

Who Will Save Us From America?

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The first US presidential debate did not reveal anything new when it came to either candidate. Instead it merely confirmed that Donald Trump is a slobbering megalomaniac who should be kept away from political office in the same way a three-year-old child is kept away from a box of matches. A poster boy for unfettered capitalism, he is a man so divorced from reality — and, with it, his own humanity — that every word that leaves his mouth comes over as a cry for help.

Hillary Clinton, meanwhile, is a natural born killer, a passionate disciple of US exceptionalism who believes there is no country that can't be improved with a shower of cruise and tomahawk missiles. Her and her husband come as a package of liberal opportunism who have made their way through speaking left and acting right. The fruits of this opportunism are mass incarceration, the entrenchment of Wall Street as the golden temple of the US economy, and perpetual war and regime change overseas. When Farrakhan described Hillary as a "wicked woman" he couldn't have been more right. Christopher Hitchens said it even better when he observed, "She and her husband haven't met a foreign political donor they don't like and haven't taken from."

Such is the parlous quality of both candidates for an office which, even in its better

years, is synonymous with war crimes and crimes against humanity, it is tempting to conclude that we're fucked. I say this as a non-American given that the occupant of the White House is a matter of grave importance for a world by now grown weary of Washington's vast and ongoing experiment in democracy, along with the moral sickness which fuels its untrammled power and the doctrine of 'destroying the village in order to save it' that has long underpinned its foreign policy.

It begs the question of who will save us from America?

Writing these words while visiting Hollywood, a part of the world I know well having previously lived here, I am struck by the ocean of broken humanity that fills its mythical gilded streets. Anyone who believes that America is a classless society need only take his or herself over here to realize how utterly wrong they are. Indeed, after just one day not only will they be assured that there is no more a society defined by class than US society, but that every minute of a every day a fierce class war is raging in its towns and cities, with up to now only one side in this war, the 99 percent, taking all the punches and doing all the bleeding.

Across America the abandonment of the poor, the downtrodden and the sick to their fate in service to the rich has been so brutal and cruel that its human consequences given new meaning to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. America's poor are a colonized people, be assured, which is why Malcolm's assertion that, "You can't understand what's going on in Mississippi if you don't understand what's going on in the Congo," remains one of his most cogent.

Yet as much as I loathe America for the scale of injustice, brutality, and mendacity that informs its treatment of the poor at home and abroad, hope arrives in the tremendous litany of rebels, dissidents, and counter-hegemonic movements which the country has produced in response. Oppression breeds resistance and throughout US history there has been fierce resistance against overwhelming odds — Sitting Bull, Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, the San Patricios, Frederick Douglas, John Brown, Mother Jones, Big Bill Haywood and the Wobblies, Eugene Debs, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, MLK, Malcolm X, SNCC, the Panthers, anti-Vietnam War movement, Cesar Chavez, and on and on.

Each of them, along with the movements they led or were a part of, were sustained by the same fierce moral outrage at the injustice they experienced and witnessed being inflicted in the name of progress and might is right. Many people experience at some level and point this burning sense of moral outrage at the injustice that defines the world they live in. The difference arises between those who learn to make their peace with it and those who refuse to make their peace with it — who instead choose to grapple with this monster in what they know before they start will be a losing fight.

This is the human condition at its most inspiring, the willingness to fight even while knowing you can't win. But, then, such a reductive and one dimensional interpretation of victory has no place when we understand history as a river that flows without end and not a monument separating it into neat and tidy chapters, as in a book. Fighting is winning and winning is fighting in a struggle that will continue so long as injustice continues.

The race for the White House is a race for power engaged in by those Chaplin famously described as "machine men (and women) with machine minds and machine hearts." It is a contest between two representatives of a psychopathic ruling class for the keys to a kingdom of despair. But lest they allow themselves to become smug and complacent as they wallow in lives of privilege and decadence, they should hark the words of Crazy Horse, spoken days before he died while resisting imprisonment. "The Red Nation shall rise again and it shall be a blessing for a sick world; a world filled with broken promises, selfishness and separations; a world longing for light again."

Amen.

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