

SUFFERING THE WORTHLESSNESS OF WOKEISM

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We are witnessing a number of radical military,

social, and political revolutions that are changing the United States—and the world—in fundamental ways that we still have not appreciated.

The taboo about never mentioning the first-strike use of nuclear weapons in a major conventional war is now apparently over. Vladimir Putin routinely threatens their use. Communist China hints at its growing nuclear capability and is hell-bent on rushing into production a huge new nuclear missile force. The world is defining nuclear incineration down.

The more China and North Korea talk about nukes, the more necessary it is that uneasy democracies such as Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan will make adjustments. And the more the United States bows out of its prior role of extending its nuclear umbrella over Western democracies, the more likely these societies will consider going nuclear themselves.

Should Iran acquire nuclear weapons—and its patrons Russia and China seem to be ensuring that it will—then the long feared but heretofore never reified nuclear Middle East arms race will finally break out, as the petro-rich Arab world tries to deter Iran's unhinged theocrats.

There is also a revolutionary vacuum occurring abroad. Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea are trying to figure out whether there is still any old-style American deterrence, or whether the woke progressives now in power in Washington dislike the customs and traditions of the United States even more than they do.

Lots of disasters have contributed to the current perilous state of affairs, including the precipitous American retreat from and humiliation in Afghanistan. Add in voluntary cutbacks in oil and gas production by the West, and the subsequent embarrassment of a superpower beseeching thuggish regimes such as Venezuela to send us their energy.

The politicized transformation of the U.S. military from a meritocratic force focused on wartime lethality into an extension of the social welfare state driven by diversity, equity and inclusion has encouraged our enemies to

take risks they otherwise might not have taken.

Other contributors to the American power vacuum are the enormous federal debt, hyperinflation, and likely stagflation and recession this winter—along with the worldwide mania following COVID and the disastrous blanket lockdowns.

All of the above has suggested to the world that a cognitively challenged 79-year-old Joe Biden is both an illustration and cause of American decline, rather than a temporary embarrassing aberration.

Certainly, a wrecked downtown Seattle, the homelessness debacle San Francisco, a Marxist legal regime in Los Angeles, a typical Saturday night of carnage in Chicago, and screaming throngs at the homes of Supreme Court justices are now typical vignettes. They should not be the stuff of a supposedly democratic superpower.

Instead, the new woke United States—from the pride flag that flew atop the now abandoned U.S. embassy in Kabul to its former gender studies programs in now gender-segregated Afghanistan campuses—exudes both arrogance and weakness. That is a fatal combination for a major power.

It suggests to those abroad that a once pragmatic, dependable, and competent America no longer exists. Soon it may reach the point that those whom America wishes to help would rather pass on such beneficence, given American propensities to offer sanctimonious and strident lectures coupled with an unreliable and ineffective military record.

So what should we expect in the next few years? Far greater cohesion between frightened Western democracies on the one hand, while on the other enormous pressures for many to become nuclear themselves.

Expect Germany to become more obdurate, either going its own way or ordering the EU and NATO to follow along its path. The more Germany endangers itself and its neighbors with its crackpot policies, the more the world shrugs that 1870, 1914, and 1939 were archetypal, not the anomalous postwar decades.

NATO and the United States may finally invest in credible missile defenses, since they are starting to agree with once-demonized conservatives that in extremis Putin would have no moral problem leveling Florence or incinerating Stockholm—no more than North Korea or China on the brink would hesitate to ensure the cinders of Seattle or San Francisco glow.

Ukraine has been our Spanish Civil War for nearly three months, a laboratory of strategies, tactics, and weapons of wars to come. What are the lessons so far from that conflict?

Western military technology still remains the world's most lethal. Russian equipment is not just noncompetitive but reminds us that weapons are simply tools. Their operations hinge on skilled and zealous soldiers. The majority of Russian conscripts and their officers are neither.

Moreover, Ukrainians remind us that well-trained, motivated, and courageous small teams of combatants—mastering online, computerized, and sophisticated Westernized anti-tank, anti-aircraft, and anti-personnel drones and rockets—can nullify vast military investment and manpower.

So far, the Ukrainian hit teams have rained death upon tens of thousands of Russian soldiers while destroying billions of dollars of supposedly impregnable Russian traditional assets like artillery, armored vehicles, tanks, and ground support helicopters and aircraft.

Given the recent humiliating U.S. defeat in and retreat from Afghanistan—after abandoning tens of billions of dollars' worth of sophisticated equipment to terrorists—and the ongoing destruction of the conventional Russian

military and billions of dollars of its equipment, we are starting to revisit an earlier pattern of large and well-equipped expeditionary forces of big powers failing to achieve their strategic goals.

They prove to be out of place and inept. China may learn the same lessons if it invades Taiwan.

In the American case, the culprits are both White House political ineptitude and the Pentagon's strategic confusion. In the Russian instance, there was a complete divorce of abstract strategy from reality on the ground, between demoralized conscripts versus motivated volunteers fighting for their families.

There were systemic Russian failures to field competent and motivated soldiers and to maintain and wisely employ sophisticated equipment. *Russia is showing the world that it is a global player only to the degree it can sell oil and periodically threaten any nation it likes with nuclear weapons*—a fact no doubt privately conceded by Putin himself.

In the West in general, and in the United States particularly, we are seeing a final fruition of decades of woke self-loathing.

What was once an elite boutique parlor game confined to university departments and the schools of education has now filtered throughout all campus courses to the point of being institutionalized. It is lapping into the engineering, math, and physics departments and the schools of medicine and business.

The idea of meritocracy is disappearing, replaced by woke reparatory fixations on race, in the manner the ideologically correct Soviet commissariat destroyed Russian institutions or Mao's cultural revolutionary insanity destroyed millions of Chinese.

At a time of impending recession, runaway inflation, and climbing interest rates, universities are charging students thousands of dollars in increased tuition and fees to subsidize an unproductive diversity, equity, and inclusion industry. And like all good commissariats, the Dept. of Education apparatchiks produce no research, do no teaching, and bully and repress those who do.

Their chief legacy is the millions of opportunistic mediocrities emerging from the shadows to mouth wokester shibboleths about climate change, diversity, equity, and inclusion, identity politics, and transgenderism, while damning the customs, traditions, history, and values of a prior society that alone is responsible for their very affluence and leisure.

The stuff of life—water storage for agriculture, gas and oil production for transportation and home livability, building materials for shelter, deterrent police to ensure safe streets, and competent medical officials and scientists—is now subordinated to ideological censure and audit.

All that is not a sustainable proposition for a sophisticated but vulnerable multiracial democracy of 330 million. Nihilist ideology finally trickles down to shelves empty of baby formula, idled diesel semis, and parked cars left open to thieves in hopes they will merely steal rather than also vandalize. Boutique university theories turn deadly when any society is unhinged enough to adopt them.

So this cannibalistic woke revolution is no 1960s Woodstock, not even a Black Panther, Weatherman, or Symbionese Liberation Army violent spasm. Instead, wokeism is so institutionalized that, like the Soviet Party or the adherents of Mao's little red book, joining the virtue-signaling wokesters is seen as a smart career move.

Going woke is a bully's paradise, an indemnity against a past ill-considered tweet or a future peccadillo. Indeed, it is quasi-religious groupthink proselytizing.

The world is fragmenting and changing in all different directions. Unfortunately, contemporary America is offering no guidance. To the extent it seeks to lead and inspire, its current elite wish to take other nations and cultures down a nihilist pathway of self-loathing that few wish to follow.

Such is the worthlessness of wokeism that America is suffering.

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