

A Psychedelic Moment In History

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In the words of the great Irish poet, William Butler Yeats:

Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Although those words were written in 1919, near the end of World War I and at the beginning of the Irish Uprising, it seems to me that they also apply to the world today.

And by changing a single word in the final two lines of that poem, it would conclude:

And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Washington to be born?

And so it is that I see us at the beginning of what I believe to be a truly psychedelic moment in history. Now for those among us who have yet to have their first psychedelic experience, let me explain what I mean.

Modern definitions of the word psychedelic, for the most part, imply that such an experience features hallucinations brought on by drugs. And that is fair enough as it goes in today's world. But we should remember that when Humphrey Osmond first coined that word, he said that it was to mean "mind manifesting", and that is the definition that I will be using here. That is, an experience in which our minds become free to explore completely new vistas, and roam free of the restraints of an ego. Furthermore, I would like to point out that I see a vast difference between our minds and our brains. While our brains may be command central when it comes to controlling our bodies, I think of my mind as the essential core of my being, others may call it their soul.

So how, you ask, could a rough beast who slouched his way to Washington cause a manifestation of mind or soul? Well, I'll get to that a bit later, but first I would like to point out two of the basic features of a psychedelic experience. One is that cultural barriers are dissolved, and the other is that a change of paradigm often occurs. I'll get to the paradigm shift later, but first I'd like to explain what I mean by the dissolution of cultural barriers.

A good metaphor for how our cultures shape our lives may be seen in the Russian Matryoska dolls, sometimes called a Russian nesting doll. I'm sure that you have at least seen a picture of these folk art dolls of decreasing size that are placed inside one another. The way I like to think about them is that the smallest of the set is us as infants who haven't yet learned our first words. We are just wonderful little unformed beings who now must begin to learn how to cope with the world around us. Then, as we mature, we begin to coalesce into more fully formed humans. We do this first by figuring out how to fit

into our families and then into the larger community around us. And at various points along the way larger and larger versions of us are built up over one another. Under my current persona you will find a grandfather persona, a businessman persona, a lawyer persona, a military persona, a father persona, a student persona, and eventually, if I dig way down I reach my core, the essential me, my mind if you will. Each and every one of us has a core being like that deep down inside. A psychedelic experience then, is a way to remove all of those outer casings, those cultural barriers, that we have used to survive thus far, in whatever culture we now find ourselves in. A truly productive psychedelic experience will return you to the essential core of your being by dissolving these cultural barriers that you have accreted over the years, and once you reach that inner core of your mind, there is no limit to the magic that you can do.

Over 100 years ago the American philosopher and psychologist William James pointed out that, "Human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives." It took me many years after first reading that quote to actually be able to put it into practice, and then it only came about after an intense psychedelic experience, one where I was able to shed all of the family, religious, national, and cultural boundaries that were covering up my inner core. Once all of those boundaries were dissolved, and I was back in touch with the essential being that I think of as "me", I was able to work out a plan to change some of the then-current **outer** aspects of my life. And that is what is meant when psychonauts say that they are "doing the work". You see, anyone can have a psychedelic experience, but not everyone does the work that it takes to bring something back from that experience, something that could be used to better their lives. It takes work to do that. So, if this truly is a psychedelic moment in history, then we have some heroic work ahead of us if we are to take advantage of these unusual times.

As melodramatic as this sounds, I believe that the mass extinction of species that is currently underway isn't necessarily going to spare the human species, unless we begin to pay much closer attention to the world around us. I realize that the news coming from wherever you are living right now seems to apply primarily to your own nation, but these are not normal times, and if you look around you will see that it isn't just your country that is convulsing today, it is all of humanity. We humans certainly have the technology and weapons to extinguish us all. What we seem to be lacking is the ability to recognize how mutually interdependent we all are, and that we simply can no longer continue to take advantage of our fellow humans, stealing their natural resources and treating them like slaves. Those days are coming to an end, which means that like it or not, voluntarily or not, those of us who are now living in the United States are going to be forced to make some significant changes in the way that we now go about our lives.

As one of my Texas law professors pointed out to me many years ago, there comes a time when we all have to take the bull by the tail and face the situation. However, the situation in the world today, as I see it, doesn't look like the hind end of a bull. No, the situation as I see it today is that we have just begun a truly psychedelic moment in human history, and how well we handle it is going to determine the course of this new millennium. Let's just hope that we don't have a bad trip.

Thanks to the Internet, it has become clear that the political struggles that are taking place in the United States today aren't unique. Similar battles are found in almost every political body on the planet. At times it seems as if the whole world is on fire and nobody knows where to find the fire department. Most human societies around the world are obviously in a major transition of some sort. The good news is that the way it finally works out for you may actually be more up to you than you think. But before we get to that, it seems to me that we first need to take a closer look at how we got to this unusual point in history. Because without looking back and clearly seeing the roads that we took to get here, it is going to be impossible to know in what direction we should proceed from this crossroad we are at. Personally, I see this moment as the perfect time for each and every one of us to stand up and be counted. However, let's be honest here. What standing up and being counted means is different for all of us. So how do you figure out your next move?

