



A Sharp Analysis and Scathing Critique of Misguided and Misguiding American Leaders

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Howdy! Please give these clear-eyed Big Picture understandings close consideration.

In a bona fide liberty-loving democratic republic, the people are protected from being ruled with excessive ruthlessness by wealthy dominion-demanding rich people and their organizational tools, giant corporations. Or by demagogues in repressive authoritarian regimes, or for that matter by religious fanatics. *We the People* generally prefer fairer and more honest governance. We want a more broadly inclusive populism in which we are offered better opportunities and greater freedoms, and we want social justice to reign from sea to shining sea. We want to live in places that are not polluted, where a reasonable modicum of environmental justice prevails. We want to be able to enjoy our lives, liberties and individual pursuits of happiness, and we want improved social cohesion in peaceful coexistence. To establish these social goods, we must elect more progressive leaders, and refocus our national priorities.

To really improve matters, a more widely shared prosperity is needed, along with improved security for the populace, adequate investments in the social safety net, and sensible protections of the environment. And we need these propitious conditions at the same time that our leaders are not running the country into irresponsibly risky levels of debt by borrowing trillions of dollars to fraudulently give the lion's share of the spoils to the top 1%. To achieve these common good goals, we need more ethical leaders, and revolutionarily fair reforms, NOT lower taxes on the highest levels of income and a new salvo of rich people-imposed austerity measures.

Our colonial forbearers courageously declared independence from the British monarchy in 1776 because they were outraged at despotic usurpations and abuses of power by King George III. Then, 12 years later, delegates representing the people of the new nation ratified a great Constitution that had been hammered out during four months of contentious consensus-seeking at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia the prior summer. A primary purpose for the creation of this commendably good guidance in our democratic republic was to ensure that sufficient checks, balances, safeguards and accountability were established in the government to guarantee forevermore that no future despots or demagogues would be able to seize power, usurp it, and blatantly abuse it.

These eminently respectable Founders declared that the government's legitimacy itself, and its moral right to use the power of the state, are only justified and lawful when the people subject to that political power give their consent. This theory of consent is historically contrasted to the divine right of kings, and was often invoked as a charge against the legitimacy of colonial empires. Article 21 of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights formally confirmed this ultimate gauge of legitimacy, stating since 1948: "The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government".

Since the legitimacy of leaders in our democratic republic relies on the consent of the governed, and since Trump Republicans represent only a narrow minority of the people, and considering that the 2016 elections involved so much devious intrigue and downright illicit activity, the very legitimacy of current leadership in the White House and Congress is distinctly discredited. Besides, most of the people who supported Donald Trump gave their consent only after being subjected to an unprecedented barrage of deceitful, divisive and manipulative propaganda that hijacked people's emotions, goaded their fears, riled up racial prejudices, stoked white male nationalist nationalist Echo Chamber Tribalism, facilitated cyber-attack disinformation, promoted a raft of really Big Lies, and

indulged in deeply unethical and effectively diabolical machinations targeted to make people believe that the Supreme Court should be stacked with anti-gay, anti-choice Republican judges who just happen to corruptly side with prerogatives of corporations and wealthy people over the best interests of the vast majority of the people.

After Republicans achieved their 2016 electoral triumphs through a long litany of illegitimate means, these hyper partisan politicians have governed with ruthless unreason. They have double-crossed the people by ruling with unrelenting deceit, cunning chicanery, contempt for rules of law, fiscal irresponsibility, discriminatory zeal, extreme ecological myopia, un-Jesus-like moral turpitude, far right judicial activism, and an anti-egalitarian agenda that mercilessly panders to an elite few, with little evidence of integrity or really caring for the many.

The brilliant design of checks and balances in our government was developed to make sure that no branch of government would become too powerful. The framers of the U.S. Constitution built a system that divides power between the three branches of the government -- legislative, executive and judicial -- and includes various limits and controls on the powers of each branch. Right now, there is a highly contentious Supreme Court confirmation process going on, in which Republicans are trying to ram through an indignantly entitled and extremely partisan far-right Republican judge into a lifelong position deciding people's fate on the highest court in the land.

Stop them! Otherwise, this sham process and scam plan will cement in place a conservative majority on the Supreme Court for decades to come. Republican Senators have made this process illegitimate by rushing deliberations, hiding huge volumes of background information and stubbornly refusing to do an FBI investigation into allegations of sexual impropriety by nominee Brett Kavanaugh until their hand was forced. If approved after these shenanigans and all the secrecy, evasions, distortions of the truth and outright lies told by Kavanaugh, and considering his outraged belligerent animus toward Democratic Senators, liberals and women's reproductive rights, the legitimacy of the Supreme Court will be severely compromised.

Appoint consensus candidate centrist Merrick Garland to the vacant Supreme Court seat now!

