Subject: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 15 Dec 2024 15:30:18 GMT
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World and domestic events and policies are the big picture that the elder brain trust of Hudson and Wolff synthesize in their discussions on the Dialogue Works blog. The latest being the US strategy of controlled anarchy its practiced for decades.

All the big strategies going on in the world now. Reflecting back on our own domestic policies that reinforce the notion of our US empire is its own worst enemy. The chaos it disseminates in the world trying to maintain a national security cover for the control of fossil fuels and our military complex umbrella. Is matched by a domestic economic doctrine that had done chaos to the wellbeing of the greater part of its citizenry. Great thought provoking discussion. As always. Time to have a serious dialogue in this country.

https://michael-hudson.com/2024/12/the-u-s-strategy-of-controlled-anarchy-syria-ukraine-and-beyond/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 16 Dec 2024 15:15:28 GMT
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Another in a continuing series with the two elder statesmen of what the world, needs now.
Is PEACE and cooperation. That isn't the American philosophy. We want to stir the pot. We'll bargain with the devil as an asset like we've done in Syria recently. You name a hot spot in this world and we're there in some fashion instigating trouble.

These two vessels of wisdom know more about what our country does and has done than just about anyone. They know the historical precedence and the current foundations of our national and world economic and social status to lift the lid on what governments do and what implications they have. You can't find this analysis from the NY Times or any publication owned by our own oligarchic class that own the politicians. Democracy. Aristotle warned about it way back when.

https://michael-hudson.com/2024/12/the-irony-of-calling-the-opponents-of-nazism-nazis/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 16 Dec 2024 15:27:31 GMT
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No sooner I post one I see another tidbit of crucial understanding of whatthehells going on. The Moon of Alabama blog seems to always do a wonderful job in my view summing up skullduggery in this world. I like this editorial. Washington Values. You can take that to the Quickie Mart to pay for a lottery ticket and lose anytime.

https://www.moonofalabama.org/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 05 Jan 2025 18:23:02 GMT
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On Kennedy and Khrushchev. From the Chris Hedges Report. Economist Jeffrey Sachs who has studied the Cuban Missile crisis and its effect on John Kennedy's foreign policy initiatives until he was assassinated.

Our foreign policy with Russia for a century along with Great Britain has been full of dangerous misappropriation of ill will of our national defense planning and diplomacy. Or lack thereof. Mr. Sachs gives a full rendering of how the Cuban Missile crisis happened, leading up to and the post threat aversion to an all out nuclear exchange with Russia.

Kennedy had the foresight to realize the need for dialogue with Russia. Which led to a seminal speech on ending the "cold war" and respecting our so called adversaries.
His assassination erased any effort in this vein with our policy with Russia since.

https://www.american.edu/cas/news/no-problem-of-human-destiny-is-beyond-human-beings.cfm

We refuse to "learn" from our very own history. Its remarkable in light of what is still going on in the world today. That we, the USA are like some benevolent hand in keeping the world stitched together.
Ironically we are the catalyst for world chaos.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wqm9Yl1gGEY

(Snowed in in KC with a rare blizzard)

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 07 Feb 2025 15:47:23 GMT
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Politics & profit are the motives with the destruction of Gaza. The Palestinians are just an impediment to realizing the potential to raze what's left of Gaza which was an open air prison since 2007. To keep the Palestinians in control by the Israeli's. Before they eventually decided to exterminate them once and for all. With a little help from their friend. The USA. The new administration in the US is doing a spin job of what it feels is only logical in the sense of revitalizing that area destroyed with our prior administrations unwavering solidarity to keep the stronghold of the Middle East in our national interests. The oil. Never mind genocide was being committed. Collateral damage.

Trump and his son in law Jerid Kushner who has business interests in Israel and Saudi Arabia stand to profit from this new proposal in Gaza. The Israeli government proposes a "voluntary" withdraw of the Palestinians to neighboring countries so that Gaza can be "renewed". As Ben Norton points out in his expose of this corrupt proposal. A voluntary choice between either death

by staying in Gaza or keeping your life by leaving.

The extent of decay of the American political and economic hegemony is accelerating more quickly than ever now under this new administration. The shock & awe style Trump is proposing for initiatives around the world to make America great again is only showing how debauched and corrupt our system of government has become. Not that it wasn't so prior to him. But he simply pulls the cover off the disease process that's been going on for some time. Why not make a profit out of it?

But, this latest proposal for Gaza is despicable and grotesque. Ben Norton shows all the gory details.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMBwV8kL5NY

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 16 Feb 2025 15:22:41 GMT
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I think Kevin Walmsley is an important source to follow for where our economy is at. He's a businessman and savvy to finance. He reports from Quingdao China where he's lived for more than a decade. He frequently speaks out about our financialized economy's shortcomings and erosion. Here he's speaking to what was once one of our top export commodities. Farming. Crops and equipment. Both now suffering from our very own economic shortcomings we've followed for decades now.

The once third world has overtaken ours and our partners in the G7 in all forms of commerce. And now our very own star of the trade show is on the ropes. Equipment manufacturers of farm equipment are being replaced by Chinese brands that are or course, cheaper and just as effective. And now our farmers are being undercut with the grains and crops that we were knows as the "breadbasket of the world". Drought, flooding and finance has made farming more and more difficult for our dwindling family based heritage.

We've done this to ourselves slowly and methodically. In denial of what we've been doing. Arrogantly pursuing our rules based exceptionalism world wide. While ridding our nation of the means to make things and even now grow things to trade with. So our balance of payments in trade is an enormous deficit now.

Kevin Walmsley substack:

US farmland is seeing steep declines nationally. In every region surveyed, the most productive and highest-yielding farmland has fallen between 5 and 15%. In many areas with less-than-ideal tillage or water supplies, the losses are much higher, at over 30%.

https://kdwalmsley.substack.com/p/american-farmland-values-falling?r=4pow86&triedRedirect=true

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Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 20 Feb 2025 20:15:28 GMT
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A trustworthy journalist. Ben Norton. Always pointing out apolitically the shortcomings of US policy. Here explaining US Multipolarity vs Chinese Multipolarity.

The new administration is converting from an outdated unipolarity philosophy from the prior administration to one which the US is "competing" with another empire, the Chinese, in a way that maintains the aspect of US imperialism within the sphere of the western hemisphere. Whereas China expresses multipolarity as a uniform sovereign right of all countries to develop and prosper in the midst of cooperation and respect.

The old ways die hard even with acceptance of not being the biggest kid in the playground. Trouble is, being a bully doesn't win respect or gain prosperity in the long run.

https://geopoliticaleconomy.com/2025/02/16/multipolarity-china-trump-marco-rubio-imperialism/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 23 Feb 2025 12:14:11 GMT
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Economist Jeffrey Sachs, an astute mind and orator gave a speech recently at the European parliament in Brussels Belgium. He points out I think the folly of the European Union to have slavishly followed the whim and will of the US dominating hegemony for decades on end to perpetuate its notion of its exceptionalism in the world politically and militarily.

It would be an irony of sorts to the old Domino Theory of the 1960's that was the leading assumption of the US committing to the Vietnam war to stop communist takeover of East Asia. That if the European nations were to wake up to their chronic allegiance with America's war mongering for decades. The alternative to joining the BRICS coalition and pursue stability and prosperity over the latter wasteful and unproductive ideology of the US would be a reverse to the old unrealized domino theory.

A transcript of his speech in full.:

https://singjupost.com/transcript-jeffrey-sachs-on-the-geopolitics-of-peace-in-the-european-parliament/?singlepage=1

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 28 Feb 2025 13:06:08 GMT
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The state of Russia is a mafia state? Full of corruption and palm greasers. Takes a back seat to what vulgarity was regurgitated unto the world from the President of the United States in his

"Truth" Social com. Who's society is really on the skids?

Making Gaza the Rivera of the Middle East AI presentation. USA F'n A Yeah baby!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_uTs0ukLik

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 05 Mar 2025 21:46:13 GMT
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The United States and our political parties, both, I can't help comparing to the character created by Mike Myers for his Austin Powers movies.

Both parties are like Dr. Evil towards world hegemony, world domination. For benefit of our OLIGARCHY. This makes Russia's oligarchy bush league in comparison. The Trump administration now is composed of 13 billionaires. And both parties are heavily financed in campaign contributions by the fraction of the one percent. Two financial companies in particular, Blackrock and Blackstone factored heavily in this last presidential election.

Biden concentrated on our old cold war rival Russia while Trump now is fully on with China as enemy number one for our Dr. Evil State Department and military complex to try and destabilize China. Meanwhile Trump and his minions are shoring up our Monroe Doctrine in South and Latin America to make the western hemisphere OURs and ours alone to control.

Ben Norton with his Geopolitical Economic Report blog explains this whole scheme being hatched for carrying out the next 4 years.

What a sad and crappy initiative to be concentrating on in this world. Instead of planning and financing a long term initiative to really make America great again. Industry and manufacturing that takes time to blossom. Which is what China did. Instead our country carries out the short term needs of our most wealthy financiers in Wall Street for their world dominance.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANqHCejgUTM

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 06 Mar 2025 16:18:52 GMT
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Not to belabor this point - I've made it enough, I think - but while I agree with you that we have

some really ugly problems in America with greed and power, they aren't the same thing as what happened and is still happening in Russia.

First though, to your point about problems here at home, I always thought it slimy that career politicians in USA could become millionaires. If a family gets paychecks of say $200K/year, then they should never be able to amass hundreds of millions of dollars. It's just not ethically or legally possible. Their net worth over a lifetime should be in the low millions, if they've invested well.

A career politician with more than a few million dollars is prima facia evidence of foul play. If a politician has other incomes prior to entering public service, that's possibly a path to wealth, but even then, it seems rife with ethical dilemmas.

But certainly, a person that enters politics early in life and then does nothing else has no ethical or legal way to generate an income that leaves them with more than an upper-middle-class retirement nest egg. There's no way to become a multi-millionaire. Yet we see dozens of people that fit that description, and I think it's wrong.

Now then, let's compare that with Russia. First, remember what I said about the novi-russki. Those are the people that are called "oligarchs" today. I call them "novi-russki" because that's the pejoratively slang term used by Russians, themselves. That's what the population of Russia calls these guys. They started calling them that in the 1990s.

The majority of Russians (and Ukrainians and Moldovans and Belarusians, etc.) are a lot like Americans. They're proud of their culture. They value fairness. They value strength and are proud of themselves, but they also value kindness. They do not like seeing someone win by unfair behavior. And because of that, they are somewhat untrusting of government. They do not consider culture and nation to be synonymous with politics. They usually keep their political opinions to themselves, largely out of prudence. Better to stay out of it, and not voice an opinion.

Not everyone is like that, but most are. The ones that speak out are people with high risk tolerance. When you get 'em alone - behind closed doors - there isn't anyone in any of the former Soviet states that sees novi-russki any differently than I've described here. They all see novi-russki as powerful, dangerous spoiled brats.

Don't mistake a comparison with the "spoiled brats" you see here. In America, there are thousands of truly famous "influencers" that have never done a thing. But it's worse than that there. Novi-russki are seen as dangerously violent spoiled brats that made their money off the backs of hardworking people. Novi-russki are literally hated there. They have a lot of power in every city and most every company, so they are feared. They're something like the robber-barons of America in the 1800s, but worse because of their criminal beginnings.

And by the way - if you like Jeffrey Sachs and you trust his opinions - you may want to look back through what he has said through the years because he recounts this too.

In Russia and Ukraine, the novi-russki were the mobsters from back when the Soviet Union still existed. They were local criminals, some that had local power in their cities. They were like Al

Capone, selling guns and drugs, and pimping out young girls that became addicted. They became interwoven in local politics, and they occasionally killed people that crossed them or didn't pay "protection" or black-market debts.

Consider the fact of life for every "comrade" in the Soviet days. It was different than here, so we sometimes forget the fact that a person didn't do stuff to make money. They didn't try to better themselves financially. They didn't run their own businesses, and they didn't have mutual funds, stock or retirement accounts. They were given a very tiny paycheck, and that was used to buy things like food, vodka and cigarettes. Major items weren't purchased - they were assigned.

Every person went to school, were assigned a career, and they then performed their task under penalty of law. Most people wanted to work and be useful, so I'm not saying they hated their lives or anything like that. As with everyone else, sometimes you like your work and sometimes you don't. But my point is that they had no understanding of private company ownership, of stock markets or even of what it is like to be a salesman. Most people just had no concept of owning or selling anything more valuable than a wristwatch.

So when the Soviet Union collapsed, one of the things that happened was every company in the nation issued ownership stock to its employees. That was one of the things the former Soviet Union did in an attempt to become a free-market nation. It was a great idea, in my opinion.

The only problem is that most people didn't understand the value of stock, and they were desperate enough to need cash. It was easy to convince them to sell their stock, because most of the population didn't understand the benefit in owning it. They needed food, electricity and heating oil. So they sold their stock. And who were there to buy that stock? Who had cash? The novi-russki.

Again, this is something Jeffrey Sachs has said. He wishes we in America had done more to help with the transition. We could have educated the people, and we could have invested in the private companies. Maybe that would have been taking advantage of the situation, I don't know. Or maybe it wouldn't have been wrong to take advantage. Again, I don't know. But I know that we didn't do that. We didn't involve ourselves. We were busy in the Middle East during that time.

So the novi-russki took over. Yeltsin saw this as a growing problem, and for some reason he thought Putin could help. Putin had a lot of experience with novi-russki in St. Petersburg.

But Putin ended up simply bringing all the novi-russki together as one big organization of mob families. The few dissenting novi-russki that legitimized themselves - wanting to make Russia a proud country of law-abiding citizens - those people were imprisoned or killed. Look at Mikhail Khodorkovsky, for an example.

Not all novi-russki were thugs, and some of those that started off slimy wanted to reform themselves. Some truly wanted a better country, and to do legitimate business. But if they didn't tow the Putin line, those were imprisoned or killed. And this even spanned out away from Russia, into other former Soviet states that had gained independence from Russia.

So what is left is a country of thugs. They aren't just "fat cats" - they are hit men. They murder

political opponents. It's pretty bad over there. Lots of political poisonings, lots of political incarcerations that result in death and lots of other kinds of murders. It's a whole other level than the ethics problems you see here.

Ukraine has struggled with this too. I've watched it since the 1990s, up close and personal. The people of Ukraine largely want to be associated with the west - with Europe and with the USA. They always vote for politicians that are pro-western. The pro-Russia politicians in Ukraine get very low votes. I've also seen popular pro-western politicians in Ukraine be poisoned and disfigured. It's been messy, and there is only one reason for that - Putin and his thugs. But Ukraine still hangs on.

I hope Ukraine stays pro-American. Recent events over here have shocked their population. Many of them feel betrayed by us now. I'm fairly sure they'll stay pro-western, but I hope they also stay pro-American. It's nice to have former Soviet states that prefer American values.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 07 Mar 2025 13:26:40 GMT
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I think it may be well Wayne to try and digest what economist Michael Hudson says from back in 2004 from the transcription interview, Reforming the reformers.
https://michael-hudson.com/2004/02/russia-reforming-the-reformers/

That Putin was instrumental in initiating a house cleaning to the mess created by Yeltsin during his administration. No less though than what our own impetus had been to support the "big buyoff of Russia's resources". As one journalist expressed as the US being the willing "fence" for the Russian oligarchy's looting of natural resources.

Our policy towards Russia has always been to degrade their government one way or the other. To weaken Russia and if possible to break up Russia into small ununified pieces with no military threat to what our Warhawk Pentagon planners obsess over.

Your ire towards Putin might be more evenly placed on his predecessor Yeltsin.

This thread Empire is directed at what our own government historically and currently pursues unabashedly in this world that is of no positive good to the promotion of peace and goodwill. Wealth plays a large part in history to the downfall of empires. Right now that seems more evident than ever before in our country that the one percent of our society is whom our government is aligned with.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 07 Mar 2025 15:14:25 GMT
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The link you provided from Michael Hudson describes the situation in Russia pretty well. I think it may blame some players a little more than others, but it definitely gives the picture. The point is that there is a huge problem over there from novi-russki.

As for what we're doing over here, I agree with what I think is your point - that we have some politicians that make "magic money" simply by entering politics. They are in a position to decide where the money can go, and in so doing, some seems to fall right into their pockets.

In that respect, I kind of like the house-cleaning we appear to be doing right now. I hope it's on the up-and-up. I don't like how we've begun to treat Ukraine, but I like everything else.
Hopefully, it all ends up being for the best.

This is a time when my fingers are crossed very tightly.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 07 Mar 2025 16:15:23 GMT
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I believe what Putin has done is more positive than what our propaganda projects. Russia's GDP has increased even despite our sanctioning. They're winning the war we concocted in Ukraine. They're firmly allied with China and the BRICS initiative. And I believe Putin is the major reason for that. I claim that from what I get from economists like Hudson and Sachs. Therefore I might be characterized as they are as, "Putin sympathizers" or enablers. Whatever. It's B.S.

We have a huge problem right here in America with our novi-amerikanski's. The house cleaning going on here with governmental agencies is nothing more than appearing to be doing something positive for our debt problems. That's a farse. Our debt problems are self generated by decades of neoliberal decay of our manufacturing and industry and allowing Wall Street to manage our government.
Which is what Hudson describes the novi-russki's of trying to do in Russia before Putin put a stop to it as with the criminal Khodorkovsky. Who became the darling of western media propaganda after he was pardoned ironically by Putin and exiled out of Russia.

Our empire is flailing away at losing it's mojo we had by default for so many years after WWII. China is the leader of the burgeoning once third world. Because they have put their banking sector in its place by being state owned and operated. They are a socialist hybrid state/free market economy. They are thriving. We are held down by privatization, monopolization and an oligarchic class of citizens that control the flow of income to anoint our political representatives in servitude to them. Our 2 party system will not allow for any other public groundswell of political organization to counter their capitulation to an economic doctrine that works for, of and by the one percent.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 07 Mar 2025 17:21:11 GMT
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I think there are a lot of things we agree upon, but on this one - on Putin's Russia - I just don't see any way to see his actions as positive.

Here's the bottom line to me: Russia invaded Ukraine. Russia has been murdering innocent people there for years.

Why?

Putin says it is because he is trying to "free" the people of Ukraine from corruption.

That's mobster talk. It's Putin saying, "you need us for protection."

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 07 Mar 2025 20:10:54 GMT
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Quote:That's mobster talk. It's Putin saying, "you need us for protection."
I can't help but chuckle. Because that's basically what NATO was all about with the US to Europe. There was never-ever any menace of Russia being a threat to Europe. It's impractical, redundant and too arduous of a task. But that's our neocon mindset in the Pentagon and State Department for many decades. Now Trump has ditched them and burdened them with talk of tariffs. China is the big enchilada. We're taking on something there much more than we can chew.
And its all totally unnecessary. As I read from the mind trust of these very wise men and women out there. Empires overreach when they start to falter. Its in the history books. Greece, Rome, Ottoman, British and many more empires.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 07 Mar 2025 22:15:15 GMT
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Rusty wrote on Fri, 07 March 2025 14:10I can't help but chuckle. Because that's basically what NATO was all about with the US to Europe.

You might be right. But only Russia has resorted to actual warfare in this arena.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 08 Mar 2025 14:01:27 GMT
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Because they had no choice. They did every bit of diplomacy and negotiation with Ukraine. Even after commencing their military occupation. And it was our country and Britain that cajoled Zelensky and his corrupt government to "give it a go", we're with ya 110 percent. America's bluff tactic they had done throughout NATO expansion. "Russia won't do anything". They don't have the will or know how to do so.
Russia showed they did and that they would not tolerate any expansion of NATO into Ukraine. Exactly as had been framed by Putin and his diplomats for years leading up to this fraud.
You won't consider that even though the evidence is plain. Subjectivity over objectivity. Your disdain of Putin. Take it out on Yeltsin.
The way to condition the public is through propaganda. We always attribute that to our enemies. But our government uses it extensively to push agenda.

Like our pretext for invading Iraq. Total lies.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 09 Mar 2025 14:34:44 GMT
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Jeffrey Sachs lays out the sensible end to this ugly unnecessary war. I hope so. Europe has been the locale of unnumerable unnecessary wars for centuries. Maybe it's an Anglo-Saxon trademark. But its time to think differently. There's always more potential with cooperation.

https://consortiumnews.com/2025/03/06/jeffrey-sachs-negotiating-lasting-peace-in-ukraine/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 09 Mar 2025 16:01:35 GMT
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In the analysis described by Jeffrey Sachs in the link above, you will notice mention of two Ukrainian political figures:
Victor Yanukovych, and
Victor Yushchenko
The history of these two men illustrates the heart of the conflict very well, in my opinion. I've mentioned their behavior a few times in this thread and in the other one about Ukraine here in "the Dungeon" forum.

I traveled to Odessa, Ukraine several times during the era when those two were "duking it out" in politics. Back in the 1990s and 2000s, I saw first-hand how the population of Ukraine viewed these men. It's pretty much how most of the rest of the world saw things too - anyone actually watching - which included Jeffrey Sachs. Of course, most people here weren't really paying attention to Ukraine back then, so Americans had no view of this until the last couple years.

But if you read up on these men, what you will notice is that Yanukovich had been a criminal from early life and so gained ties to novi-russki back when they were just local thugs. That was really his main occupation. Naturally, his ties to the novi-russki "oligarchs" brought him closer to Putin later in life. About five years after Ukraine became independent, Yanukovich became a politician. He was essentially hand-crafted to be a shill for the novi-russki and for Putin.

What you will also notice is that Yushchenko was not a criminal in his youth or at any other time. He became involved with banking as a career, way back in the 1970s, long before Ukraine was independent. When Ukraine became independent, he helped to create their currency system and was appointed to various economic/political positions by the newly-formed Ukrainian parliament called the Verkhovna Rada.

So the difference between these two men is night and day. It is obvious to anyone native to the culture than one of them is a class act and the other is a thug. One is tied to the novi-russki and all the corruption that goes with them. The other is an upstanding citizen and respectable civic leader interested in breaking from that.

Yushchenko was widely respected as an honest businessman. He was never allied with any novi-russki. He wanted to be free from the corruption of the novi-russki that was so prevalent. Yushchenko was very popular with the population of Ukraine. Yanukovich, on the other hand, was a life-long criminal, a thug that had obvious ties to political corruption and to the Kremlin.

At one point in 2004 - during an election cycle with Yanukovich - Yushchenko was poisoned using dioxin. This was at a time when Yanukovich was so unpopular with the Ukrainian population that he took over media outlets and prevented any sort of free or public speech. Yet, Yushchenko was still more popular with the public. So the pro-Putin thugs tried to kill him.

I encourage anyone that is truly interested in the history of Ukraine after its independence to read about those two men. Read about them and other politicians and events from the 1990s and 2000s. Don't just read one source, and don't watch TV today and form an "opinion" based on the chatter of American politics in the 2020s. We have our own stuff going on here, and it distorts our view.

Most of us here in America don't know anything about Ukraine and its independence. It just wasn't on our radars until recent events in American politics brought it into view. But the fact that American politics are in play means that what we're really seeing is American politics in action, and that generates its own form of spin. A lot of it is out of sync with what has been going on over there for the past 30 years or so.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 10 Mar 2025 12:37:53 GMT
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Well, we have a politician right here right now that isn't the most virtuous individual ever to be in the position of highest power in our own government. The world stage and actions of nations are

the final arbiter of all the machinations in politics.

And any politician of Ukrainian heritage would know of its relationship with Russia that aligning with NATO would be tantamount to serious consequence. As Sachs points out in the article, Russia was not interested in what alignment Ukraine had with western economic countries. It had signed a "lease" since it had from the 18th century to the critical Black Sea port in Crimea. It was pursuing negotiations with Ukraine for the civil war in eastern Ukraine.

You pursue the character of Putin and the novi-russki to paint a sinister backdrop to what led up to this conflict. Without acknowledging all the evidence of what the United States and Britain were up to in regards to NATO encirclement "to" the Black Sea, a strategic aspect of naval security to Russia.

Skirting the issue of what the prime political aspect is of this having ever to occur. As Sachs has pointed to all along. The US had been on this quest ever since the unification of Eastern Germany and dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. That NATO "would not" move one inch further towards Russia.
Plenty of official non journalistic opinion pieces of documentation to back this up.

So, the character driven plot for what you're substantiating doesn't really factor into what the real motives are in this sordid and tragic affair of states. Hundreds of thousands of people have died and not just Ukrainians. Many thousands of Russians. It's a fight upholding principals of states. Our country sits back and supplies some of our weapons in storage to essentially degrade, (as an official in the Biden administration revealed) and at a wild longshot chance of toppling the head of state in Russia along with our sanctioning.

And shucks, it didn't work out after all. Well, dusting our hands off. Next... China! Onward ho!

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 20 Mar 2025 22:20:27 GMT
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If not for a few bloggers sharing their research into our behavior in the world. We'd be at the mercy of our absentee journalism and media outlets. Whom are totally devoid of any ethical standards. They only regurgitate the will of our national security apparatus.

Egghead here, (Brian Berletic) and his New Atlas YouTube channel untangles the web of deceit that our government offers Russia with a ceasefire in Ukraine. One of many over the years in our proxy minded meddling of sovereign governments of country's we seek to diminish in our quest for world wide dominance. Dr. Evil's real counterpart in the world that is humorless and void of virtue.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59OHfllPDrM

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 23 Mar 2025 16:22:57 GMT

Ben Norton seems to ferret out the most detailed analysis of what our government projects to the world and our citizens that's cloaked in disguises in plain sight. A political equivalent to the man behind the curtain in the Wizard of Oz.

