

THE CANCER FESTIVAL 2020

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Greetings Everyone!

One of the last things to get done when remodelling a house is the garden space around the house. In our house the pictures have gone up, the inside is all but finished and the garden is almost done. Everything about the house has been redone, after being in place for almost 100 years. Of course, the lockdown here in Italy threw a wrench in the works for a few months, but we did manage to get grass started during that period. As far as getting anything done since the lockdown, as the old saying goes, "It's like watching grass grow." And we have. But nature, both human and Mother, has its own timing. It has been a full year now since we started in on this house, but the labor has been worth it. Everyone, including the dogs, has their own escape places and refuges now. And demanding my attention presently, the basement and workspace downstairs await. There will be many 'treasures' (mostly a lot of old, but interesting junk) to be unearthed, mostly accumulated by a father-in-law who was a Great Depression era man who never saw a scrap of something he couldn't use 'at some point' in the future. Some futures never come to pass. Yet, one person's dream or intention can often be picked up by someone else and put to good use in other ways. Some treasures are worth keeping, while others are better suited for people who can better use them, putting sentiments aside.

Sometimes a garden space needs to be completely cleared, dug up and re-seeded. Such was the case with our garden. And usually with a house renovation, the yard around the house gets pretty torn up in the process anyway. Since we have put ours in order there have been some pleasant surprises. Old legacy plants – from bulbs mostly – have reappeared after having been laid to rest, or so we thought. We have carefully salvaged them and they are coming along nicely in their new spaces, relocated. And plants that seed have reappeared as well. Some we can do without, as in common garden weeds, and those get their proper dues. There have been many trips made to the central recycling depot. That applies to the basement, too, as well as the attic. The attic was rather interesting, also, speaking of never throwing anything away. Fortunately, we live a few doors down from the Caritas, and they have received a generous helping of things from us, a legacy passed onwards. St. Vinnies', as Aussies know them, are very similar, as is the Salvation Army in the US.

Going through the house over these months and putting things in order has brought up many poignant moments for my wife, as well as many happy memories. It is the old family home, though now it is completely renewed, with a very different 'feel'. It is as it should be. Family, houses, homes, historical legacies, land, gardening, nurturing, the masses – these are all things associated with the sign Cancer. And since the Cancer ingress, all these ideas come strongly to mind. Cancer and the 4th house are also

associated with one's spiritual 'home', the ashram, and one's 'astral family'. Cancer is said to be a doorway into incarnation, Cancer being associated with birth (which is actually rebirth), but as it turns out, that can be read in two ways, as we will presently examine. is ruled in the orthodox by the Moon, associated with the Great Mother, motherhood in general, women in general, the lunar ancestry (which holds the template for our human form), and forms, the latter with respect to their being the 'home' of an ensouling consciousness.

The sign, Cancer: The Moon in esoteric astrology is said to be merely a veil, though, having no life of its own, meaning it represents another planet. With the sign, Cancer, the Moon 'veils' Neptune, which is the sign's esoteric ruler.¹ Neptune by itself rules that which is obscured or hidden in one aspect of its expression. Neptune, itself, veils, in other words. In respect to the type of consciousness that Cancer represents, the sign is said to be difficult to understand.² This actually holds a great occult significance, especially when we consider that Neptune rules the imaginative faculty. The sign is said to be difficult to understand primarily because of the difference between mass conscious and real group consciousness. This has to do with the difference between the development of group sensitivity and mass instinctual consciousness, the latter markedly manifesting through unthinking public opinion. But there is more to it than that.

