



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

21 January 2009; Volume 11, Number 3

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Hope for validity

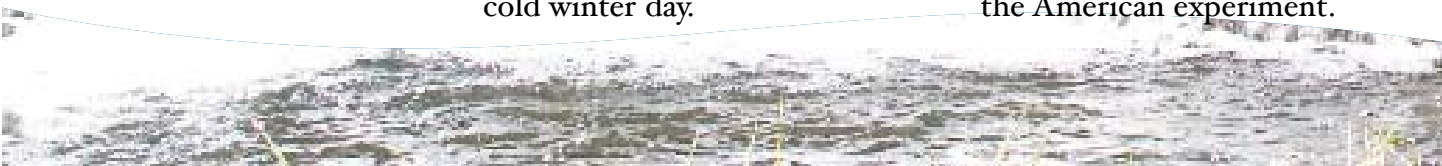
Yesterday, Tuesday January 20, 2009 the United States of America peacefully inaugurated the country's forty fourth President, Barack Obama. A true Afro American, without the history of human slavery in his heritage, we see in Obama, a refreshing beginning for not only this country, but also the world. The story that in America anyone can grow up to be President, not only rings true to those with generational history in this land, that bell of freedom now encompasses the whole world, including the continent of Africa.

I personally was moved by the bumbled oath of office, because some forty years earlier I too recited essentially those same words, in the process of being commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the US Army in Cheney, Washington. At that time the words sent a humble chill down my spine, those words still do, and have, every time I have heard them recited since that cold winter day.

“... to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. So help me God.”

Those are words, just words, but those words have been recited in the call to public service to this country since they were first administered to our first President George Washington. Those words have however a transcendent power that have kept this nation secure for over two hundred years, in times of plenty and times of crisis.

I wish and pray for success for this new President, for he has before him a task and challenges that few have seen in the history of this country. Most would say that these challenges are of economics and of foreign hostilities, but those are really just symptoms of a much deeper challenge of bringing the country back to, and leading forward into the historic hope and promise of the American experiment.



The founding of the United States came from the understanding that human beings were created in the image of God, for a Divine purpose. In that light we all walk a pilgrimage that requires an analysis and affirmation of four distinctly human principles. Those four are origins, morality, purpose, and destiny.

The problems of America and the world today stem from abandoning the dignity of those founding principles in favor of mundane material platitudes without any relevance to the true human condition.

Hence instead of being created in the image of God, humanity evolved by undirected chance over an eternity of time. Instead of treating others, as you would like to be treated, your goal is to get all you can get for yourself now. Instead of focusing your vision upon a grand land in which all have opportunity to achieve their dreams, we desire to get as rich as possible as quickly as possible and retire undefeated. Finally instead of looking forward to that eternal city, we seek to get all we can now, for tomorrow is a meaningless nothing.

As this new President begins his administration, the task is not to hope to save this dead evolutionary ideology, for this leads nowhere. The task is to take hope and make it valid in a true reality of universal unity and diversity.

There are powerful special interests that do not want to make this hopeful reality valid, because they believe wrongfully that this is all there is, and if this is all there is, they will strive diligently to maintain their piece of that stuff. God save us from that fascist worldview, for that Godly faith is our only hope.

The headlines from President Obama's acceptance speech says "choose hope over fear." Those platitudes have made for campaign rhetoric, but the operational principle of hope is faith, transcendent faith. The operational principle of fear is retreat, retreat into self, isolation, and regret. Faith is not a force, faith is a God given attribute to know and affirm a transcendent reality, not only in the Augustine's City of God, but also the City of man.

In the first few centuries after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the known world was changed dramatically. That change took place by followers of Christ, following Christ, not by trying to create the hope of glory in reality, but by allowing the Hope of Glory to transcend their lives and spreading that transcendent reality, not only to grow the church, but to use that reality to change the vision of the secular.

I recently read an article on the Protestant Reformation in which the author's thesis really was not that the church was reformed or even transformed, but recreated. The meaning was that the changes were so dramatic that essentially only the stones of the old church remained, and the new structure was so different than the old, that little remained that could be recognized as the old church. That summary is also true when you look at secular western culture of the time.

Carrying that into the present United States, there exist two extreme political factions. On the one hand, the now liberal left thinks only big government programs will bring the needs that society requires. They have no problem believing that socialism, if not communism, is the ideal form for human civilization and capitalism is inherently evil, because it demands from the individual more than they can achieve by a passive evolving life.

On the other extreme, is the Reagan doctrine that government is the problem, and it has no stake in true prosperity. In this worldview, only individual and corporate initiative can provide for a better future. Government by its very charter, oppressively taxes that desire, not only for money, but also through unneeded regulations.

These two divergent paradigms have become more hostile since the Reagan Revolution, but have been the *modus operandi* for the government capitalism debate since the closing of the western frontier in this country a hundred and fifty years ago. The driving force in all this struggle however really isn't about human enterprise of either form, the struggle is about the ascendancy of Social Darwinism as a viable philosophy of both business and government.

This is not the Judeo Christian view, oft quoted from President Lincoln's second inaugural address,

“With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right... let us strive... to bind up the nation’s wounds for a just and lasting peace.”

