

Halt the Decline of America

An anonymous historian or political thinker once charted the progression of the world's greatest civilizations from their birth to the zenith of their power and then to their demise. The pattern he discovered includes eight critical steps: (1) From bondage to eminent spiritual faith; (2) from spiritual faith to great courage; (3) from courage to liberty; (4) from liberty to abundance; (5) from abundance to complacency; (6) from complacency to apathy; (7) from apathy to dependence; and (8) from dependence back to bondage.

In my opinion, America is now at step seven. We are dependent on foreign oil to keep our economy from crashing, and 70 percent of that oil is coming from foreign countries that want to see America fall. America is no longer a *producing* nation; we have become a *consuming* nation.

Our jobs have been sent to foreign countries. Labels on clothing that used to read "Made in America" now read "Made in China," "Made in Korea," "Made in Vietnam," or "Made in ..." some other nation.

In addition, America is swimming in debt. The trade imbalance has put billions of American dollars in the hands of the Chinese government, and China is using our money to buy up American companies. You don't have to be an economic scientist to discern what the negative results of this trend will be.

In the area of trade, America is dependent on China's continuing to use the U.S. dollar as the currency of exchange rather than the euro. If China ever dumped the U.S. dollar, our economy would crash.

My wife, Diana, and I have traveled to Europe and the Middle East many times since the 1970s, and until two years ago the American dollar was a welcomed currency. Recently the desired form of exchange has been the euro. The dollar is losing its

influence.

Not only that, but America, instead of being the superpower it once was, is in a precarious position related to other countries that are antagonistic toward us. Russia, China and Iran-an axis of evil since the early '90s-are united against America and Israel. Recently the Russians pledged to sell long-range bombers to Iran to retaliate against Israel.

Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has made enormous strides in 2008 toward his goal of obtaining nuclear weapons. The Atomic Energy Agency has reported that Iran now has 3,800 uranium enrichment centrifuges in full-time operation. Most of these centrifuges have been upgraded to modern, more effective models, and some estimates predict that Iran will have enough enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon in less than one year.

In 2008 Ahmadinejad also continued to threaten Israel, calling for that nation to be utterly destroyed. When Israel was celebrating its 60th birthday, he declared: "Those who think they can revive the stinking corpse of the usurping and fake Israeli regime by throwing a birthday party are seriously mistaken. Today the reason for the Zionist regime's existence is questioned, and this regime is on its way to annihilation."

While Iran was making progress in its race for nuclear weapons in 2008, America and the international community did little to stop it. The United Nations Security Council failed to reach an agreement on economic sanctions against Iran, and the Congress of the United States also failed to impose new economic sanctions on Iran before it left for its winter recess.

Not long ago Russia invaded the neighboring nation of Georgia and stationed troops there, fully intending to control the oil flowing through it. Look on a world map-the road from Russia through Georgia leads straight to Israel.

America, it's time for us to wake up! We are in a war for our

survival. But there are four ways we as a nation can stop what is happening in the Middle East without firing a shot:

- Divest our stocks from private and public pension portfolios that are attached to Iran
- Drill for oil in the United States so we are able to end our addiction to foreign oil
- Vote for the development of effective anti-missile defenses
- Develop and deploy a comprehensive effort to assist the Iranian people in liberating themselves from their country's theocratic dictatorship.

These measures could bring dramatic results that would help prevent both World War III and the continuing decline of America. But if we don't act now, we may find ourselves the victims in the next global conflict rather than the victors.