On the heels of Samuel Huntington, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Francis Fukuyama

by Robert Guffey

On December 17th, 2007, I was standing on the corner of Hollywood and Cahuenga Blvd. waiting for a bus and thinking about the coming new year, about prophecies and predictions, about nonexistent catastrophes foretold by visionaries whose neurons were plugged into the Godhead, when an old man hobbled right up to me and handed me a flyer entitled “Tony Alamo Christian Ministries World Newsletter.”

I. Tony Alamo, the Prophet of Hollywood Blvd.

The flyer is subtitled “New Jerusalem Churches Worldwide.” Beneath the subtitle is a color photograph of famed country-western singer and unrepentant marijuana connoisseur Willie Nelson chatting it up with Pastor Tony Alamo backstage at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. Alamo is wearing a pair of dark glasses. Perhaps to hide the stoned twinkle in his eye? One wouldn’t want to speculate about such matters any further. Beside the photograph is the beginning of the pastor’s article entitled “Brace Yourselves.” The article begins as follows:

Any time now, a worldquake and a series of prophesied catastrophes will shockingly awaken the entire global population to a horrible, God-sent, unparalleled nightmare. Shortly after this event, two more disasters in the form of two large meteorites will follow, causing more destruction than many hydrogen bombs. One will smash into the ocean, destroying a third of it, including the life therein. It will actually turn the water to blood and, of course, destroy all life and every ship within its realm. The second meteorite will barrel into and flatten a great part of an entire continent, polluting a third of the rivers and fountains, making them poisonous (wormwood). Many men will die of these waters. Following this, an estimated two billion people, one-third of the earth’s population, will be killed by fire, smoke, and lave-like brimstone.

Once these plagues begin, life will never again be lived as we know it today. Just before this incredible, unspokenable, several-month-long nightmare, most people will be on their boring, everyday treadmill of work, school, and housecleaning. Some will be going to their social or political activities, looking for new forms of entertainment, buying, selling, planning, etc. Some will be planning or pursuing their routine of daily or nightly promiscuities, or making their usual plans to foolishly spend their paychecks on Friday and Saturday [...]. Then, to the woe and dismay of everyone in the world, Jesus, who is commonly and falsely today known as “sweet Jesus,” will abruptly, without notice, turn the world upside down in a moment and literally tear it to pieces. Again, one-third of this world’s population will be annihilated, then millions upon millions more will be killed in the most dreadful ways, ways that could never be imagined or dreamed of by the human mind.

For convenience sake I’ve taken the liberty of eliminating the footnotes that refer to the exact passages in the Bible that supposedly back up every one of the pastor’s proclamations. (If you really need to see them, I’m sure you can get a hold of a copy of the pamphlet in question by calling the pastor’s twenty-four hour prayer and information line: 479-782-7370. You can call it collect, or at least that’s what it says here.)

The good pastor goes on to state, ‘All of the world conditions are in the exact position that the Bible stated they would be in when these events would take place.’ It’s important to note that the Rapture-obsessed bestselling author Hal Lindsey said almost the same exact thing back in 1970 when he published The Late Great Planet Earth Of course, Lindsey also mentioned in one of his ‘70s grimoires that the Xerox machine was an invention of the Devil. There’s no word yet on his opinion regarding email or map quest.

Needless to say, the world’s been coming to an end for quite a long time. It’s very easy to poke fun at people who are clearly insane. There’s no trick to that. But what about people who don’t
appear to be insane? What about people who possess Ph.D.s and official titles and wrap their hateful, apocalyptic scenarios in the language of political science?

Let’s set aside the predictions of seers and mountebanks for a moment and focus instead on the predictions of those who actually pull the strings in this global village of ours. While the perceptions of the Crowd are manipulated daily by the mad magicians of Madison Avenue and Wall Street, the perceptions of Those At the Top are just as easily shaped by their own form of idle entertainment: the white papers and treatises and manifestoes of dark geniuses who milk the string of nonsensical letters trailing behind their names so as to gain an eager and gullible audience, at which they fling their pronouncements about the future of world affairs. They lurk behind mahogany desks in cramped offices of major universities and basement rooms of influential think tanks like the Rand Institute.

If this sounds paranoid, consider the irony: true paranoia is more often exhibited by Those In Power who choose to listen to the pronouncements of academics and glorified bureaucrats wholly cut off from the real world except in the most abstract sense, who blindly base crucial geopolitical decisions on the guesswork of these overpaid, Ivy League Tony Alamos. Allow me to introduce you to the significant contributions of three such paragons of prescience and logic and humanitarianism at its finest….

