10 and you have an estimate of the hatred that has been created. Add to that the 4 million who are displaced, some of them among the 7.5 million I just mentioned; and add to that the psychosis induced in the high number of US military who have been to Iraq; and add to that the about 25000 wounded who have come back to the US and you may probably add 10% of them dying. The definition of a person of the US army personnel killed in the war is that he dies in Iraq, that means "Put them on the plane, get them to Walter Ried as quickly as possible, don't let them die in Iraq".

Why can't the USA with some allies win? Because they are against an enemy that is unconquerable, and why is that? Because 'asymmetric warfare' is too sterile. Of

course they are using 'improvised explosive' devices against these sophisticated things the US has. But they have two more arms at their disposal: time and space.

An unlimited time perspective. There is no point called 'capitulation' in their rules, that can just be forgotten, it belonged to the old days. We are dealing with a type of warfare where what used to be called the weaker party has any amount of time at its disposal. These people are trained in fighting a government empire for 400, 500 years, like the Serbs were fighting the Turks for 500 years. The Orthodox, among the three Christianities, have a time perspective very similar to the Islamic one. I don't think you will find 500 years patience in Washington, maybe not even 5 months for that matter.

And, they have space, there are fifty seven members of the OIC, the Organization of the Islamic Conference; fifty six of them are states, while number fifty seven are the 160 million or so Muslims in India. Most of the borders of the 56 countries are drawn by the West; they are borders that make no sense to Islam at all. That doesn't mean there are no fault lines inside Islam. More important than Shia-Sunni is probably Arab-non-Arab. The non-Arab countries are in the majority: of the fifty six only twenty two are Arab. Of the 1.35 billion Muslims, three hundred million are Arab. If the Arabs feel that the religion is essentially theirs, then they are in a minority position. That is becoming something interesting, and of course the US plays on those fault lines. It seemed to work as long as they were dealing with Khomeini, he is a Shia, the "bad" Islam. But, bin Laden, a Wahab, was a Sunni, and didn't look much more attractive than Khomeini. So something went wrong somehow with that Harvard University distinction.

Harvard University, by the way, is *the* university that by far has contributed most economists to the neo-liberal attack on humanity. People like Jeffrey Sachs, a major figure in the destruction of Bolivia and of Russia, and now extending to the whole world. He has changed his rhetoric, even humanized the rhetoric. But if we look at the measures, they look very much like what he did to Bolivia and Russia.

Having said that, if you have time and space on your side, then you are dealing with enormous resources. In principle, the whole Islamic world is on the other side. This constitutes the "Clash of Civilizations" that Samuel Huntington's publisher stole from Bernard Lewis, a far more important intellectual professor at Princeton University, and a major advisor to Cheney. One of those who, more than anybody else, has whispered in Cheney's ears 'Attack Iraq!'. Everybody is blaming Samuel Huntington, best read the book, you'll find almost nothing about civilization. Read Bernard Lewis, and you will find quite a lot, particularly about Islam.

It is a complete mistake to talk about this as a civilizational-religious clash only. It's economic, military, political: it's the full house. The more one says the 'clash of civilizations', the more is one inclined to forget the economic, political, military interests hidden underneath. It must be wonderful for Washington to have all this clash-of-civilization-talk while establishing fourteen military bases and then trying to put your paw on all the oil. You can hear them think: 'Keep them discussing civilization'. And this of course is why we need the concept of imperialism, because it is holistic, one reason why the concept does not have a very high standing in the USA. The war of state terrorism against terrorism is an elitist warfare against people's warfare. The peo-

ple's war is close to unbeatable, but it may take time. That holds for Iraq and it holds for Afghanistan. Anybody who knows a little bit of the history of Afghanistan and the British attacks in 1838 and 1878 and the Soviet attack in 1978, also know how it ended; with humiliating defeats. The war in 1878 ended with the massacre of the British embassy in Kabul in 1883. I think they would have wished for good life insurance for those people.

How is it possible to enter a thing when so much knowledge would indicate otherwise, with all these negative indicators? Is it permissible to be that ignorant of history? To deny entirely a whole lot of facts that nevertheless somehow play a role? I myself think we give much too much credit to facts, but some facts are quite useful. It helps to have a President who has both ignorance and denial fitted into his mental framework, but I would warn strongly against associating the calamity with Bush alone.

