

Embracing the American Shadow

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'Everyone carries a Shadow and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is. At all counts, it forms an unconscious snag, thwarting our most well-meant intentions.'
~ Carl Jung ~

Challenges

In this essay, I want to talk about the challenges currently facing America, as it is a country I have very fond memories of. I lived and worked there for thirteen years in the 70s and 80s and got an enormous amount out of the experience and was privileged to have encountered some of the wisest people I have ever met anywhere. Like many of my American friends, I have found it very painful to see what has been going on in their country for the last four years, and in these pages I want to suggest a slightly different approach both to viewing and to dealing with the many challenges which America is currently facing.

As we all know, America is not the only country going through huge difficulties. The world as a whole is in great turmoil; my home country England also has its deep problems, and I am not just talking about the coronavirus. Boris Johnson has at last got his Brexit and now England will have to pay the economic price. (The thing about these populists is that they are geniuses at getting people to vote against their own best interest.) This week's *Economist* summed it up with a drawing on its cover of a tiny, isolated little island of a few rocks amid a vast ocean, and Britannia perching precariously upon them looking somewhat embarrassed. As well she might. At a time when what is in our best interest – indeed what is the best interest of all nations – is that we find new ways to cooperate and work together to confront some of the most serious problems in the world, never has Great Britain been more isolated.

But my focus here is on America, and its problems are very different. The most important thing that has happened is that Trump has lost the election and control of the Senate. God help America and the world if he hadn't. However, we do need to ask (and I'll be answering this question as we move along) what it is about the system there that it allows a psychopathic, lying, con man not only to pay next to no taxes, but to become President.

Luckily, his 'decisive blow', or attempted coup, failed (earning him a second impeachment), not through lack of effort but mainly because he had no ideology other than promoting himself; and most importantly because the country's democratic structures were just strong enough to survive his onslaughts. Yes, they bent, but they didn't break. Some good people refused to be corrupted and Trump's defeat was an enormous triumph for democracy.

I am increasingly starting to believe that Trump is so delusional that perhaps he couldn't - not wouldn't - accept that he hadn't won and that that firm belief played a big part in his choosing to incite his base to go unto the capital and fight for him. This thuggish and violent invasion of the most sacred citadel of the US was for me a symbolic expression of how desecrated it has become over the years. Here we think of the character of certain of the Republican senators inhabiting it. Granted, Trump intentionally tossed the lighted match and ignited the river of gasoline already flowing through this society - but it was his clan who represented the explosion waiting to happen.

There is no doubt that millions genuinely believed and still believe the big lie that the election really *had* been stolen and that they really *were* being patriotic in fighting for justice against the 'criminals' about to pronounce Biden the next President. Here, responsibility for the continued propagation of this lie should not just lie with its inciter in chief but also to those many Republicans who enabled Trump for all these years and in so doing continued to sell whatever may have been left of their rapidly diminishing soul. As is now plain for all to see, many backed his lies to the bitter end and were quite happy to see democracy crumble if they felt it might further their political aspirations and feather their financial nests - here think of Ted Cruz, Josh Hawley, Rudy Giuliani, Bill Barr and the rest of Trump's other laggards who worked with him to try to break the system.

Regeneration

But as well as America, our whole planet is in crisis. As my friend Jim Garrison put it recently: 'It is no longer a question of sustainability; we're beyond that. Our challenge now is to try to *regenerate*.' The question therefore is: how can you and I become agents for the regeneration of our society? How, especially, can American society be regenerated? Not only is its death rate from the coronavirus higher than in any other country but millions are unemployed, and the country has never been more politically split. One tiny spark could potentially create a huge conflagration.

Conspiracies

As a symptom of the confusion and despair that so many Americans feel, the country is at present very much in the thrall of conspiracy theories. Just as Hitler paved the way for the Holocaust by peddling the horrendous notion that all the problems facing the Germans were due to the 'evil Jews', so today, there's a very whacko theory doing the rounds called Q Anon.

Q-ites peddle the idea that there is a secret cabal of baddies who hold the reins of power in the world; all world leaders, they say, are their pawns, and only Trump as a kind of avatar figure will be able to 'save the world' from these degenerates - who not only are satanists and paedophiles, but also delight in child-trafficking, flesh-eating, election-stealing - and yes, they are Democrats! The world needs to be rid of the evil, devil-horned George Soros, Bill Gates (who wants to take over the whole world), Obama and Hillary ('lock her up') and Bill Clinton!

