

Editorial

## The American Dream of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Call for Transformation of America

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### ABSTRACT

In the spirit of Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr., we call all Americans to rise up in the pursuit of the American Dream of the 21st Century under the Laws of GOD – equality, liberty, justice and civic duty in all aspects of American life, guaranty of basic necessities of food, medicine and shelter, and the pursuit of happiness and World Peace. It is noted that these sacred pursuits are hindered by excessive capitalism and individualism and the state of our own consciousness. Thus, the transformation of the consciousness of all Americans from the rich to the poor is the key to accomplish these sacred pursuits and transform America. By transforming our consciousness and transcending ourselves, we shall transform greed to compassion, hate to love, wealth possession to wealth sharing and war to peace. GOD Bless America!

**Key Words:** American Dream, 21st Century, transformation, declaration.

***[Post-election America in 2020 is at  
A critical and historical moment,  
So let the healing begin and let the  
"American Dream of the 21st Century"  
Begin!]***

### Preamble

Over 230 years ago, our founding fathers brought forth on America, a new nation conceived in liberty, civic duty and the pursuit of happiness and dedicated to the ideal of equality under the Laws of GOD.

Today we hold these rights, duties and their extensions to be applicable to all Americans in all aspects of our lives - spiritually, physically, financially, environmentally, scientifically and politically - that to secure, advance and perform these rights and duties and thus perfect our Union, our Constitution may be amended time to time, if necessary, and successive governmental, social and corporate structures and institutions shall be established, deriving their just political, social and economical powers and duties from the consent of the people - that whenever any structure or institution becomes inadequate of these ends, it is our duties to modernized it or to abolish it, and to establish new ones, laying the foundation on such principles

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and organizing the structures in such forms, as to us shall seem most likely to reflect our understanding and knowledge of the evolving Nature and Life under the Laws of GOD.

### **The Critical Moment in American History**

As a country, we are now facing the greatest challenge both domestically and internationally, testing whether our public and private institutions can be transformed and work in harmony for the benefit of all Americans and whether we can still be a Great Nation on Earth and lead the World.

As a people, we are now engaged in a great struggle, testing whether our rights and duties so conceived and dedicated at the birth of our Nation, so implemented, protected and extended through out our history as a Nation can be sustained and be further advanced. Some of us are also engaged in a silent struggle in our hearts testing whether our yearning for love and compassions for fellow Americans and mankind at large can conquer our own shortcomings – selfishness, arrogance, hypocrisy, intolerance, or excessive capitalism, individualism, rivalry and commercialism.

### **Reflection on American History**

So, at this critical moment, it is appropriate that we Americans from all walks of life – the rich and the poor, the executives and the workers, the professionals and the laymen, the religious and the non-religious, Americans by birth and new immigrants– and indeed all who loves America and Her people - reflect on the status of our Nation and our own moralities and conducts as individuals with the great hope of achieving the American Dream of the 21st Century and usher Americans and the mankind at large into a new era of unprecedented progress, prosperity and enlightenment.

Before the advent of our Nation, our people were under the colonial rule and tyranny of a European monarch. Oppressed and exploited by a tyrant, early Americans rebelled. The Declaration of Independent drafted by Thomas Jefferson became the great beacon of light to early Americans, who under the leaderships of George Washington and his generals, bravely fought the Revolutionary War and gave birth to our Republic.

However, a great injustice, slavery, remained and divided our people almost a century later as South and North. Again, as a people we fought and overcame slavery through Civil War and saved our Union under the leaderships of Abraham Lincoln and his generals.

Our people then ushered in the great Industrial, Scientific and Economical Revolutions of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries together with the remaining World which brought us and rest of the World unprecedented materials wealth, scientific knowledge and technologies and thrust our Nation to the World Stage as a Great Power and Leader.

