

# America's Self-Inflicted Demise?

REVIEWED BY BRENDA WALKER

What a long strange trip it's been for Pat Buchanan. When he was the opposition researcher and speechwriter for Richard Nixon, he was the voice of the establishment. Now in his later years, he is the Cassandra of the Republic, warning of the terrible results of violating our own first principles, by forgetting George Washington's admonition against foreign entanglements, as well as a series of fundamental mistakes on the economy, immigration, and how America should act in the world.

These days, the Beltway is all about creating bigger and more profitable entanglements to benefit special interests. The nation-state is under attack as never before, and particularly by those who swore oaths of office that they would protect this one. Borders and sovereignty are seen as impediments to commerce by many of today's elites, and a kind of neo-slavery in the form of illegal immigration has taken hold, not to be easily dislodged. (Keep in mind that the last time business became addicted to nearly free labor, it took four years of war and 600,000 deaths of combatants to end, between 1861 and 1865.)

A substantial piece of the book compares America's previous history of limited foreign adventures (though with spurts of well-intentioned meddling) with President George Bush's current imperial hubris to be the global cop as well as lawgiver to billions who never signed up for his world democracy project. The present object of Mr.

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Bush's democratic intentions is the Islamic world, where certain necessary parts of a democratic society do not exist in the cultural traditions. During the Danish cartoon controversy, when drawings considered blasphemous against Mohammed caused rioting and death across the globe, we saw how freedom of speech is not valued at all among Muslims when the subject is Islam. Slander against the prophet requires the punishment of death: any ayatollah will tell you that.

And history does not indicate that the masses of humanity are pining for democracy and freedom, despite George Bush's many speeches expressing that belief, as Buchanan catalogs at length. Voters in various times and places have made decisions that actually decreased their own freedom, from the Weimar Republic to the Algerians' choice of a Taliban-style government in 1992, among others.

There are definitely bad guys out there, but dismantling the Cold War infrastructure would free up resources to deal with today's threats more effectively. At one point, Buchanan lists the military commitments abroad as of 2004. Those include 13,000 service members in Italy, 12,000 in England, 75,000 in Germany, and 37,000 in South Korea. Compare these numbers with the slightly more than 12,000 Border Patrol agents in 2007 who protect the United States from foreign incursion.

According to Mr. Buchanan, the situation for America now is a perfect storm of disastrous policies coming home to roost, with little attention given to the root causes by either the current resident of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue or those vying to occupy it next. The list of problems left to fester includes (but is not limited to) a weakening dollar, military forces being worn down, open borders, globalized anti-patriotic attitudes among the elites, a gutted

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## Day of Reckoning How Hubris, Ideology, and Greed Are Tearing America Apart

by Patrick J. Buchanan  
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manufacturing base, and trillions of dollars of debt (much of it to unfriendly China) along with trillions more in trade deficits.

Equally troublesome on the home front is how Washington immigration policies have dismantled America's national community from one of societal unity in the post-World War II period to a diverse gaggle of mutually suspicious ethnic groups now. Summoning the national will to some great effort becomes far more problematic, if not impossible, in such conditions. It's hard to imagine FDR's fireside chats having the same effect if they had to be translated into Spanish, Mandarin, and Tagalog. Even the liberal social scientist Robert Putnam has reluctantly admitted that his research reveals that increasing diversity decreases trust within communities. But the diversity business continues to boom as it peddles the false ideology that "diversity is our strength" and other silliness about human psychology.

Mr. Buchanan is not optimistic about the pending disasters looming before us, foisted upon a somnabulist America by a generation of greedy and ideological leaders; in fact, he is deeply pessimistic about our future. Over two hundred pages of a history of bad ideas will do that. Immigration, free trade, military adventurism, outsourcing, and more have all added up to a truly dire picture. In the final chapter, the author asks, "Is America on a path to national suicide?" Is the American experiment with representative government doomed to an ignominious death? Is the nation-state itself an inevitable victim of the powerful forces of globalism?

The author finds a small bit of hope in the moral strength of the American people who rose up to defeat the McCain-Kennedy amnesty legislation. But we patriotic citizens will have to be even more insistent to convince the Beltway bunch

to reinstitute the necessary degree of economic nationalism. The nation certainly must scale back the many expensive and often counterproductive military commitments abroad. It makes no sense to borrow billions of dollars from a possible future enemy (China) to finance our unwanted Globocop services to an unwilling world. Besides, if America withdrew from worldwide policing, other nations—say South Korea and some in Europe—might be persuaded to provide more for their own defense.

On the home front, immigration must be rescued from anarchy and reconstituted as a lawful endeavor so that assimilation can resume. Citizens across the political spectrum want immigration to be legal, controlled, and reduced—Washington must be made to comply.

Who knows... perhaps some President in the near future might be convinced to work for the good of the American people first and foremost. For that to happen, he would have to renounce being the self-appointed CEO of the world, a position the current President apparently favors above his job as described in the Constitution.

The book is intense reading: the lengthy analysis of the crises facing us is disturbing and predicts



**Pat Buchanan promoting his last book in Washington, DC.**

a difficult future at best. Keep in mind that the Cassandra of mythology was able to prophecy accurately, but was cursed so that the people would not believe her predictions. Pat Buchanan is similarly marginalized by much of mainstream media, but he cannot be ignored altogether because his books are always best sellers and his arguments are powerfully based in fact.

For those of us whose passion is to save America, *Day of Reckoning* is required reading. ■

