

THE DIOGENES REPORT
The Wit, Wisdom & Wituperation of Emanuel L. Strunin
“A few steps ahead of the curve”
April 2006, Vol. VI, #7

ARE WE MORE THAN A USER SOCIETY?

The net had not yet been cut down for the NCAA basketball championship when the cry of play ball went up across the land. The major league regular baseball season was at hand. All the while hockey, professional basketball, auto racing, horse racing, boxing, wrestling and who knows what other sports were attracting hundreds of thousands of spectators to stadiums and arenas throughout the USA. I'm not criticizing our infatuation with sports. I'm a big fan of certain sports.

While doing research on architects, It struck me that the largest number of their recent projects involved the design of museums, concert halls, cultural centers, libraries, educational institutions and the like. There also were office parks and hi-rise office buildings...but I don't recall any factories. Now, don't get me wrong, I like culture and I recognize the important role it plays in making a pleasant, worthwhile society.

Every once in a while I do read about the proposed construction of a manufacturing plant-- and it's usually an auto factory owned by a foreign company. At least, it's some sign that we still produce something in America. But a helluva lot more auto plants are being shut down than are opening up. And the shutdown of the factories leads to the closing of thousands of machine shops and the know-how they contained.

“Made-in-China” dominates

You wouldn't know that we do manufacture products by looking at the shelves in retail stores. There, the label “made in China” dominates. Try to buy a made-in-America product and you'll waste a whole day searching. The junkiest toy to the most sophisticated electronic equipment is imprinted “made in China.”

Oh, you'll find clothing made in countries like Indonesia, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Korea and some other exotic places that Kipling wrote about. We worry about child labor and the working conditions in those remote, low-manufacturing-cost places. I can remember when we worried about working conditions in the textile mills in the Carolinas and Georgia in the good old U.S. of A.

We Americans, are not involved in the production of these goods, but we are the happy users. Hey, we do produce some things in the USA. Every year we produce, and consume, thousands of TV episodes, movies, CDs, DVDs, books, theme park visits, gambling casino trips, sports attraction visits, financial services, etc., etc., etc We have become a user society.

Do what you do best

In the 1960s economists came up with the notion that the world's economy would best be served if each country would concentrate on the tasks that that they did best and most economically. In other words, since the strong suit of the United States was generating ideas and technology that should be the basis of our economy. Manufacturing should be carried out by those countries that were best at it—Japan, Germany, Sweden, at that time.

It has taken a few years, but the United States has slid into that quagmire prepared by those dismal scientists, the economists and financiers. Today, our once mighty steel industry consists mainly of mini-mills. Our shipbuilding industry—that launched a ship a day during World War II-- has been reduced to one or one-and-a-half companies. The thousands of machine shops that helped fuel an industrial revolution are few-and-far-between. The plants that produced radios, TVs, entertainment devices, communications equipment, cameras, kitchen appliances and bicycles are no longer on our shores.

Fortunately, we still have an aircraft industry and a defense industry because the economists and financiers who pushed to change the world's economy could not change world politics or human nature. From the 1960s to the present, depending how you want to count them, there have been five “major” wars and between six and ten “minor” wars. Without planes, ships and armaments we would have faced major problems whether or not we were active participants. Even being “prepared,” our forces were sent into combat in Iraq with unarmored vehicles. A function of not doing what we don't do best? And, we haven't learned in what other ways our forces suffered from shortfalls in armaments.

Others are doing what we do best

We are still best at churning out tons of “technology,” but, as we learn every day, the areas of what the United States does best do not continue to grow. More and more of technology related activities are being off-shored to such “backward” countries as India, China, Pakistan, South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore. Some of America's leading electronics, computer and pharmaceutical companies have set up development labs in Asia because there are not enough American scientists to do the research—or because it's cheaper to do it offshore. This guarantees that that number of American scientists and technologist will continue to fall short.