The Vital Role of Women in Politics

Gender inequities are among the harshest of all injustices in our patriarchal society. Martin Luther King once famously declared that injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane of all forms of inequality. Injustices related to medical care and reproductive rights are particularly opprobrious to women, and they are just one aspect of multifaceted gender inequities, in a fuller context of pay discrimination against women, the glass ceiling, sexual harassment and the many violations against the safety and dignity of countless numbers of females, as being exposed by aggrieved women in the #MeToo movement. Please vote for progressive women to replace conservative incumbents. Women of the world, unite! Men, give us greater respect.

What We Must Do About This

Republicans charge that their agenda is being undermined by "a vast left-wing conspiracy". In stark contrast, Hillary Clinton famously declared back in the 1990s that there was a "vast right-wing conspiracy" against her and President Clinton and progressive causes. Since every American is being bombarded with an intense barrage of competing claims and obfuscating propaganda, it is hard for us to know what to really believe. We need to think straight, and see clearly.

It is crucial for us to ferret out the essential truth of this matter, for the consequences for our lives and the lives of all humanity forevermore will be profoundly affected by the environmental, ecological and climatic decisions that are being made, and by our resource usage activities and the extent to which we allow cost externalities like pollution, toxic wastes and associated medical care to be foisted onto society rather than demanding that our representatives take effective steps to prevent and alleviate such harms. Likewise, the impacts of our economic, business, financial, regulatory, social and political activities and strategies powerfully affect people living today, and will affect the fate of all people in future generations. So they should be redesigned to be more in accord with the visionary understandings in *Common Sense Revival - Book One of the Earth Manifesto*.

It is vitally important for the American people to accurately understand in order to choose more honest

representatives in the next election, women and men who will strive to promote the common good instead of allowing shrewd opportunists to use divisive propaganda and demagogic deceit to harmfully exploit working people and consistently favor the interests of corporations over individuals, and excessively deplete natural resources while wantonly damaging the environmental commons.

To honestly figure out whether the biggest threats to us will be found in left-wing schemes or right-wing schemes, let's be smart and "follow the money".

Look what's happening here. Left-leaning politicians are calling for better and more affordable healthcare, improved public education, lower interest rates on student debt, comprehensive immigration reform, greater fairness in political representation, stronger protections from corporate wrongdoing, smarter regulations to prevent harms and cost externalizing schemes, gargantuan reductions in the amount of money irresponsibly borrowed by the government to finance tax cuts for the top 1%, bigger investments in the country's physical infrastructure and farsighted climate actions, a fairer and less racially unjust system of criminal justice, good solutions to the deadly opioid crisis, lower prices for prescription drugs, the end of punitive laws for marijuana use, thorough investigations into election malfeasance and violations of the Constitution and rules of law, and international cooperation to pay forward economic stability and more broadly shared prosperity for our heirs.

Right-wing politicians are using outrageously divisive tactics to grab and keep power, and they are stacking federal courts and the Supreme Court with far right conservatives who inimically favor wealthy people over poor people, and corporations over workers and citizens. They staunchly oppose campaign finance reforms and expanded voting rights and fairer representation of the people, and they take steps to entrench the corruption inherent in extremely partisan gerrymandering of congressional districts. They are abusing their illegitimately gained power by dangerously running the country into trillions of dollars of additional debt to reward wealthy donors with huge tax cuts. They are trying to cover up criminal wrongdoing by Republican politicians and obstruct justice. They are corruptly giving coal and oil companies expanded privileges to spew more and more carbon into the atmosphere, with inevitably damaging and catastrophically costly impacts related to global warming, extreme temperatures, more intense storms, worse droughts and wildfires in many places, and ominous rises in sea level and storm surges.

In the big picture, unprincipled Republican politicians have used twisted trickery in the form of the most egregious bait-and-switch scheme ever by promising to champion the best interests of the working class and people on Main Street, and then doing the bidding of rich people and corporate entities by trying to cripple workers' ability to collectively bargain for fairer treatment. Simultaneously, they are giving lavish benefits to rich people and Wall Street banks and corporate interests to the detriment of the vast majority of the people. These Republican politicians are acting with extremely risk-laden fiscal irresponsibility by borrowing trillions of dollars to give more than 80% of this fraudulently incurred debt to the richest 1%. At the same time, they are imposing austerity measures on the masses by cutting spending on healthcare, public education, environmental protections and many other hallmarks of a civilized society. In these schemes, they are rashly undermining the common good and the general welfare, and mortgaging the future, and sabotaging the environmental commons, risking "catastrophic and irreversible consequences" by failing to limit emissions of greenhouse gases.

It should be remembered that Donald Trump supported a petition to President Obama and the U.S. Congress in December 2009 to pass laws to limit emissions of greenhouse gases. In a full-page ad published in the New York Times as leaders from 192 countries were gathering at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, 100 business leaders signaled support of the ad, including Donald Trump and Ivanka. The petition succinctly stated: "We support your effort to ensure meaningful and effective measures to control climate change, an immediate challenge facing the United States and the world today. If we fail to act now, it is scientifically irrefutable that there will be catastrophic and irreversible consequences for humanity and our planet."