The US empire is resting on a deep structure and a deep culture. Let me take the deep culture first. There is both 'Chosenness', the vision of past and present glory; and also a strong sense of trauma. There is Dualism, Manichaeism, and the sense that Armageddon will solve it. But, this is no Republican monopoly. It is found in both corporate parties, with some fringes that feel some uneasiness. And, of course, of those, the Republicans have suffered the humiliation of losing the elections. But the two parties re-cohered, voted for the 'surge', voted for 100 billion more money, adding some clauses. In other words, we are faced with a Republican Democrat entity, a Repucrat, Repurat, whatever we want to call it; a single-party coalition with two wings. That was the bad news, the good news are the 50% who don't vote. Somewhere in those 50% there is a solution, not as one person. In other words, there is good news and bad news.

How does a person like Andreas Zumach, very well informed, think that the war against Iran will be run? It could be based on a provocation, constructed, fake and false - like Račak in Kosovo. A Finnish forensic specialist has now released her report on the Račak incident. This has been silenced by Joschka Fischer at a critical moment. This report is very clear: there was a gun-powder slam, but, the slam was on their hands and not on the neck. In other words, it was on those who had been shooting, not on the executed victims. The killing had been done in an ordinary manner and they then assembled the corpses and lay them out. They need a US ambassador to organize this, it bears the stamp of William Walker. The total number of killed in Kosovo was not 150000, but 8000 over the years: 5000 Albanians and 3000 Serbs. I am just saying that because we have been treated to lies and if there is the war against Iran it will be initiated by lies. To propagate those lies we have the corporate press, meaning press owned by the corporation. Information is easily arranged.

From the plans that have emerged it looks as if the 100000 targets have already been identified in Iran. These targets include not only some nuclear arrangements, but the total military infrastructure of the country, that means any kind of center of command, naval points, air bases, anything that has to do with missiles. But that would only amount to one half of the 100000 targets, the other targets would be anything that has to do with civilian infrastructure in the sense of railroads, airports, roads of course, sewerage, bridges, canals or watering, electric power plants: anything that keeps the civilian population going. The attack will start at five am some morning and will be in

association with Israel. As far as I understand the Iranian counterattack will be considerable. I don't know, but I could guess there could be dirty bombs inside the US, ignited by remote control. Only an idiot will use missiles. They will of course use totally different methods. So I mention it as an example of what we may be facing.

*Afghanistan:*

In March I was invited to give a talk for three ministries in the UK, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry or Department of Defense, and the Department for International Development (DFID). It was organized by the latter. I was a little surprised when I was asked to give the keynote address, and in the chair was the former Foreign Minister. The keynote was about Afghanistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. And since I have just been mentioning Afghanistan, let me say some words about what I saw as possible solutions.

The basic point I have just made: you can forget any possibility of winning. You may have a lull, and God bless you when it comes to what happens after the lull: Osama bin Laden. You can also forget calling your enemy Taliban, Talib means 'student', it's a highly anti-student type of word, you can forget about that too. We are essentially dealing with the Afghan people. I remember a discussion I had myself in that meeting, with an Afghan general. He gave a talk about how many small weapons he had confiscated, 90000, and how his forces were fighting. And I said to him 'General, tell me a little bit more about that fighting', and he looked at me and said, 'Of course it doesn't work. I cannot ask my Afghan troops to kill Afghans, it makes no sense for them. The Russians, no problem.' He didn't say, but he was thinking 'Americans, no problem', but that was not politically correct at such a conference in London. I will never forget how the twinkle in his eyes met with the twinkle in mine, twinkle meets twinkle, and we understood each other perfectly.

The five points that would give a solution to Afghanistan would be the following from the TRANSCEND mediation in Peshawar in February 2001.