Anyone familiar with the key movers and shakers of geopolitical affairs of the past three decades will be familiar with Samuel Huntington, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Francis Fukuyama. These three men and their work represent a triangle of disparate philosophical attitudes toward how the future of America—and, by extension, the future of the world—should be wet-nursed and/or managed.

II. Francis Fukuyama, the Oracle of History’s End

In June of 1989 Francis Fukuyama published a now famous article entitled “The End of History?” in The National Interest, a venerable American conservative journal. In that article, later expanded into an entire book that bears a similar title (The End of History and the Last Man), Fukuyama made a carefully reasoned argument that the Cold War had postponed the progress of civilization. He accurately predicted the fall of the Soviet Union a full year before it happened and insisted that once this inevitable collapse occurred the world’s leaders would have to sit down at the same table and figure out how to get along in a post-communist world in which there was no Great Enemy to blame for our failure to progress beyond the building of better weapons.

The concept of civilization itself, Fukuyama claimed, brought with it a series of promises that had gone unfulfilled due to the distraction of fighting this protracted war of conflicting ideologies. These world leaders would, according to Fukuyama, have to identify the promises that had gone unfulfilled and work together to implement “the twin principles of liberty and equality on which modern democracy is founded” (Fukuyama xi) and once that goal had been completed we would be faced with “the end of history.” This, in Fukuyama’s eyes, would not be a bad state of affairs at all. As he writes in the introduction to his book:

This did not mean that the natural cycle of birth, life, and death would end, that important events would no longer happen, or that newspapers reporting them would cease to be published. It meant, rather, that there would be no further progress in the development of underlying principles and institutions, because all of the really big questions had been settled. (xii)

Though certainly infused with an odd naiveté that will no doubt appear almost child-like a hundred (or even twenty) years from now, Fukuyama’s propositions appear on the surface to be essentially noble ones. He wants civilization to get on with the task of scientific progress and humanitarian endeavors as opposed to the endless bloodshed of needless wars followed by needless wars.

Fukuyama’s essay was met with great derision from conservative quarters when the initial article was published. After all, in that optimistic era of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher everybody knew the Soviet Union was nowhere near collapsing. Then, on the 7th of February, 1990, the Soviet Union collapsed. Fukuyama had been proven right, at least partly.

III. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the Shaman of the Global Village

In June of 1992 Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Jimmy Carter’s National Security Advisor from 1977 to 1981, wrote a response to Fukuyama’s treatise in the form of a white paper entitled Out of Control in which he laid out a slightly different vision for the future of world politics. He claimed that the major concern facing the world, now that the Soviet Union had collapsed, was the potentiality of complete and utter chaos breaking out in what he called “the Eurasian oblong.” He predicted a flurry of civil wars between small nation-states whose petty little hatreds had been held in check only by the strong hand of the Soviet Union.

The temptation for the United States, Brzezinski claimed, would be to move in and solve these conflicts, either through force or by other means. In
Apparently, according to Huntington, the basic foundation of the United States as set forth by the Founding Fathers is being eroded not by American culture, and promoted racial, ethnic, and other subnational cultural identities and groupings. (305)

The name of multiculturalism they have attacked the identification of the United States with Western civilization, denied the existence of a common American identity have come under concentrated and sustained onslaught from a small but influential number of intellectuals and publicists. In democracy, individualism, equality before the law, constitutionalism, and private property. In the late twentieth century both components of heritage of Western civilization and politically by the principles of the American Creed on which Americans overwhelmingly agree: liberty, A more immediate and dangerous challenge exists in the United States. Historically American national identity has been defined culturally by the<br>century for the world of foreign affairs in a 21st century that could only be led by a Republican automaton controlled by other Republican automatons, a future in which the central problem for Western Civilization would not be implementing the twin principles of liberty and equality or creating a “New Confederation of States,” but an all-out world war with the entire culture of Islam itself, immediately followed by a second war with the civilization of Asia in the form of the rising Chinese Empire.

One of Huntington’s prescriptions for this imminent clash of civilizations, as laid out in precise detail in his book, is to figuratively draw boundaries around Western civilization, identify what makes Us (the West) superior to Them (the East), to hunker down and enforce those values here at home, throw out this whole misguided and doomed notion of multiculturalism that’s been rottin away at White Christian Culture for so long, call upon other nations to isolate the Islamic world, empower ourselves for the ultimate conflict with first Islam, and then China.

