

A TRANSCENDENT ODYSSEY



**DAYS
TO
SLOW
THE
CURVE**



**ONE MAN'S
JOURNEY
INTO THE
HEARTLAND
OF ABSURDITY**

by **dave boles**



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*for Mrs. America, who patiently
watches as i tilt at windmills*

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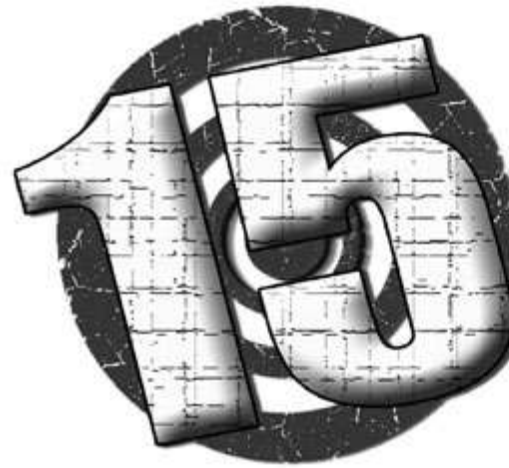
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Fear gripped America as Covid-19 continued its rampage. Schools were shutting down, film releases were postponed, campaign speeches were cancelled, health officials were creating media campaigns to teach us how to properly wash our hands—on top of all this Joe Biden cruised to the Democrat Party forefront in his bid to Make America Normal Again.

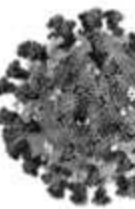
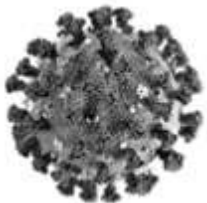
Observing this once in a lifetime event of both national, and international, political and economic change, how could I not keep a journal as to the surreal madness that continued to unravel our world on a daily basis.

I dutifully wrote daily an online “journal” through my Facebook news feed. Attempting to make sense of the nonsense we were confronted with, I listened to every briefing I could find and read countless articles from around the globe in journals that were as varied as the advice they gave. I listened to political, medical and cultural leaders as they all attempted to guide us through the fateful beginnings of COVID-19, to help us to find our way out of the vast morass we had been placed into.

I wrote for family, friends, for myself. I wrote as much as I could in order to document this terrible disease and the pandemic that it brought to us.

It was a great time to bear witness to the insanity that would become known to many as simply, RONA.

Here, then, is the story as it unfolded.



Tuesday, March 17, 2020 - St. Patrick's Day

I woke this morning to find that my favorite green shirt had been involved in some sort of cat ritual to assist in their pre-spring shedding of hair. Fortunately I have a back up favorite green shirt for just such an occasion. Mrs. America was quietly drinking coffee while watching the morning news. As I began to brew my first cup of morning java the Prez came on with breaking news explaining his administration's efforts to guide America through the Covid-19 crisis. As my java began boiling over I heard him say we were in the second day of a fifteen day countdown that began yesterday.

"Only fourteen days left. Hang tough America, we can do it. We are great, tremendous, the most awesome country in the world, blah blah blah".

This was news to me. I asked Mrs. America if she knew of this 15 day gig. These are serious times. Sheltering in place, social distancing, and saving the planet from climate change will simply have to wait. Her response was *"they say we can freeze milk. I told you so"*.

I was astounded. I had never heard of such a thing. Just yesterday, what I now knew to be day one of fifteen, I had told Mrs. America you could not effectively freeze milk as it ruined the taste. Now, today, standing in front of her with a shirt filled with cat hair and an overflowing espresso press, I find out I have been lied to all my adult life, and most of my childhood as well (at least that which I can remember). Here, on the second day of a fifteen day whatever this is we are doing, I find that not only can you freeze milk, you can do so for up to six months and it is still drinkable. Amazing!

Mrs. America was asking if I wanted fruit mixed with yogurt and granola for breakfast when the Prez said he was going to give adults one thousand dollars each to help offset the cost of this terrible pandemic. No word yet on what children would receive, but he did say a ban

on schools being open would remain in effect for a minimum of three weeks more. Astounding.

Mrs. America set a corned beef to slow cook all day before she left for work, while she can still go to work. One wonders that if this is day two of the fifteen day whatever it is we're doing, what will the next days bring? Selfishly, I hopefully wished for all the free cheesecake you can eat. Not certain how that might be accomplished, but apparently there will be a lot of free time to think about it

Stay safe.

Wednesday, March 18, 2020 - Day Three In Our fifteen-day whatever it is that we are doing thing

The Prez was on the TV again this morning giving his, apparently, morning news conference. He seems to be in control, rested, though he did seem somewhat subdued. Plenty of people around him jumped in to answer questions when called upon to do so. They all seem like nice people.

News for this pandemic changes by the hour and it is really difficult to figure out what is going to happen next. Yesterday, the mayor of New York City called for everyone there to shelter in place—such a strange string of words; *shelter in place*, like you would be able to shelter somewhere out of place—but then the Governor of New York came on and said “*no way, Jose, that ain't flying*”. Wait, maybe that was the Mexican president guy commenting. All these people, and all this breaking news stuff, is making me a bit dizzy. At any rate, that was yesterday and today, sure enough, they were not sheltering in place in New York City. But they are doing it in the

S. F. Bay and in Sacramento, my home turf, as well as a handful of other cities. That's a lot of sheltering in place. Who is going to pick up the trash?

So far I have no symptoms of the virus. While watching this morning's “*Prez talks to the people gig*”, one of the reporters asked the Prez what he planned to do about some of his staff referring to Covid-19 as “*Kung Flu*.” This momentarily stunned the Prez and he asked the reporter to repeat the statement. I, too, was stunned. How did I not come up with something like that? Kung Flu. Perfect. Maybe I might be getting the virus after all because obviously I am off my game. Prez just kind of looked a little dazed (I think he was thinking the exact same thing and he was somewhat irritated he hadn't come up with it either), but he shrugged it off and that was the end of the talk to the people session.

There remains a lot of fear out there. My new neighbor who moved out to the country from the big city of San Francisco cornered me at the mailbox and asked me if I thought he might need a gun. He was kind of sketchy about the entire thing, but the crux of the matter seemed to be that he was fearful that gangs of thugs, perhaps a few zombies as well (i.e. right-wing nut jobs), were going to attack us out here in the country. So, what were the steps to take? What kind of gun to buy? What should he do after buying the gun? Take lessons? Learn to shoot at cans? Bottles?

I told him it came down to one simple thing; buy bullets for your gun. From there anything is possible. He thought I was joking and told me so. I told him that without bullets a gun is no more than an expensive and ineffectual hammer. He thought about that as he walked down the road to his house, deep in thought. So much in thought that I had to yell after him that he had forgotten to get his mail. Also, I shouted out, “*make certain to buy the right bullets for your gun, whatever you are going to buy. Shotgun shells for a 9mm simply will not work.*”

I was certain he would figure it out eventually, but I was trying to help the guy out.

It's a crazy world, for sure. Right after the Prez and his minions lectured us all on sheltering in place—they love the shit out of that phrase—the news showed clips of thousands of people on the beaches in Florida for Spring Break. Apparently, sheltering in place does not apply to those with hard bodies. Not returning to college under the order of the CDC? Lets all party!

Stay safe out there, we're only on day three.

Thursday, March 19, 2020 - Day Four In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

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Things are looking up. At this morning's press briefing, which I now know is officially known as "*The White House Coronavirus Briefing*," lots of things went down. One of the coolest things was that VP Pence finally held up this sheet everyone had been waving around for the past three days, holding it still long enough for me to see that it read "*15 Days To Stop The Spread*". I now, and I assume others who are also paying attention, can stop calling it the 15 days of whatever it is that we are doing, and begin referring to it with its correct title, 15 Days To Stop The Spread. Success comes in small steps, but it does seem to be coming along.

I've come to look forward to these morning briefings. It's a fine way to start the day with a cup of strong coffee and the Prez telling us what is going on. And make no mistake, there has been a lot going on. Today's briefing was nearly an hour and a half long, not so brief but I'm still taking it. Prez went on and on for quite a while about what we are doing. The FDA chief—I kinda long for the days of using Czar in their titles—came up after

the Prez and explained how the processes are working to help solve this crisis, at least from a medical perspective. I give the guy props. Not only did he seem passionate about his work, explaining that before being made FDA Czar—fuck it, I like Czar so much better than Chief, or Head, or even Director. Czar has that "*I'm not fucking around feel to it*", I think that's what we need right now—he was a cancer doctor. The guy comes across genuine as hell and, even better, he can stand there behind the Prez for a long ass time without looking bored and can maintain composure with all the cameras looking directly at him looking at us looking at him looking at us—kind of an LSD and mirrors in the bathroom thing. I couldn't do it. Not certain how he does it, perhaps boring holes into the back of the Prez's head and imaging little pieces of the Prez leaking out? Who can be knowing such things?

Most entertaining was when the Prez opened the briefing up by calling it the Chinese Virus, and then the repeated mentions that if only the Chinese would have let the world know about this in a more timely manner, like back in December when they first found out about it, the world could have stopped it before it spread. Later in the briefing, Prez said he was considering what, if any, retributions might be forthcoming towards China. You gotta love this guy. Is he looking out for us or what?

The news media were physically spaced apart for the first time. I had noticed in past briefings they were sitting right next to each other, practically on top of each other. I thought we were all supposed to practice social distancing? Nice to see the media finally getting with the program. When some of the media got snarky with Prez for not doing enough sooner, or better, he was quick to point out how right they were and told them he was going to have them abide by the CDC safe distance requirements of no more than 10 people in a gathering, which, to his glee, would amount to eliminating 80% of the media in the room. There were no further snarky

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comments from the media. You gotta love this guy, right?

In other developments, since I am a Vet and use the VA for my medical services, I was sent a text by the VA yesterday letting me know that the VA is on top of it. They have 868 test kits for Covid-19 readily available and they are gonna kick some Kung-Flu ass. Of course, there are hundreds of thousands of vets that use the VA, but, being vets, we all know how to make this shit last a long way. For instance, we can all share a swab. I am certain our VA leaders are thinking this.

Also, when directed to our official VA site for the official directive as to what to do if I am feeling ill, they go on about all the latest technology they have, *blah, blah, blah*, oh, and if I do have symptoms do not come in, send them an email instead. Brother, are they on top of it?

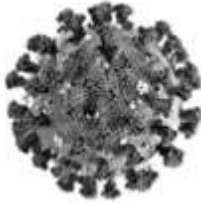
I'm not feeling any of the symptoms of the RONA, just yet, but I might just send them an email with encouragement to keep up the good work. Many of us, by the way, have taken to renaming COVID-19 the RONA. Kind of a catchy name, isn't it? RONA.

California is now up to 11,900 people that are self-monitoring, which I find intriguing. I don't know about you, but I self monitor on a daily, sometimes hourly, at times minute by minute, basis. All day long, every day. Am I being counted in the 11,900? Are you? How do we know? Just yesterday I wondered, what's with these weird body sensations I'm having? Is it that last cup of espresso I had that produced a caffeine induced catharsis, or am I having a flashback? Or is it both? Why did my hand just twitch? Was it because my dog wanted me to pet him and my hand was responding in some telepathic manner or was it far more nefarious than that? Could it be, onset symptoms of the RONA? See what I mean?

I go through these moments countless times a day, as I'm sure most all of us do. Self-Monitoring. Sheltering In Place. 15 Days To Stop The Spread. The Prez is right, we are all learning so much from this.

Eleven more days to go. Why is my ear suddenly tingling? Remember to self-monitor. Did the sky just change its shade of blue? No, really, I think it did.

Stay safe out there.



Friday, March 20, 2020 - Day Five In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

Woo Hoo, this morning's national briefing was great! Prez looked a little more tired than I have seen him and there were lots of new faces on the dais. I sent Prez a tweet reminding him it was not safe to gather in groups of more than 10 people and to keep a six-foot safe distance when doing so. I'm not really certain why this is not being practiced at these briefings, I assume it is to show Americans the fearlessness with which our leaders are attacking this crisis. There is no word as to whether my tweet got through. I suppose if tomorrow's briefing is all done via Facetime someone, somewhere, heard my plea.

Nothing of real new importance came out today. Pretty much just a rehash of yesterday, but as I said, there were new faces and they talked to us a bit about what their departments were doing.

First up was Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo. I will admit to having an instant likening for this guy that stems back to the 80s when I was a bouncer at a nudie bar. This guy, Pompeo, is a dead ringer for the owner of that place. I mean, dead on. So now I equate our Secretary of State with tits and ass, something I have not experienced with past Secs. of State, such as Hilary Clinton. Whew, now there's a few brutal images that just appeared.

So, Mike tells us all is well and I believe the guy because, well, you know, nudie bar. But other than that he seemed confident. The head of Homeland Security



came on and talked about all that they are doing. It was a bit irritating though, as he kept mentioning CVP. Over and over. CVP is doing this. CVP is doing that. He can't thank the brave people of CVP enough for their continued support. What the fuck is CVP? What agency is this? The first thing that came to mind was Central Venous Pressure. But that didn't make any sense. Then I Googled it and lo and behold, Central Venous Pressure is the first thing that comes up—great minds think alike, thank you Google. So I put in CVP Agency and bingo, it is Customer Value Partners, Inc. I check out their website and see all the cool stuff they do with our govt. and our money. Nice to know they are on the job. The head of Homeland Security says so and Prez echoed his sentiments in the usual way... *"they're great people, all of them, tremendous, blah blah blah"*. I sent a tweet to the Prez reminding him that ordinary American schmoes like me do not keep up with all these abbreviations for companies and agencies, could they perhaps provide a footnote somewhere for those of us not in the know?

So while I'm resolving this somewhat, in my mind, nefarious CVP scheme, all hell breaks loose at the briefing. The reporter dude from NBC is kinda being a dick and Prez is none too happy about it. I had noticed earlier that the NBC babe that was there the day before was absent this morning, her place taken by the aforementioned reporter dude who was being a dick. He kept asking Prez to answer a question that Prez said he had answered at least three times before—in full disclosure here I admit to being sidetracked by the nefarious CVP situation so I cannot confirm, nor deny, whether the question was answered multiple times—and then the dick/dude, or dude/dick if that is your preference, continued to instill fear in the American people by openly telling Prez that we, Americans—though I presumed he was referring to other dude/dicks or dick/dudes—were living in fear and what was Prez going to do about it?

Whoo! Prez got heated. I mean, hot. He called the dude/dick or dick/dude, a terrible reporter who only wanted to instill fear instead of just reporting the facts. Prez went on to say that NBC was the king of all journalists wanting to do nothing more than to instill fear and sensationalize, not report on, the news at hand. They were nothing but Fake News.

I desperately needed another cup of coffee as the medicinal brownie I ate last night had some unforeseen long lasting side effects. Despite the need to chase one chemical substance with another, and I also needed more coffee, there was no way in hell I was missing this. Other reporters gathered around and much harumphing ensued. You know, like in *Blazing Saddles* where Mel Brooks plays the cross-eyed governor who does not get a harumph out of one of the men at the table while the rest were all harumphing and agreeing with the cross-eyed gov. as he felt up his secretary. Yeah, like that, except there were no secretary's present to feel up and Prez is not cross-eyed. But real similar to that. The briefing gradually got back on course with Prez giving everyone the stink eye and occasional idiotic questions pertaining to the great fear in America were kept to a minimum.

Now, here in my home state of California, the local media is raving that our Governor put us all on lock-down last night. *"We are all on lock-down, we're in the Big House now"*. I watched Gov. give his speech and heard no mention of enforcing this now called "lock-down" by some in the media. He actually said that Californians would enforce Prez's 15-Day gig through the use of social pressure. So far, I have not been instructed to turn in my civilian clothes for jail attire. I'm still allowed to pretty much do as I please except for lots of businesses are shut down and it has made it nearly impossible to get a hot taco when I need it.

The fear mongering continued this morning with NBC NEWS scrolling on their bottom newsfeed during

this morning's briefing: "Gov. Newson says 25.5 Million Californians will be infected within 8 weeks".

That is not what the man said, I heard it myself. He said it could reach that number if we did not implement drastic measures to Slow The Spread. So, here is a great example of the fear mongering Prez is tired of. And, frankly, aren't we all tired of it? I ask you, are you living in fear? Or is it more like a protracted divorce; a great inconvenience? Sure, we all wonder what the hell is going on with our jobs, our economy, but the people on the dais keep saying they are going to throw as much money at this as they can. Prez says he remains optimistic, others should remain optimistic too.

We are facing some trying times right now. Giving in to fear and succumbing to irrational thought will do nothing to help us. If we all work together we can totally disrupt the system. Right? The system, my friends, is a media that has controlled us with fear for a long, long time. Let's break free of those chains. Help your friends and family find their faith, our faith, so that we can survive damn near anything that is thrown at us, including this. Well, at least that's my take on things.

Stay safe. Remember; we're all in this together.

Saturday, March 21, 2020 - Day 6 In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

Today was a bit of a rough morning. I woke to news of Kenny Rogers' passing; the Gambler has now left this Earthly gaming table. On top of this tragic news, the morning briefing did not happen until ten a.m. The late starting point was a bit irritating as I was primed and ready to watch the briefing and, not wanting to miss anything, I decided against waffles for breakfast. Huge



mistake on my part as I sat there with my coffee in my formerly anticipating waffles hand deciding if I should give the Prez and his crew some slack, as I'm sure they're pretty tired, or take to twitter and rip the Prez a new one for fucking up my breakfast. Bastard.

Sure enough, Prez and crew come out but they are not exactly chipper. The camera panned the reporters and I notice the NBC reporter dick/dude was not present. Not certain if he has been led off to Guantanamo—sure, go ahead and laugh at the absurdity of that thought, but know this, it is still up and running. Why, if not for stockpiling unruly dick/dude reporters, would it still be open after we were told it was to be shut down? Didn't someone run on that platform in the past? A past Prez?—but nothing on Google search told me anything about his whereabouts so who knows what's up with him. Reporter detention?

Not a really large dais today, and nothing really new came out either, though you can see the strain that this constant reporting on coronavirus briefings is having on everyone. Prez held it together fairly well; there were no calls for ejections or beheadings, and all in all, a pretty basic presentation. Got to hear from Ben Carson, the director of HUD, which is always a treat. I've always liked Ben, he has a soothing way about him. He gives you the information and bingo, you feel assured he is looking out for your interests. HUD is taking steps to make certain no one gets foreclosed on. You might get the corona, but you'll at least have a house to do it in. Foreclosure free, at least for 60 days. Ben was calm and assuring. The same held true for Mike Pence, our Vice Prez. More and more, each day that I watch these briefings VP seems more and more comfortable and, at the same time, believable. I attribute this as being akin to a magician practicing his act until all his tricks and illusions are flawless. The audience starts to believe the magician is really in control of magic and they begin to clamor for more illusions, more tricks. Now that I think about it, I think I just described most politicians. Hmmm.

VP and Prez both talked of speaking with religious leaders and this was a bit startling; I thought they would play the God card tomorrow, you know, on Sunday. But they trumped us—get it?—by playing it on Saturday—see what I did there? I was a little skeptical at first hearing them say how they had reached out to all these different religious leaders. My first thought was “*yeah, sure, give the people what they want to hear*”. But then VP asks for all of us to continue in giving money to our religious organizations in these trying times. Bingo! They were sure as hell talking to them after all.

I wonder if they were in communication with the Church Of The Illuminated Monkey, or the Monkey himself, in seeking an endorsement from the Church. As Gringo Shaman of the Church I have not seen such a request, though The Monkey did assure me later on that he has been in contact with VP and Prez telepathically, with both of them asking for his continued support in these trying times. How could the Monkey not respond? The Monkey, however, is not asking for anyone to send money.

Question and answer time arrived and while it was not near as heated and entertaining as yesterday, it was still pretty fun. I’ve noticed that a lot of the reporters ask the same questions over and over in an attempt to get the answer they want. When their question, or questions, are answered in an unsatisfactory way—i.e. not the answer they wanted to hear because it simply did not fit their agenda—they become snarky and irritated accusing Prez, or whomever, of not answering the question. I have to give props to Prez, he handles it a lot better than I would. Here’s how it would go down with me if I were in Prez’s shoes:

Reporter: Why will you not answer the question?

Me: I have answered the question, several times.

Reporter: But that’s just your view.

Me: All these officials here have said the same thing.

Officials harumph and verify that they have said the same things.

Reporter: It seems to me that you are dodging the question.

Me: I have not dodged the question, I answered it. You did not like my answer.

Reporter: You need to find a way to end this constant dodging of questions, the American people demand answers!

Me: I agree. I do need to end this. Tony (Dr. Fauci), I’m ordering you to come up with the proper medical procedure to remove this reporter’s head from his ass. Apply the same procedure to others in need.

Me: Next question.

See, that’s how it would be with me, and I’m sure many others. This constant bickering about everything is not helping at all...just report the fucking information and get on with it. How is this not possible? I listen to what Prez is telling us. He seems to be explaining things to us. Is it working? How the fuck should I know?

Day 6 of 15, people. Nine more days to go until you could ever hope for a chance to bitch. But, this is America and we reserve the right to complain about everything and anything any time we damn well please. Can I get a harumph?

You will note I started the morning hearing off with news of the Gambler’s passing. His sage advice; “*you gotta know when to hold them, know when to fold them, know when to walk away and know when to run,*” could not be more appropriate for these times.

This is the hand we have been dealt. None of us asked for this. We were all hanging out playing the game of life when these cards were dealt to us. Let’s examine our options; do we hold them? Possibly. Do we fold them? Not really, I mean what does that imply? Are we all going to go People’s Temple and start drinking Kool-Aid because our leader directs us to do so? Not likely, and

Prez, at least not that I have heard, is not directing us to do so either. That leads us with “walk away”. Where do we walk, it’s a worldwide issue. Then there’s “run”. Again, where do we run? Nowhere to run. So that leads us back to hold them and wait it out. Do we know what the other people at the table have? Do they have something better than us?

I’ve played a lot of poker in my time. The first thing you do when dealt a shitty hand is not show it and then the next thing you do is figure out how to play it. But remember, no one is asking us to show our hands. At the moment. Sit back and chill. Let’s go along with the 15-day plan. Do we have any other choice? At the moment, no. Here’s hoping someone’s not holding all the aces. Actually, I know they’re not because I’m holding a couple myself. See, critical thinking just happened. You’re welcome.

22 Keep a safe social distance if you’re playing cards. R.I.P. Kenny Rogers, thank you for the wonderful music and the words you gave us.

Stay safe.

Sunday, March 22, 2020 - Day Seven In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

Today’s briefing happened much later than the other days, about 2:30pm Pacific Time, or 5:30pm Eastern. I spent most of the day wondering when the hell they were going to get on with the briefing before I stumbled onto CNN’s site and they had a timestamp of 4:30pm Eastern for the briefing to start. This was great news for me as I was in the early stages of smoking a brisket and Mrs. America was about to start her pot of beans which had been soaking overnight. So, perfect timing. I had to



run out to the local market to pick up some apple juice for the brisket and spinach for the beans. I gotta say, a lot of people were out and about. Not a whole lot of sheltering in place today. The market was not too raided, though there was no bread except for one pristine loaf of sourdough with roasted garlic which I picked up pretty damn quick. There was an elderly lady eyeing the bread so I asked her if she was going to take the loaf. She smiled sweetly and told me her late husband used to love roasted garlic sourdough and she was just reminiscing. I picked up the loaf and went to hand it to her when she said “oh, no, you keep it. I can’t stand the stuff.” She smiled and went on her way and I went on mine. Not much conflict there.

The entire bread section was gone, as was most of the canned goods. There were plenty of fresh veggies and meat, and also a fair amount of dairy. There were containers of apple juice too so I grabbed the spinach, bread, and juice and went to the checkout. People were standing around looking towards the front entrance where I had earlier noticed an empty five-gallon water bottle sitting next to the “pay for clean water” dispenser. The clerk asked me if it were mine and all eyes instantly turned on me. I told everyone, “no”, then asked why it was there to begin with. The clerk told me he wasn’t too certain about it, but it had been there for a while and everyone was pretty much afraid to pick it up. He offered it to me but by now it had this strange, Covid-19 RONA voodoo presence about it, and I graciously declined. I told myself I had enough five-gallon water bottles, six to be exact, but in all honesty, it kind of spooked me.

I got back to Lake House and spent the day helping clean the place with Mrs. America. Death to the spiders was the chant and after applying the appropriate amount of war paint to ourselves we decimated those little bastards. It was kind of a strange feeling knowing that it was only 1pm our time, which isn’t that late for a Sun-

day afternoon, but the timer on CNN said the briefing would begin at 4:30pm and I sort of time-warped into a later time. 4:30pm came and went and it was changed to 5:30pm. Now it really felt weird. Mrs. America wondered if she should perhaps start dinner; when, exactly, would the brisket be ready. For a moment I sort of panicked then realized it was much too early, we were both faked out by Eastern time and dinner was a ways off still. At any rate, around 2:20pm our time the briefing started. Finally. I mean, let's get on with it.

Prez came out and I gotta say he looked hammered. Not like he and boys had been throwing them back, but fatigued. Really fatigued. There were only a handful of people up there today, all men, and VP as well who kind of has the androgenous thing going on. Sort of like a unisex android.

I don't know, maybe it was the shots of tequila I had while prepping the brisket, but it was kind of strained on the dais today. Prez hit us with lots and lots of numbers of masks that had been shipped out, ventilators, gowns, surgical supplies. He had it dialed down to the exact number. I know that yesterday a couple of the reporters were hammering him for exact numbers, so he certainly brought it home today.

The usual blah, blah, blah ensued as to how great they were doing and both Prez and VP made a point out of stating how many industry peeps were re-gearing their production lines to help out in this crisis. Hanes, was ramping up to make masks. This caused me to chuckle when I first heard it mentioned at yesterday's briefing and I spit out my tequila again today when I heard it. I have this ongoing vision of people wearing masks made out of recycled underwear, but apparently, it's just me, or those guys on the dais are truly professional because not one of them ever cracked a smile.

While I was pouring another tequila to compensate for the tequila I spit out—one of our cats, by the way,

loves tequila and he lapped it up—we went into the question and answer period. I must say, everyone seemed to be on their best behavior. Maybe it was because today is Sunday, or maybe everyone in the reporter pool was a little drained as well because of the lateness of the briefing, but whatever the reason, it went fairly smooth. There were a couple of snarky questions, but I am beginning to rethink this as perhaps these reporters aren't as much being snarky as they're simply asshole human beings who like to talk down to people in order to make their own selves feel powerful. I'm pretty much thinking this is the case, but I really don't have the data to support this train of thought. I will have to work on that and let you know.

Prez picked it up a bit and was actually kind of jovial with the snarky people. My thinking here is that in a room full of narcissistic powerplay people it would be pretty damn hard to top Prez, and he knows it. I could see the gleam in his eyes return as he bantered back and forth with them. *"That's right, bitches. Try to out narcissize me. Good luck."* The briefing appeared to go on nearly two hours but the news stations—I watch MSNBC as they have a full screen, CNN has way too much going on with their news feed. Much too much for my simple mind to grasp, and, you know, tequila—cut the live feed and back to the talking heads we went.

The upshot was that shit was happening. Prez and his crew were getting it done. Naturally, he let us know how great the team was, best in the world, kicking some Covid-19 ass, *blah, blah, blah*, but for all you haters out there...seriously, after all this time do you expect anything different? *Blah, blah, blah.*

The first full week of 15 Days To Slow The Spread has come to an end. Another week to go, plus a day, and then we will know how effective this whole plan was. Frankly, I don't see how something as severe as what they have been describing will go away that quickly, but then again I see where Gov. Newsom has said, several times, school

is effectively over for this year yet the news keeps saying when all the different school districts in our region are shut down till. Most are at the end of March. Some are the first week of April. A couple are mid-April. So what's the deal with that? Why does Gov. say school is done for the year and the news keeps telling us independent school district closure dates that run until, at the best, mid-April? Just another example of the mass miscommunication we have going on with our leaders. If they cannot orchestrate school closure dates, is there much hope for anything else?

It is painfully obvious most of the reporters in the reporter pool hammering the Prez at these briefings for exact answers, exact data, and then haranguing him when he does not produce their perceived, and in their mind correct, results, have ever set foot in combat. This goes for the idiot comments you read on social media where everyone has the luxury of playing quarterback from their favorite easy chair. When people are shooting at you, wanting to kill you, you don't sit around asking stupid ass questions like *"what kind of ammo are they using?"* or, *"are you certain you want us to shoot in this direction, wouldn't this other direction yield better results?"* You're in a fire fight. You are trained on how to react. If you've never been in a fire fight you follow everyone else's lead, especially the guy in charge, and hope for the best. You quickly realize there is simply no time for stupid ass questions; these bastards are trying to kill you. You don't waste time pondering if your immediate reaction is appropriate, if it is right or if it is wrong, you shoot the mother's and get rid of the immediate threat. You can regroup and figure out all the other stuff later. But in the immediacy of the moment, you best hold it together to survive. Ask a Vet, I'm sure they will help you figure it out.

Life goes on much the same as it has. There is a great deal of uncertainty out there, and there are a few hard-

ships that have been put in our way. But if we take the time to realize we are all in this together, all of us, then perhaps we can take some solace in that. Is this whole Covid-19 RONA thing a scam? Is it part of a larger conspiracy? Should we not trust our government at all? These are great questions that all of us are asking. All I can tell you is that we were all walking along a path, happy as can be when out of nowhere bullets came flying; the shit hit the fan. Ask yourself, in that immediate moment, what the hell else are you going to do? Freak out and question everything, demanding answers that, face it, in that immediate moment no one has, except for bullets are headed your way? Boom, you're dead. That's how quick it happens. Save the stupid ass questions for later and deal with the immediate threat. Is the threat real? Is it not? Best to play it safe and take action, like perhaps, duck. Or in this case, keep you and your family safe by staying at home for another week.

Stay safe out there. Keep the faith.

Monday, March 23rd, 2020 - Day Eight In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

Hoodie hoo. Each day of this 15-day gig gets more and more surreal. I was anticipating a morning Coronavirus Briefing from Prez and his task force but it was nowhere to be seen. I think the most trying thing about these briefings is having to watch the television in order to actually see the damn thing. I don't watch much television unless it's about Archeology, ancient or otherwise. Science programs, anything to do with History, the occasional true-crime drama and of course, Oak Island. But when it comes to sitting in front of the tube, or I suppose, flat screen or whatever it is now called, waiting for

an update...what a phenomenal pain in the ass. Did you know that Jerry Springer is now a judge? WTF??? When did that happen? No wonder the world's gone mad.

Still sheltering in place as much as I can. I've only gone out for food and to mail out copies of the anthology, QUIET ROOMS, that we just produced. Even then, that's been twice in the last 8 days, so Mrs. America and I are trying to do our part. Our good friend, D.R. Wagner, has had terrible problems with his keyboard and cannot use his computer. We communicate quite a bit each day through the computer and I have not heard from him for several days. I called and chatted with him this morning, which is always an awesome time. We discussed possible ways to take over the world, rearranging it in our vision, while Mrs. America made one fine banana nut bread loaf. Too bad D.R. lives so far away; brisket last night and banana nut bread this morning, hell yes. If you're going to shelter in place, you might as well eat well. He asked me to catch him up on the latest as, unlike me, his soul is pure due to the fact he does not own a TV. I'm in awe of this dedication, but as we have discussed many, many times, someone has to keep an eye on these thieving politicians. Might as well be me.

I did a lot of reading online about the situation in our country, in our world, due to the virus. I took a break to eat some leftover brisket taco bowl for lunch—told you we're eating well here at Lake House—and turned on the TV to see if maybe, just maybe, CNN had something about the briefing. Lo and behold they had a small graphic that said it would be happening soon. Two and half hours later after the droning's of Wolf Blitzer, Jake Tapper, and company had lulled me into a fine midday nap—large brisket taco bowls and boring ass talking heads do that to me—I awoke to find that the briefing was starting. Again, about two and a half hours after they said it was coming up, soon.

Prez looked rested and there was a fairly small dais

today. Reporters had been winnowed down quite a bit and there was a lot of "social distancing" between them. None of them looked too happy. Prez gave his standard words, not much has changed. The government continues to create more masks, more ventilators and more PPE's (Personal Protection Equipment). Prez turned it over to Atty. General Barr, who talked about going after people hoarding medical supplies and equipment and how Prez had enacted a new executive order to go after and prosecute these scumbags that were looking to price gouge Americans in need during a medical crisis.

Now, this was really weird; I like to watch these briefings on NBC because I like their full-frame camera and their use of minimal scrolling graphics at the bottom of the screen which I have always found irritating as hell. Suddenly, Lester Holt pops up on my screen and introduces Peter Alexander, the reporter dick/dude that pissed Prez off last week, one of the many reporters that incurred his wrath. They took over about half of the screen and they were talking over Barr. I flipped over to CNN and was able to catch what Barr was saying, so no loss there, but it was really kind of strange. What was their point? Why do I need Lester telling me that Peter is going to comment on the press briefing from outside the White House while I can simply watch the briefing, with no commentary, for myself? Asshats.

I stuck with CNN for a bit until the never-ending scrolling message bar at the bottom of the screen about drove me crazy, a short drive, admittedly. I switched back to NBC and the twin demon talking heads were gone, the briefing was in full screen and remained that way. Most of the rest of the briefing was questions and answers with Prez, though a lot of stuff came from Dr. Birx, which was way sweet. Listening to her explain things is nearly as entertaining as listening to Dr. Fauci, and every bit as informative. A lot of time was devoted to questions from the rabid dog reporters excoriating

Prez for his “how dare you say you will open up America for business again with such a crisis going on” stance. Prez held his ground, explaining how we could do two things at once and then the rabid dogs turned to Dr. Birx to upend Prez by contradicting him. Quite the opposite. She went into great detail on how all the data was being collected and analyzed and how it could indeed occur at the same time as looking to the future of America’s return to business. Prez came back on and said he was worried not just about the perceived economical depression of the country, but the emotional and physical depression of its citizens. Yes, we need to get back to work as soon as possible. Yes, the virus hit us by surprise but we are dealing with it. And then came the moment I’ve been waiting for, Prez brought out the deaths from basic flu, 50,000+ for this year alone.

30 The coronavirus is certainly something to not take lightly, but it is far from the death toll of the common flu. Do we shut down the country for the flu? For car accidents? Nearly 40,000 Americans die each year from car accidents. Do we place a moratorium on driving? Excellent points.

The networks left the briefing while it was still going strong and returned to their programming so that was that. I was left with the absurdity of what I had just witnessed; journalists trying to get Dr. Birx to give them a definitive answer as to whether we were going to be spending weeks, or months, sheltering in place. She patiently told them, over and over, that the task force will have enough data to make that decision at the end of the 15-day period, on Monday. Then, they would have answers to those questions.

The reporters were not getting it. I was reminded of my time in college where I took four years of statistics and experimental design in preparation for a doctorate program. On our final exam, after four years of study, the professor walked in with tests in his hands and asked us

for a show of hands that thought 20% of us would fail the final. A few hands shot up. He told them to stand up, they had failed the final. Without any data whatsoever, just going on their personal feelings, they made a judgment. Experimental design does not work that way. It relies solely on data and the analysis of that data before offering a suggestion as to what might occur, as nothing is ever exact. You can only predict with a fair amount of assurance as to what will happen given the circumstance, and the data. I, by the way, did not raise my hand.

I look forward to seeing the data that these 15-days bring. Until then, I will stay safe at Lake House with Mrs. America. We have meat, veggies, assorted other groceries, and enough cat food and dog food to last us through. The Great White Egrets have returned to nest and the land is in bloom. We are indeed fortunate. Not once do we ever take any of this for granted.

Stay safe out there. One more week to go.

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Tuesday, March 24th, 2020 - Day Nine *In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread*

Yowza! The media and a lot of people out there are in turmoil. I think this 15-Day gig is really beginning to wear on everyone’s sanity. I know it has done a number on mine. The amount of disinformation and downright lies as to what is going on is both fascinating and repulsive. It has gotten so bad on news networks that I cannot stand to watch it. It literally hurts. I’m not alone. Thousands of posts on this situation in social media talk about how Prez and the government are handling it and brother, if we ever thought there was a chance for America to pull itself together, you can throw that right out the window. Such a divide happening all over the

country. And the culprit? The fucking media. Big surprise there.

As Prez abruptly ended today's briefing while reporters asked their last-minute questions, you can clearly hear a female reporter scream out "*it only takes one person to infect an entire county*". This happens as Prez is headed out the door. Do you see what I'm talking about here? Who gives a rats ass about her statement? They are there to ask questions and report, not to make statements and scream at the Prez as he walks away. The Prez and the doctors just got through explaining how, while the states of California, New Jersey, and Washington are troubling, the state of New York is off the hook crazy bad with 56% of the cases in the United States coming from New York alone. It has indeed become the center of the nation when it comes to Covid-19 cases. But, even though things are not going so well in New York, there are large spots in the nation that only show a handful of cases in each state or even region. And a number of these states have no deaths at all related to this disease. The doctors said they have hope that these states will not become full-blown outbreaks like what New York is seeing. So what was the reporter's point? Why scream at Prez something we already know. I know he knows it, I heard him tell us the exact same thing. Again, poor journalism. Actually, not journalism at all. Just more lunacy from our media.