1. Make a Coalition Government with the Taliban. 100% Taliban is intolerable. But the Taliban has a moral fiber, which most others don't have. If you eliminate them you will get heroin and corruption and not much more. They are needed.
2. Afghanistan is the material from which a Federation is made, not a unitary state, even if the Northern Alliance based on Tadjiks and Pashtuns with Kabul in the middle, count for half. There are at least ten others. To call potential Prime Ministers "warlords" is an *insult*. You have to be very much removed from reality to believe that by insulting them you can eliminate them or make them your friends.
3. A Central Asian Community surrounding Afghanistan with the countries that contribute to the national mosaic that is Afghanistan, the Pashtuns from Pakistan, the Tadjiks from Tadjikistan and the Dari-speaking from Iran, and so on and so forth, would make a lot of sense. That will include Kashmir, and Pakistan, and Iran. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has almost realized it. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization does not publish much, but moves in very, very clever, slow, movements. It moves so slowly that the journalists

do not discover it, because it would have to move from day to day in order for a *journal*<sup>1</sup> to record it.

4. Make Basic Needs the leading line of the Government policy. That means food, education, health, clothing, security, whatever is needed for the somatic human being, shared by all, and available to men and women alike. That last problem can only be solved on a Quranic basis, and is being solved in a number of Islamic countries. One of the most interesting solutions was by Saddam Hussein, number 3 of the 14 good things he did. He told the Iraqi women, 'From tomorrow on you decide whether to wear the hijab or not. Only you. And if anybody tries to change your view come to me.' Now, to come to Saddam Hussein was not a very appetizing invitation, so this was definitely under threat, but it worked. It created a very, very vibrant group of women in Iraqi society. That of course is now all disappearing.
5. Security, provided by cooperation between the UN Security Council and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The UN Security Council has a veto nucleus of 4 Christian powers, and one Confucian. It has no legitimacy whatsoever in the Muslim world: this has to be understood. To believe that one can organize a UNSC-sponsored security operation in a country that hates the UN, not only because of the composition of the Security Council, but for having killed 1 million through the Iraq sanctions, is naive. And they gave a very clear expression for their hatred by killing the Secretary-General's representative in the Iraq UN building. It doesn't help much to call the people who did it "extremists". In the war we had against the German occupation in Norway, the people who did violent acts were extremists, and most people were sitting on the fence, applauding. But, don't be confused, don't call the fence-sitters moderates. They were waiting for the wind to blow a little bit more clearly and then will jump down and take a clear stand.

With those five points, I think one could arrive at something. It is not for us to impose any solution on anybody, and TRANSCEND in this case was essentially the Canadians. I was an adjunct. One of them was an Afghan Canadian, Seddiq Veera, of considerable diplomatic acumen. When that report was read in front of the working groups, the former Cabinet Member said 'This is the best I've ever seen, the only problem is it has no chance... Why, because,' he added, 'the Americans will attack us in October 2001, because they want to control pipelines, and they want bases.' So I asked him, 'How do you know that?'. And he said, 'Would you mind coming to my room this evening?' The room was very dark, and had a considerable amount of electronics, and quite good assistants who were very discrete, and he presented quite a lot of very interesting pictures. 'When the Americans attack in October, they will put their military bases exactly here', he took a map and put his finger exactly where a major base is today. This all happened seven months before 9/11.

But having said that, the question comes up: 'How does one move a plan like those five points?' Well, the reports from the conference, with the keynote address, is there, circulated to all kinds of governmental circles, not only in England. I don't know, but we need a better dissemination technique. The corporate press will do their best to deny us that access, because we are uncontrollable, unpredictable. And I think they want it to remain like that: so do we.

### **3. Nations and States Contradiction: 200 States, 2000 Nations**

Let me go on to number three, very briefly, 200 states, 2000 nations. In Kosova they are now practicing the principle of self-determination. They are not practicing it in Republica Srpska, they are not practicing it in Transdnistria, they are not practicing it for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. They are practicing it where they want to practice it. What TRANSCEND tries to do is to open the space between independence and unitary states. And we have a lot of research done and a lot of experience when it comes to the range of in between points. And the three best known points are of course federation, confederation and devolution. Those are in-between parts. We did not have any success so far in Sri Lanka. The parties are not convinced that they can win, but they are convinced that they can deprive the other side of victory. Not quite the same, but almost as good. If both of them want to deprive the other side of winning it can go on for a considerable amount of time, because you won't even have the mechanism of victory or capitulation which sets some full stop, for some period. They needed of course the cease-fire agreement brokered by the Norwegian government in order to arm and re-deploy, and both parties made use of it. During that period, there was not a single serious effort to solve the conflict; certainly not by the Norwegian government, nor by the others. A very sad picture. And I'm afraid that whatever beautiful peace-building efforts one can make, it has limited impact. There has to be a solution. The good news from my own experience: the moment you do have a solution, it is incredible how much bad sentiment and behavior can evaporate quickly because the solution is there.