Here he untangles a speech by JD Vance recently to a group of Silicon Valley bigwigs that have grouped together with an incentive towards "reindustrializing" our country. Using China as the foe of the near future to incentivizing revitalization of tech industry under the threat of war with the Chinese.

The theme of war permeates our political landscape incessantly. Our military industrial complex depends on it. It feeds on government subsidy. Which perversely points to Modern Monetary Theory used for all the wrong reasons.

China incidentally has only participated in one military campaign back in 1979 lasting all of one month. When Vietnam invaded Cambodia. The Sino-Vietnamese War. Whereas the US has been constantly involved with war and suppling weapons of war since post WWII. Yet China represents a so called national security threat to the US. Mainly due to their superior build up of their economy. Which we allowed ostensibly through our very own acquiescence of our industry in the name of neoliberal financial doctrine.

We can't compete with China now on all levels of commerce from heavy industry to sophisticated high tech and scientific sectors. An empire based on war is an empire losing sights on its own principles of democracy.

Ben Norton:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywmpea6vvOE

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 25 Mar 2025 15:50:37 GMT

What I seem to glean from my influencers I read and listen to in both the economic and political spectrum. Which blends together always. Is that our country's elected leadership, are themselves influenced by our wealthy elite through dependency on campaign financing. Have a conflict of interest due to that and through an ideology as well financed by elite wealth in the form of think tanks and organizations promoting ideology in line with their financing. And further supported by an institutionalized educational system that teaches within the format consistent with the dominant ideology of finance capitalism which is in line with what supports the ideology of the wealthy elite.

We have a system created that tamps down any alternative ideologies that's perceived as being contrary to the dominant one. Using further the means of communication of journalism and media that have primarily been acquiesced by elitist wealth. Sort of a closed loop system now that might loosely be analogous to an electrical canceling circuit. When a perceived distortion encountering

the prominent ideology waveform is detected, it may be referred to as being "radical". Harmful to the system. An enemy of the state. And cancelled out.

That's been applied to certain countries of our world over the years. Threatening our own national security its been said. Primarily those countries have had an economic ideology that runs counter to capitalism and more so now, finance capitalism's evolution in the traditional centers of capitalism, the G7. That has eschewed investment in traditional industrial capitalism that requires greater investment, socialized subsidy and requires longer less gain in return on investment.

Over time now our finance capitalism has eroded the welfare of its population, the infrastructure of its society and has warped the political legislative structure of its governments. While our so called rivals who have used alternative hybrid economic ideologies have surpassed our own capabilities. Coming to terms with this reality has shown both denial and overreaction on what our governments do to counter their perceived threats.

Using both an exorbitant privilege of an advantage in trade currency dominance and a military complex used unsubstantiated to try and force compliance with our ideology. Both of which are now reflecting the undeserved and unwelcomed title of most exceptional and most essential nation on earth itself. A very self centered, narrow minded and arrogant perception for a nation that comprises only 4.5 percent of this planets population.
Which ironically is the same as our economic ideology.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 25 Mar 2025 16:25:30 GMT
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Rusty wrote on Tue, 25 March 2025 10:50Our country's elected leadership, are themselves influenced by our wealthy elite through dependency on campaign financing. Have a conflict of interest due to that and through an ideology as well financed by elite wealth in the form of think tanks and organizations promoting ideology in line with their financing.

I definitely agree with that.

What I see in many American politicians is a class of people that often make a career out of "civil service," using their influence to gain a huge amount of money and power, often without ever working in any other field. That is only possible if they are growing their net worth through influence peddling of some sort.

Other parts of the world have other kinds of problems. Some other countries' problems are similar, some less so. Some countries are worse, others aren't.

Subject: Re: Empire

Posted by Rusty on Tue, 25 Mar 2025 17:10:29 GMT
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Which is why, what the world needs now is, cooperation sweet cooperation, dialogue, diplomacy and broad minded multi disciplined integration of reasoning. Our government has in its current administration, 13 billionaires in it's decision making cabinet. These are people that have a distinctive business oriented profit making mindset. Government should not be profit motivated in and of itself. Rather a catalyst of promoting economic stability and uplifting the wellbeing of its citizens. The free market isn't the end all of making that possible. The free market is a human invention and has its limitations limited in capitalism towards profits for a relatively few participants.

Our foe's or perception of foes now seems to be motivated by a threat evaluation to what the bottom line of our wealthy elite might be effected by eroding their free lunch they've grown accustomed to. The Chinese have a completely different ideology and philosophy to ours. Its been spectacularly successful for them. Yet.. We perceive that a threat?

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 26 Mar 2025 10:36:52 GMT
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Fascinating discussion here by who else. Wolff and Hudson. Encompassing near everything going on on this spinning ball we all live. But mainly the nonsense that swirls within the empire mucking up a logical, rationally functioning world.

https://michael-hudson.com/2025/03/the-strategic-disjoint-continues/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 28 Mar 2025 14:58:26 GMT
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A large component of our empire concept is the assessment of what our intelligence gathering complex feeds our military, diplomatic and legislative branches of government. Larry Johnson is a former CIA Analyst with insight into how politics and the neocon deep state influence warps the realism of what should be the whole purpose of intelligence threat assessment.
But when you're looking for justification to promote questionable policy to use our military and our soft power, (sanctioning) to the ends of what our war game planners idea is of the world and how we fit on top of everyone else. A little fudging of figures is needed kind of like cooking the books a crooked financial officer might do.

Larry here points out the US Annual Threat Assessment flaws which he was all too familiar with when he served his time at the CIA.
A big piece of the puzzle that our national security is based on. Lets call it what it is. Fraud!

https://sonar21.com/us-annual-threat-assessment-is-a-hot-mess/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 09 Apr 2025 11:43:32 GMT
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One man alone, (along with his stooges) stands at odds with the world. I don't know of any greater example of how absurd this empire mentality goes to such great lengths at being the source of chaos and dysfunction to world harmony. Its a sickness of coast to coast proportions. With the tumor in Washington DC.

There is hopefully a glimmer of challenge to this Ogre and his creepy minions to diffuse his mania. China, the source of calm and reasoned, cooperative temperance is negotiating with their Asian counterparts, Japan, Korea, Indonesia to form a unified buffer to this bullying. They also along with Russia are aligned with Iran to try and stabilize the out of proportion threat of US attacking Iran on the ruse of they making nuclear weapons.

And in our own government, there is a push to gain enough republican backing to thwart this autocratic, dictatorial onslaught to our society.
https://wallstreetonparade.com/2025/04/trumps-tariff-plan-guts-5-trillion-in-stock-value-in-two-days-senator-warren-calls-for-emergency-action-before-markets-open-on-monday/

We should take heed of what history has laid down with numerous examples of overbearing authoritarians gaining a toehold on government. It happens when economic conditions in a country become chronically oppressive to the population. And their governments have become ineffective to deal with it.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 19 Apr 2025 15:40:38 GMT
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This article points out the United States has historically adhered to an illusion of thinking that has permeated our behavior in the world and at home. That now is reaching a climax of reckoning. Internally from our economic doctrine that's eroded our peoples welfare, and run up a huge foreign trade debt.
And a foreign policy which is unproductive through military diplomacy and unrealistic negative outcomes.

https://voicefromrussia.ch/en/trump-putin-a-deal-yalta-or-no-deal/

Conway Twitty's song, It's only make believe is an appropriate backdrop while reading this article. For what our political and economic consciousness amounts to.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XbM7G-zJDY&t=2s

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 19 Apr 2025 17:49:49 GMT

I agree with some of what was said in the blog post you linked. We in America definitely have our problems, and many in politics here are our own form of "oligarchy."

But I will remind anyone reading here that in the Ukraine/Russia war - Ukraine is the "good guys" and Putin and his thugs are the "bad guys." It isn't the Russian people that are bad, but it most definitely is the Russian government that is bad.

It saddens me that we appear to be doing so little for Ukraine. We're making a mistake there. We should have stepped-in and allied with them decades ago.

That would have been good for everyone. Not a handout, but a partnership. That's where we need to be going in all our international relations.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 19 Apr 2025 21:12:07 GMT

What we have done with Ukraine is to have been like coaxing two dogs into a fight. The eastern Ukraine civil war we had supplied arms to was amped up when Russia commenced it's special military campaign to earnestly put an end to the Nazi Ukraine's regime's degradation of eastern Ukraine's Russian population.
And the article provides what our US, Great Britain's and Europe's irrational and destructive mindset is with the cold war and NATO's enlargement to feed the US's military industrial complex with a bloated budget and proven now a false belief in our superiority in our technology and weaponry.

We are not and Ukraine's Nazi infested government are not the good guys here. Russia as I have been speaking to all along is simply defending it's right to it's national security of it's boarders.

Unfortunately the US and it's subservient European vassals are experiencing the errs of their ways now. But it's all by their own doings. Not Russia and not Putin or his government.
Our government is the one overrun by oligarchic infestation. And is showing the world with this crooked president at the helm just how debauched we've become.

He's frustrated with the peace talks now because the Russians have the upper hand and want the real reasons for this behavior of the western war mongers to be made a part of the treaty for ending this war. NATO enlargement and western belligerent warmongering ideology.

It was a fraud after WWII and it's been perpetuated until today. It's wrongheaded and unproductive in the world.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 19 Apr 2025 21:48:08 GMT
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Sorry, my friend, but I don't agree.

I don't agree that we've been coaxing two dogs into a fight. Maybe some individuals have been coaxing one side or another in the last few years, but we certainly haven't been doing that since the 1990s. We haven't done anything with respect to Ukraine until relatively recently.

And it looks to me like some highly-placed individuals in America have taken one side and other influential Americans have taken the other side. So we're not even uniform in our support, or whatever one might call it.

But the thing I think I disagree with most is any sort of characterization of Ukraine's government as being "Nazi infested." Their current government looks quite competent to me. In fact, I find their government right now to be the epitome of courage and honor.

I've been there, my friend. I know what I'm talking about. Please realize that and trust my judgement. The bloggers you're reading aren't giving you a good picture.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 19 Apr 2025 22:54:48 GMT
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Just because you've "been" there Wayne is about as useful to knowing how a government goes about it's business as what we living all our lives in the US know about our own government and it's business. Mainly because we've been lied to and manipulated with the propaganda narrative that our empire managers want crafted to sustain our compliant behavior to what deeds that have been done in the name of so called national security for decades on end.

Have we not these bloggers consisting of military veterans, CIA analysts, economists and political scientists that have disseminated what really is going on. Along with some brave whistle blowers like Snowden, Ellsberg and others that have a conscience enough seeing the egregious wrongdoings of our government at their peril and wellbeing to their lives afterward. We would all be a more compliant sheep unaware of what's going on.

What's being shown here by these people is the chronic dysfunctionality that gives a thread of evidence for what we know intuitively for what seems wrong with our society. The threads run through our economy our politics and our foreign policy that gives a clue to what isn't working and why.

And the irrational contradictions that our government goes through to justify supporting blatant genocide in Gaza. Our history of warmongering that hasn't had any positive outcomes. A military budget that exceeds those of the top 9 other countries military budgets combined. And having 800

military bases strewn through out the world.

There have been articles published about Ukraine's Neo Nazi nationalists from before the outbreak of this war. And the corruption of Zelensky's government. You just choose to dismiss it.

But the contradictions and threads of evidence add up to give credence to the alternative to the official narrative. Which is corrupt. Which is what's wrong with our country. Our current president is symbolic as a symptom of the disease that's crippled our country.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 20 Apr 2025 13:01:53 GMT
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Corruption in Ukraine:
https://kkc.com/corruption-index/corruption-in-ukraine/

Nazi's in Ukraine:
https://www.moonofalabama.org/2025/04/growth-of-ukraines-azov-units-follow-path-of-the-waffen-ss.html#more

Zelensky's corruption:
https://www.occrp.org/en/project/the-pandora-papers/pandora-papers-reveal-offshore-holdings-of-ukrainian-president-and-his-inner-circle

I used the inimitable Conway Twitty's song, Only Make Believe as a reference to how our political and empire management spins the false "make believe" narrative to cover for a corruption of our own values system. Our phony exceptionalism. Our free lunch world trade using bonds over material to pay for imports and even finance our warmongering over the decades.

Now in jeopardy of running out of steam as countries around the world may not exactly want to "pledge" their homage to our dollar dominance and our so called security umbrella. Such as what Trump is basing his idiotic trade war on.

Empires rise, empires fall eventually. Maybe this is the twilight. I hope so. It's not worth it, keeping up appearances.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 20 Apr 2025 13:43:52 GMT
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Again, I have first-hand experience. My opinions are not from third-party web gibberish

propaganda but from actually being there and having decades-long relationships.

So let me ask you this, Rusty: How are you forming your opinions?

You said, Just because you've "been" there Wayne is about as useful to knowing how a government goes about it's business as what we living all our lives in the US know about our own government and it's business. Mainly because we've been lied to and manipulated with the propaganda narrative that our empire managers want crafted to sustain our compliant behavior to what deeds that have been done in the name of so called national security for decades on end.

So the inference I'm taking from your statement is that all of us here in America know very little about our own government, and upon that I generally agree. But how much less must we know about other parts of the world? And if we know so little, what in the world gives you confidence in the bloggers you so often cite? Do you know them personally, and found that they have earned your trust? If not, what do you know about those bloggers that gives you such trust?

What exactly do you base your trust upon?

Is it their credentials? Why are their credentials more credible to you than other people with similar credentials? Or is it some kind of "gut feel?" How can you trust your intuition since we've all been "lied to and manipulated with the propaganda narrative that our empire managers want crafted," as you've said?

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 20 Apr 2025 19:39:02 GMT
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Well that's very simple Wayne. People like economists Jeffrey Sachs and Michael Hudson have had direct contact with officials in the Russian government from the time of the USSR's dissolution and afterward. Larry Johnson and Ray McGovern were both former CIA analysts. McGovern has testified at the UN. Scott Ritter served in the military and was part of the original UN weapons inspector team in Iran that Trump tore up the treaty in his first term. Colonel Larry Wilkerson was in the cabinet of George Bush Jr. under Colin Powell and has extensive knowledge of foreign relations. Professor John Mearsheimer is a political scientist of international standing. Colonel Douglas Macgregor worked with NATO command in Europe. Alastair Crooke was a British diplomat serving in the Middle East and spent 30 years in the British CIA called MI6. I could list more..

These people aren't yahoo's sitting in their study or basement ranting about the world like some conspiracy geeks. They're legitimate career government and professional educators. They aren't like citizens of some country that have a gripe about their government. They have some training, experience and education and most important, some legitimate concern about what our country has been doing for quite some time. And p.s. they aren't all of the liberal way of political alignment. There is a grass roots formation of people that are more interested in a realistic understanding of the way the geopolitical relationships are progressing in the world. And politics doesn't determine the allegiance. They give for me at least, the most rational explanation for the irrational news I

certainly hear. That includes the reason for the Ukrainian conflict and the utter denial in aiding and abetting genocide in Gaza. Both, senseless and grotesque events that our country is at the center of happening. Deny it if you want. I don't that's all, thanks to these influencers and other's giving me insight to the make believe our government and commercial news outlets lead us on with.

I can appreciate your experience in that region of the world. I'm sure it gave you some insight about their culture and society. But that's not the same as having insight into the ways of government and it's hierarchy plays out in this world.
That's on a whole other level.

I feel our problems of our country are deep and conflicting. And our influence in the world has become unhealthy. Why else would other countries form together to counter
our exceptionalism behavior? These influencers as you refer them as seem to feel so too.
And I'm glad I've come to realize from them what they've explained.
Thing's are jacked up brother. It needs to change.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 20 Apr 2025 21:01:31 GMT
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I am visiting with you, imagining we are hangin' out at Town Topic eatin' a burger.

There are a lot of people that I tend to trust in most respects, but not in everything. That's true in many fields but I think it holds most strongly in politics right now.

I think some of the reasons for this are that conditions are changing. We are all changing our opinions on things, but those opinion-shifts are slow. An example is conservatives that are shifting from laissez-faire to protectionist views. Another example is liberals that are shifting from wanting to reduce military spending and "make love not war" to wanting to increase military spending and throw money at wars. We are seeing some shifts. They are slow shifts, but very apparent.

I think another reason is what you said earlier. People can't see the inner-workings of government, so they have to depend upon information sources and it's hard to know who to trust. We are becoming more suspicious of our news sources, and probably rightly so. But that doesn't stop our human tendency to form opinions, even if we don't really know our information or its sources.

As for me, I base my opinion on the Russia/Ukraine situation on what I've seen there since the 1990s. It's based on Russians, Ukrainians, Moldovans, Azerbaijanians and others from the former Soviet Union that I know personally. Most of them are good American citizens or they are family or friends of Americans. Some are legal work visa holders.

And just as importantly - I don't see this through the eyes of politicians in Moscow or Kiev or even Washington D.C. I don't see it through the eyes of news media that's intractably tied to those political machines either. I see it through the eyes of the people living in cities in the former

Soviet Union. I see it through the eyes of the people.

And just as importantly, I see with the eyes of time. We all do if we care to look. What I mean by that is this: Time tends to show motives very plainly. I don't have to believe what a man says, I can simply watch what he does. Similarly, I don't have to believe what a government says it will do, I can watch it to see what it actually does. And over time, one can always see a man's actions or those of an organization, a company or an entire country.

What I see very clearly is there was no "empire building" in Ukraine. If there had been, they wouldn't be having this problem right now. They were left to fend for themselves. They even gave their nuclear weapons to Russia on the promise that they would not need those weapons to defend themselves. But now look where they sit. Very little economic or military/security partnership ever occurred. That's not empire building. That's very much the opposite.

So I tell you this because I want you to realize that I see this situation with crystal clarity. I have absolutely no motivation for spin. I don't have a political blog. I'm not tied to someone running for office. I'm just a guy that happens to be really familiar with the culture. That's why I can see through all the "talking heads" that speak nonsense.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 21 Apr 2025 13:09:53 GMT
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Well, if you look through time at what America has been doing both domestically and internationally. You can with a little effort readily see the patterns of negativity that are never challenged by our press and certainly in the political realm. As I stated, "Why would country's be aligning towards advancing an alternative to our pattern of dominance"? They are the majority in the world in population.

Domestically, we have been traversing an economic philosophy which has stripped out the middle class numbers pushing it downward. And oppressing people with debt servicing. All while the upper classes have been thriving. Why would we want to continue this downward spiral for the greater portion of our population? A few good academics propose alternatives to the orthodoxy that are either ignored or vilified.

Internationally our foreign relations have been centered in a philosophy of American dominance through military and financial aggression. Enmeshed in war either directly or by proxy and using our dollar dominance to try and "hurt" sovereign country's economies that won't play the way we want. Why shouldn't country's be opposed to this?

So, the eyes of the people are rather shaded from a lot of this realization. As our news outlets are shallow in content and our politicians are essentially bribed and beholden to the donor class. People do know inherently though that things are not kosher. They turn to differing means to try and understand. Some are influenced though through crack pot conspiracy notions. Some just acquest to whatever the news outlets spew out.

I feel "for me" that the people I listed and more have some personal ethics to lend their acquired knowledge over their lives and speak up and make a challenge to the narrative we're fed officially by government and by media. I find it compelling as it answers with some degree of rationality the core reasons for what is going on.
They have some expertise and insight that is valuable that we people living our lives where ever haven't had the time or notion to be aware of.

So, while I admire what you say about I see it through the eyes of the people. I think we need some help fleshing out what's going on.
Just like we need the expertise of any field of endeavor from Dr's. to carpenters. Even speaker builders.
Not all talking heads are spewing nonsense. Least the ones I find compelling.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 21 Apr 2025 14:49:40 GMT
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I understand that you're placing trust in people you think have access and/or credentials. I would generally do that too.

But then again, when I see or hear someone say things that I know aren't true, I don't care about their access or credentials. I realize that trust in them isn't warranted. And this is most egregious when what they say is not only false but outrageous.

Here's one popular example: The emotionally charged statement that there are Nazis in Ukraine. This has been one of Putin's favorites, and to my amazement, it has been regurgitated here in America by some people. It is an emotionally-charged slur that is not only inaccurate but extremely offensive.

The Ukrainians lost millions of people to the Nazis in WWII. Ukrainians are particularly sensitive to that. So Putin saying there are Nazis in Ukraine is probably the biggest insult he could make. Not only is it the pot calling the kettle black, but it is an insult that goes deep into a Ukrainian's heart.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 21 Apr 2025 15:26:59 GMT
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So did the Russians. 27 million by some accounts. What Putin says about the Nazi's in Ukraine can be bandied about and pontificated ad nauseum. Ukraine's Azov military units have been pretty well disseminated as being fascist Nazi sympathetic nationalist's. I've heard about it and

read about it. I put it on the shelf as a footnote to the real reason that the war in Ukraine really got going. And I think I've linked the evidence out there that substantiates that in the Ukraine thread.

NATO.

Everything else is word salad dressing.

The pope died yesterday. I'm not a very church going type. And the Catholic church in particular has a long history of, well, kind of unsavory reputation. But this pope was one of that I felt was a genuine pope of the people. The Moon of Alabama blog this morning had an endearing homage to pope Francis that ended with this.

https://uk.news.yahoo.com/pope-francis-says-nato-started-135952616.html

Well, you know I'd jump on that!

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 21 Apr 2025 18:27:11 GMT
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There are some things that are near every Ukrainian heart that we in the U.S.A. would not immediately recognize. To know these things helps understand the relationship between Russians and Ukrainians.

1. Prior to WWII, the population of Ukraine was approximately 42 million. After WWII, its population was 27 million. So Ukraine lost fully 1/3rd of its people.

2. Consider the fact that the German advance went through Ukraine. Ukraine was completely occupied.

3. The population of the Soviet Union (including Ukraine) before WWII was 195 million. After WWII its population was 170 million. So you can see by these numbers that the vast majority of losses were actually Ukrainian.

4. In modern times, many Ukrainians prefer to speak Russian, or at least they did before Putin invaded them. They are proud of both their Russian heritage and their independent Ukrainian citizenship. They lean heavily pro-Western and want relationships with Europe and the U.S.A. as much or more than having ties with Russia. It appears that the population of large cities tends to speak Russian and rural areas are more likely to speak Ukrainian. One exception is the city of Kiev, where most people speak Ukrainian.

5. Ukrainians have complicated emotions about their ties to Russia. In modern times, many Ukrainians consider themselves to be Russians even after Ukrainian independence in 1991. But do not mistake this to mean they wish to be Russian citizens. They prefer their independence, and their "Russian-ness" is purely cultural.

6. This goes back and has ties to the early days of the Soviet Union, up and through the period of the second world war. Ukraine, like many other former Soviet states, did not want to be part of the Soviet Union. During the Bolshevik revolution - when the Tsar and his family were imprisoned and shot - Ukraine declared independence. But since it had so many natural resources, it was attractive to the Soviet Union, so Russian troops invaded Ukraine. It eventually fell and became part of the Soviet Union in 1922.

7. Ukraine had been part of the Russian Empire when it was ruled by the Tsars, so it already had ties to Russia. But it did attempt to gain independence in the period between 1917 and 1922. It was unable to maintain its independence because political and economic conditions were too chaotic and unstable. So the people of Ukraine must have felt some of the same Russian/Ukrainian ambivalence 100 years ago as they feel today.

8. For a brief time in 1941 - because of the desire to be independent of Russia - some people in Ukraine thought Nazis might act as liberators rather than conquerors. This hope was quickly dashed when the Nazis invaded. The Nazis were especially brutal, because there were a large number of Jews in areas of Ukraine. Massacres at Babi Yar and in Kiev are still remembered by all Russians and Ukrainians, to this day.

9. A Nazi resistance was formed in Ukraine while it was occupied, much like the one in France. In particular, the city of Odessa has 1600 miles of underground tunnels that acted as home base for "partisans" that fought the Nazis.

10. So the ties between Russians and Ukrainians are deep and complicated. They are definitely kindred spirits in many ways. But Ukrainians are proud to be independent of Russia, which is evident by their tenacity in war after the modern Russian invasion.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 22 Apr 2025 12:21:31 GMT
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Ukraine was free to align with Europe and the west whatever suited them, economically, socially. Russia had no qualms with that. Russia's main stipulation was..

NO NATO alignment.

The simple core issue never brought up in western media. The make believe that is spun. And the core of what Russia now in talks with US diplomacy that they want spelled out for the end of hostilities. The sticking point is the US admitting complicity in convincing Ukraine to ramp up this war. After initially agreeing to no NATO in talks in Istanbul. This is as well documented as is the loss of life in both Ukraine and Russia in WWII.

NO NATO. Period!

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 22 Apr 2025 13:38:00 GMT
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The truth is that discussions about NATO don't matter if Ukraine is occupied by Russia. That is what Putin really wants - He wants Ukraine to cease to exist, and for the Ukrainian lands to be part of Russia.