Conspiracy theories are not new. They've always existed and they tend to blossom in times of insecurity where change is happening very quickly and things are getting so complex that many people can't deal with them. This is also prime stomping ground for any would-be populist (which is why we see the hooking up of Trumpism with Q-ism.) Indeed, the more confusing the times, the more whacko the theory and the more primed the world is for psychopaths like Trump to come to the fore. Hannah Arendt in her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism* suggests that 'the masses are obsessed by a desire to escape from reality... because they can no longer bear its incomprehensible aspects, and totalitarian movements conjure up a duplicitous world that is more acceptable to people's needs than the real reality itself, so that those who feel uprooted can find a home and don't have to face the real shocks that real life and real experience can give them.'

This is why so many Americans at this moment are choosing to live in the 'alternate reality' provided by Q Anon. Interestingly, many Q-ites are basically well-meaning. I know a couple who live near me in Spain (this cuckooness is not located only in America). I call them (not to their face!) my 'conspirationist buddies'. They are very fixed in their delusions and I don't attempt any deprogramming as it would get me nowhere! I just remember when I see them that who we are is not what we think or believe and we all carry a divinity inside us.

I think there's a common theme when it comes to people who have been brainwashed into this sect (it really is a sect). They are essentially rather conservative and right-wingy and many feel their needs have not been honoured. Many Q-ites in the States feel that the American dream came and went and somehow passed them by, so they feel left out; and the virus has of course accentuated their malaise, so there is a tendency to blame other

people for their lot. Most Qs don't ask deep enough questions or question their sources. Many feel lonely and inadequate, unsuccessful and misunderstood, and they distrust the system, which operates in such a way that the rich get richer and the poor poorer. (During this pandemic, the very wealthy have almost doubled their wealth, while the poor have slid even further into poverty.)

Speaking as a psychotherapist, I have to say that it is extremely challenging working with these kinds of people. They know all the answers, tend to live with blinkers on, like to remain rooted in their past and find change very difficult. Most don't want to think of questioning the beliefs and worldviews they have.

American Woes

And what is particularly disturbing in America is that this sect is attractive to many white males, who sense they are losing their old status at the top of the pecking order and who feel black- and brown skinned people are getting special treatment at their expense. They want their old world back, where white men rule the roost and women know their place. They are seeing that world gradually slip away and it enrages them.

Also, women are increasingly coming into their own and finding their power, and this is threatening to the inbuilt misogyny that often accompanies conservative worldviews. The fact that Trump likes to portray himself as the victim of a mysterious entity he calls 'deep state' is why he has had such success with a certain kind of angry white male who also feels victimised. Because they see Trump's world as analogous to their world, Trump has given them hope that the old order that they see falling away can somehow be reinstated and fought for.

Put simply, for years Trump has been abusing his power, embracing authoritarianism and radicalising his supporters against democracy. Thus, he has been a wonderful poster boy for would-be white supremacists, neo-Nazis and paramilitary extremists, not only because he embraces their worldviews and talk their talk, but also because the fact that he is President means that every day they can look up at him and identify with him and feel their angsts are being understood. 'Wow, the President of the United States is like me. He too feels a victim. His values are the same as mine. This gives me hope!'

One of the limitations of this narrow way of seeing the world is that one is not only outwardly hostile to change (see Mitch McConnell), but also has a tendency to regard those who don't share one's worldview as the enemy. (Many of these 'macho men' would be only too willing to tie someone like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to a stake and light a match!)

To their mind, people who talk about changing society in ways they disagree with are 'communists'. Hillary Clinton, when she was running for election in 2016, made the cardinal mistake of referring to these people as 'despicable'. By not allowing them a voice, which the outsider and maverick Trump did, she lost the election.

In this atmosphere of violence and emptiness, the cult of Q Anon has served as a useful 'filling ingredient'. It is also highly addictive and, like all cults, gives its adherents no space for self-reflection. Instead of looking at the darkness inside your own heart, you are encouraged to project it out onto the 'evil others'. 'Ah,' Q-ites can say to themselves, 'I am now part of a tribe. I have a cause. I now feel I belong and I am important and special, as I know the "real truth" that others don't know!'

When times are as difficult and as complex as these times are, it is much easier for vulnerable people to become radicalised quite quickly. We see exactly the same thing happen in the radicalisation of Islamists.