Bizarrely, Trump has opportunistically flip-flopped on this position, obviously deciding that he prefers the power and money gained by allowing short-term-oriented profit-making on fossil fuels to dictate our environmental policies, even though he is aware that the consequences will be "catastrophic and irreversible." This is a Faustian bargain with the devil, detrimental to billions, and a reflection of reprehensibly naked greed unmasked.

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears ...

The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones; ...

O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts, And men have lost their reason.

--- William Shakespeare, in *Julius Caesar*

Efforts by Republican politicians to entrench a far right majority on the Supreme Court before they lose the power to accomplish this, are targeted to make sure that the narrow "Robert's Five" majority will continue to be able to impose their will over the people by making more narrow 5-to-4 rulings that side with rich people over poor people, corporations over workers, profiteers over people committed to sensible protections of the environmental commons, men over women, white people over people of color, gun rights fanatics over those who support sensible efforts to dramatically reduce gun violence, those who gerrymander over those gerrymandered against, fearful citizens against immigrants and asylum seekers, evangelical religious zealots over gay people, and Christians over Muslims, Jews, agnostics and atheists. And in the biggest scheme of things, Republican politicians want to have a permanent majority of right-wing judges on the Supreme Court who will allow the current Republican president to get away with breaking election fairness laws and engaging in intrigue with Russians who interfered in our elections, and violating many provisions of the U.S. Constitution and rules of law.

This is corruption incarnate. Seeing clearly, the American people should reject this effort to stack the highest court in the land with another Republican partisan, especially because Donald Trump chose him over all other possible nominees because he is the most likely person to act as an enabler of abuses of power rather than as an independent check against corruption, fraud, influence peddling, political malfeasance and the anti-egalitarian, anti-environmental and anti-democratic litany of right-wing Republican agenda priorities.

We are living in a Bizarro world in which Republicans have abandoned stances that they long stood for, as Max Boot points out in his new book *The Corrosion of Conservatism: Why I Left the Right*. Max Boot is a lifelong conservative writer and historian who has succinctly pointed out that he has been utterly dismayed since the 2016 national elections by witnessing "the Republican Party switch its position on issue after issue — going from free trade to protectionist, from pro-immigration to nativist, from tough on Russia to appeasing Russia, from fiscal discipline to fiscal irresponsibility, from defending the rule of law to undermining it."

In light of all the misguided and illicit actions being taken by Donald Trump in the world today, Dr. Tiffany B. Twain proclaims: "If Donald Trump really had a shred of moral integrity, he would repent of his dastardly deeds, admit his sins, fire Vice-President Mike Pence and replace him with a fair-minded progressive woman, and then resign from office before the midterm elections."

Ideas like this are expansively evaluated in *See Clearly: Sanity During Insane Times - Book Twelve of the Earth Manifesto*. Check it out on my Earth Manifesto website! Note that excellent solutions abound to all the big challenge we face, and they should be guided by a *Bill of Rights for Future Generations*, and by *Intelligent Precautionary Principles Enunciated*. And they should be informed by the eminently propitious worldview and recommendations made in my *Common Sense Revival - Book One of the Earth Manifesto*.

The Power of Film and Its Visceral Immediacy

I highly encourage every American to watch Michael Moore's new film, *Fahrenheit 11/9*. While doing so, think about which of these two competing "conspiracy theories" represents the greatest threat to *We the People* and the common good, and the future of our democratic republic. This is probably Michael Moore's most touching, perceptive, enlightening, important and frightening film, and it is impressive how brilliantly he uses the technique of weaving together disparate threads of a whole comprehensive farsighted worldview into a viscerally moving and thought-provoking narrative.

Michael Moore's powerful integrative technique is reminiscent of the great documentary filmmaker Adam Curtis, who is known to film aficionados who attend enlightening film festivals around the United States and the world. Adam Curtis is an entertaining, big picture seeing, consequential filmmaker who earned a doctorate at Oxford and taught politics, and then became a filmmaker for the BBC, where he learned to utilize vivid imagery to viscerally inform. Adam Curtis loves to explore areas of philosophy, psychology, sociology and political history, and his favorite theme is "power and how it works in a society." Explorations of such topics are extraordinarily timely in light of anti-democratic authoritarian movements in nations around the world during the first 18 years of the 21st century.

Adam Curtis describes his work as "journalism that happens to be expounded via the medium of film", which just happens to be a richly visceral way to convey more accurate and holistic understandings of our selves, our lives and political issues. His four-episode documentary *The Century of the Self* is a surprising and incisive look into human societies as informed by the insights of Sigmund Freud and his nephew Edward Bernays' brilliant success in applying knowledge of the unconscious mind to public relations and marketing and manipulative propaganda that serves to sell things and control the populace.

The Way It Is

Our Founders loved liberty, and hated despotic usurpations and abuses of power, so the brilliant Constitution they created featured checks and balances to prevent tyranny, and to ensure a more perfect union dedicated to an expansive vision of the general welfare of the people and their liberties and the nation's security.

