

America: A Failed State?

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The definition of a failed state according to some experts is: A failed state is a political body that has disintegrated to a point where basic conditions and responsibilities of a sovereign government no longer function properly. Another characteristic of a failed state includes a central government so weak or ineffective that it has an inability to raise taxes or other support and has little practical control over much of its territory...(this does not apply to the USA) and hence there is a non-provision of public services.

According to Robert Longley:

“A failed state is a government that has become incapable of providing the basic functions and responsibilities of a sovereign nation, such as military defense, law enforcement, justice, education, or economic stability. Common characteristics of failed states include ongoing violence, corruption, crime, poverty, illiteracy, and crumbling infrastructure. Even if a state is functioning properly, it can fail if it loses credibility and the trust of the people.”

Examples of these failed states are: Syria, Somalia, Myanmar, Chad, Iraq, Yemen, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Sudan. But these are very poor countries. It is understandable that many of the above characteristics can occur in these states. But can you imagine that most of these characteristics also apply to the richest country in the world?

Think about the United States. Except for the defense—in reality weapons of mass destruction-, almost all these features also apply to the United States. America meets more than 90% of the criteria for a “Failed State”. Following statistics justify this claim:

Murders: Between 1990 and 2019, there were 531,349 murders in the United States. One of the highest in the world in a “developed” country.

Rapes: In 2019, there were 406,970 victims of rape and sexual assault in the country. According to Statista Research Department, on average, more than 91,000 rape cases per year have occurred since 2015 in the United States. The number of rapes per 100,000 citizens, USA is no. 14 amongst the world's countries. But for a developed nation, the USA is no. 4 after Sweden, Australia and Belgium as per the World Population Review report of 2021.

Opioid Crisis: In late 1990s, pharmaceutical companies reassured the medical community that patients would not become addicted to prescription opioid pain relievers, and healthcare providers recklessly began to prescribe them to innocent people. Soon opioid overdose began to increase. According to NIH, nearly 50,000 people in the United States died from opioid-involved overdoses in 2019. Since 1999, nearly 841,000 people have died from drug overdose. In short, while our government was sleeping, hundreds of thousands of Americans were dying from opioid drugs aggressively pushed by a few pharmaceutical companies such as Johnson and Johnson and Purdue Pharma. While people were dying, these pharma company executives were raking in millions of dollars.

No. of prisoners: According to World Population Review, the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. About 25% of the world's prison population lives in the United States, the "leader of the free world". It holds about 2.19 million prisoners as of 2019 which comes to 437 prisoners per 100,000 people as of 2019. It costs the state about \$69,355 per inmate. Blacks are 5.8 times in greater numbers than whites, which shows racist aspect of the system.

Death Row inmates: There were 1,529 people executed from 1976 through 2020. In early 2021, the federal government executed three people.

Innocents Released from Death Row or Prison: According to the Innocence Project, 18 prisoners have been proven innocent and exonerated by DNA testing in the United States after serving many years on death row. They were convicted in 11 states and served a combined 229 years in prison—including 202 years on death row—for crimes they did not commit. There are prisoners in Guantanamo Bay held for more than 17 year and not even tried. This is the kind of justice we have in the United States. This shows how unfair and screwed up is our criminal justice system.

Political Prisoners: There are many political prisoners-too many to mention here-being held in US jails for being political activists. In most cases, they are held in trumped up charges, doubtful conviction etc. based on their race. Most famous one is Julian Assange, an Australian journalist accused of revealing "classified state secrets". Basically, he is being made an example by the US government that whoever releases dirty secrets of the US military or government will face long terms in US jail to deter future whistle blowers. Assange faces 75 years in US prison if extradited to the USA from British jail. Another example is Edward Snowden who is forced to flee to Russia for releasing dirty US secrets. There are many other prisoners such as Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu Jamal, Ricardo Palmera and many more. They are convicted of crimes without enough or doubtful evidence and are languishing in US jails for many years. This is what "The leader of the free world does at home".

No. of poor: According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 Current Population Report, 34 million Americans are considered impoverished-10.5% of the current population. This is the

richest country in the world. The poverty rate for American children was 14.4%. For blacks, it is 18.8% and for female headed households, it was 24.3%. As per World Population Review Report of 2021, while India with world's 2nd largest population has the poverty rate of 21.9% and no. 22nd, United States, the richest country in the world, the poverty rate is 17.8%, and it is no. 2nd, after United Kingdom (poverty rate-18.6%) amongst the so-called developed countries.

