

America, The Land of Contradictions and Failed Promises

By Tarcisio Beal

The America which unfolded in the 1960s under the Kennedy-Johnson Administrations was truly the hope of the world and it remains in stark contrast with the Trump/GOP ugliness, divisiveness, and antidemocratic immorality of today. While driving to class at the Catholic University of America (CUA – Washington, D. C.), my car radio began announcing the assassination of JFK. Then the Voice of America asked me to broadcast JFK's funeral to all of Brazil. Tears filled my eyes and voice while describing how his little son approached the casket and planted a loud kiss on his dead daddy's cheek.

Nevertheless, the assassination of JFK did not stop the U. S. government's drive for a better America and a better world. The 1964 Civil Rights Act culminated the heroic life of Martin Luther King, whose famous "I have a Dream" speech and rally in front of the Lincoln Memorial I was fortunate to attend. Then, there was Sargent Shriver's creation of the Department of States' Peace Corps Program for Latin America, aimed at sending young Americans to help raise the standard of living of the poor. I personally worked as Coordinator of four Peace Corps Programs for Brazil (three at Marquette University, Milwaukee, 1964, 1965, 1966 and one at the School of International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont, 1968). The Alliance for Progress had become the blueprint to get Latin America out of the vicious cycle of poverty and the grip of bloody dictators. My 1969 trip to Brazil confirmed the effectiveness of the Peace Corps' youngsters' care for the poor in the Northeast of the country.

I also experienced the State Department's goodwill and care for healthy international relations while working as interpreter and translator of Portuguese and Spanish at three joint meetings of the American and Latin American military officers in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Washington, D. C., and San Antonio, TX. Furthermore, hired by the State Department as guide/interpreter for dozens of Brazilian visitors who wished to know the best of the U.S., I took them on the road from New York to Denver, the Grand Canyon, to Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Miami. In Los Angeles, I took the Brazilian lawyer to Broadway Street to watch the parade in support of Bobby Kennedy's campaign for the Presidency, and even took a photo of Bobby speaking to the crowd. When I arrived in Miami that night, the TV was announcing his assassination.

Yes, the dreams of "Camelot" were dealt a serious blow with the assassinations of JFK, Bobby Kennedy, and Martin Luther King. However, the hopes and commitment remained high and President Lyndon B. Johnson turned into the most dedicated and sincere advocate of civil rights and social justice in the history of the American Presidency.



Now, the contrast between the decade of the 1960s and that of 2021 is between light/hope on one side, and darkness, doubt, and gloom, on the other. The debacle started under President Richard Nixon, who nullified the effectiveness of the Peace Corps and began the invasion of Iraq. Today, more than ever, too many Americans are being deluded into believing in lies, untruths and evil political plots that lead to immoral, undemocratic and violent behavior often encouraged by big money and the control of political and social power. The 2nd Amendment has been turned into an absolute, a moneymaker for gun manufacturers and the NRA, and an easy buy for criminals all over the nation. How can anyone justify the kind of freedom that endangers human life? Why aren't all Christian Churches following the lead of the Catholic Church and Pope Francis who emphasize that all human life and the love of neighbor, whatever his/her color or ethnicity, is the hallmark of every true Christian?

Why is it that Benjamin Franklin is seldom mentioned these days, he who said clearly that "to love God is to do good to one's neighbor?" Yes, Thomas Jefferson was an earlier proponent of white supremacy, but he completely changed his mind after 1799 and opposed slavery as a moral stain on the nation: "The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unrelenting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other" (cf. Christopher Hayes, "The New Abolitionism," in *The Nation*, May 14, 2014). Anyone who studies the history of the United States will realize that the 2nd Amendment was instituted because of the danger posed by British troops that were threatening the lives of any American who participated in the movement for independence. There is no way that the Founding Fathers, if they were here today, would sanction a literal reading of the 2nd Amendment and of a white supremacy concept that threaten life and basic human rights and that have killed hundreds of thousands of Americans. In fact, in 1912, the Chief of the Supreme Court declared that the 2nd Amendment should be interpreted according to the conditions and realities of the time, and not simply as the right to bear arms.