Neptune comes into play with the sign Cancer when the imaginative faculty is engaged. For instance, in the care and raising of children, they are often asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" It will be the rare child – very rare indeed – who would say, "I want to be like unto God." They would be referred to psychiatrists for evaluation, most likely. Yet, the sign Cancer represents this very thing when one places the sign in relation to the stages of the Path. 'Stages of the Path' refers to the steady progress in occult meditation. Yet, at some point in our evolution as souls and spiritual beings, over countless rebirths, we must come to realize, to fully acknowledge, that we are indeed divine, 'like unto God', though such an acknowledgement would be seen as blasphemous to evangelical/fundamentalist sorts. In fact, in trans-Himalayan meditative practices imagining oneself as a deity is common practice. This is called 'taking rebirth onto the path' in many such practices and amounts to being 'born again'. This is a side of the sign Cancer that will not be easily recognized unless one has had exposure to such practices. But unless we 'take ownership' of our life path and choose to live as souls – to 'act as if' – then our 'house' will remain darkened. We must, then, "build a lighted house and therein dwell".³ And as with any good house, well-lit and made to be a home, a little gardening is in order.

Of gardens and mandalas: In one of the books by Alice Bailey there are instructions to a disciple of the Tibetan's, named only as CDP (courage, detachment and pure-love, qualities which she was to develop) in the book. The disciples in those books were identified only by letters at the time to prevent any focus upon their personal lives, especially from the public. And in general, they were (on the outside) ordinary people, unknown to the general public. This particular disciple (CDP) was a member of a seed group known as the telepathic communicators, one of several so-called 'seed groups' (because they were hoped to be the beginnings of various phases of future such esoteric groups). Alice and Foster Bailey, along with Roberto Assagioli were also members of the telepathic group. CDP in her personal life was Alice Eugenia du Pont Ortiz (1876 – 1940), just to put a name to the face. She featured in cameo in Alice Bailey's Unfinished Autobiography, and the book, Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle is dedicated to her. Lineage has some importance, as in transmission, which is why all this is mentioned. That said, she was given a specific piece of meditative work to pursue in her instructions from the Tibetan, and that work has a bearing on the role of the sign Cancer in the zodiac. It goes to the sign's esoteric motto: "I build a lighted house and therein dwell."

The life of Alice Ortiz, a close confidant of Alice Bailey, is not what is of importance here. Her instructions, though, are quite useful, and relate to a certain meditative technique that is widely used in esoteric Buddhism. Keep in mind, the Tibetan, a.k.a. the Master DK, was a self-professed Tibetan Buddhist lama, the abbot of a monastery 'near Shigatse'. What are usually termed 'Tibetan Buddhist meditations' in Western vernacular were routinely taught in his monastic tradition, though his consciousness was universal. The monastic tradition was his outer vehicle of service, but a Buddhist lama – a fully enlightened being – is not bound at all by such trappings and teaches to all according to

their need and traditions, at least subjectively. This all goes toward a wider point, addressed shortly, but there is something else worth a mention first.

Of teachings and pedantry: The books of Alice Bailey were intended to give a Western audience exposure to universal teachings. Although Alice's Christian upbringing and culture shows through in the books – a limitation of language and culture – the essential message continues on from that of Helena Blavatsky, though partisanship unfortunately shows through in some people not recognizing such a state of affairs. It is always thus when new ideas come along, becoming an exercise in impartial examination and testing of the presented material instead of focusing on personalities and accepting things at face value or according to emotional reactions.

Pedantry is often strongest in religious and philosophical circles, especially when there are questions of loyalty involved and invested emotions. There is also the problem of *idée fixe*, where any line of thought becomes a fanatic mental fixation, a particular problem where there are strong combinations of rays five and six in a person's or group's makeup. The reason for bringing this up is that when Tibetan Buddhist teachings and meditations came out from Tibet and landed in Western nations there was often immediate reaction to the culture instead of the essence of what was being presented, with an unfortunate tendency to try to 'westernize' them instead of giving them a proper chance and striving to seek the essence instead of focusing on appearances. We – the people involved in Buddhist studies at the time in Adelaide – saw the ill effects of this sort of thing first-hand, with revered and accomplished Tibetan teachers being treated as little more than books on a shelf to gather dust, or as showpieces rolled out for show when opportunities presented themselves, all the while the teachings were not properly studied and debated. Then there was the problem of translators who interjected their own interpretations of what the teachers were saying rather than giving word-for-word translations (the teachers did not speak English). Those were missed opportunities, to put the matter mildly, and insulting to the men and the wisdom presented. What follows is neither an attempt to 'Easternise' an instruction to a Westerner, nor to 'Westernise' an Eastern/Indian presentation of teaching, but instead to show similarities and essence.