Which then leads to this moronic statement after the briefing by NBC News correspondent Miguel Almaguer as he tells our man, Lester Holt, the truth. Tell it, Miguel, let the truth fly brother. Miguel states smugly, and I quote, "*The cat's out of the bag, New York has over 50,000 cases.*"

Here's a newsflash for ya Miguel, the entire country has 53,000 cases. New York has just under 25,700 of them, not 50,000. And what cat? Out of what bag? These numbers are readily available to anyone, anytime, by

going to any one of several websites, news sources, the Prez's briefings, even your own shoddy network has the total. Who's hiding anything? What an ass.

This is what we have for journalism in a time our country needs information. Correct and succinct, information. We do not need hysterical, bullshit comments that grab our attention with spectacular lies and outright bullshit so that ratings might soar. I could go on and on, but why? We all know this, yet we still cling to this false news narrative like lemmings being led over a cliff. Are the lemmings deliberately killing themselves, or is it simply their migratory actions taking place in nature? See, we can't even get lemmings right, that's how divided we are. One side says one thing, the other side says another.

Dr. Fauci was at the briefing and he didn't look real happy. None of them on the dais looked really happy. I saw a number of articles today stating the Prez had fired him. TONY IS OUT! screamed more than a few headlines. Overseas news chimed in with TRUMP SACKS EXPERT in their headlines.

Prez didn't fire Dr. Fauci. There he was. I know the good doctor was not too pleased with some of what Prez was saying, but he is also not pleased with the way the media is portraying things, such as Prez not taking his advice on containment. Let's examine the facts: Dr. Fauci and the team come up with a plan for a 15-day stay at home as much as possible to slow the spread approach. Prez endorses this and rolls out the official slow the curve gig. We are currently in the middle of said gig. Prez then says he wants to get business back up and running as soon as possible. Let's open up Main Street as soon as it's safe to do so. AS SOON AS IT'S SAFE TO DO SO. Media goes batshit crazy saying "*Dr. Fauci is not at the briefing when Prez says this*". PREZ FIRES FAUCI! What a load of crap.

Prez stated today he wants to have the country

opened up by Easter. A couple of weeks after our 15-day period ends. Prez says he will rely on the advice of Dr. Fauci and Dr. Birx and other docs. Fair enough. Dr. Fauci then states that areas of the country are not nearly as critical as New York and he tells the media not to equate the entire country to what is going on in New York. Is New York going to be a viable candidate for opening up at Easter? “No”, he tells them, “*not even remotely thinking that*”. Prez ends today’s briefing, which came on the tail of today’s Coronavirus Town Hall, and off they go, to the dulcet screamS of “*It only takes one person to infect an entire county.*” Pathetic does not begin to describe it.

When this lasts longer than Monday, the end of the 15-days, I will re-title my thoughts on this matter as “*A Shaman’s Journey Into The Heartland Of Absurdity*”, or “*An Illuminated Monkey’s Ruminations On Modern Media*” or, “*How Social Media Led To Public Floggings And Other Bedtime Stories*”. What do you think?

Stay safe out there, wherever you are.

Wednesday, March 25th, 2020 - Day Ten In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread Gig

Not much to note today that is new news. Prez re-cited the same thing they’ve all been talking about the last few days; getting in supplies, people are great, more masks have been found, his team is great, respirators can be converted from one type to the other so now we will have more respirators, America is great, *blah, blah, blah*.

Steve Mnuchin gave a rousing statement about economic relief that is, supposedly, going to be voted on tonight in the Senate and then approved, hopefully, by the House tomorrow so that Prez can immediately sign it. The act will help get us through the next three months

and, if everything goes as planned, checks should be arriving within the next three weeks. So, the proverbial check is in the mail, though those Americans who use direct deposit with the IRS will get their money first. Steve and Prez took a few questions and that was that.

You really get a sense of family after watching these briefings day after day. Our Secretary Of The Treasury is now Steve. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, we call him Tony. Dr. Deborah Birx is the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator & U.S. Special Representative For Global Health Diplomacy who serves as the response coordinator for the White House Coronavirus Task Force; we call her Deb. The list goes on and on. Vice Prez Pence is Mike—doesn’t come across as a Mikey, so I’m good with Mike—Attorney General Robert Barr, Bob, to those of us who know him, is always a welcome character. And who can possibly forget Larry *I got your money hangin’* Ludlow, the Director of The National Economic Council. Oh, man, I almost left out Jerome *I got me some stripes on my arms* Adams, our Surgeon General. ‘*Sup Jerome?*’ The man is a Vice-Admiral so you know them stripes were earned and don’t he be looking good wearing them? These are just a few of the family members that appear on screen to assure Americans that first and foremost, we are all in this together. We are all a family. I truly look forward to seeing and hearing from them. As does, I am certain, all good Americans.

Prez left relatively early but not before taking a swipe at a couple of “fake news” reporters. Imagine how it must feel to write the bullshit that they write, knowing that is fake, and then trying to pawn it off as real “news” and real “reporting”, only to have the Prez call you on it in front of a national audience. You just know their bung-hole puckers. And at a time when there’s a Toilet Paper shortage to boot. Gnarly.

So Prez, before he leaves, states once again that he

would like to see the country up and running around Easter, with assurances that not all of the country will be able to hit that deadline. Naturally, this causes a lot of harumphing with the reporters and one asks Prez if he should discontinue referring to the Easter deadline as “aspirational”? Prez just sighs and moves on.

Why? I will tell you; aspirational is to have aspirations, to have a desire for something, an aim, an endeavor to achieve something. You know how I know this? Because I use words and I attempt at using them correctly. Stringing them together to make coherent statements—at times I fail, I know, I know. So the idiot reporter asking the question, and his equally idiotic media conglomerate are, supposedly, trained in the use of words as well. The Prez says he is hopeful that by Easter a lot of the country can be back to work. It is his “aspiration” that this occurs and it is the correct use of the word to describe his feelings on the matter. Would you rather have a president who says *“Well, I don’t know, I think we should stay shut down for another three months because I just have no desire for our country to get back to work from this horrible thing that has afflicted us. Besides, the doctor dudes and dudettes think that is best so we’re just going to go with them on this?”*

I don’t think so. Besides, Prez has repeatedly said he would confer with Tony, Deb, Jerome and the rest of the fambamily before he makes a decision, relying heavily on what they have to say. What more could you want? The media has no clue as to what they want. They want only to tear the shit out of Prez, any chance they get, and to show how screwed up he is. Again, narcissitic? He admits as much. An ego the size of the known universe? Smug? Surely you jest. It goes on and on and so does the media. So, why did the Prez simply sigh and move on? Because he knows, as well as anyone with an 8th-grade education, that the reporter’s question, as was the reporter himself, worthless.

Dr. Fauci got a little short with some of the questions too. He was pretty short with one particular question asked of him about how he felt the WHO (World Health Organization) felt about how China had handled their crisis. He shut this guy down. Quick. He told him he’s in no position to answer that question and he doesn’t do politics. Sweet. I wish he would have said, *“how the fuck does that question relate to the coronavirus outbreak in America, which is what this briefing is about?”*

I could see it in his eyes. I’ve known a fair share of New Yorkers, as Dr. Fauci is one, and I just know this was what was running through his brain, though to his credit the thought did not make it out of his mouth. Professional, through and through. I couldn’t do it, which is why I’m not up there, that and the fact I’m not a doctor with over 40 years of infectious disease experience. You know, a real pro from Dover. But I digress.

Hey, since we’re giving some well-deserved props to Tony, how about a shout out to Deb? She has it the worst of all. She’s the only woman up there amidst a dais full of swinging meat—okay, they’re kinda old so the swinging part maybe not so much, but you get my drift—and every day she has to have something new to wear. I suppose she doesn’t have to, but being a woman she does because, you know, that’s how that works. Men have it easy. They pick out a suit, pick out a tie, change the tie each day, maybe change the shade of suit color, BAM! they’re done. Except for Jerome. He’s got it easier still because he wears his admiral stuff. Same stuff day after day but it’s okay because you’re an admiral and you don’t have time for this changing out tie shit. So Jerome gets a pass. But Deb, props to her. I gotta say, she has colorful scarves and interesting dress patterns, she even rocks her shoes. She is one colorful person up there and the nation, at least for me, is so much more grateful for it.

A couple of items about the DPA came up. Again, same old, same old. If Prez isn’t up there talking about

masks and stuff it's the media hammering about any number of things, especially the DPA. So for those of you who need help with this stuff, the DPA stands for the Defense Production Act. You have probably heard the media clamoring that the Prez enacted it but he will not enforce it.

"We used it in WW2," I heard one reporter call out, "why not enforce it now"?

Again, Prez just pauses and moves on. Why? First of all, and primarily in relation to this, again, idiotic question, the DPA was signed into Federal law in 1950 to help prepare for the Korean War. For those of you reading this that might happen to be journalists, WW2 was already done and gone by the time DPA became law. So, idiotic question. The next thing about the DPA is it gives Prez the power to "force" industry to do the governments bidding as the government sees fit. No more volleyball's for you, sports equipment manufacturer, you're now producing what we need.

Nationalizing business is what we are talking about here. Plain and simple. Prez, bless his narcissistic, smug, egomaniacal self, has not wished at all to do this. And why should he? Companies are stepping forward and "voluntarily" producing what is needed. If companies are voluntarily complying, why force them? I read a few articles about this from our illustrious media that ruminated "*wouldn't it be better to live in times like when a president forced the DPA on industry?*"

Are you fucking kidding me? First off, are we still talking WW2, or is it the Korean War? Let's just clarify that. Second, oh sure, I would much rather live in a country where the government has to force its industry leaders to produce what is needed instead of living in a country where the industry leaders volunteer to produce what is needed. Who wouldn't? No wonder I don't understand our media.

By all indications, Monday, Day 15, is going to come

around and it is my bet that we will be extending the shut down for a few days more. My keen instincts, and the fact I actually listen to what Prez says instead of thinking up ways to trip him up as he's speaking, tells me he is leaning towards extending the shut down in some parts of the country, ending it in others. He brought it up no less than three times and this is the first time I have heard him do this, so it kind of stuck out. At least to me.

Nothing is near as bad as they are saying. There have been approx. 27,000 cases in America per month. Compare that to the flu—I know they say it is not the same and I'm not arguing, just stating the facts—which had approximately 9,800,000 cases in America per month at the same time. Should we follow these guidelines that have been asked of us to follow in order to slow this disease? Absolutely. Should we freak out and believe these idiotic media fucks that seek to drive fear into our nation? Not a chance in hell.

Stay safe out there.

Thursday, March 26th, 2020 - Day Eleven In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

What a day! I spent most of the earlier part of the day researching scientific journals, congressional records, CDC statistics, a phone call with a friend, whew... was I ever ready for 2pm to come around so I could watch the Coronavirus Briefing and relax a bit.

Prez came out with a limited dais today. There was Prez, Vice Prez, Tony, and Deb. It was a small party to be sure. Prez started giving us the low down on what he's been up to, starting with his morning phone call with members of the G20. This in and of itself was not so bad but then he started listing each and every member that is in the G20,

with a few hearty mentions for most everyone.

Being the Easter season and wanting to get into my usual Easter mood, I had supplied Lake House with a sweet supply of jellybeans. I'm not supposed to eat these tasty little angels of deliciousness, so I and the doctors and Mrs. America have come to an understanding that if I limit my jellybeans to Easter, some at Christmas, that would be alright with them. So I'm munching away on these babies today because, you know, it's damn close to Easter, and as I'm doing my aforementioned research I find that I am flying high. Sugar rush? Why thank you very much, I'll take five rushes, all at once if you don't mind, could you gift wrap them too?

Prez is droning on as to ALL the members of G20 and I'm higher than a Vegas Hooker on ketamine when I notice Vice Prez is looking super pale. I mean, white. Instantly I am reminded of Val Kilmer's character Doc Holliday, in Tombstone, and now I can't get the image of Vice Prez saying *"I'll be your huckleberry"* over and over out of my mind. Prez is still droning, and now I see Vice Prez swinging a tin absinthe cup with his pinky finger...I'm losing it.

"Steady there, my boy. You've been here before, it's simply a very large, though thoroughly enjoyable, sugar rush. Get yourself some water and lay off the jellybeans".

Thankfully the voice of the ghost of Ronald Reagan brings me back down and I'm back to the briefing. Whew. That was fun. Prez is nearly finished with the G20 stuff and I notice Vice Prez is only looking super pale because of the lighting. Huckleberry indeed.

I come down from my sugar rush and Ronnie's voice just in time to hear Prez say how he next had a phone conference with all the governors. It was great, tremendous, best phone call ever, *blah, blah, blah*—Prez is always predictable, eh—and he's telling the press brigade, and the people watching, how all of the governors had nothing but great things to say, nothing negative at all.

Except for, well, and I quote Prez here; *"there was this one governor who was kind of being a wise-guy, but just a little bit wise. Not a big deal because usually he's a lot worse, but we took care of that."*

Instantly I think, sweet, Prez is breaking knee caps. Taking care of biz old school ways. He gives a shout out to the fake news that reports all the governors hate him and....we move on.

FEMA is shipping millions of items. Millions upon millions. The US Navy ship, USNS Comfort, will be in New York by Monday. It comes out of dry-dock much earlier than expected, by weeks, and it sets sail on Saturday. Prez invites everyone to join him at the launch. It will be a great launch, fantastic, magnificent, awesome, best ever, *blah, blah, blah*. My only thought is if I were to fly back there to witness this magnificent launch, would there be jellybeans?

Prez is proud of Americans and how we have dealt with this crisis that was not of our making. We've also done more with our testing in eight days than South Korea did with their testing in eight weeks. 'Murica! Fuck yeah!

He also touches on the fact that Americans want to go back to work. They call and tell him constantly and he hears us. I don't know who is calling him, but thanks. I shoot out a text from time to time, but I'm fairly certain that he's not getting these, so he must be talking about you. Or perhaps your neighbor?

3.3 million people are now unemployed, but it's nothing but a thing. This was all planned for which is why the stimulus that just passed the Senate is so important. It will help with the large number of unemployed as not only will it provide immediate cash, it will also provide extended unemployment benefits. Yes, there might be the lone showboat who will hold it up in the House—one???—but he's confident it will get passed. If not Friday, then next week for sure. Health care measures are up next. Since these workers have presumably lost their

health care as well as their employment something will need to be done to help them out and that will be in the next phase. They are working on it. You can rest assured.

He takes a few questions from reporters that are actually, really great questions. An Asian journalist asks whether he will still stand up for Asian Americans—yes, he says he will—and is he still of the mind that this is a Chinese Virus—again, yes, he believes it is. Another reporter asks since the bailout includes large sums for cruise lines, and since most of those cruise lines are registered out of the country to avoid paying taxes here, is he thinking of forcing the cruise lines to renegotiate their registry to the USA so they would pay taxes here. Great question and yes, he is all on board with that. Prez leaves as reporters scream questions/statements as he walks away and Dr. Birx, or Deb, takes the podium.

42 My sugar rush has now completely abated and I eye the jellybean container longingly but hold off. Glad I did. Deb comes out swinging. 40% of our country has an extremely low infection rate. Super low. There are some acknowledged hot spots, but we are dealing with it. She pauses and then addresses the media. She tells them, directly tells THEM, THE MEDIA, that she has spoken with several hospitals in New York and there are EMPTY beds and UNUSED ventilators. So, there it is. Yes, things were kind of crazy for a bit, but people got a handle on it and they dealt with it. There is no doom and gloom. An apocalypse is not happening. Stop spreading all the nasty stories about the situation. They are not true! There are loads of empty and unused beds. The nation does not need to be in a panic over things that are not occurring, so, please, stop writing these false narratives.

Deb does not stop there. She knows pretty much everyone in the room has read the report out of England this morning. I am well aware of the report myself since I spent the entire morning researching it. Epidemiologist Neil Ferguson, who created the coronavirus model

that everyone was using, the same model that has been instrumental in government policy making, was wrong. Ferguson, modeled that the UK would have a death toll of 500,000 people and the US would have a projected death toll of 2.2 million dead. That's a lot of dead people. No wonder everyone freaked. He now says that the UK will be under 20,000 dead, if even that, though he did not revise the US death estimate. Silence. Not even a camera clicking. Deb says she agrees that his model is wrong. Otherwise, by now Italy would have had 400,000 dead and they are not anywhere near that with a little more than 8,200 dead. An astounding number to be sure, but nowhere near 400,000. Deb is smiling. She tells us the projected rate of infection in America was to be 60-70%. Now, she believes it will be far, far lower than that.

Dr. Fauci, Tony, chimes in and tells us that there are multiple vaccines in route, multiple therapies being developed. He, too, is optimistic. Vice Prez is grinning like a drunken faro player—can't get the image out of my mind, swinging absinthe cup and all—asking "*who's your huckleberry now?*" His and Prez's task force is kicking some Chinese Virus ass.

Deb comes back up and explains they are working on a plan to get the nation back on track that involves rating each county, not just state, but counties, on a High, Medium or Low-risk factor and they will be rolling out appropriate applications for each as we move forward. Vice Prez says they will be working diligently as we near the end of the 15-day gig and we, the nation, will be getting information soon, probably Monday, the end of the 15-day period.

So today there is hope. In fact, I've never given up hope, did you? Is it as bad as they said? No. Was there cause for alarm? Yes. Should we have taken such extreme measures? Probably, better safe than sorry. Are there still conspiracy theories running around in my head as to the true nature of what this was all about? Are you kid-

ding me? There was a burnt crunch in my bowl of Cap'n Crunch this morning that jacked me for about nearly an hour. Why was it in the box? I've never noticed one before, why now? Did a worker at Cap'n Crunch have it out for us? Or just for me, specifically? Was it a terrorist plot to take all the Cap'n Crunch eaters out? For Allah? For God? For Tony the Tiger so he could regain market share? It was, truly, a trying morning. But I persevered and survived. At least until the jellybean incident.

Stay safe out there.

Friday, March 27th, 2020 - Day Twelve In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

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Lots of action today. Prez signed the 2.2 Trillion dollar stimulus bill into law after it passed in the House by voice vote. Money is on its way but will it be enough? Probably not, is what Prez says, which is why the ultimate plan is to fund 6.2 Trillion dollars in aid. I love how politicians throw these numbers around like so many butterflies gracefully taking to the air. I mean, what's 4 Trillion between friends, right?

The briefing began a little later than stated, but that has pretty much been the norm this week. I was not suffering from a high blood sugar rush, but in full disclosure I was contemplating the need to raid my emergency barbiturate stash if I were to survive the briefing. I get that bloviating politicians are something we must deal with but my God, can these people go on and on? Yes, they can. Here's the gist of it:

Prez enforced his DPA order today. General Motors, who previously said they were going to pony up ventila-

tors voluntarily, kept stalling on the deal and it did not sit well with Prez. Openly stating the closure of GM's Lordstown, Ohio, plant never sat well with him. When GM changed their tune from producing 40,000 ventilators to 6,000 and increased the price for these ventilators at the same time, well, Prez wasn't having any of it. He "used the DPA hammer", and then put Peter Navarro as coordinator of DPA, sending Pete to jack the GM hacks around a bit and keep those bad puppies in line. Pete came up to the podium and says, "yowza, I'm your man". Prez smiles, Pete smiles, I smile. Everybody smiles because Pete's on the job.

Prez goes on to further explain how he's going to hold those dog bastards at GM to it and they will be producing 100,000 of these units whether we need them or not. What we don't need we can sell to our allies and help the rest of those nations. He specifically states "allies", so I'm not too certain if that includes the states of Washington and Michigan, whose governors are none too happy with Prez. But he's none too happy with them either. I love it when he refers to Michigan Governor Gretchen Witmer as "*that woman in Michigan*", and his statement that Washington Governor Jay Inslee is "*a washed-up and failed presidential candidate*" is always a good time. Gotta love Prez, telling it like it is. Prez goes on to specifically state that he could care less if the governors don't like him, he doesn't much care for them either. What really gets him boiling is that the fine, hard-working people from FEMA and the Army Corp. of Engineers are being thrown under the bus by these ingrates and Prez is simply not going to tolerate it. FEMA and the Army Corp. of Engineers have been building emergency hospitals, delivering supplies, you name it, to these ungrateful governors and he will not sit idly by as these fine people are being disparaged. Disparaged I tell you. Disparaged! Word!

All this droning on and on as facts are coming forth.

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Boeing is donating three jumbo cargo planes for shuttling FEMA supplies around the country, or whatever else that is needed to be transported. Reserve military and retired military are being called up to help with whatever logistical help is needed; loading boxes, packing trucks, etc...RONA testing is being done at a 100,000 a day rate, more than anywhere else in the world, and we are now up to 685,000 tests. As a side note, I did the math and with 685,000 tests done and the US now at 97,000 positive cases, that is 14% that are testing positive, a far cry from the 70%, even perhaps 80%, that was projected days ago. So, yay team. Why doesn't the media comment on this?

New York's Governor Cuomo, is pretty hot about not having enough ventilators and he lets everyone know it. Prez states New York had a couple thousand ventilators FEMA sent them to a warehouse in New Jersey that they never picked up. Why New Jersey you might ask? Prez doesn't get it either telling the reporter that asked the question "*that's where FEMA was directed to deliver them*". And who, exactly, told them to deliver the ventilators to New Jersey? Why it was none other than New York. So, again, go figure.

Prez tells us Apple has developed an App for screening symptoms of Covid-19 to help people figure out if they need to see a doctor or get tested. Very helpful, best ever, *blah, blah, blah*—and then back onto the ungrateful bastard topic. The USMS Comfort is headed out to New York on Saturday, a full three and a half weeks earlier than planned thanks to the wonderful work everyone was doing down in the repair facility of Roanoke, Virginia.

Yo, Cuomo, heads up, Prez is pretty wound about this criticizing his people thing.

A reporter questions whether Prez should be going down to Virginia for the ship's launch. Apparently she did not get the memo about questioning Prez. Prez says

that he needs to go, how could he not go? He's the Prez and it's a Prez thing to do. Apparently, there's some sort of official Prez playbook the reporter was referring to that said Prez should stay his ass in the White House, but Prez made it clear he does what Prez needs to do and he's going to Virginia to show his gratitude, our nation's gratitude, for the hard work all those people put in to get the Comfort to New York as soon as possible. Ungrateful ingrates, *blah, blah, blah*. Again, word.

Prez is finally done with speaking, done with questions, and he leaves. Whew. Forget the barbiturates, I need a shot of speed to keep up. Vice Prez Mike talks to us and reiterates what Prez said and then the Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, comes up and tells us how distance learning is going to be the norm for a while as kids should not sit around and do nothing. They can still learn from a variety of different formats being developed. Most all of it involves learning via the internet, and for those areas without internet there are buses being fitted with WiFi hotspots that can be driven into these areas, providing instant internet access. They are working on further funding in the next round of relief so that micro-grants will be available for students everywhere. Not certain what this means, but apparently no kid will be denied an education because of their lack of funding, or shitty ass internet.

Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue, comes up and tells us they are keeping hot breakfasts and lunches coming for students that need them. The food supply chain is strong and will be continuing to remain strong as it evolves within this crisis. Food is safe, there is an abundance of it, and a million meals a week are being served for kids that need it. He brings up the head of McCain Global who explains to us that through their nationwide network they will be delivering food directly to homes that need it. The head of Panera Bread then comes up and tells us they are serving meals, for free,

to children in Ohio to start with, and then expanding from there. All of this is being done with the oversight of the USDA and Sonny truly has it going on. It might not be the best of times for education if you're a kid, but it certainly seems you will eat well. Secretary DeVos also tells us that student loan payments are on hold for the duration of the crisis and that more than likely means no payments for six months. The briefing is clipping along at a fast pace now that Prez is gone and they've muzzled the reporters so they cannot ask questions.

I will mention here before I forget, Prez did give a shout-out to the media today, or at least some of them, as to how they have done a great job in accurately reporting what is happening with this pandemic. They're all great news media *"except for those of you who are fake news. You know who you are, and the American people know too."* Get to it, Prez. Get to it.

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Dr.'s Fauci and Birx—Tony and Deb—come out and do their thing. Things are looking up, several treatments are in the works as well as a couple of different vaccines. They both reiterate that come Monday, Tuesday at the latest, there will be much more to say about what steps they will recommend the Prez, and the country, take. Prez repeatedly stated when he was on the dais that he wants the country to return back to work, but safely. Safety is first, then work. Some of the reporters have a hard time with this and he explains it to them, over and over, ad nauseam. When the reporters try to hammer Tony on this, he smiles and says that he believes Prez has already answered them. Deb, looking quite lovely in a powder blue dress and yet another magnificent scarf whose colors simply light up the room, smiles quietly and looks at Vice Prez who ends the briefing and they all turn and head for the margarita bar, or somewhere similar.

There was a lot of stuff today. Gave me a headache. I'm not much for speeches and my God, everyone new

had a speech, except for the regular cast of characters. The regulars have their act down, and they can blaze through their section if the reporters are muzzled. All in all, not too bad. Prez can go on and on forever with the reporters, not dodging them at all. But he does tend to get sidetracked and says the same thing at least five dozen times, which does tend to wear one down when listening. Lots of questions arise. Decisions need to be made. Will it be barbiturates or speed that will get me through these conferences, or some very stout Monkey Bread?

It's the weekend and the authorities want us at home for what we hope will be the last weekend under these conditions. But it will not be our last weekend under these conditions, far from it, that much is painfully obvious, but enjoy the weekend as much as you can. It's not like space aliens have taken over the country. Or, perhaps they have and that is what is really going on. Maybe we will find out the truth on Saturday night's episode of Ancient Aliens when they reveal that Giorgio Tsoukalos is really an alien ambassador, being sent here years ago to prepare us for the inevitable conquest of our globe by a species from the far vastness of space where politicians are not needed and pastry chefs run the government. You just never know.

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Stay safe out there.

Saturday, March 28th, 2020 - Day Thirteen In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

I searched and searched but I could find any information on today's briefing. Around 1:30pm our time CNN starts showing a picture on their sidebar caption

that says the briefing is starting soon. No such briefing is forthcoming and after a healthy lunch of leftover brisket I set the news programs to record in case it comes on whilst I am doing other chores here at Lake House. If there was a briefing, I certainly missed it. But, lots of news out there so there is still plenty to write about.

The major media continues on with the dire straits Americans are in. More and more people are infected, more and more people are dying. The media is having a field day. Prez went down to Virginia today for the USMS Comfort send-off, so not a lot of official news from the task force. Media kicks it into overdrive on the fear and hysteria and man, are they ever open for business.

The purpose of what I have been doing here these past few days is to both document and distill what the government is saying about this crisis. Many of my friends cannot stomach these news conferences because they simply hate Prez and the mere sight of him sends them into a frenzy, chanting "*the orange-haired monster is leading us to our doom!*"

I get that. But they are still my friends and I thought I would help them out by watching these briefings and summarizing what went on. Gives me something to do and it spares them from frenzied chants.

Other of my friends simply cannot sit through these briefings for their entirety because, well, they're really boring as hell. The closest I can describe it is when your cables audio is slightly out of sync with the video; you see a mouth move and then hear the sound. Like the old Hong Kong martial arts movies, though without the violence and with far more simple-minded dialogue that numbs your mind. So after a while of this out of sync state you just can't stand it anymore and you change the channel, or you put on Netflix, or the Disney Channel, or Prime or any one of a number of streaming choices that suck your bank account dry. Dismal, now that you think about it, isn't it? All the money we spend on our

entertainment to keep our simple minds amused yet they always have an out of sync channel. Somewhere. So, these briefings, are a lot like that. With two of my friend bases covered and the rest of my friends reading my daily blathering's—as one astute and faithful friend noted—because they're insane and they find it amusing as they watch imaginary butterflies swoop down upon them from the computer screen of whatever land they are in at the time—in other words, it is somewhat helpful. So everyone is benefitting.

Back to the purpose at hand. I have spent an inordinate amount of time looking at figures and numbers as related to Covid-19, the RONA. Like all of you, I am basically home bound at our authorities' directive. I am retired and spend most of my time working on Lake House, watching egrets, spreading the word of the Illuminated Monkey, fun stuff like that, and I am well used to being at home for long stretches at a time. Except now they tell me I have to stay at home and naturally that irritates me to no end and I want to go out simply for the sheer pleasure of doing something I have been told not to do. Realizing this is childish behavior I look for other mature things to do like give the dogs peanut butter, count the number of grains of rice in the bags Mrs. America bought at the store, stuff like that. Oh, almost forgot, take a shot of tequila every time I hear a talking head say something intelligent and insightful—this rarely occurs so my sobriety has been, for the most part, fairly up there—and of course spending time researching what they are telling us about what we are going through and what to expect. Whew, if you made it through this paragraph you get a sense of what these briefings are like, except multiply that by two hours worth.

Big shit is going down in the media because we surpassed 100,000 cases. We are all going to die a flaming death without any underwear on. But Dr's. Tony and Deb spent the majority of the past week telling us to expect

this very same thing. A lot of the measures that were put into place at the beginning of the 15-day gig will not even begin to surface until next week, or the week after. Pretty straight-up stuff. Couple that with the fact that a whole bunch of people could care less about helping to slow any spread of anything because it will not affect them and viola, you now have a rising case number and, unfortunately, death number. So this is not looking good, is it? Prez is saying one thing. The media is saying another. Everyone has opinions and la-de-da isn't this a wonderful musical we attached ourselves onto?

Being a number freak for my entire life, I require numbers to sustain my brain when I'm not brain-dead from Monkey Bread and television. Sitting in a line of cars I will add every license plate around me, find the total, bring it to its raw number, and then assign a numerological significance to it. Not such a bad hobby. It does get a little dicey when I'm moving down the road and not stationary at a light, but what's a few distracted numbers between friends, right? Sorry about your bumper.

So I've looked at a whole lot of numbers today, thanks to both diligent searching and FB posts with links to articles that I find on my friends' timeline. Mostly the latter. Shout out to friends with cool shit on their timelines! This is what I found in regards to Covid-19 in the US.

1. We cannot figure out whether to call it Covid-19 or the coronavirus. Media headlines go back and forth with most people I know referring to it as the RONA.

2. It is the opinion of every single doctor and science article writer person that I have read that Covid-19 is the new mutation of the coronavirus, of which there are many and varied mutations. Basically, it's the flu, just another version that we don't have a vaccine for. Yet.

3. It really gets old typing Novell CoronaVirus and much easier to type Covid-19. Easier still is RONA. My guess is that coronavirus is already in most media's spell check systems so it automatically pops up and boom,

there ya have it. Answers, like numbers, I need them. I still prefer RONA.

4. Numbers do whatever you want them to do unless you assign some sort of structure to them.

5. Media could care less about number four and advance quickly to number six.

6. Don't give out real information, make it juicy so people will read your blasphemous drivel and advertisers will be happy because in reading the aforementioned blasphemous drivel people had to see their ads. Many times. You will notice there are not any ads in my blasphemous drivel. In essence, I remain pure.

7. The media go back and forth with numbers as they see to fit to do so in order to advocate whatever scenario they want to sell at the moment in regards to the Covid-19 crisis.

8. If you don't want to read about numbers and get depressed and angst-ridden about them, stick to one format. You cannot simply compare one set of numbers with another and say they are the same.

9. Visual graphics are the bomb and they should be used as often as possible instead of having people actually read this boring crap. I'm not inserting graphics so you are stuck with this boring crap. Sorry.

With that in mind, I present you Covid-19 numbers to a real comparison of numbers that come directly from the CDC:

NUMBER OF CASES

USA - 123,428

Italy - 92,472

China - 81,439

Spain - 73,235

Germany - 57,695

France - 37,575

Iran - 35,408

Holy cow, we are leading the world in Covid-19! We

are doomed. We will become the world leaders in Covid-19 deaths. Except, these are the current numbers:

NUMBER OF DEATHS

Italy - 10,023
 Spain - 5,982
 China - 3,300
 Iran - 2,517
 France - 2,314
 USA - 2,211
 Germany - 433

What? Wait a minute, we're way behind everyone in deaths, except for Germany—is it the sauerkraut and beer? But we're not finished with an equal comparison.

POPULATION of EACH COUNTRY as of 2019

China - 1.5 Billion
 USA - 329.5 Million
 Germany - 90 Million
 Iran - 83 Million
 France - 67 Million
 Italy - 60.5 Million
 Spain - 47 Million

So now let us take a look at the number of deaths, per million, for each country. This will give us a uniform look at the numbers.

NUMBER OF DEATHS PER MILLION

Italy - 0.000165%
 Spain - 0.000127%
 France - 0.0000345%
 Iran - 0.000030%
 USA - 0.0000067%
 Germany - 0.0000048%
 China - 0.0000022%

So the reality is that of the top seven countries in the world reporting Covid-19 cases, we certainly do have the highest amount of reported cases—assuming China accurately reported ALL of their cases—making us the leader of Covid-19 cases per country in the world as all the media is screaming in their headlines. The other reality is that out of these top seven countries we are number six in deaths. And when you look at the per capita numbers, that is the number of cases for each country's population, we are number five, despite being the second largest population in the world out of these top seven countries. We are not, even close, to being the hardest-hit country in the world. The media sucks.

Trying to type all of these words was a lot of work. I think it is easier to watch the briefings. Not certain what tomorrow brings, but I'm certain of one thing; we'll find out soon enough. Don't play into the media's hysterical nonsense. Be aware that some serious times are upon us. Rough times indeed. Let's not make it worse by throwing around false numbers.

Stay safe out there.

Sunday, March 29th, 2020 - Day Fourteen In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread

What a day it has been! Today's briefing was held in the rose garden so you knew it was going to be massive. It was. Here's to the point: we have had this 15-day gig extended until the end of April. Hoo-Boy! That ought to set you back a bit.

Now that you have recovered from that shock, and I'm sure most of you reading this have already heard the same thing—so it really didn't come as a surprise—but now that we have that out of the way let's get on to the briefing itself.

Prez comes out at first and talks about a new five-minute test, fifteen minutes at the most, that will detect Covid-19. The FDA had fast-tracked this test and it is now FDA approved. Thank you Dr. Steve Hahn, head of the FDA, and all your team. They're great, fantastic, best team ever, *blah, blah, blah*. This test will allow for substantial increases in testing throughout the nation. The test, developed by Abbot, and now that it is approved, will be delivering fifty thousand tests a day, possibly more. Prez was also stoked to talk about the 2,100 beds that FEMA and the Army Corp. of Engineers put into place in New York at the Javits Center, effectively turning this large center in Manhattan into a functioning hospital, in a matter of days. The FDA has also approved and allowed both Zithromax and Hydroxychloroquine for use in treating Covid-19 patients. Additionally, the FDA also has allowed experimental blood transfusions with a first test group of 1,100 patients, all from New York, to see if this might work as well as it did in Japan and South Korea. This treatment takes the blood and antibodies from survivors of the disease and puts it into those most affected, hopefully treating them.

Masks have now been developed that instead of being thrown away, they can be sterilized and re-used up to twenty times. Prez was pretty concerned that a typical, busy hospital uses around ten thousand masks per week and this number has now jumped to over three hundred thousand per week. A leading mask manufacturer comes up to the dais and agrees with Prez that this is too much of an increase, even with this disease. His company is cranking these baby's out as fast as they can, but he still questions why the demand is so high, even with the Covid-19 crisis. What does this mean? Who can be knowing such things?

UPS and FEDEX have joined the fray and they are dedicating their planes and delivery services to help fly needed supplies all throughout the country where they

are needed. Fifty-one jumbo cargo planes have been dedicated to this mission.

Wow, the April 30th date is still sinking in. We have to continue with this drama until then?

Prez comes back up and says they are hopeful that by June 1st the entire country will be back up and running again.

So this is where it gets a little weird, as if it were not weird enough. I cannot stomach CNN so I generally go to one of the other networks to watch these briefings. I'm watching on NBC when, poof, it is gone and a talking head tells me it's back to their regularly scheduled programming. I turn to CBS; same thing. ABC and FOX are the same. One of the channels had an interview with Billie Jean King going on, another one had golf. While that's pretty important shit right there, I kind of think this whole "shut-down" the country thing for another month, possibly two, might be a little bit more important. Apparently, I think wrong.

So back to CNN it is and the briefing continues. Dr. Fauci and Dr. Birx—Deb and Tony—tell us the peak death rate will come in about two weeks and to keep, as painful as it is, following their guidelines. On this coming Tuesday, they will unveil a much more detailed plan.

CNN, as you know, runs marquee banners at the bottom of the screen. Currently, it reads "*Dr. Fauci predicts over 100,00 deaths from Corona*". Oddly enough a reporter asks Prez the same question and he refers to Tony, who is hot, and I mean steamed. He explains as he has said many, many times before, that this number is if we sit back and do nothing. But we are doing something, so he does not expect this number at all. He tells the gathered reporters to again, stop spreading false information and creating a panic when it is not warranted, doing so only for the sake of a decent sound bite. Seems simple enough, right? Not a chance. The entire rest of the briefing has the same message scrolling through the bottom

of CNN; 100,000 deaths from Corona streams happily along. Nothing changing at all.