What I have done for myself, and something that you may want to do for your own self, is to spend some time trying to understand, not just the historical events that have led you to where you now find yourself, but how those events impacted your thinking, how they hit you emotionally. History, you know, is the background music of our lives. And while we all share bits and pieces of human history, there is no single story here. We all have our own stories about how we have come to think as we do, and so the only thing that I can do here is to tell you a little bit of the history that has shaped my own life. And I'll only mention the big events, ones that have also shaped the lives of many others in my generation. Of course, some of the more recent ones have touched us all.

So I'm going to take you on a little walk down the road that I have followed, and we'll stop at some of the historical markers along the way where I can better explain how I have come to my own conclusions about the best way for me to proceed from here. Now there are going to be some things that I say and with which you not only disagree but perhaps you will strongly disagree with me. Let's face it, none of us is 100% in agreement with another single person on the planet. We may agree on a lot of things with someone, but I would be shocked to find two people who totally agree about every little thing with someone else. It seems to me that one of those people would then be redundant, and there are no redundant people as far as I know. So what I'm suggesting that you do right now is to just listen to the facts that I present without emotionally disagreeing with me. There will be plenty of time for that later. Hopefully you will at the very least be able to understand how I came to the conclusion to not vote in the recent presidential election in the U.S.

For what it's worth, I did vote in the thirteen presidential elections that preceded this recent one, and in every one of them I did what many of my friends did and gave my vote to the person I thought to be the lesser evil. In fact, that was one of the three primary reasons Clinton gave for casting a vote in her favor. She wasn't Trump, thus she thought that everyone could see that she was the lesser evil. In my case that argument didn't wash because I was unable to decide which of those two was the *lesser* evil. To me they were equally bad candidates, and I'll talk about that in just a moment. Before I do, however, I want to comment on the state of mind experienced by some Clinton supporters on the morning after the election.

Although I didn't expect Trump to win, when I did learn the news I didn't feel let down at all, not the way that Clinton's most avid supporters did. In those first hours after the realization of a President Trump began to dawn on us all, I was actually shocked to learn that some people that I knew, old people like myself, were actually considering suicide, or at the very least moving to another country. Need I comment on the foolishness of those positions? Come on, suicide because Clinton didn't become the first woman president like she expected. Unless someone was expecting to be appointed to a high paying government job by Clinton, I think that suicide is a major over-reaction to her loosing the election. Get a grip people!

Of course, as a former Sanders supporter, the loss by Clinton didn't feel nearly as bad to me as Bernie's loss in the primary had felt, particularly after we discovered that he most likely would have won in a fair race. But the traitorous executives at the Democratic National Committee used their power to squash Sanders, who quite obviously had more popular support than did Clinton. So us Sanders supporters had already gone through the emotional let down of losing an election to a person who we felt was inferior to our chosen candidate.

Now, as a little aside here, please keep in mind that I asked you to listen to what I had to say without letting your emotions become involved. I say this because if you were a Clinton supporter I'm sure that you disagree with my opinion that the DNC and the Clinton campaign staff acted illegally in getting Sanders out of the way. That is my opinion. You are certainly welcome to your own opinion about these events, but what I'm attempting to do here is to let you know how *I* came to reach my decision to quit voting. So, if we can, I hope that you will continue listening with as little emotion involved as possible . . . at least until I come to the end of this little rant.

There are many reasons that I distrusted Clinton and supported Sanders. For starters, she was the most pro-war candidate in my memory. Some may want to dispute that, but this over abundance of experience that her staff always talked about included one disastrous military operation after another. However, the mess that she made of Libbia, along with her comments about Syria, were enough to show me what kind of a president she would be. On top of that, I think it is very clear that the Democratic Party itself intentionally betrayed working people and poor people in favor of the Wall Street friends of the Clinton Foundation. Again, that's how I happen to see it. You may disagree, and that's OK too.

Now while I don't expect Trump to be any less friendly to Wall Street, Big Oil, and the ultra-rich, I am hopeful (but probably misguided) about his position with regards to Russia. Taking both candidates at face value, which I agree is most likely pure folly, but based on what they said during the campaign, my take-away is that Clinton was pushing for a major war with Russia, and Trump wants to cut business deals with them instead. What I think we are seeing here is a major riff among the oligarchs who ultimately pull the strings inside the Deep State.