Alice's magical garden: Getting back to Alice Ortiz and the Tibetan, then, she was initially instructed to imagine (visualize) a garden, at first removing it of debris and weeds and rendering it a pristine space, a place of inner retreat. In her group work with telepathy, it was important that there be mental stillness and emotional calm. The initial work, as a result, was to clear out the mental cobwebs, as it were, and establish a calm place. The etheric body also needs attention in such work, and in her case,⁴ having a 6th ray physical body, attention to diet was important. Regarding the latter, it is an individual matter, but certain disciplines require specific dietary constraints.

After clearing out her garden she was instructed to populate it with beautiful flowers and songbirds, and later with structures, ornaments, trees and water features. She was given a free hand in its creation after the initial stages. It was said to be quite a beautiful and peaceful place where people could come for gathering and for a few, refuge:

For years...I have referred frequently to your garden of beauty. First of all, I had to lead you to create it; later I taught you to perfect it and then to use it. I taught you also how to dedicate it and to turn it into a shrine of consecration and connect it in your mind with the thought of service. That which is thus created and used, exists. Today I would like to tell you that on the inner planes your garden *is* of service to my group of disciples and to others—in larger numbers than you think. It is a place of gathering for many and *a place of refuge* for a few. Ponder on this and continue your task of beautifying it. Remember ever, that those who seek its loveliness come not only for the garden but also come in order to contact you who, upon the inner side, appears other than you fancy yourself to be in physical incarnation.⁵

She went on to describe it at one point.⁶ But there was one particular feature – an ivory tower – she was instructed to construct,⁷ where she could rise above the mists into the clear light of day and contact the master. It was meant as a method for a daily review and for learning the 'practice of ascent', and of passing out of glamour into the 'clear light of day'. It had other than the usual associations we have with 'ivory towers'. So, there were several features of note in her garden: tall walls, oriental structures (a personal preference, though probably also an old soul connection), beautiful features and ornaments and a place of peace and power.

Mandalas as lighted houses: Now, compare what was just described with the type of visualization that appears in practices of Tibetan Buddhism. Of note here is that what we call ‘Tibetan Buddhism’ was born in Indian Buddhism and transferred to Tibet. Thus, these types of practices are trans-Himalayan. We are speaking here of highest yoga tantra, also known as secret mantra and Vajrayana Buddhism. The Kalachakra Tantra is one such practice and, as that type of practice, is probably the most widely promulgated in the West of all of them. People who have engaged that practice or other similar practices will know where we are going with this.

Typical in such practices is a stage in the sadhana (the script, guide or ‘user’s manual’ of the practice) where one constructs a mandala and arises therein as the deity of the practice. In the Gemini letter we had a quick look at Akshobhavajra, which is representative of the higher Self and is such a deity. Keeping in mind we are all deities in our higher nature, arising as a deity has certain connotations. Firstly, it involves ‘acting as if’, termed ‘taking divine pride’ in Tibetan practice. This means acting as the soul on its own plane. Secondly, it involves generating bliss. In Western terms, this would be something along the lines of ‘taking the path of joy’ as a practice. Bliss is especially associated with Neptune and with buddhi, at least initially. Later in the practice one enters into the Uranian phase, the occult use of bliss as a vehicle. That leads to the third point, which is that implicit in arising as the deity in the mandala is the ‘practice of ascent’.

Mandalas have certain features in common in all these types of practices. When one begins to visualize a mandala, one has to clear the field, to drive out all hindering influences (clearing the garden of weeds). Such mandalas have walls of fire (representing the mental focus necessary to shut out interferences to the visualization) and are filled with rapidly moving sharp instruments that cut away anything that tries to enter into and interfere in the mental space. Only enlightened beings are allowed inside (one’s group siblings). Then, the mandala begins to take form, normally geometric, of various colors and is then populated with deities and beings conducive to the meditative state. The mandala also has protector deities positioned at the outskirts of the mandala. Those would be represented by the minarets in CDP’s garden. Then, in the center of the mandala a palace is built, adorned with jewels and ornaments, of great splendour, the entire field of the mandala being one of the most extraordinary peace and bliss, quite befitting a deity.