Another reporter asks Prez if he is aware that his ratings now are the most he has seen in his presidency. He tells them he could care less, he just wants to get America through this crisis. The reporter then asks if he thinks his high ratings are why the major networks are not showing these briefings any longer. His response is classic; *"I don't know, it's not like we're in the worst crisis this country has seen in generations. Who knows what they're thinking? But I'll tell you what, if Americans don't want to hear what their president has to say they can turn the channel or just turn their TV off. But what these networks are doing is trying to silence a president in a time of national crisis. Next question"*.

That is exactly what is happening. The networks, our beloved news organizations, are choosing not to broadcast that we will shut the country down for another 30 days in order to bring us an interview with Billie Jean King, or golf. Wow! How surreal is reality going to go?

Prez goes on to tell us that Humana and Cigna, two of the largest health insurance providers in our nation, have voluntarily waived co-pays for Covid-19 treatments. Not too bad, thanks for stepping up guys. We have now had 894,000 tests conducted to date and with the new, quicker tests from Abbot that take 5-15 minutes, we should have a lot of data by the end of April. Tony comes back up and verifies this and also verifies that they are looking at Easter as to when the top of the curve will be achieved. CNN begins scrolling in their marquee that Italy and South Korea have done 3 times as many tests per capita as the US. Whatever. A reporter asks him if his statements earlier of perhaps millions of cases in the US will occur is still true and he, again, tells the reporter yes, if mitigation measures are not put in place and we sit back and do nothing. But since we are putting mitigation measures into place and we are doing

something this will more than likely not occur. I think he wants to bitch-slap these reporters. I sure do.

Here's another dick question for the Prez; why did he state earlier that he was worried suicide rates might increase during this time of the RONA more than actual RONA deaths? Is that not downplaying the seriousness of Covid-19 deaths by stating suicide deaths might be higher? Really? That's what you have? I got this one, Prez. I got your back. Here's a number for you to chew on reporter boy: 47,173 Americans died by suicide in 2019. According to CDC, and updated as of today, Covid-19 deaths are 2,112 verified deaths. It certainly seems that, so far, suicide is a greater number. Prez goes on to say that with all that is happening, businesses closing down, country shutting down, the fear of increased suicide is very real. End of that question.

For clarification, while the CDC says there are 2,112 verified US deaths due to Covid-19, CNN kept flashing 2,391 deaths, and growing, during the briefing. Seriously, the number increased like a ticker on the side of your screen. Here's another number; 122,653. That's the number of confirmed US Covid-19 cases reported and verified by the CDC as of today. Yet CNN tells us there are 136,106 cases and the number kept climbing during the briefing. Where is CNN they getting their data? Are they simply making it up?

Here's another beautiful question that is asked; why is the US rapidly approaching and overtaking the death rate for Covid-19? Prez says it is not and he moves on. Why, it's another idiot question.

Here are the numbers on this; currently the worldwide death rate is at .047%. The US is at .017%, a far cry from rapidly approaching and overtaking the worldwide death rate. So let's all go with some doom and gloom numbers that CNN and other media outlets want to scare us with. If we were to reach their 100,000 deaths, which is what they seem to be fixating on, we would

need five million cases to achieve that with our current, and steady, 2% mortality rate—it is actually 1.7% but let's round-up. There are, to date, a total of 716,523 cases throughout the entire world, according to the CDC. That is 238,841 cases per month since January 1st which is when they began tracking this. That would mean that for the US to reach this five million case load we would have to have 1,650,000 cases each month for the next three months. We are not even close to that. Not even. We have had, currently, 40,884 cases per month since January.

Prez takes great care in answering questions. He also takes the reporters to task for asking loaded, or entirely misleading questions. He calls them on it all the time. I have witnessed this over and over. I have watched all but the first of these briefings, faithfully watching each and every one of these things no matter how painful they might be. Let me tell you, they are painful to sit and watch.

I have heard, over and over, reporters saying Prez said something from a previous briefing that I know is not true; I heard what the man said myself and they are completely misquoting or downright fabricating. Over and over. I'm not on a Trump bandwagon, I am simply reporting on what I am both seeing and hearing. Why? Because I wanted to see for myself what was going on. To hear for myself what the task force members were saying. It has been an eye-opening past 14 days and I am certain that the next 30 will not be any different.

In youth, I had an aspiration to become a writer, a journalist. I even did so for a while. But by the late 1980s, I could see where journalism was headed and I wanted no part of it. Here I am today, witnessing firsthand what I knew it would become. I have never in my life, ever, trusted the government. I can now add the media to that list. Unless I see it, hear it, research it for myself, I don't believe a word that comes out of their mouths or onto their papers and websites.

This truly is an epic crisis, not only for our country but for the world. Drastic times call for drastic measures. We have all encountered terrible and difficult times in our lives. Did we overcome these times through hysteria? We did not. We overcame them through determination and a fighting drive that lives in every single one of us that when prompted, comes forth. That is how we have succeeded in the past, that is how we will succeed through this. This time is no different, except for the constant hounding by the media to peddle hysteria so we will continue to watch their insidious parade of fear.

It's going to be a long month but stimulus checks are supposedly coming and a plan has been put into place. The government is sending supplies as quickly as they can. Do I trust the government? I already told you I don't. Do they give me a reason to not trust them this time? In all honesty, they have not given me a reason. That's my view from Lake House.

Stay safe.

Monday, March 30th, 2020 - Day Fifteen In Our 15 Days To Slow The Spread Gig

So we come to the end of the 15 Days To Slow The Spread gig, but as you all know it was a little anti-climatic as Prez told us on day 14 that he was extending the plan for another 30 days. With that being said, there were still some new developments.

Prez held the briefing in the Rose Garden, again, and it looked to be a fine day back at the White House, though it did appear somewhat windy. The wind picked up at one point blowing Prez's hair around, but he smoothed it down and joked that it's okay, it's his real hair. It's these little asides that endear him to so many and cause gas-

kets to blow in so many more. But I digress. Prez tells us that as of today we have had 1 million tests and that with Abbot's new 5-15 minute test procedure it is completely changing the game. Abbot is cranking these babies out as fast as they can and FEMA is distributing them all over the nation. Things are looking good for testing.

Millions of doses of hopeful treatments are being produced, or in some cases have been produced, by Sandoz, Bayer, Roach and other large companies. Dr. Steve Hahn, of the FDA is kicking some Covid-19 butt in as many ways as he can. Prez tells us that Ohio Governor, Mike DeWine, called Prez and told him of a company in Ohio that developed a new machine that can sterilize masks at the rate of 120,000 masks per day. Each mask can now be used up to twenty times each but the machine needed FDA approval. Prez hooks up the company with Dr. Hahn and boom, instant approval and they are shipping these out as fast as they can make them. FDA approved to boot. General Motors is geared up to produce fifty thousand ventilators in one hundred days but they are not alone; there are now ten companies in the US producing ventilators.

An interesting occurrence did happen today; while none of the major networks were carrying the briefing yesterday except for CNN, today that changed. As much as it pains me to watch CNN, that's what I was watching so I could view the briefing. Suddenly, back to Wolf and friends and that is the end of the coverage for the briefing. WTF? I flicked over to NBC. They had it on as did FOX and CBS. ABC and CNN were not broadcasting the briefing, nor was PBS—I'm not certain if they have even covered one of these briefings, pretty sure they have not. I guess I can understand the networks not choosing to air these briefings live because of lost ad revenues—God knows they do go on and on—and I still think it's pretty bogus on their part, but doesn't PBS get a lot of federal money to run on? I know they get grants and money

from a lot of people, but I'm fairly certain the US gives them a nice chunk, too. In fact, don't they receive several hundreds of millions of dollars? Is it too much to ask that in a time of national crisis our Public Broadcasting System carry these daily briefings? Apparently, it is too much to ask. Weird. Whatever, it sucks that our public broadcasting system cannot publicly broadcast about a national emergency.

Another interesting occurrence; right as Prez is talking about the strides we are making in stemming the flow of Covid-19, CNN—while they were still covering it—runs a big marquee that says 486 deaths today, our nation is now nearing 3,000 deaths. I found that interesting as I had just checked the CDC site right before the briefing and found that as of today, there were 2,405 deaths. Again, why say we are nearing 3,000 deaths when we still have a ways to go to hit that number? Why do they insist on dramatizing this? For what purpose? Other than to promote hysteria and fear and increase their ratings, I find none. By the way, I encourage you to look at the CDCs numbers, which is where everyone, including the fear monger media, get them from.

Almost forgot, CNN still insists on running banner statements that both Prez and Dr. Fauci predict 100,000 deaths—they have not.

Pretty sad state of affairs where you can trust the information given to you by a Gringo Shaman more than that given to you by national news media. You're welcome.

Speaking of ventilators, or vents, as they are now calling them—gotta have lingo in a crisis—Prez says we still have 10,000 in reserve in case we need to distribute them. I can hear the question now; why don't we just send the 10,000 to all these needy hospitals and save lives? Great question. Here's my guess; last night on 60 Minutes they had a great segment on, of course, the coronavirus. They spoke with doctors and nurses in the ERs of New York

City hospitals, the worst hit in the country, right? You know, the epicenter.

60 Minutes gave cameras to these doctors who shot footage of their ICU's and ER rooms filled with patients on ventilators. It was a pretty devastating sight. Then something interesting happened, the reporter asked doctors/nurses at different hospitals if they were out of ventilators. A pretty straight forward question considering all that is being reported on.

Each of the three doctors hemmed and hawed before acknowledging that not only were they NOT out of ventilators, they actually had many that were not being used. What? Are you kidding? Of course, the spin then came on that they could need thousands more, but as of the moment, they had enough with some even not being used at all. Uh-huh. Straight from the horse's mouth. Try to ignore their spin.

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Most of the questions coming from the reporters were pretty coherent, but there were a few snarky ones thrown in. Prez calls out *"sure, go ahead, we'll give it a try,"* to a reporter in the audience. The reporter starts his question and I immediately recognize the voice of the snarky and aforementioned CNN dick/dude reporter. He starts taking the Prez to task over nothing that is relevant and Prez stops him saying *"see, that right there, why do you always have to be like that? Can't you just ask a topical question and leave the snarky nastiness out of it? I know, you can't, which is why you work for CNN and why American's don't trust you or your network to provide legitimate news."*

Right on Prez. I can only speak for myself, but I am so tired of these off-topic let's get the bastard president questions. A few more decent questions and then another snarky journalist asking Prez about his statement of major hospitals going from 10,000 masks to 300,000 masks in a week. *"Why would the hospitals lie about that?"* Prez is great in his answer, *"I didn't say they were lying*

about anything. Why do you say I said that? I didn't—I can vouch for Prez here, he did not. I don't know what happened. The nation's largest supplier to hospitals for masks came up yesterday and verified this and said he had no idea why they needed so many and/or where did all the masks go. It was brought to my attention, I brought him up to tell you what he told me. That's it." And, indeed, that was an accurate accounting of it.

Now, here's the best part; the reporter then asks Prez if he has any answers to what the hospitals are doing with all these masks that they're saying they don't have but distributors say they are giving them by the hundred's of thousands. Are you ready for this? Prez says *"I don't know, you're an investigative reporter, investigate. Do your job. The team has a lot of priorities right now, as do I, we don't have time to investigate a story for you. Do your job."* You gotta love Prez.

Yet another snarky reporter then asks why South Korea is three times ahead of us, per capita, on testing. Prez tells the reporter that instead of asking that in a snarky and accusatory way—which they did—trying to infer that the "team" is inept and South Korea has it going on —it pretty much came off that way—the reporter should be showing gratitude for all the hard work done by everyone in this crisis. He asks the reporter if they know the population of, and including, the areas around Seoul. They don't. Prez says 38.5 million, all in one small, localized location. America has a very large, not localized location. We have developed a 5-15 minute test, something no other country has done.

I did some research and here is what I found; South Korea has done approximately 394,000 tests. We have done 1 Million. But if you look at it in a per capita view—that is how many tests per population density—South Korea has more tests. South Korea has a population of 51.1 Million, America has a population of 329.5 Million. South Korea has a test percentage, per population, of

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.0077%. America has a test percentage, per population, of .003%. So is South Korea's testing higher? Yes. Is it by as much as three times higher as the media keeps yelping? No. Is it relevant, at all, to anything? No, not really. Prez says that's it for today and we are done.

That wraps up day 15 of the 15-Days To Slow The Spread gig. I suppose I will need to re-title these pieces unless they come out tomorrow with 30-Days To Continue To Slow The Spread. The good Dr's. Tony and Deb have promised lots of data tomorrow, we can only hope a catchy name is included. Any ideas?

Again, stay safe out there.

Tuesday, March 31, 2020 - Day 1 *In Our 30 Days To Slow The Spread*

The government started the new countdown today and, as might be expected, they came up with a catchy new name for this time period of after 15-Days To Slow The Spread; 30-Days To Slow The Spread. I so want a marketing job with these guys. Brilliance!

Prez moved the briefing back into the press room because they were going to be showing slides with graphs and charts and it is so much easier to see them in the press room versus the Rose Garden where there's the added benefit of no wind to blow his hair around. Well played, Prez, well played.

Prez starts talking and tells us that the 350 Billion in stimulus for Small Businesses will hit soon. Applications will begin being accepted on Friday, April 3rd. Banks and lending institutions are being funded as we speak. This also includes money for sole-proprietors. Sweetness.

I begin watching today's briefing in an interesting

way. CNN, which I cannot stand to watch but do so out of necessity since they have their "briefing coming soon" feature in the corner of the screen, shows yet again that the briefing is to start soon. Wolf and the other talking heads are yacking away but I have no clue as to what they are saying as I have the sound off until the briefing. This goes on for about half an hour. Mrs. America is on the couch and her phone chimes with a notice from our local news station that the briefing is on. I flip over to the local channel and sure enough, there's Prez. I go back to CNN and nothing. Go figure.

While waiting for the briefing to begin, CNN had displayed in their death counter that 3,700 deaths have occurred in the US due to Covid-19. NBC had, on their scrolling word thing an amount of 3,100. I check the CDC website and it reads 2,800. Yet again, why is this RONA information so disparate? After the briefing, I went to the Johns Hopkins website, which is where NBC says they are getting their info from, and find that Johns Hopkins list the number of deaths by country, or in the case of the US, by county. Their total is 3,198, for the US, but they also notate that 794 of these deaths are unassigned. What does "unassigned" mean and why can't they just simply give the total of our country, as they do with other countries?

Why there is a disparity in the numbers is anyone's guess, but there certainly is a disparity.

So, back to the briefing. Prez is done quickly and says Dr's. Tony and Deb will present their data and they will explain why we need the extra 30 days of compliance to end this thing. Sweet. I've been waiting for this since Deb said last week that they would be presenting numbers on Tuesday, which is today. Get on with it.

Deb has some slides prepared that show curves of expected deaths versus what is expected with mitigation—another 30 days. The numbers are staggering; 1.5 - 2.2 million deaths if we let the virus run its course, 100 - 240

thousand deaths if we implement the 30-day gig. WTF! The next two to three weeks are going to be brutal and that is what to expect. Deb then shows another slide that shows everything tapering off by end of June.

June! There are audible gasps from the press corp. and the room becomes somber. A reporter asks *“are you saying 100,000 deaths is the best estimate even with your procedures?”* “Yes,” is her response.

I’m floored. I did not expect anything like this. No way, shape or form. Deb then shows a graph that shows the seven major states in the US as affected by RONA, with New York and New Jersey way up, Connecticut somewhat up, and the rest of the states, California and Washington included, way down at the bottom. Deb goes on to say that since California and Washington started their stay-at-home approach for their states much earlier than the others, they were effective in curbing their death rates. In order to help visualize, let’s say we give New York a value of 100 deaths, New Jersey a value of 80 deaths, while California and Washington each have a value of 10 deaths. Pretty large difference. You take these four states which total 200 deaths, divided that number by the number of states we are using, four, and you have an average of fifty deaths per state. So we can now say that these states will expect 50 deaths to occur and we will apply that to all of the states as well.

Right about now you’re probably saying to yourself *“that makes no sense at all.”* Two states are much higher, two states are much lower, how can you predict that all states will now have the same number? You would be correct in that questioning. You cannot. Deb goes on to show more graphs and tells us they have taken all of this into consideration and that is why they are projecting a minimum of 100,000 deaths in the next few weeks.

I’m floored. Not by the number of deaths, but by the incredibly false presentation of data. To include such a drastic area as New York into the projections of the en-

tire country at this stage of the game is nuts! None of our states are remotely as bad as New York except perhaps New Jersey and Connecticut. Reporters go crazy with questions as it is not making sense to them either. Prez, Tony, and Deb all state these are the numbers to expect, though they hope they will go down. VP Mike brings out the official 30-Day gig graphic and nods solemnly. Wow. Again, just Wow. We are hosed.

The briefing continues. Prez goes on and on and on about the same old stuff, questions are flying, answers are given, more questions are asked, Prez is still going on and on and on for each question, *blah, blah, blah*. My head is spinning because I simply cannot believe what I have just heard. My brain does not accept it. I think my brain is imploding in disbelief. It’s like someone telling me that the sky has always been purple, not blue; I need to accept this and move on. It’s purple, not blue. It’s the way it is. Suck it up. It is reality.

Deb answers a reporter’s question by bringing up a slide of Italy. It shows their curve dropping down and she acknowledges that Italy is on the downhill slide and that we will not, hopefully, be anywhere near as bad as they were when we begin our downhill slide. What? What did she just say? Prez is back to telling us how he and his team are the greatest things EVER, they are all magnificent, marvelous, really, best ever, *blah, blah,, blah*—and off goes the TV. I’ve had enough. I cannot take it anymore.

I need some air and some reality. Here’s what I found while searching for reality:

Italy has had 105,792 cases with 12,428 deaths. That is a 12% death rate. The US has had 188,280 cases with 3,883 deaths—I know, yet another death number—which is a 2% death rate.

In the US we have managed to maintain a 2% death rate with the exception of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The rest of the country is pretty much at, or below this level.

Italy has had an infection rate of .17% for their country. The infection rate for the US is .057%.

In order to hit the 100,000 minimum death rate, we would have to have 5 million cases given our nationwide current rate of a 2% death rate. 5 million cases! We would have to move from an infection rate of .057% to an infection rate of 1.5%, or 27.5 times more than what we have been maintaining!

The good doctors tell us to rely on their modeling programs because they believe they are accurate, then they also say it will not get as bad here as it is in Italy. But even though they say we will not get as bad, let's use Italy's infection rate of .17% and apply it to us. With 329.5 Million people that would be 560,150 cases in our country. Let's also use Italy's death rate of 12%, which would give us 67, 218 dead. So even if we were to use Italy's numbers, which they have said we will use, it will never be as bad as Italy. The number dead is still much less than what they are estimating with 100-240 thousand deaths.

What is going on? Nothing is adding up. The math is simply not there. Something is not right. Either they are not telling us the truth about other countries—but there are worldwide disease organizations that are reporting the case and death numbers so we can see from independent organizations what is occurring worldwide—or they are completely exaggerating the numbers. They never once mention how many cases we might see, only how many will die. Nothing about total cases, only about how many deaths they are projecting. They bring up New York constantly. Yes, New York is pretty bad but the rest of the country is not near as bad, what about that? What gives? Here's a little something to chew on.

The top 10 from the CDC for Deaths In America, 2019:

Heart disease: 647,457

Cancer: 599,108

Accidents (unintentional injuries): 169,936

Chronic lower respiratory diseases: 160,201

Stroke (cerebrovascular diseases): 146,383

Alzheimer's disease: 121,404

Diabetes: 83,564

Influenza and pneumonia: 55,672

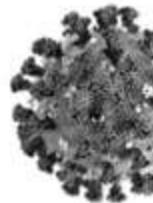
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, and nephrosis:
50,633

Intentional self-harm (suicide): 47,173

While 100,000 deaths, minimum, and again, this is with mitigation, without mitigation it could be 2.2 million deaths, is certainly nothing to shrug off, take a look at the numbers above. I am all for doing another 30-days if that is what it takes to get a handle on this crisis, but what's up with the false information? Are they telling us this to keep us on the 30-day plan? Is that it? Good old fashioned fear as a useful tactic to keep us on track? And again, why is there such disparity in the numbers? Should we invoke stay at home measures for some of the above diseases to lower their death rates? Seriously, what the fuck is going on?

There are a lot of theories floating around right now, conspiracy theories included. I'm not saying there's anything more going on than what is obvious; the government's numbers do not make sense when compared to what they are saying. It's that simple.

So, what is my solution? For me, it is a very simple one. I started this journal because I wanted to understand exactly what the government had to say. I have sat through hours upon hours of babbling from both the government and the media—with the exception, until today, of the good doctors, they have always been on point, or have they?—and there is no way in hell I am doing it for another 30 days. I simply cannot handle it. I cannot trust what the media, nor our government has to say nor can I stand our Prez crowing about all his achievements over



and over. It's just too much.

Do I hate Trump, no. I still maintain he was the better of the two choices offered and he seems the better of what will apparently be offered, no more no less. Would I like to see someone else in charge? Sure, show me, someone. But no one materializes. So why even go down that path? I have merely had enough of people lying to me for days on end. I don't need anyone to tell me what I can see and hear; we are being played. I am no longer participating in this charade by watching each and every day as more and more lies are set forth. The real story, whatever it might be, is not this daily briefing and RONA thing. I will wait for it to continue to unfold but without hearing the constant blathering's from fearless leader and his team.

In a dream last night the disembodied spirit of Monica Lewinski's dress appeared to me and urged me to further the cause of the Illuminated Monkey, which is to further the cause of us all. We have been placed into a surreal reality show that we are just now beginning to understand, we will need guidance going forward. That disembodied blue dress gave me direction. It urged me to create Monkey News Network, MNN, and to have The Gringo Shaman as its head anchor. Perfect.

I'm done trying to make sense out of this surreal nonsense. I've lived long enough to have survived a whole lot of stuff, as have we all. We'll survive this as well. Thanks for reading, your comments and messages have been awesome—and no, to the mystery messenger, I'm not at all interested in a five orifice dildo, but thanks for asking. Five?

Stay tuned for a much different approach tomorrow. The media networks want to foster surrealism? That ain't nothing but a thing for an Illuminated Monkey and his Gringo Shaman.

Keep safe and buckle up, we are in the middle of a wild ride indeed.

Tuesday, March 31, 2020 - Day 2 ***In Our 30 Days To Slow The Spread***

Taking a day off. Delivering furniture for the granddaughter, running errands with Mrs. America, making as few essential stops as possible in order to resupply. Not certain what is going on in the world other than that. I was going to launch MNN (Monkey News Network) today but then I realized today is April Fools and I didn't want to cause any confusion over it. Have a great rest of the day. I'll be back tomorrow with a whole new outlook on things, both RONA and otherwise.

Continue to be safe.

Thursday, April 2nd, 2020 - Day 18, ***COVID-19 Crisis***

Greetings and welcome to the new reporting format. I took yesterday off to run errands, deliver a chest-of-drawers to our granddaughter and to generally try to get away from all the insane news that is non-stop. Plus, when moving to this new format I realized that yesterday was April Fools day and I didn't want people to think this was a joke. It is not.

It is not something that is similar to The Babylon Bee, or The Onion, or any one of several satire sites out on the internet. I have no intention of spoofing anything and I still plan to follow this crisis and to give out as much information as I can; I'm just changing the format of my writing to give out as much information as I can while still maintaining the surreal essence that swirls around us as our leaders attempt at guiding us through these difficult times—see what I did there?

Why do this? Because watching the daily briefings was driving me mad. I see things in my own quirky way but at the same time, I want to understand what is going on out there in the world and then write about it. To attempt at factually documenting it.

The briefings devolved into a series of surreal statements and sideshows that defied logic and reality. Since I have much better things to do with my time, like searching out real information from other country's news sites, checking out scientific journals, medical sites, alternative medicine sites, alien abduction theories, world domination by penguins theories, etc—all of which are infinitely more entertaining and educational than what the daily RONA briefings have become.

I will admit to questioning my decision. Perhaps I am a tad hasty in my decision. Perhaps I should consider returning to the daily grind, tough it out to see what the silly bastards come up with next. On and on it swirled around in my brain until late last night, not able to sleep and looking for a decent movie to watch, I stumbled onto my recorded programs listing and, lo and behold, there were yesterday afternoons CNN news programs that I had recorded previously so as not to miss any briefings. I'd forgotten all about them.

I opened the first program and fast-forwarded to see what the Prez had to say, for old times sake. Suddenly there's some guy speaking that I don't recognize and other people on the dais that I'd not seen previously. Must have forwarded to far. I rewind the program and there's Prez introducing the new guy. Turns out he is Mark Esper, Secretary of Defense. Prez and Sec. Esper are unveiling a somewhat elaborate, yet still clouded in governmental mystery, plans for a new military counter-narcotics mission that would hurt embattled Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro. What?

The day after our fearless leader tells us a minimum 100,000 Americans will die in the next two to three weeks

and we are all pretty much hosed by this coronavirus thing he now tells us he's conducting a huge counter-narcotics mission that is clandestine and he can't really go into details about it? Are you kidding me? The next fucking day? What kind of bullshit is this?

Sec. Esper draws a link between the pandemic and the new military operation, saying that criminal organizations are trying to capitalize on the fact that governments are distracted by the outbreak. "*Transnational criminal organizations continue to threaten our security*" and "*destroy lives.*"

I can't wrap my head around it. Where's Tony, or Deb? Who are these other jokers up there looking somber? I do recognize Atty. General Barr, but I could care less about whatever nefarious drug smashing operation they have going on. They do that stuff every day and they seldom, if ever, tell us about it beforehand. If it's so clandestine why even tell us now? Again, WTF?

There is only one answer. Obviously, Prez and his task force are way more adept at surreal news than I gave them credit for.

The Cambridge English Dictionary defines surreal as "*strange; not seeming real; like a dream.*" Yep, that pretty much describes what's going on right now with these briefings.

I have written bizarre and off the wall writings for years in an attempt to either explain something in a different manner than what is perceived as "normal", to describing how events taking place in parallel universes and times lines up with events that are occurring in our timeline, to everything in between. Dream sequencing, trance dialogues, you name it, I've used it in an attempt to communicate what I see in the world and then explain what I've seen and how it impacts or affects us. Did I have a dream sequence where the disembodied spirit of Monica Lewinski's blue dress appeared to me, urging me to develop Monkey News Network in order to

more adequately describe the COVID-19 crisis and how the government is handling it? Absolutely. Do I find that odd? Not at all.

Do I understand the rationality of rolling out our Secretary of Defense at a coronavirus briefing to describe a clandestine operation that he cannot divulge? Not a chance. Do I find that odd? Absolutely. That is the ultimate in surreal writing and I have to admit, I can't touch it. Well played, Prez and company, well played.

So who needs briefings, let's just open our eyes. The numbers still rise throughout the country though it does appear the numbers in California are drastically slowing down. Could it be due to our Governor's orders to stay at home and not gather in large groups? That's my bet. I read article after article that people want Prez to do something similar. Hello? He did. 15-day, 30-day to slow the spread. Remember that?

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Do we need to enact martial law or should the governors of each state decide for themselves what to do in their states? That seems legit, I mean, do we really need, or want, to give up states' rights by having the Fed come in and supersede state law? But after listening to Brian Kemp, who is Georgia's governor, telling us today that he didn't realize COVID-19 could be spread by people who were asymptomatic—what rock has this guy been living under for the last couple of weeks? He's running the state of Georgia? Seriously? The sad thing is, he's not the Lone Ranger.

So maybe the Fed should step in and take control because don't we all just love government troops rolling through our streets with bullhorns telling us to stay inside? Happens to me quite frequently, though I am quick to figure out I'm in a drive-thru and the girl is asking me do I want to supersize my order. I'm certain we've all had this experience, but honestly, are we ready for it in real-time? Not just a flashback from a bad zombie movie? Maybe we are in a bad zombie movie and the zombies

haven't come out yet. That would certainly explain a lot of things. Or maybe we need, as a country, all of us, to do what we can to eliminate the threat that is not only at our door, but it's at the kitchen table eating the last of our tamales. Those were some really good tamales, too. And now they've shut down the tamale guy because he's not an essential business. The hell he isn't. Who the hell wants that?

There is so much information and disinformation out there right now. I am reading and searching for clarification every day. I've come up with some interesting stuff—like our government's numbers make no sense at all—and so many more interesting facts are coming up—seriously, they make no sense at all. I'll be throwing them at you soon. Strap in, you will not believe what I have found. Though if you're believing the nonsense our fearless leader is telling you by misdirecting your attention to follow his plan to get rid of Venezuela's president in the midst of this crisis, you'll probably believe in anything.

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Stay safe out there. Eat more tamales.

Friday, April 3rd, 2020 - Day 19; COVID-19 Crisis

It seems like we are pretty much on cruise control at the moment with this crisis. Don't get me wrong, there is still lots of finger pointing and political infighting but it looks like we are waiting for time to pass and the coronavirus to run its course so we can get back on track in 30-Days. That's pretty much the summation, and the governments official stance. Mind-numbing news briefings go on endlessly. Not really certain what became of the super-secret effort to clean up all the illegal drugs as

I didn't really hear too much more about it, which one would expect for a super-secret operation such as this. Why, again, did they tell us? Right, because we don't have enough to deal with in our own country at the moment and we need to get rid of the evil bastard in Venezuela.

Speaking of dealing with things in our own country, Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin, tells us that they have everything under control, money-wise. So much so that instead of three weeks to begin delivering money to the public, he now guarantees it in two. Jovita Carranza, the head of the Small Business Administration, explains how loan packages will be available for small businesses beginning today, and then Sec. Mnuchin lets us know that the program for sole-proprietors and self-contractors will be rolled out next week. Unemployment money is being covered already and more help is on the way so don't fear, it will be a rough time but the government foresaw this and has put plans in place to deal with it. He urges, at great pains, with sage nods from Prez and Vice Prez, that small business is the backbone of the nation, accounting for at least 50% of our GDP, if not more. The government does not want these businesses to go under and their employees to be out of work.

Mnuchin tells us, *"use the loans, which are basically grants because they will be forgiven. Use the immediate ten thousand dollar loan to pay your employees, we need small businesses across America to keep their workers employed."*

Sounds pretty good, right? But all this rhetoric that talks about getting people back to work immediately is just that; rhetoric. The problem right now is that 90% of America is under stay at home orders. So which is it, stay at home to help end the coronavirus or go to work? Kind of confusing and it goes right along with the other mixed messages we keep getting from our government.

Outside of the unfair argument with existence rhetoric regarding continuing to pay employees or keep them

at home to help end the crisis, debates are flying everywhere on the hill about who will be overseeing the 2.2 trillion stimulus money. Naturally, Dems want to oversee it because Prez cannot be trusted. Prez fires back that the Dems can, basically, go to hell and stop with the politics. If memory serves me correctly that was part of the agreement in order to pass the stimulus bill; Dems could choose someone to oversee it. But naturally now they want more than they agreed to and the Republicans are offended, the Democrats are offended, *blah, blah, blah*.

But the debates don't just stop there; Should we all be wearing masks? Do they do much to help? L.A.'s mayor has ordered that anyone outside must have a mask on. Period. Information comes from all over the globe that it is beneficial to do so even if it is such a drastic measure—is it really that drastic? Numerous studies from around the world have also shown that millions of people are asymptomatic to COVID-19 but while they are not affected and do not become ill, they can still spread the virus. Okay, pretty much like any other virus or disease. Some people are affected, some are not, but everyone has the capabilities of spreading it to their fellow humans. A no-brainer in my world.

In numerous countries, citizens voluntarily wear masks and stay indoors as much as possible. They think this way automatically and don't really need their government to tell them to do this, but when their government does tell them to do this they don't argue, they do it. Better yet, their governments don't appear to argue amongst themselves, or if they do, they certainly don't broadcast it.

Western media would have you believe the reason for this discrepancy between Americans and the rest of the world is that we here in America are revolutionaries. We founded this country on freedom and independence and we will do what we damn well want to do. While I will not argue that logic as it is, for the most part, true, I

think something that is being left out of the thought process is that perhaps other countries have enough people that are smart enough to understand that not only can masks slow down the risks at getting the wearer ill, it can also help contain it to themselves if they happen to be asymptomatic and can help in stopping the spread of the virus to their fellow citizens.

You might think this, again, a no-brainer, but out of 50 of our states, not counting territories, only 30 have issued a stay at home order. So the other 20 states have some magical shield around them? We are living in true American fashion; when the shit hits the fan let's argue about it first, then debate it, then debate it some more, then point fingers of blame, then perhaps we will see about it after we debate it again. Perhaps. Maybe. What was it we were discussing again? On and on it goes.

Something I have found perplexing throughout this whole time line is the 1.5 trillion that the Fed injected into the banking system to bolster a falling stock market. Remember that? Way back on the 12th of March, 2020. Nice move, Fed, well played. Thanks for saving the stock market. But here's the thing—you never hear any mention of it anymore. We hear 2.2 trillion stimulus all day, every day, but no mention of the 1.5 trillion injection by the Fed. Why is this strange, let's take a quick peek at the timeline:

December 31, 2019 - Chinese Health officials inform the WHO about a cluster of 41 patients with a mysterious pneumonia.

January 7, 2020 - Chinese authorities identify a new type of coronavirus—called novel coronavirus or nCoV.

January 20, 2020 - First US case is reported: a 35-year-old man in Snohomish County, Washington.

January 30, 2020 - WHO declares a global public health emergency.

January 31, 2020 - Prez bans foreign nationals from entering the US if they were in China within the prior two weeks.

February 9, 2020 - The death toll in China surpasses that of the 2002-2003 SARS epidemic, with 811 deaths recorded

March 11, 2020 - WHO declares the outbreak a pandemic and Prez bans all travel from 26 European countries.

March 13, 2020 - A US national emergency is declared over the novel coronavirus outbreak.

March 16, 2020 - Prez orders 15-Days To Slow The Spread.

Notice that the Fed injected the 1.5 trillion on March 12th. One day after WHO declares a pandemic and a day before a US national emergency is declared. One day after? How could this be? In one day they could see what the future held due to the RONA? Perhaps, but consider this instead:

March 17, 2020 - A leaked federal plan warns the new coronavirus pandemic “will last 18 months or longer” and may come in “multiple waves” of infections.

Again, a “leaked” federal plan that was reported by the NY Times on March 17th, was actually dated March 13th, the same day Prez declared a national emergency.

The whole “this thing snuck up on us,” line is pretty lame when you look at the above. But if you think that rhetoric is lame, consider this:

March 23, 2020 - New York becomes the epicenter of

COVID-19 in the US with nearly 21,000 cases.

March 26, 2020 - The US leads the world in COVID-19 cases with 82,404 confirmed cases

March 27, 2020 - Prez signs the 2.2 Trillion dollar stimulus that took nearly two weeks of negotiation between the parties before they sent it to him to sign.

That 2.2 Trillion took nearly two weeks of wrangling back and forth before it was passed. That they are telling us about. You can trace the public motions of this to the day Prez declared COVID-19 a national emergency, but they knew about the devastation long before they admitted it. Does anyone really believe the 100-page document that outlines what to do dated March 13th was actually written on that date?

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Perhaps a lot of the medical programs that are still being debated and discussed as what to do or what not to do might be a new, and ongoing debate, but the facts when it comes to the cold hard money of the matter, those plans were talked about some time earlier. Why would I think this? Common sense. That and the end of Capitalism as we know it, which has been coming at us like a powerful locomotive since the 2008 collapse.

The COVID-19 crisis is pretty severe, but is it as severe as they make it out to be? Is it worse than Asian Flu, or AIDS/ HIV, or even the Hong Kong flu? The Spanish flu? Doubtful. It is right up there with them, but did we shut down the country, the world, for any of these? No. They are telling us that COVID-19 death rates are worse than any of the above, that is why it is such a serious deal. Again, facts:

Spanish Flu: 1918 50 Million deaths worldwide, 675,000 in the US.

Asian Flu: 1956-1958 2 million deaths worldwide, 68,000 in the US.

Hong Kong Flu: 1968 1 million deaths worldwide, 100,000 in the US.

HIV/AIDS: 2005-2012 36 Million deaths worldwide, 714,000 in the US.

COVID-19; 2020 To date, 58,000 deaths worldwide, 6,900 in the US. (on-going so these will increase).

Yes, it is a serious virus. But other viruses were just as serious, if not vastly surpassing in intensity, as this virus. We might have shut down schools in the past and taken some other measures in the past, but nothing like what we are going through now. Again, why is that?

Tomorrow we begin to look at the answer, and it's not pretty.

Stay safe out there, we have a long ways to go.

