

From Superpower to Incompetence

By [Dr. Paul Craig Roberts](#)

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Having grown up during the second half of the 20th century, I don't recognize my country today. I experienced life in a competent country, and now I experience life in an incompetent country.

Everything is incompetent. The police are incompetent. They shoot children, grandmothers, cripples, and claim that they feared for their life.

Washington's foreign policy is incompetent. Washington has alienated the world with its insane illegal attacks on other countries. Today the United States and Israel are the two most distrusted countries on earth and the two countries regarded as the greatest threat to peace.

The military/security complex is incompetent. The national security state is so incompetent that it was unable to block the most humiliating attack in history against a superpower that proved to be entirely helpless as a few people armed with box cutters and an inability to fly an airplane destroyed the World Trade Center and part of the Pentagon itself. The military industries have produced at gigantic cost the F-35 that is no match for the Russian fighters or even for the F-15s and F-16s it is supposed to replace.

The media is incompetent. I can't think of an accurate story that has been reported in the 21st century. There must be one, but it doesn't come to mind.

The universities are incompetent. Instead of hiring professors to teach the students, the universities hire administrators to regulate them. Instead of professors, there are presidents, vice presidents, chancellors, vice chancellors, provosts, vice provosts, assistant provosts, deans, associate deans, assistant deans. Instead of subject matter there is speech regulation and sensitivity training. Universities spend up to 75% of their budgets on administrators, many of whom have outsized incomes.

The public schools have been made incompetent by standardized national testing. The purpose of education today is to pass some test. School accreditation and teachers' pay depend not on developing the creativity or independent thinking of those students capable of it, but on herding them through memory work for a standardized test.

One could go on endlessly.

Instead, I will relate a story of everyday incompetencies that have prevented me from writing this week and for a few more days yet.

Recently, while away from my home, a heavy equipment operator working on a nearby construction site managed to drive under power lines with the fork lift raised. Instead of breaking the wire, it snapped the pole in half that conveyed electric power to my house. The power company came out, or, as I suspect, an outsourced contractor, who reestablished power to my home but did not check that the neutral wire was still attached. Consequently for a week or so my house experienced round the clock surges of high voltage that blew out the surge protection, breaker box, and every appliance in the house. Expecting my return, the house was inspected, and the discovery was that there was no power. Back came the power company and discovered that high voltage was feeding into the house and had destroyed everything plugged in.

So. Here we have a moron operating heavy equipment who does not understand that he cannot drive under power lines with the lift raised. We have a power company or its outsourced contractor who does not understand that power cannot be reconnected without making certain that the neutral wire is still connected.

So every appliance is fried. Glass everywhere from blown out light bulbs. We are talking thousands of dollars.

This is America today. And the incompetents ruling incompetents want war with Iran, Korea, Russia, China. Considering the extraordinary level of incompetence throughout the United States, I guarantee you that we will not win these wars.

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About the author:

Paul Craig Roberts, former Assistant Secretary of the US Treasury and Associate Editor of the Wall Street Journal, has held numerous university appointments. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research. Dr. Roberts can be reached at <http://paulcraigroberts.org>

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