## REALITY QUEST

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## NAFTA

There are many political and current events which take place each day in our lives. I feel it is important that one tries hard to stay abreast of these events so as to better understand the nature of our human race. These events can teach us a lot about ourselves, and if understood correctly, can help us to improve ourselves. It is very sad to admit, however, that humans very rarely learn from the historical experiences (mistakes) of our predecessors. Many great civilizations have risen and fallen, and from this fact, one would think mankind would learn something ,i.e.: how and why these civilizations fell. If we can determine the cause of their demise, one would assume that we would try not to make the same mistakes. Since most adults are just *old* children, they do the same things which one would expect of a child only in a more sophisticated way- they think their parents are old fashioned and they alone are right. As these children mature, they soon realize that their parents weren't as dumb as they thought.

Anyway, I feel current events whether they be political, personal, or of whatever nature are very important to follow and understand.

If I were to take a poll of 100 of my peers (a group which is pretty small) on NAFTA, 80% wouldn't know what it stands for, and of the 20% who do, only about 2% would have any kind of idea at all about what it means. Of the 2%, no one would really know how to answer the question, What is NAFTA and what does it entail? These two individuals would more than likely have two very different opinions of what it means to them. Thus is the way with politics. (If one wants to argue, bring up politics or religion.)

When someone forms an opinion on a matter they become an *expert* on their own opinion. When they express their opinion to others, they try to portray their expertise in a way which will convince the listener that they indeed <u>know</u> what they are talking about. What usually happens is, the "expert" will only give his or her opinion to those which he or she believes understands less about the issue than themselves. Knowing this about human nature, I have never met an *expert* on anything, or do I consider myself an *expert* on the same. Humans will form their own opinions based on either first hand experience or the opinions of others. The vast majority, however, base their opinion on the opinion of an individual who based their opinion on the opinion of someone else. Confusing, Huh? No wonder humans have so many problems finding truth.

Being the expert that I am on my own opinion, I will now discuss NAFTA.

NAFTA stands for the North American Free Trade Agreement. A wise political student would notice from its name that it is an *agreement* and not a *treaty*. An agreement only needs to be ratified (approved) by a majority of the Congress, while a treaty must receive at least a two-thirds vote to pass. Those wise politicians who drafted (wrote) NAFTA knew that there would be a lot of opposition to it, so to make it easier to get it passed, they called it an agreement. Historically, treaties are usually used in this instance. Because of the wording of its name and its presentation to congress as such, a "red flag" went up in my mind.

The agreement is between the Untied States, Canada, and Mexico. However, the United States and Canada have been experiencing most of the agreements outlined in NAFTA for quite sometime (another "red flag"). Therefore, the agreement must be for the purpose of opening up the trade borders between the U.S. and Mexico. But why now? I asked. Why not 20 years ago? It seems to be the best thing to do for our neighbors to the South. At last, it seems, the U.S. is trying to help their poor neighbors become a more prosperous nation. How kind and thoughtful of us, I thought. However, knowing that it is ludicrous

(absurd) to think that the wealthy give a damn about the poor, I was puzzled as to why this agreement was being made at this time.

With a little research and my continuing quest for truth, I found what I believe to be the truth. The following is a little analogy of what is happening with NAFTA:

Mr. M asked Mr. U for a loan of 100 dollars. Mr. U was in debt himself and couldn't personally lend Mr. M anything. However, Mr. U had considerable assets and good credit with his bank. So Mr. U borrowed the 100 dollars from his bank for 1% interest and lent it to Mr. M for 2% interest. (Knowing slyly that he could make 1% interest off Mr. M by doing nothing more than lending Mr. M the 100 dollars he borrowed from his bank.)

Now, Mr. M could not make the \$10 per month payment to Mr. U as promised. Things were going bad for him. Both men knew that \$2 of the \$10 monthly payment was interest only. The two men agreed that no matter what, the interest had to be paid. For you see, Mr. U had to pay back his bank. Mr., U knew his bank would accept only the interest payment on his loan which was \$1 per month. "Ha, ha!" thought Mr. U, "I am making \$1 in interest in the deal. (Remember, Mr. M has to pay Mr. U \$2 and Mr. U only has to pay his bank \$1.) "What a great source of revenue (income). I think I will borrow more money from my bank and lend it to others in the same way as I did Mr. M, (to help them in their dire needs of course), so I can create a continual source of income for myself without doing anything."

It didn't take long before Mr. M realized that Mr. U's bank would lend him money directly at a lower rate of interest than Mr. U had charged him. Things with Mr. M were still pretty bad, so Mr. M borrowed money from Mr. U's bank just to pay the interest that he owed Mr. U so that Mr. U could pay his interest to the same bank (It didn't take long before Mr. U was in debt up to his eyebrows. It seemed like everyone owed Mr. U something.)