Fast forward to right now. *See Clearly* is an ultimate Big Picture exposé of the wide-ranging wrongdoing involved in the way the status quo is currently rigged. In seeing clearly, we realize how long a litany of corrupt schemes, illicit scams and unethical con jobs are being perpetuated by power abusing "conservatives" against *We the People*. By seeing clearly, we recognize the crucial importance of wide-ranging farsighted change.

It is my strongly felt conviction, my fellow Americans, that we can no longer afford to allow conservative males to run roughshod over the greater good by ruthlessly dominating our churches and federal and state governments. We need to collectively pledge allegiance to unifying policies, greater good goals and smarter national priorities. We need to demand a peaceful revolution that will ensure our representatives give us more just and honorable national plans, and more inclusive and egalitarian national priorities. Our representatives in Congress should start by enacting legislation that effectively reverses the corruption-facilitating *Citizen's United* ruling that allows Big Money to corrupt our elections and lawmaking.

Only a misled minority of Americans consents to the ruthlessness of Republican rule today. People see that these usurpers of power prioritize profits over people's health and well-being, and that they are engaging in egregiously idiotic ecological insanity. People see the treacherousness of incredibly well compensated puppet politicians, and the ultimate wrongheadedness of rationalizers who help domineering CEOs and crony capitalists impose their profit-prepossessed plans on the people, promoting a crusade against fairer treatment of working people. Sensible folks see that all of this is crazily contrary to the health of providential living conditions for life on Earth.

This culture of corruption in Crazytown is spreading like a cancer on the nation. What we really need is a new reality that features better management. We need leaders who are not pushing a divisive agenda that benefits from diversions of attention and partisan rancor and chaos in the administration of what should be proper governance. We need leaders who are less villainously obsessed with exploiting workers and cheating consumers and using up our home planet's limited natural resources at the fastest possible rate. We need leaders who are not creating a Reality TV-like drama that allows them to get away with excessive profiteering and widespread malfeasance, accompanied by a tsunami of preposterous distractions from all the self-serving, self-aggrandizing and unscrupulous goings on, right here and right now. Who knew that the Big Brother government George Orwell imagined in his dystopian novel *1984* would come in such an ugly, cruel, deceitful, condemnation deserving, and transcendently irresponsible form?

Let's reverse course. Instead of getting rid of all the vitally important functions of government and opening the barn doors to individual and corporate cost externalizing and wrongdoing, let's do the opposite!

A Big Focus

To actualize the greater good, we must be guided by more comprehensive concerns -- ones that take into account *The Common Good, Properly Understood*. Most folks do see that the status quo is rigged irresponsibly against the vast majority of the people. Candidate Trump promised to fix this. This deceitful assurance was part of a pathological con job. Instead of this, after conniving Republicans stole the 2016 elections, these corrupt politicians immediately began to impose an unbelievably long litany of schemes, scams and frauds against the people in their 20 months, so far, of illegitimate and chaotic rule. The sordid details of this infamy are spelled out in the 16 incisive essays of *See Clearly*.

As a pathetic consequence of the ways the status quo is rigged, the ruling class is wantonly endangering and outright harming hundreds of millions of people in the United States and around the world. And right now, "conservative" politicians doing the bidding of corporate CEOs are trying to get rid of more and more regulations, so we are losing sensible safeguards against roguery, influence peddling, cost externalizing schemes, environmental damages, insider trading, illicit money laundering, and all manner of worse-than-the-mob scams, including bank fraud, tax evasion fraud, Charitable Trust scamming, risk-laden leverage, violations of campaign finance laws and emoluments improprieties.

Think of how fanatically misguided it is for corporate entities to be allowed to exercise domineering power. The two main legal purposes of corporations are to maximize profits and minimize liabilities and responsibilities of CEOs and managers and investors. As a result, corporate entities are driven to externalize costs, foisting them onto you and me -- and onto everyone in the future, to their inevitable eventual detriment and titanic chagrin.

The goal of establishing a government of strong checks and balances that can stand for time immemorial against both domestic despotism and foreign tyranny is at the very heart of the U.S. Constitution. So, it is tragic that our democratic republic, founded for the common good, has devolved today into an illegitimate state by allowing a demagogue and his nodding co-conspiratorial minions to seize power, and to brazenly abuse authority, inimically contrary to the best interests of the citizens of the republic.

Trump Republicans are putting their Party over country, using divisive demagogic tactics to succeed in sacrificing the common good to the monomaniacal pursuit of power, profit and personal advantages in a crony capitalist system. In so doing, these cunning politicians are causing excessively myopic and consequentially harmful impacts on countless numbers of people. Their way-worse-than-Machiavellian schemes should be judged as acts of "evildoers".

According to Proverbs 6:16-19 in the Bible, there are six things that the LORD hates, and a seventh that is an abomination unto Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil mischief, a false witness who speaketh lies, and one who sows discord among brothers." In light of Trump narcissistic character disorders, the Goddess of Irony grumbles ominously.