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Saturday, April 4th, 2020 - Day 23; COVID-19 Crisis

The surrealism continues to swirl into official government rhetoric as we officially hit the twenty-third day of our COVID-19 crisis. Prez says, in line with CDC recommendations and also the recommendations of Dr's. Fauci and Birx, that we should wear masks when going outdoors if we want to. He makes it abundantly clear that he will not be wearing a mask nor is he mandating that Americans wear masks, it is merely a suggestion that if you want to wear one then do so. This is a fine example of what I refer to as "surrealistic government

rhetoric". Take this latest tidbit of news that they drone on and on about during the briefing which then led to an equal droning on and on about from the media. We can wear a mask if we want to?

"I am not mandating wearing a mask, but if you want to do so then do so." Wow, thanks, Prez, for giving me the ability to do what I want. Before COVID-19 if I felt like wearing a mask because it was a high pollen day and my allergies were off the charts, I wore one. If the asshole grocery clerk who has been sniffing and coughing for weeks is really starting to irritate me as I do not wish to be sick but I need groceries, I wore one. Not certain what this latest proclamation really amounts to, but it is cause for great news headlines and at the same time it gives you a warm and fuzzy feeling that you can now do what you have been able to do for decades; wearing a mask if you want to. They play us like a fiddle.

Yesterday was the first day of the Small Business Loans and there were lots of snafu's with banks, with filling out forms, all the usual government and bureaucratic nonsense that comes with handing out money. And supposedly free money at that. Unemployment is now at 10 Million claim filings. As of March, 2020, there were 127.98 million full-time employees in the United States, so roughly 8% of the workforce is now out of work. The situation does not look to improve any, though the stimulus program is still being touted as a safety net for all of us.

No one has received the guaranteed money we were all told we would receive to help get us through these rough times, but they still have some time left on their deadlines to get it to us by about a week, perhaps two at the most if you are going with direct deposit, more if you require a paper check and that is if the government has your address. Solid estimates happening. Very solid. Or, perhaps not. I hear a fiddle playing.

With all the turmoil going on, especially in New York,

I find it a relief to see that life is still going on as normal as it can. For the past few days, the internet has been ablaze with whether Governor Cuomo does, or does not, have nipple rings, or more exactly, barbells. This is consuming news to the media and many, many people have weighed in on it, including Stephen Colbert, NY Magazine, The Daily Beast and other fine journalists of dubious repute. Thousands are dying from COVID-19, no cure in sight, yet we demand to know if Cuomo has pierced nipples. Sounds about right.

Before I dive into the craziness of the situation behind the situation that is being used to hide the real situation that no one wants to talk about, I would like to offer up a few interesting items:

1. In an interesting twist to "big brother" monitoring; the Earth is making less noise than it has in years. Due to a lot less traffic moving on our roadways since the lock downs, the Earth is actually vibrating less. Seismologists around the globe can measure this and they are finding that in many countries the vibration of the Earth has decreased. This is a great indication that people are indeed staying home and not traveling near as much as normal. In some cases, there is as much as a 50-80% reduction in noise. Scientists are currently gathering data to help facilitate where people are, and are not, heeding their stay at home parameters. Big Brother is not only watching you, my friend, he's listening, too.

2. From my own personal observations people are not needing the government to tell them what to do, or to bemoan the fact there are not enough masks to go around—they are taking matters into their own hands. Last week at this time there were people in grocery stores, pharmacies, etc...doing essential life chores. But very few had any masks or protective gear on. Today, while out grocery shopping with Mrs. America, and attired in masks and gloves, we were surprised to see that nearly everyone else was, too. A lot of homemade masks

and bandanas were being used, as well as painters masks, manicurists masks, you name the mask, people were wearing them. I also noticed that everyone, and I am not exaggerating this, made attempts to stay six feet apart from each other. Shopping was certainly much slower with this added social distancing, but people were making incredible attempts to adjust. Nicely played, citizens, nicely played.

3. Across the nation there are stories of great personal sacrifice appearing showing people from all walks of life helping their fellow citizens. Whether it be millionaires donating money or elementary students raising money to buy PPEs for their local hospital, Americans are stepping up and taking care of business. Despite what the nasty media demons might say, I have never, at any time, ever considered that Americans would do otherwise.

Back to craziness. So a lot of facts and figures are coming out. There is a history of this disease to track and that in and of itself raises many questions in that the government has not been as transparent as they say—no, tell me it isn't so. Outside of the obvious health crisis we are in the middle of, there are a lot of other issues that are occurring, such as the economy. Basically, it's tanked. We all know it but we don't really want to talk about it. Why? Fear, mostly. None of us wants to confront this grim reality and we are hoping, as is the government hoping, that the stimulus will take care of us. We all know it will not. They know it will not. Change is going to happen, is happening, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's a bad thing. It's going to be tough going for a bit, perhaps even a while—using common political language here so you will feel comfortable—but in the end, the change that is happening/was happening with or without COVID-19, has been a long time coming.

We all know the history of the Black Plague. It was some pretty terrible stuff that decimated Europe and Asia in the mid-14th century. The economic system of

Feudalism, which had begun in the 9th century, took a powerful hit. Regional lords and peasants were deeply affected by the plague at all levels and it greatly crippled this system. This eventually led to what would be termed the Renaissance, in the 15th century. Without going into super great detail, here is an overview of economic “standards” that began with Feudalism—this is some really boring shit, I'd just skip to the bottom, but for those who want clarification and information, plus you are sheltering in place so what else do you have to do, here you go.

Feudalism—I am only discussing European and not Asian—is a system of diverse layered and interacting political powers and governances—it is not an economic system per se. The official economic systems under European feudalism was whatever the ruler thought was good for himself, his domain, or in accordance with Church teaching—the Church, not even going to touch that topic. It was gradually replaced by the political system known as the Nation State. Most Nation States made official the economic system known as Mercantilism. Mercantilism is an economic nationalistic system for the purpose of building a wealthy and powerful state. When non-conservatives think about or speak about capitalism today, they almost always mean Mercantilism.

As the centralized control and policies of Mercantilism gradually gave way to more economic liberties, the modern system of unhindered markets, commonly called “capitalism”, gradually emerged. Capitalism is an economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production and their operation for profit. Capitalism can be traced back to the Renaissance, after the plague, and it is still emerging to this day.

The highest point of Mercantilism in the US was in the late 19th century, but the actual economic systems remained a mixture of Mercantilist crony capitalism and truly unhindered markets. Since the emergence of the Progressive Movement, government economic policies

seem to have been to improve Mercantilism, bring it up to date, and correct some of its abuses, while eliminating the economic liberty that spawned the messy system of unhindered markets.

Progressivism in the United States is a political philosophy and reform movement that reached its height early in the 20th century. Middle class and reformist in nature, it arose as a response to the vast changes brought by modernization such as the growth of large corporations, pollution, and fears of corruption in American politics. In the 21st century, progressives continue to embrace concepts such as environmentalism and social justice. During the second Wilson administration, 1917-1921, the halcyon days of Progressive economic intervention began which eliminated economic freedom as much as possible.

The Great Depression hit which led to the New Deal. New Deal economic policies were a combination of Mercantilism and Socialism—a series of programs, public work projects, financial reforms, and regulations enacted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the United States between 1933 and 1939. It responded to needs for relief, reform, and recovery from the Great Depression.

Major federal programs and agencies including the Farm Security Administration and the Social Security Administration were formed. They provided support for farmers, the unemployed, youth and the elderly. The New Deal included new constraints and safeguards on the banking industry and efforts to re-inflate the economy after prices had sharply fallen. New Deal programs included laws passed by Congress as well as presidential executive orders during the first term of the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Despite the name changes and differing theories, today, Mercantilism continues to dominate the economic discussions in American politics as presidential candidates vie with each other about details of Mercantilist policies

and how socialist they are, or are not. Libertarians remain the only thinkers actively opposing Mercantilism and favoring the liberty that leads to the spontaneous system of voluntary human cooperation that is (unfortunately) one of the systems given the name “capitalism”.

Free-market capitalism was hoped to fully emerge from under the oppression of Mercantilism, but it has had several setbacks in recent years. Our current economic system is one of quasi-socialist economic interventionism. A mixture of Free-Market economy and Mercantilism, what many refer to as Capitalism. Trump effectively utilized Mercantilist ideas to help him achieve the Presidency.

This is a lot of words and it's pretty fucking confusing and totally boring. I get it. But in order to go forward, we needed to understand some basic history of economic theory. One thing that can be taken away from all of the above is this—the plague was a devastating disease that crippled Asia and Europe. No lie, it was. But it also helped those civilizations move forward with newer and more “society-friendly” cultures and economies if you will.

Feudalism might have been pretty cool for the kings and lords of their time, but it pretty much sucked for most of the population. The harshness of the plague, the realities it brought, forced change which, ultimately, led us to where we are now with our economic system.

Where we are headed is complex but we are long overdue for a complete overhaul of the world's economic systems. Remember when the Soviet Union fell, literally overnight, on December 31, 1991? It happened for a reason; their economic and political/social system had to evolve in order for their people to move forward. Their system could not support the populace any longer.

Think about this; prior to the COVID-19 crisis, we had massive homeless issues, health insurance issues, an ever-increasing disparity between classes, cost of living issues and a nation going further and further in debt

with no sign of it letting up, to mention just a few of our troubles. America, despite all the cheerleading from its fearless leader, was not nearly what its fearless leader was saying it was.

According to the FDIC as of last June, 2019, across all households, 29% of Americans have less than \$1,000 in savings. Lots of media, politicians and fearless leader himself, will tell you otherwise, but nearly a third of our country cannot make it one month on their own in an emergency. We all know this. The cat's out of the bag, the writing's on the wall, the emperor has no clothes and his tally whacker is showing, whatever euphemism you want to use, it's become pretty damn hard to hide it from the populace any longer.

Tomorrow: What the hell kind of an economic system do we have anyway, and where are we headed now?

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Sunday, April 5th, 2020 - Day 24; COVID-19 Crisis

They are still spinning on the east coast and other parts of the nation, but many parts of our country are holding their own. Prez tells us to prepare for many deaths. *"There will be death"*, is his ominous opening statement. The Surgeon General develops a short video for making a quick mask. Positivity, they tell you. Practice being positive.

The rollout of the SBA loans is not going well, but it's only the first couple of days since it was launched last Friday, so officials want us to give it some time for the kinks to be worked out. Slow it down, you peasants, and put the pitchforks away. Apparently, we all have time to kill so chill.

The media continues to look to place blame everywhere they can and their gaze usually lands squarely on Prez. Depending on which media you listen to, or read, Prez is doing a great job or he's taking us all to our doom—most media have the doom part down pat. Prez warned House Democrats on Thursday to back off plans for what he called another "witch hunt" investigation, this time over his administration's response to the coronavirus outbreak.

"This is not the time for politics, endless partisan investigations - here we go again," Prez said during his daily coronavirus briefing at the White House. *"It's not any time for witch hunts. It's time to get this enemy defeated."* Prez then hammered Democrats for organizing an inquest of the administration in the middle of a health crisis. So, business as usual.

Governor Cuomo announced today that for the first time in days, the state has seen the daily number of deaths, hospitalizations, and intubations as a result of COVID-19 decrease. More patients are also being discharged from hospitals. It appears that serum therapy is working, as are a few drug therapies, though it is still too early to tell if these are significant therapies to use.

Worldwide there are 1,263,320 cases and 68,999 deaths. In the US there are 331,519 cases and 9,484 deaths. Worldwide the mortality rate for COVID-19 is at 6% while in the US it is at 3%. Europe remains the hardest hit with deaths averaging 8%.

Prez goes off track once in a while and he did so again recently by going after the Ukraine whistle blower, Michael Atkinson, whom he fired on Friday. Reports of not enough equipment, mismanagement of supplies, no supplies, not enough transparency, on and on, *blah, blah, blah*, fills the briefings, along with Prez's ire and rantings.

Meanwhile, here in America, citizens are doing what they can to get through this and it does appear to be

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working. Helping one another, doing what they can to slow this insidious disease and to keep it the hell away from their families. Slow, for the most part, but working none the less, there are success stories everywhere. America will survive, as we always do. As worthless as our politicians are, our citizens, which make up the fabric of our nation, are a whole different story. Which brings us to our continuation of yesterday.

I know that yesterday's report was boring as fuck—try writing it—and we covered a lot of ground. My point with all them there words, outside of I have lots of time on my hands, and apparently, you do as well because you read it—thanks—was to show that even though the plague has been recorded as this terrible thing that shaped the world—it did indeed have profound effects. Our basic system of “capitalism” which is basically Mercantilism, began going back to the end of the plague, or pretty close to it. Nothing much has changed since then, yet huge changes in society have taken place since then, like, say, the formation of America. So why, again, are we adhering to what amounts to be ancient principles? Because we do, simple as that. Here's what it all boils down to:

The United States is the world's premier free-market economy. Its economic output is greater than any other country that has a free market. China has the world's largest economy, but it relies on a command economy, something completely different. It is not a free-market economy.

The U.S. free market depends on capitalism to thrive. The law of supply and demand sets prices and dictates the distribution of goods and services.

A command economy, such as in China and other countries, is where the government uses a central plan to manage prices and distribution. Countries that follow communism use a command economy. So do monarchies, fascists, and other totalitarian regimes. But even countries such as Russia, China, Cuba, North Korea, or

Iran, have adopted the characteristics of a free market economy. They must do so in order to compete against market pricing throughout the world. Only a free market gives them the flexibility to succeed in a globalized economy. They are themselves, becoming mixed economies.

The United States is a mixed economy as well and it is better for it. A free-market economy can't coordinate a national defense plan. It also leaves vulnerable members of society without a safety net, something a true “Free-Market” does not account for. So in America, as in most of the “free” world, the economy is a mix between Free-Market and Command. Take Capitalism out of the equation, along with Communism and Socialism. Get rid of all the political labels and just look at the way the world runs—it's on money, which comes down to Free-Market and Command.

While the U.S. Constitution allows the government to use central planning in areas of vital importance to the nation's growth including defense, telecommunications, transportation, the Constitution also instructs the federal government to “promote the general welfare” of its people. The key mechanism of a market economy is competition. As a result, it has no system in place to care of those who are at an inherent, competitive disadvantage. This would include the elderly, children, and people with mental or physical disabilities. The caretakers of these people are also at a disadvantage. Their energies and skills go toward caretaking, not competing; many might become contributors to the economy's overall comparative advantage if they weren't caretakers.

This leads to another disadvantage in a market economy; the human resources of a society may not be optimized. For example, a child who might otherwise discover the cure for cancer might instead work at McDonald's to support their low-income family and is left with no time for education or advancement because of their economic situation.

Additionally, society reflects the values of the winners in a market economy. A market economy may produce private jets for some while others starve and are homeless. A society based on a pure market economy must decide whether it's in its larger self-interest to care for the vulnerable instead of doing so out of a humanitarian desire.

Since a market economy allows the free interplay of supply and demand, it ensures that the most desired goods and services are produced. Consumers are willing to pay the highest price for the things they want the most. Hence, businesses will only create those things that return a profit.

Goods and services are produced in the most efficient way possible. The most productive companies will earn more than less productive companies. It also rewards innovation. Creative new products will meet the needs of consumers in better ways than are existing goods and services. These cutting-edge technologies will spread to other competitors so they, too, can be more profitable. A great example of this is Silicon Valley and why it is one of America's key innovative advantages.

So this is all fine and good for the money side of things, but what about the people? Our country is "For The People," right? What about the child that has to forego their education in order to help support the immediate need of their family, through no fault of their own? Does that child have the possibility of doing more than flipping burgers and working low-wage jobs for the rest of their lives?

Right now we can apply this exact question to what is happening with COVID-19, the RONA—millions upon millions of Americans are, through no fault of anybody, forced to not work. This is unheard of. It's never happened before. Maybe a little bit with the Spanish Flu in 1918, but not on this scale. So what do we do in this crisis? Is this even a crisis?

The United States has been losing its free-market status ever since Congress started spending above its means. Federal revenue doesn't cover spending. Each year the deficit adds to the debt. The national debt is more than the country's annual economic output or GDP. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the monetary value of all finished goods and services made within a country during a specific period. Currently, our debt-to-GDP ratio is 107% and growing. That's beyond the World Bank's tipping point of 77%, or economic failure.

But the concern should not be "*Is America no longer a free market economy?*" The concern should be that Congress continues to spend far beyond its means on everything. The 2.2 Trillion stimulus bill will drive us deeper in debt, and we are going to go deeper still. As of the beginning of 2020, America was 22.7 Trillion in debt. Despite what economic cheerleaders say, we have been steadily going into debt each and every year since 1835 when President Andrew Jackson achieved his goal of paying off the entire national debt. It remains the only time in our history that our national debt was at zero.

So we need to completely get rid of the debt, right? Not really, we just need to keep it under control. Except for about a year from 1835–1836, the United States has continuously had a fluctuating public debt since its Constitution went into effect in 1789. Simply being in debt is not such a terrible thing, it's when the debt grows to a more than debt-to-GDP ratio of more than 100%, preferably no higher than 77%, that things get weird.

In modern times the growth of public debt slowed from \$200 billion to \$400 billion per year in the 1980s and mid-1990s to roughly \$100 billion per year in 2001. Many people hoped President Bush (the W) would continue that trend. Instead, two things happened—first, the administration spearheaded a significant tax cut that dramatically ratcheted up deficits and second, the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks quickly led to an American in-

vasion of Afghanistan, followed by an invasion of Iraq. Neither invasion was funded by additional taxes, and the national debt began growing at a rate of \$400 billion to \$500 billion per year.

This rate of growth was pushed to \$1 trillion per year by the 2008 Great Recession as W's administration launched spending programs to combat the worst of the downturn's effects. President Obama continued this policy. During his first term, Obama oversaw spending that grew the debt at a rate of well more than \$1 trillion per year, although that rate did fall by more than half later in his presidency in his second term.

When elected to office our current Prez inherited a national debt of 19.5 trillion. Prez oversaw more than \$1.3 trillion in new debt during his first full year in office, an amount that would grow as his 2017 tax cuts and spending increases continued to impact government finances. As one of the largest tax cuts in modern history, Prez's tax cuts pushed corporate-tax receipts to a 75-year low, further increasing the debt.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, the U.S. debt-to-GDP ratio was 107%. That's using the \$23.2 trillion U.S. debt as of December 31, 2019, divided by the \$21.734 trillion nominal GDP. In other words, we are spending more than we are making, placing us 43rd highest out of 207 countries in terms of financial solvency. 43rd place. We don't have the number one economy, we have the 43rd economy. These are real figures. Real numbers.

We must find a way to restore the balance envisioned by our Founding Fathers and to, above all, serve the People. We have all seen an increase in homelessness, drug addiction, poor health, the list goes on and on. Now you see why...we do not have the world's greatest economy, far from it. But we're not the Lone Ranger, either. Take a look at this ranking of debt-to-GDP ratios as of June, 2019:

Japan: 253%
Greece: 181%
Lebanon: 154%
Italy: 123%
Singapore: 112%
United State: 105%

The list goes on and on. The world, for the most part, is in debt up to its collective eyeballs and something has to change.

One way to change in America is to shift spending priorities to more effectively create jobs. Defense spending only creates 8,555 jobs for every \$1 billion spent. It's not a good unemployment solution since so much is spent on technology instead. Half of those funds could go toward public works, which creates 19,795 jobs for every \$1 billion, more than double what defense spending creates. But it would mean the end of our Military-Industrial Complex (MIC), begun in 1941 with the start of WWII. Necessary at the time, I suppose, but is it any wonder that in 1961, when President Eisenhower gave his farewell address he warned of continuing this system that he so appropriately named in his farewell address? It is an evil, leeching system that does little to help a nation not at war.

Putting people back to work by moving money away from MIC and placing it into other avenues of need will create much needed jobs and revenue while at the same time allowing, through the increase of demand needed, to let the free market grow. Coupled with these spending renovations, spending should be capped at current levels at a minimum, though in reality spending will need to be slashed if we are to effectively gain control over our debt. Over time, this will restore the debt-to-GDP ratio to a sustainable level.

So pull it all together and get to the point. The point is that without the current COVID-19 crisis, the above was already happening. Our economy was in trouble, it had been for some time. The last time we were at or below the 77% threshold was in 2009. It has not gotten better. Our social issues are vast and we cannot merely blindly look away as we have been doing. The issues are only increasing. Health care alone has become an untenable monster all of its own. We've been in a health care/insurance free fall for years, everyone knows this. The country needs an economic reset, but how do you pull this off, especially in an election year? If only there were a national crisis to expedite things and mask the reset. If only. Perhaps some kind of virus?

Next up: Officially, the Health Maintenance Organization Act of 1973 allowed for-profit health coverage. But that's only the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

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Monday, April 6th, 2020 - Day 25; COVID-19 Crisis

The nation is still under the Prez's 30-Days To Slow The Spread program and lots of things are happening. In New York, the epicenter in America for COVID-19, there is some degree of hope in that the numbers of infected and the numbers of deaths seem to be slowing down. This trend has gone on for the past two days and it seems hopeful. Cuomo, though, is extending his stay at home order as they are not out of the woods, yet. On the briefings side of things, it's still pretty much a free for all in that no real news has come forth, lots of *blah, blah, blah*, and Prez has taken to shutting down questions from the press to Dr. Fauci in regards to the use of hydroxychloroquine, stating *"he has already answered that question."*

It's a tug of war between the media and Prez on this issue. Dr. Fauci has steadfastly stated there is not enough data to tell whether hydroxychloroquine might be beneficial for use with COVID-19 and Prez maintains it just might, just might be the cure we need, let's give it a chance. Of course, the media jump right on this and here we go, off to the next headline-generating expose on the "real" truth behind the conflict. Again, *blah, blah, blah*.

Tens of thousands of business owners across the nation are having nothing but problems with the SBA loan programs rolled out last week, and today Wells Fargo says it is no longer participating in the SBA loan packages to help struggling small businesses. The bank announced late Sunday that it would no longer accept new loan applications under the government's Paycheck Protection Program, which launched last week as part of Washington's \$2.2 trillion economic relief package. Wells Fargo stated they planned to lend a maximum of \$10 billion through the program and that it has already received more than enough applications to reach that threshold so requests for loans submitted after April 5 will not be considered. An interesting note here is that Wells Fargo had arranged for more SBA loans than any other institution in our country. It barely lasted a week.

Chase Bank, as of Sunday night, was still refusing to accept applications under the \$349 billion dollar program. Bank of America said it had received 185,000 loan applications on the first day and a half of the program, seeking a total of \$30 billion. The Small Business Administration said late Friday that it had approved over 17,000 loans with a total value of \$5.4 billion, a slow start for a program set up to quickly distribute \$349 billion.

Looking at the numbers, with Wells Fargo saying they will only fund \$10 billion in loan applications—yet they were the largest in the nation for SBA loans—it pretty much makes a mockery of the proposed \$349 Billion package, including the Paycheck Protection Program

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which offers 1% interest loans to businesses with fewer than 500 workers. Borrowers who don't lay off workers in the next eight weeks will have their loans forgiven, so, essentially it is a grant. The American dream has turned into an American nightmare with little funding happening when we need it the most.

There are certainly a lot of conflicts to go around, no shortage of them at all. News media contradict each other, print media contradict each other, it seems if you're the media, you're contradicting something or someone in some way or another. On the social media side of things there are numerous tweets and posts from doctors and nurses in hospitals throughout the country that say hospitals that are being portrayed as being overrun with patients are, for the most part, empty. The staff has been told to go home and be on-call, though no one calls.

True? False? Who knows but it is strange that all across America these posts and tweets are appearing from all manner of people. Kind of hard to ignore that.

There's a petition going around asking Prez to fire Dr. Fauci, that is led by Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai's assessment of Dr. Fauci's fabrication of this crisis stating, *"The current trajectory of Dr. Anthony Fauci's public 'health' policy will result in the short- and long-term destruction of our citizen's immune health as well as our nation's economic health – perhaps a conscious and intended goal."* He further goes on to state, *"In the current situation purposely driven by fear mongering and fake science, Dr. Fauci, his allies – Big Pharma, Gates Foundation, Clinton Global Initiative, Chan-Zuckerberg, WHO, CDC – and, the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), will profit enormously, both politically and economically, at the expense of the American working people."*

Interesting stuff. Equally interesting is Dr. Shiva Ayyadurai. He signs his letter with the following notation; PhD Biological Engineering from MIT/Inventor of Email. While it is true Dr. Ayyadurai does hold four

degrees from the prestigious MIT, one of them being a PhD in Biological Engineering, his claims as Inventor of Email has been proven false several times. Interesting that he still clings on to this. I mean, what's the point? It makes it hard to take the guy with any amount of credibility, but again, who knows what to believe these days?

CDC releases numbers that COVID-19 has an overall cumulative hospitalization rate of 4.6 per 100,000, while at the same time stating the "common" flu is 67.9 per 100,000. Mortality for COVID-19 in the US is roughly 3%, while the mortality rate for the "common" flu is 8.2%. COVID-19 has a combined death count of 10,611, the flu has a death count of 24,000. COVID-19 has a total of 359,000 cases, while the flu comes in at 400,000.

I'm certain there will be some overlap in these numbers and the CDC states that as well. They tell us that next week they will be able to break these numbers out to show the differences between the two and to account for discrepancies. They have noted that laboratory tests for flu, which are different from the tests for COVID-19, are much lower now that flu season has come to its normal and predictable end.

It will be interesting to see what their numbers are when they come out with them next week. They are tracking two different diseases with two separate tests so one hopes it would not be that difficult to get some "real" data, as they are fond of saying.

No matter what the numbers reveal, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that, while COVID-19 is nothing to ignore, it is not near the pandemic they have made it out to be, especially when you compare it to traditional flu, something we have been living with for decades. So again, why are we shut down?

I left off yesterday with health care. I'm not certain that I can get to all of it today, but I would like to throw out some basic facts about health care in the United States and its history to start with. It is difficult to get

real-time numbers so I am going to use numbers that I have verified. I can verify to 2017, so we will start there. Here goes:

In 2017, U.S. health care costs were \$3.5 trillion. That makes health care one of the country's largest industries. It equals 17.9% of our gross domestic product. In comparison, health care cost \$27.2 billion in 1960, just 5% of GDP. That translates to an annual health care cost of \$10,739 per person in 2017 versus just \$147 per person in 1960. Health care costs have risen faster than the median annual income and there is a lot of talk about how inflation has skewed the amount that health care costs. So let's look at inflation. I am using an inflation calculator provided by the government for its calculations.

\$147 dollars in 1960 would come to \$1,217.32, in 2017. That is taking into account for inflation. Yet the same health care that costs an average of \$147 per person is now costing \$10,739 per person. That's an amount 8.5 times more than the rate of inflation. Why? There were two causes of this massive increase: government policy and lifestyle changes. Okay, there's a third, greed, but I do not have the time to get into that today, but I will. Soon.

The United States relies on company-sponsored private health insurance. The government created programs like Medicare and Medicaid to help those without insurance. These programs spurred demand for health care services which gave providers the ability to raise prices. Several studies have found that Americans use the same amount of health care as residents of other nations, they just pay more for them. As an example, U.S. hospital prices are 60% higher than those in Europe. While government efforts attempted to reform health care and to cut costs it ended up raising them instead.

Chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and heart disease, have drastically increased. As of 2010, the health care costs for people with at least one chronic condition has been shown to be responsible for more than 85%

of health care spending. Almost half of all Americans have at least one of them and they are expensive and difficult to treat. As a result, the sickest 5% of the population consumes nearly, if not more, than 50% of our total health care costs. The healthiest 50% only consume 3% of the nation's health care costs. Most of these sickest patients are Medicare patients. Medicare spending for patients in the last year of life is six times greater than the average. Care for these patients costs one-fourth of the total Medicare budget.

Government foresaw this and stepped in to help, here's how that worked out over time. Between 1960 and 1965, health care spending increased by an average of 8.95% a year as health insurance expanded. As it covered more people, the demand for health care services rose. By 1965, households paid out-of-pocket for 44% of all medical expenses. Health insurance paid for 24%, the remaining 32% was sort of a grey area with government picking up the tab and donations from health officials making up the rest.

From 1966 to 1973, health care spending rose by an average of 11.9% a year. Medicare and Medicaid covered more people and allowed them to use more health care services. Medicaid allowed seniors citizens to move into expensive nursing home facilities. As demand increased, so did prices. Health care providers put more money into research and it created more innovative, but expensive technologies.

Medicare ended up creating an overreliance on hospital care. Emergency room treatment is very expensive, making up one-third of all health care costs in America. By 2011, there were 136 million emergency room visits. One out of five adults uses the emergency room each year, the most expensive form of health care.

In 1971, President Nixon implemented wage-price controls to stop mild inflation. Controls on health care prices created higher demand. In 1973, Nixon autho-

rized health maintenance organizations to cut costs. These prepaid plans restricted users to a particular medical group. The HMO ACT of 1973 provided millions of dollars in start-up funding for HMOs to deal with, and solve this problem. It also required employers to offer them when available.

From 1974 to 1982, health care prices rose by an average of 14.1% a year for three reasons. First, prices rebounded after the wage-price controls expired in 1974. Second, Congress enacted the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 that exempted corporations from state regulations and taxes if they were self-insured. Companies readily took advantage of these lower-cost and flexible plans. Third, home health care took off, growing by 32.5% a year.

Between 1983 and 1992, health care costs rose by an average of 9.9% each year, but Home health care prices increased by 18.3% per year. In 1986, Congress passed the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act. It forced hospitals to accept anyone who showed up in the emergency room and to treat them whether they could pay, or not. Prescription drug costs rose by 12.1% a year, the main reason being that the FDA, for the first time ever, allowed prescription drug companies to advertise on television.

Between 1993 and 2013, health care spending grew by an average of 6% a year. In the early 1990s, health insurance companies tried to control costs by spreading the use of HMOs once again. Congress then tried to control costs with the Balanced Budget Act in 1997. Instead, it forced many health care providers out of business. Because of this, Congress relented on payment restrictions in the Balanced Budget Refinement Act in 1999 and the Benefits Improvement and Protection Act of 2000. The Act also extended coverage to children through the Children's Health Insurance Program.

All this government intervention sounded help-

ful, but in reality, it just jacked up spending and passed those extra costs for health care organizations onto us, the People.

After 1998, people rebelled and demanded more choice in providers. As demand increased again, so did prices.

Between 1997 and 2007, drug prices tripled. A big reason is that pharmaceutical companies invented new types of prescription drugs that they advertised straight to consumers which created additional demand. The number of drugs with sales that topped \$1 billion increased from six in 1997 to 52 in 2006. The U.S. government approved expensive drugs even if they were not much better than existing remedies, allowing these new "designer" drugs to be sold for a much greater cost than pre-existing medications that, basically, did the same thing. Other developed countries were more cost-conscious and did not adopt this program, which helped keep their costs down.

In 2003, the Medicare Modernization Act added Medicare Part D to cover prescription drug coverage. It also changed the name of Medicare Part C to the Medicare Advantage program. The number of people using those plans tripled to 17.6 million by 2016. Those costs rose faster than the cost of Medicare itself.

Our nation's reliance on the health insurance model also increased administration costs. Several studies found that administration costs made up 30% of all U.S. health care costs. About half of that is due to the complexity of billing. U.S. private doctor's offices use at least 11% of their revenue on administration. A big reason is that there are so many types of insurance payers. In addition to Medicare and Medicaid, there are thousands of different private insurers. Each has its own requirements, forms, and procedures. Hospitals and doctors must also chase down people who don't pay their portion of the bill, further adding expenses. This does not happen in coun-

tries with universal health care.

The reliance on corporate private insurance created health care inequality. Those without insurance often couldn't afford visits to a primary care physician. By 2009, nearly half of the people (46.3%) who used a hospital said they went because they had no other place to go for health care. The Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act required hospitals to treat anyone who showed up in the emergency room. Uncompensated medical care costs hospitals more than \$38 billion per year, some of which are passed on to the government, but most are not.

By 2009, rising health care costs were consuming the federal budget at an alarming rate. Medicare and Medicaid cost \$671 billion in 2008. That was 19% of the total budget of \$3.5 trillion. Payroll taxes cover less than half of Medicare and none of Medicaid. This is part of the so-called mandatory spending that also generally includes federal and veteran's pensions, welfare, and interest on the debt, which consumed 60% of the federal budget. Congress knew something had to be done to rein in these costs.

Since Federal health care costs are part of the mandatory budget, that means they must be paid. As a result, they are eating up funding that could have gone to discretionary budget items, such as defense, education, or rebuilding infrastructure.

Welcome, Obamacare. Obamacare's goal was to reduce these costs. It intended to achieve this in staged maneuvers. First, it required insurance companies to provide preventive care for free. This part of the act treated chronic conditions before they required expensive hospital emergency room treatments. It also reduced payments to Medicare Advantage insurers. Since 2010, when the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) was signed, health care costs rose by only 4.3% a year, it achieved its goal of lowering the growth rate of health care spend-

ing. It next required insurers to accommodate for pre-existing conditions, a huge item for most Americans, and it allowed children to stay on their parent's health care plan after they turned eighteen. Some pretty good points. Unfortunately, it also came with some practices that were pretty damaging such as raising the income tax rate, mandating everyone to purchase health insurance and taxing those who didn't purchase insurance. People quickly figured out it was cheaper to pay the penalty imposed for not purchasing insurance than to pay for insurance, and just like that, people were back to being uninsured and using emergency rooms as doctor's offices. Up go the costs, up go the rates. We continue to have a nation where a vast majority of its people have no, or completely inadequate, insurance.

So how did \$147 dollars per person for health care in 1960 come to \$10,739 instead of \$1,217.32? Government intervention with mandated laws and corporate greed. Our health system was ripe for a perfect storm to hit it. Along came COVID-19 and we can all see what has happened. Health care in America has been out of control for a long time and something needed to happen, something drastic. The finances of America were also out of control and something needed to happen, something drastic. Is COVID-19 simply a convenient scapegoat to help these changes along? That is a great question. Just as our finances were needing to change, with or without COVID-19, our health care and health insurance systems were needing to change with it.

Is COVID-19 any worse than the flu? Perhaps it is, perhaps it is not, only time will tell. But shutting down a nation, telling its workers to stay at home because the government has stimulus packages coming that will get them through this crisis, is painfully playing out to be yet more bureaucratic red-tape and governmental incompetence as the people suffer. And people are suffering. Big time. Businesses are closing, 10 million-plus

and growing citizens are unemployed. It's a disaster, to be sure. But you know what else people are doing right now? They are at home with little to do but to wait this out and they are starting to see the writing on the wall—and the writing is not pretty.

All of this in an election year? Could this be a perfect storm for elections? Will the American People benefit from this at all, or will the government attempt to white-wash it as they did with the collapse in 2008? No, not this time. I don't think they can. People are shouting, all across America, *"we can't do this any longer. This shit's gotta change!"*

Next up: How long do they really plan on keeping us shut down, and why?

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Tuesday, April 7th, 2020 - Day 26; COVID-19 Crisis

Yesterday's COVID-19 briefing was fairly entertaining, though nothing much in the way of new information. New York and New Jersey are still looking hopeful for reaching their peak as both new cases and deaths are slowing down. California and the state of Washington, as are other states, are also holding their own. What had been a frantic cry for ventilators throughout the land has now turned into *"here, take some of ours,"* as states are shipping their overstocked ventilators around the country to areas that need them.

On a national level, there are many temporary medical facilities being set up to deal with the overloaded hospital systems. Additional medical staff from the Army, Navy, are being brought in to ease the burden. Oddly enough, most of the nation does not require them but they are being put into place just in case as some areas of

the country could still erupt with mass amounts of cases and death. Locally, here in NorCal, plans to turn the old Arco Arena into an emergency medical facility are moving ahead and they are telling us it will be opened around April 20th, ready for business.

So pretty straight forward stuff until a reporter agitates Prez and off he goes, lambasting them for fake news and little, if any, accurate reporting. It has become apparent that a number of news organizations such as CNN, NBC, ABC to name just some of the big ones, have no problem at all with taking on Prez. He, likewise, has no problem at all taking on the networks, lashing out and reprimanding them as he sees fit.

A lot of the media do come at Prez with "gotcha" questions, looking to show both him and the nation, how big a dork they think he's been. Prez would much prefer them to be a little more civil about things and just ask questions without an agenda, something a lot of the media seems to have a problem doing.

Watching the media and the Prez dance back and forth reminds me of road trips our family went on when I was a child, sitting in the back seat with my brother. We'd get bored and after a while we would start harassing each other. Dad and Mom would yell at us to knock it off, telling us *"you sit on one side, you sit as far as you can on the other side, and stay away from each other."* I'm sure anyone with siblings or children know the scenario well. Naturally, I would start putting my finger out and move it closer and closer to my brother until I barely touched him, and then he would inevitably scream *"he's touching me."* I would feign innocence and the whole thing would repeat itself over and over for miles and miles until Dad completely blew his cool and then, complete annihilation and destruction would occur, with Dad quickly pulling over to the side of the road to administer justice.

We can all relate. Prez and the media at these briefings are exactly like that, except no one is quickly pulling

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over to the side of the road and administering justice. Where is God when you need him?