Well, the other people to whom Mr. U had lent money realized that they too could borrow from the same bank which Mr. U borrowed from. Alas, Mr. U's bank caught on to the idea and realized that they could lend to the same people that Mr. U was lending to for a good interest rate. Soon, all of Mr. U's debtors were also debtors to Mr. U's bank. Therefore, everyone owed everything either directly or indirectly to Mr. U's bank.

A bank is an institution where money is put by people so that they may make money without working for it. Simply put, banks charge interest rates to those who borrow their money at, let's say, 10% interest. The bank then pays the people who put money into their bank 5% interest and they pocket the other 5%. (Pretty easy way to make some bucks without sweating a drop. My personal opinion is that when ever someone makes money without "the sweat of their brow" they are selfish, greedy, corrupt and are contributing to the downfall of a righteous society.) Now, Mr. U's bank is getting pretty nervous that Mr. M is not paying his interest payment to Mr. U. The bank knows that the only way Mr. U is able to pay them the interest due on his loan, is when Mr. M pays Mr. U the interest owed on the debt between them.

I hope the reader gets the picture. Mr. U is the United States and Mr. M is Mexico. The bank is actually a financial institution. The investors, or depositors, of this bank include many influential politicians, businessman, and such from many countries. These businessman, and "such", lobbied (legally bribed) the government to do something for Mr. M so that he could repay his loans. It just so happened that the president of the United States at the time of the formation of NAFTA, George Bush, holds quite a lot of stock in the financial institutions which have the most to lose if Mexico can't pay back its debts. Of course, the lobbyists (legal bribers) had a tremendous amount of influence in the formation of the agreement, but the American political lobbying fiasco would take a good deal of time to explain, so I'll just leave their corruption alone at this time.

Now I finally understood why now? Americans don't care about Mexicans. Americans care about their own economy and their own well being -nothing else. What the opponents of NAFTA fail to realize is that if NAFTA fails, the Mexicans have very little hope of recovering their economy enough to pay back their debts owed to the U.S. and the world banks. If these two institutions fail, the U.S. economy is done for. If the rich fail in a capitalistic (for personal profit) society, everyone fails.

This author is of the opinion that it doesn't matter if NAFTA succeeds and is passed or fails, (This article is being written on the 16th day November, 1993, the same day as the vote to pass NAFTA is considered in congress), because the Mexican people are not Americans. The reason why their economy is not like the American economy has nothing to do with trade, resources, or jobs. It has to do with greed. Mexicans are by nature not as greedy and materialistic as Americans, therefore, it is very unlikely that any

change will occur in their lifestyle unless the American government can instill this greed and want for material wealth in the hearts of each Mexican. Then and only then will the economy of the Mexicans become similar to the U.S. economy. As hard as they work at it, I am sure someday they will succeed.

## HUMAN WASTE

As an intrigued student of all forms of government which have been established among the human race to which I belong, I have pondered the differences between the governments of the human race and those of other animals which share this planet with us. It didn't surprise me to find that human governments are very similar to those in the animal kingdoms.

Most animals of every class establish territories, or part of the earth's surface, as their own. How they set the boundaries of their territories and what gives them the right to these areas, is determined by their wants and strength. If a pride of lions have claimed a certain area as their own, and another pride attempts to move in, the latter will be driven back unless they are strong enough to overcome the established lions.

No one can disagree that this is exactly what occurs in the human species. When one group of humans have set boundaries or borders for themselves, they remain steadfast until a stronger group of humans overpower them. Like the lions, humans have grouped themselves into "prides" usually according to race, religion, or class (rich, poor, ect...). When one "pride" of humans wants the land of another, they simply fight it out through war.

Now, there is a difference between the human species and the other animals when it comes to establishing these boundaries according to the needs of the members of the different groups. It is very sad to admit that the animals seem much more civilized in these decisions than the humans. There is no known group of animals who would claim more territory than what is needed to take care of the <u>basic needs</u> of the group (i.e.: food, clothing, or shelter). They take no more from their territory than that which will enable them to continue their existence. Humans, on the other hand, claim as much territory as their strength allows them. They take from their claimed areas far more than is needed to sustain their lives. Because humans are far superior in strength and knowledge than the other animals which share their planet, they have spread their boundaries throughout the whole earth and take the territories of the animals at their pleasure.

Humans are not using the resources of their lands to take care of their <u>basic needs</u> of survival, but insist on consuming every element possible to improve their unreachable wants for pleasure. The natural resources of earth are being consumed at extraordinary rates by the human creature. What is unconscionable is that the majority of the resources used up by humans do nothing to sustain their life. Most resources are used to fill their seemingly endless gullet of lusts.

I believe that being a human is the ultimate form of existence known on this planet. Therefore, I believe this planet should be colonized in a way that benefits humankind. Just as the dinosaurs served the measure of their creation by supplying abundant substances which now allow the food to be grown which benefits the human race, most species of the animal kingdom are no longer necessary for the perpetuation of humans, and will eventually follow in the dinosaur's footsteps.