A few years ago there weren't many places where you could read about what is commonly called the Deep State or the Shadow Government. There are many definitions of what makes up the Deep State. One that fits what I have to say here comes from Charles Hugh Smith who defines it as "the unelected government that continues making and implementing policy regardless of who is in elected

office." And he provides an interesting graphical image of these interconnected decision-makers that shows over thirty groups, all in circles that touch one another but have no direct lines of authority between them. Naturally, you would expect to see bureaucrats from the three branches of government represented, but on that pseudo organization chart you will also find directors of major corporations, Wall Street and banking organizations, the Pentagon, the intelligence community, the defense industry, lobbyists, Silicon Valley, and over a dozen other such assemblages of like-minded individuals.

There is no overarching structure to the Deep State. However, there are many interconnecting mutual interests and bonds of friendship between the permanent hierarchies of these organizations. They go to the same prestigious universities, take vacations in the same places, and belong to the same clubs as their peers do. Often, their children are in school with one another. These are the people that C. Wright Mills wrote about in 1956 in his book *The Power Elite*, where he points out that these people are the leaders of the military, corporate, and political elements of society. Basically, these unelected people are in powerful and influential positions and actually run the government. These are the guys who call the shots. And if you don't think that they hold the reins of power in this country then you also probably still believe that Lee Harvey Oswald actually shot John Kennedy in Dallas. Sadly, the truth is that on November 22, 1963 Allen Dulles and other members of the Deep State orchestrated the murder of President Kennedy, staged silent coup, and took over the government.

This isn't the place to delve back into the Kennedy and King murders, but the truth is now available to the public in the form of many well-documented books and movies. While I don't always agree with Oliver Stone's point of view, I do believe, after reading dozens of books on the subject, that Stone's movie, *JFK*, got it right. Stone also produced an excellent television series titled *The Untold History of the United States*, which should be mandatory viewing for every high school student in the country. Or for those more inclined to reading, Howard Zinn's book, *The People's History of the United States* is another must-read book for anyone who is actually interested in learning the truth about how this country evolved into it's current form, that of a police state.

I can almost hear the groans now. "How can you say this is a police state, Lorenzo? I'm just as free to go about my business as I ever was." Oh yeah? Are you sure that you aren't living in a police state right at this very moment? Just look around. Every aspect of our lives are policed by the government. Every telephone call you make, every stroke on your computer keyboard, every time you leave your home and go somewhere, all of that is constantly being monitored by a government agency somewhere. There are communities in this country where people have been arrested for collecting rainwater from the roof of their own homes, for growing vegetables in their front yards, for raising chickens in their back yard, and for putting solar panels on their houses. There are many instances when SWAT teams have broken into homes, killed the pet dog, caused extensive damage, and sometimes even killed people who have committed crimes no more serious than petty infractions such as unpaid traffic tickets. You can be forced to give blood and be strip searched at some traffic stops in this country. And yet there are people who still don't think that this smacks of living a police state.

Right now, today, there are almost a million women and men who spend their nights in steel-barred cages and then spend their days making office furniture, working in call centers taking hotel

reservations, working in slaughterhouses, or who are making countless other products for the oligarchs who actually own this country. For their hard labor these docile prisoners are paid between one to five dollars A DAY! Prisoners are packaging your Starbucks coffee, shrink-wrapping your Microsoft products, and sewing lingerie for Victoria's Secret. They are sewing uniforms for McDonald's and making circuit boards for Dell and IBM. Prisoners are providing so much slave-type labor that the U.S. economy would have a serious problem should those people be fairly paid for their work. And you can bet that the corporate partners in the Deep State are going to do everything in their power to keep the War on Drugs going. After all, it is the primary source of their slave labor work force.

So how did we get to this sorry state of affairs? How do you get millions of people, who seem to believe that they are free, suddenly roll over and accept a police state? In a word, FEAR. Fear is the Deep State's primary weapon. I can remember, as a child in the 1950s, learning about the USSR, the Soviet Union, where citizens were exiled to the gulag, where the government had its nose in everyone's personal business, where neighbors were encouraged to spy on one another. I can vividly remember having discussions with my friends about how that could never happen in the United States. It could never happen here, we thought. How wrong we were, because today the U.S. is considerably more of a security/police state than the Soviet Union ever thought possible.

And all it took were a few terrorist attacks, a mall shooting here, a bomb threat there, and before we knew it, stories about these possible threats began appearing in the media every day. It didn't take very long for the brave U.S. citizenry to roll over and say things like, "I don't care if they listen to my phone calls and read my email, because I don't have anything to hide." Well, that may be true, but now you don't have personal privacy any more either. If you use a cell phone, a computer, or a credit card, almost everything you do is now open for the government to see. On top of that, millions of seriously deluded people continue to use social media outfits like Facebook, which is little more than an easy way for the NSA, the National Security Agency, to obtain even more personal information about you. If you ever accidentally get caught up in a police sweep of some kind you can expect them to know everything about you, including what you ate for lunch yesterday, what your current favorite movie is, and what kind of Web sites you've been visiting lately. Unless you have already been taking steps to keep some of your personal information private, your life is now an open book to the government.

