

Note to readers: I wrote this the morning after the 2016 election as a desperately needed outlet for my shock, disappointment, anger, shame, patriotism, and fears about the future of my country. I hesitated to publish this because of the strength of the emotions expressed, but in re-reading it lately, nothing has changed for me. It is real and raw, and most of all it is honest.

## **2800 WORDS FROM MY FOUR YEAR EXILE IN TRUMLAND**

### **THIS IS NOT WHO WE ARE! BUT WAIT, THIS IS EXACTLY WHO WE ARE!**

We Americans, all of us, elected someone whose words and deeds are the dictionary definitions of mean, dangerous, unpredictable, racist, bigoted, egomaniacal, homophobic, narcissistic, sexist, authoritarian, climate-science-denying, misogynistic, revenge-obsessed, ego-maniacal, xenophobic, torture loving, litigious, amoral, non-self-aware, media hating, alienating, white supremacist, Internet trolling, reality-TV host, real estate mogul, compulsive and pathological liar, sociopathic, a supposed billionaire, steeped in Islamophobia, and who twenty five percent of his own voters in exit polls said was not qualified for the job he sought.

Let's ignore generations of wisdom that says we should select the very best of us to represent and lead us. Let's go rouge, let's go *oppo* and pretend that it is opposite day, and reject our inclinations and instincts to respect history. Let's select someone who actively demonstrates the very worst of us, and calls out our worst angels and plays to our deepest fears, prejudices and biases. After all, what could possibly go wrong? It's all fun and games until someone gets hurt, isn't it?

Forty six percent of the Americans who even bothered to vote, decided to make a deal with the devil, a Faustian bargain if you will, and trade their own personal morality for the offered invisible magic beans and dubious and suspicious promises for their own personal economic gain. This without any regard to the personal pain and suffering that could be unleashed on many of their countrymen.

- We rejected an honest and sincere democratic socialist candidate and embraced a dishonest and insincere Fascist. This is exactly who we are!
- We selected a president who won a minority of votes, based on a flawed and outdated 18<sup>th</sup> century electoral college slave owner payoff, which effectively allows twelve states to select our president. This is exactly who we are!
- We had a majority of white women vote against the first white women candidate for president. Why did 53% of White women vote for the presidential candidate who, on an audio recording, reveled in his talent as a sexual predator? This is exactly who we are!
- We have assassinated four of our 44 presidents, with six more having survived attempts. This is exactly who we are!
- We claimed a destiny from a god to justify our first Original sin of killing, imprisoning, and destroying the culture of a Native population and stealing their

land and resources We continue to oppress and steal from them two hundred years later. This is exactly who we are!

- We claimed a destiny from a god to justify our second Original sin of capturing, transporting and enslaving another race to provide the labor to build our country. After a couple hundred years of this, our better angels freed this race, but not really, only to continue to discriminate against and hang them. Two hundred years later we freed them again, only to continue now to kill them unarmed, as they run from the historic danger of our over militarized and improperly trained police. This is exactly who we are!
- We provided some minority civil rights only to slowly reduce them and to continue to do our best to prevent them from voting. We purposely created a permanent minority criminal class to allow us to incarcerate more citizens than any other country. We do this in the name of profits. This is exactly who we are!
- We restricted civil rights to women for voting and business. We now allow them to vote but continue to discriminate against them for jobs, career advancement, and pay. This is exactly who we are!
- In the nineteenth century our better angels told us that a free public eighth grade education was necessary for an informed citizenship and productive work force and so this is what our ancestors did. In the twentieth century our better angels told us that a free public twelfth grade education was now necessary for an informed citizenship and productive work force and this is what our ancestors did. We even built a great number of beautiful high schools, many now still in use almost ninety years later, with the government WPA program during the economic hardships of the Great Depression. In the middle of the nineteenth century we offered a nearly free college education to returning GIs' after the war and doubled the number of our educated citizen and built a middle class that was the envy of the world. Towards the seventh decade of the nineteenth century our investments in the future made a college education essentially free. By late in that century, fueled by greed, ignorance and malfeasance, we allowed our children to burden themselves with mortgage level debt, and be ripped off by greedy for profit sham schools, in their pursuit of an education and a better life. Now in the twenty-first century it has long past become clear that due to the relentless pace of change, technological advances, and rapid obsolescence of skills, that a fourteen or sixteen year education is essential to an informed citizenship, social growth, and productive work force. Yet now greed, ignorance, and profit motivations prevent us from again providing the necessary tuition free public education, like our ancestors did in their wisdom. This is who we were, what we have become, and who we are now!
- We invade countries and force regime changes around the world. We kill hundreds of thousands of civilians around the world with indiscriminating bombs and robots, and so for generations to come they will seek to kill our own civilians anywhere in