As a Nation and a People, we have fought in World Wars and defeated evil powers, endured and overcome the Great Depression, endured and overcome racial segregation and injustice under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., won the Cold War and oversaw the collapse of Godless Communism around the World.

Since September 11, 2001 terrorists attack on our Nation, we are again at a critical moment in our history.

### **The Aftermath of Excessive Capitalism and Individualism**

No doubt that it has been the creativity, productivity and entrepreneurship of our people and the advances of sciences and technologies fueled by capitalism and individualism that brought our Nation unprecedented material wealth, prosperity and a world-influencing pop culture.

But, the very wealth is now concentrated in the hands of so a few wealthy individuals and big banks and corporations and has displaced many among us into poverty and despair. The very wealth has created a deep gulf between the rich and the poor and among the political parties as reflected by increased hostilities and seemingly irreconcilable differences among Americans and in our Congress. The very wealth and prosperity have not stopped hunger and disease in the World and might have produced our arrogance and intolerance in the eyes of the rest of the World along with our Nation's positive image. The very pop culture might have both positively and negatively influenced the young generations worldwide. On the other hand, many Americans are unable to cope with or adapt to the new environments.

Thus, after all the recent revolutions, many of today's Americans are not better of than the Americans of yesterday.

After all these revolutions, young generations of Americans are at peril of not being able to realizing their American Dream as their parents did.

After all these revolutions, the spiritual lives of many among us are sadly crippled by the manacles of mechanical view and the prisons of random chance and chaos.

After all these revolutions, some among us including some children still go hungry daily and without shelters at night in the midst of mountains of food and vacant homes.

After all these revolutions, many among us cannot afford medical cares in the midst of a vast ocean of medical advances and modern medicine.

After all these revolutions, many of our educated people cannot find a decent job and is suffocating under the piles of educational debts.

Indeed, after all these revolutions, the moralities of many among us are degenerating, many among us become selfish, mean-spirited, non-collaborative and too commercial, and some among us even become hypocritical, untruthful and are solely driven by money, power and fame.

As a People, many among us are unemployed, our homes and investments have drastically decreased in values, our bank accounts have dried up, our individual and family debts are overburdening us.

As a Nation, our financial system almost collapsed, we are still at war abroad and facing unprecedented economical crisis, national debts and economical inequality at home in the backdrop of a World foreshadowed by the turbulence in the Middle East and the rise of China, India and other countries.

So, at this critical moment, we dramatize these depressing and shameful conditions.

### **Sacred Pledges**

In a sense, it is high time that each American makes a pledge to our fellow Americans – A pledge that each of us shall rise above ourselves and shall work and struggle together with fellow Americans for equality in all aspects of our lives, guaranties of food, medicine and shelter to all Americans and opportunities of cost-effective education and employment afterword through our Constitution, legislations or other meanings.

Each American shall further promises to do his/her best to contribute to American Society. The rich may pay more taxes, if necessary, and shall pledge more of their wealth to help and assist the less fortunate. The less fortunate shall work hard to realize their American Dream.

Each American corporation shall promise to be a moral corporation to American Society. The executives shall strive for common good instead of excessive profit at the costs of the workers and the society and the workers shall strive to contribute their best productivity to the corporation.

Each American educational institution shall promise to be the best American Dream making institution. The administrators and teachers shall strive for producing the best students instead of collecting excessive tuitions and endowments and the students shall strive be the best students and future American Dream makers.

The three respective branches of our Federal and State Government shall promises to all Americans and their respective State Citizens that they will work in harmony for the prosperity and common good of all Americans and the advancement of this cherished Nation and Republic under GOD, not the interests of a few or self-interests. The executives, representatives and judges shall strive to carry out the businesses of our Nation and the respective States in their best abilities and the supporting staff shall strive to provide the supporting services to their best abilities. Let us remember that our Government is of the people, by the people and for the people as Lincoln declared.