### **4. Cultural Contradiction: Islam vs Christianity**

Number four, the cultural one. Imagine that you take the TRANSCEND five point diagram and you simply say Islam hates Christianity, wants to kick it out, and Christianity hates Islam, wants to kick it out. That formula is called intolerance. We are against that. There is the neither/nor possibility they may both conclude that there is something crazy in both religions. Let us turn to Buddhism, or let's become secular. Secularism, I think, can partly be traced back to the 30 years war in Europe (1618 – 48). I don't have the historical evidence, but I have at least the hypothesis that a high number of people came to the conclusion that if these are two Christianities that both define themselves as the only correct one, and that's the way they treat each other, there must be something basically wrong in the whole Christian message. At the time, they did not have alternative religion, so they turned to secularism.

Secularism supported itself as science, and they fell into a very deep dark hole. Science, as you know, is based on data as the ultimate arbiter between hypotheses. But, data comes from the past. In opting for science you give the past practically speaking one hundred percent of the power. I have been struggling almost all my life to develop epistemology that does not take that dramatic position, but maneuvering even-handedly between past and future. It means that you give the potential, the negatively non-existing, as much praise as the positively existing. The moment secularism allies itself with science, it allies itself with the past. It is very easy to understand why they do it: because they are Christians, maybe Jews, maybe Muslims, and God created the world, and if God is perfection then His work must also be perfection. To talk

about an alternative future is to challenge the creation. Any alternative future from a scientific point of view is speculation. From that point of view Darwinism and intelligent design are very very similar. The driving forces are in the past. What could be a true global future of this relation? We should draw on the potential of future aspirations, of the dreams and the hopes and the values as an equally important part of the intellectual enterprise, and here I am not with Noam Chomsky. Brilliant, he is a digger for facts, and I dig him too. But he is chemically free from any concrete, constructive and creative future. There isn't one single idea except 'writing a letter to your Congressman'. And he has proven again and again and again how futile that exercise is. And he is called the major intellectual in the world!

So, having said that, I am very much attracted by a statement by an Iranian, and that statement by an Iranian is as follows. I will read it to you in English. It is the 14th Century Persian Sufi poet Hafiz and his ultimate words about the distinction and struggle between Christianity and Islam:

*I have learned so much from God that I can no longer call myself a Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Jew. The truth has shed so much of itself in me that I can no longer call myself a man, a woman....*

The latter is going a little bit too far, I'm not sure I can follow him into that!

*...An angel or even a pure soul, love has befriended Hafiz so completely, has turned to passion, freed me of every concept and image my mind has ever loved... man/woman, thing.*

And this is what I for reasons of time will say about number 5 on the list:

## 5. Sufism

It comes straight out of the Axis of Evil. Ahmadinejad wrote a letter of 18 pages to Bush, a little bit repetitive at times, but a fascinating letter<sup>2</sup>. What an indictment of the Western civilization that they are not even able to answer that letter. Nobody is of course expecting any answer from George Bush, but he has a couple of people: couldn't Condoleezza Rice try her hand at it for instance? I mean, she is a bright person. Why not?

A quote from Daoism:

*Sharing the suffering of others, the life and joy of others. Use the good fortune of others as your own good fortune. View the losses of others as yours.*

This is "we-ness", this is swinging in harmony, two persons, or, humanity swinging in harmony, sensing each other's delight and suffering. Compare that with the profoundly egoistic lex talionis: 'Do unto others as you want others to do unto you.' Why is it so profoundly egoistic? Because it ends up with my ego, somebody should do something good to me, but I'm so smart that I know that the best way to get that is to be nice to that person, you get much more from him with that method. If you treat him badly you might get nothing or worse. A light-year away from the Daoism of creating we's. This is the kind of thing that I find fascinating in connection with religion: it is

not neither/nor, it is not the compromise, it is not one dominating over the other. Better, try to take the both/and, pick up the gems from all of them, make them coalesce, cohere somehow! A fascinating challenge, a little bit ahead of its time, or then maybe not. Maybe a lot of people think that way, it only has to be released, perhaps, in public space.