That's why the supposed cease-fire agreement has stalled - Putin wants Ukraine and he isn't willing to settle.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 23 Apr 2025 11:05:53 GMT
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That isn't true. Managing a territory where the populous is willing to subvert occupation by guerilla warfare isn't a tactic worth the effort. The eastern "Russian" area is viable. And the ports to the Black Sea. Russia never coveted Ukraine. But push came to shove with US & UK meddling. Russia does not want NATO at their door. Period. And they aren't going to let that happen. Kiev, Europe and the US will just have to accept that.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 23 Apr 2025 14:30:10 GMT
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I don't understand the point you are taking in your last post.

You said, "Managing a territory where the populous is willing to subvert occupation by guerilla warfare isn't a tactic worth the effort."

I don't understand that statement. Are you trying to argue that Ukrainians should just lie down and take it? They should just allow themselves to be invaded and occupied? Are you saying they should roll over and become a Russian state?

And you said, "The eastern "Russian" area is viable. And the ports to the Black Sea. Russia never coveted Ukraine."

Then why did Russia invade in the first place? If Russia didn't care about the territory, why engage in war to conquer it?

You said, "Russia does not want NATO at their door. Period. And they aren't going to let that happen. Kiev, Europe and the US will just have to accept that."

NATO membership of an adjacent country is not something that rises to war. It's a diplomatic issue.

Russia has had NATO all along its western border for decades. Its latest actions have awarded it Finland joining NATO in 2023, extending that line far to the north.

So if NATO membership were truly a motive for war, then Russia has clearly played a losing hand.

But that's a red herring. NATO membership is not what Russia really cared about. Ukraine has been independent for over thirty years without joining NATO. It wasn't a member of NATO before Russia invaded and it isn't NATO now. That's actually a side issue - it isn't the main thing here. It's a red herring.

This whole thing about NATO is a distraction. It isn't why Russia invaded. Putin invaded Ukraine purely as a power grab. He wants the territory to be Russian.

To be honest, that fact is self-evident.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 23 Apr 2025 20:52:24 GMT
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Not true Wayne. As I've pointed out a number of times. Our country nearly started WWIII in the 1960's over missile placement in Cuba by Russia. After we provoked them first with missiles in Turkey. Know your history. Now, I think the facts for Russia having committed to this war far outnumber your assessment. And it's backed up by historical documents.

Russia has stated and backed up by historical documents and speeches that Ukraine would be the last straw in the United States and Europe's quest to encircle Russia with missiles, some with nuclear capability pointed into Russia for a quick strike. Known as a decapitation strike. Facts Wayne. Historical facts. Documented facts. Yours are speculation and bias.

They called our bluff finally after decades of encroachment by our warmongering, neocon, paranoid deep-state military complex. People like John Bolton, Dick Chaney, Robert McNamara just to name a few.

When our country fictitiously invaded Iraq under the guise of the phony weapons of mass destruction. During our occupation an insurgency developed to rid us out of their country. Which would be the same if Russia took all of Ukraine. That's what I meant. They would have a protracted mess to deal with just like our troops did in Iraq. And frankly, Putin is too smart to want that kind of quagmire. So the eastern "Russian" speaking and Russian sympathetic region is all that will be assimilated back into Russia. And Crimea. And the rest of Ukraine can be free to do whatever it wants economically, socially to align with Europe and the US. Just as they had prior to this stupid NATO war. Though frankly they'd be better off aligning with the BRICS. All our current administration wants is to confiscate as much of their resources as what our current leader thinks

would pay back our losing deal with this war commitment from our prior administration.

This whole concocted NATO farse is just that. Russia never had any what-so-ever desire to take that country back into it's management. Their hand was forced by our country and Europe. Why would Russia want the headache of it all? And the absurd battle cry of the European Union mismanaged wrongheaded seat in Brussels that Russia would invade all of Europe eventually is so far fetched beyond reason. They've been duking it out for 3 years now just in Ukraine. Imagine the time, the money, the loss of life to take all of Europe! Ridiculous!

And as I've stated ad nauseum now and also historically documented. Russia had a treaty with Ukraine hammered out in Istanbul to end hostilities in eastern Ukraine when the messy haired Brit. Boris Johnson at our behest convinced Zelensky to "give it a go", we'd back him 100%. Yessiree.

And now we want war with Iran and China! Who's the war freaking fanatics here Wayne?

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 23 Apr 2025 21:36:31 GMT
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I'm only talking about Russia's invasion of Ukraine right now. Not on any other world events. Although I have wondered why we took sides at other times and in other parts of the world but don't seem as firm right now in our stance against Putin.

You said, "Putin is too smart to want that kind of quagmire. So the eastern Russian speaking and Russian sympathetic region is all that will be assimilated back into Russia."

The language spoken by the citizens of Ukraine has nothing to do with their "sympathies." There are many Ukrainian people that speak Russian.

Ukrainians want their independence. They do not want to be part of Russia. That is evident by their bravery and tenacity in standing up to Putin.

Ukraine has been independent since 1991. The only thing that's really changed in the last 30+ years is that Putin has grown more wealthy and entitled. I think that's all this is - He personally thought "now is the time." What history he would have made! What a legacy he would leave!

So he invaded Ukraine, hoping it would be an easy victory and the land would be his.

Instead, what has happened is that Ukraine has given Russia quite a fight. Europe has become alerted to the warmongering Putin is capable of, and they are now set against him too. Russia has lost any chance of having good relations with European countries.

America seems to be on the fence a little bit, but I think that's mostly 'cause we don't want to mess with it. We didn't want to involve ourselves in Ukraine thirty years ago when it would have been easy. And now it is no longer easy - it's messy - so we throw our hands up in the air. We've

generally been pretty isolationist until somebody blows up something in our own back yard.

I'll admit that I'm usually pretty happy being an isolationist. I'm not now 'cause I'm so familiar with Ukraine and Russia. Not sure if I would have felt this way about Germany in the 1930s. Probably only if I knew something about their culture at that time.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 24 Apr 2025 15:35:46 GMT
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Your obsessed with Putin and Russiaphobia. And you've left your objectivity behind on this. When you brought up seeing things through time, aka, history. The history of the United States is well documented and fraught with meddling. That isn't sitting on the fence. That is a perversion of diplomacy and sovereignty of nations.
You don't seem to make the connections of how our economic aggression and trade imbalances have contributed to world geopolitical disturbances. And our country's long standing idealism of arbiter of world dominance through economic warfare and diplomacy through strength as it's called. Which is our recipe for military conflict.

No other country has so many military installations throughout as we do. Not even close. Even Russia whose country boarders with 16 others is no where close to ours. And no other country has been involved in so many conflicts since WWII as ours has. So, who has the pattern of aggression historically? It's right here. That isn't sitting on the fence. That is what the term "unipolarity" is used to describe a dominant country influencing world affairs.

All while we can't get our own act together in this country. Other than to protect and preserve the ruling class of wealth and privilege pulling the political strings.

Yes I feel Putin is intelligent and is conducting this campaign intelligently. And his country. Despite what we, our government has done subversively to try and hurt their economy. Our petty control freak agenda. Trying to "contain" is our term used. That is the crux of what our influence with Zelensky using the carrot and stick of maybe, possibly joining the European Union if they'd also join NATO amounted to. It didn't work. And Biden having had the Nordstream pipeline destroyed didn't work either. It only put Europe and especially Germany economically depleted.

The terms of Russia's halt to hostilities has been consistent. They will keep the traditional Russian sympathetic regions and Crimea, they will "disarm" Ukraine without NATO influence, and they want the "root" causes for the US and NATO eastern expansion addressed. But they put that in for a reason. The reason Wayne you and our government won't acknowledge. You both have a scapegoat, Putin and Russiaphobia.

Well, Trump just wants to look like the peacemaker like when he said as a candidate he could end the war in 24hrs. But now our diplomacy is to just walk away and let Europe and Ukraine deal with it. Because neither Ukraine or Russia won't play Trump's dealmaker game.

China is the new con job. Our "containment" quest. That isn't working either by trade war or

economic warfare. We are as the Chinese say, a paper tiger. Meow.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 24 Apr 2025 17:33:28 GMT
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You misunderstand me when you say, "You're obsessed with Putin and Russiaphobia."

I am not against Russia or Russians. I am not against the majority of their population. I have met and become friends with many Russians, as well as many Ukrainians, Moldovans and people from other former Soviet states.

One of my good friends was a Russian tank driver in Afghanistan. As a gift, he gave me his tank helmet. I think of him often, especially now. Actually, this man is Moldovan, and like most Ukrainians, he is happy to be independent of Russia. But he - again like many other "Russians" from independent states of the former Soviet Union - still considers himself to be Russian, culturally.

This is not true of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Might not be true in other places either. And now - after Putin's aggressions - it is probably much less true everywhere. But at least in the 1990s and 2000s, there were lots of people in newly-independent, former Soviet states, that were proud to be both Russian and Azerbaijanian or Moldovan or Ukrainian or whatever.

I find many people with that kind of background are very easy to like.

My point is that I am not anti-Russian. I will admit that I am anti-Putin, but I think that is clear.

You made another point to which I'd like to respond. You said, "You don't seem to make the connections of how our economic aggression and trade imbalances have contributed to world geopolitical disturbances. And our country's long standing idealism of arbiter of world dominance through economic warfare and diplomacy through strength as it's called. Which is our recipe for military conflict."

I realize this thread is about whole-world empire-building and perhaps meddling. At least I think that was your point in starting this thread.

But right now, I'm not talking about any other events except Russia's invasion of Ukraine and America's involvement in that arena.

And my point is essentially that I don't think we did enough there, and I think what we did do was a little too late and fairly ineffective. I think we wasted money that could have been spent better. But at the same time, I think we could have partnered with Ukrainian businesses to help us both, and I think we needed to stare Putin down much more effectively.

I think we have been very weak where Putin is concerned, and that surprises me. The Russian military has not proven themselves as one might have expected, and their infrastructure is a joke. The last thing they need to be doing is tit-for-tat strikes destroying energy services and other infrastructure. They have nothing to sell except oil, and so their economy sucks.

I further think we should have engaged in this Russia/Ukraune situation more effectively, and much earlier. At least ten years earlier; Better if done twenty or thirty earlier. This was a big miss, in my opinion. We were so focused on other areas of the world that we missed this one.

I keep hearing in my mind, President Reagan saying, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!" And then he does, it crashes down with a resounding rumble. And then I hear... Nothing. Crickets. Silence.

I think we missed a huge opportunity there. An opportunity that could have helped everyone - Get them back up on their feet and maybe share some resources with us too. But we just did nothing.

You said about Russia, "They will keep the traditional Russian sympathetic regions and Crimea, they will "disarm" Ukraine without NATO influence, and they want the "root" causes for the US and NATO eastern expansion addressed."

I'm not sure if that's what you are hoping for or if that's what you predict will happen. But I must insist that you drop the phrase "Russia sympathetic regions" because there is no such thing. I think you are talking about the eastern areas of Ukraine, and I can tell you with absolute certainty - from knowing people there - that the Ukrainian citizens in the east are not "Russian sympathetic." The people that live in Lugansk, Donetsk, Mariupol and Kherson hate the Russians. They are not "Russian sympathetic." I know people that live in those cities. I know people that have fought and died there, during this invasion.

There was a time when people in those cities were happy to be free Russian/Ukrainians. They saw themselves as both Russian and Ukrainian. They were sort of both. They were proud to be both Russian and Ukrainian. They were happy to be independent, to be Ukrainian citizens.

But now they feel completely betrayed. Their homes and shops are destroyed, and their friends and family have been killed.

So don't even think there is such a thing as a person in an east Ukrainian city that is "Russian sympathetic."

As for the rest of that, I kind of don't care what Putin wants. He shouldn't get what he wants.

About Trump, you said, "Trump just wants to look like the peacemaker like when he said as a candidate he could end the war in 24hrs. But now our diplomacy is to just walk away and let Europe and Ukraine deal with it. Because neither Ukraine or Russia won't play Trump's dealmaker game."

I have to say, I agree with that.

I have hopeful optimism about a lot of the things that Trump is doing, even if some of them are a scary shake-up. I think the tariffs are a tricky situation, but I agree with them in principle. And similarly, a lot of the other changes are kind of scary too, but I think they may be good. I hope they're good.

But in this case - the Russia/Ukraine situation - I do not agree with appeasement of Putin and I do not like seeing Zelensky made out to be the heavy. Our position looks weak to me, and it is also ineffective. I can see with my eyes that it is ineffective.

I do not need anyone else's assessment - I can see the violence is still there. Kiev was bombed again last night. Not a city in the east, mind you. That's the capital of Ukraine. When Putin first invaded Ukraine, that was his target. Kiev and nuclear plants.

This isn't the actions of a liberating army. Putin can say all he wants he is hoping to free "Russian sympathizers." But never mind the fact that they don't exist, and that phrase is pure spin. The fact is he attacked the capital first and tried to cutoff power to paralyze the nation. His plan was a total takeover, and it wasn't for the good of the people. It was for his own empire-building ambitions.

So I'm very surprised that we seem to be letting him do it.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 25 Apr 2025 12:42:38 GMT
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Russiaphobia is the general term for the conditioning our government has pushed off on the public since post WWII. That and demonization of the words communism and socialism. I realize you have empathy for Russian and Ukrainian's as do I. But I don't obsess over the hydra Putin as is known. I've gotten over that. Using objectivity from linking what I read and hear that answers the contradictions and adds up to a high plausibility for what is real vs fantasy, propaganda & hogwash.

I could go out here in my own community and get a sample of disdain or defense for Trump. Thus, your assessment for what the disdain for the Russian government and Putin is in eastern Ukraine based on knowing "a few" people is no more revealing the dominant mood of the population. Even having visited that region won't give the knowledge to understand the big issues of geopolitical happenings. It's too complex and subtle.

But I'll wager from the narrative we all have here in this country our whole lives that traveling to that region and getting to know some people there that had negativity towards Russia & Putin led to confirmation bias as a result.

But none of this comes down to what we "feel" about this world event. It comes down to what an ideological pattern is followed for decades on end and giving no positive returns for the effort. And that is where I get the notion that you are not giving credence about. As if one person, Vladimir Putin, is a diabolical individual bent on conquest. Leading up to this terrible occurrence

happening.

This has played out over decades culminating in what is happening now. Our country has followed a path that plopped in its lap by default after the world war as an unscathed highly industrialized prosperous nation that embarked on being the unipolar defacto democratic capitalist beacon on the hill, as Regan described. Shining truth, liberty & the American way to the world. Which has become a warped fetish to maintain. Trying to control all aspects of world affairs.

Every empire in history has followed this pattern. It eventually becomes too great a burden on it's population to sustain it.

We didn't cultivate Ukraine or Russia as a result of this ideology of unipolarity, of dominance. We have considered Russia, its huge land mass and its military a threat to that unipolarity. And have acted accordingly as trying to contain that threat. When the Soviet system collapsed and asked for our capitalist guidance. We gave them neoliberalism. We only wanted them for their natural resources, oil and minerals.
We went to use them. That's as far as our charity went. That's what empires do. Colonize a population for the empires needs. Something Putin wouldn't allow. So he becomes a pariah for our empire managers.

And we've "used" Ukraine the same cynical way. They were a last piece of the puzzle to encircle Russia to the Black sea with the NATO so called defense umbrella. In defense of the military industrial complex our country maintains. Our last "profitable" industry.

Here's a good treatise on that note.
https://sonar21.com/the-road-to-war-in-ukraine-the-history-of-nato-and-us-military-exercises-with-ukraine-part-1/

I just don't agree Wayne with your simplistic assessment of what has happened. All you've been rationalizing seems more of an emotional element than an objective view.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 25 Apr 2025 19:42:46 GMT
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I hear what you're saying, Rusty. And your argument has merit.

But then again, think about it: You said, "I could go out here in my own community and get a sample of disdain or defense for Trump. Thus, your assessment for what the disdain for the Russian government and Putin is in eastern Ukraine based on knowing 'a few' people is no more revealing the dominant mood of the population."

Now think about the actual facts here. Those people in east Ukraine have now had their homes and businesses destroyed, and many friends and family members killed.

How many of them do you think are Putin supporters?

Exactly zero.

If there ever were any folks in eastern Ukraine that thought Putin was OK, they don't think that anymore. I would argue there were few even before Russian aggression, but as a nod to the point you've made, I'll agree there may have been some here and there.

But not anymore. Now days, Ukrainians that used to be proud to be Russian Ukrainians are less so.

Most Ukrainians now have a seething hatred of Putin.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 26 Apr 2025 14:50:11 GMT
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Well Wayne I think that you could turn that argument around to land on the government of Ukraine and certainly the influence of the United States and Europe by means of how this war was instigated.

There was a civil war going on in that region before the Russian special operation which I gather had some solidarity with the Russian heritage inherent to that region being subverted by the Kiev government.

I don't know if you perused this piece of reporting done by journalist Shura Burtin about the war weariness of Ukrainians and how the Kiev government has gone to fascist methods of putting soldiers on the front lines. It's heartening to read the realities of warfare and its effect on people up close.

https://meduza.io/en/feature/2025/03/27/please-don-t-use-my-name

You'll be heartened as well by the preface of this piece condemning Russia invasion. But, I don't doubt the Ukrainian's will call to mobilize for invasion by an army across the boarder as being the enemy.

But when you piece together the cynical chess game that the west has done in using a whole country as a means to further an ideological construct that when analyzed over time and content. Amounts to a barbarous mind set. A totally negative, wasteful and cruel way of thinking.

That is what I find indefensible about our country. And is a sign of its depletion as a world leadership devoid of any virtue in government.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 26 Apr 2025 16:45:24 GMT
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I hear you, Rusty.

I think the point of what you've been trying to say in this thread is there are some selfish and even corrupt people in this country using ugly force to do nefarious activities around the world. You're saying it isn't fair and it isn't good. You're saying there's a lot of manipulation and much of what we read and hear in the media is spin.

I think you're saying that happens in Europe too.

I agree. I see that.

But where I chime in is specifically on this Russia / Ukraine thing. And most specifically, on Putin, his political allies and the novi russki.

I liked Putin when he first came to power at the end of 1999. He appeared to be a strong leader and I was hopeful for Russia. I was warned back then by many Russians though. They were afraid of exactly what has come to pass these past twenty-five years.

Putin's actions and those of his cronies are the absolute worst examples of everything you stand against in this thread. Vladamir Putin is the archetypal example of the emperor of an evil empire.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by gofar99 on Sun, 27 Apr 2025 02:11:13 GMT
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I think the point of what you've been trying to say in this thread is there are some selfish and even corrupt people in this country using ugly force to do nefarious activities around the world. You're saying it isn't fair and it isn't good. You're saying there's a lot of manipulation and much of what we read and hear in the media is spin.

I think you're saying that happens in Europe too.

I'm with Wayne on this. At one time long ago I used to think the US was largely above all that stuff. Now I'm sure they are as involved as most others. What I see as a more immediate issue is that we as a country are engaged in a death spiral in both the economic and political senses. we have someone who wants to be a King and run the whole world. A large percentage of the world (and our population) doesn't want any of that. Worse the folks in positions that could put an end to it are sitting on their butts.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 27 Apr 2025 14:11:15 GMT
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I think the point of what you've been trying to say in this thread is there are some selfish and even corrupt people in this country using ugly force to do nefarious activities around the world. You're saying it isn't fair and it isn't good. You're saying there's a lot of manipulation and much of what we read and hear in the media is spin.

I'm saying its been a consistent behavior our government has crafted going on for longer than we've been alive. It has been a part of our foreign relations that our neocon mania induced ideology as the worlds sole superpower. The empire. Europe is but our cooperative vassal in this NATO scheme.

Our neoliberal economy is stretched thin now having succumbed to its inherent tendencies to eventually cannibalize itself with debt service on our people and trade deficits on our government. Over dependencies on imports has weakened our ability to thrive independently. Our world dollar standard that has been known for some time as our exorbitant privilege has been used as a weapon to hurt other sovereign nations economies unjustifiably.

We have tried to do exactly that to Russia, for years. In conjunction with our NATO expansion to rein in and contain that country. That is a long established policy having been passed on bipartisan from one administration to another to try and break up their nation. To neuter it out of our chronic cynical reasoning.
You're really off the mark though saying Russia's economy is bad. Data shows otherwise. That shows the competency of their government.

So when you say Wayne that Putin has evil intentions and empire, it's the mirror what your own country has amounted to in this world. The history shows it, the cover up promotes it. I think you're coming from a very micro oriented viewpoint. Based on relationships with a limited few amount of people and a lifetime of conditioning that our country crafts to assuage public sentiment.

The macro view I read gives a much different take on what has been going on for some time. Everything is interconnected so a broad view has to be considered. Without the intentional distortion that propaganda is used for. As the saying goes, "Actions speak louder than words". The cumulative actions that our country has exhibited over the years show a pattern of deception and deceit. That's been as counterproductive to ourselves as is to others. We are isolating ourselves by it.

You just discount it is all. In this ugly war that never had to be and with the other subjects I've brought up here in the dungeon. MMT, Israel, Politics and AI.
I don't expect to "change" anyone's minds here, I'm just giving my opinion is all. I make it a point to try and get more viewpoints to subject matter and try and piece together what makes sense to me. You mentioned once how the solar system was once an official standard that slowly came to be seen otherwise.

That's what I'm banking on. Probably not in my lifetime. From the real smart people I think anyway, that seem like pretty good detectives understanding this mess for what it is. I think their legacy is being passed on. There's some youngblood expanding on it.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 27 Apr 2025 15:04:31 GMT
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Rusty wrote:

"So when you say Wayne that Putin has evil intentions and empire, it's the mirror what your own country has amounted to in this world. The history shows it, the cover up promotes it. I think you're coming from a very micro oriented viewpoint."

I'm really not sure why you seem to be letting Putin off the hook here.

I mean, you're quick to point out the ugliness you see in America, but seem to give Putin a pass. I don't get it.

You've undoubtedly read that some in America are considering ways to reassert control over the Panama canal. Some think we are getting a raw deal there, and that since we built that canal, we should retain a great deal of influence and cooperation in how it is being used and who is using it.

Similarly, between here and there we have Mexico, and some say America has problems with Mexican criminals doing nefarious activities in America. They say we have economic problems from unfair tariffs and welfare payouts for food, housing and healthcare for illegal immigrants. They usually also say the nations between Mexico and Panama are part of the same problem too.

Without making any judgement as to whether those things are right or wrong, fair or unfair, let's consider our options: We can take diplomatic measures, economic measures or military measures.

So what actions should America take? What have we done so far?

As much as I agree that there are some shady politicians and unfair practices in America, I must remind everyone reading this that what Putin is doing is an order of magnitude worse.

Consider his actions. Putin faced a situation in the port of Sevastopol, where he had cooperative agreements from Ukraine allowing Russia to maintain a fleet there. But apparently, Putin would rather take control than cooperate. So he simply claimed Crimea to be a Russian territory and attacked eastern Ukraine.

What Putin did would be like if America were to install an overwhelming number of troops in Panama, claiming it to be an American state. Then attack Mexico in war. Take control of that whole region, and make a corridor all the way through to Panama. Rile the population, saying "Remember the Alamo!"

You may say that America has overstepped some boundaries. I won't argue that. But I will remind you of what Putin has done. That's clearly an overstep. It's an ugly war created by an evil overlord.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 28 Apr 2025 16:20:54 GMT
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You know Wayne, everything you mentioned there is the convoluted readout from our state department and lackadaisical press. It's not 'me' letting Putin off the hook. It's you letting off the hook our age old neoconservative influence in the realm of governmental policy support recommendations that underwrites our policy domestically and internationally. Our two political parties follow this nonsense as if it were like the tablets of the ten commandments.

This is why I bring up a narrow interpretation I read from your statements. The macro view I mentioned is what some very astute professional people, economists, analysts, journalists that have taken the interest and time to research the contradictions of what our government has been up to for a great long time. That have NOT had a positive impact on our longstanding good will with the rest of the world.

All you have been offering is what 'your' experiences have been with a few people in a region under conflict now. And I'm to trust you just by that.
That is so narrow of a slice of the way of the world operates as to be able to understand the big picture of things.

This thing with Panama is blown entirely out of proportion thanks to our new administration. It's too old and narrow now to accommodate larger vessels, it requires fresh water to operate that now is in short supply. And other routes are being built, (with the help of China) to circumvent the inherent downside of the aging Panama canal.
And by the way, China conducts it's infrastructure outreach without the overbearing imperialist colonizing mentality our country exhibits throughout history. They're policy is win-win. What's good for both country's.
We still hang on to the imperialist mentality of the Monroe Doctrine in Mexico, Central and South America.
The measures we should have taken all along in that region is what China shows like the golden rule for sovereign nations. Ours has been to use and abuse with impunity.

I could go back and forth with you till the cows come home about Putin and the Ukraine issue it seems. But for what I came to understand is that this conflict was underwritten as part of a longstanding effort to put the squeeze or even breakup the sovereign nation of Russia out of our asinine neocon behavior of long standing.

The historical record of it is obvious. And now our interest is in doing the same stupid pretense with China using Taiwan as the proxy. This shit never ends!

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 28 Apr 2025 16:39:11 GMT
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A good summation of the ongoing peace negotiations with the Trump administration.
I've no doubt that our press and official government release will spin this reality into the usual

gobbledygook. But this blog and others spell out the most accurate interpretation that most public has no clue to. Just read the typical western headlines and stay clueless.

https://www.moonofalabama.org/2025/04/russia-continues-to-reject-trumps-attempt-to-freeze-the-war-in-ukraine.html#more

P.S. Sergei Lavrov is a consummate foreign minister. He was on Meet the Press Sunday. And was very articulate and accurate. Something our State Department is sorely lacking in for quite some time.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 28 Apr 2025 17:10:17 GMT
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Rusty wrote:

"You know Wayne, everything you mentioned there is the convoluted readout from our state department and lackadaisical press. It's not 'me' letting Putin off the hook. It's you letting off the hook our age old neoconservative influence in the realm of governmental policy support recommendations that underwrites our policy domestically and internationally. Our two political parties follow this nonsense as if it were like the tablets of the ten commandments."