It may be said that today some among us in America would have defaulted on these Sacred Pledges if made earlier. Instead of honoring these obligations, some among us would have given Americans bad checks, checks which would have come back marked "insufficient funds." But we

refuse to believe that the banks of this Great Nation would be bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there would be insufficient funds in the great vaults of America. So all American Citizens, corporations, institutions and Governmental units should make good on these Sacred Pledges — Pledges that will in the long run give our people the security of basic necessities of food, medicine and shelter, riches of the economy and the fulfillment of happiness under GOD.

Finally, as a Nation and a People, we pledge to the World that we shall always work for World Peace, eliminations of hunger and diseases, economical stability and prosperity and mutual benefits of all nations on Earth.

### **Fierce Urgency, Warning & Precaution**

As Martin Luther King, Jr. once did, let us remind ourselves the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to keep our silence or hope others to take action. Now is the time to make transformational changes in America. Now is the time to rise from the darkness and despair of an excessively capitalistic and individualistic society to a compassionate and morally just society. Now is the time to lift America from the quick sands of corporate greed and personal financial gains at all costs to the solid rock of glorious path under GOD to prosperity and happiness for all Americans. Now is the time to make equality in all aspects of American life a reality for all our people.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. would warn, it would be fatal for American corporations, the financial and educational systems, other social and economic establishments and the wealthy individuals to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering heat of many Americans' discontents will not pass until there is an invigorating atmosphere of transformational changes, economical equalities and job opportunities in America. This is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that we needed to release our angers and will soon be content will have a rude awakening if the establishments of America return to their businesses as usual. There will be neither silence nor rest in America until all Americans have regained their hopes of American Dream. The whirlwinds of protests and non-violent struggles will come to shake the establishments and current status quo of America until the bright day of transformational changes, economical equalities and job opportunities emerges.

There is something else that we must say to all Americans who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the glorious path to American Dream of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for transformational changes, economical equalities and job opportunities by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our protest and struggle on the high ground of dignity and discipline as Martin Luther King, Jr. did. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence or worse. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting economical inequality and other injustice of excessive capitalism and individualism with positive forces. The marvelous new struggle which may engulf the establishments of America and the World must not lead us to a distrust of all the wealthy individuals, corporate executives and representatives in the establishments, for many of them, as evidenced by their sympathy or silence, have come to

realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. They have come to realize that their yearning for love and compassion to fellow Americans is inextricably bound to our struggles. We cannot walk alone.

At this critical moment, we must also ask ourselves the soul searching question: Are we really fighting the benefit of all Americans or our own self-interests? And do we want to go down in history as hypocrites or equality-seeking men and women? And so, as John F. Kennedy would urge: My fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you but what can you do for your country.

### **Marching Ahead**

As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead as King would do. We cannot turn back. There are those who ask, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the majority of Americans are short-changed by the minority and disadvantaged by the establishments of America. We can never be satisfied, as long as our hard work cannot feed our families nor provide them with medicine or shelter. We can never be satisfied as long as young generations of Americans, loaded with heavy burden of educational debts, cannot find decent jobs and robbed of their American Dream by signs stating "for the rich only." We cannot be satisfied as long as an American wanting to work cannot find a job and another American who has a job feels insecure and is in despair. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until economical equalities roll down like waters and job opportunities rain like a mighty stream.

We are not unmindful that some among us have suffered great trials of unemployment and financial difficulties. Some among us are still in the suffocating environment of hopelessness and despair. Some among us have been battered by the storms of corporate greed and staggered by the winds of layoffs. Some of us have been the veterans of unearned suffering. Continue to hope with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to your work, go back to your study, go back to your business, go back to your place of worship, go back to the backwaters of undesirable jobs, go back to the forgotten paths of entrepreneurship knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair but turn to our family to help each other and pray to GOD for comfort, inner strength and salvation.

## **We Have a Dream**

We say to you today, fellow Americans, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, we still have a dream in the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American Dream of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the struggle for the advancement of our Republic and the mankind at large under the Laws of GOD.