Huntington’s book was like a breath of fresh air for an ennui-afflicted world lacking a clear-cut enemy. Here now was a vision of the future with promise. Now we could go back to the good old days of inflated military budgets and messy foreign wars in countries most Americans couldn’t even identify on a map (no, not even with the help of map quest). But that wouldn’t stop the people from hating them, if they had the right motivation.

Samuel Huntington’s book was embraced by many neo-conservatives, and its militaristic vision used by the Dubya administration as a blueprint for both domestic and foreign affairs. In chapter 12 of his book, Huntington states that:

The central issue for the West is whether, quite apart from any external challenges, it is capable of stopping and reversing the internal processes of decay. Can the West renew itself or will sustained internal rot simply accelerate its end and/or subordination to other economically and demographically more dynamic civilizations? […] Far more significant than economics and demography are problems of moral decline, cultural suicide, and political disunity in the West. (303-04)

Huntington identifies these “problems” as increased antisocial behavior, family decay, a decline in membership in voluntary associations, a weakening of the work ethic, lower levels of scholastic achievement, “immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation,” and “the weakening of [Western civilization’s] central component, Christianity” (304-05).

Huntington then goes on to warn us that:

A more immediate and dangerous challenge exists in the United States. Historically American national identity has been defined culturally by the heritage of Western civilization and politically by the principles of the American Creed on which Americans overwhelmingly agree: liberty, democracy, individualism, equality before the law, constitutionalism, and private property. In the late twentieth century both components of American identity have come under concentrated and sustained onslaught from a small but influential number of intellectuals and publicists. In the name of multiculturalism they have attacked the identification of the United States with Western civilization, denied the existence of a common American culture, and promoted racial, ethnic, and other subnational cultural identities and groupings. (305)

Apparently, according to Huntington, the basic foundation of the United States as set forth by the Founding Fathers is being eroded not by
theocratic philistines listening intently to invisible deities hovering over the Oval Office, or out-of-control black-pajama-boy mercenary teams “disappearing” innocent dissenters, or a weak and compliant Congress robotically doing the bidding of multinational corporations whose economic interests favor the implementation of a fascist American government, or the backwards but prevalent belief among Americans that the central problem with their country is that its people are too free.

No, none of these factors are endangering American principles, says Samuel P. Huntington. What’s endangering American principles is the fact that Little Johnny is smoking pot in the school bathroom while he should be putting his nose to the grindstone in one of those enervating Job Placement classes, that Ma and Pa Kettle are no longer encouraged to smash their kid’s face with a lead-lined copy of the King James Bible, that less and less young men are running out to join the Elks and the Freemasons, that the results of standardized Scam-Tron SAT tests are down in the dumps due to the fact that they do little more than measure one’s facility at succeeding as a Middleclass Caucasian Accountant, that Muslims are establishing their own mosques in white communities like Orange County, CA and refusing for some reason to voluntarily convert to the teachings of the Eternal Prince of Peace, that less and less people believe the Earth was created in seven days by a gargantuan Semite with a beard a little over five thousands years ago, that University professors are having their students read Toni Morrison instead of William Shakespeare.

Yes, these are the evil parasites eating away at the intestines of America. We must do something about it. But what?

What shall we do?

Shall we steal a Presidential election? Shall we take advantage of a terrorist act and use it as an excuse to implement a war plan we already had waiting in the wings?

Shall we save America by destroying it?

Shall we?

Shall we?

Shall we?

As I write these words a whole slew of authoritarian bills are being pushed through the U.S. Congress. One such bill, the perfect representation of what appears to be a growing trend in jurisprudence these days, is called The Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act (Senate Bill 1959). It’s already passed the House of Representatives (as House Bill 1955). Only six people in the House voted against it despite the fact that it’s the most repressive piece of legislation ever to be proposed to Congress, despite the fact that it bans the right for the people to dissent in any form whatsoever.

Let me be clear: This is not my personal interpretation of the language of the bill. This is the bill.

The Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act empowers the U.S. government to arrest and detain any citizen or group of citizens, not because they’re being violent or even advocating violence, but because their language or actions may seem to be heading toward violence at some point in the future.

Does it matter if it’s the near future or the distant future?