Think honestly of the long litany of profoundly corrupt scams and unethical swindles and shrewdly illicit schemes that "conservatives" have used to win elections and grab power. Trump Republicans have engaged in almost every possible illegitimate ruse, rather than more honorably and honestly trying to promote the greater good and the general welfare. They have cheated, lied, divisively stoked hot button cultural issues, used fear and grievances to emotionally manipulate the populace, broken laws by using hush money to cover up Trump's scandalous adulteries, engaged in duplicitous smear campaigns and character assassinations and dirty electioneering tricks, encouraged Russian cyber-attacks and disinformation, promoted fake news and inimical political conspiracy theories, denied facts and expertise to push their narrowly corrupt agenda, suppressed the vote, made contorted extreme gerrymanders of hundreds of congressional districts, purged voter rolls, restricted early voting, treacherously done the scurrilous bidding of rich people and corporate entities, and refused to take steps to prevent influence peddling and limit the corrupting effects of Big Money given by donors to decide elections and rig our laws and pervert our system of justice. Yikes, Tiffany! Let us meditate.

See clearly what's happening here, and why it's so seriously wrongheaded. Wealthy donors, led by the secretive Koch conclave co-conspirators and their well-heeled cronies, have colossally corrupted our economic and political systems, using Big Bucks and *Dark Money*. Encouraging this corruption, five conservatives on the Supreme Court gave their stamp of approval, stating in their majority opinion in the 2010 *Citizens United* ruling that Big Money in our elections cannot corrupt our politics -- "or even create the appearance of corruption." They expressed this suspect opinion despite the plainly evident extent of corrupting influence in allowing Big Donors to control and decide almost everything. "Not a puppet, not a puppet!", Trump-like characters exclaim, in dubious denial.

These indignities are being compounded by the fact that many of the scams being perpetrated are almost textbook examples of malfeasance and activities that bend or outright violate rules of law, and even often violate our great Enlightenment Era ideals-informed Constitution. The American people are further being subjected not only to this litany of ruses, but to deep psychological distress and insecurity due to the extremely divisive nature of demagogic attempts to blame others and exacerbate prejudices and pit people against each other. "United we stand; divided, the despots win." VOTE against these uncivil, anti-democratic and unpatriotic villains!

Chaos in the White House is dangerous to national security, and the revelations about it resemble an intrigue-packed thriller novel. The respect-deserving investigative journalist Bob Woodward has painted a harrowing portrait of the Trump presidency in his new book *Fear: Trump in the White House*, which is based on numerous in-depth interviews with officials in the Trump Administration and other principals. Woodward relates the dramatic story of Trump's lawyer John Dowd peppering Trump in the White House residence with questions about the Russia investigation, "provoking stumbles, contradictions and lies until the president eventually lost his cool." ... "This thing's a goddamn hoax," Trump finally erupted, and launched into a 30-minute rant that finished with him saying, "I don't really want to testify" to the Special Counsel Robert Mueller and his team of investigators. I guess not! After all, his now former lawyer John Dowd reportedly warned him that he would likely end up in prison wearing an "orange jumpsuit" if he were to testify under oath in the Russia investigation.

Other stunning stories about the risk-spiking chaos in the Trump Administration include Omarosa's grand opera testimony in *Unhinged, An Insiders Account of the Trump White House*, and Michael Wolff's *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House*. And David Frum's *Trumpocracy, The Corruption of the American Republic*. Etc.

Republicans in Congress are abdicating their Constitutional duty to exercise oversight over the President and members of his administration. In response, Democratic Attorney Generals are filing lawsuits against this rogue regime at a record pace, blocking Trump's cruel "zero tolerance" child separation policy, defending reproductive rights of women, and fighting for protections of the natural environment, which is critically important in sustaining us and everyone in the future. Democratic Attorney Generals are thus acting to create crucial accountability that is desperately needed to stop the worst harms of the narrowly self-interested agenda of Trump Republicans. "The inability and unwillingness of Republicans in Congress and state legislatures to hold this administration and others in power accountable means that our system of checks and balances rests with state attorneys general, who are filing lawsuits against Trump when he violates tenets of the Constitution and rules of law."

Crucial Ecological Issues

Make no mistake about it, there is an even worse aspect of the Republican agenda and the shrewd schemes that they are pushing to reward hyper-privileged partisans for their political support and campaign contributions. This is in the arena of environmental protections. Republican politicians want to slash spending on protections of clean water, clean air, food and drug safety, environmental science, the Environmental Protection Agency, NASA and efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. By these actions, these politicians are acting like *Conservatives without Conscience*, condemning countless numbers of people right now, and for all future years and decades and centuries, to radically increased risks of more calamitous hardships, resource shortages, deprivations, damaged habitats and intensifying natural disasters.