We have a dream that one day all Americans will be better off than today, secure in basic necessities of food, medicine and shelter, prosperous in all aspects and happy in our lives.

We have a dream that one day all wealthy Americans will be compassionate and giving, sharing their wealth with the less fortunate and the Nation.

We have a dream that one day all American corporations will rise up and live out the true meaning of an ideal corporation: morality before profit, employment before dividend, collaboration before monopoly and cooperation before competition.

We have a dream that one day Wall Street will not be a “greed” street but a “moral” street: orderly market, honest investment banking, transparency in financial reporting and no manipulation of market and no insider trading.

We have a dream that one day all educational institutions will provide educations to their students at reasonable costs, use their endowment generously and ensure their students employment opportunities after graduation.

We have a dream that one day even a bigot, sweltering with the heat of anti-immigrants, sweltering with the heat of racism, will be transformed into an oasis pursuing equality for all.

We have a dream that one day, the three respective branches of our Federal and State Government will always work in harmony for the prosperity, common good and advancement of all Americans and this Great Nation under GOD.

We have a dream today. We have a dream as that of Martin Luther King, Jr. “that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of [GOD] shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.”

So, we have a dream today. We have a dream that one day we will be live in a Paradise on Earth and a peaceful World under GOD for a thousand years to come.

This is our hope. This is the faith that we go on in the pursuit of the American Dream of 21<sup>st</sup> Century. With this faith as that of Martin Luther King, Jr. “we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of [American economy and finance] into a beautiful symphony of [harmony and prosperity].” With this faith we will be able to work together, to struggle together, to pray together, to stand up for America’s future together, knowing that we will be truly happy one day.

This will be the day when everyone will be able to sing as Rumi "I am so tipsy here in this world, I have no tale to tell but tipsiness and rapture."

### **Let Transformation of Consciousness Begin**

No doubt that our pursuit of American Dream of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is hindered by the state of our own consciousness from the rich to the poor. Thus, the transformation of our consciousness under GOD is the key to accomplish this sacred pursuit and transform America. By transforming our consciousness and transcending ourselves from the rich to the poor, we shall transform greed into compassion, hate to love, wealth possession to wealth sharing and war to peace.

So, let transformation of consciousness begin in each of us from the rich to the poor! Let transformation of consciousness begin in corporate America! Let transformation of consciousness begin on Wall Street! Let transformation of consciousness begin in all places of business, schools, churches and all institutions!

But not only that, let transformation of consciousness begin in the respective three branches of our Federal and State Government! Let transformation of consciousness begin in the corporations, businesses and government of every nation! From every corner of Earth, let transformation of consciousness begin!

When this happens, when we allow transformation of consciousness to begin, when we let it to ring from every individual, every corporation, every business and every governmental unit, we will be able to speed up that day when American Dream of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century shall be realized under the Laws of GOD.

### **Tribute and Resolve**

Let us now pay tribute to those who have greatly contributed towards the birth, endurance and advancement of our cherished Nation and Republic. But, as Abraham Lincoln would declare, in a larger sense we cannot compose anything proper to honor those heroes. The brave men and women of America, living and dead, who struggled, have already done so, far above one's poor power to add or detract. The World may be little notice what we say here, but it can never forget what they have done. It is for rest of us, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored we take increased devotion to the cause for which they have given their full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that these dedicated shall not have fought in vain, that our Nation shall have a new birth, and that American Dream shall endure and advance and shall not vanish in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

GOD Bless America from Sea to Shining Sea!

**Acknowledgements:** The layout of this Essay “The American Dream of the 21st Century: A Call for Transformation of America” is based on Martin Luther King, Jr.’s speech “I have a Dream.” The Essay is also fused with languages from the Declaration of Independence the chief drafter of which was Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. It also contains a quote from John F. Kennedy and a verse from “GOD Bless America.”