In a sense, every animal eventually will become human. When an animal dies, its body disintegrates and becomes part of the earth again. Plants absorb the nutrients left by the animal's body and are eaten by humans who then incorporate into their cells (the structure of the human being) these same nutrients which were once lions, tigers, and bears. In fact, we are all more related than we would like to believe. I am almost certain that I have eaten many nutrients which were once the decrepitating bodies of other human beings. Thus they, in a sense, become a part of me. There are some groups of humans who actually eat their dead to maintain an ancestral closeness. There are others who burn the bodies of loved ones and use their ashes to fertilize next years crops.

However, if the human animal persists in the waste of natural resources to satisfy his or her wants instead of needs, the human too, will join the dinosaur. Nature has provided a very good plan for the sustaining of the creatures which inhabit her planet. The plan is for the <u>basic needs</u> of the creature to be met and not the creature's every carnal desire. The framers of nature, who for want of a better word I shall call "God", established this order of nature to be respected and followed. If the wishes of "God" are met, then the highest order of creature inhabiting this planet, the human, will exist indefinitely. But if the order of things is disrupted, nature, or "God", will fight back.

What is the more disturbing thing to me is that the majority of humans <u>do</u> take only what is necessary to sustain their lives. It's the minority, which includes every American, most Japanese, and every other capitalistic nations which consume most of the earth's resources. In fact, the United State tops them all in the consumption of natural resources. There are 260 million Americans out of about 5 billion humans which reside on earth. That means that less than 5% of the human race is consuming more than the other 95%.

It is an interesting question to ponder- What would our world be like if only the Americans would live like their fellow human beings and use the earth's resources to sustain their *lives* instead of their *lifestyles*?

## WHO WAS JESUS?

Being raised in a "christian" family and residing in what has been coined as a "christian" nation, I have often faced the question of whether or not I am a Christian. This is not an easy question to answer to an ecumenical audience. Being a Christian means different things to different people. In the general sense, the question wants to know if I believe in Jesus. It really doesn't matter if I believe in Jesus or not. Jesus is very real to most people, and therefore, is real to me.

My father tried his best to raise me a faithful believer in Jesus as my Saviour and Lord. The biggest mistake (for my father, who wants me to be a Christian) my father made was to tell me to study the scriptures. To most Christians, the scriptures mean *the Bible* which consists of the Old and New Testaments. Only Christians believe in the New Testament as divine scripture. It was *the Bible* which I consumed for literally two years of my life. I read and re-read it and studied its beginnings and structure. I wanted to find out the truth.

No one can actually claim to have read *the Bible* and believe it unless they scrupulously (painstaking) analyze its contents and teachings. Since most "believers" are taught to either have faith in *the Bible* as the "written word of God", or trust in their religious leaders, who they suppose know the truth about *the Bible* and have scrupulously studied it. I found that the leaders of my church could in no way study the scriptures with the focus I could, because they were much too busy in the pursuits of their own desires of worldly success or the success of their church. Needless to say, I trusted my knowledge of the scriptures to no one but myself.

It was from my dedication to my search for truth which allowed me to find the truth about Jesus. First and foremost, Jesus never left any writings himself. Everything which is written about him is presented in the New testament as the testimonies of eye witnesses. No student of *the Bible* would dare admit with integrity that there is even the least bit of proof that any of the actual authors of the books in the New Testament were really "eye witnesses" to the life of Jesus. The original manuscripts of these texts have been changed and revised many times. I tried tirelessly to obtain any information about the original documents which contain these accounts of Jesus' life, but found no known source or acknowledgment of their existence.

One Christian pointed out to me that the Jewish Historian, Josephus, mentioned Jesus in his writings. I knew of Josephus' writings and the part this "Christian" was referring to. Upon careful research and study, one will come to the understanding that the original writings of Josephus had no such mention of Jesus, but his name was interpolated (to insert into a text) by some old Christian zealot who translated Josephus. The Jewish version of Josephus, which they guard very closely, has no such mention.

To go into the actual facts and knowledge which I obtained during my search for the truth about Jesus would take many editions of my newsletter. It suffices me to say that the traditions and stories taught to me by my father and church have no basis in fact.

Jesus, which name I doubt he was called, was a good philosopher who tried to help the human race learn things about themselves that they fail and continue to fail to realize. I believe he did exist and like most archaic (ancient) philosophers, he had students (disciples) who followed him. Like Socrates who lived 400 years before Jesus, he was brought to trail for teaching his doctrine and killed by those who felt threatened by his teachings. If one were to compare Socrates with Jesus, along with many of their doctrines, one would find that they are very much the same person. (That was a clue!)

(This is only a ankle dip in my understanding and knowledge of Jesus, but should suffice to wet the appetite for the reader of my thoughts to anticipate other writings I have on this revered pseudonym, Jesus.)