## 6. The US Empire

Let me introduce number six with a quotation from the South African Nobel Prize winner in literature J.M. Coetzee. Absolutely brilliant. The essay he wrote and published in 1974, when he was 34 years old, was about South Africa and the Vietnam War. He wrote a statement about the USA, putting it in the wording of a specialist in a U.S. think tank in California. The project he is working on is how to break the wild of the Vietcong, and substitute for Vietcong goals that are compatible with the sincere US love for the Vietnamese people. He writes:

*If the Vietnamese had come singing towards us through the hails of bullets, we would have knelt down and embraced them.*

If they can come singing through the hails of bullets: A good way of putting it. Yes, if only it's exactly what happens. The idea that we can bomb the people into submission, and make them love us, is insane. When the Germans were 'bombed into submission', it actually strengthened the Nazi party. What then happened to the Germans was something else. At a certain point they realized that their whole project was doomed, the whole Nazi project was wrong, wrong, wrong. They were not taught a lesson by being bombed. 'If only they would come singing through the hail of bullets, we would go down on our knees and embrace them.' The perception of their own project came from the inside. What Coetzee leads up to is psychosis, diagnosis maybe a combination of narcissism, megalomania and paranoia, maybe with elements of a fantastic detachment from reality. But we are not dealing with psychopaths, we are dealing with socio-paths. Maybe lovely individuals, but with an image of the world totally devoid of any humanitarian reality when those attacked refuse to do what Reagan said when he was entering a helicopter, in connection with Nicaragua. 'Mr. President, what do you want them to do?' 'All I want them to do is to say 'Uncle' ', meaning 'I submit.'

It doesn't work like that with a deep culture and a deep structure at work. US political science and US economics have no concept of history, and, it seems, only two concepts of structure, hierarchy and anarchy. If you come from a Nordic country, or from the European Union, you have no problem understanding what equity is about, even if I had to make up the word "equiarchy", to add to hierarchy, polyarchy and anarchy. For the US the only approach to equity was and is the signed agreement, contract, regardless of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th level consequences. Similarly, solution to them means settlement, a signed document, and I would argue it isn't good enough, *solution is deeper*.

So how is the US Empire performing these days? There are fifteen contradictions at the end in the hypothesis made in the year 2000. Let me say what the basic theory is about. An Empire is a transborder arrangement that combines economic, military, political and cultural power. It's an enormous power display that obviously brings with

it contradictions. Contradictions are problems you cannot solve unless you change the system, but you can coexist with a couple of contradictions. When the contradictions start multiplying, synchronizing and synergizing, they become serious.

For the Empire, people hit by an Empire start understanding that they have a common cause: get rid of the Empire °V like colonialism, like slavery.

I can now pick up some of them, such as the amount of Euros passing the Dollars in circulation last December, Toyota passing GM in January, and you have the number of patents in the world with the US proportion sinking in comparison with other countries passing the US in one domain after the other. There is all of this happening, and much much more.

Let me point to a key factor. It hasn't happened yet. But, many Europeans have felt bothered, and the moment they meet people in the Iraqi resistance movement and they compare notes, a sense of a common cause may start arising. If I now take all of these fifteen points, some of them also inside the US, and Americans also sense that they are better off without the US Empire, the moment that common cause factor comes about, the US Empire is doomed. That is what happened to the Soviet Union. My prediction made in 1980 was that the wall would fall before 1990 and that the Soviet Empire would follow and they performed on time. The prediction of the US Empire is by 24 October 2020, the UN day and also my 90th anniversary, and you are all invited to celebrate. And let us combine it with a TRANSCEND meeting, but we need to make a jump, because they are now in odd years.