And yet, most people say that they are OK with all of this because of the terrorist threats we are faced with. Did you know that there is a 17,600 times greater chance that you will die from heart disease than you will from a terrorist attack. You are a thousand times more likely to die in a car crash than from a terrorist attack, yet you most likely get in a car every day. Are you aware that you are eight times more likely to be killed by the police than by a terrorist? Yet the mainstream media never points these things out. Why is that, do you think? You see, the top media moguls are also elite members of the Deep State.

Last year the Obama administration, whose policies Clinton pledged to continue, began a major expansion of NATO forces into Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. These three nations were once members of the Soviet Union, and when they were admitted to NATO, the U.S. pledged to Russia that NATO would not station troops in those three countries, nor would NATO hold military exercises on their soil,

which borders Russia. Yet Obama and his generals have now started a significant military build-up in these three nations, right in sight of the Russian homeland. Think of this for a moment. During World War II, the Russians suffered unimaginable death and destruction when they were invaded through their Western frontier. Can you blame them for getting nervous about what the U.S. is up to? And why, do you think, are the Americans causing such a provocation?

This provocative build-up of NATO armies on Russia's border comes with the additional risk of sparking a nuclear exchange between NATO, Russia, and the United States. Military experts now tell us that due to the overwhelming superiority of US-led forces, that Russia has begun exploring the possibility of using so-called tactical nukes on the front lines. It doesn't take a Dr. Strangelove to see where that could lead.

Believe it or not, the United States of America would suffer an immense financial meltdown if war no longer is the nation's number one business. War is what this nation is all about. There is even a war against its own citizens. It's called the War on Drugs, but it is people who are being locked up in prison cages and forced to work as slaves, not drugs. During the Johnson administration we even had a War on Poverty, and now there is a War on Terror. I hate to be the one to break the news, but terror isn't something that can be ended with more war. In fact, war actually causes terror. It will never end it.

The United States economy is largely driven by the business of war. Well over one-half of all the weapons sold in the world today are manufactured right here in the good old USA. And the U.S. arms manufacturers desperately need an enemy like Russia in order to continue to prosper.

Each and every hour of every day since 2001 the citizens of the United States have shelled out \$10,500,000 for an uncounted for number of foreign military adventures. Add to that the \$2,200,000 that is spent every hour just to maintain the current nuclear stockpile, plus the \$1,610,000 given every hour to foreign governments to use in purchasing U.S. manufactured weapons. Right there you have over \$14 MILLION dollars per hour going directly into the war machine. What could your local school do with just one hour's worth of war money each year? Think about that for a moment.

For now, that should be enough talk about life in a police state for you to get the idea. But I have strayed far from my promise to take you on a little walk down the road that I have followed and which has led me to believe as I do when it comes to the current state of affairs in the United States.

In June of 1960 I graduated from high school, and, after reading from an old journal that I kept at the time, I can vividly recall my then almost constant state of terror about the possibility of an imminent nuclear war. Keep in mind that I was one of those children who, already in first and second grade, was being taught to duck and cover when we saw that bright flash that marked the start of the next war. We often would speculate about whether it was true that with that bright flash we would be able to see through our flesh to our bones. And that is the state of mind in which I grew up.

During my last month in high school I wrote that my deepest wish was to be able to complete at least one semester of college before the nuclear war began. That is how frightened my classmates and I were. You see, going to college was a really big deal for me because no one in my family had done so before. When my grandfather immigrated to this country from Portadown in County Armagh, Ireland,

he was 17 years old and could not yet read or write. The house maids on the farm where he found work taught him to read and write. It was my Grandpa Fox who instilled in me the love of reading that I still have today.

By the time I was born, my grandfather had already retired as a successful farmer in southern Illinois and had moved to a large house in a small town on the outskirts of Chicago, and that is the house in which I grew up. One of my earliest memories from back then is of sitting at my mother's desk and making a drawing for her to mail to my father, who at the time was in the navy, fighting the war in the South Pacific. I have other fleeting memories about life during World War II as well. So it is safe to say that from my earliest days, war was always in the background of my life. Even during the Korean war, I was aware of it because my favorite cousin was over there with the Army.

Obviously, I made it through college without seeing the bright nuclear flash of my deepest fears, but my college years weren't without other events that scared the shit out of me. The school I was at was the University of Notre Dame, which at the time was a boys-only school. I was there, at that bastion of Irish Catholic America, when John Kennedy was elected president. I watched his inauguration speech in the basement of our dorm on a small black and white television.

Then came the Bay of Pigs fiasco and the humiliation that was heaped upon Kennedy, our hero. Not much more than a year later came the Cuban Missile Crisis. Even if you have watched some of the documentaries about that crisis, unless you had grown up steeped in the constant fear of nuclear war, it will be difficult for you to understand the depth of our collective fear when President Kennedy came on the television and said: "It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union." That was a very grim moment for us all, both the citizens of the United States and the citizens of the Soviet Union as well. That crisis remains, yet today, as the closest that this world has come to beginning a nuclear war, which would cause modern civilization itself to come to a halt for a very long time.