I stress again: these are not ordinary times we are living in. Our world was confusing and painful enough, but now, fuelled by this virus, which as it mutates becomes increasingly contagious, people's fear, anger, uncertainty, paranoia and confusion have increased. Millions of Americans have no money beyond their current pay cheque. I don't agree with those who say that the coronavirus means that we are all in it together. We aren't. This pandemic is much, much tougher for some than for others.

Dark Night of the Soul

In my recent book, *Gateways to the Soul: Inner Work for the Outer World*, I suggested that the whole planet is currently descending ever more deeply into a Dark Night of the Soul crisis, and if five months ago it seemed probable that our old 'normal' might never return, now I say unequivocally that ' *Our world will never go back to being the way it once used to be.*' As to how it will be two years down the road, we haven't a clue. And for those of us who like to know how things stand, this feels very unsettling.

Death and Rebirth

The problems in America therefore need to be set against the context of an old world that is gradually dying and a new one that is doing its best to be born. As such, people are being torn between forces seeking to pull them back into their old 'beyond its sell-by-date' past and those that would propel them forward into a new world that, if you are rigid in your views, looks very scary. Many Americans today feel marooned in a kind of no-man's-land

where, to make things worse, one is continually bombarded by earthquakes, fires and floods. As I said earlier, this is why demagogues who present vulnerable and frightened people with a simplified worldview and tell them that they'll look after them and make things great again for them can be so appealing.

Therefore the fact that Trump failed in all his promises and that after four years his country is in much worse shape, politically, socially and economically, is not an issue for his followers. Their true belief that he is 'making America great again' and that this can only continue with him at the helm is all that matters. His continual repetition of his many lies has had a hypnotic effect on vulnerable people and has played a key part in their radicalisation.

Emergence of the Shadow

Another way of looking at what is transpiring everywhere on the planet is to realise that the dark 'shadow side', which for aeons has been suppressed, is starting to erupt out of the closet. This is especially visible in America at this time. Put simply, the U.S. 'shadow bag' is breaking open! Everything in the United States that for a long time has been repressed and that people haven't wanted to face is now emerging into visibility. That is what happens when one goes through Dark Nights!

Let me put it like this. *When big transformations start to occur as they are doing right now, one of the first signals is always greater visibility of what has been shut away. We can say that newness always casts its shadow in front of it.* Therefore what Americans are all being confronted with right now, both in their personal lives and politically, is their own unhealed toxicity, which is not going to go away by pretending it doesn't exist. *The dark side of the United States, which for a long time has mainly resided underground, is now coming out of the closet in full force because it is time for it to be confronted and hopefully worked with.*

Not Better Than This

When he was questioned about the recent attack on the citadels of power, Biden said on *CNN News*: 'This isn't America. We are better than this.'

At one level he was absolutely right. A great many Americans *are* better – much better. Many Americans are extremely fine human beings. As I said, this was my experience when I lived in California and it is truly an honour to have spent all those years there.

But there is also another side, which is *not* better than that attack on the capital. And unless this 'other side' is addressed in the *right way*, I fear for America's future. When shadow

sides emerge, they do not just go away by not being looked at. Whether the shadow is our personal one or a national one, it asks to be somehow embraced, to have its contents integrated. Waging war on the shadow or denying it does no good. In fact, it does a lot of harm. As Jung said, 'Any part of ourselves we do not own becomes our enemy,' i.e., The deeper needs of white supremacists, Q-ites and paramilitary extremists can't just be pushed aside. They need to be understood and related to in the right way... Americans need to look carefully at this side of themselves and ask: what does it *really* want?

Violence in the American DNA

What Americans have to face is that this invasion of their inner sanctum was very American. I will go so far as to say that violence and racism is deeply imprinted in America's DNA. Let us be honest: America as a nation came into being first by massacring its native people, trashing everything that they held sacred.

Then later, Americans got involved in a vicious civil war that was not, as many believed, fought over the morality of slavery but over the economics around it. Many slave owners became very wealthy and didn't want to lose this wealth. This obsession with materiality still exists today, which is why those who, because of the fault lines in society, are deprived of it, are scared and angry, and those who because of those same fault lines have it to excess are scared of losing it and angry at the thought that it might happen.