The harshly negative impacts of these retrogressive initiatives on human health can be categorized into a broad array of effects that saliently include climate change factors like extreme heat, severe weather, air pollution, diminished water quality, fresh water shortages, food supply disruptions, spiking risks of diseases, exposures to increasing amounts of allergens, rising sea levels and a worsening degradation of the environmental commons, which just happen to serve as an underpinning for overall human and biotic well-being. It is a colossal folly to court such catastrophic and irreversible consequences for humanity and our Mother Earth. The big picture understandings contained in *Climate Change Considerations, Carrying Capacity and Population Overshoot* are crucially important, so they are included here by this reference.

Pope Francis issued an important ecological encyclical on climate change in June 2015. In it, he made a strong moral case for the need to mobilize people of faith and others into action to seriously address climate change. The Pope centered his environmental protection theology on the biblical creation story in the book of Genesis, in which God is said to have created the world and declared it "good", and charged humanity with its care. And Pope Francis tied the ongoing environmental crisis to misguided economic schemes and the exploitation of the planet by a wealthy minority, emphasizing the social injustices that these trends cause while wreaking detrimental damages to the downtrodden and the poor and powerless. Jesus Christ!

Pope Francis has called for climate action as a moral imperative because of the perilous effects of global warming that will be most devastating for poor people and folks in vulnerable developing countries, who happen to be contributing the least to factors that drive climate change. Smarter and fairer policies are needed to achieve

truer environmental and social justice. All developed countries should make bigger contributions to the Green Climate Fund to mitigate the impacts of climate injustices. Most of all, the United States should contribute much more money, because it has been responsible more than any other country for the increasingly rapid build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere in the past century.

The smartest path forward would be to implement Pigouvian incentives such as an egalitarian carbon fee-and-dividend plan that would reduce the profligacy of wasteful usages of fossil fuels. Plans like this would have the effect of giving "extraordinary encouragements" and "extraordinary restraints" to businesses and individuals. The basis of this idea was first advocated by the insightful British economist Arthur Cecil Pigou, who promoted the idea of implementing subsidy incentives and tax disincentives because such mechanisms have the salubrious effect of properly reflecting both social benefits and costs to society that are not accounted for in private transactions. This would be a good means for influencing people's activities and behaviors in sensible ways. A carbon fee-and-dividend plan, progressively designed, would have added benefits of helping reduce inequalities in our society by returning some of the carbon fees generated to all Americans in a highly egalitarian way.

For more auspicious guidance, we should stop ignoring the largest constituency of all -- every person in future generations -- by making a courageous commitment to a truly fair-minded *Bill of Rights for Future Generations*, as specifically proposed in the-is manifesto.

Conservative leaders seem to want us all to stick our heads in the sand. Instead of making honest vulnerability assessments to the unfolding adverse impacts associated with juiced-up fossil fuel profit-making, they are firing environmental scientists, eliminating the best scientific understandings from government websites, dismantling the Environmental Protection Agency, and trying to pull the wool over our eyes. Crazytown!

I implore all politicians to remember the meaning and value of honorable public service, and to consequently stop their efforts to sacrifice future well-being merely to pander to narrow goals of corporate executives, fossil fuel profiteers, opponents of collective bargaining, religious fundamentalists, uncompromising gun rights extremists and wealthy ideologues like Foster Friess, David Pecker, Robert Mercer, Rebekah Mercer, Charles Koch, David Koch and Sheldon Adelson. The Koch brother billionaires have exerted more influence over our democratic American republic than any other individuals in history. They think Republican healthcare plans are simply not "conservative" enough, and they are "gearing up to target vulnerable Democrats on the ballot in 2018, pledging to spend upwards of \$400 million ...". Senator Kamala Harris indicates that Koch organizations "are specifically coming after some of the most effective voices in the fight to save the Affordable Care Act, like my colleagues Senators Chris Murphy and Bill Nelson." The gamesmanship of extremely partisan politics should not ignore human ethics and morality, and the common good should not be sacrificed with such ruthlessness in the pursuit of money and power.

There are extraordinarily good reasons to cultivate a miraculous healing for the Earth that "awaits this planet once we accept our new responsibility to collectively tend the Garden, rather than fight over the turf." So say Bruce Lipton and "Swami Beyondananda" in their insightful book *Spontaneous Evolution*.

One Way to Look at It

It can clearly be seen that Dividers have grabbed power through this illegitimate litany of schemes, enabled by their overarching ruse of psychologically exploiting the fears and racial prejudices and anti-immigrant sentiments of their narrow political base and the tendencies of authoritarian followers to blindly obey power-abusing leaders.

Trump Republicans are rashly, rudely and treacherously abusing the power they have gained by such illegitimate means, betraying the American people with their diabolical agenda and ruthlessly dishonest rule, and their fiscal irresponsibly, ecological insanity, immoderation, egregious violations of the common good, and sabotage of the best interests of all of humanity in future generations. In addition, they have abused their narrow majority power by stacking federal courts and the Supreme Court with conspiring Republican partisans who are not moderate, impartial or truly fair-minded in the administration of justice. And their fiscal irresponsibility is proving to be idiotically imprudent because of the trillions of dollars that are being borrowed from the public treasury to corruptly finance tax cuts for the top 1% of taxpayers.