No. of people without Health Insurance: While most European countries have universal health insurance coverage, in 2021, the United States had 9.6% of its population or more than 26 to 30 million—without health insurance while there were 4 million children without the health insurance as per statistica.com.

America's Unnecessary and Disastrous Wars: The US has been at war 225 out of 243 years since 1776 according to TheNews.com. According to the World Future Fund, America has been in 19 wars since World War-II: The Korean War, The Vietnam War, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are some of them. The Iraq war alone has taken more than a million lives at a cost of more than \$5 trillion as per some reports. The total death toll of people killed in all these wars put together is over 12 million. The number of injured is many times this number. Trillions of dollars were squandered in these immoral and unnecessary wars. The latest war in Afghanistan which has lasted 20 years or more, where the US is finally pulling out, has killed some 47,000 people and it cost the US some \$2 trillion. Were these wars necessary? Only the most ignorant will say "yes."

Use of Chemical Weapons: The United States sprayed 21 million gallons of Agent Orange, an herbicide—deadliest of poison—in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. More than 500,000 civilians were injured permanently. Even their children are being born deformed or without limbs today.

U.S. Military Bases: According to Politico Magazine, the United States still maintains 800 military bases in more than 70 countries and territories abroad while, in contrast, Britain, France and Russia have about 30 bases combined. Maintaining bases and troops overseas cost \$85 to \$100 billion annually in 2014. That cost is much higher today. Why should we have military bases abroad? What a colossal waste of money while millions don't have enough food to eat and are in poverty in America itself?

Illegal Interventions in other countries: While the number of foreign interventions stood at 188 till 2017, the leader of the "free world" was found involved in 117 "partisan electoral interventions" between 1946 and 2000 or about 1 of every 9 ballot exercises held since World War-II. Since World War-II, the United States has sabotaged or destroyed more than 50 democratic movements around the world while supporting compliant dictators on many occasions. The US has a long history of rigging polls, supporting military coups, channeling funds, and spreading political propaganda in various countries. Amazingly, after these horrific wars, and mass killings of humanity in other countries, there never is discussion on major news media about these blunders. Everything is back to business as usual; everything is conveniently forgotten.

Flawed Constitution: Unlike what majority of Americans are led to believe blindly from childhood in the holiness and greatness of the US Constitution, it has major flaws and is undemocratic. Additionally, it allows legal bribery of political donations to candidates for Presidents, Senators and Congressmen (including state elections candidates) by the rich in

the number of billions of dollars during elections. No wonder, our elected officials listen to their paymasters and legislate laws mainly in favor of their donors. Also, our flawed constitution allows unelected Supreme Court judges to be appointed for life. What a shame!

Broken Political System: American political system is broken. Though there are two parties, they both are corporate parties with their allegiance to American corporate elites, not the American people. Hence most of the laws are enacted favoring the corporate elites and the super-rich or oligarchs.

No. of Uneducated: According to the U.S. Department of Education, 54% of U.S. adults 16-74 years old—about 130 million people—lack proficiency in literacy, reading below the equivalent of a sixth-grade level. As per Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, this low level of adult literacy could be costing the country \$2.2 trillion a year. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), 21% of adults in the United States (about 43 million) fall into the illiterate/functionally illiterate category as of April 29, 2020.

No. of Blacks Killed by Police: As per Statista.com, the trend of fatal police shootings in the United States seems to be increasing, with a total of 371 civilians having been shot, of which 71 were black in the first five months of 2021. Year 2020 saw 1021 fatal police shootings while in 2019, there were 999 fatal shootings. The rate of shootings of blacks was much higher than any other ethnicity showing the racist nature of police brutality. All these figures clearly show that not only the police in America are trigger-happy idiots but they are also racist. In 21st century, the United States is still a very racist country.

