Subject: Our Country
Posted by gofar99 on Wed, 18 Jun 2025 03:01:03 GMT
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Hi Everyone, The following is just my opinion, but I think others may share it and perhaps take notice. To me recent events that have transpired in the US are much like that in third world countries. We now assassinate lawmakers that we don‘t agree with, drive through crowds of peaceful demonstrators and harass and arrest folks that disagree with someone. Until this week I thought we lived in a democracy and that the constitution was there to insure that we would have a peaceful and prosperous life style for all individuals. Recent events seem to be at odds with that thought. In addition to all that the US no longer seems to be the greatest country on earth, but more like a whining kid. There is inconsistent foreign policy, inconsistent national policy, and continuous attacks on fundamental constitutional principles. Militarization is being used where not needed or wanted that tends to escalate some situations. Those situations may not be correct and proper but are not of a nature to require such excessive force. Those same situations are being caused by some of the above mentioned governmental transgressions. I believe that the show of force is not to quell an insurrection but rather to intimidate and restrict first amendment rights to voice dissent. On an international scene the disparaging of longtime allies and praising equally longtime foes is inconsistent of a great country. Tariffs that serve no real purpose and interfere with world trade that stifle the ability of numerous companies to do effective business, some now filing bankruptcy and others laying off workers. Then there is the wholescale intent to deport individuals that are branded as criminals of one sort or another whose only crime may be a desire to have a better life for their families. That desire is fundamental to our country. Now it seems as if we are going to get into the Israeli Iran conflict. Possibly start a much wider conflict. I hope I’m wrong and this all plays out well, but it sure seems we are rapidly going down a rabbit hole in a direction never intended or conceived of by the founders of the country.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 18 Jun 2025 16:37:07 GMT
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I feel Bruce that our current POTUS has brought about your voicing an existential anxiety for our democracy. But I feel he's a symptom of a disease process that our country has entrenched in our economy and foreign policy for as long as you and I have at least have been living. And longer. And its coming to a head now through this person who admittedly harbors the dark triad of human behavior more so than any head of state we've ever witnessed in our country's existence.

But he alone has not arranged this chronic condition coming to head that we are experiencing now. Our policy both domestically and internationally is derived through a myriad of think-tank and political and ideological foundations funded by our corporate, Wall St. and wealthy individuals that have the hold on our political legislators through campaign and lobbying efforts. Its institutionalized now!

So, I feel right along with you at this moment just how disturbing our situation appears to be. Our government seems like a bull in a China shop. Causing disruption, destruction and angst at home and world wide. The danger currently is of a possibility of a triggered exchange of the dooms

day devices may occur if it spirals out of control pulling in other members of states, is madness. Especially when it is having been contrived from years before from just such policy scenarios formulated by our deep state to keep control of this region of the world that we promote as national security. But on academic scrutiny amounts to a system in place to maintain control of a commodity known as oil.

Our country has neglected the symptoms of this disease process for decades and decades. Allowing for it now, at this point in our history for the festering of narrow minded policy that promotes the interests of our elite wealth influences to finally be challenged internationally, while we have declined domestically. How do you treat a disease? You go to the root cause. Smart people write about it and speak about it that are kept under the consciousness of the general public. It needs to be promoted somehow. But that seems to take wealth to make that happen in this country.

Anyway that's my perspective which keeps me busy here in the dungeon expressing my angst.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 18 Jun 2025 20:29:41 GMT
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This particular subject has been an interest of mine for decades. And it's not just an academic interest - although it is that, for sure - but it's much more of an actionable part of my life.

There are a few things I'm really passionate about and most are inter-related. This is one of them.

The truth is, my interest in cars and audio is actually more of a side thing for me. That part of me is just 'cause I like cool toys.

Specifically, what I am talking about is minds. What makes a good mind? What makes us tick? What improves our human minds, making us happier and healthier? Can we create a machine mind? Are there meta-minds, like is there a "consciousness of the Earth," a sort of collective soul? Is there a soul of the Universe? A causality of the Big Bang perhaps? Or maybe that soul of the Universe is what caused the Big Bang. Is that God?

