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## Western world's decline accelerates: USA, Europe can't handle change

By John Stanton

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"You can't handle the truth!" said Jack Nicholson's character in A Few Good Men. To that should be added. "You can't handle change!"

Both sentiments are easily directed these days at the leaders of the USA and the European Union who are dumbfounded at the rapid pace of revolutionary movements underway in Croatia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen, Ivory Coast, Wisconsin-USA, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Iraq. Natural disasters in Japan (9.0 earthquake and tsunami), flooding in the Northeast United States, and the affects of global climate change further expose the incompetence of American and European political, economic and military leadership. The Great Financial Crisis of 2008 was choice, of course, as it showed that government and Wall Street are nearly one in the same.

And let's not forget the US led NATO wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan have gone completely ironic. Iran has the upper hand in Iraq. Afghanistan is a kluge. As for Pakistan, assassin Raymond Davis, and his fellow Keystone Cops (who ran over a Pakistani with their SUV), through their actions summed up nicely the derogatory attitude the USA and Europe have towards Pakistan. One American commentator actually blamed Pakistan for Raymond Davis' actions by saying that if Pakistan's security were better, the incident would not have happened.

Yes, if the Earth did not exist, we would have no problems.

Into that stew of incompetence we can toss in the grand brains from think tanks, media organizations, academia and associations who, via the revolving door and board membership, never really leave the power centers of the ruling elite.

Staggered

All of them are clearly staggered, as one might be from a series of punches from the incredible heavyweight champ Mohammed Ali. And well they should be on the ropes as the revolutionary movements seen in North Africa and the Middle East are a response to a system designed and tolerated by the USA and Europe for decades. It was a system where the middle classes on down were suppose to play by the rules.

The monopoly on fear, violence and information held by American and European leaders-and their cronies in their post colonial enterprises--was never meant to be aggressively challenged by the masses. Oh, a demonstration here and there, a critical opinion piece, even a sporadic leak of classified information could be tolerated even within the most autocratic of regimes.

But the width and breadth of the revolutionary street movements that came about-in Egypt and Libya, for example--was hardly contemplated by the increasingly desiccated American and European leadership and their institutions. They move slower than a snail's pace in an era of Internet Time. The experts were stunned and recoiled at the changes afoot. Even as US President Obama offered half-hearted support to Wisconsin state workers, little voices in his head-national security advisors-- must have been wondering, "Could it happen in the USA?" Not long after, 100,000 people would turnout in the state of Wisconsin to protest antiunion, anti-worker legislation pushed through by state officials there.

Their collective response to it all was to load up aircraft with political, military, diplomatic, and corporate personnel and jet them off to meet their counterparts at an exquisite hotel-conference center, a governor's mansion, or even the United Nations in New York City.

The inevitable wine-dine meetings take place during which horse trading over which revolution to support, crush, and toy with is discussed. The days and hours lost in this archaic process of diplomacy are immense. And those lost days and hours mean young people in Libya, Bahrain or Yemen-in the vanguard of revolutionary movements--will continue to die to rid themselves of draconian governments supported by the USA and Europe.

Imagine it. As Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her counterparts in Europe throw back glasses of white or red wine--prior to a gourmet dinner--hundreds may have died waiting for support in their fight for "freedom."

Can you hear the dinner conversation? Yes, quite, the Saudi led invasion of Bahrain was proper, I dare say. Yes, of course it was. Wow! This Beef Wellington is most excellent!

I'll need a cognac at dinner's end, for sure. Do you think we should support those Libyans? I don't know, pass the salt.

Enter Speed

This is as a pivotal point in history for the USA and Europe as any in their history. But they have no sense for the moment and are content to use decision processes that are too slow to match events as they happen. President Obama stated in his National Security Strategy of the USA that the national security policy of the USA was to "move beyond traditional distinctions."

That "move" is not evident yet. And that's too bad.

The reality for the moment is that some form of the USA/Europe capitalist, representative republic (CRR) is the most effective system of governance and economics available to humanity. Europe developed it (think Montesquieu) and the USA took it to the next level though the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution. The CRR produces people, life, death, culture, politics, things, slavery, consciousness, awareness, revolution, counterclaims, empowerment, etc. Even China and Turkey mimic the CRR. Perhaps their models will work as well or better than the USA's and Europe's, but no one can say.

At any rate, the current global reality/environment (minus the natural disasters) is the product of the USA and Europe. But they seem incapable of working with their own creation as it matures and races ever faster in some direction. In 2011, there is no place in the world for slow reaction, risk-averse leaders or citizens, particularly in the "Western World." Further, the game is up: Wikileaks, Anonymous, Bloggers and Online Activists have exposed an "elite" decision making methodology that requires little academic training but a lot of street smarts. A gang leader from Los Angeles would likely be a better diplomat than many ambassadors currently filling the slots around the globe,

So ditch the antediluvian methods of diplomacy, politics and the decision process that are operational. Toss out the notion that there is classified information. Become truly exceptional: embrace change and challenge.

Cut travel and security costs by using the technological tools of the revolutionary-the Internet. There is no need to meet in brick and mortar structures any longer. It's too slow.

Why waste time jetting around the globe? If someone needs to be sized up, use HD technology for full screen teleconferencing. On that note, the US House and Senate can easily telecommute and televote from their home districts. Better service may result for the US constituents.

The "Western World" should take some pride in the world it has shaped. Yes, the history of their enterprise is often horrendous but those moments should be met head on with lessons learned, hopefully never to be repeated.

The world still looks to the West and migrates to the West.

But the Western World must pick up the pace and get with the program of change and adaption. Otherwise, North, South and East will pass them by and this is no time to be left alone.