Gun Violence: According to teamenough.org/gun-violence-statistics: Every year, 115,551 people in America are shot in murders, assaults, suicides or suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, or by police intervention. Every day, more than 106 people die from gun violence in America. Out of that, 39 are murdered, 64 kill themselves, 1 is killed unintentionally and 1 dies but intent is unknown. On average, yearly, 38,826 people die from gun violence while 76,725 people survive gun injuries. Every year, 7957 children and teens are shot, 1663 children and teens die from gun violence while 864 are injured. As reported recently by ABC News, as of July 2nd, 2023, there were 338 mass shootings in America. So far, 21000 people died from gun violence which comes to 115 people per day.

The numbers are mind boggling. This can happen only in a wild, wild country that America has become now a days. No other country has such a horrible record. Despite these horrific numbers, gun laws are not tightened enough. Wasted interests such as Gun Lobby-National Rifle Association—prevail because of its corrupting influence—legal bribery of political donations- on our politicians.

As reported by ABC news, so far, more than 13,900 people have been killed by gun violence. But do we have stricter gun laws? No. As per theguardian.com, as of May 7, there were 202 mass shootings in the country. United States has become a “Wild, Wild West” country now.

No. of Billionaires: As per Forbes Magazine, the United States has the highest number of billionaires in the world, numbering 724 as of 2021. China has 626, India has 140 while Germany has 136. The U.S. billionaires’ net worth is staggering \$4.4 Trillion. According to americansfortaxfairness.org, the total wealth of U.S. billionaires grew by \$1.3 trillion during the roughly first seven months of the coronavirus pandemic—a 44% spike in wealth. This increase in wealth is more than it would cost to send a stimulus check of \$3900 to every one

of the 330 million Americans.

Six Media Giants Control all the News: As per techstartups.com reports, today, 6 media giants control a whopping 90% of what we read, watch, or listen to while giving an illusion of choice and objectivity. By constantly giving Americans the controlled “news”, these media giants, using Noam Chomsky’s phrase, manufacture “consent”. Majority of us Americans are led to believe that America is doing so much good to the world, bringing democracy and freedom to the world, helping other nations, and maintaining peace around the world. Also, its capitalist economic system is the greatest and the only system that works. Nothing could be farther from the truth. There never is the discussion of other economic systems such as socialism or social democracy.

These media giants are: G. E. owning Comcast, NBC, Universal Pictures, Focus Features, News Corp owning Fox News, Wall Street Journal and New York Post, Disney controlling ABC, ESPN, PIXAR, MIRAMAX and Marvel Studios, VIACOM owning MTV, NICK Jr., BET, CMT and Paramount Pictures, Time Warner owning CNN, HBO, TIME, Warner Bros., and CBS controlling ShowTime, Smithsonian channel, NFL.COM, Jeopardy and 60 Minutes. Their total revenue in 2010 was \$ 275.9 billion. These media giants are given free reign over America’s airwaves belonging to the American people. All of them have an agenda of controlling what Every American sees, hears, reads, or listens to. Some 232 media executives control the information diet of 325 to 330 million Americans.

In 1983, 90% of American media was owned by 50 companies. By 2011, the same 90% was controlled by only 6 companies. They have consolidated their power.

Who Controls America? Have you ever wondered who really controls America? The answer is Oligarchs, Media Giants, Giant Corporate CEOs, and Wall Street Bankers. Together they wield enormous power over our corrupt politicians who do their bidding and enact laws that always benefit these superrich. The country has one dollar one vote ‘democracy’, not one citizen one vote. As billionaire Warren Buffet has rightly said, “My class (superrich) is waging a war against the 99%, and they are winning”.

Looking at all the above, it should be clear to any open-minded person that America has huge problems and is creating massive problems in other countries by its foolish wars. Its latest crime is the “proxy war” it has created between Russia and Ukraine. It should be worrisome to everyone how long such dire conditions can last? How long such massive waste of money in global wars can American economy sustain? For how long American parents will tolerate their sons and daughters being sent to such unnecessary wars to kill and be killed? How long do we Americans tolerate such bad decisions by our “elected” politicians that are taking this country closer and closer to a disaster and bankruptcy? All indications are there for those who can discern without bias that America is failing to protect its own people. It has become a failed state. American Empire is in rapid decline. It is just a matter of time.

Unless America drastically changes its national and foreign policies, American Empire will certainly deteriorate and decline further and further until it meets the same fate as the Roman, the British and other empires of history.

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