This isn't a "readout from our state department" or anywhere else. It's my own observations. I've been following Russian and Ukrainian things pretty closely since the late 1990s.

Honestly, I'm kind of like you in the sense that I don't believe a lot of what I read and hear in the press, whether in print, television or online. So I'm not biased by spin 'cause I'm not listening to spin.

My main point is this: Without taking anyone else's opinions - just using your own eyes - you can see that Russia overran and occupied Crimea and then proceeded to militarily attack Ukraine. Putin is an aggressor.

In my eyes - since I'm close with friends, some that live there, others with family there - I can see that Putin has been brutal. I consider him and those that do his violence to be terrorists.

And the truth is, most every other nation sees it this way too. It's not just American "neoconservatives" or "neoliberals" or whatever. It's not one American administration or another. It's not just the United Kingdom or France. It's practically everyone. Almost every other nation is alarmed at Putin's aggression.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 29 Apr 2025 15:56:31 GMT

Your interpretation just by what you "see" and the people whom you know there forms a bias to the part of what I think is a narrow, blinders-on approach I'm trying to describe. That there is an advance directive to what has transpired in that region which has contributed enormously to what has occurred! And there's plenty of evidence to show that. I've tried to include it in this series. Your scapegoat is Putin! The Novi-Russki's! I haven't read any real documentation from your claim. Just, take your word for it. You've seen it, you've been there.

Nothing in the big picture of domestic and international relations is just blatant happenstance. There is always an underlying aggravation or scheme to eventually make things occur. You can liken it to a pre-cancer as an analogy.

You can say most other nations can see this tragedy in your good vs bad view. But I'd wager that it mainly follows within the G7 nations and not from the viewpoint of a greater number of nations and population of the world that are clamoring to join the BRICS alliance that want to be out from under our nation's dominating influence.

And you never say anything about this alliance. As maybe you don't follow this critical framework to what is changing in the world. But its a critical part of why our country is experiencing as well as all the G7 countries an economic downturn directly related to the economic doctrine that isn't functioning well for the people of the collective G7. And our exploitive behavior, that now from this new administration is exposing blatantly our true nature of international exploitation. Extortion!

So I'm saying all along this conflict is attributable to what has been the United States policy planners conniving over a great long time. That it is a continuation of other historical precedents that forms a pattern of behavior from this ideology. Just like what has happened with our economy. If one cares to follow the contradictions and patterns, one finds that the inevitable conclusion is that our country bears a great deal of responsibility for this conflict to have occurred. You can see that in the conditions that Russia has stuck to since before this war occurring right up to now with negotiations to end the conflict.

Or you can simply say in black and white terms that there's good vs bad. Nothing else bears witness to.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 29 Apr 2025 18:54:05 GMT

I can't continue this discussion for a while because I'm heading to Austin for the Lone Star Audiofest. So I'm just too busy to chat online much right now.

But I gotta say one last thing, even though it feels like we're just going round and round.

You said, "Your interpretation just by what you 'see' and the people whom you know there forms a bias to the part of what I think is a narrow, blinders-on approach I'm trying to describe. That there is an advance directive to what has transpired in that region which has contributed enormously to what has occurred! And there's plenty of evidence to show that. I've tried to include it in this series. Your scapegoat is Putin! The Novi-Russki's! I haven't read any real documentation from your claim."

I've heard and read all the kinds of stuff you keep saying. But I've heard and read expert analysis saying all the kinds of stuff I've described too. I'm not the only one saying it. In fact, some of the links you've posted in this thread and on the other one here about Ukraine say exactly the same things I'm telling you. So you can find "evidence" that supports either side.

It's just that I have an extra amount of confidence in what I'm saying because of my experience with that culture. And from the length of time I've been involved with people in that culture. I've literally been there, and I've been watching this stuff "up close and personal" since the 1990s. Most people in America did not have this view, and frankly, most still don't. It's just not on our radar, other than what we see in the nightly news.

What I'm saying is to disregard 99% of what you are calling "evidence" and simply look at the actions taken by both sides. Stop reading people you think are "experts" and think with your own mind, using actual physical evidence that you can see.

Since your main thrust of this forum thread is a mistrust of empire builders and their deceptive practices, I would think this would appeal to you.

The fact is that Putin annexed Crimea by sending a barrage of troops. He then attacked eastern Ukraine. Ukraine is a sovereign nation and has been since 1991. So no matter what else happened behind the scenes, that was an unwarranted attack.

Putin can say a whole bunch of nationalistic rhetoric - and others can repeat it - but it's all just saber-rattling. It's the very thing this thread complains about, only it is being done in Russia and not in America or by one of our allies.

So my position is if you want to get upset about ugly stuff going on behind the scenes in an "evil empire," you damn well shouldn't let Putin off the hook. He ain't the good guy.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 30 Apr 2025 11:13:45 GMT
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I agree we have irreconcilable differences of opinion. So the table tennis debate is just that.

I don't think just being somewhere gives squat to what is going on behind the scene's in this world. And knowing a few people that are biased from living wherever gives a solid foundation for forming a true understanding. It just gives a taste of the scene. Not the nourishment of the banquet. And you're riding mainly from that perspective. I see that in this debate, from the MMT

thread and the AI thread.

I'll stick to what I got as I think it's better than what I read and hear on the news. That's the 99 percent of which anyone can discard. But that one percent is what is compelling in spelling out what's happening. In total, it adds up. Like detective work.

The evidence I've listed has enough depth to be figured into a pattern of real recognition of reality. Not propaganda that poses as evidence. You can file that away where it belongs.

Have a good'n at the audiofest.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 30 Apr 2025 15:05:35 GMT
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I just watched this discussion from the Jeffrey Sachs Book Club. A young man named Aaron Good with a newly minted PhD has written a book based on his dissertation study called American "Exception", not exceptionalism. Which has been the typical narrative bandied about out country's perception of itself at home and abroad.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXvuOG33zLs

Mr. Good explains how our American system of democratic government is supplemented with a bureaucracy of the Deep State consisting of the political state, the security state and the "overlord" state, (the oligarchy) which forms our domestic and foreign policy.

That a free reign is given to the security state to administer covert and overt operations in the world that the deep state apparatus seeks control of. Overriding even the legislative political state. Thanks to the "overlord" principal control over the political part of our government. Campaign finance and lobbying.

Really a fascinating discussion that gives great food for thought about the state of our empire and its system of management. It challenges the notion we actually have a democracy.

Its a book I'll be acquiring for sure. American Exception by Aaron Good.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 03 May 2025 14:13:30 GMT
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Having hoped that this already tiresome administration at least had a smidgeon of some ethical sense of ending the Ukraine disaster is a pipedream. The deep state along with a terribly flawed

individual figure heading our government plays with inadequate skills and faulty virtue to leave the conflict with no real attempt to fairly end it. Our country has bigger things to deal with now, (China). Everything is a transaction with the POTUS and our deep state continues to operate as usual with a demented ideology of conquest.

Cut out wasteful domestic social spending, slash programs. We need more money for our military! We must meet all the threats that we can ever imagine. Whether they exist or not. The important thing is our dominant standing in the world.

I think we're a sick, sick country judging from our long declining leadership. We've lost any shred of being fair and just to our people and to the rest of the world. Where its going doesn't give much encouragement.

A good article that contributes with the pessimism.

https://consortiumnews.com/2025/05/02/core-trump/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 06 May 2025 16:44:42 GMT
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Here is a website showing the destruction and death created by the US air campaign in Yemen on Israel's behalf to try and halt the Houthis targeting vessels in the Red Sea that supply Israel. On behalf of the Palestinian genocide Israel is conducting in Gaza.
The Houthis had stopped their warfare on shipping during the brief ceasefire in Gaza, that Israel had broken their end repeatedly by sniper fire killing civilians during that period. The Houthis returned to their shipping warfare when Israel commenced bombarding and starving civilians again in Gaza.

The Trump administration supports Israel as did the Biden administration. Both bipartisan political party's are as one in this behavior. Aiding and abetting genocide in Israel's behalf. And bombing targets in Yemen that have done nothing to stop the Houthis support of Palestinians. Only killing innocent civilians as do the Israeli's.

This is our sick, degenerate political process at work today. The website shows the aftermath of our bombing campaign. Complete with images of bodies. Children. You can unblur the images. Which should be shown to all Americans if our news weren't sanitized and full of propaganda and fake journalism.

https://airwars.org/country/yemen/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 13 May 2025 12:07:10 GMT
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This gal puts what I'm reading from the book, American Exception, with an academic perspective, into a layman's perspective. So, essentially how to interpret the news and how it's manipulated by the state to conform to its narrative.

https://www.caitlinjohnst.one/p/how-to-make-your-mind-harder-for

Meanwhile the book delves into the 3 pillars of our political, security and capitalist state. How their woven together and the power status of their influence. Going back to the founding of this country. A pretty big meal to digest so far for me. Academia writing doesn't lend itself to casual reading. But it's giving me a window into what makes this big mess operate as it has and does.

https://www.skyhorsepublishing.com/9781510769137/american-exception/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 14 May 2025 16:54:08 GMT
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Old Egghead I call him. Brian Berletic researches the real from the front page pablum. He digs into policy papers and political speeches from politicians to separate facts from the fiction we're fed. Pablum. Tasteless and non nourishing bunk the corporate press passes for journalism.

This blog entry shows how the story of our negotiating with Russia and the end of the Ukrainian conflict is all a front to "pivot" to our main adversary, "China" to try and maintain our silly hegemony stature in the world. Really though its more a desperate means of maintaining our neocon overworld continuation of wealth extraction and preservation we've been accustomed to since the big war last century. Hittin the skids now with big China, Russia and all the manufacturing countries in the world that are taking our mojo down a notch or two. But wait! We didn't account for the 3rd world becoming so resourceful and strong. We wanted to use them for as long as our fairytale vision of endless wealth extraction would go on and on forever.

So Trump and the policy manual Project 2025 are being adhered to verbatim as Mr. Berletic points out with his research. The spin Dr's do their part to keep us peons guessing wrong and clueless to their real designs. The big, big picture is keeping the empire intact and in command. No matter what the cost in lives and treasure spent to maintain the charade.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5B1o7E5A5o

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 16 May 2025 13:21:16 GMT
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In this discussion with Wolff & Hudson entitled Empire Without Returns is a telling paragraph by M. Hudson regarding the origins of the Cold War.
https://michael-hudson.com/2025/05/empire-without-returns/

Quote:What was really the source of this Cold War?

It wasn't just geopolitical. The Soviet Union wasn't a trade rival or an investment rival. It was a different economic system. And that's what led the United States to start the Cold War right away in 1917. As soon as you had the Bolshevik Revolution there, the U.S., along with England, tried to invade Russia and overthrow the revolution.

The whole fight against communism, they didn't say it's against the Soviet Union or the Russian people or Russian production. It was against communism.

And the threat of communism, what was it? The Americans feared that it was an alternative economic organization to that of American finance capitalism. And in the negotiations in 1944 and 1945, leading up to the World Trade Organization creation, the International Trade Organization, the U.S. negotiators said, "how are we going to deal with a socialist economy?" Because socialist economies are lower cost than Western capitalist economies.

Socialist economies are more efficient because they don't have a predatory financial class. They don't have a real estate class. Their housing costs are much lower because you don't have an absentee landlord class that is able to maximize its land rent. You don't have debt. The government of Russia simply creates the money.

Well, we all know that the Russian system really wasn't a workable economic threat to the West because it was basically, under Stalin, a bureaucratic collectivism. They didn't let a hundred flowers bloom as Mao did. They didn't let what had been Lenin's new economic policy of 1921 actually create any kind of competition there. China did.
In a nutshell this explains what our whole cold war ideology has been derived from. That nowadays has become such a monetary strain on our country. The whole tariff debacle is just an extension of our longstanding cold war capitalism vs socialism ideology. We're losing the advantage we enjoyed as a free lunch with our exorbitant dollar dominance in trade. Which allowed for us to deindustrialize and pursue finance capitalism service economy as our economic model.

Its proven to be a self destructive and perverse means of running an economy that funnels the economic proceeds towards the upper incomes. At the expense of the middle and lower incomes. So the tariff chaos now is but an attempt to try and extort the worlds economies towards keeping our upper income free lunch protected from countries now de-dollarizing because of our perverse weaponization of the dollar. Sanctioning, proxy warring, regime changing behavior.

In the meantime, another indicator of our empire's decay is our educational standards has been falling behind to the rest of the world. And our literacy rate is declining. Public schooling is underfunded and being perversely challenged by privatization. But the data shows the story.
https://sonar21.com/if-ignorance-is-bliss-the-us-is-the-happiest-superpower/

The trends show that our economic system is faltering and the deep state financialized military industrial complex ideology is only now isolating our country from the rest of the world as the once 3rd world has the economic and political power to counter our empire finally since the great war of last century.

So far our leadership still maintains that our empire is the necessary center of gravity in this world. While the greater portion of humanity and countries are feeling that no one country has claim over the rest.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 17 May 2025 12:08:06 GMT
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The more I read into this book American Exception, the more I can understand the depravity of what our country has become. The rule of law is absent within the power structure of our tripartite state. The power structure supplanted by the authority of the security state and the wealthy interests of the corporate overworld state. Working behind the scenes to the outward appearances of the political state. Overruling debate and developing plausible cover stories to mislead the public.

What we think of as a democracy is really a front for what is really happening within this multi staged control apparatus. And its gradually taken more control of the political "representation" we're all vaguely aware of. Our two party system basically follows what the prerogatives are in domestic and foreign policy of what the tripartite state decree's. Whether or not its in the best interest of the public or not.

Lying, cheating, stealing, defamation, killing, regime change and wars are all part of the lawlessness that this system perceives as for its best interests. And as a world leader of empire minded statecraft that's now in its twilight. The posturing positions employed to try and maintain this hegemony is finally isolating our position as one of an uncooperative spoiled sport that tries to get its way by subterfuge and bullying.

The latest with the tariff fiasco shines a bright light on this apparatus. It seems more and more clear to me that our country is on the wrong side of virtuousness and benign relationship with the greater part of the world these days.

Our economic system needs more than reform. Because reform only begats a brief time which corruption eats away at it. As with the period of economic social reform of the Roosevelt years. Slowly and surely reduced by the overworld wealth influences of the opaque power system we have.

The Chinese said it best in response to the tariff decree thrown out into the world. Someone said, The US needs a revolution.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 21 May 2025 15:29:42 GMT
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Come and see:

From the movie, Come and See. This article is about how the German political climate is all aboard with the NATO madness in Europe now to build up the military in the absence of the US having pivoted towards the China NATO madness. The author points out what the Nazi's did in the USSR during WWII was even a greater mass extermination of humanity than what all the extermination camps for the Jews were. That their atonement can never be truly reached ever. So the hypocrisy of the German government now along with the European NATO commitment is a shame to the memories of the past and a sham to the principals of the present. When the USSR dissolved in 1991 the build up of NATO commenced even more pulling countries into its fold. By design. The Russian military then was at its lowest level than ever.

There was never a threat to Europe from Russia. NATO was formed in 1949 while the Warsaw Pact was formed in 1955. Russia perpetually answering to the aggression of the west. The end of WWII was the beginning of the Cold War. A calculated effort mainly by the US to bolster our perpetual war machine economy. The Communist Soviets who were allied during the war and bore the brunt of destruction and death but tore the gut from the Nazi war machine became the pariah and threat to the western capitalist deep state after the war. Propaganda always needs a threat to sway public sentiment.

The United States and Europe have perpetuated this since then. Managing to protect the Nazi war criminals for the most part from justice and even utilizing them to a great extent by the US for the ones with technical prowess such as war criminal Dr. Wernher Von Braun for our aerospace program and others. Operation Paper Clip.

The Russian movie Come and See is regarded as one of, if not the most powerful depictions of war and its effect on people ever filmed. Little known about it here in the west. A gut wrencher.
https://sonar21.com/germany-major-criminals-should-keep-quiet/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHaSQU-4wss&t=3s

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 21 May 2025 16:06:23 GMT
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Things are very different now. Not that the Russian government was great in the WWII years, but it is definitely a bad actor now.

I think your focus is on NATO "empire building" but don't forget that Russia and China are empire-builders too. Any critical assessment of the ills of men shouldn't stop with NATO.

And also remember that Ukraine was part of the USSR in WWII and most of the Soviet lives lost in that war were actually Ukrainians.

So when having empathy for the people over there - as we should - understand that the biggest

harm is being done to the people of Ukraine. Was in WWII and is again now.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 22 May 2025 18:47:54 GMT
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Of course Ukraine suffered as being part of the USSR then. And there's no animosity from that. What China and Russia now are doing economically is not empire building in the sense of being a unipolar hegemonic force in the world as what the United States has done since that terrible conflict. They are only doing what any nation state does in their own peoples interest for self determination. They both suffered great loss and destruction from WWII. Now China mainly but Russia by alignment with them and the other coalition of countries forming the BRICS are pushing the envelope of their ability to flourish for their peoples.

They've aligned as I've stated time and again to counter our country's unfair practices with our currency and meddling. They have no ambitions towards being as our country did by becoming the worlds dominant player in everyone's affairs.

The article spells out just that in what is going on in Europe now. And particularly Germany that committed those atrocities then. Which now is an affront to the memory of what they did then by posturing what they believe now in this arrogant geopolitical bad theater production. Which of course is all orchestrated from within our own empire mentality government structure.

The protagonist here is the United States. As it has been since post WWII. That's the focus of this thread.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 24 May 2025 13:59:44 GMT
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You have to have some historical underpinnings to understand the present time. Our country and Great Britain whom we are primarily derived from in our cultural and capitalist ties, have been opposed to the notion of Communism and Socialism since the Russian revolution.

After WWII the Soviet Union, our ally and a Communist oriented nation that gave more than any other nation in the effort to rid Nazi fascism was summarily and perversely made into a foe. The United States with Great Britain that we subordinated along with the rest of Europe and essentially the world then from our new found aspirations of arbiter of world affairs. The United States unscathed from the war, rich with abundance and calling the shots.

There was though an overhang from war production and a recession creeped in in 1947. The principal war industries and particularly the aerospace industries were in a downturn. With the help of the deep state overworld corporate wealth and the authority of the security pillar of the defense department, the legislative and executive end of the government became as one with

forming the CIA agency, International Monetary Fund and other security and financial aligned agencies to prevail in world dominance.

The need was a scapegoat to arouse public fear of a potential threat to our society. That became the origins of the cold war with the Soviet Union mainly and China superficially. More so when they developed their own nuclear capability. It was the threat of Communism towards Capitalism. Evil authoritarianism vs benevolent democratic freedom.

NATO was formed in 1949 as a deterrent in Europe from the planned perception of the Communist USSR being a threat. It coincided with the build up of the military complex in the United States. An answer to the floundering defense industries of the post war.
The USSR didn't respond to this until 1955 with the Warsaw Pact. They had been after all a country devastated by the world war. Having lost millions and millions of people in their effort for freedom from the tyranny of fascism.

The economic sympathies towards Communism and Socialism that was prevalent in the US in the depression years and helped spur the Roosevelt government towards progressive socialism with the formation of Social Security and government subsidization in the industrial sectors was by the 1950's being dismantled by the forces of the deep state. McCarthyism was the neoconservative way of demonizing the prewar Communist, Socialist sympathies out of existence.

The now perpetual war machine economy of the military complex was entrenched. The Korean war was the beginning of our military adventurism to come. Fighting Communism with the virtue of Democratic Capitalism.

The deep state structure within our government has gradually grown more powerful and authoritarian over the decades. And our economic structure has followed suit becoming more financialized by design. Allowing our non war industry to wither and die domestically following the path of globalization to bolster the financial profitability of the growing wealthy end of our society. The military complex was utilized towards the blunt end of our security pillar of the deep state along with the financial overworld pillar to keep our world dollar hegemony to our advantage.

Eventually our ability to make war with our military service has become a strain for the public to accept. So a proxy method has served our security end by suppling forces with our military material to do our bidding in our strategic meddling. Our military budget though has mushroomed over the decades to be a drain on our already vast national debt. Mainly from our trade imbalances.

We're at a compromising point now economically that is influencing the authoritarian part of the deep state to be reflected in our political end more than ever. Our advantages internationally have also been compromised by overextending our financial restraints on countries we tried to control through sanctioning and now through tariffs.

Our deep state is showing its negative effects in the world that has coalized by responding with a firm ability to counter our dominance as it has never had the ability before. Its high time. I hope they prevail. We need a revolution in this country to end this negativity. I hope its bloodless. The deep state has shed enough of that over the years, mainly abroad. Lets hope it doesn't turn

inward on ourselves.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 26 May 2025 15:13:19 GMT
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Our deep state and its influence into policy with the political branch is woven tightly in our notion of democracy. The CIA is a subversive untethered organization that carries out clandestine and illegal activities which the legislative and executive branches have little control or even knowledge of.
The military complex along with the corporate end of it have a large influence with the political matrix to maintain our war mongering in the world. Its profitable.

The current Ukrainian Russian negotiations are hung up with the narrative of having a cease-fire. To which Ukraine could be bolstered with more weapons to carry on this delusional and debilitating proxy war. Meanwhile NATO Europe is being encouraged to buy American arms to build up their militaries. While the US pivots to our other delusional need to antagonize and threaten China with war. With Taiwan being the focal unprincipled reason just as Ukraine is for expanding NATO up to Russia's back door.

This is the imperial empire ideology that permeates our government that allows for the Israeli government to behave similarly in the Mideast. Our proxy military society there that we allow Carte Blanc to administer whatever barbarity upon their indigenous Arab population that suits the notions of some twisted biblical ordained prophecy.

So our current administration just as all preceding administrations of either party is bound to adhere to the deep state unprincipled in virtue notions of the imperial empire world order. Historians and political scientists have been writing of this phenomena since its origins post WWII.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 27 May 2025 16:35:17 GMT
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Un huh, un huh. Here we have the German Chancellor mentioning lifting restrictions on long range weapons for continuation of the Ukraine war with Russia. But its nothing new as the article in The Moon of Alabama points out. But it shows where Europe is as being a vassal to the United States to the war mongering, war machine economy that we've perpetuated for decades and decades. Its profitable! And its about the only industry left that is insinuated as being vital to the

world order security that our deep state requires.

It would appear that the planners of policy have decided to try and keep the pressure on Russia through attrition as the Russians are doing with Ukraine's faltering military. Wearing them down towards capitulation till collapse. There is a limit to what manpower Ukraine has left that they have to throw against the Russian superior forces.

While America pivots to the South China Sea to set up Eastern NATO with Taiwan as the focal point for conflict. Europe can purchase our weapons to carry on the supply to Ukraine's war weary and draw out this unnecessary conflict still to the last Ukrainian. They were nothing but pawns anyway with our deep state planners.

Proxy wars, genocide enabling, regime change, assassinations, sanctioning and now tariff extortion added to the list.

This is our purpose in the world it seems. An egregious amalgamation of devious manipulation without any virtue but perpetuating finance capitalism at any cost. A very sad example of governance.

https://www.moonofalabama.org/2025/05/recycling-old-news-media-push-for-more-war-in-ukraine.html#more

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Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 27 May 2025 21:13:07 GMT
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The evil-empire builder here is Putin. He has poisoned his country and is hoping to poison Ukraine. He is attempting to steal from Ukraine the independence they achieved in 1991 and which they are desperately fighting to maintain.

Putin actually believes it is best for him to rape Ukraine, to take that country over by force, to make it a Russian state and to impose his will and his laws there.

There is no NATO empire-building there. I wish there had been. It was a huge miss to have not embraced Ukraine years ago. That's the real problem - not the meddling of NATO but rather the absence of it. We were too late, and we let Russian become emboldened.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 28 May 2025 13:29:09 GMT
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Heidi is more suited for stylish writing in the New Yorker than serious academic research presentation. From her book review on NPR:

Quote:Blake's book appears to be largely based on accounts provided by people who found themselves within Berezovsky's gravitational field at various points in time, as well as on intelligence sources in Britain and the U.S.

Sadly, these sources bring their own individual spin and narratives that warrant a much greater deal of scepticism — especially since the author herself pictures Berezovsky's circle as a bunch of extremely dodgy characters or outright crooks. In the words of a British judge, cited in the book, Berezovsky is "an unimpressive, and inherently unreliable, witness, who regarded truth as a transitory, flexible concept, which could be molded to suit his current purposes." So are his associates.
Quote:The author's personal lack of expertise in post-Soviet matters shows in a bombastic analysis of recent ex-Soviet history. She proposes, for example, that Berezovsky staged the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and that a U.S.-backed Georgian government may have wanted to murder an oligarch in Britain.

Anyway, the bones and skeletons abound in the closet of the CIA telling a tale of grand sweeping dirty deeds. Including the flawed Warren report concluding conspiracy of assassination most likely of a sitting president of this country. Including his brother who wanted to investigate Kennedy's assassination if he attained the presidency himself.