How do we change this headlong race into national disaster? First, recognize that our industrial and financial leaders are not patriots—but essentially, traitors to the long-range welfare of America. Legislation must be passed that forces every major technology, pharmaceutical, energy, chemical to put a significant part of their development budgets into U.S. facilities, employee and student training. These domestic development budgets must be at least three times as much—and perhaps much more-- as each company's overseas development budgets.

Also, all mergers and acquisitions should be measured, above all else, on their impact on America's industrial/technological development.

As for the nation's retailers, they should be required to offer at least 50 percent American made products.

These proposed actions will produce some disruptions in our "normal" business and consumer activities. But putting a "no fly zone" around the White House also causes some upset to "normal" flight patterns in the Washington area. Based on the good of the country, we adjust.

I'll be coming back to this topic as long as it continues to jump up and bite us on the ass—which it promises to do for a long, long time.

THIS HAS BEEN GOING AROUND THE INTERNET FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS, BUT THE LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD IS STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE IT

George: Condi! Nice to see you. What's happening?

Condi: Sir, I have the report here about the new leader of China.

George: Great. Lay it on me.

Condi: Hu is the new leader of China.

George: That's what I want to know.

Condi: That's what I'm telling you.

George: That's what I'm asking you. Who is the new leader of China?

Condi: Yes.

George: I mean the fellow's name.

Condi: Hu.

George: The guy in China.

Condi: Hu.

George: The new leader of China.

Condi: Hu.

George: The main man in China!

Condi: Hu is leading China.

George: Now whaddya' asking me for?

Condi: I'm telling you, Hu is leading China.

George: Well, I'm asking you. Who is leading China?

Condi: That's the man's name.

George: That's who's name?

Condi: Yes.

George: Will you, or will you not, tell me the name of the new leader of China?

Condi: Yes, sir.

George: Yassir? Yassir Arafat is in China? I thought he's dead in the Middle East.

Condi: That's correct.

George: Then who is in China?

Condi: Yes, sir.

George: Yassir is in China?

Condi: No, sir.

George: Then who is?

Condi: Yes, sir.

George: Yassir?

Condi: No, sir.

George: Look Condi. I need to know the name of the new leader of China.

Get me the Secretary General of the U.N. on the phone.

Condi: Kofi?

George: No, thanks.

Condi: You want Kofi?

George: No.

Condi: You don't want Kofi.

George: No. But now that you mention it, I could use a glass of milk. And then get me the U.N.

Condi: Yes, sir.

George: Not Yassir! The guy at the U.N.

Condi: Kofi?

George: Milk! Will you please make the call?

Condi: And call who?

George: Who is the guy at the U.N.?

Condi: Hu is the guy in China

George: Will you stay out of China?! .Condi: Yes, sir.

George: And stay out of the Middle East!

Just get me the guy at the U.N.

Condi: Kofi.

George: All right! With cream and two sugars.

HEADLINES AND COMMENTS*

Headlines from the world's press.

Comments by Diogenes.

The Venezuela Government, Run By Dictator Chavez, Is The Sole Owner Of Citgo

He really wants people to love him. Citgo gas the lowest gas prices in the area.

Wal-Mart's Move Into Organic Foods Has Small Farmers And The Health-Conscious Bristling

Since Wal-Mart gets most of its products from China, why not foods, they ask? If Wal-Mart goes the food route to China, will they label how many coolies crapped on their alfalfa sprouts and soybeans?

Oil Giant Rosneft Has Vast Reserves, But Its Controversial Past Has Investors Wary

Not to worry, the company will keep its costs down. Putin will provide lots of very low cost labor from the gulags.

Making Bangalore Sound Like Boston

It's hard enough to understand the Indians, why make it worst.

Twilight Of The UAW

Instead of beating up on the autoworkers, why doesn't GM and Ford design and build cars that the American consumers want?

Former Library Official Serving Time In Prison

That's pretty harsh punishment for an overdue book.