the world they can. We have elected Christian Supremacist Politian's whose thoughts and actions are equally as perverted as the Muslin religious extremists they hate so badly. This is exactly who we are!

- We claim that we don't torture in war, but we do. It is not what we wish to do, but it *is* what we do. We stopped for a while, but are about to start again. This is exactly who we are!
- We allow the creation of a surveillance state, because we think that we have nothing to hide and nothing to lose, despite clear evidence to the contrary by citizens who gave up their lives to tell us. This is exactly who we are!
- We are obsessed by, and are becoming more obsessed with guns, despite the murderous toll this takes on our population including our children. We want to have gunfights in our churches, bars, and schools. This is exactly who we are!
- We defund public education to provide tax breaks and sports arenas to the wealthy. We have created a population of room temperature IQ's incapable of supporting our economy nor participating in self-governance and absent the knowledge of history and the wisdom contained and thus doomed to repeat its mistakes. Fully half of them abdicate their birthright and responsibility as a American citizen to vote. This is exactly who we are!
- We now have a significant portion of the population who no longer believe in science and the wisdom contained within knowledge. They are not aware of the stubbornness of science, that ensures that it will always be correct whether they believe in it or not. We are no longer respectful of intelligence, knowledge, or value in a person's knowledge of language, vocabulary, or abilities to articulate ideas in a rational and logical manner. We can no longer do the critical thinking where facts and reason prevail over myths, superstitions, theories, and beliefs. Not unlike terrorist zealots around the world, they believe what they want to believe and are willing to vote against their own self-interests and die for beliefs that make no rational sense at all. This is who we have become!
- We listen to and believe fourth grade language promises of bringing coal mining jobs back, despite the generations of death and disease it caused. This despite the economics of blowing the tops off of mountains and inexpensive natural gas have long since made this obsolete. We continue to allow the pillaging of our environments, the creation of earthquakes with fracking, the pollution of our air and the poisoning of our water, by corporations who deflect responsibility and cleanup, leaving that to burden taxpayers. This is who we have become!
- We have states who spend 70 million dollars of tax monies for a high school football stadium while ranking last in providing a public education and healthcare to its citizens. This is exactly who we are!
- We have states who rail against the federal government, all the while sucking on the federal welfare tit. Yet most of our southern states would look like third world countries without federal aid. This is exactly who we are!

- We have states who execute the mentally ill, despite clear evidence of a flawed system that frequently kills the innocent. Now we are doubling down on this. This is exactly who we are!
- We have states who turn the people against each other, divide and conquer to create a race to the bottom, while they steal and redistribute public resources to the rich and to corporations. This is exactly who we are!
- We have states who actively work against providing health care for their citizens despite that great need and offered federal subsidies. This is exactly who we are!
- Starting with Reagan, we stood by and watched the dismantling of our great middle class by vulture capitalists, corporate raiders, while our government was too inept and unwilling to prevent this. We believed the politicians that government was bad and believed their promises of frugality and competence. This despite reality showed us only cuts to public investments used to fuel tax reductions for the rich, and massive military spending to enrich the military industrial complex on our national debt credit card. We believed them when they acknowledged the massive job losses and told us that everything would be Ok and more jobs would be created to replace them, the jobs that never came. Jobs that were supposed to come from trade deals which only enriched corporations. This is exactly who we are!
- We stood by and watched the destruction of both public and private sector unions, and lost our power and voice in the process. We stood by and watched corporate mergers that limited completion, reduced choice, and increased prices. Now forty years later, our great middle class has all but vanished. We are left undereducated, under skilled, and unprepared for the world around us. We are in decline as a nation for the first time since our founding, and therefore we are living in uncharted and perilous times. This is exactly who we are!
- We now have government who poisons the public water in cities while giving away pure water resources for bottling free to corporations. This is exactly who we are!
- We called on our better angels to provide affordable health care to 20 plus million to reduce the fifty thousand who die each year without it. We left another 30 million uninsured, and then immediately threaten repeatedly to take it away from those that had it. This is exactly who we are!
- We allow our transportation infrastructure crumble because the rich and corporations no longer wish to pay federal taxes and we allow this. This is exactly who we are!
- We shop at Walmart and buy cheap Chinese goods even though we know it destroys two jobs for each one it creates. We do this despite knowing that each store costs us a million tax dollars a year in supplemental federal benefits due to the low wages paid. We allow this corporate welfare to continue, while refusing it for those in need. This is exactly who we are!
- We handed the presidency to an articulate, decent and intelligent black man in the middle of a world economic crisis and after eight years of struggle he pulled us back