This all started for me back when I was young, interested in computers, robots and artificial intelligence. I later studied psychology, which is a natural progression of that. And then even several religions, mostly the ones in Mesopotamia or near there. The Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Canaanites, Hebrews, Zoroastrians, Christians and Moslems. Tons of others I didn't study in that region, but I've studied those mentioned.

What kicked it into high gear for me happened in 1989, when I entered a fellowship that actively pursues all this stuff. We meet regularly, we work on our own mental state, and we work with

others using a mentor/apprentice approach.

Our primary position is that we're all somewhat selfish and arrogant and that we tend to impose our will. So we work on stopping that and only taking action on things we actually have influence upon. If we don't have influence, there's no point in mulling things around in our minds and getting worked up. Nobody is perfect, so we fail at that goal. But that's kind of the point. We continually improve ourselves, we continually remind ourselves of our goals and we don't get hung up on our mistakes. When we make mistakes, we back up and come at things again, knowing what we know to be a better way.

Seeing the world through this view, I have come to some sort of conclusions. I could change my mind later if I learn things that change my view. But for quite some time, these have been my conclusions:
Every man is inherently slightly selfish and slightly arrogant. We also tend to get fixated on ideas, many times formed with little real evidence. Those fixations are hard to change.

We are creatures of habit. We do most things on "auto-pilot," which is an efficient way to think. But once we've formed a habit, it's hard to change. And many of our habits don't serve us well.

Almost everyone is uncomfortable seeing themselves as incomplete, incorrect or otherwise fallible. We often times pretend to be things we're not. It's actually so common, I'd say it's kind of a normal state for us as people.

We act differently when we are fighting for survival than we do when we feel safe and comfortable. When safe and comfortable, our tendencies towards selfishness and arrogance are heightened.

One could call this entitlement or narcissism. My label for this leans towards the mental models of the past few decades of the dark triad: narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy.

We are animals with instincts and physical cravings. We need food and sleep. We crave things that are pleasant and make us feel good. We usually recoil from things that are unpleasant or that make us feel bad. Sometimes we mis-assess those things though and build habits that cause us to crave unpleasant things and recoil from things that could make us feel good. The animal in us can get warped that way.

But even though we are animals, most of us try to live in a way that is kind and compassionate of others.

That "being things we're not" thing kicks in here sometimes to make us promote an image of ourselves that is kinder than warranted or that hides bad motives underneath good ones.

Those are just human things. We all do 'em. We all feel shame when we sit in a church and hear the preacher say stuff we did last night. We pretend we'd never do such a thing. So we keep secret our little failings - and become uncomfortable if we feel exposed - which is kind of silly 'cause we all do the same kinds of stuff, from presidents to homeless folks.

Adding to all is this is our success as a culture in America. It has moved most of us further from survival mode into comfort mode. Looks to me like we started moving this direction in the industrial revolution in the 1800s - peaking in perhaps the "roaring 20s" - but then set back in the depression and horrors of WWII. Then really kicked it up after WWII, when we enjoyed such economic prosperity.

Looks to me like since 1950 or so, we've been more and more entitled, as a culture. It shows in our actions and in our mindset. Not just politicians - every one of us. But I do think the effect on politicians is stronger and deeper, because they gain both money and power in that profession. So it would stand to reason that the arrogance and the entitlement stuff would kick in even stronger than in someone that worked as, say a tradesman at a factory.

But even our least wealthy in America have some entitlement. You can see it in their actions. They are more at risk than someone in the middle class, living in a nice home. But they are much less at risk than say, someone homeless in Mumbai. Homeless in America can demonstrate, hang out pretty much wherever and pocket whatever they beg for. Makes some of 'em kind of emboldened. Mumbai homeless can't do that. They are much more vulnerable. Totally different mindset.

I think this is why politicians are growing more and more emboldened and are showing more dark triad traits. We all agree to have seen this in many or them. But I think we're also seeing this in individuals. All the shootings from someone that's pissed about something that is maybe unfair, but what did the shooting achieve? Why did they think they should play God? Everyone in our culture has been affected, ironically, because we've actually had it pretty good for quite some time.