U.S. Plan to Build Iraq Clinics Falters

They had a \$200 million budget to build 154 clinics; we only built 20 clinics and ran out of money. You thought medical services are expensive in the U.S.

India Nuclear Deal May Face Hard Sell

Rice Set to Defend Landmark Accord She Orchestrated Without Congress

Even as pianist she couldn't orchestrate her performance with an orchestra.

Geologic Faults Cause Structures In New Orleans To Sink, Study Says

That's one thing you can't blame on FEMA.

Bush And Fox Repeat Vows On Immigration

They repeated their vows, immigrated and lived happily ever after.

Labor Shortage In China May Lead To Trade Shift

Maybe they can import Mexicans to do the jobs Chinese won't do.

Osprey Mishap Raises Questions

How many more marines have to get killed and how many more billions have to be thrown away on this program before the DOD junks it?

Peace Now Demands: Uproot Six Communities

Only if we can bury the Peace Now members in the uprooted communities—a tough but promising trade off.

 Hamas Hints At Recognition Of Israel

Before or after they stop firing rockets at Israel?

IDF Attacks, But Kassams Continue

Following ten Kassam rockets since Wednesday, the IDF barraged the Gaza Strip with shells and leaflets warning Gaza residents to stay away from Kassam launchers

Was this demonstration meant to warn Arabs or, more likely, to blow smoke in the eyes of Israelis to make them believe that the Government was trying to protect them?

Prosecutors Try To Seize Gold Dental Work Of Defendants

Achtung! Akzione!

Give Rebuilding Lower Priority in Future Wars

Give rebuilding a higher priority in natural disasters.

QUOTES I LIKE

Diogenes considers these quotes clever and/or informative, not that he necessarily agrees with them--not even his own.

Two extremes: Trusting to reason, or leaving reason out of account.

- Renee Pascal

Ben Mot son of Bon Mot, the Hebrew collector of aphorisms.

- Diogenes

Change is one thing, progress is another. "Change" is scientific; "progress" is ethical; change is indisputable, whereas progress is a matter of controversy.

- Bertrand Russell

I'm not too rich
I'm not too po'
But I'm always apropos.
- Diogenes

Life's under no obligation to give us what we expect.

- Margaret Mitchell

Men are idolaters and want something to look at and kiss and hug, or throw themselves down before; they always did, they always will; and if you don't make it of wood, you must make it of words.

- Oliver Wendell Holmes

When a line of action is said to be supported 'by all responsible men' it is nearly always dangerous or foolish.

- Harold Macmillan

A man may be a fool and not know it, but not if he is married.

- H. L. Mencken

People usually wish their enemies dead—but I do not: I say give them the gout, give them the stone.

- Mary Wortley Montagu

My wife was an immature woman...I would be home in the bathroom, taking a bath, and my wife would walk in whenever she felt like it and sink my boats.

- Woody Allen

READER'S COMMENTS

It has always been clear that 'Diogenes' is no Greek philosopher, but instead a Jewish nationalist. That being said, has he really had a change of "heart with our Father in heaven.?" Is he a political realist or does he buy into Biblical prophecy of recapturing the entire ancient Judaic kingdoms at their peaks.

The belief based Zionists to whom you ascribe constancy and realism live with a fantasy of a resurgent greater Israel under which millions of Arab residents will conveniently disappear, abandoning their homes to the inevitable Jewish victory (these are the same people who claim to have keys to the homes in their formerly seized land). The Kadimists whom you deplore are trying to find a safe haven behind secure borders with a strong wall with more Arabs on the other side than within.

Both positions appear fantastic. Both think that they occupy the moral high ground. The believers think they can remake the world. Those trying to establish a safe enclave believe that they can keep the world safely outside.

If you really believe in our Father in heaven, isn't it about time He does something?

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Comments welcome. e-mail to: editor@diogenesreport.com