## What Comes After the U.S. Empire?

### A. The European Union as Successor

And then what? Three possibilities: (1) A Successor Country or Countries, (2) A Regionalizing World, (3) Another Globalization. Let me say a couple of words on all three. And you will take note, of course, that the end of an Empire is the most natural thing in the world. Empires come and go, it's been like that all the time. No empire lasts forever. However, this one happens to be so brutal, so killing, so intervening, doing so much damage that you would expect it to be more short-lived than many of the others. It didn't have the decorum and the sense of responsibility sometimes exercised by the English and the French, to a large extent by the Spanish, to a minor extent also by the Dutch, much less by the Portuguese and the Belgians. You will of course also remember that the Portuguese in Brazil, with the US, were hanging onto slavery more than any other. So there is a tradition here.

But leaving that point aside, I think China is one of the least likely successor candidates. On my list, candidate number one is the European Union. You need a sense of universalism, China has nothing of that. They are still convinced that they are surrounded by barbarians. They are willing to buy quite a lot. The annual global income is 54 trillion dollars, and China's reserves are more than one trillion. The US currency reserves right now amount to 47 billion, which is nothing. That means when you want 100 billion for more fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, you have to take more loans. That they get those loans is something still a little bit strange, but they do pay something in return, namely access to the US markets. So, having said that, a likely succes-

sor is the European Union, very universalist, with the eleven major colonial powers all members, and all concerned about their part of the world. And they are willing to say 'I'll not protest if you do something in your part if you'll not protest when I do something in my part'. It is the European political common market. There is much more to the European Union, but this is one important aspect.

We had a conference on peace studies in Hull in England one week ago, about democracy and peace. And I launched the idea of the European Union as a successor, after nineteen reasons why the hypothesis of 'democratic peace' is false, even a fraud, but I leave out all of that. The point I'm making is simply that the European Union has the deep culture and the deep structure it takes to become an empire. There were protests to the effect that there was no such plan even from Members of the European Parliament. Back then, a German from the European Commission raised his hand and said: 'I'll tell you one thing, I work in the European Commission, but occasionally I go over to the Council of Ministers and whenever I am in the building, so many of the people walking around are in uniform, they suddenly disappear into some room, and it is very clear that the doors are closed.' There is of course also the Tindemans plan, and the Tindemans plan is exactly what they need for that successor purpose. So let me proceed to what I think is most likely: regionalization.

### **B. Regionalization**

We have four regions or maybe five: the EU, AU, SAARC and ASEAN; Number five is the G8, it's not contiguous, but it doesn't have to be contiguous to be a region. And we have four regions that are coming, and they have one thing in common: they are not going to ask Washington for permission.

The first one is the *Estados Unidos de America Latina y el Caribe*, the United States of Latin America and the Caribbean. The common currency will be a Bolivar. Nine of the countries met in La Paz in December and drew up the basic plans for the Charter. A basic pattern of thinking is what they call a 'social economy' and about that one I will just say one or two lines. When sanctions came to Cuba in 1960, or 1961 rather, the only trading possibility was with the Soviet Union, meaning sugar in return for shoddily manufactured goods. The Soviet Union collapsed, so did the trade, and Washington was already looking forward to the collapse of Cuba. What did they do then? First of all they switched to organic agriculture to be self-sufficient. In industrial products, they have enormous shortages, but they have some trade possibilities. And then you would immediately say that it was obvious, but not everybody thought about it. 'We have human material, let us process that human material to as high a level as possible.' That started university education to an extent unknown in most other countries, with a science and training center outside Havana for the training of doctors, dentists, engineers, social workers, educators, teachers of all trades. Thousands and thousands of them, ready to go to Latin America. But they didn't have the money till Chavez. He had the money, and a messianic complex. He is the Messiah with a budget. Imagine Jesus Christ with an oil budget? You see the triangular theme? Chavez pays Cuba for providing the manpower for lifting the bottom level of those nine countries, starting with the slums, and they pay Chavez a certain allegiance to the Estados Unidos, which is evolving everyday today. Venezuela then, a couple of weeks ago left

the World Bank and the IMF. You cannot leave it unless you have paid all your debts and Venezuela paid them some time ago. The other countries cannot leave because they haven't paid their debts, so Venezuela is going to pay their debts for them. The Messiah with a budget. The difficulty of it is, that Messianism might go to his head and make his populist democracy, as opposed to the usual Latin American elitist democracy, similar to people's democracy in Eastern Europe, as opposed to any democracy. As it is obvious I like his policies, I would hate to see that happen.