We ought to look inward at our own deep state of deception and lies that our very government foists upon us. But the cheap narrative of those "foreign" characters is just too easy to lead us on.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 28 May 2025 18:29:28 GMT
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Experts that assert Putin is evil

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 28 May 2025 20:09:42 GMT
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This expertise listed for the evil Mr. Putin is only the western think-speak Orwellian journalism that is influenced by our deep state construct.

A good example of this contradiction is the current article by The Moon of Alabama concerning the Patriot missile system being used in Ukraine. Which is ineffective and costly and has been such since its inception. But as the article points out, our press contradicts itself in covering its use in the world since 1992 in Iraq. Its either a boondoggle or a godsend to the might of our most

expensive military in the world by a multitude of percentage of countries heaped together to our expenditure. Which the Trump administration now wants to spend even greater than one trillion a year on now. With yet a "Golden Dome" maybe as a tribute to his cotton candy hairdo color to waste treasure on. Yet be a boon to the greedy defense industry.

https://www.moonofalabama.org/2025/05/us-supplied-air-defences-fail-in-ukraine.html#more

We are an empire on the skids my friend. Our economy shows it, our politics and society shows it. And our behavior in the world is most definitely showing a frenzied flailing about of incoherent thought. How long this can be kept up no ones knows. But its sickening to realize how unproductive and uncivilized it all is. When so much needs to be done for human development instead of inciting wars and throwing so much money into the black hole of defense spending rather than productive use that isn't realized.

I don't expect to change your beliefs and I'm not trying to. I'm just writing about what I am learning as I go along.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 28 May 2025 20:30:55 GMT
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Rusty, my friend, you wrote:

Rusty wrote on Wed, 28 May 2025 15:09I don't expect to change your beliefs and I'm not trying to. I'm just writing about what I am learning as I go along.

But you're not learning. You have taken a side and are reinforcing it with the same old bloggers.

There was a time when I thought as you do now, that Putin was a good leader for Russia. I have learned since then that I was wrong.

The Google search link I provided is a generic search. Some of the articles returned by the search are from western sources, but some come from the east, some even from Russians.

When Putin was first made president, I thought he might be good for Russia. But the Russians I knew - way back then - set me straight. The first time I heard reasons to be leery about Putin was in 2000, when a Russian immigrant told me what Putin was like in East Germany and St. Petersburg. He and others were very concerned that Putin would make Russia an evil empire.

Their opinions have been proven to be correct. Putin has made Russia a terrorist state.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by gofar99 on Thu, 29 May 2025 02:19:23 GMT
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Hi All, I have been following this for a while but resisted commenting. Some things seem really clear to me (not in any particular order). Ukraine didn't start the present conflict, Putin did. China is empire building. Just today they started to improve an island about 400 miles south of Guam. They aren't doing that to improve their trading needs. They have their tentacles in Panama. They don't want Australia to meddle with them on Australian turf. They have navy assets there now. They want Taiwan. There are more such instances. If it isn't empire building I don't know what it should be called. The one thing in their favor (if you can call it that) is that they have already figured out it is more to their benefit to trade with us particularly when it favors them than to get into a global conflict in which neither of us will do well. * At one time the US did engage in empire building. The current President would like to do that but the places he indicates are not for the taking in any peaceful manner. He can buy golf courses and hotels, but Greenland isn't for sale. The EU doesn't want Russian territory and would be glad to have Russia as a respectful trading partner. The opposite certainly doesn't seem true. In all this mess it seems as if our President is screwing up relations with folks he should be cultivating for mutual benefit. There is a lot more, but I'll save that for another time.

* A side issue...trying to get manufacturing back to the US is a good thought. Trying to do so quickly is naive. It will be a really long endeavor. Tariffs will not make that happen sooner.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 29 May 2025 14:48:58 GMT
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I totally agree with you, Bruce.

And an extra mention on the tariff stuff. It's tricky but, in my opinion, we probably have needed to do something about the trade imbalances for decades.

Fair trade is a good thing. But lopsided trade is just stupid for us to have allowed. Not sure why we allowed it for so long. Now it feels very difficult to "dial it back." It's looks pretty tricky.

And another adjacent matter - protectionism. I used to have a laissez-faire attitude towards that. I thought there was no need to protect an American industry. When we make the best stuff at the best price, no problem.

Even when the Japanese started beating us with better cars in the late 1970s, I thought that was our own fault. We were making junk and their cars were better. German cars were better too. My opinion back then was that we needed to get off our butts and design and build better cars. I thought we made better cars for decades, especially in the 1960s. My opinion was that we just needed to rise to the challenge of the 1970s and 1980s.

Eventually we self-corrected. Our car manufacturers did begin making better cars and by the

1990s, we were competitive again. So the beating we took in the 1980s was really a self-inflicted wound. Too much government pressure to shift design goals in the 1970s, and too slow to respond by the car manufacturers.

At least that's how I saw it.

But I see something else now. The Chinese government subsidizes a market, taking a loss in that market for a lengthy period of time. Essentially, the American companies producing products in the market China wants to control are under economic attack. It is economic siege warfare.

In the beginning of the siege period, Americans (and people in other countries, for that matter) - both individuals and companies needing supplies - shift from buying American products under siege and instead purchase the low-cost Chinese products. Often times, the Chinese products are of poor quality because the Chinese have little experience at first. But the cost is so low, American companies buying the inferior import products will make do with it. In many cases, it is repaired, retooled or otherwise made serviceable after import. The cost is so low, it is still economically viable.

After a while, the American companies making products in the market under attack slow production or cease entirely. We have lost a lot of industries that way in the last few decades. China has successfully monopolized several markets using that strategy.

And now that I look back, I realize the situation in Japan was somewhat similar in the 1960s and 1970s. It wasn't done exactly the same way - Japan wasn't subsidizing their industries - America did it as economic assistance. We were still helping Japan get on its feet after WWII.

I'm not sure I feel the same way about that as I do about the invasive market take-overs that China has done. But the results to the American economy were probably the same. American car companies eventually came back after a pretty bad beating, but the American consumer electronics market really never recovered.

So I think we must be much more careful in the matters of trade going forward. I like it when we can be helpful, as I think was initially the case in Japan. But I also think we have to protect our own interests. Otherwise, we'll find ourselves being unable to do things we once were great at. We'll be "out of shape."

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 29 May 2025 17:09:02 GMT
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Your both are so wrong on so many fronts its hard to accommodate an answer to. Economically, geopolitically and what an empire, (as in economic power) is all about.

I don't feel Wayne its of any use to play ping pong with you as we have about the notion of evil Putin and his government and what the Ukrainian conflict is all about that is the real geopolitical

truth. I've given more than enough factual account for what that is, with the help of those sources I use. That you can dismiss it with just personal experiences and relationships and articles written that reflect the manipulations of government to sway public opinion. It's about what is to be expected from anyone that with such a narrow framework of subjective feelings and our commercial journalism which does not do justice to their ethical standards.

China Bruce is an example of empire that has no ambitions of being a sole hegemonic sovereign state that our country has done. That they have literally pulled themselves out of abject poverty to the level they've attained just in our lifetimes is an accomplishment never realized before in human history. They interact with nations on a win win relationship. They do not bully, provoke or sanction or war monger as our country does historically and to this day. Taiwan to them is part of their territory just as Puerto Rico is to us. Maybe they should start arming that island and put their troops there. Or Cuba! Maybe they should start sending warships into the Gulf of (MEXICO) to antagonize our government. They had purchased the ports in Panama fair and square and had updated them. Why can't other nations branch out into the world as the United States has done with impunity?

The fact is you two is that this country of ours is a basket case of its own doing. Its our economic system that has financialized to the point that it is eating away at itself like a parasite. And we can't keep up in the world to the nations that we had tried to use their cheap labor to further enable our financial free lunch with our monopoly with the dollar that we use to punish with.

But we still have this Pollyanna notion we're the sole arbiter of freedom and democracy. We aren't! Either one. We are a war mongering, selfish and arrogant nation of wealthy elites that call the shots. We the people have no influence what-so-ever.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 29 May 2025 18:40:40 GMT
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Using bloggers, economists, political scientists, military veterans with world geopolitical experience and people with national security experience gathering information is useful to supplement your personal educational views. I don't think just reading headlines or viewing corporate news is nearly enough to give an understanding of how the world operates economically and politically. Both being bedfellows.

This fellow is a journalist that takes the time to read policy papers that our network of deep state corporate think tank organizations have funded to churn out the methodology that the legislative and executive branches adopt along with their respective political committees use as their political platforms.

Brian Berletic here goes over an article in the NY Times that "suggests" that the Trump administration has deviated from established policy reflected in think tank papers that the

administration has culled from almost word for word in speeches recently. What Mr. Berletic is laying out here is that the political end of the deep state is more of the sales branch of policy that the corporate think tanks and lobbyists bring to them to "sell" to the public. Such as Project 2025.

Berletic though says there are no policy papers to substantiate the article being written in the NYT's. Thus what commander and chief Trump states in the article is a ruse he uses common to his style of innuendo to stretching the truth. Saying that the world can accommodate multiple hegemonic empires. Implying the US, China and Russia. When the truth is as laid out in the policy paper is that the administration truly is following what the United States has been following as the hegemonic sole dominant world empire player its followed since post WWII.

Our press and media never try and tease out such detailed analysis of what the truth is that our government is really up to. And the public is not informed enough to judge whether or not our government is working for the true interests of ordinary people. But its a sure bet that the interests of our wealthy elite are the true recipients of the advantage that our government is playing cat and mouse in world geopolitics. After all, their the ones that write the play book for the politicians to play the game by.

I suspect YMMV though for any eyeballs attached here.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCYwDtaRu6E

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 29 May 2025 20:07:27 GMT
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Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by gofar99 on Fri, 30 May 2025 03:04:44 GMT
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Hi All, A good discussion that covers the subject from different viewpoints. With that siad I take my leave...

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 30 May 2025 15:55:31 GMT
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To anyone interested, it might be useful for your edification to listen to these two senior economists that I admittedly reference often. Because they are two of our greatest living national treasures we have whom the general public has no knowledge of. Unfortunately.

Hudson & Wolff. Here they go over the core of capitalism. Its origins, promises, successes and limitations and hopefully its demise, (particularly in the form its in currently). They describe how classical economics and its explanation of value theory has been manipulated into the opposite of what the classical economists Adam Smith and David Ricardo described the free market being. Free from economic rent! Free from the then parasitic renters class making money in their sleep and siphoning capital away from useful benefit to their own conspicuous consumption. Today the equivalent are the banking financier's and Wall Street.

They explain how Karl Marx and his remarkable volumes of capitalism took value theory from Smith & Ricardo and explained further the worker relationship with the capitalist and their surplus exchange, trade consolidation, monopolization and how industrial capitalism could become socialism in its final development. Never to be realized of course.

Listening to these two gives a foundation to understand where our country and the other capitalist countries following current neoliberal financial capitalism are experiencing the trials and tribulations that are degrading our way of life. Taking particular note in China's successful development is that their financial structure keeps banking as a public-state owned entity. Eliminating the capitalist monopoly on finance opens up the means to preventing the free lunch, money in their sleep financial class from hijacking the economy as ours has been made.

Economics and geopolitics mimic one another. So its little wonder from our finance capitalist economics how our country has in its dominant world character come to monopolize its influence through colonization, militarism, Imperialism etc. to maintain that dominance over the years.

It has become a burden to the world. Which countries now once part of the 3rd world are strategically aligning to counter our dominance.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loxwfNQw17o

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 31 May 2025 13:16:41 GMT
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Watching this video this morning gives clarity to the abject absurdity that our government is going about now with whatever it is that diplomacy is supposed to be. Its a complete farse! Its a carnival ride of deception and collusion towards subordination of countries to literally kiss our ass! The Trump administration sows nothing but chaos. Irrelevant contradictory gobbledygook.

Panel discussion with former Ambassador Charles Freeman and Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson. Very informative yet exasperating illumination of our worse than ever diplomacy and state craft.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rsuGiI1_Ms&list=PLzImU_KHY9-JjAIg0AZXxHaMhJD6UXfNj&index=1

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 02 Jun 2025 19:05:42 GMT
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Nice article from Alistair Crooke, former British diplomat about the American financial Monetary system losing ground to China. The real reason for the trade war. Alistair is a very classy and astute Brit. that has the experience of years of diplomacy work and the British national security organization MI5.

China's monetary system and state banking is overtaking the SWIFT trade clearing system that due to our sanctioning policy has, like computer chips and a host of other things caused the sanctioned-ee's to forge their own systems for trade clearing, computer chips and "things". They don't need or particularly want our bond dollars anymore. Our free lunch for our military complex. And China can do trade without us. They would like to but since we do nothing but antagonize. Why?

The United States monetary financial empire is sputtering due to its very own arrogant hegemony beliefs of dominance. Things can get tough for us little people. Our government doesn't plan things well other than trying to undermine other countries.

https://strategic-culture.su/news/2025/06/02/one-quiet-early-morning-in-beijing-the-dollars-crown-slipped/
I can't help but think of an old song by Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys to compare to our leadership's dilemma.

I Can't Go On This Way...
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rheqGynrt0M

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 03 Jun 2025 18:32:36 GMT
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The pace may be quickening. Financially, militarily, economically and definitely socially, it's been a long time coming. Thinking people around the world are seeing the patterns of what our empire has been doing now maybe coming into fruition of a downfall.

Know one knows for sure when but there's a sense of it being espoused as from Emmanuel Todd, a French anthropologist that has written and spoken of the Liberal West's demise from factors building up over the years that are similar to the Soviet Union's collapse in the early 90's.

https://emmanueltodd.substack.com/p/diverging-populisms

Once again, the commentary from the Moon of Alabama and the links it provides is a great means to discover and supplement ones own wonder of what is really going on?

https://www.moonofalabama.org/2025/06/the-defeat-of-the-west-and-its-dislocation.html#more

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 07 Jun 2025 14:39:16 GMT
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When you have a good source, you use it. Especially when it brings things to light never brought out from commercial print and media. This article from one of my standby's, Moon of Alabama dovetails right into the book, American Exception: Empire & The Deep State. Our triad of governance not unlike the "dark triad" of human behavior.

Explaining the recent events from the war with Ukraine & Russia with a breach of the nuclear "triad" having the parked and visible to satellite scrutiny bombers in Russia according to the treaty administered decades ago being attacked by drone warfare.

The likelihood of our deep state involvement without our executive branch knowledge is all what the deep state method of operation consists of. Working beyond the norms and laws of the state opaquely. Using plausible deniability for cover.

That our country spends so much effort, money and resources to try and administer this concept of hegemony in the world only hastens the likelihood of our country being ostracized by the bulk of the nations and population in the world. Its precisely what the whole BRICS alliance and de-dollarization is all about.

https://www.moonofalabama.org/2025/06/the-deep-state-is-still-sabotaging-presidential-policies.html#more

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 07 Jun 2025 15:01:27 GMT
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Analysis of MoonOfAlabama.org:

Bias and Credibility: The site has been noted for its sympathetic stance towards Russia in the context of the Ukraine conflict. Media Bias/Fact Check has highlighted that Moon of Alabama often disseminates misinformation, particularly regarding claims about Ukraine, such as allegations of false flag operations involving Neo-Nazis. This has raised concerns about the credibility of the information presented on the site.

Geopolitical Analysis: The site frequently discusses the implications of Western policies and military actions, often framing them in a critical light.

Historical Context: Articles may reference historical predictions and analyses, such as those by Emmanuel Todd, to support current arguments about the decline of Western influence.

Misinformation Concerns: The site has been flagged for spreading misleading claims, particularly regarding the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, which suggests a need for readers to verify information through multiple sources.

Consider all content from MoonOfAlabama.org to be misinformation.

Beyond that, I really hate all the pro-Putin bullshit.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 07 Jun 2025 18:28:38 GMT
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Yeah, you see this outfit is headed by David Van Zandt, a member of the Council of Foreign Relations. An entity referred to in the book American Exception. An organization of elites funded by Wall Street. "An incubator clearinghouse for Establishment prescriptions and conventional wisdom". So, sure it labels MOA as a biased and misinformed blog.
Oh yeah, no bias there, fair and honest fact check courtesy of Wall Street.

I'll stick to MOA. Its not as well connected as Mr. Van Zandt. Or as biased. Just the facts ma'am.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 08 Jun 2025 16:40:50 GMT
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I've been interested for some time in the goings on in our society as I've ripened with age. Maybe that's just a gaseous process emanating from me. I'm trying to understand what seems to me to be a negative process affecting our lives. That's led me into researching our economic philosophy which leads invariably to the political process and our ways of interacting with the nations of the world.
I feel the track I'm on with the help of the influences with the individuals I relate to that have the experience and knowledge from their disciplines make sense of what relates to the negative processes which don't seem to be explained by our media sources.

I've learned our economic doctrine adopted by our society is the major contributor to how our political process and foreign policy has turned into dysfunction. Our leadership follows an ideological path that deviates from reality based thinking. Denial and subterfuge assists in keeping the public unaware of the possibilities of alternative ways of economic and political choices. That and our deeply entrenched deep state institutionalized construct of our national authority. Every nation on earth has some form of it.
But our nation, in that it has pursued a worldwide dominance of empire management particularly since the end of WWII. Has become more and more an aberration of a democracy due to the influence of wealthy elites insinuating themselves into the political process. They control the

electoral campaign process completely now. And our economic doctrine has been tailored to resemble the top down style of management as is done with corporate enterprise. Neoliberal, financialized trickle down economics.
Our cost of living has been climbing since the adaptation of this economic doctrine. While our debt both individually and national debt in the form of trade debt, has risen to levels that are untenable. Our infrastructure in key areas is outdated. Our educational, medical, childcare and many other metrics of a stable thriving society show burden and neglect. Yet our authorities feel obliged to spend more than any other nation, or the combination of many other nations towards military procurement and status with over 700 installations in the world.

Our nation is at a point now with the development of the once 3rd world aligning together to counter our tradition of empire colonialism, financial weaponization and warmongering. Our economic fortress of the mighty dollar is being challenged by alternatives that the BRICS nations are developing to counter what we have taken for granted for too long. A free lunch, rentier philosophy of dominance in the world of trade and finance.
What will become of this challenge is being discussed and editorialized by the few and not well known group of people of various journalistic, academic, former governmental, military and various disciplines in society. I for one take solace with following this movement in our world. It goes way beyond our borders as has what our capitalism has done over the centuries. What it has become should be at a crossroads. Because it isn't functioning in the interests of people in the majority.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 10 Jun 2025 12:46:07 GMT
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I wonder with hope and optimism through the deepening gloom of news attributed to our current administration, if that it is unwittingly hastening the process of change. Change in the realization that our capitalism is at the twilight of its usefulness.

When it originated after the French Revolution in the late 18th century replacing Feudalism of the aristocracy there was the hope it would come to embody the slogan "Liberty, equality and fraternity". As it stands now here in the US, it resembles more like the Feudalism it replaced. The aristocracy replaced now are the oligarchy class, our modern lords to we the serfs. The gap of economic inequality now is as deep and wide as then.

When we were an industrial nation there were those issues, but the industrialists realized the government could keep their workforce wages lower by augmenting the cost of living better then they could with social services. By the mid 20th century after the big war our nation was at its peak. And our middle class and living standards as well. That's all changed from the deliberate adoption of finance capitalism settling in our society for good in the 1980's. Its taken us down that path of the Feudal system of centuries past ironically. A government comprised of an ideological shift towards letting the corporate and financial sector plan the economy through the notion of the free market. Which would be only free for the needs of the few that most benefit from that notion.

That's demonstrated by what our administration has inflicted on the world with the tariff debacle. The free market isn't free when you can't dominate it by monopolization. Blanket tariffs are the tool of desperation for an economy in turmoil from a strong rival that has put all the advantages in peril for our finance capitalists. We couldn't take advantage of the Chinese market as we'd conspired. Because they invested in their markets, they built them up. They were not solely trying to capitalize their market for a few at the expense of their huge population. As we have let happen to ours.

We threaten them with war. They are our greatest threat our leaders say. We devise ways to hamper their superior economy unsuccessfully. Theirs is a hybrid economy. A socialist-private enterprise economy. Their government keeps finance controlled by the state. Thus speculation is minimized. Cost of living low.

Our government relinquished that to the (un)free market. For profit. And we languish from it. Capitalism in the hands of the financiers devours itself. Hopefully its at a crossroads. Do we try to keep this false facade in place or come to realize that the word socialism isn't bad after all? It means sharing and working more equally. The freeloaders of society are the ones whom make their profit in their sleep. That takes a strong government to make it so.
The only pretense of strength of our government is the authoritarianism projected at home and abroad just to enable the continuation of this fantasy notion of the free market finance capitalism.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 17 Jun 2025 17:41:00 GMT
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I always look forward to Ben Norton's Geopolitical Economy Report. He is a "reality" based journalist that doesn't follow a strict political ideology to side with. His focus is on what our country's economic and geopolitical practices play out in the world. Our two party system of government is subject to the same critical scrutiny. Particularly because they both follow essentially the same basic economic and geopolitical philosophical temperament regardless of which political party is dominating the legislative agenda.

Insofar as our geopolitical stance is, is where our country stands in the world as a hegemonic world power. Mr. Norton explains to us laymen how it works historically and currently. And the planning involved with carrying out foreign policy. And what that implies in the scheme of things.

This report explains how what's playing out with the new outbreak of war between Iran and Israel. What has been planned behind the scene that our media ignores as they habitually do. This is a long and thorough explanation to this latest in a long, long line of what the United States plans and schemes to keep its hold on controlling our dollar dominance and the continuation of the "petrodollar" for oil trade. The scheme to break up the alliance of the BRICS formation. And war with China.

The Real Reason for the US Israeli War on Iran Explained.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwH780cEcEQ&t=3s

After taking this tutorial in, I for one wonder what good has this policy with foreign relations done for the benefit of the American people? That is, the majority of the American people. Because it seems fairly obvious that the wealth of our nation has the influence of why this policy is perpetuated. The major portion of what the deep state is all about. That our political and security aspect carries out without questioning. Justifying then the genocide in Gaza as just part of the overall part of the picture that our war planning necessitates.

People believe this is necessary apparently. Not having endured the horrors of world war and massive destruction and death on our own shores our country has escaped. I hope it doesn't catch up with us finally with our misadventures in our warmongering that has evolved more now with proxy conscription of making war using other countries to fight and die with our financing.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 22 Jun 2025 19:15:57 GMT
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Mr. Hudson I presume.
Go ahead let your hair down and get out of your comfort zone with what crap our country is and has been up to for decades on end. Its disgusting. Planning, scheming and implementing. It reminds me of the movie, The Goodfellas. Doing whatever they wanted to do. They had it all and nobody could touch them. Till it all came down on them.

Michael Hudson: Why America Is at War with Iran:

https://www.nakedcapitalism.com/2025/06/michael-hudson-why-america-is-at-war-with-iran.html
P.S. Herman Khan back then was the prototype for the character Dr. Strangelove.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 24 Jun 2025 12:26:50 GMT
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The U.S. no longer exports industry — it exports debt. As finance capitalism collapses, the global majority is choosing production over predation.

From Empire to Exit.

https://michael-hudson.com/2025/06/from-empire-to-exit/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 24 Jun 2025 15:06:25 GMT
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Trump Lures Iran into "Peace" trap. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSMSuVzwvMs

Brian Berletic unpacks the treachery that the US has used to lull nations into compliancy before being traumatized by military or financialized warfare.
Russia wouldn't buy it with a ceasefire in Ukraine. The west wants to "freeze" that conflict, re-arm and continue with trying to deplete Russia at a later date since Ukraine is being militarily dismantled currently by attrition.

Iran is part of the overall plan as Brian has laid out and Michael Hudson has laid out and Ben Norton has laid out showing the planning through policy papers for long term strategy trying to keep the hegemony of the US intact.

Lying and deceit are all a part of our national and international policy to maintain a system of dominance and advantage that is undemocratic. The majority of the world is slowly waking up to realizing how untrustworthy the United States has become. That our financial imperialism is an unsafe policy to invest with.

The empire is slowly dismantling itself the more it tries to keep up its dominance.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 24 Jun 2025 16:41:43 GMT
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I've watched the middle-east conflicts through my lifetime and thought of it as a sad war between fanatic Moslems and Israel. I don't think it's the common people that are to blame - I think it's the politicians and fanatics driving that perpetual conflict. Jews, Christians and Moslems should consider themselves like-minded, but the mentally sick ones don't and they cause strife. Other than that, I don't have an opinion on events in the middle east.

But I do have my finger on the pulse of the conflict in Ukraine and it is caused solely by Putin. It isn't the west. You may say America and Europe had fingers in stuff in other parts of the world, but not there. We should have, in my opinion, but we didn't. At least not 'til now, and we're a

little late.

That's just how it is, my friend.

Let me give you just one of a million examples. Back in the late 1990s, I considered buying a Volga and having it shipped here. I wanted to put a blown big block in it and wrinkle-wall back

it would be really cool.

Well, days passed and I didn't get around to doing that. I spent my hot-rod dollars on my Cutlass and eventually bought an Impala. But I never stopped thinkin' about the Volga...

Then later I learned that Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton tried to smooth-over relations with the Russians with a "Russian Reset" campaign. I don't suppose it's ever a bad thing to improve relations with anyone, but my point is that American political attention to Russia and Ukraine is so abysmally slight that we didn't even take the time to pay a translator a hundred bucks to make sure we got the word right.