One year and one month later, John Kennedy was dead, murdered by a Deep State cabal that was organized by Alan Dulles, the former CIA director who had been fired by Kennedy for setting him up with the Bay of Pigs fiasco. I won't try to explain here why I believe this, it would take too long, and if you are really interested there are numerous books and documentaries that you can explore on your own. All that I will say here is that, in my opinion, the assassination of President Kennedy was the event that led to a silent coup in which well-connected persons within the Deep State assumed control of the government. I'll give you just one example.

Approximately fifty days before his murder, Kennedy signed an order to begin withdrawing U.S. troops from Viet Nam. On the day after President Kennedy's assassination, Lyndon Johnson ordered an escalation of the war. A few days after that one of his largest campaign contributors received a nearly exclusive contract to provide all of the construction work for the new infrastructure that expanding the war would require. Need I go on?

Eventually I wound up serving as a junior officer aboard a navy destroyer off the coast of Viet Nam in 1967. While my contemporaries were spending the Summer of Love in San Francisco, I was helping to shoot large projectiles at people with whom I had no quarrel. After returning from the war I became a severe critic of the government of the United States, initially because of their abandonment of over 300 U.S. military personnel who were intentionally left behind to rot in Vietnamese prisons.

At times I felt like the only liberal who was involved in the Prisoner Of War issue. Every liberal news outfit that we contacted wouldn't even review the evidence that we had to prove that these men were still alive. Basically, the liberal media told me that from their point of view we were just a bunch of disgruntled vets who wanted to restart the war. Of course, nothing could have been further from the truth. And the conservative movement also pushed us aside because they were well aware of the fact that it was the policy of the Department of Defense to abandon prisoners who were still being held after the end of hostilities, just as they did after World War II when over 20,000 U.S. servicemen were observed by the U.S. ambassador to Russia as they were being shipped to Siberia for slave labor. I realize how difficult it is to believe this, but there is a significant amount of documentation backing that statement up. It has finally been declassified and is now available to the public. As a member of the military myself, I took it very personally when I discovered that my own government was behind the cover up of the POW issue. And I remain bitter about it yet today.

For several years, I spent virtually all of my time and money in an attempt to raise awareness about our government's intentional abandonment of our POWs. I gave speeches everywhere from farm house porches in Illinois to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. And I produced dozens of television programs about the issue, all to no avail. About the only satisfaction that I ever got out of all that protesting was the time when, for just a moment, I locked eyes with Ronald Regan, just as I was giving him the finger. He just smiled and waved to me. I don't think that he even knew where he was by that time.

One of our main goals back then was for the Senate to hold hearings at which we would be able to produce our witnesses and play the audio and video tapes that we had of the prisoners who were still being held captive. We actually raised so much noise that Senators McCain and Kerry finally called the hearing. And then these two cowardly traitors put the final nail in the coffin by denying our right to bring our own witnesses and essentially covered up the government's involvement in the affair, essentially putting an end to our inquiries. It was then that some of us vowed to do whatever it took to see that neither McCain or Kerry ever made it to the White House. At least we succeeded with that mission.

I could go on about other major historical milestones from then until now, but they most likely have been the historical background music of your own life as well. I'm talking about Watergate, the oil embargo, the hostage crisis in Iran, the sale of guns to the Contras, the first Gulf War, the rise of the mujahideen, the end of the USSR, and the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. No matter where I looked, the world seemed to be coming unglued. Eventually I arrived a tipping point, the 2016 presidential elections in the United States.

Early on, political commentators pointed out that when Trump took the reins of power in the States that it would have massive repercussions all around the world. Well, it sure didn't take very long for

that to happen. Even people who normally avoid learning about the current news haven't been able to avoid the crisis Trump has now caused with his ban on Muslims entering the country. Interestingly, he didn't ban entry from the countries that 18 of the 19 hijackers on 9/11 came from. In fact, he also didn't include in the ban the 90% of the countries tied to terrorism in the U.S. Naturally, the countries that should have been on the list but weren't are all nations where Trump has major business interests. Does he have to make it any more clear that we are now being ruled by an insane band of oligarchs?

But, you ask, if I feel this way, why didn't I at least give my vote to Clinton rather than not voting at all? To be honest, my personal belief is that while she may have taken a little longer to exert her authority, Clinton would have been even worse than Trump has been. To me, they were equally bad candidates, and so I simply have quit voting. This two party system here in the States is totally without merit when the best they can do is to offer us those two horrible choices for president. I can't understand why anyone would ever again want to participate in such a flawed system as we now have.

