
Maj. Gen. Vinod Saighal (ret.)

‘The Globe Is Facing A Discontinuity’

Maj. Gen. Vinod Saighal (ret.) of India was, among his other responsibilities, the head of the UN peacekeeping forces in Gaza for eight years. He gave this presentation to the Berlin seminar on Jan. 12. Subheads have been added. In a future issue, we will publish a longer contribution, in which he develops his views in more depth.

I must compliment Mr. LaRouche for his presentation. I’ve been reading his papers over the years, and to the best of my knowledge, in the last hundred years of U.S. politics, I have never come across any Presidential contender having articulated his views so concisely, cogently, and clearly. I have a slight difference of opinion with him, because the past is not going to project into the future at this point in time. In fact, the new book I am working on, is titled *The Future as Discontinuity*. The globe is facing a discontinuity.

Kautilya, a few thousand years ago, in his *Arthashastra*, said, it is the nature of power to assert itself. And we’ve been

seeing this throughout history. What the United States is doing now, is nothing out of the ordinary. The difference is, at this point in time, as never before in history, power is concentrated at a single point on the globe. Any decline in this power, is going to affect the globe. So therefore, at this point in time, regardless of what evil that has overtaken the United States, a catastrophic decline of U.S. power is in nobody's interest: not of America, America's friends, and America's adversaries. I have said that in almost all my books, which have sold more in the U.S.A. and Canada, and the West generally, than in India.

Now, I am going to be flagging off two points: the impending financial crisis, and externalities that impinge on the likely U.S. decline, which translates into a temporary global decline—unless we're prepared for it.

The Elites Can Delay a Financial Breakdown

Taking first the financial crisis: Don't you think, ladies and gentlemen, that the powers that control the U.S. establishment today, as so clearly brought out by Mr. LaRouche, are aware that their policies, their economic policies, are pushing the United States into a head-long decline? Do you think they're not aware of it? Do you think there's not a deliberate-ness to it? The answer is: They're aware of it! And they are preparing to take over and benefit from a global collapse!

Today, the United States is hugely indebted to the powers that hold the global financial reserves: China, Japan, Saudi Arabia. Do you not think that these countries know that these reserves—in the case of China going up to \$800 billion—are not worth the paper they're written on? Does Japan not know it? Does Saudi Arabia not know it? But, they are all part of the global system. The governing elites of China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, have been co-opted into the system. So, they're not in a position to pull the rug from under the feet of the United States, and bring in that collapse—because a collapse of the United States *ipso facto* translates into a collapse of China's ambition to be a global power by about 2025. So, China is not going to do it. Although these U.S. Treasury receipts may be worthless pieces of paper, China is using those assets to build itself as a global power. The same is the case with the others I'm referring to. Where I differ with Mr. LaRouche is: The collapse is not necessarily imminent; the decline can be artificially stretched for some time.

Once again, who are the people pushing for this decline? I think Mr. LaRouche knows them. Today, in the United States, they are putting their money into an area which is already defunct—as known to them. The National Missile Defense (NMD) effort, over the period of its life-span of 25 years, is going to cost \$1.2 trillion. Kindly see, who are the people who have bought up and control the firms and entities that are going to support this NMD system. They speak of an axis forming around China, India and Russia threatening the United States.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I have written in my books, this triangular relationship is a laudable enterprise—but it's a non-

starter. Just go to the establishments who run China, India, and Russia. Take the establishment that runs India. Where do you see India sacrificing its bilateral relations with the United States in order to augment this triangular relationship, beyond a point? Where do you see the Russian establishment, in the ascendant after the Yeltsin years, going to sacrifice its bilateral relations with the Atlantic community, to build up China and the triangular relationship? Go to Beijing: Where do you see, in the establishment currently running China, the bilateral interests of China being sacrificed to build up the triangular relationship? I don't see it, at all.

In the manner which Mr. LaRouche proposes this triangular relationship, I'm all for it. But, look at the people who are running China. their wards, their sons and children. Do you know how many billions of dollars they've invested into joint enterprises with people from Taiwan and the United States?

We must appreciate the subtle change that has taken place in the outlook of the middle classes who have been slowly sucked into the maws of free market capitalism in one country after another. The essence of capitalism being self-indulgence, conspicuous consumerism, and instant gratification, parts of society experiencing greater affluence have joyfully taken to the "who cares what happens tomorrow" syndrome. Something similar is happening at the other end, due to extreme deprivation by people who are starving and who do not know where their next meal is coming from.

Will U.S. Society Implode?

My greatest worry, is an implosion of U.S. society; America's demoralization over the longer term, if its policies that are being followed in the Middle East continue for any period of time. In September 2003, when Abu Ghraib was not yet known, en route to a conference here in Berlin, I was passing through London and the BBC asked me to come for a live presentation. I said, when people talk about American casualties and the body bags—there were 600 U.S. casualties at that time—this means nothing. For people who are ready to invade another country, 600 casualties are no casualties; 50,000-100,000 casualties might be different. *But*, I said, the problem that America is going to face, is the psychological disorientation that has come about in the people you have deployed in Iraq. A psychological disorientation deriving from what they were told about Iraq, and what is happening there in reality—and this I said before Abu Ghraib.

The psychological disorientation has already gotten into these 150,000 people in Iraq. Once they go back to America, it will diffuse through the bloodstream of American society and will demoralize America. Throughout America's history, there have been parades in New York and Midwestern towns when the soldiers returned from foreign wars. They were welcomed back as heroes. This time, when the soldiers go back from Iraq, there are going to be no yellow ribbons on the trees. They're going to slink back! They will not be welcomed as heroes. You've destroyed them psychologi-

cally in Iraq—which in turn is psychologically wrecking and demoralizing America. . . .

Sri Aurobindo, the great philosopher-sage, a little before his death, had presciently warned humanity on the need for urgent remedial action. In April 1950 in a Postscript Chapter to *The Ideal of Human Unity*, he wrote: “The indwelling deity who presides over the destiny of the race has raised in man’s mind and heart the idea, the hope of a new order which will replace the old unsatisfactory order, and substitute for it conditions of the world’s life which will in the end have a reasonable chance of establishing permanent peace and well-being. . . . It is for the men of our day and, at the most, of tomorrow to give the answer. For, too long a postponement or too continued a failure will open the way to a series of increasing catastrophes which might create a too prolonged and disastrous confusion and chaos and render a solution too difficult or impossible; it might even end in something like an irremediable crash, not only of the present world-civilization but of all civilization.”

The digression, not being a descent into pessimism, should serve to highlight the urgency for immediate action, to very simply resume the destiny of humankind from the handful of people who have taken control of the levers of power in the superpower and some nations around the world. An enlightened leader with the attributes required to reverse the dangerous decline might not find it possible today to come to the fore and win election to the office of the President of the United States. The interests that have taken an iron grip over the Washington establishment, the media, and wealth formation will simply not allow such a species to co-exist.

Yet, as I said, the challenge before the world is not so much to diminish U.S. power—a catastrophic decline at this juncture not being in anybody’s interest—but to change U.S. mindsets and channel America’s amazing vitality toward productive ends—ends that will allow for the speedy revitalization of the planet. Once again, the globe is facing a discontinuity.