Speaking of God, this is a terribly hard week for religious people that look to Easter as a massive event in their lives. With all the stay at home stuff going on, not much in the way of Easter services will be happening. Some churches are still having worship services but state governments are quick to shut them down or to shame them into shutting down by featuring them on local and national newscasts.

Interesting points are being discussed as to whether these churches should be allowed to have their services, or not. There's a "freedom of religion" chant that religious people keep referring to, but does it apply in times of a massive pandemic? Is this a massive pandemic? It's the same thing with state's rights—Prez is not going to force the remaining eight governors to order their states to issue stay at home orders as the governors seem to have their states under control. They are barely affected by the pandemic, and Prez does not want to trample on state's rights.

Naturally, the media is all over this and tear Prez to pieces on his decision to not trample on state's rights. His decision does seem legit seeing as how the aforementioned states are holding it together without needing Prez to interfere, and there is this tricky thing called the Constitution, which sorta kinda says states get to run their own show. But, as with everything else, what's a Constitution good for if not for trampling on, right? As for the church issue, I notice the media pretty much leaves the God thing alone, merely reporting on it and, in a rare display of actual journalism, not offering their opinions on the subject. God does indeed work in mysterious ways. I suppose you need to pick your battles and hedge your bets every once in a while, just to be on the safe side.

More and more videos and articles are coming out

on-line from medical professionals that are offering many different opinions of the disease than what we were previously told. Chief among these revelations is that COVID-19 does not fill up the lungs, killing people by filling their airways with a form of bacterial "cement". Instead, these medical professionals are finding that the disease results in starving the body for oxygen, like a severe high-altitude sickness. Severe hypoxia, if you will. This flies in the face of everything we have been told since the beginning of the crisis and you might tend to think these are isolated occurrences, or even "fake" medicine itself, but when you look at the enormity of the reports coming in, from hundreds of doctors and specialists, it does make you wonder. Especially when they say one reason for such a high death count is that we are not correctly treating the disease.

Interesting stuff for sure. Who to believe? I'm going with the hundreds of doctors that are actually treating patients, but I'm just kind of crazy like that.

Prez says the stimulus is going well despite hearing of several reports that it is not doing well at all. Prez says it is being handled but the media—again with these guys—insist it is not moving forward when it is. I think a large part of the problem is that people are expecting immediacy. They want action NOW! "*We've been laid off and we are unemployed and where the hell is our money,*" is a common cry across the land, or, that's what the media tells us.

I recall watching in rapt fascination when Prez and his crew rolled out their programs. They were promising help, and quickly. And therein lies the problem—quickly. Nothing is ever done quickly when the government is involved. Prez signed the stimulus on Friday, March 27th, one and a half weeks ago. One and a half weeks. I don't know about the rest of the country, but whenever I have been laid off or unemployed through no fault of my own, it took a solid three weeks just to get the wheels in motion. There was always a week waiting period where

you received no money at all, and then you started in on your two week pay periods if you were lucky to not have a glitch happen between you and the “system”. To think that you would get anything quicker is, in a word, foolish. Or in the case of it being your first time, naive. So here we are a week and a half later and people, or so the media portrays, are ready to revolt because they are not getting their money quick enough. Ever applied for anything from the government without it taking much longer than anticipated to finalize? Yeah, me and the rest of the nation, too.

The battle wages on. If you want diversity try tuning in to CNN for a half hour and then switch it over to Fox News. Are we even still talking about the same country? Talk about mixed messages being disseminated by the media. Yowza!

112 One of the key points that are brought up by the task force doctors is for people to keep their spirits up. Depression is a very real deal in times like this. I could not agree more. For years I have advocated the use of micro-dosing hallucinogens, specifically psilocybin, to help with depression and anxiety. Terence McKenna’s groundbreaking work in the 1990s which furthered the work of many forward-thinking people before him, has recently been looked at again by medical guru’s and a lot of conclusions regarding the use of micro-dosing have been found to indeed be beneficial. So much so that many doctors are now asking for psilocybin to be legalized for just such use. It took them a long while to legalize marijuana for medicinal use, they will eventually get around to legalizing psilocybin as well.

For purely medicinal reasons—who am I kidding, it’s entertaining as fuck—I heartily recommend using small doses and then flipping back and forth between all the news stations. Talk about a mind-opening and mind-expanding experience. Pick a political spectrum and you will find a news station tailored just for it. It is not about

reporting what is happening out there, or what we can expect to happen, it is all about slanting the news into a certain political bent and then distributing that to the faithful and to hell with all the other heathens out there as they are simply ignorant Philistines anyway. When, again, did I micro-dose?

The situation, when viewed through this new found clarity, is this: Rabid dogs are chasing our favorite toy poodle around the yard and as we watch in horror, they grab the poodle and viciously attack it. We watch from our enclosed porch and scream out for the dogs to stop but take no further action other than screaming at them. A good samaritan finally hears the screams, looks into the yard, sees the situation, pulls out a gun and shoots at the rabid dogs, saving the toy poodle, though the poor thing dies later from its wounds. In the meantime, the police have arrived and have arrested the good samaritan for shooting at the rabid dogs with a weapon, as discharging a firearm in public goes against our societal norms. He’s arrested and taken off to jail. We, the toy poodle-owners, are distraught. Huge fines and court dates are levied against the good-samaritan. We need to bury our toy poodle and our one good shovel cannot be found. The rabid dogs, who knows where they came from, they just appeared and havoc ensued, then disappeared just as quick, no doubt moved on to someone else’s yard to terrorize them. Do we track down the rabid dogs and secure them? Should we pay for target practice for the good samaritan so next time he breaks the law being a good samaritan he at least kills the rabid dogs? There are so many questions to answer.

The nation right now is a lot like the above scenario. There are rabid dogs roaming everywhere you turn—on your social media, in the news, in the papers—they are everywhere. My advice is to secure the yard and keep these dogs the hell out of your life. Don’t even give them a chance to enter. They stink, they’re not pleasant to look

at, and they almost always leave a large pile of crap for you to clean up. In life there are never-ending questions that need to be answered. It's the way it is with life. You learn to pick your battles, your questions, wisely. Kind of like the media showing intelligence by not offering their opinion on the God issue. If only we could get them to apply that to other things as well. Why don't they just do it? Oops, there's one of those nasty questions. See what I mean?

I know you were expecting another long-winded article with numbers and all the other boring stuff that comes with our current reality, but I had to take a day off from the enormous failures of our systems and focus on the moment at hand—we're all in this together and there's not much else we can do except make our small edge of the universe that much brighter than the darkness that is out there.

If we were all to do this in unison we could light up the darkness once again. Free yourself from this chaos for a moment. Tonight is the first full moon of Spring, a Super Pink Moon, named for the bloom of the ground phlox, a pink flower common in North America. It is a sign of hope, a sign of rejuvenation. Gather your loved ones, in a group of less than 10, making certain to maintain a six-foot distance between each other, and howl at the moon, encouraging the rejuvenation that it brings to sweep over us, washing the media-driven hysteria away. As a Gringo Shaman, I highly recommend it, micro-dose or not.

Stay safe, howl like no one is watching. Change is coming, but it will not come easy.

Wednesday, April 8th, 2020 - Day 27; COVID-19 Crisis

Yesterday yielded disparate news in our ongoing COVID-19 crisis. There were many signs across the nation that the virus appears to be slowing down, but at the same time, New York saw its largest number of dead in one day at 779, bringing their total to 6,268 dead. Louisiana is also being hit hard, their cases and deaths are skyrocketing and the Cook County Jail in Chicago is now the nation's largest emerging center of COVID-19 infections. GM is sending 30,000 ventilators to the national stockpile, but these will not be available for use until the end of August, possibly later, though the first shipment of 6,132 ventilators is slated to arrive by June 1, which will be utilized as needed. Confusing? Just another briefing.

The SBA loan part of the stimulus program, including the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to help small businesses keep their workers paid, is taking fascinating turns. A fine bureaucratic rabbit hole if ever there was one. Wells Fargo stopped taking applications for the program two and a half days after they started accepting them, capping their loan total at \$10 billion even though the fund is set up to finance \$349 Billion in loans. Bank of America and Chase put their own restrictions on loans stating you had to have a checking account with their banks as of February 15, 2020—long before the stimulus package was put in place—in order for them to consider your application. Bank of America further restricted its requirements to include not having any credit relationships with any other bank. So if you have a business checking account with BofA and a credit card from Chase, you're out of luck with BofA.

JPMorgan Chase includes a caveat that you can apply with them but only if you have not applied anywhere

else. US Bank says it will accept applications but only if you currently have a business account with them. Citibank and a whole lot of regional, small, and local banks still do not offer any programs.

With all of this going on Prez is requesting an additional \$250 Billion in funding, and Dems say no way, we need to increase that to \$500 Billion, immediately! This, despite the fact that the SBA itself says it has only had \$70 Billion in loans taken against the \$349 Billion allocated. There is \$279 Billion sitting in the coffers, waiting to be used. Meanwhile, banks are putting up roadblocks as quickly as they can and not all banks are agreeing with the program. Still, according to Democrat leaders, we immediately need another \$250-500 Billion because it's urgent, people are desperate, American workers need relief. I listen to many questions from reporters and not one of them asks "*exactly how much did you already give the banks?*" I figure it to be a worthwhile question to ask.

116 If, say, Wells Fargo says they shut down their applications because they already have \$10 Billion in loan applications, did they only get \$10 Billion? Is this why they shut down? Or did they get, say, \$50 Billion? There's \$349 Billion to disperse, how the hell can you call it quits at \$10 Billion? Shouldn't we the people, whose money it is anyway, get to know these things?

On and on it goes. Hydroxychloroquine remains in the news and in the briefings. Prez wants it used saying it might help against COVID-19. Media hysteria ensues reporting that it is killing people and the Prez is going to kill us all with his reckless use of this medication. Scores of doctors who have used hydroxychloroquine for years, even decades, to treat lupus, malaria and rheumatoid arthritis patients say this is nonsense and state there have not been any patients dying from its use, especially given the low doses that doctors are using for COVID-19 patients.

In fact-checking these statements they appear to be correct as very little data accumulated over the decades

point to any adverse reactions to hydroxychloroquine that results in death, let alone something on a mass scale. Other information is also coming forth that doctors who have had patients that used hydroxychloroquine for prolonged periods of time are finding none of their patients have COVID-19 symptoms. This is being found to be true the world over and serious clinical studies are being developed to research this anomaly. Could hydroxychloroquine be an agent against COVID-19? There is abundant anecdotal evidence to show there is, so what is the media's problem with using this drug to see if it works? It's been approved for 65 years through the FDA, thousands of doctors around the world whose patients have regularly used it for other illnesses report nothing even remotely similar to what the media is reporting—what gives? Just another day of lies and hysteria to keep us all tuned in.

It's the same with headlines screaming Prez is killing people by not having ventilators available for them to use, yet not one death has been attributed to a lack of ventilators. Because there is none. But it certainly makes for a good headline, doesn't it?

I left off with the spiraling costs of health care and I also detailed how America has been over the debt-to-GDP ratio of 77% in our country for the past eleven years. In essence, over the edge of solvency. So are we headed for a total economic collapse? We were probably already in one and the COVID-19 crisis masked it quite well. If the U.S. economy were to collapse it would happen quickly. The surprise factor is itself, a cause of the collapse. Signs of imminent failure are difficult to see, but several key economists have been predicting just such a failure for years.

Most recently, the U.S. economy almost collapsed on September 16, 2008. That's the day the Reserve Primary Fund "broke the buck", the value of the fund's holdings dropped below \$1 per share as fund managers couldn't

maintain its share price at the \$1 value. Money market funds use that \$1 value as a benchmark. Panicked investors withdrew billions from money market accounts where businesses keep cash to fund day-to-day operations. If withdrawals had gone on for even a week, and if the Fed and the U.S. government had not stepped in immediately to shore up the financial sector, the entire economy would likely have ground to a halt. Trucks would have stopped rolling, grocery stores would have run out of food, and businesses would have been forced to shut down. That's how close the U.S. economy came to a real collapse, and how vulnerable it is to another one.

If the U.S. economy were to collapse, you would lose access to credit, much like what happened in 2008. But this time, with a full collapse, banks would close, and there would not be a bailout as there would not be money to bail them out with. Demand would outstrip the supply of food, gas, and other necessities. The collapse would affect local governments and utilities—water and electricity might no longer be available.

Make no mistake about it, a U.S. economic collapse would create global panic. Demand for the dollar would plummet. Interest rates would skyrocket. Investors would rush to other currencies, such as the yuan, euro, or even gold. It would create not just inflation, but hyperinflation, as the dollar loses value to other currencies. Think back to the Great Depression. The stock market crashed on Black Thursday. By the following Tuesday, it was down 25%. Many investors lost their life savings that weekend. By 1932, one out of four people were unemployed. Wages for those who still had jobs fell dramatically—manufacturing wages dropped 32% from 1929 to 1932. U.S. gross domestic product was cut nearly in half. Thousands of farmers and other unemployed workers moved elsewhere in search of work as two-and-a-half million people left the Midwestern Dust Bowl states. The Dow Jones Industrial Average didn't re-

bound to its pre-Crash level until 1954. Real history, real facts. Couple this scenario with the rest of the world's countries having their own financial troubles, and we have a global crisis the likes of which we've never seen.

So we are looking at another collapse, like the one in 2008? As painful as it was, the 2008 financial crisis was not a collapse, it was a crisis. Millions of people lost jobs and homes, but basic services were still provided. Other past financial crises seemed like a collapse at the time, but they are barely remembered now.

1970s Stagflation

The OPEC oil embargo and President Richard Nixon's abolishment of the gold standard triggered double-digit inflation. The government responded to this economic downturn by freezing wages and labor rates to curb inflation. The result was a high unemployment rate. Businesses, hampered by low prices, could not afford to keep workers at unprofitable wage rates.

1981 Recession

The Fed raised interest rates in a bid to end double-digit inflation. That created the worst recession since the Great Depression. President Ronald Reagan cut taxes and increased government spending to end it.

1989 Savings and Loan Crisis

One thousand banks closed after improper real estate investments turned sour. Charles Keating and other Savings & Loan bankers had misused bank depositor's funds. The consequent recession triggered an unemployment rate as high as 7.5%. The government was forced to bail out many banks to the tune of \$124 billion.

Post-9/11 Recession

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, sowed nationwide apprehension and prolonged the 2001 reces-

sion, garnering an unemployment rate of greater than 10% that lasted through 2003. The United States' response—the War on Terror—is costing the nation \$6.4 trillion and counting.

2008 Financial Crisis

The early warning signs of the 2008 Financial Crisis were rapidly falling housing prices and increasing mortgage defaults in 2006. Left untended, the resulting subprime mortgage crisis, which panicked investors and led to massive bank withdrawals, spread like wildfire across the financial community. The U.S. government had no choice but to bail out “too big to fail” banks and insurance companies or face both national and global financial catastrophes.

We have been on the brink of economic collapse many times. In September, 2019, business leaders, and academics across Europe and the US began calling for an economic reset—the need for businesses to act more sustainably, to treat their stakeholders more equitably, and global warming seriously. They were focusing on ESG, “environmental, social and governance” factors. Six months later, as an unforeseen global pandemic sweeps across the globe, the calls for a reset have become more urgent than ever, but the reset is also being redefined. The global recession that is being unleashed by the pandemic has massively compromised our social and economic capacity, leaving it up to individual nations to care for their sick people and ill economies.

At a time when both global and national business leaders needed to cooperate and apply vision to redefine their roles in society, they were plunged into an unprecedented struggle to save jobs and fend off bankruptcy. When we urgently need our global political leaders to come together, they are being sucked into national emergencies facing their hospital and health systems and the

challenge of saving tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of lives.

Our governments need to cooperate in bringing the pandemic under control and minimizing the harm from having to shut down our economies, but the prospects of international cooperation are arguably worse than at any point in the past seven decades. We are shutting down borders, limiting trade, in essence shutting each other off when we most need to communicate with each other. Did China unleash this upon the world in order to take over the world's economy? Or was this a middle-east terrorist plot to destroy us? Could that be it?

The conspiracies are endless and hard to pin onto real facts. But what is easy to pin onto real facts is that America has had an ever-increasing divide of wealth for decades. In the last decade, it has spiraled out of control with even further gaps between classes. Basic costs such as rent, groceries, and utilities are nearly impossible to provide for even with a decent job. And what, exactly, is termed decent? Notice I did not include the cost of health insurance? How are we supposed to pay for that?

If we use the standard of \$15 an hour that is pushed onto us as a “fair and livable wage,” we soon realize it falls far short of being “livable”. One recent study shows that \$15 an hour isn't enough to secure affordable housing in most U.S. states. Nationally, someone would need to make \$17.90 an hour to rent a one-bedroom apartment, or \$22.10 an hour to cover a two-bedroom home, according to analysis from the National Low Income Housing Coalition. We all know this. This is not earth shattering news. We've lived with this for years. Health insurance costs have skyrocketed out of control for years as well. We all know this, too. All this at \$15 an hour?

With a global economy on the ropes and our own economy going further into debt each year, how are we going to move forward? In the past, we, as a nation, have relied on many tactics and tricks in order to keep the

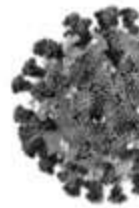
economy moving. The one thing we've never done; shutting it down. Completely. Totally. Close it down for a period of time and then bring it back up again to where you can begin managing it. That's the first step to take, though government leaders refuse to comment, they just do it.

Second step, put politicians in charge to further control the economy by having them pass stimulus bills to "take care" of Americans, even though these same politicians were the ones that drove us into debt to begin with. So, we would give them even more power? Who would be stupid enough to do this? Who would fall for this? These politicians are the same politicians that allowed big business to run rampant for years. They now want us to agree to this plan? How is America going to agree with this?

122 COVID-19, baby. The RONA. That's the ticket to shutting down the country and giving the people no chance at all of saying a thing. Keep them fearful and keep them locked down. How many out there took the time to write their elected representatives before COVID-19 started, telling them they wanted to see things run differently? Not too many. Now, how many have written their elected officials since COVID-19? Again, not many at all, if any. It's a perfect excuse to keep us all locked down, control the economy, and reset.

It sounds like a conspiracy theory, doesn't it? We keep hearing, over and over, we had the greatest economy in America's history, ever! Ever! Why would we do such a thing to ourselves?

Next up: Some more truths about our economy.



Thursday, April 9th, 2020 - Day 28; COVID-19 Crisis

In what was an attempt at bringing "good" news to today's briefing, in revealing this "good" news it quickly became apparent that we have been gaslighted, or at the very least, we've been given completely fabricated information.

The mainstay of the country's paranoia over the COVID-19 crisis has been the modeling done by several institutions, chief of which is the modeling done by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). These are the fine and noble scientists that projected many things, including last week's numbers that at a minimum, 100,000 Americans would die from COVID-19, possibly 240,000 or more. This was touted as a "break" from the Imperial College London model our government had been using which projected upwards of 2.2 Million deaths from COVID-19 if we did not take immediate and drastic measures to end its terrible path of destruction through our land. That model was discarded when the chief scientist of the model realized he had made a mistake in his calculations and there would not be near the mayhem he had projected.

So we scrap the English model but fear not, our government did not just have one model they were using to plot a safe course through these stormy corona seas, they had several of them, chief of which was the above mentioned IHME model. Sweet, American science and ingenuity will save us all.

Last Sunday, April 5th, IHME revised their modeling numbers and instead of 100,000 to 240,000 deaths in a two to three week period, we were now looking at 81,766 deaths. Then yesterday, April 8th, just three days later, they further reduced this number to 60,415 deaths, and not just in a two to three week period but extending



the time frame until the end of August, 2020.

Their estimate of needed hospital beds was also cut from 141,000 to 94,249, with needed ICU beds cut by nearly one-third to just under 20,000 beds needed. While their numbers drastically decreased, they still called for a total bed shortage of 87,674. The US is still expected, according to IHME, to face a shortage of about 16,000 hospital beds, even though it will need 168,000 fewer beds than previously expected, according to the new analysis. According to which day they revise on, or perhaps the hour, who knows, maybe even the minute, this can all change.

So there you have it. We are doing so much better than expected. Why? Was it perhaps due to ineptitude and incorrect modeling? Oh, heavens no. It is all due to social distancing.

Social distancing, baby, that's the ticket. Americans staying apart from each other has completely changed the curve of the projections. It was all due to Americans following the mandates set by Prez and his corona task force. You remember them, right? Dr's Deb and Tony? They are rocking it when it comes to saving the nation from COVID-19 by telling us to social distance. Yay, team! Oh, and masks and gloves, too. Well, not so much gloves anymore, but masks. Hell yes, wear them puppies.

But there are many things that are not adding up. On Tuesday, April 7th, Deb answered a reporter's question as to how we were counting COVID-19 deaths with "*If someone dies with COVID-19 we are counting that as a COVID-19 death.*" Pretty straight forward.

Dr. Deb smiled sweetly as she gazed out over the room, telling us that while many countries are recording actual causes of death, in the US we are not—i.e., if a person had cancer and was terminal and died from that cancer the cause of death, in most countries, was determined to be cancer. But in the US that same person, if testing positive for COVID-19, yet showing no symp-

toms of it, was stated to have died from COVID-19, not cancer, or whatever occurring disease they might have died from.

Despite knowing that hundreds of thousands of Americans more than likely have the virus in them but are not showing symptoms, the cause of death is still altered to reflect death by COVID-19, not the underlying condition of the patient.

Then, of course, there is the CDC directive issued March 24, which tells hospitals to list COVID-19 as a cause of death regardless of whether or not there's actual testing to confirm that's the case. Even if the coronavirus was just a contributing factor or if it's "*assumed to have caused or contributed to death,*" it should be listed as the primary cause. Seriously? Seriously.

Let's take a moment and review.

We have a pandemic, as outlined by WHO. Serious health issues begin happening with this COVID-19 thing. Modeling done in England says that millions will die. A plan is put in place to shut down our country and we then shut down the country because, you know, having millions of Americans die pretty much sucks. In the meantime, CDC issues guidelines to list any death as a COVID-19 death, whether the patient has any form of the virus detected, or not.

Oh, but we're not done.

The English modeling program is found to be supremely flawed and is abandoned but the one done here in the US at the University of Washington is right and we are going to go with that. 'Murica!

The American model tells us even if we use mitigation measures to thwart the virus, hundreds of thousands will still die, tens of thousands of hospital beds that we do not have will be needed and ventilators that we desperately need to keep people alive are not anywhere near the numbers that we will need. We are hosed. These are indeed dark times, prepare for two weeks of death. Or,

as Prez said, “*there will be death. Yes, there will be death.*” Sound right so far? Sounds like the plot to a bad movie if you ask me.

We then find out the IHME study is not so much “flawed” as it has been “revised” to show supremely lower numbers in both infected case numbers and deaths, and we will not need near the number of hospital beds and ventilators that they said we would need, but we’re still screwed. Three days later the IMHE study “revises” its numbers yet again to reflect even lower numbers in both infected case numbers and deaths, and we will not need anywhere near the number of hospital beds and ventilators that they said we would need. Man, I’m getting dizzy trying to follow this.

Does anyone believe anything these guys from IMHE say? I didn’t think so. Does anyone believe anything the Government says?

126 Couple this “reliable” modeling and study that we have been hearing about for the past month, along with the CDC directive and Dr. Birx’s admission that COVID-19 death numbers are scientifically skewed, and we’re not left with much more to wonder other than “who, exactly, is running the show?” Is it Prez? Vice Prez Mike? Dr’s. Tony and Deb? The guys at IHME? Is anyone running the show at all?

But what about all that stimulus money? It’s getting out to the people, right?

There has been little to any mention of the money coming to citizens to help them through these strange times. It is trickling into a few accounts, but that’s all, a few. Yet already the government is looking to authorize even more stimulus money because the People need it. They certainly do, no argument there, but instead of figuring out why the People are not getting their promised and allocated money to help out in this disastrous time, the government might as well spend their energies in enacting legislation for more money because, as Prez so

eloquently put it “*the program is working so well, largest stimulus ever, really, it’s fantastic what we have done, the team is awesome, blah, blah, blah.*”

Do the people at IHME have anything to do with this? Does anyone with the thought processes of a seven year old have anything to do with this?

Something is rotten and it is starting to smell.

Prez touts our economy as being the best ever. It’s the greatest ever, really, it is that great, *blah, blah, blah*. He tells us this daily at the coronavirus briefings. Several times a day, actually. But do the numbers add up?

Back in February of 2020, all of perhaps two months ago, Prez, speaking at his State of the Union address, reinforced claims that hailed his pro-growth policies saying they have helped Americans with jobs and wages. It is true the economy has been doing well, but there have been periods when it was even stronger. So, has it been strongest ever? Not so much.

The trade war with China, rising tensions in the Middle East and fears over the health of the global economy unsettled markets at various points along the way which led the US central bank, the Federal Reserve, to lower interest rates in order to adjust to these fears and tensions. The Federal Reserve executed an emergency half-percentage-point rate cut, the first since 2008, and markets slid, reflecting fears the coronavirus epidemic is raising recession risks for the U.S. and global economies.

On March 12, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York announced that it would offer \$1.5 trillion in short-term loans to banks to “*address highly unusual disruptions in Treasury financing markets associated with the coronavirus outbreak.*” Just one day prior the WHO had cited the outbreak as a pandemic. In its prepared statement, the Fed refers to it as a “coronavirus outbreak” and not a pandemic, giving speculation to the belief that the Fed had been contemplating this all along.

Speculation? Sure. Just like reports from the govern-

ment speculated we would have 2.2 million casualties from the coronavirus.

The Federal Reserve announced on March 14th it would drop interest rates to zero and buy at least \$700 billion in government and mortgage-related bonds as part of a wide-ranging emergency action to protect the economy from the impact of the coronavirus outbreak. All of this in the span of a very short period of time. Nothing like this has occurred since the 2008 crisis.

But let's get back to the greatest ever economy. What do the figures show?

The annual rate of growth in GDP—the value of goods and services in the economy—has generally been strong, that's not being contested. But has this been the greatest economy ever? Using numbers and statistics from the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2019 the data shows an annual average growth of 2.3%, ending the year at 2.1% for the fourth quarter.

This is significantly less than the 5.5% peak achieved in the second quarter of 2014 during the Obama presidency. And if you go further back, there were times in the 1950s and 1960s when GDP growth was even higher.

Looking at the health of the economy based on GDP, Prez's claims of the "best economy ever" when compared to the national economic boom of the post-War years do not add up. Sure, the stock market has been rising since Prez took control, but in all fairness to the numbers, it has been steadily rising since 2019. Unemployment is the lowest it has ever been. That is also true. There has been a steady gain in employment since Prez took over, but have wages kept pace with inflation? Did wages grow as well? According to official data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, after inflation is taken into account, real wages increased by 0.6% in December, 2019, and peaked at 1.9% in February, under Prez,. This is lower than the real wage increases of more than 2% that President Obama oversaw in 2015.

So what about real money? Are Americans better off financially? Right now, Americans have an average personal credit card debt of \$6,849, costing an average of \$1,162 in annual interest. 80% of us are in debt and cannot pay it off. This does not include homeownership. Factor that in and the typical American household now carries an average debt of \$137,063 when averaged across the board. The nation as a whole is also in debt, to the tune of nearly 24 Trillion, and a debt to GDP ratio of 108% as of the end of 2019. With projections that it would reach 110% by the end of 2020 with this crisis, it will well surpass that with the stimulus monies Congress just authorized and that Prez signed into law. We might have some things going for us in some areas of the economy, but make no mistake about it, we are a debt-ridden nation.

The U.S. economy has built up too many imbalances—consumer debt, overextended construction, impaired capital of banks, to name a few—to avoid an economic downturn and a major retrenchment of the banking sector. Essentially, nothing much has changed since 2008. The goal to fixing this must be to avoid an outright collapse or deep recession. In order to do that the government must infuse massive amounts of cash into the system. When they did this in 2008-2009 it was not near enough real help and the typical American saw little, if any, relief with the bulk of the money going to the banks and big industry. America has not forgotten.

Throwing money at the same problem, in the same way, will only cause more dissension, and in an election year that is certainly not a good thing for the incumbent. What was needed was a large infusion of cash not just for the banks and industry, but for the people as well. What better way to accomplish this than to have a major national disaster to help further the cause. Perhaps a pandemic might help.

In the 21st century, we have had, counting COV-

ID-19, seven pandemics. Not one of them shut down the world like what we have seen. Countries are now infusing large amounts of cash into their economies across the globe in order to help their people in this time of need, yet nothing on this scale happened with the other six pandemics we have had in the past twenty years. Remember, the definition of a pandemic is a disease that spreads across a large region. I chose to state seven pandemics that were/are worldwide. Not to be forgotten are the fifty-six epidemics in the last 20 years that did not reach the levels of a pandemic. No one talks about them. So, what's the point? Despite what the media might hysterically tell you, and despite what our government might be saying, these epidemics, and pandemics, happen on a regular basis.

Of course, it doesn't hurt to throw false modeling into the mix. It also doesn't hurt to define any death that occurs in a hospital as being caused by the pandemic to show just how deadly this pandemic is.

Is this entire thing a fabrication? It could be. But there have been many pandemics over the years, such as the seven in the last twenty years. Does this current pandemic warrant the extreme measures taken to fight it? If you want to stave off a major economic crisis in an election year, it certainly wouldn't hurt.

Next up: Where do we go from here?

Friday, April 10th, 2020 - Day 29; COVID-19 Crisis

COVID-19 is the name of the disease caused by the SARS-CoV2 virus. In its full form, COVID-19 stands for CoronaVirus Disease of 2019, given this name by the

World Health Organization on Feb. 11, 2020. We like to call it RONA.

Since late December of 2019 when it first appeared in Wuhan, China, the disease has held the world hostage with rapid escalation. Within four months over a million and a half people are infected, and there have been 100,00 deaths worldwide. COVID-19 has been touted by media and government officials around the globe as the modern-day equivalent to the Spanish Flu of 1917. With 475,000 cases in the US and over 16,000 deaths in the US alone, it is reported as one of the worst pandemics in modern times. Serious stuff.

The reality, however, is a far different story from the above, official narrative. While COVID-19 is deadly and contagious, it is nothing similar to the Spanish Flu, which had a worldwide infection rate of over 500 million people, about a third of the world population at the time.

Estimated deaths worldwide were reported as high as 50 million, with 675,000 deaths occurring in the US alone. The Spanish Flu had a worldwide infection rate of nearly 33%. COVID-19 currently has a worldwide infection rate of 0.02% or two-hundredths of a percent. Quite a difference between the two, yet the world shut down, completely shut down, for COVID-19 because it is such a devastating virus.

What gives? Why the panic? During the coronavirus briefings in America by Prez and the team, we were told repeatedly we have never seen anything like this virus. Doctors and scientists have no idea how to respond to it. This is rather hard to fathom as the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, in partnership with the World Economic Forum and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, recently hosted Event 201, a high-level pandemic exercise on October 18, 2019, in New York, NY.

The exercise illustrated areas where public/private partnerships would be necessary during the response to

a severe pandemic in order to diminish large-scale economic and societal consequences.

Event 201 was created so that, here, I'll just let them explain it—*"In recent years, the world has seen a growing number of epidemic events, amounting to approximately 200 events annually. These events are increasing, and they are disruptive to health, economies, and society. Managing these events already strains global capacity, even absent a pandemic threat. Experts agree that it is only a matter of time before one of these epidemics becomes global—a pandemic with potentially catastrophic consequences. A severe pandemic, which becomes "Event 201," would require reliable cooperation among several industries, national governments, and key international institutions.*

The Center for Health Security had previously hosted three pandemic simulations prior to Event 201, going back to a 2001 simulation known as Dark Winter. The October, 2019 simulation was the first time the center included private sector actors in its exercises, in the hopes of modeling how they might also react in such a crisis."

Those are their words. Their exact words. They be explaining things pretty well, don't they? You would think these would be some "go to" guys for help with a pandemic. Bummer that no one bothered to tell Prez and his team of this Event 201 stuff, or the previous pandemic simulations that occurred as recently as the distant past of October, 2019. Such a shame, I tell you. A shame.

Even Drs. Fauci and Birx, in fact, many government officials, bemoaned the reality there was simply no data to rely on, no mechanism to understand how to react to the virus, or what to consider. Prez told us this as well and then said he had the nation's best people working on this, who, incredibly, had no idea what to do. If only someone out there would have thought about something like this. Maybe something like, oh, I don't know, something like Event 201?

Interestingly enough, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and University of Washington's Institute

for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) announced in January 2017 the foundation's commitment to invest \$279 million in IHME to expand its work over the next decade, allowing IHME to build on its work providing independent health evidence to improve population health.

The award complemented other investments from the Gates Foundation to further the work of the University of Washington's Population Health Initiative, launched in May 2016 to establish a university-wide, 25-year vision to advance the health and well-being of people around the world.

Wow! Why didn't we consult with these guys? Immediately? Screw the Event 201 things, these IHME peeps have been at it far longer, they would have to know something. Wait, didn't the modeling used for COVID-19 come from IHME after we booted the problem riddled model from England? It was. Well, what the hell, why wasn't Prez and the team in touch with these guys at IHME all along? Perhaps IHME is only a small outfit think-tank. Hold on here, this is from the IHME's own fact sheet:

"IHME has grown from employing three individuals nine years ago to managing more than 300 faculty and staff today, while producing more than 200 scientific papers annually, and working closely with global and national institutions to improve health systems worldwide. Its findings are published in major scientific journals, policy reports, and online data visualizations. Moreover, IHME is now considered the trusted source for The World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development, The National Institutes of Health, the Wellcome Trust, and a range of other national and global organizations."

Holy cow and WTF, how the hell did we not consult with these guys from the start? If only the World Health Organization (WHO) would have been up to date with these IHME guys. Hold on again, what's this, an April

2018 press release from IHME stating:

“The World Health Organization and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) have formally agreed to collaborate in improving the accuracy, timeliness, and policy relevance of health data. This new agreement highlights our shared commitment to ensure that health policy is based on the most accurate and up-to-date data available,” said WHO Director-General and mouthpiece Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

So what the hell? WHO knew of these guys? Certainly Prez and Dr’s. Fauci and Birx knew of these guys, and I’m willing to bet you a shiny buffalo nickel that they knew about the Event 201 exercises, too. How could they not? I’m sure that leaders around the globe knew and/or participated in Event 201 as well, so why the statements that no one knew anything about something as huge as COVID-19 coming? Is it huge? It doesn’t appear to be the world killer it was made out to be. Not in the slightest. So what gives?

Consider this—a week ago we were clamoring around the nation for medical staff and supplies as we desperately needed them in order to fight this devastating disease. This week hospitals across America are laying people off and letting people go. Again, wow and hmmm.

Is it a coincidence that the Italian government has announced a \$4 billion stimulus package to help their economy cope with the coronavirus outbreak, or the United Kingdom announcing \$398 billion for their stimulus?

How about Hong Kong planning to pay HK\$10,000 to every citizen? Or how about the French, or the Spanish, or the Germans, countries all around the world, simultaneously dumping billions and billions of dollars into their economies overnight. I thought they were all broke? You know, Global Recession and other Short Stories.

The Federal Reserve just yesterday injected 2.3 Trillion in loans into American business in order to keep it going. This is on top of the 1.5 Trillion it injected into the market a little more than three weeks ago. What’s up with all the mystery money all of a sudden? We cannot feed people, or house people, yet Governments are snapping billions of dollars, if not trillions, in aid like a drunken sailor on leave with a pocket full of hundreds. Which whorehouse needs help, sign here.

To date, most Americans have not seen a penny of any of this money. Sec. of Treasury Mnuchin, told us all last week he would personally guarantee we would have emergency money to all Americans by end of next week. Now they tell us the checks will be coming on the 13th of the month, or, they will begin to come then, maybe, perhaps, it’s still complicated.

All the billions in stimulus for small businesses are as translucent as the emperor’s clothes—though there’s not a tally whacker to be seen.

Banks have received funding, but their stringent conditions are effectively stopping the people that need the money the most from receiving it.

But still, there is hope. The cornerstone of the Fed’s new 2.3 Trillion dollar injection is a new \$600 billion “Main Street Lending Fund” to offer support for small and mid-sized businesses who will then have to pay between 2.5% to 4% above the secured overnight funding rate, which stands at zero.

The plan is to offer four year loans to companies, with principal and interest payments deferred for one year. The loans will be originated by banks, who will retain a 5% share and sell the rest to the Fed’s facility.

Ah, it’s now becoming clear. The Prez and government offer up 349 Billion dollars to small businesses in interest-free loans that are touted as basically being grants and do not need to be repaid as long as no employee is terminated, but the government is not going

to administer these supposed loans, banks are. So the government will give the banks money, then the banks will give the money to the small businesses. But banks don't like this program at all, what's in it for them? That's really never been talked about, has it? What, exactly was in it for them to begin with? How about a 5% fee for each loan. Banks maintained up to 5% per loan for fees in the process, regardless of the outcome.