The second one is an **Islamic community from Morocco to Mindanao**. 1.3 billion Muslims crossing almost 1.3 billion Hindus, from Nepal to Sri Lanka, like two highways, but at the same level. This has a major potential for a huge conflict, making small riots in India look microscopic. I use that as an exercise for diplomats and say, "Please come up with 5 solutions for this one".

Third, an **East Asia Community**, without Japan and with India, possibly combined with SCO.

And fourth, possibly, Putin could pull it off, but he may not be the man for it, is a **Russian Union** with Chechnya having as much autonomy as the Netherlands in the European Union. Today, widely off the mark. Tomorrow? Maybe. It would be very much in Russia's interest. The problem is that Putin came to power by being anti-Chechen. So, let us see. Maybe somebody can come to power by being pro-Chechen.

In a regional world we do not have any guarantee for peace. As a matter of fact, the country that will benefit most from the decline and fall of the US Empire will be the US Republic. They may start sleeping well at night, and they might use their enormous natural and human resources for innovative projects and their capacity for cooperation, all of that, for better purposes, and make a decent country out of the USA.

### C. Another Globalization

That means of course a stronger UN with globalization through the United Nations. I was advisor to the Commission for Global Governance. They had a lot of good ideas whose time had not come, so let me just say the three that for me are most important.

Abolish the veto power. They may meet, in the G8, but put their agenda on the UN agenda, and if they don't like what they come up with, outvote them by expanding the Security Council to 54 members like the Economic and Social Council, and see to it that all parts of the world are there. That's point one.

Point two, democratize the United Nations. They can mobilize an enormous amount of initiatives through a democratic United Nations. Maybe with one representative for each 1 million inhabitants, some say for each 10 million.

And, point three, take the United Nations out of the United States and put it somewhere else. Put it in a more friendly environment. This can all be done within a span from 5 to 20 years. If democracy is such a good idea, then why not practice it?

My own book on *The Decline and Fall of the US Empire – And Then What?* is scheduled for next Spring. The book on alternative economics is also for next year, and so is the book on deep culture. Books, books, books, what matters more is peace, peace, peace.

So let me end by simply saying that I was asked to say something on the state of

the world. I've done that. And, if anybody can come up with ideas on how to speed up constructive, creative, concrete development, please don't hesitate!

Thank you.

## **15 Contradictions of the US**

### **Economic**

1. Between growth and distribution: overproduction, 1.4 billion below 1 dollar a day, 100'000 die a day from preventable and curable diseases and 25'000 from hunger;
2. Between productive and finance economy: currency, stocks, bonds, overvalued, crashes, unemployment, contract jobs, not positions;
3. Between production/distribution/consumption and nature: ecocrisis, depletion/pollution, global warming;

### **Military**

4. Between US state terrorism and terrorism: blowback;
5. Between US and allies: except UK-Germany-Japan, allies will say "enough";
6. Between US Eurasia hegemony and Rus-Chindia triangle with 40% of humanity;
7. Between US-led NATO and the EU army: a Tindemans follow-up;

### **Political**

8. Between USA and the UN: the UN ultimately hitting back;
9. Between USA and the EU: vying for Orthodox/Muslims support;

### **Cultural**

10. Between US Judeo-Christianity and Islam: the UNSC nucleus has four Christian, and none of 56 Muslim countries;
11. Between US and the oldest civilizations: Chinese, Indian, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Aztec, Inca, Maya;
12. Between US and EU elite cultures: France, Germany etc.

### **Social**

13. Between state-corporate elites and working classes of unemployed and contract workers; the middle classes?
14. Between older generation and youth: Seattle, Washington, Praha, Genova and ever younger youth. The middle generation?
15. Between myth and realities: the US dream and US reality.

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## **Notes**

1. This is a pun: *jour* = 'day' in French. A journal is a daily record.
2. <http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/Ahmadinejad%20letter.pdf>