Contradictions and nonsense, including the falsification of history, are being used these days to justify undemocratic and even immoral actions and movements, including a form of religion which is anything but Christian or godly. The same government authorities and legislators who facilitate the possession of deadly weapons in the name of the 2nd Amendment, are denying the basic rights of women, of the LGBTQ community, and the right to vote to millions of Americans. They also wish to abolish

Continued on Page 5

Decree 900—the “infamous” agrarian reform—was not institutionalized until June 17th of 1952, seven months after the plot was created.

The United States intervened with the sole purpose of “rolling back the clock” to the days of repression and peonage. The U.S. overthrew a legitimate government, altered its’ constitution, and dictated the priorities of the future “government”. From a purely objective standpoint it becomes clear why this document has been long overlooked—The Department of State committed multiple crimes against a sovereign nation. The facts are indisputable.

Suspensions of subversion were identified by the Guatemalan government during Arevalo’s time in office. The plot to overthrow the government was uncovered soon after this document was created. For two years the government of Guatemala vocalized concerns of intervention, attempted to defend independence through the “legal process” of the United Nations, and presented documentary proof of the plot. The operation had been shared

throughout Latin America and Europe by reporters grounded in the U.S. No action was taken to investigate the accusations or the evidence, the program was renamed PBSUCCESS (PB-FORTUNE was rather obvious), and it’s secrets buried behind a curtain of lies—further acknowledging the illegal activities of the U.S. government and the deliberate attempt to cover it up.

This needs to be known by the American people.

The illegal acts committed by the U.S. to include obstruction of justice is a deplorable injustice for the people of Guatemala, who have not recovered from the event. Guatemala was a victim of international crimes with no opportunity to seek resolution. The argument that anti-communism was the main cause for intervention is undeniably false in the case of Guatemala.

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WHEN IT’S MY TIME TO GO TO HEAVEN (OJALÁ)

Whom I hope will meet me at the Pearly Gates:

My Beloved Boxer, Dusty, that my father dumped far from home, miraculously she returned to me on her own.

Mi Querida Abuelita, María Reyna, that I loved so much, who showed me love and attention when I had none.

Mi Madre, María “Neva” Mora, who sacrificed so much when, my father “El Viejero” abandoned us when I was ten.

My Abuelo, “Apa,” who spoiled me so, he couldn’t speak English well but he was well versed in his vocabulary of bad words like “Mutha Fuker” (he was the pioneer of rap music without knowing it).

Mi Abuela. “Ama”, who loved her birthplace Mexico, “Apa” would taunt her by saying “Tienes Mexico en el Corazón, pero la panza en los Estados Unidos” and oh yes, she’d get mad.

My good Friend and Supervisor, Guadalupe Flores, who traveled to Chicago on vacation only to be struck down by a stray bullet while visiting.

And the countless relatives and friends that have gone before me, too numerous to mention, that are loved and sorely missed.

Please take the time to tell your loved ones how much you love and care for them. Hug them and tell them how much they’ve touched your life. LA VIDA ESTA EMPRESTADA, LIFE IS A GIFT, DON’T WASTE IT!

—Rosemary Reyna-Sánchez



America

Continued from Page 3

the right to the very base of education, which is to form the critical minds of the young generations to have truth and facts as guides for their lives’ actions.

Unless we become aware of America’s history from its beginnings, of its strength and its weaknesses, we will not shape a better future for the country.

What is being called “Critical Race Theory” is a study of the truth and facts of racial relations, a truth and documented facts that its opponents cannot stand, from the sins and plague of slavery and

denial of basic human rights to the slaughter of black Americans, sometimes of whole black communities.

We must also face other serious threats to American democracy and human rights, especially that of the control of minds facilitated by the new technology of cellphones, the Internet and a portion of the media that propagate lies and falsehoods, trying to control the minds of the people and increase their revenues. We even hear some folks, including ex-President Trump, glorifying Hitler and the Nazis, and denying that the Holocaust ever took place. This topic, however, will be discussed in a separate article.

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