We gave the Russian Foreign Minister a cute little Staples-like-that-was-easy button with what we

Caught my eye 'cause of my fun Volga phrase. Still think that would have been cool on a funny car based on a Volga.

Point is, we ain't into it here. We don't have a clue what's going on there. Not at the everyman level and not even at the highest political levels. It's not a sinister plot. It's a comedy of errors.

Odessa, Ukraine, at the top of the Potemkin stairs, right by the statue of Duke de Richelieu (in a jacket, just for fun):

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 24 Jun 2025 20:30:32 GMT
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I guess you can buy one of those vintage Volga's if you're willing to pay import taxes. I'd be interested in the Ladas's SUV's. https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=TebnQUnZkks

I know we can't reconcile our differences about Ukraine, Putin and such. I respect your views but I don't believe them. It's too big a scale of human issues to be understood by the involvement by means of friends and travel to understand the nuances causing what has unfortunately transpired.

It's taken me over 60 years of life in this country to be able to grasp some of what is causing world affairs. And as I've pointed out early on. I've done a 180 on how I've come to view that war and how it came about. Through my personal investigations.

I've come to realize that our country, unfortunately is the source of a great deal of the strife in the world. I think some very learned, sincere and growing group of people are bringing this out by alternative media. I'm grateful its available as such and hope it becomes more mainstream.

Here's a couple of links that show there is some dissent in Ukraine with the leadership brought forth by a Ukrainian political scientist in a book published recently.
https://the307.substack.com/p/ukrainian-political-scientist-exposes
And an interesting blog called Events in Ukraine about Zelensky's youth and post Soviet society.
https://eventsinukraine.substack.com/p/portrait-of-the-joker-as-a-young

The Middle East is a disaster by the United States own selfish making. Principally from the creation of Israel. And our petrodollar fetish. All very ugly and all our doings exclusively.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 24 Jun 2025 22:05:41 GMT
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When I was over there, I bought pistons and other car parts for a Lada. Kinda just wanted to show my American hotrod buddies what the Russkis were dealing with.

The Volga would have just looked cool being tubbed.

Here's the deal: I was over there way back, not long after the wall fell. I wondered back then why we weren't more involved, and kinda thought probably there were higher-level diplomats and negotiations between politicians and other things I didn't understand. I thought that the evolution of time would prove that.

Decades have passed since then. I've watched the Russians and other former-Soviet states since long before most other Americans cared. And what I saw proved to me that I was wrong about any sort of higher-level anything. Our highest levels literally couldn't even spell. Can you believe the lack of engagement, attentiveness and well any sort of concern showed when they made that "reset" button?

And even less intelligent or informed than that are all these pro-Putin, Zelensky-bashing bloggers and journalists. These nut-cases just want to hear themselves talk, and worse than being flat-out wrong, they are irresponsible. Quite frankly, it is downright evil for them to spew their nonsense.

Let me make this plain: Those bloggers don't know shit. I mean, they are completely clueless,

and just make up stuff based on the propaganda they read from Putin. They can't even do that - they have to run it through a translator, 'cause they don't know Russian.

So you and I agree on one thing - incompetence and misjudgment. What we don't agree with are the responsible parties. You somehow have given Putin a pass on this and I do not. I personally know people that have died there, and I know who is responsible for their deaths:

But the brave men and women of Ukraine seem to be doing pretty well keeping Putin's war dogs at bay.

Losh and others like him in Ukraine are ready for Putin's murdering slaves:

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 25 Jun 2025 14:16:28 GMT
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I'm sorry for all the Ukraine's too. They wanted independence from Mother Russia. They got it. But they've also had a long involved history being part of it. Unfortunately they've also been a pawn in this unnecessary dispute. That you can discount and disregard the same as they are bravely holding off the hoards of the Russian enemy. Grinding down their military capability slowly and surely.

But that's a delusion the same as what Europe is doing as far as "re-arming" of NATO by decree by the United States to spend 5% of their GDP on this military boondoggle. Europe's economy, especially Germany is recessional now. That cheap Russian natural gas was eliminated by old Joe, who got this whole shebang going in earnest. So, like here in the US, a military industrial complex is useful to prop up an economy that can't be competitive in the world market with manufacturing due to the cost of living.

Austerity will ensue in Europe as it has in the US. Social services will be cut as in the US.

I just think you deny the responsibility of the big picture to make things fit with your experiences over there. Useful absolutely for getting to know the culture. But inadequate to assess the geopolitical implications that go on between governments.

I'm not letting anyone off the hook. I've just been putting the pieces of the puzzle together with the help and knowledge of learned people that have a grasp of that big picture.

And brother, the blame sure tilts our way. Just as it has in the Middle East, and Latin America and South America with our overt meddling. Sorry, but that is the reality.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 25 Jun 2025 18:44:40 GMT
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Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 26 Jun 2025 12:01:31 GMT
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I think its denial Wayne that challenges your views. You refuse to look at what is so big you won't make shape of it. That is what the bloggers, these people that can see the way in which the geopolitical landscape is changing that coincides with the historical aspect of world affairs.

You see this country you've been to and gotten to know a few of their people that's dear to you. I can understand that. And its been torn apart by your reckoning by a country that its leader you fixate on as the source of it all having been caused. And its that simple.

I just feel your emotional attachment interferes with your great objectivity in this case.

The world is very complex as you do know. And the political world most certainly. Even though its fraught with all kinds of misappropriated thinking. Which is what is going on in Ukraine and the Middle East right now. That the United States is, (as usual) in the thick of it all. And the main instigator.

People like Hudson & Wolff. Old scholars who've studied this nut all their lives. They see this big picture clearly. I'm thankful for having run across them. Too bad our politicians haven't.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 26 Jun 2025 15:56:34 GMT
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It's not denial. Far from it. My view isn't challenged - it's spot on.

Denial is when people think "Putin is OK. He's just doing what he has to do." Or when they think "Ukraine was once Russian, so why not let 'em just go back." That's denial. It's bullshit,

and it's stupid.

I hate to sound arrogant, but I know what I'm talking about. I used to think that my understanding of the culture was just one man's view. But as the years passed, especially when I saw that "reset" button thing or now when I see shit like this getting thrown around, I know now that most people here don't understand. Some bloggers and politicians only make matters worse, 'cause they are so far off the mark.

The internet has become a cesspool of misinformation, and a platform for a ton of folks that don't really have anything meaningful to say. Look at how many "influencers" out there have absolutely nothing substantive to bring to the table but that spew incessantly about nothing. Worse are the ones that make stuff up.

But let me also remind you that it isn't all politicians, journalists and bloggers that have this wrong. In fact, I'd say most around the world get it right. Most around the world agree with the view that I am proposing, which is that Putin has gone off the rails.

Most people see Putin as the aggressor. That includes most of the worlds politicians, journalists and well, OK, most of the bloggers too.

The ones that side with Putin are the minority view here. They are the ones in denial. Some, probably, are a little more like tin-foil-hat-wearing "flat earthers." But I think most are just misinformed and because of that, they're in denial. They're the ones that think, "It's OK. No big deal."

Russia's war on Ukraine is an egomaniac's attempt to steal the state. Putin is a horrible leader for Russia, having turned the whole world against him. He is an irresponsible aggressor, and I think the only reason nations are slow to act against him is a genuine and reasonable concern about Russian nuclear stockpiles. Otherwise, I think Moscow would be bombed into dust, and rightly so.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 26 Jun 2025 19:51:05 GMT
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I think it's just manipulation for most citizens of the United States. This manipulation has kept our economic doctrine in place since the 1980's that has corrupted our ability to thrive in our country. Financial corruption. Political corruption and media corruption.

I'm in the minority for sure. I don't profess having a great intellectual prowess for having come to my views. With this issue and our economic beliefs. But I think I can disseminate dung from Shine Ola. I know every bit in my belief that the reality of the way this world operates is a con job. And that what I've come to perceive, is that the main provocateur of corrupted domestic and

international dysfunction is the United States of America. Not Russia, or China or currently Iran. They are countries that are just resisting our ignorant self serving ways. It's a battle for maintenance of a system that has benefitted an elitist view of privilege. Now in threat of losing its dominance.

I guess we can leave it as the crude add on to the old adage that says: Time will tell... and feet will smell.
Our country's hygiene is lacking.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 26 Jun 2025 22:26:57 GMT
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I absolutely agree that "time will tell." That's always the best source of truth. It always shows itself in time.

One thing I wanted to say here - mostly because I'm so passionate about this - is to make sure that you know I consider you to be a friend. With the talk getting so strong, I wanted to make sure you know that. We've known each other so long, and we're practically neighbors too.

So please don't take this discussion to mean otherwise.

Furthering that, I must say that I've never paid much attention to international politics or to economic sciences. Not that I don't find them to be potentially interesting, it's just that I have plenty of things on my plate, and with them, plenty of things to ponder.

I wanted to qualify myself by saying that. I'm really only strongly opinionated about the Russia/Ukraine aspects of our recent "dungeon" conversations.

On the subject of the Middle East, I just wish that the countries that reside in Mesopotamia and surrounding areas would get along. It's totally naive on my part, since they never have been cool with one another. Even before the modern religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and similarly, even before the Persians and Zoroastrianism, the people of that area have always fought among themselves. All the way back to Sumerian times, they were fighting one another. So my wish for peace there is super naive, and I know it. I try to keep that in mind any time I get riled up about anything going on in that region.

Honestly, I don't really think America even involves itself in the Middle East solely to assist Israel or any other nation, for that matter. I think our biggest motivation there is oil. But I don't find myself wrapped around the axle about that. Maybe it should bother me more, but I admit that it doesn't. I do think we should be more energy independent - turn up the nuclear reactors, optimize solar technologies and "drill baby drill" - do it all. But that's a different discussion.

So when we talk about things going on in the Middle East, I tend to bow out pretty quickly. I feel

like a hippie that just wants everyone to get along. Get out the 1960s chill records, the beads and the mood lamp.

Similarly, when we talk about monetary matters, I'll say what I think but I won't say it with much zeal. I've tended to lean generally towards Adam Smith laissez-faire thinking in general, sort of libertarian, I suppose. But I do recognize that John Maynard Keynes advocated giving things a little push, and his ideas made a lot of sense to me. And further, in the last twenty years or so, I've shifted towards being somewhat protectionist because I can see how a whole industry can be taken over by subsidizing production and taking a loss for a while to gain market share. We have anti-trust laws to protect our population from our own industries doing that, but we do not have the same legal tools to control other countries. Those are the basic things that enter my mind when macro-economics comes into view. My whole basis of opinions can be summed up in one paragraph.

So again, when discussing things about macro-economics, I'll visit for a little while, but I do not get too worked up.

But now this deal about Russia and Ukraine, well that's just something I happen to know a lot about. In my school days, I wouldn't have ever guessed I would know something about that. But as fate has it, I do. Turns out I know more than most of my countrymen. And that's why I'll exercise my voice on that subject.

I still just can't understand why such little effort has been exerted towards engaging Russia. I mean, I do understand how tough it is to do business with them. That's a novi-russki thing. It's the first thing I learned, way back when my career was young and I worked a lot with engineering firms that made stuff for oil exploration, well completions and production. When the Berlin Wall fell, many companies wanted to approach the Russians and do some business. But it was basically impossible because you had to be working with the mob. Early on it had quickly shifted that way.

But while companies may have had difficulty there, I would have expected our government to help Russia and the independent states that spun off. After all, we spent a lot of time, money and human lives to defend against communism. Seems like we would have spent, I don't know, a little bit to help make something good out of the ashes. Yet - with exception of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia - we really just didn't back then.

And much to my surprise, we never even started. All the way up to 2014 when Russia actually began its invasion of Ukraine, we were totally unplugged. And we still are. Our highest-level politicians knew absolutely nothing about what was going on. We apparently weren't hiring knowledgeable advisors, or we weren't listening to the ones we hired that were knowledgeable. And I can see that is still a problem today.

It's not a particular political party that has messed this up. Both sides are equally ignorant. It's like we just really don't care. I actually think it's not "like that" - it is that. We just don't care. We cared about the Soviet Union when we saw them as a threat. But once the Berlin Wall fell, we stopped seeing them as a threat and they just became invisible to us.

I wish we had seen them as an opportunity, when the new threat - novi-russki - was still fairly

small and weak. It would have been much easier to work through the corruption problems when they were just small-time thugs. We had an opportunity back then to have helped shaped their economy in a way that helped us do trade with them, and that simultaneously could have helped their people have nations that were less corrupt. But we didn't do that, and now they've grown empowered and entitled. They're like a vampire coven with Putin as its alpha leader, and with plenty of evil elders and initiates.

So in a way, you and I are in a sideways agreement here. When you talk about nefarious empire-building, I sort of agree with you but in reverse. It was horrible for us to have been so blind to what was happening in Russia, and to have done nothing about it. We didn't push Ukraine into NATO or even assist them into joining and we probably should have.

For that matter, I think it would have been useful to have assisted Russia to educate its people on free-markets. That way the general population could benefit from the stocks they were given rather than to hand them over to the novi-russki for the mere price of a loaf of bread. Back when Gorbachev and Yeltsin were in power, we might have been able to do that. Might have even been able to do it during the first few years of Putin's reign.

But we didn't. We did nothing. That's why I think it's crazy-tree-hugging talk to say America pushed Ukraine into anything. We did almost nothing there, at least not until February 2022, when Russia started bombing Ukraine's civilian population. A little late by then - about 30 years too late. That's nefarious, in my opinion. We have spent our time focusing on things that are much less beneficial to world trade and to American security. We've allowed Putin to become what he has, and we've done almost nothing about it.

So having said all that, I will reiterate my statement that the folks saying pro-Putin stuff are absolute nut-cases. They are flat-earthers and shills selling propaganda. That's most certainly the case for the eastern pro-Putin bloggers. They are just political hacks, people that Putin has control over, either financially or through intimidation. Others - particularly in the west - probably do it for a weird ego-boost, wanting to have something to talk about, to pretend to be experts. Our journalists and bloggers here that are pro-Putin are most likely of that type. Those are the real flat-earthers. They just make stuff up, mixing together Putin propaganda with re-written history or complete fabrication.

It's all just too easy to see. Nothing difficult about it. No need to read between the lines. Putin invaded Ukraine because he wanted to steal the nation and call it his own. No motive other than that. None needed. Putin's motive is pure and simple. He wants Ukraine. Nobody "pushed" him into it. He is the one that has always been the pusher.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 27 Jun 2025 18:10:51 GMT
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Hey Wayne. For me a debate online with decorum is preferable I think to direct face to face interaction. Because emotion always gets involved. Training in debate and diplomacy is needed for direct debate. I appreciate being able to voice my reasoning in this forum. I've come about it

like you have over the years by experiences with revisions and most with a lot of study.

I find that things are a lot more interconnected than compartmentalized. So, macroeconomics and foreign policies go hand in hand. Along with philosophy, history, technological, psychological and of course the boogie man itself politics. Which has made it interesting to me. That this interconnection has a very profound affect on our lives. My main mentors are the ones I mention most frequent. That along with other people who have used the blogging platform of communication. Of course, just like our mainstream journalism and media, you have to be discriminating for what you take in. But I don't think that's too difficult with someone with an open mind.

Now, you say the Middle East has fought among themselves for centuries. Consider also the European continent over those centuries. Constant warring among themselves. Eventually drawing in most of the planet from the last century's warring. So that's moot about the Middle East. Peoples, nations, dynasties, empires just as in Europe doing the human preoccupation with domination and advantage over one another. And it hasn't abated into the 21st century.

When you mention how our country hasn't had much to do with Ukraine & Russia. Well, that is part of the whole policy structure our government has promoted. We have had an adversarial attitude with that part of the world longer than we've been alive. The whole cold war scenario and all. And from what I've studied is that this has tied into our whole fetish of the military industrial complex. And our doctrine of economic thought.

When you start looking into that, you can see the gulf between what the seminal writings of Karl Marx critique of capitalism and the revolution in Russia towards socialism that they interpreted with communism has formed our country's geopolitical strategy in that part of the world. Later with China following suit.

The patterns of how the United States has asserted in its foreign policy, particularly since the end of the great war, has been consistently at odds with any socialist brand of governance. With the build up of our military and our financial dominance being used to try and control the perception of it spreading out in the world. Using the dollar's dominance, our exorbitant privilege as it's been groused about by foreign countries.

In the Middle East our petrodollars exchange has been at the heart of controlling the oil trade in this part of the world. When Israel was created, it had a dual purpose of promoting a Jewish homeland and also being a military stronghold in the region for our oil interests. Our longstanding geopolitical goal has been to reign in the governments of the states in the region that have run contrary to our control.

Currently the sovereign nation of Iran, whom we had control with from the overthrow of a fairly elected official in the early 50's with a dictatorship of the Shah that was overthrown in the late 70's. Has been our purpose ever since to regain that country's compliant control. The ruse has been their nuclear program which they have complied with international agencies. Israel has not. So the double standard of our foreign policy shows in the Middle East particularly. Especially with Israel committing genocide on the Palestinians.

When you look critically at how the United States has conducted itself in its foreign policy. With

study you see a blatant pattern of conduct that is consistent throughout the world. Over a long time period. Our CIA is our rogue agency that conducts illegal and clandestine activity all over the world. Our diplomacy follows lock step with their conduct.

Meanwhile our influence is wearing thin with the greater portion of inhabitants of this planet. And developments are occurring to challenge our dominance both financially and militarily. This is the time will tell element.

I think what I've learned has merit and can stand up to scrutiny. Despite the propaganda to counter it. It's definitely swimming against the current. But I hope that this movement going on in the world will get more and more traction. Until this information can become more fairly distributed by media and journalism. The undercurrent of blogs will have to suffice. So I think they do have a place in absence of good journalism and a media essentially under control by financial interests. Discounting it out of hand is obscuring what relevant and crucial information is available from it.

So just as you are passionate Wayne about that part of the world you got to know. I'm passionate about the way our country has conducted itself. I think and I know it has to change.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 28 Jun 2025 12:54:56 GMT
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Russia's war on Ukraine is an egomaniac's attempt to steal the state. Putin is a horrible leader for Russia, having turned the whole world against him. He is an irresponsible aggressor, and I think the only reason nations are slow to act against him is a genuine and reasonable concern about Russian nuclear stockpiles. Otherwise, I think Moscow would be bombed into dust, and rightly so.

It's all just too easy to see. Nothing difficult about it. No need to read between the lines.
 Putin invaded Ukraine because he wanted to steal the nation and call it his own. No motive other than that. None needed. Putin's motive is pure and simple. He wants Ukraine.
 Nobody "pushed" him into it. He is the one that has always been the pusher.

Its when you say these kind of statements Wayne that I tend to think your objectivity is approaching naivety. They're statements of passion but little substance. Sure its true and granted that public sentiment to the war in Ukraine and Putin in general follow a western narrative that's dominantly employed by our governments long standing propaganda. Its been a part of our cultural upbringing.

You mention always not understanding why our nation has never tried to promote good relations with Russia or Ukraine. Obfuscating our nation's committed policy of breaking up the nation of Russia. Dismissing policy papers detailing methods of the application of financial, and military subversion towards that aim.

You know. Slavery used to be an established norm in our country. The framers of our constitution employed the use of slaves. But there was a moral stigma that a few in our society wrote about and spoke about that was the minority. It took a century for that policy of dysfunction to be challenged to the point of civil war. And a century and more of Jim Crow and segregation and intolerance to try and right what was morally wrong from the get go.

So being in the minority addressing what is essentially one nation, the United States, bullying the world out of its institutionalized idealism of maintaining its position of dominance and privilege has no place in this world any longer. Its understood that things change slowly and are fraught with setbacks.

This struggle with the goings on in Ukraine, the Middle East and the impending showdown with China as is written and bloviated in media is all part of that. Its described as the desperation and manipulations of the American empire fizzling out under its own weight of our losing control of what we never had a right to control anyway.

That the world can operate without one nation imposing its will through financial sanctioning and military adventurism. That having 7 to 8 hundred military installations throughout the world is perverse and wasting its own society's potential to thrive. That imperialism and colonizing for the sake of a financial free lunch is intolerable.

Time will tell.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 28 Jun 2025 14:27:56 GMT
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Dude, Rusty! You're a smart guy! So how in the world do you not get this?!!

Don't listen to anyone else right now. Just look at the facts, without anyone else's opinions - including mine - and especially without having the nonsense spouted by pro-Putin (or anti-West) bloggers in your head. Just look at the facts:

1. Ukraine is an independent sovereign nation and has been since 1991.

2. It has (actually had) good relationships with both Russia and Western nations in Europe and the U.S.A. Still does have good relations with most of the world but most (probably should say all) Ukrainians now hate their former brothers in Russia. That's a big deal - and a huge mistake on Putin's part - because while the Ukrainian people want independence from Russia, until Putin bombed the hell out of them, they felt a great kinship with Russia. They now feel betrayed by their former countrymen and absolutely hate them. That's actually a side-point, albeit an important one. The main point is that Ukraine had good relations with Russia and the West. It is solely and completely Putin's fault that the Russian relationship is now poisoned.

3. Ukraine has its own freely elected government, which tended to swing left and right, just like ours. But by "left and right" here, I mean pro-Russian or pro-Western.

4. We can assume there was meddling from outside nations. I say "assume" here 'cause both you and I would say we "knew" there was meddling, and we would probably tend to blame one side or the other more. So let's just say we "assume" there was meddling.

5. Now here's the big one: Putin sent in troops. Russia is killing people in Ukraine. They are bombing the hell out of cities, and they are hitting population centers, homes, businesses and energy producers.

6. And to add to that, Putin claims that he has the right to take all of Ukraine. The world could see that he felt that way by his actions. But he actually admitted it, declaring that at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum last week.

That says everything. So I reiterate:

Russia's war on Ukraine is an egomaniac's attempt to steal the state. Putin is a horrible leader for Russia, having turned the whole world against him. He is an irresponsible aggressor, and I think the only reason nations are slow to act against him is a genuine and reasonable concern about Russian nuclear stockpiles. Otherwise, I think Moscow would be bombed into dust, and rightly so.

It's all just too easy to see. Nothing difficult about it. No need to read between the lines. Putin invaded Ukraine because he wanted to steal the nation and call it his own. No motive other than that. None needed. Putin's motive is pure and simple. He wants Ukraine. Nobody "pushed" him into it. He is the one that has always been the pusher.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 30 Jun 2025 16:33:28 GMT
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All you are stating Wayne are superficial facts to the reasons for the state of Ukraine is in now. You have to approach Ukraine, the Middle East and China from a Statecraft level. They are ALL interrelated towards how our government conducts its Statecraft into the world. With the help of our allies that are like vassals to our government and its dealings in the world.

You my friend would be well served to broaden your own scope of understanding. And there are people in this world with far more knowledge of how our government works here in the US and in Russia. You can't fathom how Ukraine was used in this terrible mess. The Maidan overthrow in 2014. The civil war in the eastern Donbas region. All contributing to the eventual special military operation.

We are doing this same crap with Iran. The pretext is their nuclear program. It has nothing to do with that. It is their self determination along with China, Russia and most of the BRICS country's desire to counter American hegemony with the dollar.

Our history is long fraught with this kind of subversion throughout the world. Its real and quantifiable.
But your belief's are your own. Not mine. Granted most Americans are hornswoggled by our worthless media and a government that projects false doctrine. I follow what makes sense out of the senselessness that our country is perpetrating. At home and abroad.

Sorry we can't see eye to eye on this. I do love your loudspeakers and trust your technical knowledge. But I just think you're out of your element with this stuff.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 30 Jun 2025 18:08:18 GMT
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Most of the world considers Putin to be the aggressor.

The bloggers and journalists that promote an alternate position have to twist reality to do so. It's just so plain to see.

When Putin started bombing, he showed exactly who and what he is. When he says "Ukraine is mine," he shows who he is.

The subject of this thread is "Empire" and most of what has been written here is about unfair and nefarious empire builders. Putin's Russia is the biggest example of that.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 01 Jul 2025 17:07:52 GMT
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The War Beneath the War.
Our country spends a huge amount of effort in trying to maintain its dominance. At the expense of the public's wellbeing. Grotesquely now successfully passed in the Senate to push through a bill now to sustain billionaires keeping their tax advantage. While rising the deficit and pushing people at the lowest margins of life and health off of Medicaid. Freeloaders right?

Our latest project is Iran while we keep Ukraine simmering on the back burner. Our officials have stated emphatically that China though is our true ENEMY. China, which has not intervened with any country since the Indo Vietnam war that lasted a whole month back in the 70's.

Our country is obsessed with its perception of being the worlds dominant nation. It has to do with our dollars trade advantage that recycles them back into our country in the form of bonds and T-bills. It has been shown that this has helped PAY for our military industrial complex and our war mongering. Its being threatened by the BRICS alliance which we are ardently trying to break apart. Our corporate military manufacturers, our banking and our rich bond holders are part of the International Monetary Fund & World Bank depend on their free lunch from this arrangement. They influence our political process with their hold on campaign finance.

Michael Hudson teased all this out back in the 1970's with his book Super Imperialism. Its been used perversely as a template since going off the gold standard back then as a means to "finance" our military and financial domination.