Just based on what the two candidates said during their campaigns, Clinton's position in regards to Russia is that she was eager to get into a shooting war with them so as to further line the pockets of the arms industry and foreign governments who she pimped to get huge donations for her family business, the Clinton Trust. The oligarchs of war are her main backers. Trump, on the other hand, said that he wanted to talk with Russia and rather than go to war with them he wanted to engage with more trade deals with them. The oligarchs who are backing Trump, like his Secretary of State nominee, Rex Tillerson, think that trade is better than war. Of course, we really shouldn't believe anything that either of them says, because they are both inveterate liars.

What many people in the Clinton camp don't understand is how off-putting it was to have the press constantly tell us that it now was Clinton's turn to be president. Her TURN? Really, her turn? To most people that smacked too much like a royal succession. Clinton became the queen of our political royalty, and simply by living long enough some people thought that it was her turn to run the country. If I remember correctly, we fought the Revolutionary War with England because we wanted to get out from under the ridiculous habit of letting a single family own and run the country. The British can have their queen if it makes them happy, but here in the states royalty has no place. There is no line to wait in for your turn to become the leader of this nation, and whether that position is fair or not, it is most definitely the way a significant number of people feel here in the States.

What has taken place with the Trump inauguration, however, has much deeper significance when we see that a new center of power is arising within the Deep State. In the past, the wealthy oligarchs who were the true power behind the Bush/Clinton/Obama thrones are the ones who I think of as the war lovers, people who have amassed great fortunes in the defense industry. And for the most part these blood thirsty psychopaths stayed in the background, hiding behind the politicians they owned. But the Trump era has a slightly different look and feel, because some of them are now out in the open and are about to become the members of his Cabinet. Trump's selection of Cabinet members is quite revealing when looked at with a view of their wealth. Collectively, a dozen members of the newly proposed Cabinet have a greater net worth than the bottom one third of the citizens of the United States. Just think about that for a moment. A handful of the white men that Trump wants in his Cabinet own more

stuff than do 108 MILLION of our less rich citizens combined. In the past the president's Cabinet wasn't quite so obviously wealthy, they were just rich. That is no longer the case. The oligarchs are now clearly in charge. What do you think that means, exactly?

Well, here is just one example of how the rich and powerful can become even richer through the manipulation of the public discourse and the nation's laws. What I'm talking about is an issue that gets such a bad reputation through the mainstream media that sensible and intelligent people are shouted down even before they can point out a few facts. Yes, I'm talking about the current state of affairs with vaccines. And before you roll your eyes and tune me out, you may want to turn off your emotions for a moment and listen to some facts as I see them.

There are a lot of people on both sides of the vaccine issue who seem to be constantly shouting one another down these days. So it has become difficult to sort through the conflicting facts on this issue without putting your faith in someone who has studied it more than you have. In my case, I have come to listen to what Robert Kennedy, Jr. is saying about vaccines. You may not have as high an opinion as I do about Robert Kennedy, but for me the way that he came to investigate the issue has a lot of bearing on why I trust what he has to say.

To begin with, Kennedy states very clearly that he is not against vaccines. What he has a problem with is that the current schedule of vaccines now requires that school children in the United States must have at a minimum sixty-nine shots. When I was a child I received three vaccines, today the government is attempting to force the parents of my grandchildren to give their children **sixty-nine!** Doesn't that seem a bit much to you? It does to Robert Kennedy, and that is one of the things he is trying to change, to reduce required vaccines to a more sensible level.

But the main reason he became involved in the issue has to do with the things that are put into these shots to keep them from spoiling too rapidly. And mercury is one of those horrible adjuncts that the vaccines now include. Of course, virtually all of the vaccines that we are forced to give our children are manufactured in China. So there really is no sure way to know what they are putting in these shots. However, mercury is one of them, and mercury toxicity is something that Kennedy knows a lot about.

Over the past several decades Robert Kennedy has been involved in several hundred cases where his clients were injured by mercury, mainly from the pollution caused by coal fired power plants. In fact, he has clearly stated that after reading many studies, he believes that no one in the United States should eat ANY of the fresh water fish caught in the lakes and streams of this nation because, basically, they have all accumulated unsafe levels of mercury in their flesh. Mercury toxicity is a serious problem in many ways. For one thing, mercury tends to accumulate in our brains. And the fact that the mercury added to vaccines disappears from the blood quite rapidly is actually a bad thing, because it never leaves the body. It just goes right to the brain where it remains until we die. And in the pockets of poverty close to sources of mercury contamination of the air and water, one out of every six women already have such high levels of mercury in their systems that the IQs of their children has been measurably reduced.

Why, you ask, is this not front page news? Interestingly, Robert Kennedy got a direct answer to that question from Roger Ailes, the former head of FOX News, and, oddly, a long-time friend of Kennedy's. And it was Ailes who told Kennedy that if one of the FOX News hosts had Kennedy on a show to talk about this he would have to fire that host immediately, because 70% of FOX's non-election year income comes from the pharmaceutical companies who are getting rich through their vaccine divisions. Oh, did I forget to mention the fact that in the late 1980s the U.S. Congress passed a law that completely exempts vaccine manufacturers from any and all liability due to damages caused by their products.