I am afraid that the truth is that as a nation, America came into expression on the wings of racist violence and this violence is re-emerging in full force today. If we look back at the country's history, we see that in its self-imposed role of world policeman, its hostility has tended to be directed at other countries. For many years in many ways, America has delighted in acting out the role of arrogant military juggernaut, soundly bashing on the head individuals and countries that do not fit in with its imperialistic. Think Vietnam, for example, or more recently Iraq. The lie that Trump won the 2020 election is not dissimilar to the lie that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. All the Republicans wanted was Iraq's oil and all Trump wants - but will now no longer get (we hope!) - is the licence not to lose his power and his god-like status. In truth, the orange man couldn't care a hoot about his supporters, any more than he cares about America. He would never think of inviting any of them to dinner at Mar-a-Lago! All he cared about was manipulating them to boost his fragile ego, validate him, help make him feel less unloved.

But I want to stress again the point that Trump, in all his grotesqueness, did not come in and degrade the Republicans. The Republicans had been growing increasingly more autocratic and less democratic for years before Trump came along, and they merely drew

to themselves a leader to reflect where they were at very accurately and ostentatiously. Those Republican senators who continued to challenge the election results had for years been paid by billionaires to do exactly that. The pull of greed, money, status and power was too attractive to too many of them, which is why they thought nothing of choosing to enable Trump's lies right to the end, to the extent of colluding with him in inciting violence.

Death Wish

So, the desire for violence is very strong in the US shadow. As an example, Trump has continually engaged in self-destructive activities – as I write, his brand and his businesses are collapsing; he will soon have to repay millions he doesn't have and could well end up in jail. *The problem is that his death wish may also be acted out by those who believe he is the 'second coming', come somehow to redeem or save them.* Think of the mid 70s and what happened at Jonestown when over 900 members of Jim Jones' cult, at his instigation, committed suicide en masse. *I think America needs to face the fact that deep inside certain segments of its psyche is a desire to self-destruct. And they must take this seriously.* As America is not currently fighting any wars against other countries, she is instead choosing to turn her hostility against herself – or more accurately, a large portion of her citizens are choosing to do so.

But my dear American citizens, I beg you to beware of thinking that just demonising Trump is enough! It is not. Please beware of projecting your shadow onto him. *If you engage in playing the same games that he has been such a specialist at, it may lead you to forget to look at – and hopefully do something about – certain aspects of your own self that Trump embodies.* I am not American, but if I am brutally honest with myself, there are aspects of 'the Donald's' nature that exist in me, if not perhaps to the extent that they do in him. If I can see these aspects of myself, then I can do something about them.

The Gift of the Donald

The gift of the Donald was that *he beautifully and very openly embodied every single thing that is worst and most juvenile and undeveloped about the male American psyche.* So instead of demonising or, conversely, worshipping this very polarising figure, please learn from what his obnoxious presence tells you about the dark, rather odious side of your country and of aspects of your own self. Put simply, many Trumpites, just like their inciter in chief, need to mature. Their emotional and spiritual development has become arrested and this is one reason why they are so angry, unfulfilled and vulnerable to being radicalised.

Working With the Shadow

Whether we are looking at our personal shadow or the human-collective shadow, there are a few things that one needs to know. First is that it is always very unpleasant to see and second that there is always a tendency to want to run away, split off from it and go into denial. So please, dear Americans, don't do that. The big question you need to ask yourselves is: how *do* you deal with your racism, bigotry and fanaticism, now that these have been drawn out into the open?

My reply is that, just as when dealing with the Islamic fundamentalist one needs to know what the factors are that served to radicalise them, so the same holds true for the home-grown terrorist. As I suggested earlier, white extremists have a not altogether dissimilar mindset to their Islamic brethren and what is needed is to find out what the underlying wound is that makes people see the world in such a distorted and bigoted way and to be moved to act so violently.

The 'Proud Boys'

Let me give you an example of what I mean. One of the main 'alt right' organisations who were out in full force in the raid on the capital was 'The Proud Boys'. I have researched this organisation and discovered that many of its members are part of a group calling themselves incels (short for involuntary celibates).

Incels, therefore, are men who feel inadequate and while many of them may certainly still be 'boys', they are actually far from being proud. On the contrary, there is a lot of shame connected to their difficulty in attracting and so being able to have sex with women. They don't want to be celibate but their own lack of seductive skills ensures this; and as the spiritual teacher Osho once said: 'When a man does not know how to love a woman, he gets a bayonet and attacks other men.'

So true. Incels are very sad and very angry: they are angry at themselves for their apparent deficiencies, angry at other men who have success with women, angry at women for not giving them the sex they feel they deserve, angry at society for seeming to be set up against them. They feel victimised (the outgoing President having set them a good example) and find it hard to accept their own vulnerabilities; their negativity therefore becomes channelled into rage against the system.