One could say this is a disease of perception. The dark triad mental traits are a collection of self-deceived properties. Those traits don't achieve what the person hopes to achieve. Everyone else can see them for who they are. And even if they successfully manipulate a situation in their favor, the winnings are almost always short-lived.

Another part of the disease of perception is that we forget to be happy for the good stuff. We focus on what pisses us off, what's "not fair" or what needs to be changed - in others. We can't change others. We can vote. We can discuss. But if it's pissing us off, we're forgetting that we can't change those other people. Even our politicians. Or other countries' politicians. What is more pleasant to focus on is the good stuff that we have in our lives. I have plenty, and I prefer to look at those things than say, Putin. I fail at that sometimes, but I know what to do about that. Laugh at my failings and move on. I have a voice, but that's it.

It's all a personal affair. We all can do what we can to improve ourselves - if we actually set about to do such a thing - yet we can do very little to change others.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 19 Jun 2025 00:04:08 GMT

I think what this elder gentleman says in regards to where our country is at now, and the person who represents its leadership speaks volumes. We're all individuals that make up a society, but individualism should not be the guiding principle for how that society should be expressed.

A Patriotic American Speaks His Mind- Parade of Shame

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

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by gofar99 on Thu, 19 Jun 2025 02:14:20 GMT

Lots of good stuff for pondering at length. I agree that the issues did not crop up over night. They were a long time simmering and most folks didn't either recognize them or care about them or even would rather deny their existence. I believe that the issues that now confront us clearly demonstrate two things: one the issues have been just under the surface for quite a while and second the right sort of trigger has brought them out. I suspect that most folks thought that the US was more or less a good county to live in and pretty much anyone could do (or was doing) well here. A perception of unity. It denies that a large portion of the population was not so well off but didn't have either a voice or method to get out of their situation. The pent up anguish and in some cases rage had no way out. With a trigger that promoted division and essentially condoned violence, the anguish and rage found a way to respond. It made the use of violence acceptable to some. Combined with the present legal / judicial mash up violence was nearly a certainty. The problem extend to the international community as well as on the individual basis. It absolutely makes no sense to me to engage in any sort of action without a clear concept of what the ramifications of it would be. This seems to be over looked frequently.

A lot of this goes back to a number of concepts that Wayne listed. I would add one though. Many individuals seek immediate gratification without considering the consequences. Sort of like "I want to steal the candy bar now and not even consider the possibility of getting caught".

I too am a member of an organization that promotes individual growth and improvement and it has assisted me in several ways. One of which is that it makes it possible for me to see other individuals actions in perspective. It also allows me to separate their actions and my response by remembering three statements that I have used to govern my behavior for a long time.

Is this something I can change or personally influence?

Is it wise (or smart if you wish) to do this?

If the answer to the previous two is yes then I should take action.

If either of the two is negative then I should stand aside and not fret on the issue.

Right now with the present problems / issues the best I can do in the short run is spread the word on various media and to friends and associates with the hope that if enough individuals get involved some positive changes can be made.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 19 Jun 2025 03:22:18 GMT
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I agree, Bruce, absolutely.

In particular, you wrote:

gofar99 wrote on Wed, 18 June 2025 21:14Many individuals seek immediate gratification without considering the consequences. Sort of like "I want to steal the candy bar now and not even consider the possibility of getting caught".

Totally agree. I would consider this to be a symptom of the entitlement that seems to be growing in our culture, from the top to the bottom of our economic and social positions.

I try to do a little better at wanting what I have rather than trying to have what I want. And also to focus on what's good instead of what's bad. Those two simple maxims make all the difference between being satisfied and happy versus being angry and resentful. Tends to reduce frustration and violence as a result.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Thu, 19 Jun 2025 12:24:07 GMT
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For me, our entitlements favor heavily towards the percentage of stock, (89% to 93%) in Wall Street that favors the top 10 percent of wealth in this country depending on what source viewed. And the top 1% garnering 38% of that stock in Wall Street.

The rest of us drop off precipitously from there depending on your ability to keep up with the cost of living.