from this self-inflicted abyss and started the move forward again. Now we remind him that he is not really like us by forcing him to hand over the presidency to a known white supremacist. This is exactly who we are!

- We are mostly Irish, German, Italians, Scandinavians and Asians. Historically we discriminate against other nationalities for a period of time, but ultimately accept and assimilate them. But now we no longer do this. We brought none of this bad behavior with us from our home countries, we learned it here and practice it here. This is exactly who we are!

Let's not let our third Original sin be the elimination of the very foundation of this country, the assimilation of immigrants.

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Our country is not yet 250 years old, still in its early years, but we have been tested yet again as we have been many times before. This time we may have to turn rotten lemons into lemonade. As Dr. King said, the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice. We can still evolve past this teenaged angst, and form our Founding Fathers vision of a more perfect union. The sooner we become self-aware of who we are, the sooner we can start down the path to, and evolution toward who it is that we really want to be, who we really are now, and to have that knowledge be reflected in our conduct.

My rural neighbors are not racists, but they are prejudiced against people and things they don't understand. They largely haven't been to college or out in the wider world and don't understand how ugly and mean the big world around them can be. Their faith in ancient religious traditions no longer serve them well in the modern world. They don't watch the news in detail, because they are too busy earning a living. They don't know about voter suppression, police misconduct, or judicial misbehavior. What they do see on TV depicts minorities as different but not as a threat. They don't know that more people leave the US for Mexico than come from Mexico to the US each year. They don't know that most of the undocumented people in this country are Asian and came here not through a border but on an airplane. They don't know that most of the undocumented have overstayed vacation or work visas and have not snuck in over the border. They don't know that 98% of the Syrian and Muslim refugees admitted to this country are women and children, widows and orphans from a war that is partly our fault. They just don't know, what they don't know. They don't know this because politicians are cynically using misinformation to support their own personal agendas. In many cases this is their own Christian versus Muslim war ideology.

As they say, it's all fun and games until someone gets hurt. People are being hurt now, and many more are going to get hurt soon.

It's time to question the America that gave us Trump — the America which no longer feels the need to help the outcast, the destitute, the America where the filthy rich just get richer and filthier.

We have a President whose wheels in his head don't turn with a great deal of velocity, but exhibit real stamina. He makes a lot of words but rarely herds them toward any discernible meaning.

Americans now allow schools to conduct “active shooter drills” with our children, permanently, emotionally damaging them as we show these little ones that this is the life we've created for them, and pass down to them.

It is time to pose some discomfoting questions: What will the wealthy want when they have all the money? Body parts? What if one day the dispossessed decide to fight back? Will they all be hunkered down in their mansion safe rooms, in *their green zones*?

These words serve as a shout out into the darkness, a cry into the wilderness of this once great country. Perhaps it is just a fool's errand, as those who could gain the most from these ideas and thoughts have long since dismissed reasoned discourse, the command and articulation of the English language, and personal intelligence as things of value. They hold beliefs without the slightest regard for rational faculties or evidentiary requirements.

After all, we are like the ones who in the movie Idiocracy continued to irrigate their dying crops with Gatorade, despite visual proof that it was killing them.

This John Prine song seemed appropriate to these words [Some Humans Ain't Human](#)