Just think about this for a moment. How would you like to be selling a product for which there is no liability even for gross manufacturing negligence? And you don't even have to go to the expense of actually selling your product in the way other products are marketed and sold. You see, if you want your children to go to the public schools, you have practically no choice but to pay a doctor to shoot who knows what all into your child. Sure there are labels on the vaccine bottles, but they wouldn't be the first products from China that aren't all that they claim to be.

So first a group of oligarchs from the pharmaceutical industry got together and had the Congress remove all liability from their products. Then they arranged for the public school system to not teach un-vaccinated children except in a few rare instances where their parents have been able to show that they have a family history of adverse effects with vaccines. Getting your vaccine on the schedule of required vaccinations is worth around one billion dollars of profit per year, and all without any marketing, sales, or liability expenses. That is how the oligarchs work.

So what are we to do? My first and best answer is, fuck if I know. But I've never let that stop me before, and so I'm going to tell you what I am thinking about, and I'm also going to tell you what I would do if I was still in my twenties.

As I see it, us ordinary people who don't have access to great power and wealth, have three basic options: 1) We can just continue doing what we've been doing up until now; or 2) We can do what many of us have started to do, and that is to becoming Edge Walkers who have one foot in each of two different worlds; or 3) We can drop out of the default world and live a more joyful life in some underground kind of way.

The first option, of course, is what a lot of people think is the only option. You can either keep your head down and remain in the middle of the herd, or you can stand up and be counted by organizing demonstrations and working with various groups who are doing their best to bring about some positive change in the world. Perhaps becoming involved in politics is something that you think you should do. My advice is that if you have a strong inclination for public political action of some kind then follow it. In truth, I no longer have much faith that us common people can actually change things from our position at the bottom of the power ladder, and with few resources. However, I do believe that all of these kinds of activities are worth the time and effort involved at least as rear guard actions that slow the growth of the fascist police state we now find ourselves in. So if things like this are calling you, then it seems to me that you should follow that call. But politics, demonstrations, lobbying, and other

such activities haven't worked for me in the past. Frankly, it has all been a waste of my time for all of the results that I have achieved.

I am now in agreement with Dr. Timothy Leary when, way back in 1967, he said, “You, the younger generation in particular, have got to drop out, and by drop out I mean all the way. You can’t vote, I urge you not to do politics, don’t picket, don’t get involved in any of these menopausal mind games because it doesn’t make any difference.” Well, it has taken me fifty years to finally get that message. I now see that there are a couple of other roads that I could have followed.

Where I suspect most of us will end up is by taking the second road and become Edge Walkers. By that I mean mean that many of us today already have one foot in the default world and one foot in the world where the psychedelic community lives and plays. If we had a choice, I suspect that many of us would elect to become permanent burners and live on the playa at Black Rock City all year. However, as you know, that isn't actually an option. But us Edge Walkers still are able to find local festivals, dance parties, and other community activities where we can shed the outer shells that culture has imposed upon us, and, for a short time, be able to live as free people, singing, laughing, and dancing through the night. Then we go back to the default world where we return to our jobs and live what appears to be an ordinary life.

But what about that third way, you ask? What's that all about? Well, there are countless answers to the question about how to live a joyous life outside of the constraints of our current default cultures. Artists, writers, musicians, and people of many stripes have always found ways to drop out and somehow live fun-filled and exciting lives. Of course, some of them have also led rather desperate lives as well. But what if there was a way, through an underground economy of sorts, and an underground culture of sorts, where free spirited people like you and I can get out of the rat race of cubical and jobless hell and live the lives we were meant to live? I think that there is a way to create such a world culture.

Even though I'm not a believer in reincarnation, just on the off-chance that I do have to come back here for another few trips around our Sun, here is the world that I would like to find.

As the default world around us continues to implode, one of the things that the ruling elite will need is a way to keep the people passive. Roman rulers are said to have held their citizenry together with bread and circuses. Well, why don't we provide the circus. I'm talking, of course, about turning the global festival and dance communities into major features of everyday society, and the initial infrastructure is already in place to do this. There are already many global festivals of all kinds. Additionally, there are regional and local events, such as the ones the Burning Man community has been fostering for many years now. Why don't we now create our own business infrastructure among all of these festivals and for the people who build and produce them?

With blockchain technology and the Internet, we now have the tools we need to incorporate these festivals in ways that keep as much of our labor out of the default world's tax structure as is legally possible. There are many ways to do this, and every dollar of tax money that we aren't forced to give to

our governments is another dollar that isn't going to be spent buying more weapons. In addition, there is an army of Edge Walkers to provide the support that the festival culture needs to expand.