The post war boom of the standard of living meant people could move up more easily the economic ladder. But that ladder has been kicked out from under us ever since the conversion to being a service oriented financialized economy. And it's eroded our country in so many metrics of standards that today we're feeling the pain it's brought on.

And our government has been assimilated by that upper percentile, particularly the top decimal to favor its advantage. Which has warped our whole political and social fabric of life.

This isn't unique. Its played out in history. Rome & Greece are the closest indicators of such rise and fall of empires. Corruption from within.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Sat, 21 Jun 2025 13:54:32 GMT
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Our country's government lies. Blatant lies. To the people of the United States, and to the people of the world. Our country is on the verge of yet another Middle Eastern War. An utterly unnecessary war concocted by our deep state of the dark triad of human behavior. And they are currently lying out of their yin yang as has been done over and over to play out this ridiculous charade to prop up the fraud of being a singular nation of exception. The exception of law and order.

If you ponder the state of our union today, with all the dystopian activities happening in our society that seem to be getting more chronic. Making a fuss over the actions of the few in our society that act out in antisocial behavior as the problem to focus mobilization to address towards a cure. That's missing the forest for the trees.

The breakdown of cohesion in our society is linked as being directly attributable to how our government has acquiesced its responsibility towards a more perfect union by selling out to a false ideology that cannot sustain the means of fairness towards thriving for the majority of the population. And in its place has assembled an internal order of power brokers that have over time guided our resources and willfulness towards maintaining a world hegemony favoring the advantage of the few in our society that can finance that power influence.

This is the dark triad of behavior as is a cult. Where the reasoning capacity is used to sustain the ideology itself. Regardless of the contradictions of where the state of the union is that all manner of data shows is one of diminishing functioning.

The people of this country are under the weight of ulterior motives interfering with the great capacity this country has to truly regenerate a higher level of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I hope that more and more that people come to understand that. And demand and protest to change our system. We have been successfully divided. That can change when the many unite to counter the few. "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity".

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by gofar99 on Sun, 22 Jun 2025 01:06:13 GMT
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Yeah. Welcome to Afghanistan 2.0 The "peacemaker" has decided that war is more his speed. I see no hope for us in this fray. The region has been fighting with each other for thousands of years why should they stop now and more to the point why should they do so because we said so.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 22 Jun 2025 13:04:36 GMT
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Your leaving out the main provocateur. The United States. The well worn adage of fighting amongst each other for thousands of years can be applied more aptly to Europe! Anglo Saxons. The Middle Eastern nations have been perturbed ever since Israel was created.
And don't forget the telling statement of Joe Biden when as a Senator stated, "If there wasn't an Israel, we'd have to create one".
Israel is our attack dog there that has over time turned itself into a warped Zionist, militant culture. Knowing big daddy US would back them no matter what they did to their indigenous Arab peoples.

It's ironic isn't it that Israeli Jews being mostly of European extraction are the most vehement towards the Arabs. But they have their holy decree to back up their behavior.

American's are clueless to how our cynical petrodollar interests in the Middle East has stoked the war on terror. Does China, (whom we rattle war swords at) do this kind of power brokering as we do to supplant our corporate oil and wealthy interests in this region of the world? We are the largest "producers" of oil & natural gas in the world.

Our country is the problem, to itself and throughout the world. All from a few well heeled elitists and a dysfunctional government they have in their pockets. Trying to maintain this idiotic financial Imperialism that our dollar has supported by being the world currency ever since Bretton Woods conference in 1944.

This latest skirmish in a long line there in the Middle East is a pattern of power plays to control and protect the petrodollar system. Principally from the threat now of the coming together of China and Russia, (whom we want to break apart), (fat chance) and the BRICS and Belt & Road coalition forming to counter the arrogant dollar system our country has used and abused for our selfish elitist interests.