Meanwhile, in comes the Federal Reserve with 600 Billion in loans that will be dispersed to the banks who then will disperse to the small businesses who will then have to pay 2.5% to 4% interest on these loans above the overnight funding rate. Oops, forgot to say they will need to also pay the secured overnight funding rate, which stands at zero. Zero! No interest, just like the Prez said. Yay, Prez! Yay, Fed!

136 But in reading it again we quickly see that the secured overnight funding rate—you gotta love how they spin them words—is currently at zero. Doesn't mean you're paying zero interest, it means you're paying 2.5% to 4% above zero, or 2.5% to 4% interest. The words will set you free, or enslave you. All this to keep doing what small businesses were doing before the COVID-19 Crisis hit. Except now they get the added benefit of paying back a loan, with interest, on the money they didn't need to take out until the government shut everything down. Nice racket if you can get it.

Where do we go from here? Not real certain. Not much talk has been going on as to how we are to resume business, or even when we are to resume business. Prez is edgy and it certainly looks like he wants to open back up, but we seldom receive any solid information. What we do receive are further stimulus plans, but we do not receive any money. We hear lots of backpedaling on how the virus did not act as aggressive as suggested, but we will still have to maintain social distancing for quite some time as this social distancing thing is what did the

trick, it's what turned it all around. Oh, and lock downs. Keep those businesses closed.

Meanwhile, in the midst of this pandemonium the stock market is going to crash. Some big news there. Like who didn't expect that with nearly 17 Million unemployed people, and that's not counting the self-employed. That was a sure bet. I mean, half of our economy is small businesses, Prez and all his suit-wearing official-looking people tell us so. With all these businesses shut down and all the unemployed out there, of course, the market is going to crash. What's that you say, the stock market just had the best week it has had since 1974? Really? You don't say?

Indeed it did. The market moved higher this week thanks to increasing optimism that coronavirus containment measures are paying off, with a recent decline in new cases both in the U.S. and globally. Here are a few more fun facts:

Treasury Secretary Mnuchin stated yesterday that he believes the U.S. economy could get back up and running next month.

Bernie Sanders drops out of the Democratic race for president but is keeping his delegates and plans on keeping his name on ballots in states that have yet to vote so he can acquire even more delegates.

There are sudden and massive pushes to require us to vote by mail only. No voter ID, no voting in person, mail that ballot in bitches and trust us, we have your back.

Perhaps they do, but does that trust have to come with a knife? There's an awful lot of facts popping up every day.

Want another fact? Steely Dan had it right, it's a Royal Scam.

Saturday, April 11th, 2020 - Day 30; COVID-19 Crisis

Hard to imagine but it has been thirty days since Prez declared COVID-19 a National Emergency. Time does fly when you're sheltering in place. But has it really been a month? Indeed it has.

While our nation continues ever downward into the spiraling morass that is the politics of this pandemic, the briefings get stranger and stranger, the mad grab for power gets more desperate, and the thin line of democracy that separates us from tyranny seems to fade away a little more each and every day.

Prez seems to say that we will return to business as usual at the beginning of May, but then slippery people appear from the cracks in our political cesspool loudly stating that individual governors and mayors will be making the call as to when we can come out of our homes and return to some semblance of our past lives. The mayor of Los Angeles has already shouted out, to all who will listen, that L.A. is shut down until May 15th, and the list goes on and on. Politicians we seldom hear from, if at all, now righteously proclaim they have an honor-bound tradition to make certain their constituents are kept safe and by God, come hell or high water they're here to make sure that happens. I'm left with one searing question—who the fuck are these people?

Make no mistake about it, everyone is grabbing for power. It's like a power button was pushed and people went ape shit crazy. The Mayor's of towns and cities are arresting religious leaders and their congregations for Good Friday services, whether they are practicing CDC approved COVID-19 practices or not. *"Ain't gonna let no big-city politician tell me what to do, I'm keeping my citizens safe,"* seems to be a common theme among them.

Sheriffs, police, rent-a-cops, they're all getting into it

and enforcing what they believe to be a righteous "stay at home and slow the spread" cause.

Reports are many and varied but they all have one common thread running through them—if you are out and about, for whatever reason, the authorities can stop you at any time.

What the hell? When did the police-state start? Did I miss that part of the volunteering to stay inside gig? You know, the volunteering because we're not making it mandatory part? I guess I did. As did, apparently, a whole lot of Americans.

Tell me something, honestly, do you understand where the power some of these people have over us right now came from? Take Dr. Fauci. He certainly seems like a nice enough guy, but what do we know about him? Not too much, though here is what we do know—we did not elect this man into office, much less determining how our lives will be lived. But this guy, with the quick wit and the New York accent, he decides that we stay in our homes, shut down our businesses, how to conduct our social interactions, all under the guise of informing Prez? Doesn't sit too well, does it? At least not to a lot of thinking people it doesn't it.

His data, and Dr. Birx's data, and a lot of the crack team of coronavirus fighter's data, has been shown time and time again to have severe flaws, yet still, we follow their mandates. How do we overcome this?

As our nation languishes and we hear how even more money is being sought for the *"brave souls that operate small businesses throughout this great land"*—seriously, someone really said that—there is not a whole lot of direction, or planning, as to how we are going to get back on track. But do you want to know what they are talking about? Issuing identification cards to people that have tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies. That's right, voters don't need voter registration cards, nor do illegal's coming into the country need identification cards, but

you sure as hell will need an “immunity certificate” if you want to return to work.

With the same zealousness our leaders embraced the multi-trillion-dollar stimulus bills, they’ve put their collective energies into this latest scam—testing people for antibodies so they can return to work.

Immunity certificates offer the enticing promise that an increasing number of people can stop sheltering in place and begin to help the world revive. They could even play an important role in the period before we have excellent treatments or an effective vaccine. Sweet.

The United Kingdom has floated the idea of “Covid-19 passports”. Italy is discussing the idea as well, and in the U.S. they have it all lined up but, *“we’re making certain the antibodies tests will work before moving forward.”*

I would hope so, as there many issues about the science of COVID-19 immunity, about how such certificates would be provided and policed and, most important of all, about a country split between the free and the confined. Let me throw that at you again—a country split between the free and the confined. That’s what we’re talking about here. Under the guise of helping America end a pandemic that we’re not totally convinced is a pandemic at all. Are we?

“Are you kidding, you crazy man, science tells us it is a pandemic.” Ah, yes, science. Let’s look at the science when it comes to issuing an immunity certificate.

No one knows whether infection with COVID-19 confers immunity to re-infection and, if it does, how strong that immunity is and for how long it lasts. Not only is that information missing, but we cannot get it soon—it will be months and months before we can know if antibodies last a year. And that’s if testing happens quickly and flawlessly.

People who survived severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003, which was caused by a closely

related coronavirus, had antibodies to it for at least several years. Yet whether those antibodies would prevent re-infection is still unknown today as SARS disappeared by the summer of 2004. Some other coronaviruses, several of which account for a large fraction of common colds, produce antibodies and immunity for only a few months. One immediate study has found that some patients who recovered from COVID-19 had few or no antibodies. And a few scattered and poorly documented reports claim that some individuals who recovered from COVID-19 have become re-infected with the coronavirus. There simply has not been enough time to accurately test this. You know, that science stuff.

The current best guess right now is that COVID-19 infection provides some immunity, but it’s just that—the best guess. Assuming that’s true, how should we determine whether someone has immunity to COVID-19?

The best way would be to test people directly for COVID-19 antibodies—this isn’t the same as testing for infection, which looks for the genetic material of the virus. Antibody tests are well-understood, and research laboratories and firms around the world are developing such tests for COVID-19 antibodies. The FDA recently allowed one such test to be used. More will follow. But they are all in their infancy. Nothing is proven.

But no test is perfect. Some detect antibodies that do not exist—false positives—others miss antibodies that do exist—false negatives. False positives may be a particular problem here, as a test might even signal positive for COVID-19 antibodies when it is really detecting antibodies to cold-causing coronaviruses.

Whew, that’s a lot of if’s and maybe’s and um, we’re giving it our best guess—it’s making my head spin. Know what else is making my head spin—the fact that politicians are willing to throw all this aside in order to roll out a plan for us to be identified as being okay to work, or not.

How is this to be enforced? What about that? Some

people would no doubt use another's immunity certificate unless it had a driver's license-like photograph and identifying information, or perhaps we could have required thumbprints, retinal scans, or other identity verification. Would this, then, hopefully, raise even more privacy issues? It certainly raises them with me. How are you doing with it so far?

Know what would also be cool, even the right thing to do? Give out the money they said they were going to give out to help Americans survive through this crisis. That has not happened. They keep telling us it has. It has not.

How about we focus on what was already passed and let's leave the other stimulus ideas off the table, along with spur of the moment ideas such as immunity certificates. If only it were that easy.

In 2017, Dr. Fauci said this: *"There is no question that there will be a challenge to the coming administration in the arena of infectious diseases."*

He said this in a speech titled "Pandemic Preparedness in the Next Administration" at Georgetown University Medical Center. He delivered it just days before Trump was inaugurated on Jan. 20, 2017.

Johns Hopkins University, Bill Gates, Dr. Birx, Dr. Fauci, the list goes on and on, have all spoken of having immunity certificates as a way of dealing with a pandemic, in most cases, a coronavirus pandemic. It is nothing new. The logistics have been worked out well in advance over the past few years. Now they want us to believe this is a "relatively new" concept and we are "having to research it" in order to understand it better? Yet another lie. Yet another scam.

Some religious people are not being allowed to gather for one of their highest of holy days. Under threat of having local law enforcement arresting them, they shelter in place, foregoing their rituals for the sake of power-mad slippery people that have nothing better to do than

to sit around abusing their power. Now we are discussing immunity certificates in order to work when we still have no idea what this disease is, or is not?

Americans are slipping further into despair as money dwindles and businesses shutter, all while the promise of help rings hollow in their ears.

All this in 30 days. Do we really want to know what the next 30 days hold?

Monday, April 13th, 2020 - Day 32; COVID-19 Crisis

There were no briefings held by the government this past weekend. Both Saturday and Sunday remained free of information from official government sources. We do know that there will be a second task force that Prez is creating in order to deal with the reentry of America back into the business market. Chief financial advisors such as Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, and National Economic Council Director Larry Kudlow, have already been appointed to this second task force, but that's about all the information we have. Hopefully, more light will be shed on this in further briefings.

One thing that is clear is there is no clear path to reopening the business that is America other than there has been a lot of talk about "immunity certificates" for those that have been officially cleared to return to work. Though the procedures to obtain these "certificates" have not been worked out, or at least they have not been stated. With the assurance that "the health of American citizens" will be the priority for any type of reentry, we were left to experience the Easter weekend as best we could without gathering with our families, friends, or

with even the basic of knowledge as to what will happen this coming week.

Living at my home, Lake House, has kept me somewhat secluded from the world at large as I seldom venture far from it. When COVID-19 hit and the restrictions to shelter-in-place were instituted it did not hit me as directly as it did many people, primarily because of my seclusion to the world. Mrs. America, has had a bit of difficulty because out of nowhere she, like millions of Americans, could no longer go to work. Not only was this a dramatic blow to her income, as it was to all Americans, but her social interactions abruptly stopped as well, as did the rest of America.

This past Easter weekend took a toll on her as it is a holiday that we celebrate every year at Lake House. The grandkids are all here, there is a big feast laid out, it is something we all look forward to every year. Pretty much like every other family household in America.

This year, obviously, that did not happen. While Mrs. America was saddened by this, it affected me as well. For the first time, the isolation of not having a cherished family event hit home. In two words, it sucked. In three words, it sucked ass.

Both of us struggled through the day. We cooked a small Easter meal complete with appetizers and dessert, but everything had a dull taste to it. The day itself came and went with little to no joy. Though we both are thankful for the things we do have, the day itself was rather lackluster.

I know the majority of Americans suffered the same as we did. The shut-down of America reached its apex with Easter—not only can we not gather with family, but we also cannot gather for religious reasons—whatever they might be. As America watches media reports of officials at the local level “cracking down” on “illegal” gatherings for religious purposes, it’s still okay to wait in lines at Home Depot to buy supplies for our home

renovation projects or to stand in line at liquor stores to purchase our booze—as long as we maintain a six-foot distance from each other and not have more than 10 people in the store at a time. We can even head out to our local sporting goods store to purchase that much needed Easter Sunday ammunition. But when it comes to gathering for an Easter service, no fucking way.

The Kansas Supreme Court recently voted in favor of Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly’s executive order Saturday, banning religious services of more than 10 people. In Louisville, Kentucky, Mayor Greg Fischer announced a ban on an Easter Sunday drive-in service, though a federal judge did finally grant a temporary restraining order filed by a Louisville church against the mayor. The judge stated in a memorandum that the mayor’s decision was “unconstitutional.”

In Greenville, Mississippi, two churches said police threatened to fine worshippers at their drive-in services following a ban on the practice announced by the local mayor and city council, with officials going as far as to “arrest” and detain the pastor, releasing him after said officials were satisfied “he got their message.”

Hundreds of cases like this appeared all throughout the nation. US Attorney General Attorney, William Barr, was said to be “monitoring” government officials cracking down on religious services amid the coronavirus pandemic and is ready to take “action.”

A Department of Justice spokeswoman tweeted Saturday that U.S. citizens should “expect action” next week regarding state officials regulating religious services to enforce social distancing.

“During this sacred week for many Americans, AG Barr is monitoring govt. regulation of religious services. While social distancing policies are appropriate during this emergency, they must be applied evenhandedly and not single out religious organizations. Expect action from DOJ next week!” she wrote.

The government is on it. They will show these locals that they will not tolerate any of these shenanigans, especially not during Easter! Wait a minute, next week? So, after the religious holiday is over? They couldn't have come out last week and ordered this? Well, no, of course not.

As they have throughout all this "crisis", they have consistently said governors and mayors will be given the discretion to implement directives as they see fit to maintain the health and safety of their citizens. Unless it becomes a massive news item, then, by God, we're going to show these locals not to mess with religious gatherings. Next week, perhaps. Maybe. We'll get back to you on that.

Sitting here at Lake House over the weekend I was struck by the fact Lake House is in Grass Valley, CA. The same Grass Valley that Christopher Stevens hailed from. You remember him, don't you? He was an American career diplomat and lawyer who served as the U.S. Ambassador to Libya from May 2012, to September 11, 2012, until he was murdered when the U.S. Special Mission in Benghazi, Libya, was attacked by members of Ansar al-Sharia on September 11–12, 2012. Yes, that Christopher Stevens.

You'll recall that at the time of his murder the reason given to Americans was the attack had grown out of a spontaneous protest against the anti-Islam film *Innocence of Muslims*. We learned of this officially by Susan Rice, then the US ambassador to the UN, in her infamous appearance on ABC's *This Week*, on September 16, the Sunday after the Benghazi attack.

Ambassador Stevens is killed on a Wednesday, on Sunday the official reason given for the uprising was in response to a film the Libyans found offensive. The immediate day after the murder of Ambassador Stevens, Thursday, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called the film that helped provoke protestors to riot "*disgusting*

and reprehensible." Clinton said that the video's intended purpose seemed to be inciting violence.

Of course, we all now know the video had nothing whatsoever to do with the riot or uprising, or whatever label the government gave it.

The 2012 Benghazi attack was a coordinated attack against two United States government facilities in Benghazi, Libya by members of the Islamic militant group Ansar al-Sharia. This was divulged much later after several holes developed in the "*Libyans were pissed about the movie*" theory. Investigation after investigation ensued and there you have it, the real reason, with nothing at all to do with an obscure film made months before the attack.

Why bring this up? As I sat pondering this whole COVID-19 crisis thing, sans grandchildren and family, on an otherwise beautiful Easter Sunday, I began going back in time to when we first heard of the novel coronavirus, as it was known back in January.

It originated in Wuhan, China from a live animal market, specifically from bats. This was repeated by our officials many times during the next few weeks, nearly months, as to how the virus originated. The only problem with this is that in fact checking this I discovered, by using media other than our hysterical gang of fear mongers here in the US, that this was not true at all. Chinese officials were quick to confirm, and many doctors and health officials verified, there were no bats at the Wuhan market. Not a one. Not dead. Not alive. So what's up with the bats?

In digging further I found that Chinese doctors were writing medical articles that found the Wuhan coronavirus was closely related to two viruses sampled from bats in Zhoushan, by the People's Liberation Army. On Jan. 10th, when China released the genome structure of the Wuhan virus, scientists around the world compared this released structure to articles written by Chinese medi-

cal doctors back in 2018 about the two bat viruses they found in Zhoushan, and their genetic structure. The two were found to be identical by geneticists around the world. So it did come from bats. Not so quick.

Scientists tell us there is no way an animal virus can jump species, especially to a human, and remain identical. There has to be some degree of mutation. But here we have two viruses, two years apart, that show they jumped between species and did not mutate. How can this be? Simple, geneticists tell us—it was engineered.

Remember the story about Ambassador Stevens and the video? Here we are again with a ready explanation right after a disaster that again shows no basis in reality. Why would someone say it was bats that caused this when no bats were in the market? Doesn't make sense, does it?

148 Couple all of the above with the immense propaganda that we have been bombarded with over COVID-19 and you have even more questions. One prominent question being, why?

News articles are now appearing that suggest upwards of 21 million people have died in China since the beginning of the year. The source? According to Bloomberg News, run by former Democrat candidate Michael Bloomberg, intelligence briefings have shown that 21 million cell phones have been disabled in China since the start of the year. Obviously, they all died due to COVID-19. ABC News also floated this theory, as did others. It's all over FB and the internet. Even SNOPEs, who for some reason is the "authority" on all things true or false, calls it unproven. What is the point?

Are we to think the Chinese unleashed this on the world? And then hid the true devastation of the disease until someone noticed 21 million people were no longer using their cell phones? Many world leaders are openly critical of China's COVID-19 numbers, asking how can a country of so many people have such low numbers?

Maybe 21 million people did die and they hid this information from the world. Should we exact revenge on China for doing this? What should we do with this information?

As all of the information trickles down to us it is difficult to believe what is true. If any of it. Just like the now-infamous film "*Innocence of Muslims*", this whole propaganda campaign for COVID-19 is a smokescreen.

Early Easter morning, while drinking coffee and pondering our Easter without family day, Mrs. America and I turned on the TV and found the movie, Pearl Harbor. A devastating movie that showed how Japan attacked us and how US officials dropped the ball and knowingly allowed the attack to take place. In the decades since that day many books have been written about Pearl Harbor that has shown what the US did, and did not, know about the attack. We actually knew a lot.

But it took years for that information to come out. As a young boy in the early 1960s, I was taught about Pearl Harbor, along with every other kid in school. I can still remember family gatherings where my grandfather and great uncles would tell me not to believe everything I learned in school. "*They knew the attack was coming,*" they would tell me with disdain. "*Don't trust the government, kid,*" was their collective advice.

At that age, I couldn't fathom how our government would, or could, do such a thing to its people. But here we are decades later and it is now accepted as fact that our leaders used Pearl Harbor to officially bring us into World War II and purposefully withheld knowledge of the attack in order to allow advancement of their agenda. Again, is it true? It certainly seems so.

So has our government and other governments around the world inflated a pandemic to further causes that we can only speculate about? Time will tell, but it is certainly not looking like anything they are telling us is true, except for businesses are closed and a lot of people

are out of work in numbers the likes we have never seen before.

Who to believe? That's a damn good question.

Tuesday, April 14th, 2020 - Day 33; COVID-19 Crisis

Just when the coronavirus briefings were becoming brain-dead exercises in consciousness deprivation, along comes the two days after Easter and with it, an infuriated Prez. Make no mistake about it, the Orange Man cometh and he does not care if there is blood on his hands.

150 After the past weekend and the media having a field day with rumors, innuendos and outright lies, yesterday's briefing opened with Dr. Tony "clearing" up the article that said he told a reporter that more could have been done by Prez, and sooner, that would have resulted in much less of a crisis. It is not true, not true at all.

Dr. Tony says the reporter asked him a hypothetical question and the good doctor was foolish enough to answer it. I suppose we all make mistakes, but it does make you wonder, since doc has served no less than six presidents. You would have thought he'd have learned some politicking by now. Then Prez comes up and says there is no way he is going to fire Dr. Tony, even though he retweeted something with #fireFauci in it. Prez says to pay it no mind, the media was spinning the story however they wanted and let's get back to the business of coronavirus, shall we?

From there the briefing descended into something just the other side of a Saturday Night Live skit and the sequel to Eraserhead. A rather bizarre bit of television

that had Prez raving he was in control—ala Alexander Haig for those old enough to remember the good old days—and stating in no uncertain terms the buck stopped with him. Period. End of story. The governors will do what he tells them. The nation will comply with his orders. Prez and Prez alone will decide when the nation should open back up because that's just the way it is.

Hell yes, Prez's testicles were inflated today.

Prez then proceeded to show videos and clips of the news media to prove he is one "on top of it honcho" and the media are evil-doing asshats who attack him for saying, or rather not doing, the very same things they were saying/doing at the start of the crisis back in January. I recall a couple of evil-doing asshats thrown out during his running monologue. It was a great show, that's for certain.

Prez brought up some great points on the things that he did to help slow the spread. He did indeed order China, and then Europe, to be shut out of our country long before anyone was even talking about doing it. Dr. Tony emphatically stated that Prez listened both times when he and Dr. Deb let Prez know he should shut the country down for, at first, fifteen days and then again when they suggested the current thirty-day shutdown. This, of course, did not sit well with the media and they jumped on this like a turkey vulture on a five-day piece of road kill, bald head and all.

"Why didn't you shut down the country in January," they cried out.

Prez responds with "there were no cases in the US in January and no deaths, what reason would I have for shutting down the country?"

Stupid question, great response. The media does not like it and here we go, by my count at least a dozen more times, with the hysteria amongst some of the reporters that is palpable all the way to my living room. Larry the Mastiff got up, passed gas, and left the room, even he fed up with it.

So there I sat, my big-screen television showing a shouting match between Prez and the media while I slowly became more and more incoherent due to the mastiff's foul gas. Torture. The things I endure for clarification on a crisis.

I managed to make it to the windows and doors, opening them to let in fresh air. I gave Larry the Mastiff the boot and turned down the volume to regain a modicum of sanity in my immediate environment. Mrs. America called out from the other room asking why I continue to suffer the abuse of these inane briefings and I tell her I have no clue, none at all. Thankfully Sec. of the Treasury Mnuchin comes up and says we're all supposed to have money by Wednesday, and they are now up to 200 billion in small business loans.

I find this a bit amazing because I have not received a thin dime, nor does anyone else I know, received any stimulus money. No one I know who owns a small business, myself included, has had any success at all with loans, but I will give our governmental leaders the benefit of the doubt because, frankly, I'm exhausted by it all. I watch the rest of Monday's briefing in a haze flipping back and forth between news channels just to stay awake and functional.

It is interesting to note that I was watching the briefing on CNN when Prez was showing how big the chumps at CNN and the other media whores were being, when they switched off the briefing in order to give us their expert opinion on some trivial matter that had nothing to do with anything.

Good old Wolf Blitzer looking scholarly and assholio at the same time, a hard look to pull off, but he seems to do it with such ease so I will give it to him—Wolf, you are a scholarly assholio.

Basically, Prez called them on their bullshit and they did not want their viewers to see it, is what went on. The briefing continued on this way for a devastating two and a

half hours. I could not tell you more than what I have already told you as my brain ended up as dead as the aforementioned five-day-old road kill the turkey vultures were feasting on.

But I can tell you today's briefing was just Prez. He came out loaded for bear and let us all know that he had stopped all money going to the World Health Organization (WHO). We give them between 400 and 500 million a year, the most of any country, and they stabbed us in the back over this coronavirus deal, stating that China was doing a fine job in reporting on the virus and everything was on the up and up. Of course, we now know this was not true and the WHO pretty much lied to the rest of the world, but they especially lied to Prez, so heads are going to roll.

China gives WHO a lousy 40 million a year, we give upwards of 500 million, and for that kind of service they should be doing much more for us than the Chinese. Kind of a strange logic in some ways, rather straight forward in others.

It does appear from what I have read in medical journals that the WHO did indeed fabricate and hide what was really going on in Wuhan, China with the coronavirus. If they would have done what people pay them to do, monitor the world's health and report on instances of serious epidemics before they turn, you know, serious, we would have all been much better off.

Prez then turns a 180 from yesterday and says the governors of each state will be responsible for declaring when their state will come out of lockdown. It is up to the states, not the federal government, to oversee this. The federal government will stand by and give help if needed, but it is the individual states and their elected governors that are responsible for figuring out when they will come out of lockdown. Repeat this about fifteen times and you pretty much have the gist of today's briefing.

There was also a long and drawn out droning of all the names from industry that will be on the new economic council to guide us forward as we begin to rebuild industry, but droning is the keyword here and I must be honest, the winds picked up for a bit this afternoon, activating my allergies, and I nodded off after about fifteen minutes of listening to names being read from a list.

While it was mildly amusing to hear Prez give accolades out to those on the council that are his friends, “Sam, great guy, wonderful human, he’ll be a terrific asset to this council.” I have no idea who the fuck Sam is, nor do I care. The only reason I can recall this is because drool from my allergies had made my shirt color wet and it woke me up. But you get what I am saying, right?

A few questions from reporters, Prez threatens to walk out if one certain reporter doesn’t shut his pie hole as he is tired of the reporters grandstanding, a couple of more questions from other reporters and, poof, we’re finally done. Prez walks away with a female reporter screaming questions at him as he walks off into the distance. Oops, I forgot to mention that today’s briefing was held outdoors in the Rose Garden so it lent an even more surreal scene to the whole movie as Prez walked off with the female reporter screaming questions at him.

I’m left with not too many questions answered from today’s briefing. Although Prez seemed pretty clear we were not extending the 30-day gig we are already in. In fact, it seemed like he was saying some states would be opening up before the end of the month and those evil bastards at the WHO are going down. Oh, and it is the responsibility of each individual governor to release the hounds, such as it were.

Obviously, the White House legal counsel talked with Prez after Monday’s “I am the God of Thunder and you will all bow to me” presentation, but then, you kind of knew that was going to happen, so no big surprise there. One thing I would like answered though is who the hell

is the female reporter that is always heard screaming questions at Prez as he leaves these briefings?

Indoors, she is kinda loud, but outdoors, man, that woman has some lungs on her—she is freaking loud. I was kind of waiting for Prez to turn around, look her straight in the eye and tell her, “look, sweetheart, it’s a dirty world out there, that’s just the way it is,” and then walk off into the sunset, or in this case the White House, but, well, you get the picture. Life would be so much better if it were to be like how it plays out in my head—in fact, we’d all be better off.

Did the Orange Man cometh? Yes, he did, and he did it in spades. Stay tuned for the next installment.

Wednesday, April 15th, 2020 - Day 34; **COVID-19 Crisis**

On a day traditionally known as the deadline for filing our taxes on time, today instead became the day we all get our stimulus checks deposited into our accounts. Well, that’s how the plan was supposed to play out, but it fell short for a lot of us, far short indeed.

While some Americans have received their stimulus payments to help ease the burden of leaving work and productive lives to shelter in place, far too many Americans have not received a dime. Many households have received half of the stimulus money, or simply a portion of what they were to receive, if they received anything at all. Others are in a waiting game to receive what the government has ensured them many times over they will be receiving. There is no one to call to check on where the payments are, or when people might be receiving them. The IRS opened a portal on their website for people to

check on where their stimulus payments are but hundreds of thousands of Americans are either crashing the system in their efforts to check on their stimulus or, more frequently, after answering the questions given, they are told no further information can be disclosed at this time. Just more bureaucracy.

Many citizens are left to live with the ongoing panic of no work, no money. They are caught in a myriad web of lies that is emerging as nothing less than government deceit. Millions of Americans have filed for unemployment in the hopes of sustaining themselves with unemployment pay through this crisis, yet these payments have also not been forthcoming. While states lament they cannot handle the barrage of claims being sent it in, the Federal government says there is nothing more they can do as the states have all received the monies earmarked for unemployment from the stimulus, the largest, you will recall, in the history of the country. Or so our fearless leader constantly reminds us.

SBA loans that were set up to help small businesses across the nation keep employees paid with interest-free loans that basically amounted to grants, forgiving the loans if the business kept their employees working and did not fire or lay them off, have been nothing short of a criminal manipulation of taxpayer money. While the funds are there for the banks, and the monies have been distributed to said banks, the requirements set forth by the banks are so restrictive that few, if any businesses, qualify for the loans.

Consider this, if you go to the SBA website for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), the program that allows the small business loans to keep employees paid, it will direct you to a tab to “find a lender.” You put in your zip code and it will tell you which banks in your area are participating. In my area, there are two banks that show up out of nearly two dozen banks in the area. When I contact these two banks, in this case, Wells Fargo and Banner

Bank, I’m told that they are only servicing those clients with an existing business checking account with the bank. Even if you happen to have an account with them they have closed off accepting any further applications as they have reached the limit for amounts the SBA has given them. This, of course, is a blatant lie, there is still a large amount of money left from the stimulus that has not been given out. Or at least that’s what Sec. of Treasury Mnuchin keeps telling us. So someone is lying to us.

There are other means for independent contractors, or a small business where there is only one person involved to receive emergency funds—the SBA Disaster Loan Assistance Program. This program is not near as known as the PPP program, but it is available if you do a deep search for it.

I happened to apply for this program when it was first launched right after the stimulus package was passed on March 27. You apply online and it directly hooks you up with the SBA, no banks involved. I was to receive an email from the SBA but as of today, nearly three weeks later, none has appeared.

When you apply online you are given an application number that shows your application was submitted. I called the toll-free number at the bottom of the page in super small print and was placed on hold for about 45 minutes, standard procedure for dealing with a government agency. After holding for the 45 minutes with really atrocious music that I believe they believe passes for classical music, a sweet voice answered and asked me for my information. I gave it to her and found that they showed that I had applied and I am in the “queue” waiting for a determination. What kind of determination you might ask? That is a great question.

I asked the same question but they could not tell me more other than I would be notified by email when a determination had been made and I could make my decision then. Wait. What decision? What determination?

"I'm sorry, sir, that's all I can offer you at this time," was the response.

If you communicate with these clerks remember they are only the messenger and if you are rude, upset, yell or curse at them or offer any other form of savagery, they will hang up. So I politely inquired about the PPP program and I was again directed to the website portal that would direct me to my local lenders. When I told the clerk I had done this already and neither of the two banks listed for my area was taking new applications, the clerk agreed with me saying "*yes, they were hearing that from a lot of people*".

When I asked the clerk why only two, out of nearly two dozen banks in my region were participating in this government program to keep employees paid, she offered no answer other than letting me know I was certainly not the only person telling her such a thing. "*Is there anything more I can help you with, sir?*" I replied no, thanked her, and that was the end of it.

The government is always here to help.

In California, our EDD, our employment department, came out today and said that payments for self-employed people would begin on April 28 as they acknowledged problems with non-self employed people not receiving their benefits. I do know there are some people who have received some amount of assistance, but not nearly what was rolled out when the government laid out their plan to keep all of the unemployed people solvent in order to keep them from going to work so we might end this crisis.

Why did the SBA and PPP program only use a few, selected banks? No idea. In my region, there are many major banks that are not participating at all, and the only two who are participating, one a small, local bank and one a large, nationwide bank, are not taking applications even if you have an account with them. How is this helping employees of small businesses? How is this help-

ing anyone at all other than the banks who have received funding from the SBA? Who the hell is overseeing this mess? Who do I call? Who do I write to? How do I pay my bills? All great questions. Unfortunately, those questions fall on deaf ears if you can even find a deaf ear for them to fall on.

We hear rumors of the nation opening up again for business but at the same time we also hear of many restrictions that will be placed upon us when we do open up. No one seems to be on the same page with anything. The media does little to report on anything other than they hate Trump—we *hate the Orange Man, we hate him, hate him, hate him*. Not much information there. Try to call someone at the state level and talk with them about what to do and see how far that gets you. If you are lucky enough to get through you will more than likely spend a large amount of time on hold and then, poof, you are disconnected right as you begin talking with someone.

On the national level, you can call and speak with someone at the SBA, they do have that going for them, although there is a lengthy wait, and at the end of the call you find there is not much they can either tell you or do for you. So we're all pretty much where we've always been—on our own and at the mercy of a capricious system, a system that will not only shut down your work, your employment, your life, but they will also shut down any sign of a future.

It's pretty much business as usual in the land of the free, the home of the brave. With nothing left to do but hope for the best, the government is slowly and deliberately suffocating that hope each and every day this farce continues as we attempt to contain an outbreak that has killed fewer people than the common flu. But let's not bring facts and numbers into this, that might be construed as a "conspiracy". You might even be branded, a disgruntled American.

Stay safe. Remain vigilant.

Friday, April 17th, 2020 - Day 36; COVID-19 Crisis

As a nation languishes in its collective solitude amidst depression, angst, and fear, a worrisome thought is beginning to creep across our majestic purple mountains and golden fields of grain as citizenry actively begin to wonder—*what if this is one large scam?*

Prez comes out at his coronavirus briefing and lays out his plan for America to reemerge from its forced coma. A three-phase plan including gateways and acknowledged tasks that must be achieved in order to advance back to “normal”. The outline has all the makings of a really bad video game circa late 1970’s.

Giving authority to individual states to release their citizens from COVID-19 confinement, there are certain mandates that Prez and his task force have put into place that the states must meet before said release can take place. As well as giving individual states authority to move forward, Prez also extended this to individual localities within each state, provided they can confirm a two-week downward trend in coronavirus symptoms and documented cases before starting to ease lockdowns, while at the same time assuring hospitals have adequate capacity and robust testing in place. It is now the states and their localities that are in charge of testing, though the Federal Government will provide those testing measures and devices.

It works like this; after meeting the first gateway test of confirming a two-week downward trend, they move on to one of three phases:

Phase One: Restaurants, movie theaters, sporting venues, places of worship and gyms can reopen if they observe strict social distancing and avoiding gatherings of no more than 10 individuals. Elective surgeries can resume when appropriate on an outpatient basis.

Schools currently closed should remain shut and visits to senior living facilities and hospitals should be prohibited. Bars should remain closed. High-risk individuals should remain at home.

If, after Phase One there is still a two-week downward trend, they move on to Phase Two:

Phase Two: Schools and organized youth activities like camps can reopen. Nonessential travel can resume, and people can start circulating in parks, outdoor recreational areas, and shopping centers while avoiding gatherings of more than 50 individuals, unless unspecified precautionary measures are taken. Restaurants, movie theaters, and other large venues can operate under moderate social distancing rules.

Vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place, and employers should continue to encourage telework whenever possible. Common areas where people congregate in close quarters should be closed. Bars can operate with diminished room occupancy.

If another two-week downward trend period is successfully observed they move on to Phase Three:

Phase Three: Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions but they must still practice social distancing. Employers can resume unrestricted staffing of workplaces. Large public venues can operate under limited social distancing rules. Visits to senior care facilities and hospitals can resume.

Each state will have to maintain “core state preparedness responsibilities,” including having adequate testing and screening, the ability to supply enough protective gear and medical equipment and plans to provide increased intensive care beds if needed.

If at any time during these phases there is an upward increase in COVID-19 cases it reverts back to the beginning and they start all over again.

This is the plan for regaining an America that is once again “normal”. This is our American Video Game.

America is a country with rights and freedoms that are both granted and enforced by laws. But all across the land those rights and freedoms are being trampled on and discarded daily by power-hungry politicians that are allowed to move forward with their ego-fed dreams of totalitarian order by a citizenry that allows it to happen.

Fact; at no time in this COVID-19 crisis, was it ever determined we were at war with a foreign country, or with a state within our own country.

Fact; at no time in this COVID-19 crisis, was martial law put into place by either the nation or its states to adopt martial law mandates. It never happened.

Fact; at no time during this COVID-19 crisis, either within our country or in the world in general, has it ever even remotely risen to the status of the great pandemic of 1917-18, which our leaders assured us it would.

Fact; what is a fact is that it has not even risen to the status of the flu, which we have all been living and fighting against for years, as we deal with it as best we can.

With this new flu, however, the RONA, businesses have been shut down, illegal arrests have been made, citations given for not “obeying” orders to stay at home, we have been told what we could buy, how we could gather, if we could worship, the list goes on and on. But these very same “orders” that the media and the police throw at us as legal have no legal bearing with our laws. Far from it. They are not legal orders.

In California, the law is fairly specific about what our officials can and cannot do in a crisis like this. Let’s take it a step at a time. We all understand Governor Newsom “ordered” us to shelter in place, right?

Actually, the reality is that Gov. Newsom did not really issue an executive order requiring Californians to practice social distancing, nor did he actually order gatherings of over 250 people to shut down. All he did was order people to pay attention to what health organizations were saying. These were merely recommenda-

tions, not orders. Big difference. At no time has he ever said otherwise.

But what about our individual counties and their orders?

California law allows counties to declare a health emergency when the local health officer determines that there is a threat of the introduction of any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease—California Health and Safety Code § 101080. This power was not given to the California Department of Health Services but instead, this power was left in the hands of local Health Officers.

