

IN THE GLOBAL ABYSS OF DESPAIR A GLIMMER OF HOPE FROM MAHATMA GANDHI

(By Pascal Alan Nazareth, author of *Gandhi's Outstanding Leadership* & *Gandhi : The Soul Force Warrior*)

Many decades ago Gandhi had averred : "When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it--always."

Amazingly Napoleon had articulated a similar thought but in a different idiom. On the eve of his demise, at his remote St. Helena Mansion where he was exiled / died, he had averred : " There are but two powers in the world, the Sword and the Spirit. In the long run the sword is always b conquered by the Spirit."

20th century history validates the veracity of these affirmations.

In 1918, Britain was at the zenith of its power. The German, Austro Hungarian, & Ottoman Empires had been defeated & Pax Britannica established worldwide. Its proud boast was "The sun never sets on the British empire". In one way this was true. As its empire extended from Fiji in the east to Vancouver in the west, the sun shone on a British flag in some part of the world every hour of the day ! Yet just 29 years later, in 1947, a "half naked fakir", plucked the "brightest jewel in the British Crown". By 1980 most of its colonies, as also those of other European imperial powers had attained

independence. When the UN was founded in 1945 it had 51 members. In 2000 it had 189!

In the 1920 - 1945 period three highly militarized fascist powers - Italy, Germany & Japan - dominated the world. They conquered most of Europe, North Africa, East & South East Asia. During this period they appeared invincible. But by August 1945 all three had been defeated & devastated. Their leaders, Benito Mussolini was shot by fellow Italians, Adolph Hitler committed suicide & Hideki Tojo hanged as a war criminal.

Post 1945, USA & Russia (the latter in its new incarnation as the Soviet Union), emerged as global super powers. . Each had its own military alliance : NATO with 15 members & Warsaw Pact with 8 members. However, the Non Aligned movement, which opposed military alliances & was founded in 1955, had 115 Asian, African & Latin American countries as members by 1979.

1980 onwards non violent revolutions brought down Communist dictatorships in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, East Germany & the Soviet Union. Most of them or parts thereof, emerged as democratic states & joined the European Union. Elsewhere, non violent revolutions ended Apartheid in South Africa, racial discrimination in the US & military dictatorships in the Philippines, Chile & Bolivia. They gave Philippines & Chile their first women presidents, Bolivia its first indigenous Aymara president, South Africa & USA their first Black Presidents .

These radical changes were the most sweeping democratization of national politics and international political geography in world history.

Roger Markwick has written about these revolutions in his 'From Violence to Velvet : A Century of Revolutions 1917 - 2017' book.

In recent years the global discourse has been mainly about wars in Ukraine, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Iran & Venezuela. In the Ukraine war, the lead role was that of Vladimir Putin. In all the other wars Donald Trump & Benjamin Netanyahu have had lead & closely coordinated roles. The US veto has provided them complete immunity from any UNSC condemnation for their many blatantly contrary to international law acts like bombing Iran's nuclear sites & abducting Venezuela's President & his wife from their Caracas Mansion & flying them to New York for trial. Their combined military strength being greater than that of all other military powers, they appear invincible. This has created the present 'Global abyss of despair'

Nonetheless, both of them & their countries have major vulnerabilities. The latter are heavily mired in debt, their societies highly divided / restive & their armed forces, particularly Israel's, considerably over stretched. Besides, Donald Trump & Benjamin Netanyahu are criminally indicted in US & Israeli courts, the latter also by ICJ.

Israel's brutal genocide of the Palestinians has aroused global revulsion & anger. Prominent among those opposing this genocide are 'Jewish Voices for Peace' & 'Rabbis for

Palestine', both of whom have denounced "Zionism" & exposed the vital fact that Israel is a 'Zionist' & not a 'Jewish' state.

Pro-Palestinian rallies have been held in over 100 cities worldwide from Canberra, Djakarta, Cairo & Cape Town to Paris, London, New York & Sao Polo.

Israel is now widely regarded as an 'Apartheid' and / or "Pariah" state.

In a 2024 U.N. General Assembly vote, 174 countries, with 94 percent of the world population, voted in favor of Palestinian self determination, while only the United States, Israel, Nauru & Micronesia voted against it.

By laying claim to Greenland & threatening to impose a 25% tariff on any country that opposes this claim, President Trump has splintered the Western Alliance. Some of its members now prefer to trade with China & India rather than the US.

BRICS membership has increased from the original 5 (Brazil, Russia, India, China & South Africa) to 19 with Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand Saudi Arabia, UAE, Uganda & Uzbekistan joining it by 2025. It now has 56% of global population (4.45 billion) & 44 % of global GDP. Its member states are increasingly handling mutual trade in their own currencies or the Chinese Yuan, NOT the US dollar.

Since January 1, 2026, New York city has a 34 year old India origin, Uganda born, pro-Palestinian Muslim as its Mayor despite it being the world's largest, wealthiest, 'Zionist' city.
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To me, these vital developments are an indication that the tectonic plates of the global political & economic order are likely to have as major a shift as in 1945 & 1991.

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