

## Connecting the Dots, Saying a Long Goodbye

Written by Alex Baer

Thursday, 12 April 2012 18:49 - Last Updated Thursday, 12 April 2012 19:52

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Both sides showed up on time, armed to the teeth with favorite weapons. The Brains showed up early, skittish and unsure of themselves, legions of sparking, crackling facts and computer records at their fingertips, electrified as if by lightning. The Brawns marched in at the top of the hour, as agreed and decreed, clad in full-bore, end-of-the-world riot and combat gear -- all in black, befitting the solemn, sober, somber occasion -- and methodically beat The Brains into oblivion, no battling back, then, simply said, took over the world.

*Or, how about this one?* Christian right-wingers are not from around here, not from our home planet, but have been shipped in and placed here as part of a test to see if any sane humanoids could or would survive or even thrive in the midst of such an indelibly foul and alien race.

End of science fiction stories. Begin instead the opening salvos of sheer madness to be accumulated today, or any other day, really. Any day brings new landslides of outrages to anyone still equipped or desirous of sensing such antiquated feelings of loss or suffering or brutality.

Consult the guidebook we both know to this Earth: People are insufferably blasé about the suffering of humans, animals, or even the home nest. People are thoroughly immunized and propagandized now, unimpressed at any of the hearsay of such passé doings. An entry here: "Prologue" -- see

Coming Attractions.

*Such heresy, some people, paying attention, using facts and thoughts!*

Oh, sure -- we twitter on as half-wits and twits, tweet back and forth about this stunning headline or that startling article, and move on. Technology serves up twin curses: We have inescapable, constant news cutting gaping swaths in our hearts, slaying our minds while we wait, then we are handed the gift of having more communication methods than ever before, *to say little or nothing of value to change any pains we might accidentally see.*

Alternately screaming or yawning at each news-burst of poor fortune or befouled fate, we seek

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stimulation, spotting each new *black hole* of pain that catches our human attention span, stories spanning our synapses or screens for split-seconds. This should be more than enough to sear into our vision the sight of all these seamless sheets of spots before our eyes -- but that is all that we see: Splashes and splotches of gore, pain, or misery, specific to each new star-bursting story that tromps or blasts its way through our armor into consciousness.

Who among us is connecting these dots, these *inch-by-inch, slowly-they-turn* turns of fascism slipped into place by its humorless stooges, as we note the sequence story by story, noting each move? Who is taking these endlessly mutating syndromes and symptoms into the next levels of diagnoses? Is there anyone minding the long arc of history, the long curves of cause-and-cure cycles and effects? Is there anyone listening to the slow shuffling sound of the founders' democracy and documents slipping away? Is there anyone out there able to tear their attention away from the endless stream of new informational dots appearing like fireworks, one at a time, or clustered, in the skies?

*Is there a battalion of doctors in the house? □ Any time-travelers to help lend a clue?*

*Taken one or two at a time, like pawns taken out and demolished, in a chess game of seven billion pieces, any single-digit loss matters little enough, you know? □ After all, who among us has a perch so high up as to afford a wide view of the whole game, right?*

You have a point -- none of us little people do, which is exactly and precisely the same number of us who can change anything single-handedly, barring the sudden imposition or election of a very loving and profoundly benign King of the Planet, wielding massive power, but, only for Good this time -- an improbable non-trend of *one-in-a-row*.

One problem's apathy, getting enough people interested and putting on their ant-minds just long enough to all push in one direction, all at once. And, then: there's always good ol' willful, mindful, determined, stubborn, traditional ignorance, too. It's tough to know which conjoined twin to introduce first.

Like the one song, you never know what you've got till it's gone -- and, like another tune, it's only then that you start thinking you've got nothing left to lose. Nothing will change until plenty of people realize they've lost anything worth having. Then, people may start to act, which will trigger a new human problem: The Powers will simply co-opt the shifting balance, safely jamming it back to the side of powerful.

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At any tipping point, you expect the world to shift and change? It won't happen, not while running toward a new Start/Finish line in baby steps, ropes tied around your ankles and knees. The rich and powerful may be more heartless and vile than mere mortals can know, but they are not stupid: At the first sign of real trouble or threat -- *counted by millions only, dahling* -- they will loosen their grip just enough to satisfy some few, just enough to make the tipping point re-shift again, then, re-tighten their merciless grip.

Their cruel logic is flawless, and they will flay us with it, time and again: One only has to outrun the slowest runners in the scrambling crowd, not personally outrun the sprinting tigers they've set loose, unleashed in the streets.

Until we can see through the mists and mind-fogs, identifying the wreckless, feckless human beings running all these tigers and trolls in our midst and our ranks, we are failing to connect the dots, and are only seeing each dot as it explodes, here, there -- *no, over here!*

Imagine us, the perfectly-evolved pattern seekers, able seers of whole stories made up from mere scraps of facts, failing a vision test, failing to see tigers stalking and streaking at us, noting no blur of stripes rushing past, just these fascinating, individual dots, appearing one by one, all day, every day. *Look -- it's the news!*

*This is us, in this last photo here, failing to connect the dots, slowly waving farewell to the American way of life -- saying a long, oblique, tearless goodbye, to what used to be thought of as precious and dear: □ Our present, The Future.*

How old-fashioned is that!

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***The problem of the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts. □ - Bertrand Russell***

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*Postscript: □ So there is no doubt here, I cast myself in the lowest possible role of a mere squinter, a glasses-less, nearsighted seer of futures, as a court jester, as one of the real fools and dolts wandering around, mostly clueless.*