I say that incels need our compassion, not our disdain. We need to listen to their stories. They need our support. These people should not be dismissed, Hillary Clinton style.

Over the years I have worked therapeutically with many very wounded and angry men. Many carry unresolved traumas and other wounds, and this tends to curtail their development as human beings. If you are tender with these people, it gradually serves to melt their hardened hearts and makes them more capable of confronting what it is inside them that propels them to behave the way they do. And the one common denominator of all the people who invaded Washington is a rigid and frozen heart. We can therefore say that a large portion of the capacity to be 'heartful' lies in the American shadow.

Thus far, America's way of dealing with difficult issues, be they internal or external, has been, as I said, the juggernaut way. The hard way. Heartlessly. The use of force. If there is armed resistance, just send in the bloody Marines! Where America is stuck at this moment is in an internal war of good fighting bad, where, depending on which side you are on, the other side are the 'baddies'. So if you are on the Black Lives Matter side, then the white supremacists are the bad guys. If you are on the other side of the fence, the baddies are Bill Gates and George Soros and those Black people who seem to be getting all those privileges that you don't! Do you see?

If one ventures a little deeper, however, one may find that Americans of different skin colours are more united than they think. I think many Black and white people have a lot of the same problems (e.g. feeling insufficiently 'seen' and respected) and this fact needs to be recognised. It can be a unifying factor. More energy therefore needs to be put into exploring what many Americans have in common, as opposed to mainly focussing on what divides them, as America does not need a new civil war. If there is an enemy, it is the system itself. *Both* sides need to come to realise that everyone eventually gets ripped off by it, in one way or another!

The most important thing that currently needs undoing is the lie that the Republicans were cheated in the election, which Trump has repeated for so long (years before 2020) and so many times that it has sunk in deeply. As things currently exist, it is highly unlikely that he will ever come clean. He'd prefer to see his country implode than ever admit his mendaciousness.

The Great Soul Wound

Yet another way of looking at the problems in America is to say that its soul has gotten wounded. *Large chunks of what is best or most soulful about the American psyche have become locked away in the shadow and they need to emerge once more into the light of day.*

In other words, we can not only suppress what is *worst* about ourselves but also, very sadly, what is *best*. It is as if many of us are terrified of being the full and abundant human being who deep, deep down, we all *are*! America therefore is wounded in the very core of its being. In the words of the American theologian Matthew Fox:

"When a civilisation loses its meaning of soul, it is coming to an end... I feel our civilisation has lost its meaning of soul some time ago. This is the bad news. The good news is that when we can come to new images of soul, we're creating a new civilisation."

Creating a New Soulful Civilisation

That last sentence is key : to return soul to a nation that has lost it not only requires that it faces and investigates what is worst about itself – acknowledges those areas where soullessness rears its ugly head – but also that it devotes energy and attention to work at allowing or enabling what is best.

I believe Joe Biden will be able to do that, for there is a core decency and quiet integrity about him. He understands how the system works and, despite all his many years in politics, he has never been corrupted by it. So while on the one hand he faces these big problems, which I have already outlined, I believe he is well prepared to address them. *I think that there has never been a greater need and also a greater opportunity than right now to bring core human values that signal the presence of soul into the light of day.*

These values include the qualities of love and integrity and goodness and honesty and wisdom and compassion and kindness and endurance and altruism and vision. And what Americans also need to remember is that many millions of its citizens – men and women in many different professions – truly *are* soulful, truly *do* embody these values, truly *are* evolved human beings. And somehow these people need to be given the opportunity to shine and play a central role in the healing of the country. Remember: when you turn on the light, the darkness evaporates.

Thus far – and this is a global issue and not just confined to America – there has always existed a separation between the world of politics – the so-called ‘establishment world’ – and what we can loosely refer to as the world inhabited by soulful people exploring new paradigms, investigating new ways of thinking and seeing the world, new ways of transforming oneself, deepening one’s humanity and growing one’s spirituality.

These people have tended not to have been given the opportunities to contribute sufficiently to their societies, because the ‘system’ tends to favour people who are rich and

'important' (in England we call them 'the great and the good'!) as opposed to those who are spiritual and wise.

For far too long, those people capable of contributing most to their society have been kept out in the cold and have often tended to be regarded as a kind of lunatic fringe - eccentrics on the edge of society talking about 'irrelevant woo woo stuff like consciousness-raising and enlightenment.' Actually, there is nothing more relevant to these dark times than consciousness-raising and enlightenment. What would happen to white supremacists, I ask myself, if they partook, say, in a mindfulness training programme!