This is an interview with Michael by Ben Norton on his blog The Geopolitical Economy Report discussing current events in the world and how they're linked to our subversive attempts to circumvent sovereign nations to create alternatives to the United States and its allies financial and military hold counter to PEACEFUL existence.

https://michael-hudson.com/2025/07/the-war-beneath-the-war/

Maybe try to read and learn some how this world really works.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by gofar99 on Wed, 02 Jul 2025 02:12:54 GMT
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Hi Everyone, I have been following this thread for a while and resisted chiming in. But it seems to me that there are solid differences in opinions and none will budge. It is also getting a bit off track and becoming personal. I seem to recall that this forum was based on respect and decorum. If I err then I will move on. My thought is that this might be a good time to end this thread as it doesn't seem to be productive and does not seem to be headed in a positive direction. Just my two cents.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 02 Jul 2025 15:05:25 GMT
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This thread mainly concerns our country's degradation to itself and its stewardship of world interaction. If Ukraine wasn't a part of the overall pattern of how our country has planned and perpetrated its geopolitical influence then I doubt that there would have been this exchange of back and forth that makes your referee instinct Bruce come to comment.

My approach to expressing my views obviously includes links and references to people that I feel helps to back up my views. Because they have helped me craft my views. What means do people have in this world to help them form opinions and overall views? We have of course personal experience. But how comprehensive is that? Don't we need to disseminate through information that we feel we can trust and makes logical sense to ourselves? Or do we just use faith.

When our sources are given a blanket "fake news" for being reliable and trustworthy, do we just shrug our shoulders and acquiesce no contest?

I don't think now or ever on this forum that I've been overtly demeaning to anyone. If so, I apologize.

I just as I've stated before to you Bruce feel that this Dungeon area, which states, "Anything goes, as long as it's legal", is an appropriate place for this kind of discussion.

I admire Wayne tremendously for his work and this forum. But I feel this subject about our country is important to where the human race is right now in this world. I believe its at a juncture. From a long time period that now our society and wellbeing is breaking down unnecessarily from the forces of the big picture of governments and ideologies clashing.

I'll debate anyone over this. As I feel that most people have been manipulated by those very forces that this thread is about.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 02 Jul 2025 15:53:03 GMT
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Yeah, I definitely agree with you, Bruce. If Rusty and I hadn't exchanged hugs, so to speak, this discussion would be too much. I usually don't discuss stuff like this in public anyway. Not in public places, and not in public internet sites. I don't even participate in social media for this reason.

I generally agree with Rusty about the main thrust of his views in this thread, which is that there are those that would try to take control of world events and that they shouldn't. There's even math that expresses this, and it's called "power distribution law." When that emerges in sociology, economics and other places, it's called a "scale free network," and there we have too much control in too few hands. Absolute power corrupts, absolutely. At least, that's my opinion.

That idea that "absolute power corrupts absolutely" doesn't die when it hits the American border though. In fact, I would argue that as bad as things can get here, some of the worst stuff I see happens beyond our borders. Not giving us a pass here in America - we're an entitled bunch - but just sayin'.

I think we'd all agree that those who seek to manipulate and control almost always use various

forms of media spin and propaganda to create a narrative. That's why I often suggest on this matter of Putin's Russia to look at the facts one can easily see. Those facts actually show everything one needs to know. Even just one fact says it all:

Putin invaded Ukraine.

He stopped his meddling campaign ('cause it wasn't working) and actually started killing people in an independent sovereign country.

There are other places in the world where nefarious "empire building" is going on. Rusty has spoken about those. But this one is Putin's fault. He's the aggressor and his nation's actions are as guilty as anyone else mentioned in this "Empire" thread.

I'd argue that Russia is worse than anyone else right now, 'cause Ukraine is entirely innocent. They didn't plot schemes against Russia, and they didn't send terrorists to kill people in Moscow. They didn't play economic games. They did nothing bad to Russia and even considered themselves to be brothers until Putin started escalating his egomaniacal efforts to control Ukraine and ultimately to take it by force.

So my hope is that if this discussion continues, it will do so with no further mention of Ukraine.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 03 Jul 2025 15:17:04 GMT
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Well I'll give a glimpse of the thrust of mine is in this thread through my mentors which is with the notion of ideological entitlement. Our country has been the thrust of financial sanctioning to sovereign nations for a good long time. It's been described as our "free lunch", and "weaponization of the dollar". As the astute economist Michael Hudson and other progressive economists have pointed out that the world currency of the dollar has allowed for and perpetuates a means for the United States to run its now enormous trade deficit. Simply by issuing bonds and bills for IOU's in goods exported to our shores.

Which also has helped pay for our overblown military complex and seeding the world with military bases all over the world. Why would we do such expenditure? Based on the wars we have committed to with boots on the ground and by proxy it points towards a means of sustaining our financial imperialism. Our foreign policy has been likened to the tactics of the Mafia. Do what we want or we'll invade you, bomb you, topple your government subversively and replace your duly elected officials with a dictatorship. Someone more malleable to our thinking.

It's taken decades and the buildup of one country, China, to put cracks in the fortress of our hegemony of world financial domination. But China now is THE largest economy and it has formed with other countries a hedge against our mighty weaponized dollar. Our sanctioning and threatening and absconding by freezing accounts and taking gold from sovereign nations that used our banking as a depository have wised up.

And the one ace in the deck we thought we could use to keep countries in line with was the SWIFT banking clearing portal for trade balancing. We could deny countries from using it. China and the other BRICS countries have developed a superior method for this that bypasses our weaponized dollar dominance. CIPS, (Cross-boarded Interbank Payment System).

And this is what is spurring our country's mad desire to try and subvert.

Looking at the fees is telling for what our banking free lunch is all about. This new system is all around superior to the SWIFT system is and far less expensive to use. This is our crusade against China, Russia and the rest of the BRICS systems amounts to. Finance capitalism's desperate attempt to maintain its hold on the world.

We have only diminished ourselves more by all this. We are de-industrialized, in debt to our eyeballs and throwing out aggression to the world with our latest insult, the trade war with everyone.

The Empire is a hoax. As is the belief that one country in eastern Europe and it's leader is the main provocateur of conflict. What is implied as obvious to the public, but is the cover for the plausible deniability used all the time by the empire for its devious doings under the radar of truth.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 04 Jul 2025 19:39:04 GMT
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Happy 4th of July from the tyranny of the British imperial colonialism that led to our revolution from it.
They taught us well though those Brits. We took over as the tyrannical imperial colonialists from what was their empire.

So happy hopeful birthday to the BRICS nations that are challenging our fray mouth way of life and best wishes they succeed. We need our comeuppance. Maybe from the loss of being top dog to just another hound in the kennel might just be the road to salvation.

The little old country of Vietnam. That place we didn't really give a damn but fought a brutal war with them. Killing so many and bringing a righteous end to our military conscription. Are thriving now as a socialist nation much like China. They were being courted by our nation to try and subvert their being full fledged BRICS members out of our petty cold war with the Chinese. It didn't workout like we planned. Good for them and BRICS.

https://geopoliticaleconomy.com/2025/07/04/brics-expansion-population-gdp-vietnam/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 11 Jul 2025 15:24:34 GMT
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Maybe it may just be me on this tiny forum that senses that our country is causing the lion's share of dissension and chronic conflict in this world? Are Americans so isolated and complacent and gullible from what is happening that it would take conflict to reach our shores before we take notice?

Well that seems to be a general view though to how Americans view the world. We only have two rather well behaved countries bordering our sovereign space and two big oceans isolating us. Compare that over time to Europe, Russia and Asia. South America and Africa. Then there's the complacency of being a consumer society with all means of choices and temptation through advertising and the lure of immediate gratification through credit. We've been the center of the universe for a good century or more.

But at this juncture now the public is beset with issues of economic degradation. What's causing that? All the public gets informed with is that there's outside forces that are contributing to this issue. Like "China" and "BRICS". And our problems with debt have been brought on by personal choices that insinuates lack of personal discipline.

So our leadership claims that to deal with these issues we must invest in more commitment in a military deterrent to counter those outside forces. And at home we must cut out the wasteful entitlements that our society expects to make ends meet with the cost of living driven so high. Somehow it's the public's fault by being so lax in being consumer oriented and credit undisciplined. All while being bombarded with enticement ads and easy credit to fulfill their wishes. Never mind that it's our trade debt that is the true danger of default. All debt made in a sovereign nation can be forgiven, wiped out. It's foreign debt that gets tricky. And the faith in our dollar is shrinking internationally. Our banking too, which can collapse from overextension from chronic speculating. Everything can snowball into a deep recession and or depression.

How many might consider that our societal problems and our foreign policy have a similar root in how our economic philosophy is centered around a government which decided decades back to de-industrialize and ship manufacturing abroad to those backward 3rd world countries, "like China". And conversely and purposefully subjugate the government itself out of economic policy making. The market will take care of things. And big banking and Wall Street will call the shots by planning the economy.
You won't find much talk of how this system operates. And why do we keep using it as if there is virtually no other way to do things. Any other way is taboo especially if the word socialism is mentioned. We don't want to wind up like China, a communist country with no personal freedoms and slave labor. Isn't that the crap we're fed? Along with the crap about needing a bigger, deadlier, more expensive than ever military to counter all the threats in the world we imagine or

make up.

Meanwhile our country has been virtually and constantly at war or planning for war or instigating war or using proxy military's for war since the 2nd half of the 20th century. All in a narrow minded concept of maintaining a world advantage and dominance that favors our wealthy elite. I'd say something is definitely wrong with that logic. But we deflect that notion with, well there's other countries doing that too. Who? What other country other than ours has been involved in so many international conflicts and regime changes by subversive revolutions? By realizing there is a pattern in all of this should give a clue that the ring leader is the United States of America.

We are not so powerful or omnipotent anymore but don't act it. While we were luxuriating so high with the privileges of high finance making a few people in our society wealthier than Egyptian gods. Other countries were wising up to our game that we play. They've banded together to counter our dishonesty in contrast to international laws and ways. And our leaders and wealthy oligarchy want to throw a wrench in their works.

And who does all this charade serve? Has it made our peoples livelihood more secure? Are we bulging at the seams with a happy, healthy and prosperous public? Maybe the top 10%. But It is definitely serving the interests of the few who call the shots in our economy. Our oil oligarchs, our banking and military complex oligarchs and a host of other influential wealthy elite that feel the world is their oyster that better not be tampered with. Or we'll sic our bad-assed military on you or some proxy military we can supply after all the sanctioning, regime change and financial skullduggery doesn't soften a country up enough to satisfy compliance with our way of keeping our status on top.

It's a matter of time that this charade will eventually bankrupt our society. But our politicians and definitely our wealthy elites want to keep on till that eventuality takes place. They don't care. Extreme wealth warps their minds and they believe they are in their position because they are almost ordained to be. They've "earned it" like the famous old Smith Barney commercial.

If that sounds like class warfare on them. Forget that. It's been the opposite forever. Wealth manipulating politics is as old as them thar hills. It permeates human history. And trying to cancel their hold on the electorate is one of the hardest endeavors a society can achieve. But it's necessary if we want to really claim we are a democracy. As it is, it's not. We are closer to the feudalism of old that the notion of capitalism would replace.

The BRICS countries that have formed with its roots in the 1950's Non Aligned Movement at the Bandung conference have the economic power now that the fragile Asian-African countries then didn't have. But the aim is the same. Hedging against the American led colonialist and imperialist countries that exploited that part of the world. And still feel compelled to maintain that hegemony.

The tables have turned on the great American power brokering. But we still have influence through our means of subversive subterfuge using bribes, threats and proxy warmongering to try and keep our hold on this power we have no rights to hold. Thus those outside forces are real and they are pitted against our notions of control. But they are interested in sharing the riches of the world by cooperation, respect of sovereign territory and the ethical international adherence to the laws that were originally the bylaws of the United Nations. That we routinely ignore and break with

our rules based order. Our rules, our advantage.

Our country at this point in time, is on the wrong side of history. What say thee?

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 12 Jul 2025 14:32:46 GMT
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Americans as a whole because of our geographic location, our government and a passive unchallenging corporate media and print regard the rest of the world without much reflection. Those people over in the Middle East have been fighting each other for centuries. They just can't get along. Israel has a right to defend itself. Israel is part of the holy land, they're just trying to reclaim it rightfully but those terrorists are making that difficult.

The terrorists are in fact, the Israelis themselves that the USA supports unflinchingly for our selfish reasons. That they are committing genocide is considered antisemite to claim. Just the narrative spin our empire managers use to deflect accountability.

In the Middle East and all over the world over decades of our empire projects we have created instability with sovereign countries ability to make progress for themselves through debt peonage by the IMF and banana republic colonialism. Or they have had their governments hijacked by regime changes. Or outright war through false pretenses.

I wonder how many American understand what the BRICS alliance is and what it is based on? Seeing what accounts for it in media, a negative connotation would be ascribed to this organization. But its a vital case of the majority of this worlds peoples and nations that wants to pursue commerce and self determination for their benefit by what the principles of democracy is supposed to be about.

What's standing in as an impediment to this notion is the USA and it's vassals of the G7 countries. The free market was free for our country when we had the advantage. But monopolization has reared its ugly head of selfishness. In our own country and what we want to control throughout the world. We cannot compete through fair trade thus we use subversive methods. Using now tariff extortion to try and wrestle some advantage. And it isn't working.

So we're living a lie.

https://geopoliticaleconomy.com/2025/07/10/trump-threat-brics-us-dollar-western-imperialism/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 12 Jul 2025 17:09:46 GMT

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This article speaks to what seems so dumbfounding for why the United States is placing so much priority with funding and resources on international relations rather than focusing on building itself up internally to meet the demand on a new and changing world economy.

But it kind of explains why the current administration has attempted to do by trimming government agencies down and with the big bill passed recently to satisfy the political donor base by cutting government spending domestically imperiling the poorest of the poor using Medicaid serves as a means to justify spending on the prescribed military budget now over a trillion dollars.

And this is just what is so creepy about this empires priorities that is reckless, feckless and mean spirited to our own people and the tranquility of the world itself. Like a mental illness it seems. Twisted and tormented.

Anyway this is the blueprint that our empire managers are using to conduct its madness.

https://journal-neo.su/2025/07/09/us-still-dangerous-despite-limits-of-military-production/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 13 Jul 2025 16:40:25 GMT
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Another clear indication of the Tariff War being used on our beloved allies to further our war machine diplomacy. Is by making the allies compelled to invest more of their own national treasure going from their own publics benefit to the dementia of war mongering.

The US is focusing its hegemonic vanity on Asia now and want's our partners in crime there to boost their commitment towards depleting social services the same as what America has been committed to for years at home. Those wasteful social services for health, transportation, education etc. Need to take a back seat towards "peace through strength"! But the overall strategy is a bankrupt ethical void of neoliberal doctrine combined with imperialism and dominance by subterfuge.

I submit that this is like a deeply emotional perverted psychosis. The dark triad of human behavior. That seems to be a mass induced phenomena not unlike how Nazi Germany succumbed to its national identity perversion in the 1930's. And now how Israeli's have similarly succumbed in kind like family's do that are locked in the inheritance of emotional and physical violence. Being focused on their Palestinian "Final Solution".

To me, this is a point in time that our world is going through that can go positive or much more negative due to this mass hysteria being generated by our country. But so far what is playing out is showing that negativity is not losing any steam.

https://archive.ph/d4ZxW

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 15 Jul 2025 16:55:00 GMT
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These are my thoughts. I'm sorry if they offend anyone. My writing this is out of my concern of how our own country conducts itself in this world. I feel its unjustifiable and barbarous. Here's a take on the death we have afflicted in this world since post WW2 concerning just the major conflicts we've directly been involved in. Not accounting for the "minor" skirmishes out of the 201 conflicts initiated by the United States since the big war last century.

THE KOREAN WAR: 3-4 MILLION DEAD

VIETNAMESE AND INDOCHINA WAR: A TOTAL OF 5.5 MILLION DEAD

AMERICA'S WARS IN THE MIDDLE EAST - 4 MILLION OR MORE DEAD

DEATH TOLL KILLED IN AMERICA'S "WAR ON TERROR" AFTER 2001: 2 - 4.5 MILLION

From the website World Future Fund:
https://www.worldfuturefund.org/Reports/Imperialism/usmurder.html

We could split hairs on these numbers but nonetheless it shows that the United States has in its role as the hegemonic "Leader of the Free World" exhibited a terrible toll on people far from our shores. And, it continues to this day. Our government says it want's to actually go to war with China. Try and wrap that around your noggin. Ridiculous!

But this is the cult mentality of our deep state, our political establishment and our oligarchy. It has been a planned out priority among this triad of power brokering. With policy papers written as guidelines from the think tank organizations supplementing our legislative bodies, military and our foreign diplomacy.

I think this is quantifiably NUTS! As a society that is in decline now, we still adhere to this mentality like the band playing on the Titanic. I'd like for our society to be proactive in countering this worthless ideology. But, alas.. It may take some terrible calamity to stimulate a groundswell of people fed up with the way thing are.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 17 Jul 2025 16:21:57 GMT

All in all its just, (not) another BRICS in the wall. While the BRICS coalition has come a long way from its formation initially. It has a long way to go still in its ability to out maneuver western, (US) hegemony. Set up long ago after WWII. Using the IMF and World Bank to implement economic rent on the world not in the sphere of influence that the US imposed on that our European and Asian counterparts Australia, New Zealand and Japan vassals kneel to without question.

China and Russia are the two principle cornerstones of BRICS that our empire managers want to somehow break apart to keep our free lunch program going for our oligarchy. China is the main nut to crack out of its impressive rise of economic influence with manufacturing and industrial dominance. The globalization that the US once promoted zealously has come back to hinder our financialized method of creating monopoly rent for our elites benefit. Now free trade is a scourge to them. So extreme protectionist tariffs are being used by our administration as a means to try and pay tribute to our financialized hold on trade.

The key for the BRICS countries to wrestle freedom once and for all is to align their economies similarly like China has by doing a hybrid socialist capitalist economy that is very similar to how our own and Europe did at the onset of industrialization. The classical economists of old figured out that the free rent of the once feudal class was the impediment towards a competitive industrial economy in the world trade. Monopolization has always been a prime feature of capitalism. To corner the market. And then set the price of what the market will allow. Which invariably sets inflation to rise due to capitalist free rentier's imposing higher rents.

This is exactly what is going on inside our own economy as is. And the world market is the pearl in the oyster that our oligarchy wishes to perpetuate. The BRICS coalition is the impediment to that.

Michael Hudson and Richard Wolff discuss that state of what this pivotal point in history is at. It explains so much of what our current chaos in the world is all about. Chaos that our country alone, with a little help of our vassals on our leash are doing.

https://michael-hudson.com/2025/07/brics-vs-the-rentier-economy/

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 18 Jul 2025 11:56:44 GMT

No one speaks so elegantly to the truth of our declining empire as does senior economist Michael Hudson. Now in his mid 80's. His economic philosophy is simple at its root. Classical economics that the early economists of the industrial revolution Adam Smith & David Ricardo championed. They saw the folly of the then feudal system's rentier class as an impediment towards industrial advantage for a nation. Subsidized labor via low cost of living in a society. Taxing the unearned income of the rentier class to keep their influences in government to a minimum.

This philosophy still holds true even today. As with the spectacular rise of China taking only

decades to become the powerhouse of economy today. It's no different than what Great Britain and Europe and the United States did in the 19th century. Except for one aspect even better. China made banking a state run monopoly. A "natural monopoly" that eschews the profit motive from investment that a state run banking system does for helping to plan out an economy. State & private interests combined.

Here Dr. Hudson goes through how the current Global Majority. The BRICS nations can take the shackles of finance capitalism off of their backs with the ability to grow and be true sovereign democratic nations following international laws and norms.
Our own nation does not have the wisdom yet to realize this virtue. Here I copied & pasted in full. Minus the diagrams.

Michael Hudson: How the Global Majority can free itself from US financial colonialism

Economist Michael Hudson describes how China created an alternative to the Western neoliberal order, and how the Global South can challenge the rent extraction of US-centered financial colonialism.

Industrial capitalism was revolutionary in its fight to free Europe’s economies and parliaments from the hereditary privileges and vested interests that survived from feudalism. To make their manufactures competitive in world markets, industrialists needed to end the land rent paid to Europe’s landed aristocracies, the economic rents extracted by trade monopolies, and interest paid to bankers who played no role in financing industry. These rentier incomes add to the economy’s price structure, raising the living wage and other business expenses, thus eating into profits.

The 20th century saw the classical aim of clearing away these economic rents rolled back in Europe, the United States, and other Western countries.

However, today, land and natural-resource rents in private hands are still rising and even receiving special tax advantages. Basic infrastructure and other natural monopolies are being privatized by the financial sector — which is largely responsible for carving up and de-industrializing economies on behalf of its real estate and monopoly customers, who pay out most of their rental income as interest to bankers and bondholders.

What has survived from the policies by which Europe’s industrial powers and the United States built up their own manufacturing is free trade. Britain implemented free trade after a 30-year fight on behalf of its industry against the landed aristocracy, aimed at ending the protectionist agricultural tariffs, the Corn Laws, which had been enacted in 1815 to prevent opening the home market to low-priced food imports, which would have reduced farming rents.

After repealing these laws in 1846 to lower the cost of living, Britain offered free-trade agreements to countries seeking access to its market in exchange for these countries not protecting their industry against British exports. The aim was to deter less industrialized countries from working up their own raw materials.

In such countries, Europe’s foreign investors sought to buy rent-yielding natural resources

headed by mineral and land rights, and basic infrastructure headed by railroads and canals. This created a diametric contrast between rent-avoidance in the industrial nations and rent-seeking in their colonies and other host countries, while European bankers used debt leverage to gain fiscal control of former colonies who had won independence in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Under pressure to pay the foreign debts that were run up to finance their trade deficits, development attempts, and deepening debt dependency, debtor countries were obliged to relinquish fiscal control of their economies to bondholders, banks, and creditor-nation governments, which pressed them to privatize their basic infrastructure monopolies. The effect was to prevent them from using revenue from their natural endowments to develop a broad economic base for prosperous development.

Just as Britain, France, and Germany aimed to free their economies from feudalism's legacy of the vested interests with rent extraction privileges, most of today's Global Majority countries need to free themselves from the rent and debt overhead inherited from European colonialism and creditor control.

By the 1950s these countries were being called "less developed" or, even more patronizingly, "developing." But the combination of foreign debt and free trade has blocked them from developing along the balanced public/private lines that Western Europe and the United States followed.

The tax policy and other legislation of these countries has been shaped by U.S. and European pressure to observe international trade and investment rules that perpetuate geopolitical domination by Western bankers and rent-extracting investors to control their national patrimony.

The euphemism "host economy" is appropriate for these countries, because the Western economic penetration of them resembles a biological parasite feeding off its host.

Seeking to maintain this relationship, the U.S. and European governments are blocking attempts by these countries to follow the path that Europe's industrial nations and the United States took for their own economies with their 19th-century political and fiscal reforms that empowered their own takeoff.

Without these countries adopting fiscal and political reforms aimed at developing their own sovereignty and prospects for growth on the basis of their own national patrimony of land, natural resources and basic infrastructure, the world economy will remain bifurcated between Western rentier nations and their Global Majority hosts and held subject to neoliberal orthodoxy.

The success of China's model poses a threat to the neoliberal order

When U.S. political leaders single out China as an existential enemy of the West, it is not as a military threat but for offering a successful economic alternative to today's U.S.-sponsored neoliberal world order.

That order was supposed to represent the End of History, succeeding through its logic of free trade, government deregulation, and international investment free of capital controls, while detouring away from industrial capitalism's anti-rentier policies.

We can now see the absurdity in this self-satisfying evangelical view that had emerged just as Western economies were deindustrializing, as a result of the dynamics of their neoliberal finance capitalism.

The vested financial and other rentier interests are rejecting not only China but the logic of industrial capitalism as described by its own 19th-century classical economists.

Western neoliberal observers have closed their eyes to recognizing the ways in which China's "socialism with Chinese characteristics" has achieved its success by a logic similar to that of the industrial capitalism advocated by classical economists to minimize rentier income.

Most late 19th-century economic writers expected industrial capitalism to evolve into socialism of one form or another, as the role of public investment and regulation increased. Freeing economies and their governments from control by landowners and creditors was the common denominator of the social-democratic socialism of John Stuart Mill, the libertarian socialism of Henry George focusing on the land tax, and the cooperative mutual-aid socialism of Peter Kropotkin, as well as Marxism.

Where China has gone further than earlier socialist mixed-economy reforms has been in keeping money and credit creation in the hands of government, along with basic infrastructure and natural resources.

Fear that other governments might follow China's lead has led U.S. and other Western finance-capitalist ideologues to view China as a threat by providing a model for economic reforms that are precisely the opposite of what the 20th century's pro-rentier, anti-government ideology fought against.

The foreign debt overhead owed to U.S. and other Western creditors, and enabled by the 1945-2025 international geopolitical rules designed by U.S. diplomats at Bretton Woods in 1944, obliges the Global South and other countries to recover their economic sovereignty by freeing themselves from their foreign (mainly dollarized) banking and financial burden.

These countries have the same land-rent problem that Europe's industrial capitalism faced, but their land and resource rents are mainly owned by multinational companies and other foreign appropriators of their oil and mineral rights, forests, and latifundia plantations, who extract resource rents by emptying out the world's oil and mineral resources and cutting down its forests.

