



## Solution for America: Term-limits and more

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February 15, 2010 (President's Day in the U.S.)

Our country is in deep trouble. This article proposes a new structure for our federal government to greatly change its shape and to fundamentally change the way it works. It is a concrete proposal based on several writings of mine over the past year:

- (1) My personal story (<http://www.west-east-international.com/doc/4June2009OnChina.pdf>).
- (2) Mixing business with politics (<http://www.west-east-international.com/doc/BizAndPolitics.pdf>).
- (3) My lecture on US-China relationship (<http://www.west-east-international.com/doc/VandyLecture.pdf>).

### 1. Our country is in deep trouble

Here are three simple facts:

- (1) We are in a deep recession, the worst since the Great Depression in the 1920s.
- (2) Our federal debt is reaching \$14T (i.e. \$45K/person for the entire country), and rising.
- (3) Our government is so broken that nothing big & right gets done.

No recent example is more obvious than the situation in Haiti: We were the only country on earth capable of responding quickly to its rescue. But then came the question of who was going to pay for these people airlifted and flown to our country for medical treatment? While it was definitely a good humanitarian mission, we should ask ourselves this question honestly and seriously: Can we still afford to have such a big military machine standby for this kind of mission while our economy is going down the hell?

### 2. Why so deep in trouble?

Simply put, we are in deep trouble because our system (= capitalism + democracy), which has worked for 200+ years without much change, is no longer the best in the world. The Chinese system (= capitalism + autocracy) has proved to be better than ours, overall. In other words, democracy is a luxury we, as a country, can no longer afford and here is why:

- (1) The Chinese system, with many problems of its own, turns out to be better suited to run a country like a business (in today's time at least). Ours is grid-locked all the time to get nothing big & right done. Worse yet, we do a lot of big & wrong things (e.g. the Iraq war, the stimulus package in 2009, and the jobs bill forthcoming), bringing our economy down to its knees.
- (2) Our politicians work for one supreme purpose only: getting re-elected. Everything serves that purpose, which in a bad economy like this simply means more handouts, from various entitlement programs to many phony jobs (so that some of us can pretend to be working and the government can pretend to be paying them, on all borrowed money though). This further damages our economy.
- (3) A country must be run like a business, just like a family, or it will go bankrupt. Because there is little true democracy in a well-run company or family, there should be little democracy in a well-run country. Now, you might argue how come democracy worked for us before? Democracy seemed to have worked for us recently only because we, as the richest nation on earth, could afford it. While we enjoyed various luxuries (e.g. democracy, subsidized housing, and various missions to save the world), the rest of the world figured out their own ways of success, with Japan shaking us first and now China.

Still unconvinced? Just recall what happened to our auto industry: It had its own good times until better competition from Japan showed up and soon ours was blown away! The same applies to the political systems as well: China's political system has proved to be better than ours and China has the size and weight (unlike Singapore or Japan, for example) to blow us away as a country, economically!

How bad can this be? Here is my forecast: by 2030,

- (1) China will become the largest economy on earth (in GDP).
- (2) Our national debt will be \$40T, with \$20T owing to China.
- (3) We will work mostly to pay back the interest of our debt.
- (4) Our country will be in bankruptcy.
- (5) The Chinese currency RMB could become the currency in the US.

Scary, isn't it? It's time for us all to wake up and change the course in order to save the country before it's really too late.



### 3. A possible solution?

Before presenting my solution, let me highlight some principles first.

#### 3.1 Principles

- (1) Do not hate the competitors because they are better. Just become better ourselves!
- (2) Do not hate China. It took China a long time (yes, quite a few hundred years) to figure out its own way of success, and it finally did - Good for the Chinese!
- (3) Recognize that our political system, largely unchanged over the past 200+ years, is obsolete. It's time to have it updated, if not over-hauled. No doubt, our founding fathers were smart men. But no human being could have been so smart as to foresee the future 200 years ahead!
- (4) Recognize that closing the door and locking ourselves up is not an option. China was a mighty country 1000 years ago. It chose to close itself up and ended up falling behind by a few hundred years.

#### 3.2 The solution

We need to move toward an autocratic system, which means to run our country like a gigantic company, with a structure as follows:

- (1) The CEO (or President) runs the daily show.
- (2) The board of directors (or Senate) oversees the directions.
- (3) The shareholders (or House of Representatives) revolt only after some grave mistakes are made.

It should be better than the Chinese system, with fairer representations, because of our long history of democracy. Specifically, here are some details:

- (1) Term limits for the top elected officials:
  - a. President: 6 years/term. 1 term.
  - b. Senator: 6 years/term. 1 term.
  - c. House of Representatives: 6 years/term. 1 term.
- (2) The president must have served as a governor (1 full-term at least), with a solid "CEO" track record.
- (3) The federal budget must be balanced:
  - a. Figure out how to pay for it 1<sup>st</sup> before introducing any new program.
  - b. No earmarks.
  - c. Cut the defense spending dramatically. If not, we will have no country left to defend!
- (4) Minimize the government,
  - a. With the understanding that the government does not create jobs. Business does.
  - b. The federal government will only do those works that are above the states, such as highway and national R&D.
- (5) Keep the US to be the heaven for business: You can make it if you work hard and if you are good (and lucky). This is, after all, what America is about: the land of opportunities (vs. the land of handouts)!
- (6) Restore capitalism to its original form and ban unions at all levels.
  - a. Unhappy with your employer? Strike out on your own.
  - b. Want a better life? Work for it.
  - c. No minimum wage or set it at \$3/hour, way better than the welfare system though.
- (7) Abolish all the entitlement programs and replace them with a minimal welfare system, such as \$200/person/month plus a roof.
- (8) Healthcare: leave it alone as a private industry, just like food and housing.
- (9) Simplify everything, from laws to tax codes, so as to reduce the number of lawyers and accountants. Most importantly, you don't have to be a lawyer to run for office.
- (10) Reform the legal system: Have the losers pay for the (frivolous) lawsuits.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

We are deep in a hole. Keep digging deeper (aka "we are going to spend our way out of trouble," per President Obama) or change the course completely to dig our way out?

The human history is a history of leadership changing hands. Rome, Egypt, China, and Britain all had their shares of the leading times. We, the USA, are having our own share now. But our days are clearly numbered, if we keep sleeping on our 200-year-old system and keep resisting changes. Or we can change, fundamental and big. China did it. Why can't we?

Winston Churchill once said: "democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried." China has a newer and better system. Let's move toward a new system that is better than China's!