Trump haughtily looks down on others, especially those who oppose his con man scams, as if he is better than others and exclusively deserving and immune from being held accountable for the dastardly consequences of his

treachery. He declared that he could "stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue" in New York City "and shoot somebody and not lose any voters", and now he's desperately trying to get away with far worse treachery and much more nefariously consequential wrongdoing. He is full of what sure seem to me to be wicked plans, because his priorities directly disadvantage millions of Americans, and he strives to deceive people to achieve these inimical outcomes.

A Spotlight on the Crucial Role of the Supreme Court

Look here now. Our Demented-Demagogue-in Chief and his Republican co-conspirators are ruthlessly attempting to ram through the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to a lifelong tenure on the Supreme Court, and this is a judge who SUSPICIOUSLY happens to be far outside the judicial mainstream in having professed a belief that courts should show great deference to the power of the presidency, even when that power is used contrary to the law or fundamental values, or healthy norms, or the Constitution itself. Right now, with so much malfeasance being uncovered related to the 2016 elections, and with the Mueller investigation revelations impending -- and with so many unethical abuses of authority going on -- it is a terribly wrong time to allow Donald Trump to appoint a cunningly clever judge to the Supreme Court who will almost certainly take the side of the "Robert's Five" in rationalizing, enabling and facilitating all the egregious wrongdoing taking place. Besides, Kavanaugh's candidacy should be widely discredited because of the fact that he has lied about many things, and has additionally been diabolically evasive and contradictory in his stands with regard to women's reproductive rights. Also, the fact that Trump has tried to appoint only judges to federal courts who are hostile to abortion rights makes Kavanaugh a poor choice, because he is likely to join other right-wing "conservatives" on the high court to overturn *Roe vs. Wade* rights to a safe abortion in the first trimester of any pregnancy.

A review of the Supreme Court's jurisprudence, in the years since George W. Bush appointed John Roberts to the Supreme Court and made him Chief Justice in 2005, reveals that in the most controversial and salient civil cases -- those decided by bare 5-4 or 5-3 majorities, when the right wing of the Court has voted en bloc to form the majority -- they do so to advance far-right and corporate interests more than 90% of the time. In those cases, the "Roberts Five" -- John Roberts, Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas, Anthony Kennedy and Justice Antonin Scalia (replaced last year by Justice Neil Gorsuch) -- have consistently voted in lockstep to help Republicans win elections, to protect corporations from liability, to abridge people's civil rights, to favor the rich and powerful, and to advance a reactionary social agenda.

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island indicated during his opening remarks to the Senate Judiciary Committee in the Kavanaugh confirmation hearings on September 3, 2018 that rulings in 73 cases decided narrowly by the Robert's Five fell into the following four categories:

- (1) Helping Republicans Win Elections: Dark Money, Voter Suppression & Union-Busting.
- (2) Protecting Corporations from Liability: Letting Polluters Pollute & Making It Harder for Americans to Have Their Day in Court.
- (3) Taking Away Civil Rights and Condoning Discrimination, and
- (4) Advancing the Far-Right Social Agenda: Religion, Guns & Abortion.

Senator Whitehouse specifically mentioned each of these 73 cases and the upshot of the decisions made, and it makes a very persuasive case for the Senator's contention that partisan Republicans on the Supreme Court consistently advance the interests of corporations and a radical right social agenda.

Republican Senator Sasse of Nebraska made an impressive and superficially persuasive argument in his remarks on the same day of Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearings to fill the seat left vacant on the Supreme Court when Justice Anthony Kennedy retired. Sasse stated that it is the duty of Congress to make laws and fix problems, rather than for judges in our court system to become activists in making deciding determinations. But Senator Sasse conveniently overlooked the glaring need for an independent judiciary to act as a check against wrongdoing by Donald Trump and members of his administration. What Senator Sasse was doing in his remarks, in effect, was to rationalize the arrogantly rushed appointment of another extreme conservative to a lifetime position on the Supreme Court.

Senator Sasse basically said that it is the responsibility of Congress to make fair and reasonable laws, and that it is not a proper duty of the Supreme Court to act as a check on the failings of Congress or power-abusing Executive

Orders. His views were sensible, for Congress should not betray the people by making laws that narrowly favor rich people and corporations, and the President should not lie and cheat and rip off the people. But with the fact of the matter being that Congress has been corrupted by Republican dirty tricks and an anti-democratic agenda, and with Trump Republicans violating rules of law and the Constitution and ethical norms, *We the People* are desperately in need of Supreme Court Justices who will act responsibly, fairly, impartially and ethically to uphold the values and ideals that will contribute to actualizing the *Common Good, Properly Understood*. This would be true legitimacy.