The core of this new paradigm are the free spirits who will be organizing and producing these festivals, both large and small. In the Burning Man culture they are called theme camps. Other people may call them clans. In Medieval times they were called guilds. They may be organized around a single activity, such as jewelry making, or fire spinning, or blacksmithing, or even computer programming to provide the infrastructure for a group of clans.

I'm not describing this very well, but I hope that you are beginning to get the idea. Should I be reincarnated here on Earth fifty years from now, I would like to see a world that is held together by the festival vibe. I would like to see a world in which I could join a guild or clan or theme camp that was focused on a place where my talents and dreams aligned. Rather than go to college, I could become a member of a clan that was cherished by their local community. Should I want to sculpt large pieces of art, rather than send me off to an expensive college, my parents could endow an artist's guild where I could work. That is the kind of world in which I could be happily reincarnated. As I said, much of the infrastructure for a world like this is already in place. All you have to do is search it out.

Ultimately, the road that you take will determine your destiny, for, like it or not, we are at a pivotal moment in human history. And by the way, making no decision and just going along as you have been is a decision as well. So own it, and remain aware of the fact that you have intentionally chosen the path that you are on. This doesn't mean that you have to make any great initial changes in your life, the only thing that you have to do right now is to make a decision about where you want to be a few years from now, then take the first little steps in that direction. If one day you want to live in wine country and become a wine maker, then begin reading and watching videos about wine making, maybe even begin making wine at home. Although I did actually try that myself once, and my end product wasn't drinkable. So I moved on to other dreams, and right now I am dreaming about the amazing power that we possess to make positive changes in our lives after we come through a powerful psychedelic experience like this particular moment in time.

If I'm correct, and this is a truly psychedelic moment in history, then we can expect to see a major paradigm shift in one or more aspects of the world around us. It can be that the United States loses its preeminent position of power in the world. Perhaps the global corporate capitalist system will be replaced by something new. Maybe our environment will turn against us even more quickly than it already is doing. It could be all of those things and others besides. I obviously have no better crystal ball to look into the future than you do. But of this I am sure, our world, the world of human diverse activities and diverse cultures has begun to morph into something different. I don't expect there to be another Dark Age, but if there is then I am sure that the global psychedelic community will bring light into the dark soul of whatever is coming our way.

I like to tell the story of a time when I was living before the mast and working as a deck hand on the three masted bark during a Pacific crossing. There was a young man who joined our crew just before we set sail. He was brash and boisterous and really full of himself when he came on board. But that first night at sea brought with it a little squall, and we had to go aloft to reef our sails. Our little

round bottomed ship had begun to roll from side to side somewhat vigorously as the wind and waves tossed us about. Of course, this meant that after climbing the mast and making your way out to the end of a yard you would be whipped about with great force. One hand for yourself and one hand for the ship was the rule aloft, and at times it had to be both hands for yourself.

But getting back to my story. The first time that we were ordered aloft, this young man I was talking about got about half way up the ratlines of the main mast when he suddenly froze. And I couldn't blame him. The only thing that got me to the top of that mast was my fear that my shipmates would find out how scared I was. The truth is that I was more afraid of looking like a wimp than I was of falling to my death . . . go figure.

So this young man is half way up but frozen in place. Two of us went back down and tried to talk him into relaxing and continuing to climb. That didn't work. So the two of us tried to pry his arms loose and, with the rope we had tied around him, lower him back down to the heaving deck. That didn't work either. Somehow he had acquired super-human strength, and we couldn't get his arms to let go of the shrouds they were wrapped around.

Then Bill Bartz, our wonderful old boatswain, climbed up to where the young man was clinging to the rigging with a death grip. And he began to talk to this kid in a very soft voice, telling him to not be ashamed, for this kind of thing happened to new sailors more than one would think. When he got up to where the young man was stranded he said, "There is a little trick to going up and down the rigging that you need to know, son. Never look down. Always look up. Look up, son, look up." And with that simple suggestion, the young man looked up, relaxed his grip on the shrouds, and resumed his climb. From then on he was fine up aloft with the rest of us, hanging on for dear life but pretending that it was all in a day's work . . . which it was, after all.

So, as this psychedelic moment in history continues to unfold, and as our ships of state traverse the coming storms, let us remember to keep looking up. We have already been through worse storms than this, and we're going to make it through this one as well. And then, from time-to-time, when we anchor off a beach where there is a big party going on, let's keep in mind what Henry Miller said in *Tropic of Cancer* way back in 1934:

"I believe that today more than ever a book should be sought after even if it has only one great page in it: we must search for fragments, splinters, toenails, anything that has ore in it, anything that is capable of resuscitating the body and soul. It may be that we are doomed, that there is no hope for us, any of us, but if that is so then let us set up a last agonizing, bloodcurdling howl, a screech of defiance, a war whoop! Away with lamentation! Away with elegies and dirges! Away with biographies and histories, and libraries and museums! Let the dead eat the dead. Let us living ones dance about the rim of the crater, a last expiring dance. But a dance!"