The current, hottest (and so revealing) rant for the fading American Dream

Contributed by Jan Lundberg
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CRITICAL COMMENT

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Get Happy! Maybe you need a beautifully crafted justification of the crumbling American Dream, to keep you sharp and see how many times you recoil. The essay below has been attributed to David Letterman, but previously to Jay Leno. It was crafted into its full form by a Craig R. Smith of the right-wing, Christian, buy-gold-now Worldnetdaily.com. But it's circulating via the internet with the attribution to Letterman and "his" anti-Bush preface seamlessly tacked on.

It shouldn't be a surprise that a content, wealthy defender of the American Way of Life has no idea of the mess this nation and the planet are in. The writer is a very privileged consumer; evidence is his claim, "(Bush) cut taxes to bring an economy out of recession..."

- Jan Lundberg

David Letterman wrote this; it's the David we don't often see...

As most of you know I am not a President Bush fan, nor have I ever been, but this is not about Bush, it is about us, as Americans, and it seems to hit the mark.

The other day I was reading Newsweek magazine and came across some Poll data I found rather hard to believe. It must be true given the source, right?

The Newsweek poll alleges that 67 percent of Americans are unhappy with the direction the country is headed and 69 percent of the country is unhappy with the performance of the President. In essence 2/3 of the citizenry just ain't happy and want a change. So being the knuckle dragger I am, I started thinking, 'What are we so unhappy about?"

A.. Is it that we have electricity and running water 24 hours a day, 7 Days a week?

B.. Is our unhappiness the result of having air conditioning in the summer and heating in the winter?

C.. Could it be that 95.4 percent of these unhappy folks have a job?

D.. Maybe it is the ability to walk into a grocery store at any time and see more food in moments than Darfur has seen in the last year?

E.. Maybe it is the ability to drive our cars and trucks from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean without having to present identification papers as we move through each state?

F.. Or possibly the hundreds of clean and safe motels we would find along the way that can provide temporary shelter?

G.. I guess having thousands of restaurants with varying cuisine from around the world is just not good enough either.

H. Or could it be that when we wreck our car, emergency workers show up and provide services to help all and even send a helicopter to take you to the hospital.

I.. Perhaps you are one of the 70 percent of Americans who own a home. [Culture Change notes that a mortgage on a home means a bank really owns the home.]

J.. You may be upset with knowing that in the unfortunate case of a fire, a group of trained firefighters will appear in moments and use top notch equipment to extinguish the flames, thus saving you, your family, and your belongings.

K.. Or if, while at home watching one of your many flat screen TVs, a burglar or prowler intrudes, an officer equipped with a gun and a bullet-proof vest will come to defend you and your family against attack or loss.

L.. This all in the backdrop of a neighborhood free of bombs or militias raping and pillaging the residents. Neighborhoods where 90% of teenagers own cell phones and computers.

M.. How about the complete religious, social and political freedoms we enjoy that are the envy of everyone in the world?

Maybe that is what has 67% of you folks unhappy.

Fact is, we are the largest group of ungrateful, spoiled brats the world has ever seen. No wonder the world loves the U.S. , yet has a great disdain for its citizens. They see us for what we are. The most blessed people in the world who do nothing but complain about what we don't have, and what we hate about the country instead of thanking the good Lord we live here.

I know, I know. What about the president who took us into war and has no plan to get us out? The president who has a measly 31 percent approval rating? Is this the same president who guided the nation in the dark days after 9/11? The president that cut taxes to bring an economy out of recession? Could this be the same guy who has been called every name in the book for succeeding in keeping all the spoiled ungrateful brats safe from terrorist attacks? The commander in chief of an all-volunteer army that is out there defending you and me?

Did you hear how bad the President is on the news or talk show? Did this news affect you so much, make you so unhappy you couldn't take a look around for yourself and see all the good things and be glad? Think about it.....are you upset at the President because he actually caused you personal pain OR is it because the 'Media' told you he was failing to kiss your sorry ungrateful behind every day.

Make no mistake about it. The troops in Iraq and Afghanistan have volunteered to serve, and in many cases may have died for your freedom. There is currently no draft in this country. They didn't have to go.. They are able to refuse to go and end up with either a "general" discharge, an "other than honorable" discharge or, worst case scenario, a "dishonorable" discharge after a few days in the brig.

So why then the flat-out discontentment in the minds of 69 percent of Americans?

Say what you want but I blame it on the media. If it bleeds it leads and they specialize in bad news. Everybody will watch a car crash with blood and guts How many will watch kids selling lemonade at the corner? The media knows this and media outlets are for-profit corporations. They offer what sells, and when criticized, try to defend their actions by 'justifying' them in one way or another Just ask why they tried to allow a murderer like O.J. Simpson to write a book about how he didn't kill his wife, but if he did he would have done it this way.....Insane!

Turn off the TV, burn Newsweek, and use the New York Times for the bottom of your bird cage. Then start being grateful for all we have as country. There is exponentially more good than bad. We are among the most blessed people on Earth and should thank God several times a day, or at least be thankful and appreciative. With hurricanes, tornados, fires out of control, mud slides, flooding, severe thunderstorms tearing up the country from one end to another, and with the threat of bird flu and terrorist attacks, 'Are we sure this is a good time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?'

David Letterman

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The writer is, to be kind, naively and deeply up the corporate culture. Never expect someone like this to understand the implications of peak oil or anticipate crippling shortage or collapse based on the ecological overshoot of civilization. He may be a climate-change ignoramus or denialist, but he is like so many who honestly cannot connect the dots.

The things Craig Smith (the actual author of the essay) doesn't know, that he ought to learn, are too many to mention. Like any lightweight he believes almost all of us are gainfully employed, have all the freedoms we need, have health care, and don't suffer from toxic exposures from industry and runaway technology. What about the fact that U.S. workers get hardly any vacation time compared to Western Europeans? "Keep slaving away and shut up, you brats!" is the underlying message. Smith's essay's title was, "Made in the USA: Spoiled brats", from 2006.

Many of Smith's cherished advantages about his USA are going to disappear along with the mortgage-backed artificial wealth, as the petroleum infrastructure dries up and rusts away.

Smith and fans of this ("Letterman's") essay should watch the new documentary Considering Democracy - 8 Things to Ask Your Representative. Filmed in several countries, it's an eye opener for how the world regards the sad nation that is the U.S. The film does not entirely undermine mainstream illusions -- the technofix is not questioned -- but it would rock anyone's world. It would be nice if more columnists, film makers and talk show hosts woke up audiences with insight, statistics and even jokes about the suppressed and emerging reality. See these links:

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Considering Democracy - 8 Things to Ask Your Representative:

consideringdemocracy.com

Snopes: running down falsehoods:

snopes.com

Reader comment:

The really telling thing is that every single thing on that list is material. No mention of the loss of community or deep relationships which can never be offset by any amount of material comforts.

Best,

Howard

Website: SystemsThinker.com