Notice there really is nothing in Lincoln’s words, which do not appeal to absolutes, which transcend what we now foolishly call our material reality.

Many are the descriptions of these days being similar to the time of the Great Depression. Those similarities are justified in the context of economics, but to keep those times as the focus, misses the more complex reality. Our current battles are not so much about money as they are about ideas. In that light the words of the oath of office ring even more clear. “... to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. So help me God.”

So the wise course ahead seems, while not truly constructed, truly surveyed. That civil and secular course lies in the pragmatic call to leadership to reconstruct traditional American civil values. Our experiment with the truly only material is truly bankrupt. We can pour more money toward that failure, but the results will continue to baffle, not live up to expectations, and make real solutions much more difficult in the long term.

The church for its part has walked that same path with world system. In that regard, rare is the church doctrine that cannot be associated with any other religion or even the goals of secular progressive atheists. In the historical context of Augustinian doctrines of the City of God and the City of man, there really is no difference.

In that light, as we noted from the Reformation summary above, the church does not need to be reformed, the church will be reconstructed not by man’s wisdom, but by the transcendent workings of God. Part of that reconstruction must come from offering some wisdom of God’s creation to the City of man.

We have long described the financial crisis as, “An ocean of non energetic debt money, chasing too little true wealth.” That concept as far as I can tell is unique to the Wonder

Springs Chronicle. The financial collapse really was a deflationary revaluation of all global wealth by the passive inflation of not only the American dollar, but also included all global currencies. Central banks believed that relatively cheap money and ongoing prosperity could be maintained by magic leveraged monetary tricks that shuffled risk to those who were unwilling or could not understand the manipulative schemes. Presently, we are deeply immersed in the debt ocean current of what goes around comes around, and around, and around.

The reality of that debt ocean current is contextually described in an article, “Gordon Brown brings Britain to the edge of bankruptcy.” <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/ianmartin/4295219/Gordon-Brown-brings-Britain-to-the-edge-of-bankruptcy.html> The last paragraph of that article suggests that perhaps President Obama can pull off some miracle to save not only the United States, but Britain as well.

Before the first bailout of the melt down, we suggested somewhat whimsically that it would be wise, quick, and the prudent thing to do, just write off all the bad loans and start afresh. In hindsight we could now be well on our way to recovery, rather than still attempting to create value with fresh new debt money that never will or can be repaid by sound monetary policies.

What we have found out, in the USA, UK, and elsewhere, is that the private financial system of just a few months ago could not be saved in that form. Worldwide, these pillars of free market capitalism are now wards of their various national sovereignties and there is no reason to believe that any of the debt money tsunamis will affect anything other than raising the non energetic debt ocean level, soon drowning out New York, Washington, DC, London and other world financial and political centers.

There is some semblance of wealth in all the bad housing loans, wherever they originated and wherever they now reside. However determining that “net present value” will and cannot be ascertained when they are now scattered around the world hidden on the balance sheets and portfolios of debt flooded financial institutions. Taking debt and making or calling it, preferred stock, does not create asset wealth, it ex nihilo creates just more uncertainty.

No country, not even the United States, now maintains enough true wealth to properly sandbag these now federalized institutions, and set their respective countries on the solid ground of energetic wealth, creating, sound money and capital. That sound money should be called entrepreneurial liquidity.

When this all began the conditions of world economies were not all that bad, but as long as this wishful thinking of spinning debt money continues, the vortex keeps getting deeper and deeper more and more rapidly, and the great sucking energy becomes more and more powerful.

In 1944 near the close of World War II at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, international monetary leaders met to determine a financial structure for the postwar world. It lasted for over sixty years. In the age of global free trade that type of mutual cooperation is probably impossible, but a return to somewhat fixed rates of exchange of global currencies would be a step towards making money worth something as a medium of exchange for goods and services.

That cannot happen however as long as the United States insists on peddling debt like the most virulent financial cancer the world has ever known. A trillion here, a trillion there it really doesn't matter any more.

Way back then there was talk of the gold standard for money and other such mechanism to maintain currency values. What really brought on our meltdown and the bailouts however, was worldwide speculation in finances and energy. With access to billions of hyper leveraged capital, millions can be made by computer generated

swings in market prices of a few cents. So why do anything worthwhile when you can get rich, in monetary terms, by doing nothing and taking virtually no risk.

The old saying, "It isn't whether you win or lose, but how you play the game," no longer holds. In this game, you win and you make money, you lose and you make money, and all you need to do is bank the money in an offshore tax haven, and it is all legally, legal.

Putting this all into a type of transcendent context, the Roman Catholic Church lists seven deadly sins. Those seven are: lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. If you look at what got the world economies into this current state are really applications of these sins many times linked together. Because evolution is a goal to be emulated, especially the eternal consequences of billions of years in a personal lifetime, we can see in a number of the big players in this demise, either personally or corporately, the chosen link to most if not all of the above.

We used to call that vanity and narcissism. In the real world of the twenty first century you call it success.

"... to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. So help me God."

These need to be the words by which all Americans, not just public servants, use to understand their responsibilities to this land, and to all humanity, wherever they may live on this big blue globe.