Cal. Health & Safety Code § 101040 permits local health officers to take any preventive measures that may be necessary to protect and preserve the public health from any state of emergency declared by the governor. After a local health emergency has been declared, *“The sheriff of each county .. may enforce within the county ... all orders of the local health officer issued for the purpose of preventing the spread of any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease”*—Cal. Health and Safety Code § 101029.

Cal. Health & Safety Code § 101030 specifically gives the county health officer the authority to order quarantines. There it is, Code § 101030 gives the authority to shut us down. Not so fast.

Does a county health officer have the authority to order a quarantine of healthy people, or just those who are sick? What laws are in place in the state of California regarding the stopping of disease through the quarantine? Great question.

While most of the laws regarding quarantine are very broad, Cal. Health & Safety Code § 120215 specifically appears to have limiting language. This statute reads: *“Upon receiving information of the existence of contagious, infectious, or communicable disease for which the department may from time to time declare the need for strict isolation or quarantine, each health officer shall: (a)*

Ensure the adequate isolation of each case and appropriate quarantine of the contacts and premises. (b) Follow the local rules and regulations, and all general and special rules, regulations, and orders of the department, in carrying out the quarantine or isolation."

Obviously, health officers have sufficient information that there is a communicable disease. However, the disagreement comes into play in that the Health Officers are ordering a county wide shelter in place law where the law only allows "*adequate isolation of each case and appropriate quarantine of the contacts.*"

This is where the local health official appears to have overstepped their authority. The counties are not looking at this on a case by case basis. Instead, they are issuing broad orders that affect both the healthy and the sick. The law does not provide for a quarantine of the healthy, only for the sick.

Cal. Health & Safety Code § 120225 has some instructive language that might clarify. This statute says that "*A person subject to quarantine ...*" A...PERSON. The quarantine laws were designed to quarantine an individual or a location, not an entire community or organization.

Quarantine laws, at least in California, are clearly intended to be applied to individuals and not to the entire county. The quarantine laws were designed to stop those who might have been infected from passing the disease onto others, it's fairly straight forward. We have laws that direct us what to do and how to do it unless our officials decide to arbitrarily change those laws and we decide to let them. I did not agree to allow these changes. Did you?

So what about COVID-19, itself? It is a devastating virus that kills and hospitalizes hundreds of thousands, if not millions. We have to do what we can to "Slow The Spread". While "Slow The Spread" is a catchy slogan, a bit of reality should be injected here.

As of 4/16/2020, there have been 74,705 hospitalizations due to COVID-19, and 29,000 deaths, since the

beginning of the year. No small amount. The CDC says the overall cumulative hospitalization rate is 12.3 per 100,000 for COVID-19, as compared to 68.3 per 100,000 for the common flu. Deaths in the US for COVID-19 are 10.6 per 100,000 compared to 14.3 deaths per 100,000 for flu deaths in 2017—the last year for factual numbers.

Make no mistake, COVID-19 is a wretched disease that needs to be addressed. But did we go overboard with all of our restrictions? It is a new virus, and certainly a potential killer, but so is the flu. At one point in time, in 1999, deaths per 100,000 were 23.5 for flu until they created a vaccine to slow it to 14.3.

Not only do we collectively cower under the fear of a virus that shows little, if any, of the devastating affects our Government said were coming for us, but we also have Governors, Mayors, county officials, police and sheriffs, ready and willing to put us into a near police state, creating laws out of thin air when it suits them to do so.

Couple that with all of us sheltering in place and it is rather hard to challenge these fallacies. But again, why did we allow this to happen? Governor Newsom perhaps summed it up best when the COVID-19 crisis began in California and he stated "peer and social pressure" will keep us in line. He was right, it did.

We fight amongst ourselves as to who is right with their beliefs, and who is wrong. We snitch on our neighbors, we snitch on our friends. We call authorities at the drop of a dime to turn someone in. Hell, in Los Angeles the mayor even gives you money for turning people in. What happened to our country?

The Declaration Of Independence tells us that in our country we have rights. It also tells us "*That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.*"

The consent of the governed. That's you. That's me. Don't forget our leaders are only in power because we

allow them to be there. Leaders are what we allow them to be. We ALLOW them to be leaders.

We, THE PEOPLE, are supposed to have the power over our elected leaders, not the other way around. We allow them to lead by voting them into office and tasking them to do what is necessary for that office to fulfill its duties for THE PEOPLE.

THE PEOPLE have been collectively scammed and are continuing to live with that scam for what some government officials are predicting will be well up to a year, perhaps a year and a half from now. Do we sit idly by and continue to let this happen? No voice? Nothing? What the hell?

I am of a generation where many of us are fond of saying “Fuck The Government” and periodically remind ourselves, and anyone who will listen, you need to keep these bastards in check, otherwise, they will steam roll over you in a heartbeat. An entire nation is now beginning to understand this—we’d all like our country back.

Is the sky falling, or is it government tyranny raining down upon us? You tell me.

Fuck The Government.

Saturday, April 18th, 2020 - Day 37; COVID-19 Crisis

As American small businesses struggle to stay afloat during the COVID-19 crisis their hopes for money to keep both their businesses and their employees afloat through the government’s much-touted SBA stimulus program has vanished, leaving both small businesses and their millions of employees, floundering.

With the much-touted Paycheck Protection Program as its base, the government gave a needed lifeline to Amer-

ican workers and the small businesses that hire them. But from the onset the program was marked with many flaws and now, barely two weeks into the program, the 349 Billion dollar fund has run dry. Congress is back to bickering over another requested 250 Billion dollar addition, but with little agreement between the parties, workers and small businesses remain without money while politicians bicker and another month’s expenses become due.

In the overall picture, the 349 Billion dollar bailout was only a small part of a much larger stimulus of 2.2 Trillion dollars to help keep the American economy going, collectively known as the CARES act. The SBA portion was to specifically help “small” businesses, not large, which were helped by other parts of the CARES act. Ultimately, due to zero oversight and vague structural guidelines, banks were allowed to give large firms the amounts of money intended for mom & pop businesses. Banks were still receiving up to 5% per loan for fees in the process, regardless of who they gave loans to, and since there was no oversight of the loans given out the banks went with wealthy firms and long-standing customers, tossing small businesses aside.

In numbers released by the SBA, more than 25% of the total funding given out went to fewer than 2% of the firms that applied. These firms include a number of publicly traded companies with thousands of employees and hundreds of millions of dollars in annual sales, hardly the small business the program was intended for.

Loans of \$2 million or more made up nearly 28% of the total, and of those at least \$5 million accounted for 9% of the total, with a number of those going to companies with access to public securities markets, again, hardly a small business.

Since there is no prohibition in the CARES Act against money going to publicly listed firms, at least 60 publicly traded firms have claimed a share, according to Securities and Exchange Commission filings. Some

firms, including the holding companies for well known restaurant chains, Shake Shack and Ruth's Chris Steak House, for example, appear to have taken advantage of a provision in the CARES act that allows companies with more than 500 workers overall to get loans as long as they do not exceed 500 employees per physical location.

Some firms, like Hallador Energy Co, which operates coal mines, received \$10 million from First Financial Bank through the SBA program. With more than 500 employees, firms like Hallador were able to navigate through loopholes in the program to procure large loans that are essentially grants, as they do not need to repay the loan as long as they keep their employees hired, or, at least 75% of their employees hired.

Other examples include a Maryland hotel company that did more than \$1.5 billion in revenue last year. They applied for more than 50 loans, and have been approved for about 10 so far. There's also the Pennsylvania investment firm that owns the Ritz-Carlton Coconut Grove in Miami, that applied for as many as 48 taxpayer-backed loans.

Remember the mention of Ruth's Chris Steak House receiving loan money, Winter Park's Ruth's Hospitality Group Inc.—the parent company of Ruth's Chris Steak House—revealed last Monday that it received \$20 million through two small business loans. The company made \$42 million in profits last year and spent \$41 million buying back stock and paying dividends to shareholders. Obviously, they desperately needed the SBA money.

The rules for qualifying for the loans were so loose that the program was opened up to many businesses and people who were never the intended recipients to begin with, one of the reasons the program hit its ceiling so quickly. It became a huge benefit for private clubs, law firms, investment managers and accounting firms that have the resources to complete their applications quickly. Some wealthy individuals set up limited liability com-

panies, or LLCs, which technically qualify for the loans, and they put their yachts, planes, and personal staffs in the companies to qualify. It didn't hurt that many of these "small businesses" had long-standing relationships with their banks who, again, were responsible for deciding who got loans and who did not. Pretty convenient hustle no matter how you look at it.

The last bailout, following the Great Recession, was widely criticized for showering benefits on the biggest banks and investment firms so as to avoid an economic collapse. Is it mere coincidence that men who made fortunes during that crisis, which crippled thousands of economically vulnerable Americans, many of whom still haven't recovered, are involved in solving this one?

Many of the players in banking in the Great Recession are now players in The Great American Economic Revival—Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin once ran IndyMac, deeply entrenched in subprime lending. He is now in charge of the Treasury. On Wednesday, John Paulson, a large hedge fund manager, was appointed to be a member of the "Great American Economic Revival Industry Groups," as the White House is calling them. The list goes on and on. Should we think things will be different this time around?

While Americans sit in their homes waiting for the help they were promised, banks have spent the largesse of government money on large businesses to cleverly maneuver, with the bankers help, a system set up to finance, once again, the wealthy instead of the middle class.

There were widespread riots in 2011 when the bailouts of Wall Street shook a nation amidst an ever growing economic inequality in America. Imagine what will happen now when it is realized that not only have the wealthy taken money from the working class once more, but this time millions upon millions of the working class have now lost their jobs and are being told to stay at home, as the wealthy enjoy cruises on their yachts

thanks to small business loan money. That doesn't have to be paid back. How much pressure can our nation take until it blows?

With the focus so far on the poorly mismanaged, if managed at all, SBA program, not much has been said about the rest of the CARES money, which causes one to wonder just how much more corruption will be detailed in the coming weeks and months?

Remember, ALL of this money is coming out of the nation's pocket and it's free money for the wealthy to scam upon. Give it to the working class? Let's start calling them what they really are; the working poor. Robber barons of the past have nothing as compared to the new corporate greed.

With each administration after the other looking the other way as a small percentage of our country grows wealthier at the expense of the rest, is it really any wonder we are a nation divided by economic inequality, with most of us waiting for scraps to be tossed to us from the elite as our families starve, waiting for a government to help them, only to find there is no help coming, only empty programs and hollow speeches?

We remain, a nation divided.

Monday, April 20th, 2020 - Day 39; COVID-19 Crisis

*Today's missive is dedicated to the memory of
Gene Oldfield, a visionary human.
R.I.P. May you soar the heavens.*

After many days of dread and confusion we crossed Gjallarbrú, that great thatch covered bridge of glittering

gold which spans the river Gjöll in the underworld. We understood it must be crossed in order to reach Hel, but we had no idea the journey would prove to be so long, or so arduous a task. Our leaders had promised us there would be little disruption to our lives, perhaps a week or two of inconvenience at most, but nothing more. Now, here we were, weeks later, on the other side of Gjallarbrú, searching for an exit from the cursed place our leaders had led us.

It was not for us to blame anyone but ourselves. We were learning to understand that. We knew our leaders were corrupt, capricious beggars of riches and power, yet still, we allowed them to decide our collective fates year after year, decade after decade, eons after eons, with hardly more than a whimper. Certainly, there were those among us that were hardened to the truth of the matter, but those voices were quickly muted by the ignorance and blind servitude that had come to serve as the little more than distorted obedience of being a "good citizen".

Truly, there was little hope for us, on this we all agreed, yet we soon began to realize as first one of us, then a dozen, then hundreds upon thousands of us realized that even with the smallest amount of hope that glimmered in our hearts, in our souls—we could not find the strength to begin anew.

Taking measure from our sacred songs, we recalled how Odin visited Hel, upon his horse Sleipnir, becoming a legend amongst us, directing our lives with his mystical knowledge. Foregoing the dread that was directed at us by scheming heads that talked to us from boxes on walls, carried with us on portable devices that further implanted their fear and paranoia deep into our collective conscious, we eventually succumbed to their gilded voices and thus began believing their foul, acrid statements as truth, never realizing they were only servants sent from the great demon Loki, the great trickster, who disavowed all mortals and Gods alike in order to fashion a universe unto himself.

It was this awakening of our collective conscious that came to us, unfortunately, too late, for we were already far past the twin gates of death, both past, and future, that guarded the great bridge Gjallarbrú, forever forcing us to wander in the land of Hel, where her spirit was kept hidden from the kindred souls that could show us another way across the mighty river Gjöll, the great river that separates the living from the dead.

Of the eleven rivers that spawned life out of the primordial void, Gjöll was the easiest to attain. Although ten more existed, the river Gjöll was by far the most attainable. We would have to find this river and cross it in order to have our souls cleansed and returned to us.

As we languished in our new land more of us grew weary of the stagnate nature of time and began actively looking for a way to transform our fates. Collectively agreeing that all political and media icons from our now tattered civilizations would no longer hold us in their power, we sought to understand the songs our ancestors had sung to us, all those many lives ago.

Ashes of a sunrise collected as they fell upon us, helping to clear our minds and allowing us to merge as one thought, one mind, one love. Soon, with no need for wars or money, hatred and the solitude that comes with it began to erode.

Even though we now all resided in the underworld of Hel, she was still a benevolent goddess, urging us to become greater than the individual nation, the individual mind, we had known. If we were to free ourselves from this desolate void it would only be through the mutual cooperation of all. There could be no recalcitrant thought. The common good of all had to be forefront.

But as powerful as Hel was, her father, the trickster Loki, was far more powerful. He had usurped cultures for eons by pledging false promises to low thinking men, offering them transient riches to enjoy on their earthly plane while hiding from them the far reaches of purga-

tory that awaited them in repayment for a few years of glory. Now that his trickster schemes were revealed, the task for us was to remain united in our determination to remain whole, and why should we not? We had already passed over Gjallarbrú, whether we allowed our leaders to lead us here or not, here is where we all were. What else was there to lose? We had lost our jobs, what little savings we had managed to put away, some of us had such despair over the lies our leaders and media had sown amongst us they even lost their hope for life, the most cherished thing of all.

Truly, as we wandered the lands of Hel we came to understand this well. With our new found growing unity of minds, we had discovered the ability to overcome the machinations of low thinking men and left them to dream of their great rewards while sinking further into the purgatory they were trapped in. We watched them flailing about, their faces grim with the knowledge their fates had handed to them as they began to leave us, one by one, for nether regions none of us dared spoke of.

In the end, we were alone. The people, all people, collected together in order to move forward as one people, one nation, one race, our race—the race of humans.

Millions upon millions of us suddenly found none amongst us that would lie, cheat or steal, in order to advance the singular cause of one nation, one human. We had learned to care for our brothers, our sisters. It mattered not from where they came, what color they were or if they had been wealthy, or poor, a teacher or a clerk, all that mattered now was we were all of one love and devoted to the continuation of our species. All that mattered was for us to understand that no one person, no one nation, could dictate to another. All of us, every single person, had a right to live in harmony with their fellow man.

At that moment the great primordial void opened again and Earth Mother called out to Hel, to Loki, to set

us free. With no low thinking men to corrupt with his trickster schemes, Loki, who by now had moved on to playing with other low thinking men's minds in differing realms, could care less about us like-minded people, whom he knew he could, ultimately, not control.

Hel, who was content on providing a place for the dead where they could reside in eternal peace, also had no inclination to hold us captive as she held no interest in the living. The great bridge Gjallarbrú appeared before us once more and we crossed back over into our appointed lands, leaving the low thinking men and women to account for themselves in the purgatories they had created.

On our return, great feasts were held. Stories were written and songs were sung in every language. We set about reclaiming our lives with a new thought of unity, one love driving us. Anunnaki came to our planet once again, giving us even greater knowledge that we might soar into the heavens with them. Our scribes wrote in great detail for other generations to learn the lessons we had come to understand as essential, before being allowed to soar the universe. As we climbed on board their starships we asked the Anunnaki, *"who would teach those who came after us? How would they understand?"*

They smiled and pointed to a monkey, who peacefully smoked an herb stick of a golden dream oblique. His illumination extended far into the heavens, lighting the way. The Anunnaki told us the Illuminated Monkey survived through time so that our lessons might be taught to future generations who, if they looked close enough, and were willing, they could see it growing, long into the future.

An Illuminated Monkey who sits waiting, patiently, to show people there is another way to live instead of living with fear, and paranoia, and the hatred preached by low thinking men. This Illuminated Monkey was a being throughout time, one that carries the lessons learned by

past civilizations, lessons to be passed on by a vehicle that all are a part of; the Church Of The Illuminated Monkey.

We were told to seek this Church and the knowledge that it held. To follow its guidance. To redeem our souls. To forever live as free humans.

*R.I.P. Gene. Yours was an intellect
that will not be forgotten.*

Wednesday, April 22nd, 2020 - Day 41; COVID-19 Crisis

Prez continues with his coronavirus briefings with little new information. There are daily regurgitations of perceived triumphs along with the appropriate ex-coriations of an unbridled media spinning their collective agendas. The nation lets loose collective groans as Prez continues to defend himself at all costs and at every chance he gets, which is pretty much with every breath he breathes. One wonders would it not be best for VP Pence to hold these meetings and to keep Prez off the podium for a bit? What began as an informative briefing so the nation might better understand what was happening to it has devolved into, at times, hours-long speeches of excellence that are at once hilariously inappropriate, while at the same time being, in a word, pathetic.

America at this point could care less about the now months old shut down of the nation from incoming Chinese and European visitors. We've revisited that far too many times. Yesterday's hold on immigration was, if anything, more of a shock that it took so long to implement than anything else. Yes, there have been times of leadership in the past forty-one days, but there have also

been far too many times of mind-numbing recounts of this leadership, and we, The People, need it to stop.

Numbers during this crisis have been thrown about like so much flotsam at sea during a raging storm. Figures, statistics, predictions, modeling, they have all been tossed about until the air around our “experts” appears to be as filled with as many glittery lies as there are bubbles at an acid-driven Grateful Dead concert. Throughout it all there is a lack of transparency that permeates the political culture. Americans are seeing right through it, and they are sick of it.

“Fraud,” we collectively shout.

“Your stimulus for small business has been shown to be the scam it is.”

At yesterday’s briefing this is readily apparent as Prez tells a rapt nation, rightfully angered at the loss of their businesses, that firms who inappropriately took the SBA’s PPP money are giving it back.

Harvard is listed as one such example with Prez citing their sizeable endowment as more than enough to cover their needs. *“Why use PPP money, much less apply for it,”* he asks.

Harvard tweets back—*“Harvard did not apply for, nor has it received any funds through the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for small businesses. Reports saying otherwise are inaccurate”*.

Harvard appears to be correct. Further inspection reveals that included in the \$2 trillion CARES Act relief package was \$14 billion earmarked for institutions of higher education. The amount Harvard received—\$8.6 million—was based on a formula hastily devised by members of Congress and focused on student enrollment, favoring schools with a large number of Pell Grant recipients.

Harvard did not lobby Congress for aid. Congress openly gave it to them. Like other institutions, it had to

sign a Certificate of Funding and Agreement stating that it would follow guidance from the Department of Education on how to allocate funds these funds. That guidance states that *“at least 50 percent must be reserved to provide students with emergency financial aid grants to help cover expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus.”*

Harvard and other academic institutions do not need the SBA’s PPP program, they have their own, unique program to help them out. This was not readily made public, but a little digging ferreted it out.

This is only a solitary example of misinformation as yet more and more misinformation is fed to an American public that continues to suffer, day after day, as promises of money, of hope, continue to slide by.

Unemployment figures have skyrocketed to 22 million nationwide as our economy continues to sink.

In California, there is little relief. While many have received unemployment money, many more go without. The added stimulus payments for those that are self-employed have not materialized and we collectively watch as unemployment officials talk of a roll-out program for the self-employed that will begin April 28th, finally giving the relief those citizens were told they would receive weeks ago. Do we believe this? Not really. Especially when officials say that while it will be retroactive, it will more than likely take a few weeks to get it online.

The local media gives us daily news programs that decry the problems California’s EDD has in dealing with such a massive number of people unemployed. *“We are up to 5% unemployment,”* an obviously distraught supervisor cries out, *“we are doing the best we can do.”*

In 2010 the population of California was roughly 37.3 million people. At its peak, unemployment then reached 12.2%. That translates to more than 4.5 million Californians out of work, a disastrous number no matter how it occurs.

In 2020 there are now nearly 40 million people in our Golden State and authorities are crying out there is a 5% unemployment rate. That translates to 2 million Californians out of work, less than half of those out of work in 2010. What happened? How could EDD have possibly handled 4.5 million cases of unemployment ten years ago but are struggling to do so now? Perhaps we do not have the money to provide for these claims?

The health of state's unemployment insurance funds is assessed by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). For a state to be deemed healthy and to be able to weather a recession, it needs to have a solvency level great enough to withstand a recession. In February 2020, the Department of Labor found that 22 states or jurisdictions, including California, was below the recommended level of solvency, which is given a value of 1.0.

DOL's report found that California had a solvency level of 0.21. This means that they are below the recommended level of solvency, and are thus ineligible for interest-free borrowing from the Fed, which means they have to pay interest on the money they borrow from the federal government to shore up their unemployment trust funds. If they take too long to repay the loans, employers in the state face higher federal unemployment insurance taxes.

Based on 2020 solvency ratios and jobless claims through early April, 2020, DOL reported that six states, which collectively account for over one-third of the U.S. population, are currently in a position to pay out fewer than 10 weeks of unemployment compensation claims. California is in the worst shape of all of them, with less than four weeks of funding.

So where do we get the money to pay our unemployed? The stimulus? The PPP program that has already been raided by large corporations, leaving little if any money left for small businesses to pay their employees? Where do we come up with the money?

At every turn, nothing adds up. Numbers, statements, promises made on the cuff by politicians, not a thing holds up for even a few weeks, or even days, sometimes their statements do not hold up for hours. The narrative changes so rapidly Americans are left with little to believe in other than they are not allowed to return to their work as mortgages, rent, utilities, food, all of life's essentials, must still be provided for.

California, tell us again, please, how did EDD handle so many claims ten years ago but can only handle half of that today? Was it the sudden surge of COVID-19 claims? That sounds plausible, but with all of the other disinformation coming from the state it makes it rather hard to believe.

Could it be that California's long-standing mismanagement of the state's resources and infrastructure, such as EDD, in order to provide for fanciful dreams of a high speed rail system, or providing free medical care and money to non-citizens, seeing fit to take care of these matters first instead of taking care of the aging and dated infrastructure, have something to do with it?

California is one of five states with open-ended stay at home orders, the others being Kentucky, Maryland, Oregon, and West Virginia. All other states have an end date in sight.

California has now joined with Oregon and Washington to open their states at the same time. Hilariously, one state official was heard stating the reasoning behind this as being "they all share a common border," despite the fact that California does not share a border with Washington, though it does share a border with Nevada and Arizona, who have been left out of the newly found "west coast cooperative".

We hear a lot of noise about returning to being open again from Prez, but we also hear it will be at the state's discretion, not his, and now Californian's must wait for not just one governor to set forth a plan to end this dra-

conian order to stay at home, but three?

While all this is taking place we have media and health officials reporting that the second wave of the virus will hit us and it will hit us hard, leaving us with even greater numbers sick and dead than what we have previously seen.

These numbers come from institutes such as the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), but these were the very same people that started this paranoia to begin with by telling us 2.2 million Americans were going to die, or at least 1.1 million, perhaps 200,000, maybe 100,000, oops, they made another miscalculation and now it will be 60,000 dead over the course of the entire spread of the disease.

These are the people we are supposed to believe? Seriously? In one sentence authorities tell us they know little if anything about this virus, and in the next sentence they tell us it will come back in three to four months and kill us all. Which is it?

Many studies are also showing that the spread of COVID-19 is much greater than anyone expected, in some instances by as much as 68 times the amount originally estimated. Not only does this drastically lower the death rate, but it also shows that the virus is among us in vast numbers, and has been all along, no matter what shutdown procedures we have taken. With scientists and doctors declaring COVID-19 is mostly transmitted within confined spaces, our governments have told us to stay inside and will now take action if we are found to be outside without proper reason. Again, more disinformation on top of information? On top of disinformation? Hard to figure.

What is not hard to figure is that the American public continues to be played through the use of fear and outright lies, as a gleeful media feeds us our daily intake of COVID-19 that now includes protests that are taking place around the country.

"Look at those protesters over there, they're carrying weapons! Oh, my God, they are carrying assault rifles!"

"No, look at those protesters over there, they are not wearing masks and are not keeping six feet distance from each other!"

"No, no, listen, we need to look at those protesters over there that are going to kill us all by their selfish actions of not sheltering in place!"

The media covers it all and we eat it up, spewing it out onto social media where we argue and bicker with one another in infantile attempts to prove each other right and the other wrong. We should all be standing together in unison letting our "leaders" know that we are fed up with their lies and misinformation, that we want to return to work, we want our children to return to school, and our lives to return to normal so that we can once again return to a nation where lies and misinformation are the cornerstones of our political system and we can do so while eating our breakfast at our local cafe, in peace, with a hardy nod to one another that we've all been had. All while not wearing a mask.

Is this ever going to end?

Thursday, April 23rd, 2020 - Day 42; COVID-19 Crisis

On March 19th, 2020, in what seems an eternity ago, L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti effectively placed one of the biggest cities in America under lockdown when he instituted an emergency stay at home order that clearly said that *"it is against the law to violate this Order, and you may be punished by a fine or imprisonment for doing so."*

Hours after Mayor Garcetti's order was issued California Governor Gavin Newsom ordered a statewide stay-

at-home order that he said would be enforced by social pressure, with no need for police enforcement.

Heralded by many as a way to combat the invisible enemy that has attacked worldwide, people flocked to the concept of simply staying at home to help end a pandemic.

At the time the Mayor and the Governor authorized these measures there were a total of 231 cases in the region and two deaths. Not much of a pandemic, but enough to make the Mayor ban indoor meetings of more than 10 citizens as well as closing down most public and private spaces from malls to clubs to playgrounds.

Despite only 231 cases and two deaths in the greater Los Angeles basin, and little more throughout the state, Gov. Newsom informed the federal government that at least 50% of Californians could come down with the coronavirus and California overnight became a quasi police-state with even further draconian stay at home orders subsequently popping up throughout the state.

The State of California and the City of Los Angeles were hardly alone. Three days earlier, on March 16th, San Francisco and six Bay Area counties had issued their own stay at home orders.

New York State was way ahead of the curve when it enacted a law on March 3rd that gave Gov. Andrew Cuomo unlimited authority to rule by executive order during state crises like pandemics and hurricanes, allowing him to issue emergency response directives that could overrule any local regulations. Talk about looking into the future. Cuomo could foresee this all the way back on March 3, 2020, before the 15 Days To Slow The Curve gig, before any of this madness. Could it be he is just power-mad? Nah.

America was being shut down, big time, in order to save us all. But this was not a lockdown, officials were quick to point out, we simply want you to stay inside your homes to help defeat the virus. *"Of course,"* we all collectively cried out, *"our bad. You're only trying to help us."*

After 9/11 and the Patriot Act was signed into law, many civil libertarians warned of law enforcement agencies having access to higher-powered surveillance systems, like fine-grained location tracking and facial recognition—technologies that may be repurposed to further political agendas. With the COVID-19 pandemic well underway in America, this has proven to be true.

In other areas of the world during this "March Madness", South Korean governmental agencies were harnessing surveillance-camera footage, smart phone location data and credit card purchase records to help trace the recent movements of coronavirus patients in order to establish virus transmission chains.

Israel began using its country's internal security agency to start using a cache of mobile phone location data—originally intended for counterterrorism operations—to try to pinpoint citizens who may have been exposed to the virus.

In Lombardy, Italy, the authorities there began analyzing location data transmitted by citizen's mobile phones to determine how many people were obeying their government lockdown order and the typical distances they move about every day.

As countries around the world raced to contain the pandemic, many began deploying digital surveillance tools as a means to exert social control, turning security agency technologies on their own civilians.

While all of the above took place in early to mid-March, a month later, America has gone full-blown surveillance on its own citizens.

From requests by Mayors for citizens to call in and report their neighbors for not obeying stay at home orders, to adding additional personnel to make certain businesses are remaining closed and people are avoiding public spaces, to having some authorities even offering monetary rewards to its citizens for turning in their fellow citizens, this RONA thing was starting to sound a

little too much like a bad Sci-Fi movie and a lot less like the science our leaders were proclaiming to follow. And it's only getting worse.

The suburban town of Westport, Connecticut, this week began deploying specialized police drones to yell at people who aren't standing six feet apart. That's right, police drones flying over parks and public spaces that shout down to non-compliant citizenry to get back inside their homes, or to at least stay six feet apart.

Westport Police Department told the public that the drones would not be used on resident's private yards, nor will they be using facial recognition technology. That's a relief. Wait? Did you catch that? They will not be using facial recognition technology? So while they have this technology, they just swear they are not going to use it. Pinkie swear.

The company behind the drones, Draganfly, says that the "pandemic drone" uses "specialized sensor and computer vision systems" in order to track people with fevers or high temperatures, heart and respiratory rates, people sneezing and coughing in crowds, and large groups of people gathering together. Draganfly also claims that its drone can detect "*infectious conditions from a distance of 190 feet*". Wow. Talk about Big Brother watching your every move. Can their drones delivers tacos? You know, maybe a side gig since we must all shelter in place?

New York City has used drones from a "volunteer" task force to monitor citizens, as have other cities. But it goes much further than drones flying overhead and monitoring you.

In hundreds of cities in China, the government is requiring citizens to use software on their phones that automatically classifies each person with a color code—red, yellow or green—indicating their contagion risk. The software determines which people should either be quarantined, or permitted, to enter public places.

In Singapore, the Ministry of Health has posted in-

formation online about each coronavirus patient, often in stunning detail, including relationships with other patients. The idea is to warn individuals who may have crossed paths with them, as well as to alert the public to potentially infected locations.

Singapore has also introduced a smart phone app for citizens to help the authorities locate people who may have been exposed to the virus. The app, called Trace-Together, uses Bluetooth signals to detect mobile phones that are nearby. If an app user later tests positive for the virus, health authorities may examine the data logs from the app to find people who crossed their paths. A government official said the app preserved privacy by not revealing user's identities to one another, but of course, the government does still have all their identities and says nothing about what it is doing with this information. But the information will not be used in a negative manner. Yet another pinkie swear.

In the United States, the White House recently spoke with Google, Facebook and other tech companies about potentially using aggregated location data captured from American's mobile phones for public health surveillance of the virus. Apple and Google say that starting in May, 2020, they'll add new features to their mobile operating systems that will make it possible for certain approved apps, run by government health agencies, to use Bluetooth radios to track physical proximity between phones.

If someone receives a positive Covid-19 diagnosis, they can report it through the app and any users who have been in recent contact with them will receive a notification. These digital dictates may enable governments to exert more social control and enforce social distancing during the pandemic, but they also raise questions about when surveillance may go too far. Notice how they are being used to "exert more social control".

Are we even certain this is even a true pandemic? Social control? Unilaterally tracking citizens? Surely

authorities would never use this information in a detrimental way.

Telling Americans this very same thing, that the technology mentioned would only be used for medical and scientific purposes, these official statements came on the heels of New York Mayor Bill de Blasio posting details on Twitter last March about a lawyer in Westchester County who was the second person in the state to test positive for the virus—including the name of the man's seven-person law firm and the names of the schools attended by two of his children. A few hours later, The New York Post identified the lawyer by name and was soon referring to him as "patient zero" in the coronavirus outbreak in New Rochelle. So much for privacy.

In January, South Korean authorities began posting detailed location histories online on each person who tested positive for the coronavirus. The site has included a wealth of information—such as details about when people left for work, whether they wore masks in the subway, the name of the stations where they changed trains, the massage parlors and karaoke bars they frequented, and the names of the clinics where they were tested for the virus. All this was being done back in January while, supposedly, no one knew much at all about this RONA.

Echoing statements heard from our own lawmakers, Jung Eun-kyeong, the director of South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, stated this to his press back in January, *"We will balance the value of protecting individual human rights and privacy and the value of upholding public interest in preventing mass infections."*

Pretty straight forward, your individual human rights and privacy will be balanced against the public interest in preventing mass infections, but by whom? Great question, isn't it?

While we vote for Congressmen and women, Senators, President—what about people like Dr. Fauci, or Dr. Birx? We did not vote for them yet they institute policies that af-

fect all of us. What about the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME)? We did not vote for them and they, too, institute policies that affect all of us.

Interestingly enough, these same people we did not vote for are the same people calling for stricter measures of testing, stricter levels of enforcement, stricter levels of surveillance. Hmmmmmm.

You would think that with a pandemic, science and medicine would be the cornerstones that we would observe unfolding throughout the pandemic. You would be wrong.

Control and power are what we are watching unfold with this crisis, not medicine and science. Along with all the differing and increased monitoring of citizens, even a skateboard park is not immune.

At Ralphs Skate Court in San Clemente, California, the city filled in the skate park with tons of sand in an attempt to enforce the state's strict social distancing measures. About 80 miles away, the Venice Skate Park, in Venice Beach, was filled, too. But under whose orders?

In accordance with LA County Department of Public Health orders, set in place by Mayor Garcetti, LA City Recreation and Parks filled the parks with sand, 37 tons of sand at the San Clemente skate park alone. San Clemente, by the way, has 43 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among a population of 65,000, and is in Orange County—with its own Mayor—but it is close enough, apparently, to fall under L.A. Mayor Garcetti's rule.

So it's okay to stand in line at Walmart, or Costco, or Sam's Club to buy supplies. It's even okay to head on down to your local liquor store to stock up on your favorite adult beverage. But go outside and get some sunshine and fresh air and we will fill your parks with sand and send drones in to monitor you, all under the guise of protecting you, the American Citizen, from an invisible enemy, which is not your government.

Is the enemy really invisible? It looks to be very real

to a lot of Americans. It pretty much looks like lawmakers and officials are running amok, grabbing power as fast as they can grab it.

America's political elite has transformed the land they govern from the land of the free, to the home of power-hungry egomaniacal fifth-rate politicians forcing their will on a people under the guise of "flattening the curve". These power mad rubes are making up laws as they go along and placing ever more obscene measures of surveillance upon the people they swore to protect.

Why, we collectively ask them?

"Coronavirus," is their collective answer. But they're just kidding.

"Because we can," is the truth they will not say.

As America's people continue to endure insane mandates that illegally strip them of their constitutional rights, they are also bombarded with outright lies and overnight laws that supposedly give their power-mad overseers the right to continue with their charade.

It's just another week in an ever-tightening noose our leaders have crafted, and are continuing to place around the necks of all Americans.

Throughout it all, we remain faithful to our families, faithful to the ones we trust. Now, more than ever, we must not give up hope and we must realize that despite all they throw at us, we will remain, Alive In America—Our America, an America for The People.

Stay safe out there.

Saturday, April 25th, 2020 - Day 44; COVID-19 Crisis

TRUMP

The hatred for one man
The focused animus of control
No dreams, or desire
For new ideas

Only the pure exaltation
Of hatred that rises from within

An entire congress of corruptions
Swirl about us
Raping our rights, our lives,
Our children's future
As hatred grows, festers

A plague is upon us, destroying

The soul of a nation

Sunday, April 26th, 2020 - Day 45; COVID-19 Crisis

As the COVID-19 crisis continues it has become obvious that what at first started as a way to defeat a virus has now evolved into a way of defeating American citizens.

With not one shot fired our citizens have been confined to their homes as their livelihoods have been taken from them, their rights taken from them, and their fates decided by aloof politicians interested more in their own personal gain than in the name of stopping an unseen enemy. The American people have come under attack not from a foreign enemy, but from within.

Many areas of the country are still hurting. Cities disrupted by both death, and the fear of more death to come. Most regions, however, have shown little effect. With millions of people left to languish under quasi-quarantine orders that we are not certain are even legitimate orders, every day that passes without a plan to emerge from this farce is one day further that we fall under the boots of our leader's whims.

Stories after stories are appearing that show the virus was far more prevalent than thought, dramatically lowering the death rate. What was presented as the scourge of our time has devolved into little more than what influenza brings each and every year. In fact, it would appear it is much less than what we have already been living with for decades. In the long run, it seems the great COVID-19 scare of 2020 was little more than a mass hysteria panic fueled by a media driven by ratings and a political regime driven by control.

How else do you explain the open-ended lockdown of states? What began as a 15-day course to slow the spread of a virus has now morphed into open-ended restrictions of our freedoms, of our rights. From decrees

ranging from not gathering for worship on Easter, to not being allowed to buy garden seed, to having drones fly overhead to keep us in line, America is facing an enemy that threatens to destroy the very fabric of the principles our country was founded upon. The enemy—our political leaders. The enemy is us.