Taxing economic rent is a precondition for economic sovereignty

A precondition for Global South countries to gain economic autonomy is to follow the advice of the classical economists and tax the largest sources of rental income – land rent, monopoly rent, and financial returns – instead of letting them be sent abroad.

Taxing these rents would help stabilize their balance of payments, while providing their governments with revenue to finance their infrastructure needs and the related social spending needed to subsidize their economic modernization.

That is how Britain, France, Germany and the United States established their own industrial,

agricultural, and financial supremacy. This is not a radical socialist policy; it always has been a central element of industrial capitalist development.

Recapturing a country's land and natural-resource rents as its fiscal base would enable it to avoid taxing labor and industry. A country would not need to formally nationalize its land and natural resources outright; it simply needs to tax the economic rent over and above actual "earned profits," to cite the principle of Adam Smith and his 19th-century successors that this rent is the natural tax base.

But neoliberal ideology calls such taxation of rent, and the regulation of monopolies or other market phenomena, an intrusive interference into the "free market."

This defense of rentier income inverts the classical definition of a free market. The classical economists defined a free market as one free from economic rent, not as one free for the extraction of economic rent, let alone as freedom for creditor-nation governments to create a "rules-based order" to facilitate foreign rent extraction and stifle the development of financially and trade-dependent host countries.

Debt remission is a precondition for economic sovereignty

The fight by countries to free themselves from their foreign debt overhead is much harder than Europe's 19th-century fight to end the privileges of its landed aristocracy (and less successfully, of its bankers), because it is international in scope, and is now confronted by a creditor-nation alliance to maintain the system of financial colonization created two centuries ago, as former colonies sought to finance their independence by borrowing from foreign bankers.

Starting in the 1820s, newly independent countries like Haiti, Mexico, and other Latin America nations, as well as Greece, Tunisia, Egypt, and other former Ottoman colonies, won nominal political freedom from colonialist control. But to build up their own industry they had to take on foreign debt – on which they almost immediately defaulted, which enabled their creditors to establish monetary authorities in charge of their fiscal policy.

The governments of these countries were turned into collection agents for international bankers by the late 19th century. Financial dependency on bankers and bondholders replaced colonial dependency, obliging debtor countries to give fiscal priority to foreign creditors.

World War II enabled many of these countries to accumulate substantial foreign monetary reserves as a result of supplying raw materials to the belligerents. But the post-war order designed by U.S. diplomats, based on free trade and free capital movements, drained these savings, and obliged the Global South and other countries to borrow to cover their trade deficits.

The resulting foreign debts soon came to exceed the ability of these countries to pay – that is, to pay without surrendering to the destructive IMF demands for austerity that blocked the investment needed to raise their productivity and living standards.

There was no way that they could meet their own development needs to invest in basic infrastructure and provide industrial and agricultural subsidies, public education, health care, and other basic social spending that is characterized by the leading industrial nations. This still remains the case.

Their choice today, therefore, is between paying their foreign debts – at the cost of blocking their own development – or claiming that these debts are odious and insisting that they be written off.

At issue is whether debtor countries will gain the sovereignty that is supposed to characterize an international economy of equals, free of foreign post-colonial control over their tax and trade policies, as well as their national patrimony.

Their self-determination can only be achieved by joining together in a collective front.

Donald Trump's tariff aggression has catalyzed this process by drastically reducing the U.S. market for exports from debtor countries, preventing them from obtaining the dollars to pay their bonds and bank debts, so these won't be paid in any event.

The world is now busy de-dollarizing.

The need to create an alternative to the U.S.-centered post-war order was expressed in 1955 at the Bandung Conference in Indonesia, and then later by the Non-Aligned Movement. But these countries lacked a critical mass of self-sufficiency among themselves to act together.

Attempts to create a New International Economic Order in the 1960s faced the same problem. Countries were not industrially, agriculturally, or financially strong enough to "go it alone."

Today's Western debt crisis, de-industrialization, and coercive weaponization of foreign trade and financial sanctions under the dollarized international financial system, capped by the "America First" tariff policy, have created an urgent need for countries to collectively seek economic sovereignty, to become independent from U.S. and European control of the international economy.

The collective BRICS+, with Russia and China taking the lead, have just begun talking about making such an attempt.

China's success has made a global alternative attainable

The great catalyst for countries to take control of their national development has been China. As indicated above, its industrial socialism has largely achieved the classical aim of industrial capitalism of minimizing rentier overhead, above all by publicly creating money to finance tangible growth.

Keeping money and credit creation in government hands, via China's state-owned banks, prevents financial and other rentier interests from taking over the economy and subjecting it to the financial overhead that has characterized Western economies.

China's successful alternative for allocating credit avoids making purely financial gains at the expense of tangible capital formation and living standards. That is why it is viewed as an existential threat to the current Western banking model.

Western financial systems are overseen by central banks that have been made independent from

the Treasury and government regulatory “interference.” Their role is to provide the commercial banking system’s liquidity as it creates interest-bearing debt, mainly for the purpose of making wealth financially by debt leveraging (asset-price inflation), not for productive capital formation.

Capital gains – rising prices for housing and other real estate, stocks, and bonds – are much larger than GDP growth. They can be made easily and quickly by banks creating more credit to bid up prices for buyers of these assets.

Instead of the financial system being industrialized, Western industrial corporations have become financialized, and that has occurred along lines that have deindustrialized the U.S. and European economies.

Financialized wealth can be made without being part of the production process. Interest, late charges, other financial fees and capital gains are not a “product,” yet are counted as such in today’s GDP statistics.

Carrying charges on the rising debt overhead are transfer payments to the finance sector, by labor and businesses, out of wages and profits earned by actual production. That shrinks the income available for spending on the products produced by labor and capital, leaving economies debt-ridden and deindustrialized.

The strategy of creditor-rentier nations to prevent withdrawal from their global control
The broadest strategy to block countries from avoiding the rentier burden has been to wage an ideological campaign from the educational system to mass media. The aim is to control the narrative in a way that depicts government as an oppressive Leviathan, an inherently bureaucratic autocracy.

Western “democracy” is defined not so much politically as economically, as a free market whose resources are allocated by a banking and financial sector independent of regulatory oversight.

Governments strong enough to limit financial and other rentier wealth in the public interest are demonized as autocracies or “planned economics” — as if shifting credit and resource allocation to the financial centers of Wall Street, London, Paris, and Japan does not result in an economy planned by the financial sector in its own interest, with the aim of creating monetary fortunes. Its aim is not to improve the overall economy and living standards.

Global Majority officials and administrators who have studied economics at U.S. and European universities have been indoctrinated with a value-free (that is, rent-free) pro-rentier ideology to frame the way they think about how economies work.

This narrative excludes consideration of how debt polarizes economies by growing exponentially at compound interest. Also excluded from mainstream economic logic is the classical contrast between productive and unproductive credit and investment, and the related distinction between earned income (wages and profits, the main components of value) and unearned income (economic rent).

Beyond this ideological campaign, neoliberal diplomacy uses military force, regime change, and control of the main international bureaucracies associated with the United Nations, the IMF, and World Bank — and a more covert network of non-government organizations (NGOs) — to prevent countries from withdrawing from today's pro-rentier fiscal rules and pro-creditor laws.

The United States has taken the lead in using force and regime change against governments that would tax away or otherwise limit rent extraction.

It should be noted that few early socialists (except anarchists) advocated violence in pursuit of their reforms. It has been the vested interests, unwilling to accept loss of the privileges that are the basis of their fortunes, who have not hesitated to use violence to defend their wealth and power against attempts at reform to check their privileges.

To be sovereign, nations must create an alternative that enables them to be in charge of their own economic, monetary, and political development. But American diplomacy views any attempt to enact the necessary political and tax reforms and strong government regulatory authority as posing an existential threat to U.S. control over international finance and trade.

This raises the question of whether it is possible to achieve reforms and a strong public economy without war. It is natural for countries to wonder whether they can achieve economic sovereignty without a revolution, such as the Soviet Union, China, and other countries that fought to end their domination by their foreign-supported landlords and creditors.

The only way to protect economic sovereignty against military threats is to join an alliance for mutual support, since individual countries can be isolated in the way that Cuba, Venezuela, and Iran have been — or destroyed, like Libya.

As Benjamin Franklin put matters, "If we don't hang together, we will hang separately."

American writers characterize the attempt of other countries to join together to achieve economic sovereignty as a civilizational war. While this is indeed a civilizational contest, it is the United States and its allies that are waging aggression, against countries trying to withdraw from a system that has provided the United States and Europe with a huge inflow of economic rents and debt service from host countries subject to U.S.-backed diplomacy.

How U.S.-centered financial colonialism replaced European colonial occupation
After World War II, the era of settler-state colonialism gave way to financial colonialism, with the international economy dollarized under U.S. leadership.

The Bretton Woods rules established by 1945 enabled multinational corporations to keep economic rents for land, natural resources and public infrastructure out of domestic fiscal reach. Governments were reduced to the role of acting as collection agents for foreign creditors and as protectors of foreign investors from democratic attempts to tax rentier wealth.

The United States was able to weaponize world trade by monopolizing oil exports through U.S. and allied oil companies (the Seven Sisters), while U.S. and European agricultural protectionism and World Bank "aid" policy steered food-deficit countries to focus on tropical plantation crops instead of grain to feed themselves.

President Bill Clinton's 1994 NAFTA free-trade agreement swamped Mexico's market with low-priced U.S. farm exports (highly subsidized by strong government support). Mexican grain production plummeted, leaving it food-dependent.

To block governments from taxing or even fining foreign investors to recover compensation for damages to their countries, today's rentier powers have created Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) courts requiring governments to compensate foreign investors for increasing taxes or imposing regulations that reduce foreign-owned income. (I provide the details of this in Chapter 7 of my 2022 book The Destiny of Civilization.)

This system blocks national sovereignty, including by preventing host countries from taxing the economic rent of their land and natural resources owned by foreigners. The effect is to make these resources part of the investor-nation economy, not their own. (The Saudi oil company Aramco, for instance, was not a corporately distinct corporate affiliate but a branch of Standard Oil of New York (ESSO). This legal nicety meant that its income and expenses were consolidated into the parent company's U.S. balance sheet. That enabled it to receive a tax credit for the "depletion allowance" for oil, rendering the company effectively free of U.S. income tax, although it was Saudi oil that was being depleted.)

Other nations permitted the United States to dictate the post-World War II order, with it promising generous aid to support free trade, peace, and post-colonial national sovereignty, as spelled out in the United Nations Charter. But the United States squandered its wealth on military spending abroad and financial wealth addiction at home.

That has left America's post-industrial power based mainly on its ability to harm other countries with chaos if they do not accept the U.S. "rules-based order" designed to extract tribute from them.

The U.S. imposes protectionist tariffs and import quotas at will, and subsidizes agriculture and key technologies as potential global high-tech monopolies, while forbidding other countries from implementing such "socialist" or "autocratic" policies to become more competitive. The result is a double standard in which the U.S. "rules-based order" (its own rules) replaces adherence to international law.

U.S. agricultural price support policy initiated under Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s provides a good example of double standards. It made farming the most heavily subsidized and protected sector. It became the model for the European Economic Community's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) introduced in 1962.

However, U.S. diplomacy opposes the attempts of other countries, especially Global South countries, to impose their own protectionist subsidies and import quotas aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in basic food production — while U.S. "aid lending" and the World Bank have (as indicated above) supported the exportation of tropical plantation crops by Global South countries by lending for transportation and port development. U.S. policy has consistently opposed family-owned farming and land reform throughout Latin America and other Global South countries, often with violence.

Moves toward a multipolar world order

It is not surprising that, inasmuch as Russia has long been the United States' main military adversary, it has taken the lead in protesting against the unipolar U.S. order.

Advocating a multipolar alternative to the U.S. neoliberal order in June 2025, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov described the post-colonial economic subjugation of the countries that achieved political independence from colonialist rule in the 19th and 20th centuries but which are now facing the next task needed to complete their liberation:

Our African friends are paying more and more attention to the fact that their entire economies are still largely based on siphoning off natural resources from these countries. In fact, all value added is produced and pocketed by the former Western metropoles and other European Union and NATO members.

…

The West is using illegal unilateral sanctions, which increasingly become the harbinger of a military attack, as this has happened in Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya and is now happening in Iran, as well as the instruments of unfair competition, initiating tariff wars, seizing other countries' sovereign assets and taking advantage of the role of their currencies and payment systems. The West itself has actually buried the globalization model, which it developed after the Cold War to promote its interests.

Marco Rubio made the same point in the U.S. Senate hearings to confirm him as Donald Trump's Secretary of State, explaining that the "postwar global order is not just obsolete; it is now a weapon being used against us."

Violating the rules of foreign trade and investment that the United States itself dictated in 1945, and yet another instance of Washington resorting to the "rules-based order" of its own rules, President Trump's unilateral tariffs aimed both at shifting the New Cold War's military costs onto other countries, which are expected to buy American arms and provide proxy armies, and at reviving the U.S.'s lost industrial power by forcing countries to relocate industries to the United States and to permit U.S. companies to extract monopoly rents by controlling the leading emerging technologies.

The United States aims to impose monopoly rights and related rentier privileges uniquely favorable to itself on the entire world's trade and investment. Trump's "America First" diplomacy demands that other countries conduct their trade, payments and debt relationships in U.S. dollars, instead of their own currencies.

The U.S. "rule of law" is one that permits unilateral U.S. demands to impose trade and financial sanctions dictating how and with whom foreign countries can trade and invest. They are threatened with economic chaos and confiscation of their dollar reserves if they do not boycott trade and investment relations with Russia, China, and other countries refusing to submit to U.S. control.

The United States' leverage to obtain these foreign concessions is no longer industrial leadership and financial strength, but its ability to cause chaos for other countries. Claiming to be

the indispensable nation, the U.S.'s ability to disrupt trade is ending its former international monetary and diplomatic power.

That power originally was based on U.S. holdings of the world's largest monetary gold reserves in 1945, its status as the largest creditor nation and industrial economy, and, after 1971, its dollar hegemony, arising in large part as a result of its financial market being the safest for other nations to hold their official monetary reserves.

The diplomatic inertia created by these former advantages no longer reflects the realities of 2025. What U.S. officials do have is the ability to disrupt the world's trade, supply chains, and financial arrangements, including the SWIFT system for international payments.

The U.S. and European confiscation of $300 billion of Russia's monetary deposits has darkened America's reputation for financial safety, while its chronic trade and balance-of-payments deficits threaten to disrupt the international monetary system and free trade that made it the major beneficiary of the 1945-2025 world order.

In keeping with the principle of national sovereignty and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs that underlay the creation of the United Nations (the basic principle of international law grounded in the 1648 Peace of Westphalia), Russia's Foreign Minister Lavrov described (in his speech cited above) the need "to establish foreign trade mechanisms [that] the West will be unable to control, such as transport corridors, alternative payment systems and supply chains."

As an example of how the United States had paralyzed the World Trade Organization, which it had created on the basis of free trade at a time when America was the world's leading export power, he explained:

When the Americans realized that the globalized system they had created – one built on fair competition, inviolable property rights, the presumption of innocence, and similar principles, and which had allowed them to dominate for decades – had also begun benefiting their rivals, primarily China, they took drastic action.

As China started outplaying them on their own turf and by their own rules, Washington simply blocked the WTO's Appellate Body. By artificially stripping it of a quorum, they rendered this key dispute settlement mechanism inactive – and it remains so to this day.

The United States has been able to block foreign opposition to its nationalist policies by having veto power in the United Nations, IMF, and World Bank. Even without such power, U.S. diplomats have been able to block United Nations organizations from acting independently of U.S. wishes by refusing to appoint leaders or judges not primarily loyal to U.S. foreign policy.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), charged with keeping nuclear proliferation in check is the most recent notorious case in point. Iran published documents showing that the agency's leader Rafael Grossi provided U.S. and Israeli intelligence with the names of Iranian scientists who were killed, and details of the Iranian nuclear refinement sites that were bombed.

The U.S. veto has prevented the UN Security Council from condemning Israeli attacks on the

Palestinian population. And when the International Criminal Court (ICC) brought charges against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in a genocide against the Palestinians, U.S. officials imposed sanctions on the ICC and demanded the removal of the prosecutor.

The world no longer is to be governed by international law, but by unilateral U.S. rules, subject to abrupt change depending on the vicissitudes of American economic or military power (or loss thereof).

As Russia's President Vladimir Putin described this new state of affairs in 2022, "Western countries have been saying for centuries that they bring freedom and democracy to other nations," yet the "unipolar world is inherently anti-democratic and unfree; it is false and hypocritical through and through."

The United States' self-image depicts its long dominant world position as reflecting its democracy, free market, and equality of opportunity that has enabled its power elite, in their view, to acquire their status by being the economy's most productive members, through their management and allocation of savings and credit.

The reality is that the United States has become a rentier oligarchy, one that is increasingly hereditary. Its members' fortunes are made mainly by acquiring rent-yielding assets (land, natural resources, and monopolies) on which they make capital gains, while paying most of their rent as interest to their bankers, who end up with much of these rents and have become the new oligarchy's leading managerial class.

Summary
The real conflict over what kind of economic and political system the Global Majority will have is just gaining momentum.

Global South countries and others have been driven so deeply into debt that they have been obliged to sell off their public infrastructure to pay its carrying charges. Recovering control of their natural resources and basic infrastructure requires the fiscal right to impose an economic-rent tax on their land, natural resources and monopolies, as well as the legal right to recover environmental cleanup costs caused by foreign oil and mining firms, and to implement financial cleanup costs (i.e., write offs and cancellation) of the foreign debt burden imposed by creditors who have not taken responsibility to ensure that their loans can be paid under existing conditions.

U.S. evangelistic rhetoric describes the imminent political and economic fracture of the world economy as a "Clash of Civilizations" between democracies (i.e., countries that support U.S. policy) and autocracies (i.e., nations acting independently).

It would be more accurate to describe this fracture as a fight by the United States and its European and other Western allies against civilization — assuming civilization entails, as it seems it must, the sovereign right of countries to enact their own laws and tax systems for the benefit of their own populations within an international system that has a common set of basic rules and values.

What Western ideologues call democracy and free markets has turned out to be an aggressive

rentier-financial imperialism. And what they call autocracy is a government strong enough to prevent economic polarization between a super-rich rentier class and an impoverished population at large, such as is occurring within the Western oligarchies themselves.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Fri, 25 Jul 2025 15:26:35 GMT
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Maybe its time to pull out the old copy of The Doors song, The End.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeMlQEWEg2Q&t=128s

Trump has succeeded in ramping up the American Empire demise more so than any other president. Though we've been working on it for quite some time. Our economic doctrine and our foreign policy via the military industrial complex is all coming together as a loose wheel coming off the axle.
The ongoing tariff conundrum Trump touts towards reclaiming our greatness. Is nothing more than like a mafioso shakedown with the rest of the world. Even our own closest trading partners and allies.

Trump claimed the recent Japanese trade deal is one of the biggest ever made! But as Michael Hudson and Richard Wolff point out. Japan's concession to allow our marketing our products in their country will be a resounding flop. Take for instance our cars. They're too big for Japan's roads and tastes. Our agricultural introduction of American rice into their market will amount to bags of rice sitting on store shelves. Japanese are too finicky to accept our homogenized product.

What little else we have to offer the world, including our military weapons that we can't build at a rate to be replenished after being destroyed or used in vain to down incoming missiles will all contribute to our dollar decline and our inflation worsening.

We've dug a deep trench from which to cope in this world that has changed drastically in the last 10 years. Our leaders are in a profound mind warp of denial to the reality of our county's internal and external affairs.

As Richard Wolff gives for an analogy to our flailing attempts to stave off decrepitude. Like a drowning person thrashing in the water before drowning. Countries of the world will eventually un-align with our vain attempts to retain our superiority. And they'll act in their own interests out of demand by their own people's. The economies of the East are the ones to go to.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTG-RzKdGKE

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 26 Jul 2025 14:51:02 GMT
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How Bankers make you poor. The public is denying its own personal interests by allowing a small group of people manipulate our understanding of the way economies and societies work for the best interests of everyone as a whole. Its not too technical to grasp. In fact its simple. The accumulation of debt rises faster than the production of an economy can maintain. Thus, the unproductive part of an economy, the rentier class soaks up the working classes income causing debt deflation. Stagnation. Lack of thriving as what a parasite does to its host organism.

That is where our economy is and has been for some time. We're experiencing a slow crash towards an eventual breakdown. Banking should be a public governmental run organization for the purpose of financing productive enterprise. As it is now, its a drain on our economy.

Spending one hour of time to understand the underpinnings of how we have reached this situation is a means of realizing, there IS another way.

From Babylon to Wall Street:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pplrFx0ThYY&t=2s

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 02 Aug 2025 16:46:59 GMT
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I depend on alternative journalism in the form of written blogs and media to discern the totally disruptive US policies that consist of its empire imperialism towards the nations of the world. Critical blogger Ben Norton's Geopolitical Political Report is one of the best and most thorough critique of what our country is doing to try and keep its hegemony going. You won't find this kind of reporting in any commercial media.

This is important because knowing the reality of what is going on domestically and internationally is critical towards giving people a sense of why there is so much dysfunction that affects our lives. Literally. Blogs are not backed by great wealth or corporate influence. There are good individuals with academic discipline and concern with the state of the world that contribute this information to the public.

Biased information is crafted by the power of an elite minority of society towards perpetuating interests advantageous to them. It's as old as civilization itself. This is the dichotomy of the distribution of wealth and the influences therein it has with legal authority.

Here Mr. Norton gives understanding with the ongoing feud with Brazil and their legally elected president Lula da Silva that president Trump has taken personal ire with. Mr. Norton shows the historical perspective of the US with its Monroe Doctrine approach to the southern tier of the

continents. A long history of meddling with the sovereignty of nation states in Central & South America. With direct armed conflicts, election meddling, coup's, assassinations and financial subterfuge. A pattern of behavior our nation has committed to in its foreign policy "Everywhere" in the world in fact.

Brazil being a principal in the BRICS alignment of nations is a main trading partner with China who is investing in infrastructure in South America to facilitate its trade alliance being better served. This has brought the attention of Washington to bear in trying to subvert this process. Which is the main policy of our arrogant diplomacy.

President Lula is standing up to this tyranny and I for one hope he and others in South and Central America & Mexico are successful in countering our criminally leaning foreign policy. The far right seems to embody the dark triad of human behavior that has caused the most detrimental effect on humanity in history and now. Authoritarianism is its hallmark of imposing control. Our current president embodies that totally.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niPNwB-0nQI

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 03 Aug 2025 21:19:41 GMT
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Quote:Rulers driving extreme inequality are strong in the triad of dark traits: narcissism, cold psychopathy and Machiavellian manipulation.
Sound familiar? A new book by Dr Luke Kemp at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge studied 400 cultures over 5000 years showing the history and future of societal collapse.

https://iefworld.org/node/1756

It sounds very familiar to our culture right now and the people who lead it. As the professor says. He is pessimistic about the future but optimistic about people.

Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 10 Aug 2025 16:51:53 GMT
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This article from Aljazeera speaks volumes for what our China policy is truly all about. It's sour grapes. Our whiny corporate monopolists aren't getting their cake and ice cream in the huge serving they used to when China was developing they're industry and manufacturing with very

cheap labor.

Which goes to show that a strong government that has the principles of their people's welfare in mind over the enrichment of a few of them that bribe politicians for personal gain is a superior method of governance. Over time with social welfare for their people, the Chinese have been able to actually increase the personal incomes of their workforce while becoming even more productive. Keeping the cost of living well within what constitutes a middle class way of life for millions of Chinese working class.

Our cost of living through monopolization and privatization has risen so high that even with wage increases several times what Chinese make still can't cope with the rising tide of inflation. The idiot tariffs will start kicking in soon to further erode working people being able to "cope".

But our elitist few aren't happy so they whine to the political hacks to do something already. So, what is our method of modus operandi? Antagonism, threats, tariffs, saber rattling, subversion and anything but cooperation. You get more bees with honey. Our brain trust is too arrogant to figure that one.

https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2025/8/3/the-real-reason-the-west-is-warmongering-against-china

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Subject: Re: Empire
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 12 Aug 2025 18:26:00 GMT
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Watch-read-and learn. We've all been suckers to what the politicians, pundits and the people they trot out to talk about the economy. Our neoliberal mindset is rigidly affixed to a false doctrine of how our government can run the nations business. Kept there by our wealthy elitists and a brain washed system of higher education.

Follow the history deep into human culture and a pattern emerges from how the concentration of wealth worms its way into the political spectrum to further their longevity generationally to stay wealthy and in control. Empires erode from it. Greece and Roman. Contemporary United States?

Brief periods emerge where they're tamped down some and regular society can claw their way back up to a civilized life of thriving. Like the Gilded Age post period where anti-trust laws broke up monopolies. Or like the post WW2 years were till the 1980's when trickle-down, neoliberal, financialized economics solidified into where we're at now.

Here the 2nd part of Ben Norton's Geopolitical Economic Report with economist Michael Hudson gives a prescription for the global south formerly colonized countries of the BRICS coalition and even our own if the veil of ignorance is ever lifted from or forced upon the purveyors of governmental policy. To change the way our government and the way business is run. Efficiently for most of us, not at the expense of us for a sliver of the population. You can't demand change if you don't try to understand what has been done to us. To see, there really is an alternative.

https://geopoliticaleconomy.com/2025/08/10/corporate-landlords-rent-michael-hudson/