It has to be realized and be rid of before setting off the ultimate calamity of nuclear exchange via some ill tempered lunatic such as Trump showing how ignorant we've become.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by gofar99 on Sun, 03 Aug 2025 01:19:58 GMT
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It seems that not only has sanity departed from the white house so has any sort of decorum. When the President tells the leader of the opposite party to GO TO HELL then he has really lost it. Firing the messenger because he didn't like the message a day ago is the sign of an immature individual. If he only wants to hear good stuff he is in the wrong job. I wonder if any of his hand picked staff might consider the 25th to save themselves from disaster. It is getting to appear that he thinks he is a dictator and everyone should kiss his feet. Not me one. I wonder if any of our elected officials have the guts to take action to end this nonsense. OBTW it seems he wants the Peace Prize....for what, encouraging more fighting?

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Sun, 03 Aug 2025 14:03:16 GMT
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Don't you think its time to realize that our political process is and has been BROKEN for some time? Trump is like the pain involved with full blown metastatic cancer disease. He was voted in again despite what he showed of his character from his first administration. Because neither parties potential candidates presented anything but what the stale status quo has been for decades.

He somehow represented a difference to break the political stalemate. But he's ended up doing what they all do from their promises to change things while running for office. Which is maintaining the continuity of failed foreign policy and rewarding the donorship that actually runs our country.

The system is broken brother. If somehow he speeds up the inevitable decline of this Orwellian empire our power elite have created. Then maybe the pain he's inflicting may be worth it. We need an overhaul of our economic doctrine and our campaign financing and lobbying. As is now, our country has become a dangerous broker of chaos in the world.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by gofar99 on Tue, 05 Aug 2025 01:50:13 GMT
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I'm with you on this.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Tue, 05 Aug 2025 16:34:28 GMT
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Is it only from what this administration is doing now that causes your consternation? Or do you feel that change needs to be implemented to our whole political process.

Personally, I feel Trump is merely a symbolic exclamation point of what our economic, diplomatic and political process has amounted to for many decades. Why I say he's like the ravages of cancer on someone. The process began long prior to him and his obvious abhorrent behavior.

For instance. Do we really need over 7 hundred military installations throughout the world, and a military budget of over one trillion dollars now? Why did this country de-industrialize and end most manufacturing? Does the elite wealth of our nation really have such influence on our political policy making? Does this nation have a right to penalize other nations with our dollar denominated trade standard? And do the citizens of this country have a right to government socialized healthcare, childcare, schooling, utilities and even banking to augment the cost of living?

What do you feel is important to straighten out the course this country is/has been on. Just being free of one person's authoritarian narcissistic personality being the commander and chief at this point in our history?

From where I sit now, he just ripped the lid off for all to see what was politically correct to be discreet about for quite some time.

Subject: Re: Our Country
Posted by Rusty on Wed, 06 Aug 2025 15:14:17 GMT
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All I can say is that our public needs to have information to understand what our country is doing. We're fed a steady diet of "shaded" information through our prominent news and media outlets. Shaded towards the narrative of what our government is doing domestically and internationally.

Which is why I feel that through the internet that still has a rather open source towards putting out first amendment thinking to the public. Blogs have proliferated in this regard. As with any information, an individual has to disseminate whether its agenda is truth or leading towards ulterior motives. With that in mind, anyone can tap into critical and essential information to navigate the larger world of nations states and their governments and its effects on the global population down to ones own personal life.

If we listen strictly to what our own government and news outlets are putting out to the public. We get a tailored narrative serving a continuity the prevailing administrations and the power brokering entities use towards sustaining their legitimacy. Despite the contradictions we experience on a personal level.

A blog such as the Geopolitical Economic Report shows what the contradictions are and how they're sustained to the detriment to our own ability to thrive and up and through our society and our world. Which is why I like to put this link consistently in the threads I've written. It explains the root causes of what is so wrong headed with how our nation conducts its business domestically

and internationally. Historically and currently. And "That's, Our Country".

Unfortunately this and other blogs showing the dysfunction and hypocrisy of the way things are seem to reach only a relatively small audience. The people and the format they consist of doesn't have the material wealth to punch into mainstream media. And the mainstream power elite don't want this type of critique to be disseminated to the public.

https://geopoliticaleconomy.com/2025/08/06/world-us-financial-colonialism-economist-michael-hudson/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgBUbbTF5Sg