Millions upon millions of Americans sit in their homes afraid to step outside into the sunlight because their leaders tell them not to. At first, it was to stop a virus, but with forty-five days behind us since we first started to "slow the spread", and with the virus appearing to have "plateaued", as politicians said the goal was to be, we are no nearer being able to resume our lives than we were when this first began—they still insist we shelter in place.

Despite hospitals not being overloaded, and with many hospitals laying off their staff, we are still told we must meet a preparedness level in order to begin "phasing" back into our lives. Many states, certainly many counties within states, have seen little change in outbreak numbers for weeks, yet still, the ban on free movement remains in place as millions of Americans remain out of work. Their jobs, their businesses, wrenched from them.

Monetary measures put into place to help the masses struggle through these difficult times have been shown to be nothing less than wholesale scams of transferring the people's needs into the wealthy pockets of the rich. Vast amounts of the country's money have been diverted not to those that need it the most, but to those with the connections to acquire it. Bankers were left to decide who gets relief, not American citizens, whose money it was to begin with. Fraud at all levels is so apparent it is laughable to try and deny it. A few fortunate individuals are paraded before us to show that we have all received our share, but the public knows this is a lie.

The great scam of the American people continues with just enough people having received funds to placate

the mob, but in reality, that money is nothing compared to what we have ultimately lost. Without an independent media to turn to, people turn to social media to tell their stories, urging like-minded people to join together to fight this injustice. But these stories are quickly taken down by the owners of the platforms created for just such expression. The end result being there is little, if any, mass communication between America's citizens—the great scam continues on.

From this crisis a new breed of political leader is emerging, one that has been groomed for some time, one that threatens the very fabric of our country. From council members to mayors, to governors and on up, new rules and laws are being created daily to further enslave the American people, all under the guise of destroying a virus. You cannot have public gatherings of more than ten people, they decry, especially if it is of a religious nature, yet it is okay to go to the store where there are easily more than ten people purchasing needed goods. You cannot purchase a garden hose or a roll of carpet, or vegetable seeds for your garden, but a fifth of Jack Daniels is perfectly fine. The absurdity knows no bounds.

We are told we will have our quarantine lifted when politicians and authorities chose to lift it, based on dictates that medical professionals set forth, even as these same medical professionals are thwarted in their own efforts to end the pandemic. What? How is any of this real?

"More testing is needed," they cry out, "we need more testing before we can release the public."

But there are not enough tests to meet their goals, not enough to meet their requirements, so a banished public wait in their homes while bills pile up, food stores run dry, and tempers wear thin as officials argue amongst themselves as to how to proceed.

"How are we to meet these demands?" a tired nation

cries out in desperation for an answer, any answer, that will end their struggles.

An outraged public grows with each waking day, knowing that they are being lied to, they are being played. Yet still, nothing changes and the rules grow even more stringent.

People wanting something, anything, to give them relief and to get out of their homes head to parks, to rivers, to beaches, only to find them shut down with threats of fines and imprisonment levied against any who dare challenge the authorities's demands. In towns where little, if any, cases of the virus are present, even more restrictions are placed upon people for no clear reason. We were told this would not be the case. Yet, here we are.

"The state next to us did not shut down, why must we be shut down," is a commonly heard question.

The question falls upon deaf ears as a nation is now said to be split into governance by individual states and not one governing body.

"We are here to help you," the federal government assures us. *"But it is the individual states that must now take the lead. They will guide you. Trust them."*

But when the overreaching tyranny of a local governor or official does rear its ugly head, nothing is done to stop it, only the words of a flaccid president calling out, *"yes, it is a shame what is happening around the country, but there is nothing I can do."*

Our forefathers forged this great country out of a desire to not live under the callous demands of a tyrant who would hold a people hostage for the tyrants' own benefit. A Constitution was put forth, a way of life was chiseled out of the bedrock that is freedom and set forth for all to read and understand. We are one United States of America, sovereign to ourselves and no one else.

Enemies have tried to defeat us, none have succeeded. Now we face our biggest threat yet—ourselves. How much longer do we sit by and watch as our people suf-

fer at the hands of these crooked despots that we term “leaders”? When our country was starting to form it was not uncommon for citizens to rise up against their leaders, elected or not, in order to keep our country firmly on the path our forefathers set before us. It was expected of the populace to do so.

Now, it appears, the populace has little or no understanding of what our forefathers fought for, discarding rights and freedoms at every whim. The question is asked, over and over, “*when did we become an America that is divided?*”

Great question, but maybe we should be asking instead—“*how did we lose our way?*”

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Tuesday, April 28th, 2020 - Day 47; COVID-19 Crisis

Life with COVID-19 trudges on. Speeches are made daily by important men. You can tell their importance by the suits they wear and the colorful nooses they wrap around their necks for all to see. “*We are powerful,*” the nooses cry out, “*witness the bold statements before you and yield to our power.*”

Their agenda of fear has reached deep into the soul of a nation, nearly extinguishing what little flicker of freedom remained. The nation does not rise in revolt against these fear mongers, quite the opposite, they embrace them and champion their cause. Enabled and sustained by a media held hostage by its own greed, the media message rings across the land—“*listen to the rulers we provide to you, accept their resolutions for they are our salvation.*” In plain English, “*here, take this kool-aid and drink it*”.

There are those souls, however, that will not succumb to the hypnotic lies being spun before them. These patriots of freedom turn off the media, turning off the paranoia and fear. While those around them allow men with colorful nooses to dictate how life should be, the patriots smile and nod to one another in a silent and knowing kinship. They have been through this before. This is nothing more than one more storm they must endure. The patriots know this, deep within the fabric of their souls, they know this and continue to remain faithful for that which their ancestors fought and died for—a free America. Sustained by dreams of their ancestors, fires burning deep within their souls that illuminate the charade before them, all that is needed now is for the first shot to be fired.

The revolution that began as a reality TV show will be examined and dissected for decades. The truth will be what the victors decide it should be, as it has been through all of time. Of lessons learned and then forgotten by countless cultures throughout time, no matter who writes history, this one fact will remain true—there will always be dissension when you enslave people and take away their freedoms.

Therein lies the truth of man—there is always dissension. Pompous rulers can never fully enslave anyone, they can only enslave themselves. With their suits and colorful nooses wrapped around their necks for all to see, the irony remains. Countless people enslaved by their fear, and power-mad rulers feeding their narcissistic hunger, it’s all an illusory game. No matter how many people are enslaved there are always those who will dissent, waiting, patiently, for the right moment to strike.

Nature dictates nothing less.

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Wednesday, April 29th, 2020 - Day 48; COVID-19 Crisis

Prez is set to end his national stay at home order tomorrow, April 30th, while governors across America are varied in their response. Some governors never closed down their states and some are opening already. A lot of governors say they plan to reopen after Prez ends his stay at home orders.

In California, Governor Newsom is not letting up on his draconian stay-at-home order, refusing to give a timeline on his open-ended stay at home order, though he did say this week that California is in Stage 1 of four Stages to fully re-open.

Newsom said on Twitter that Stage 1 is where the state is now, staying home and working on flattening the curve. Stage 2 involves lifting restrictions on some lower risk workplaces, such as retail, manufacturing, and offices where telework is not possible. Reopening child care centers will be a part of that second stage as well. When will this occur? Stage two could come in a matter of weeks.

Stage 3, is *"months, not weeks, away,"* Newsom tells us. This stage will encompass personal care businesses like gyms, spas and salons, sports without live audiences, in-person religious services, and other businesses where workers come in close contact with customers.

And the final phase, Stage 4, will see the end of the stay-at-home order with the reopening of the "highest risk parts of our economy" being reopened. That includes concerts, convention centers, and sports with live crowds. Newsom said that Stage 4 would come only *"once therapeutics have been developed."* In other words, he wants a vaccine before he ends his stay at home order, which could take up to 18 months.

In California we have gone from 15 Days To Slow

The Curve, to 30 Days To Slow The Curve, to four stages implemented and controlled by our governor who readily states a free and open California is not likely to happen any time soon.

Stay safe. Stay vigilant. Remain hopeful.

Thursday, April 30th, 2020 - Day 49; COVID-19 Crisis

Prez said Wednesday the federal government's coronavirus social distancing guidelines will be "fading out" when they expire Thursday. It will now fall on individual states to either cancel or extend their stay at home orders.

Tens of thousands of people all across America, hundreds of thousands, are planning to demonstrate in those states that have refused to end their stay at home orders in an attempt at persuading their political leaders to open up their states.

There have already been demonstrations against the unlawful orders issued by these states, but these demonstrations have been marked by a lot of idiocy that the media preys upon to distort the truth that most demonstrators are speaking. So a few things to keep in mind if you are planning to demonstrate:

While yelling obscenities at politicians is a great past time, being captured on TV cameras doing it, allowing editing that shows how rude and stupid people act at these rally's, it does not help the cause of ending these lockdowns.

Yelling support for, or opposition to, Trump, or some other politician, can also be great fun, but again, it does nothing to address these lockdowns.

Yelling a profanity-laced rant based on frustration

and anger, or simply yelling the first thing that comes to mind, does not do a whole lot to further the cause either.

So, while all of the above are great releases, they do little or nothing to help address why we should not be locked down further. There will be lots and lots of camera crews on hand and they love to get people on camera that are riled. If they ask you why you are out protesting, try these suggestions for answers:

We, the people, accepted Shelter In Place to “flatten the curve” to avoid overwhelming our hospitals. The curve is now flat. Hospitals are furloughing staff, emergency hospitals are closing, and hospital ships have been sent away after treating very few patients.

How has a 15-day quarantine turned into 6 weeks and counting when hospitals are not overwhelmed?

Asking questions like this to a news crew totally fucks up their thinking. They are waiting for a yelling and screaming tirade. The minute you hit them with intelligent and relevant questions you have them off-guard.

Why are hospitals furloughing staff?

See, it's easy to come up with intelligent questions.

Why are the model predictions constantly wrong and always overstated and why do we constantly keep relying on them?

Why are the COVID-19 deaths overstated?

Why are hospitals given financial incentives to report deaths as COVID-19, even without testing?

Why are politicians threatening to extend Shelter In Place because of the “bad behavior” of citizens, yet we were told opening up would be based on “science and data?”

Why is the government setting up snitch reporting lines? Isn't that what happens in Communist dictatorships?

Why are politicians allowing people to volunteer for free when it's too dangerous for them to go to work in the first place? Are the places that need volunteers safer than regular work environments?

Why is it okay to stand in line at Walmart with hun-

dreds of other people but it is not okay to go camping in the woods, or surfing in the ocean?

Why is the government using cell phone tracking data and analyzing that data using artificial intelligence to spy on its citizens?

The list can go on and on but I think you get the drift.

Don't give the appearance that so many have put forth with partisan anger and endless diatribes against tyranny while holding your favorite gun. The media loves that shit and they will exploit the hell out of it.

I know it is a difficult thing to do after witnessing the lies we have been told, the unlawful suspension of our rights taking place, at times, on an hourly basis, but we all need to present as a unified front and not let the media and the politicians turn this into a bigger circus than it already is. Remember, when it comes to creating a circus, politicians and media whores are professionals—it ain't nothing but a thing for them to create a circus out of thin air.

If we all work together we can totally change the system.

Friday, May 1st, 2020 - Day 50; COVID-19 Crisis

Happy May Day! Rallies and revolts occur across the nation today as citizens are letting their ELECTED officials know they have had enough of their crap.

CDC comes out with a breakdown of COVID-19 deaths, along with deaths from other causes, such as pneumonia and the flu.

11,356 deaths attributed to COVID-19 alone, the rest are all flu, pneumonia, or underlying conditions.

Check out the number for ALL causes of death—569,403, for the period of February, March and half of April for this year. Two percent of all deaths were

strictly COVID-19 deaths. Nine and a half percent of all deaths were COVID-19/Flu & Pneumonia caused.

Do you still believe your government?

Wednesday, May 6th, 2020 - Day 55; COVID-19 Crisis

As we soar into May the grip COVID-19 has on us is anything but relaxed. Three states, NY, NJ, and MA account for 53% of the total number of COVID-19 death in the US while the three largest and most populated states, CA, TX and FL account for 6.5%. The numbers are not only staggering in their disproportional nature but they tell an interesting story as America continues to trudge through the farce known as COVID-19, the RONA.

With rules changing daily, the nation finally gave up its authority to tell citizens how to interact on a national scale, replacing that with the state by state decrees we are to adhere to at the beginning of May. Frantic governors across America relay fears of an onslaught of disease and death that will ravage its citizens if they do not keep them locked down and following their rules. With press conferences that include threats of citations or arrests, some local leaders have even gone so far as to say they will come into homes and arrest people for hosting large social gatherings. And they know who these people are, they tell us—they are watching.

As the death rate steadily decreases, news about low death numbers in our three most populated states as compared with NY, NJ and MA are not mentioned. Further redactions of COVID-19 deaths from the CDC are also not reported. Tens of thousands of deaths originally attributed to COVID-19 are now assigned other classifications ranging from the common flu, to pneumonia,

to natural causes. Again, none of this is reported on by mainstream media. Not a word.

Here at Lake House, I am fairly immune from the craziness that exists outside of its borders. When I do go into town for food or the occasional replacement sprinkler head, I am required to wear a mask, sometimes gloves, in order to enter stores. Hostile stares from mask-wearing citizens, their eyes alternately filled with hate and fear, let me know exactly how much of a savage I am for not wearing the appropriate protective coverings.

“Do you not care about your fellow man!” a woman screams at me, poking her spindly finger in my chest.

“Aren’t you supposed to be six feet away from me?” I ask.

It’s hard to navigate through these times and deciding who, or what, to believe. The original call for mask-wearing came from Dr. Fauci and the CDC back when this was a national issue. Now that it has supposedly become a state by state issue, the good doctor has appeared on news programs stating that mask-wearing is ineffective and silly—he actually said the word, “silly”. So, what changed? Are we to believe him now? Or someone else? And if so, who?

In California, the governor has come up with a long list of approved outdoor activities, among other restrictive stuff. One of the activities that I enjoy is kayaking on my lake. It is wonderful to cruise along the water and observe the egrets, ducks, geese, swan, and other wildlife, even beavers and otters, as I glide along the waters’ surface. This, however, is not an approved activity. I am now, in essence, breaking the law by doing so. Even if it is on my own property.

Which brings me to a great question—does the governor have the right to enact such a law? Is my gliding along peacefully on my lake, in my kayak, really going to increase the COVID-19 death rate in my county, which is one of the lowest in the state to begin with? Will I

cause thousands upon thousands of infections by my neglectful kayaking, especially now that we know I don't wear a mask, either?

How do we determine such things? I used to believe we had the Constitution, and The Bill Of Rights to guide us, but these have been thrown to the curb mighty quick. While I understand and appreciate a store owner requiring the wearing of a mask, or gloves, or both, to shop at their stores, it is not a LAW. There is nothing in the law that requires this. Just as there is nothing in the law that gives the governor, or mayors, or any politicians, the power to arbitrarily make up laws as they go along.

We all know this. We are all freedom-loving Americans. But it seems a lot of us have forgotten this basic tenet—you cannot create a law just because you think it should be created. No matter who you are. There is a process to this law making stuff. Ironically, it is called the process of law. Who would have thought?

Videos are uploaded nearly daily, if not by the hour, of doctors and specialists calling out the errors in medical science that are occurring daily in front of our eyes. These are taken down as quickly as they are put up.

Platforms like YOUTUBE and FACEBOOK have vowed to censure any and all items they deem as going against the common thought that our political leaders attempt to cram down our throats. But it is too overwhelming for them. There are too many of us out here that are still free thinkers and they flounder in their attempts at censorship—enough information gets through that the flames of dissent are kept alive.

Think about that statement—the flames of dissent. If you question the ridiculous rule of “not kayaking,” though being allowed to participate in an officially sanctioned visit to a “tide-pool”, you are dissenting. You are a bad human, not caring one bit for your fellow man. You are a selfish human and you're probably a racist, too. You selfish racist bastard, you.

Can we sink any lower? Why yes, we can. Many municipalities have tip lines set up so you can call in and let authorities know your selfish, racist, bastard neighbor who lives six miles down the road from you is kayaking on his lake. That mother fucker. Come take him down.

People are being stopped, arrested, cited, you name it, for the act of, ready for it—living. Where once upon a time before mid-March we could pretty much do as we pleased, we must now conform and follow new rules of law that are not rules at all. When you attempt to enforce rules of law without authority you have tyranny. Plain and simple. These people are tyrants, make no mistake about it. They are actively engaged in tyranny.

Hundreds of small businesses are shutting down, permanently.

Citizens are being monitored by their local police via drones and their fellow citizens.

Billions of dollars in financial aid to support Americans placed under a nationwide lockdown have vanished into the pockets of the wealthy. In states or counties where the RONA is merely a blip on their medical radar, citizens are held to the harsh confines dictated by areas of the country not even closely related to where they live and, used to, work.

This is where America stands as we move further into an election for political leaders that will lead our country. Is anyone paying attention?

Or has the fear our leaders and media crafted fully clouded our minds? Is it tyranny that we desire? Or is it that our citizens have simply given up their freedom for the sanctity of Netflix, Showtime and cable TV?

After all, who doesn't like a good political drama?

Wednesday, May 13th, 2020 - Day 62; COVID-19 Crisis

After consuming the better part of a bottle of absinthe it occurred to me that what we have all been experiencing is nothing less than living in a parallel universe. I mean, it makes sense.

History is replete with stories of individuals moving freely between dimensions and then writing of their travels. There is ample evidence to verify these fantastic stories as factual, how else would you explain a small, guerilla band of volunteers defeating what was, at the time, the most powerfully armed force on the planet in order to attain independence from a maniacal king? Exactly. Parallel universe.

What the government is keeping from us is that in late November 2019, there was a large meteor that hit in the high plains of China. Believing it to be the return of their beloved Yellow Emperor, the Chinese flocked to the site of impact where an amazing transformation was taking place—a parallel universe opening and absorbing our own.

At first, it was only around the immediate area of the impact, but it soon spread throughout China and then into Europe where it eventually leaped to the United States, and, soon after that, the entire globe was consumed.

Political leaders quickly came up with a story of a coronavirus spread from a bat at a live animal market in Wuhan, as Wuhan was as good a place as any, and it sounded ominous. What better way to gaslight a world than to begin the gaslighting with a virus spread from a place called, Wuhan?

The media was quick to pick up the story from the start as it was a relatively boring news week and ratings were dropping. Christmas had pretty much killed news stories of any dire, world shattering events and, again, ratings were marginal.



With an incredible stroke of genius, world leaders had the WHO state the “crisis” in China was only regional as more and more of our Earth became consumed by the parallel universe. The plan worked magnificently. News media began devoting more and more time to the story of this new disease from Wuhan. In brilliant insight, several media networks paired the virus with not only the wet animal market but with the virus research center located right next to it. The conspiracy was on.

Despite the fact there was already a terrible flu season occurring around the world, and that the flu virus, a coronavirus, was constantly mutating, it was determined by the media that this was a brand new virus, never seen before. Ever. In all likelihood, it would be a killer virus. Political leaders could not be more pleased.

As the parallel universe continued to consume our existing universe medical officials of dubious renown began telling us through cryptic messages how to interact with this new, killer virus.

At first, they officially, and with much authority, stated that this virus was nothing to worry about, it was indeed contained in China. As more and more of our universe vanished, being replaced by the parallel universe caused by the meteor’s impact, authorities and officials began changing their stories. Now the virus was a big deal and we all needed to take precautions, such as social distancing ourselves from each other, though wearing masks was not recommended at this time.

With our old universe still hanging around in some parts of the world authorities then demanded that only “essential” workers could go outside their homes, the rest of us needed to stay secluded. The reason given was to combat the spread of this terrible virus, but the real reason was that some workers were still needed to help with the change from one universe to the other. These workers, we would find out later, were inoculated with an agent that erased their memories of the events they

witnessed. Oh, and we still did not need to wear masks.

The change between universes was now complete and the effects were apparent. Here in America one of the first signs of our complete transformation from one universe to the other was the weekly press briefings where our President and his appointed authorities went on for hours and hours about nothing, and no one noticed. Media was so enraptured with their ratings going through the collective roof that they sat, for hours, asking the same inane questions over and over as our President defended his virtuous ability to end the crisis, which then gave the media even more ammunition. It was game on.

Sources from media networks to small taco stands in Tulum, began citing infection and death rates. It became a race to figure out the real tally of the virus’s evil menace. Naturally, governmental agencies around the globe got in on the act and soon it was a full on pandemic that no one could see coming, but by God, it is here and by the way, go ahead and wear masks and we’re going to start eliminating your freedoms, we’re sure you don’t mind.

The Chinese sent out memos to other world leaders that their people were not fully buying the whole charade and they had to resort to giving out large sums of money in order to distract the populace from the merging of the two, parallel universes. This was met with great cheer as other countries were experiencing the same thing and were at a loss as to how to regain control. Soon, the entire world was awash in “free” money as governments one by one started passing legislation that would pave the golden path for all its citizens.

There were a few sentient beings, however, that saw through the charade. They were not certain exactly what was going on, but they knew something was not right. Oddly enough, no one was dying of the flu anymore, or any respiratory disease. In fact, all deaths were now attributed to what a world had come to call COVID-19,

or RONA, for those sentimental few who felt a need to bond with the disease.

While people were jubilant with the anticipation of “free” money and readily agreed to stay in their homes, some with their doors locked tight—the RONA has master keys anyway so this was rather futile—there were still the few sentient beings that saw through the whole thing and knew there was no way government would give out money to common citizens, it just wasn’t done. Big business, sure. Corporations and politicians, you bet. But hairdressers, nail technicians, mathematicians with advanced degrees, street taco vendors—are you kidding me?

A fifteen day period of lock down took place which was then extended for another thirty days. Political leaders realized that the parallel universe exchange was much like an electromagnetic blast—it destroyed society but left everything intact. They could refine society the way they saw fit, but it was going to take time. At least another thirty days. But the public was getting restless so massive political discord was set in place. Our President gladly accepted any and all claims against him, slanderous, truthful, false, fanciful, it didn’t matter, if it gave the public something to take their minds off of what was happening to them. He didn’t mind at all. Hell, he was used to it anyway. And it worked, for a while.

When it became apparent that thirty more days would not make the cut, a plan was put into place to let individual states decide when to “re-open”. By now an entire world could see the RONA was a figment of someone’s wild imagination but wide swaths of the population had still not been indoctrinated into the new universe we all found ourselves in. More time was needed. The sentient few that had seen through the entire scam to begin with were effectively silenced by those who still feared the RONA. Even though people could plainly see it was all fiction, they enjoyed not working and receiving

“free” money so much they overpowered the few thinking people left on the planet and allowed, even voted for, the shut-down to continue. And what about rights? Who cares, there’s “free” money coming in and Netflix just released a ton of new stuff.

Governors were suspending rights and freedoms left and right with no reprisal. The nation’s attorney general vowed to not let any rights be trampled upon, but stood by and did nothing as more and more rights were tossed to the wayside.

New rules were written and enforced daily as to how to conduct business. No one debated or voted on them, they just appeared. Overnight. Businesses were determined essential or non-essential with no rhyme or reason. Voting was canceled in some areas and massively modified in others so that no one would know or understand what, or who, was really being voted on.

Masks were ordered to be worn by everyone.

Meanwhile, on the high plains of China where it all began, the seam between these parallel universes was permanently sealing. The meteor began to fade away as the new universe managed to completely worm its way into our old universe. Vast majorities of the population sat by in ignorance as their rights and freedoms vanished one by one, all because of a virus that never was.

Those sentient beings who had seen through the farce since the beginning were left without a voice. There was nothing for them to do but try and find a way to keep the old ways alive, writing truthfully about what had happened, creating stories to be told that would document these events for future generations. They dreamed of days gone by, where the government was for the people and you could walk into a restaurant, order a decent ham on rye without wearing a mask, and sit at the counter and enjoy it.

I so love the clarity that absinthe brings.

Saturday, May 16th, 2020 - Day 65; **NO COVID-19 CRISIS**

As we enter the 65th day of the COVID-19 Crisis it has become abundantly apparent to the nation that there is no crisis. There might have been one at the start, and perhaps it might have been a true pandemic. But as the days turned into weeks, then months, more and more information has come out that radically challenges whether there ever was a crisis to begin with.

Yes, large numbers of people became ill, and large numbers died, but agencies all over the world are now revising their figures to a much lower death count even as the media hypes how the death count is actually much higher than stated. Bureaucrats and doctors argue back and forth as to what numbers are the right figures. Media plays it all up as their ratings continue to soar. Up is down and down is up. Confused yet? Maybe even a little angry?

Despite the hyperbole, what began as an exercise to “slow the curve”, to allow our hospitals to not become overloaded, has now given way to a feeble attempt at keeping American citizens locked up and in the dark as our economy is restructured around us.

While some states in the nation are reopening, some never having shut down at all, many states are not only deciding to remain closed down but they are tightening their restrictions as they do so. Just as the Federal Government relinquished control to State Government for reopening, many States, in turn, have allowed cities and localities to provide their own standards in reopening.

In Los Angeles, the city’s mayor, Eric Garcetti, has put his massive city on lockdown until the end of July, perhaps even further than that. Despite having far fewer COVID-19 infections and death than New York City, Garcetti has placed so many severe draconian measures

in place against his constituents, Draco himself blushed.

Single-handedly adapting laws and rules as he sees fit, Garcetti goes far beyond his station of mayor in his commands, yet no one opposes him. People protest his directives and people are arrested. People protest even more against his directives and he magnifies the harsh restrictions he sets upon his city. Again, all while the courts and national representatives remain silent.

It’s not just Garcetti. The state’s governor, Gavin Newsom, hands out equally incredulous decrees. While “allowing” twenty-three counties to open to a second of four-stage program, he holds the rest of the state hostage with his savage and inane restrictions. The entire state cannot move forward to a “stage three” for weeks, if even then. Why? Because he says so. He has stated many times that a complete reopening will not occur until there is a vaccine and no deaths from COVID-19. This is echoed by his maniacal counterpart in Los Angeles, Mayor Garcetti.

But California is hardly alone. The Wisconsin governor had his decrees struck down by the state’s Supreme Court. Meanwhile, across the lake in Michigan, a similar lawsuit against their governor is headed for its Supreme Court. In the states of Washington, Illinois, Kentucky, and Maryland, to list only a few, legislators and citizens have had to sue their governors in order to get their restrictions lifted. On and on it goes.

The Federal Attorney General, William Barr, is constantly heard stating the federal government will not stand for states trampling on their citizen’s Constitutional Rights, but nothing from his office is forthcoming on any level, other than a few repetitive speeches here and there. Meanwhile, businesses remain closed, more and more people are becoming unemployed and many businesses have folded under the burden, never to reopen. All this to “slow the curve”.

It does not stop there. Take a good look around you

the next time you go out. How many people are wearing masks? How many are not? How many are wearing gloves? Again, how many are not? Do you see the abject fear in some people's eyes when they go out into society for basic needs such as food?

Not only are the political parties fighting a grand battle between themselves in this election year, but now we have neighbors turning on each other. Hotlines are being set up throughout the country so citizens can call in and let law enforcement know their neighbor is not obeying the law as they think they should be. Even when there is not a law in place to restrict an activity, people are still calling in to report what they think is inappropriate activities. All because "it is the right thing to do".

We have become a nation completely divided in little less than two and a half months. While we argue about everything and turn each other in, our political leaders continue their unabated corruption as we collectively blame the "other" party.

This is nothing new—it has been going on for decades. The only difference now is that people are actually having their livelihoods destroyed, their businesses ravaged, their rights and freedoms tossed aside like yesterday's spoiled milk. All in the name of saving us from a virus that we know nothing about. A virus that not one "expert" has gotten right.

Compared often to SARS, the killer virus that appeared in 2003 and then mysteriously just disappeared soon thereafter, SARS today still does not have a vaccine.

Experts have told us over and over how COVID-19 is far more deadly than the common flu, yet now the numbers show it is not. An entire global economy was put on hold because of one man in England, Imperial College Professor Neil Ferguson, and his modeling "results" which stated hundreds of thousands, even millions, were going to die because of COVID-19. His modeling results were then found to be completely inaccurate and he now

stands in disgrace, resigning his position and admitting to "undermining" his government's messages on social distancing by meeting up with a married woman.

His faulty data didn't do him in—his pecker did. That was the uproar—he carried on an affair with a married woman after knowingly contracting the COVID-19 virus.

All the mayhem he caused worldwide with his faulty data was simply, unfortunate. But letting his pecker roam free in search of a married woman, while he himself was married, and having the RONA, well, that's a whole different story, isn't it?

His study was not alone. Many studies and modeling have been shown to be the snake oil they really were when given time to show how asinine the predictions were. But our political leaders went for it hook, line and sinker and sold it to us. Why? Look around you. Nothing but social dissent and chaos as we continue to hold the "other" party responsible. They played us and are continuing to play us all while they keep attacking the "other" party.

So, where does that leave us?

We are told we will never get back to "normal". We must embrace the "new normal". But no one ever tells us what this new "normal" is. Here's a preview of what the new "normal" is, because it is happening all around you as you read this:

1). A cashier that works at Walmart and sees hundreds of people a day coming through their checkout is okay to perform their job because they are deemed "essential". This is the new normal.

2). A hairdresser or nail tech that is trained in sanitation and cleanliness procedures, who are licensed in order to perform their tasks and see perhaps seven or eight clients a day, is not allowed to perform their job because they are deemed "non-essential" and their close contact with people could spread the virus. This is also the new normal.

3). We can stand in lines with hundreds of people in order to get into a store, but we cannot gather in groups of ten or more people once we are inside the store. Again, the new normal.

4). Bill Gates, a brilliant computer manufacturer with no education beyond High School—yes, he went to Harvard for a year but he dropped out and never went back—is allowed to have videos on YouTube promoting his beliefs about COVID-19 and vaccines, but doctors and scientists with more degrees than you ever knew existed have their videos pulled and banned from YouTube because the Tech God that runs this platform deems their videos to be “false information”.

All together—this is the new normal.

This goes on and on. You know it. I know it. The powers that be also know that we all know it and they just don't give a fuck if we do. That's also the new normal. Taken out of parentheses and placed as it is, the new normal. Soon, in the not too distant future, it will be shortened further to simply, normal.

Our children, certainly our grandchildren and their children, will never know the difference. They will be happy and content with their government. Vaccinated, safe from harm, because vaccines, as we all know, are the undisputed way to end a pandemic.

The government and their doctors tell us as much. It is also part of the new normal. Unless it is something like the vaccination to cure SARS that never materialized, despite being worked on for the past seventeen years.

But let's not bring facts and logic to the table.

That too is the new normal.

Sunday, May 17th, 2020 - Day 66; **NO COVID-19 CRISIS**

What began as my earnest attempt to chronicle a pivotal, historical event, has devolved into some of the most surreal moments I have ever witnessed. Period. It is unfathomable what has transpired in the short amount of time since I first began writing this journal a mere two months ago.

Our nation, our world, has forever been changed.

America is a powerful powder keg right now, ready to blow. All that remains is for ignition. A simple, solitary event to ignite what has been building, growing, waiting to destroy our political, cultural, economic and societal systems, is all it will take.

The insanity that has grown by leaps and bounds these past two months will pale to what is coming.

I can no longer keep a constant vigil with this journal. Where ever we end up, these short, sixty six days were the beginning of a new era. This remains true.

One might argue it has been a long time coming, going back much further than a scant sixty six days. One would be correct. But these past sixty six days, these were pivotal in forming, shaping, what is to come.

We sit waiting for a spark to ignite our collective powder keg while the media guide us further down a path of their choosing. Although few people will admit to this, I choose to come clean, putting it out there for all to see.

Do we listen to our leaders? Do we reject them? Do we follow their advice and live in fear of this, RONA?

Advertising for erectile dysfunction has been replaced by ads featuring sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer's, masks, gloves, all manner of vitamins and magic potions designed to combat the evil that we all know is RONA. We have no time for erectile dysfunction ads, we must defeat the scourge known as RONA.

Make no mistake about it, there are no more theories as to “what if.” That time has come and gone. It has been replaced by the ubiquitous present where nothing is known about this mysterious virus except we need to fear it, and to not question authorities.

And our future, can we question that? Are you kidding? Just do what our leaders tell us and move along. Nothing more to see here. Move along.

I have gone through a wide range of emotions these past few weeks as I chronicled the RONA crisis. I have determined this is the way it is going to be. This is the future, except I believe our future will become even more dark and unstable than what we have seen.

It’s been heading this way for a while. This is what they want it to be. Who are *they*? I have no fucking idea. You don’t either. But we both know *they* exist—pulling the strings for our show.

216 I accepted a long time ago that *they* existed, while also accepting that I would never know who *they* are. I acknowledged, accepted and understood *they* exist, and then went on to live my life as best I could.

For those reading this last entry, my advice to you is to go forward and live your lives. Admire the beauty that is all around you, no matter where you look. Never forget the trick is having to look in order to see it.

Create. Procreate. Teach your children to be kind humans and to respect freedom for all. In so doing freedom will continue to live on.

So what are my last words on this? My final thoughts on the matter?

Stay safe. Live free.



EPILOGUE

We all know the events that happened eight days after I stopped writing my journal on the beginnings of RONA.

A little more than a week after I came to the conclusion this was not a pandemic—it was an exercise in controlling the population with dire consequences if it continued further—America remained a powder keg ready to blow, it simply needed something to ignite it.

On May 25th, 2020, a Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin, was one of four police officers that arrested a suspect, George Floyd, for allegedly trying to use a counterfeit twenty dollar bill in a local grocery store.

After taking Floyd down to the ground, and while he was handcuffed with his hands behind his back, Officer Chauvin kept his knee on the back of George Floyd's neck for over nine minutes, despite Floyd's pleas that he could not breathe.

Chauvin kept Floyd restrained in this manner even as emergency medical workers attempted to work on Floyd. It was to no avail.

George Floyd died on the street, in handcuffs, with Derek Chauvin's knee on his neck.

The rioting, burning, looting, and revolt that ensued would turn America upside down forever.

It was exactly as I predicted.

dave boles,
August, 2021



dave (bodhi) boles, has worked as a Publisher, Editor, Writer, and Designer. His publications, editorials, writing, graphic design, and artwork have appeared both nationally and internationally.

The protege of acclaimed poet and alternative publisher Ben L. Hiatt, dave embraces our ever-changing literary and political structure while continuing to ponder Hiatt's school of Okie Surrealism and how it might fit in with this modern age of high tech.

He has several chapbooks, including *Balding Dissertation Of A Balding Man*, *A Small Answer To A Large Question*, *Do Aluminum Chickens Eat Metal Feed?*, and *Confessions Of A Black Ink Junkie*, among others, as well as full-length books, *OFFERINGS*, 2011 (Cold River Press), *ALIVE IN AMERICA*, 2021 (Cold River Press) and *COYOTE MAGIC*, 2021 (Cold River Press).

After obtaining a Doctorate in Divinity, he founded The Church Of The Illuminated Monkey, where he holds the position of Gringo Shaman.

His lifelong friend, Mescalito, still keeps watch over him to this day, sending a Red Hawk to check in on him from time to time. He resides with his wife, Mrs. America, and a collection of animals at Lake House — the Illuminated Monkey's *Home For Wayward Poets And Socially Bereft Humans*.

15 DAYS TO SLOW THE CURVE - ONE MAN'S JOURNEY INTO THE HEARTLAND OF ABSURDITY (first printing), is published in an edition of 200 copies.

Text: Body is Minion Pro, 12pt leading 14pt,, stretched 115% horizontally. Headings are in Minion Pro Semi Bold Italic, 14pt leading 19pt, stretched 125 percent horizontally and 125% vertically. Page numbers are 11.5pt Adobe Caslon Pro.

Cover: *Surreal News On RONA – Or How I Finally Got Rid Of Erectile Dysfunction Ads*, by *Bodhi*. It was created digitally using Photoshop and Illustrator. Book title is based on the typeface Alor, modified, beveled and airbrushed.

Inside Bio Photograph by *Mrs. America*.

Inside Illustrations by *Bodhi*.

Paper: Interior pages are printed on 70# white 3.7 Caliper, 541 PPI. Soft Cover is printed on 12pt Cover stock 541 PPI and gloss laminated before binding.

Printing: Text was printed on an Océ 6250 digital printer. Cover was printed using a Xerox Versant 3100.

Binding: Book is soft cover perfect bound.





In the early moments of 2020, a terrible disease found its way to American soil. Within weeks it would savage the nation, leading to its borders being shut-down, emergency orders given for citizens to stay in their homes, and an ad-hoc committee of politicians, doctors, and scientists formed to lead Americans through the crisis of Sars-CoV-2, a coronavirus that would come to be known as COVID-19, or simply, the RONA.

What began as 15-Days to slow the curve in order to combat this new, nefarious disease, would ultimately lead into an ongoing miasma of tyrannical measures that continue to hold America hostage to this day. Dividing its citizens, supplanting their freedom with fear, media moguls and techno giants became demi-gods, decrying they alone would decide which information is allowed to be shared through their benevolent decrees.

This is a story of those first few days when America still held on to its ideals of freedom.

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