I strongly believe that the Supreme Court must act as an honest and effective check against abuses of power. Just as Donald Rumsfeld once stated, "You go to war with the Army you have -- not the Army you might wish you have", we cannot rely on Congress and the President to act ethically and constitutionally, since right now the current Administration and rogue Republicans in Congress are acting like functionaries for enabling wrongdoing. So we must choose judges who will honestly, honorably and impartially decide cases in order to limit inimical abuses of authority by rich conservatives and giant corporations and the scheming politicians they have bought.

The threats to our democracy from within are the most serious in all of American history right now, due to Republican politicians in Congress abdicating their responsibilities to honestly represent the people and serve as a check against Trump's presidential abuses of power and the permissive Republican culture of corruption. Extremely partisan Republicans in Congress are not willing to pass a law to protect the integrity of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation from Trump's trying to discredit the findings in advance and get Mueller fired to terminate the investigation into wrongdoing. So, Senator Ben Sasse should admit that an extremely political partisan like Judge Kavanaugh should not be confirmed to a lifetime position on the high court, where he would very likely defend Donald Trump from accountability for his dishonesty, corruption, campaign finance violations, cyber-attack collaborations and emoluments profiteering at the public expense.

Scheming Republican Senators, notably including Mitch McConnell and Chuck Grassley and Orin Hatch, have been on an accelerated hurtling rush to get Brett Kavanaugh appointed to the Supreme Court before the November midterm elections. Astonishingly, this brazen effort has been tripped up by a woman who very credibly has testified that Brett Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her during their high school days. Reaction was swift to this challenge by a woman daring to speak out against the Republican nominee, a champion of male Republican privilege. Fox News incited its viewers to outrage at this existential challenge to right-wing hegemony, and almost immediately unhinged followers sent death threats to the courageous woman, Dr. Christine Blasey Ford. Many are being *Blinded by the Right*.

Echoes of the ruthlessly roughshod sexist mistreatment of Professor Anita Hill during Senate hearings in 1991 reverberate through the public consciousness, and there is a permanent stain on the Supreme Court for Republicans having put the extreme conservative Clarence Thomas on the court for a lifelong term of ruling for males and corporations and rich people over the greater good. #MeToo.

Conclusion

Survival is the ultimate moral good for our kind, and Big Picture perspectives are needed to help ensure our human survival and flourishing. Such perspectives should be comprehensive, and they should take into account the best understandings of spiritual leaders, and of deep ecologists and scientists in every discipline. They should not deny the most ethically aware worldviews, or the latest and most accurate scientific understandings.

Survival involves indefinitely sustained biological existence. We humans need to clearly recognize and respect the fact that we cannot continue to consume much more than can be supplied by natural resources and healthy ecosystems and regeneration. The carrying capacity of damaged ecosystems is much less than that of healthy ones, so it is an overarching necessity for us to act to prevent harms to habitats. Otherwise, by upsetting the providential balance in nature, we will upset the indispensable foundation of our flourishing and survival.

"Après moi, le deluge" attitudes did not work out well for the power-abusing nobility in France, because they cavalierly treated the masses too ruthlessly, provoking the French Revolution in 1789. And it sure didn't prove to be propitious for King Louis XVI, who was guillotined in January 1793, or for "Let them eat cake" Marie Antoinette, who met the same fate nine months later. Republican efforts today to roll back environmental protections, and to

reject global responsibilities under the Paris Agreement on climate change, are essentially a dead end "Après nous, le deluge" attitude. This is on all of us.

Big Picture perspectives should be better informed by a Buddha-like triumvirate of Right Mindfulness and Right Understanding and Right Action. They should be guided by foresight and respect for the long-term greater good, like that imbued in a Bill of Rights for Future Generations. Greater concern should be given to social justice and environmental justice, and to the proper stewardship of Creation. Greater respect should be accorded to the compassionate caring of spiritual leaders like the Dalai Lama, and of prophets like Jesus Christ.

At this crucial moment in human history, it would be wise to honestly review the findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment report, in which more than a thousand experts in 95 countries had spent four years assessing ecological conditions on Earth right after the turn of the millennium. The conclusion they reached was that human activities are having harmful impacts by unsustainably consuming natural resources while simultaneously significantly degrading ecosystems upon which we depend. These experts sensibly warned that humanity should develop a better managed economy and better methods of governance, so that in the course of living our lives we will at the same time better protect the vitality of our environment, and the future prospects of life on Earth. Let's come together to accomplish such farsighted goals!

Pliny the Elder was a scholar, naturalist and philosopher in ancient Rome who regarded the noblest life in an interesting way. "True glory," he said "consists in doing what deserves to be written; in writing what deserves to be read; and in so living as to make the world happier for our living in it." Interesting idea.

I, Dr. Tiffany B. Twain, am a relative nobody, and I regard the seeking of "glory" as a curiously odd purpose, either in gods or in mortals. This is especially true when perceived glory comes at the expense of others, or to their distinct detriment. I feel strongly that all people should try to pay forward some good deeds to our heirs in future generations to help create better and safer prospects for overall well-being for everyone.

Truly,

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain

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