No, for the wording of the bill is so broad and polymorphous that it can be interpreted in any way that best suits the government at any particular moment. American citizens can literally be rounded up and thrown into prison, or some subterranean cubicle far worse, because of their future crimes. If you ever doubted the word of a prophet, no matter how divinely inspired, you should definitely be concerned about this bill… even if you’re not American.

Particularly if you’re not American. After all, what’s uniquely American one day is uniquely global the next. The same type of person who stands on the corner of Hollywood and Cahuenga Blvd. preaching about rivers of wormwood and the imminent worldquake is the same type of person who will be in charge of predicting whether or not you’re potentially violent enough to deserve a protracted stay in Guantanomo Bay… people like Tony Alamo, only with government funding and the majority of the U.S. Congress behind him.

“Prepare your heart for sorrows. The people of the world need to immediately prepare their minds, their spirits, their hearts, and their souls for these catastrophes, which will surely come to pass within this very generation.”

–Tony Alamo

Let’s turn back to the good Pastor’s fire-and-brimstone pamphlet for a second: “Any time now, a worldquake and a series of prophesied catastrophes will shockingly awaken the entire global population to a horrible, God-sent, unparalleled nightmare.”

I believe I now know what that “horrible, God-sent, unparalleled nightmare” really is. Need I spell it out? It’s written in the clouds, in the stars, in the broken lines on the palms of your hands. Peer closely into my crystal ball . . .
It's the dark legacy of the Dubya administration and the Clash of Civilizations and Senate Bill 1959.

It's The Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act and its mutant progenies being hatched in dozens of Congressional offices even as I write this.

Sweet Jesus, could it be that Tony Alamo was right?

If this bill (or any similar one) passes in the Senate my confidence in his prognosticative abilities will be unshakeable. At that point, and that point alone, I will throw my support to Pastor Tony Alamo and help him secure the Republican nomination as the next President of the United States.

Or, better yet, why waste time with the Executive Office? Let's appoint Alamo to be the guy who sits behind a mahogany desk in a cramped office at Harvard and writes the voluminous Bible worshipped by the President's most trusted acolytes.

Dubya, as I'm sure you know, has mentioned on several occasions that God gives him good advice on a semi-regular basis. I suspect, however, that if we could eavesdrop on these conversations we'd be surprised by the fact that God's voice sounds suspiciously like that of Samuel P. Huntington.

Or maybe even Tony Alamo.

Study closely the death-wish-laden prognostications of both and ask yourself: What's the difference?


Endnote

1. You might want to visit www.senate.gov and jot down the phone numbers and email addresses of every single U.S. Congressman and let all of them know in no uncertain terms that you will not stand by and abide the loss of your right to dissent. And, hell, if they arrest you for protesting a bill that takes away the right to protest, then the joke will be on all of us.

References


Acknowledgement

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the work of Daniel Sheehan. Sheehan is an untiring political activist who has worked as a legal counsel on many high profile cases such as Karen Silkwood, Iran-Contra, the Pentagon Papers, Three Mile Island and Watergate. In January of 2003 he delivered an inspiring and informative lecture at Southern Oregon University titled “New Paradigm Politics” in which he discussed the misappropriation of Hegelian dialectics to manipulate public consciousness—to limit the potential progress of civilization itself—by using the three political scientists mentioned above as examples to illustrate his thesis. I have drawn upon some of Sheehan’s insights in order to write this article. (A copy of his lecture is available at: http://sandiego.indymedia.org/en/2003/05/6042.shtml)
The End of History and the Last Man” by Francis Fukuyama (1992) and “The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order” by Samuel Huntington (1996) famously differ not only in their interpretation of the historical event of the end of the Cold War, but also in their interpretation of history itself. Following the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union Fukuyama claimed that the “end of history” has arrived not in the sense of no more events but in the sense of no more opposing historical forces which drive history forward through conflict. He therefore offered an analysis of global politics as comprised by several civilizations (like the Western, Islamic, Latin American, Orthodox, Eastern Asian and the Sub-Saharan civilization) which clash between one another. The Clash of Civilizations is a hypothesis that people’s cultural and religious identities will be the primary source of conflict in the post-Cold War world. The American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington argued that future wars would be fought not between countries, but between cultures. It was proposed in a 1992 lecture at the American Enterprise Institute, which was then developed in a 1993 Foreign Affairs article titled “The Clash of Civilizations?”, in response to his former student [ ]