I think Biden and his team are called to value the contribution that these people can potentially make to his intention to be a President for all the peoples of America. I say this because these people understand the secrets of how to heal society better than anyone. So I say to Joe Biden, 'bring some of these people into your close circle and allow them to assist you as they represent the true soulful dream of America as opposed to the bogus materialistic one.'

Please note that I am not here talking about religion. I am talking about spirituality. And there is a difference. The problem about religion is that it can have the tendency to divide (Q Anon, as I said earlier, has become a sort of religious sect) and in America this has often been the case. Here, I am referring to those many Christian right-wing fundamentalist churches - many of whom have got caught up with Trumpism (viz. Mike Pence) and who believe in white nationalism and that America should become solely a Christian country and all other religions ought to be excluded from schools. I regard many of these people as inherently racist and bigoted and when I lived in the States all those years ago, I had many run-ins with them!

The Bigger Picture

Essentially what is needed is for more Americans to be aware of the bigger picture and not get overly submerged in the current dramas, tantalising though this can be. Please be aware that a new world is trying to emerge and that as a nation, you all need to work at learning to move into the twenty-first century. To do so, you are challenged to broaden your way of seeing the world; you need to learn to live with more courage and heart, and some of you to stop thinking that the way to move forward is to look through the rear-view mirror. It is not true. That is the way to collapse.

The problems in America, then, are essentially evolutionary problems. All the angry men who invaded the citadels of power are fearful and angry that the world is moving beyond

them, and they want to hold it back. But evolution will not be restrained and sometimes it can be cruel to be kind. Remember the remark about there being nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come? Well the truth is also that racism and xenophobia have all the weakness of an idea whose time is well and truly passé.

America Needs to Move Forward as a Totality

However, just as in the development of an individual we cannot move forward and effectively evolve without taking all of ourselves along with us – in other words, we can't leave parts of ourselves behind, for example, our wounded inner child, as they will only become angry and fight us – so the same holds true for the evolution of nations. America is a totality composed of many different parts. Some segments of its population are highly evolved, others less so, but the less evolved need to be helped. They can't be left behind or America will be split. The great challenge, I think, is how the more evolved dimensions of the country can help the less evolved. This is again why it is so important that the wisest and most spiritual and soulful people in the nation be invited in to assist from a place at the centre, as opposed to the edge, of things.

Soulfulness, and the many qualities it comprises, *is* the integrative presence. Soul ends wars. Soul reconciles. Soul illuminates. Soul creates a space for the buried heart of America – for all that is most loving and creative – to come out of hiding and proclaim itself. Soul possesses a certain light, which, if shone in the right way and in the right areas, can ensure that the power of hatred, violence, xenophobia, fanaticism, dishonesty and excessive materiality will begin gradually to diminish.

Here is what I think. Just as Trump, in his utter soullessness and empty-shell-of-a-manness, gave permission or acted as a conduit to enable what was worst about America to spill out – and this was necessary, it needed to do so – so I believe Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, being the people that they are, will work to allow a new spirit of honesty and goodness to emerge.

Of course Biden needs to pay trillions to those out of work. Of course he needs to tax the large corporations and the mega-rich. Of course he needs to address climate change seriously and bring America back into the world and rekindle all those links with organisations like NATO and the UN and the World Health Organization. Of course he has to reignite the economy. We know he will do all these things. I also admit to a sneaking sense that in the years ahead the Republicans will be so full of remorse for the way they have behaved that they will prove more supportive than they ever have been. I may be wrong. I hope not!

Whatever transpires, big struggles lie ahead. Resistance will continue. Real change will take time and hard work; deep wounds don't heal overnight. It is important that Biden and his team employ counsellors, psychotherapists, soul workers and people trained in the arts of deprogramming who can work at grass roots level. Hillary's 'despicable' all have soul inside them (it just hasn't yet emerged enough!) and while it needs to be made clear that certain boundaries exist and certain actions will not be tolerated, it is vital that they be listened to and honoured and that they feel respected.

I will finish with the words of the philosopher David Spangler:

Underneath the patterns of instability in the world, a profound spirit of love and goodwill is at work and is using the instability and the individuals that emerge from it as the farmer uses a plough, to turn the soil and prepare it for new seed and new harvest.

My heart is full of joy and hope.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Serge', written in black ink on a white background.