There are beings in the mandala playing music, there are food and material offerings, the place is brightly lit – anything a proper deity might want. But here is the catch, if you want to call it that – it is all done for the service of all sentient beings instead of oneself. One arises as a bodhisattva in a mandala, not as an ordinary being. Everything on offer is as a place of refuge, a place of solace ‘for those unable to breathe’, a place of absolute peace and bliss. At some point in the future, that mandala becomes a Pure Land once one achieves Buddhahood. And yet, all of this is only what is called the ‘generation stage’ of the practice. The real occult work has yet to begin. This stage is all done in the imagination, wherein the soul seeks expression in one’s life.

In the generation stage of the mandala, one ‘builds a lighted house and therein dwells’ in preparation for more intensive occult meditation. We have examined the twelve astrological signs in relation to the stages of meditation in past letters. The first three signs are preparatory, as in ‘getting one’s head straight’ and learning to focus to the point where such a mandala can be held in a steady mental focus. It took Alice Ortiz many years to develop her garden. It is not something one does in a few sittings, or sessions. In the Cancerian stage of meditation, one ‘comes into incarnation’, this time as one’s own higher Self as an act of service. When it is stated that Cancer represents the doorway into incarnation, there is a hidden meaning there, and it relates to this present discussion. From the stage of Cancer onwards, ‘it gets real’. Instead of accumulating knowledge and wisdom, one enters the true stage of preparation – i.e. preparing the garden for habitation. The real preparation is to enter into the Path of Seeing, which is the direct cognition of what we call the monad in Theosophy, and emptiness in Buddhism, or the first touch of the buddha-nature.

A garden or a mandala – they are both similar in the context of meditative practice – is at once a place of communion and of development, much like a family home should be. They are places where people hopefully grow in wisdom and progress together along the path of the soul-life, on the way to full enlightenment. Cancer marks a new commencement, the ‘2nd commencement’ in the zodiac, as every

cardinal sign represents some sort of commencement. Cancer sets the stage for the graded steps along the path to the full realization of one's true nature, seen in fullness on the mountaintop of Capricorn. It is no longer a mental exercise. One stands in the be-jewelled palace in the mandala or in the ivory tower of the garden and begins to experience life as a divine being. One is born again. One 'contacts the Master'. If one reads the instructions to Alice Ortiz carefully, what stands out is that she was on the Path of Preparation, albeit in a manner befitting her life experience and her present incarnation and 'equipment'. But her soul history showed through in how she adorned her garden.

Alice Eugenia du Pont Ortiz wrote three books – one a collection of her poems, one about the Witch of Endor and another about Mary Dyer, the 'Quaker martyr'. She was a descendant of that du Pont family – Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours, whose son was the founder of the DuPont chemical empire. She was also preparing for her transfiguration by the time she passed from her earthly life. She was beloved by both Alice Bailey and by the Tibetan. When the Tibetan sent his instructions to her he referred to her as 'my brother of old', meaning there was an old karmic connection between them, and in a spiritual sense. She is also proposed to have Cancer rising in her chart, which would not be surprising at all. The point to the preceding discussion is not to put forward one method that is better than the other, but to show something else: the use of the creative imagination in the process of 'ascending to a higher place', i.e., entering the path of initiation, as well as showing similarities in approach and the universality of the proper use on one's imagination. The instructions to CDP are thus of great value, for they show a practical approach toward treading the inner paths. With all the preceding in mind, we move on now to the full moon and the mundane.

The full moon takes place on 5 July 2020 at 6:01 UT. This full moon is also a partial lunar eclipse and lands on the Sun in the US chart. Hence, for the remainder of this letter the focus will be upon the US, given what is taking place there now and following upon the 21 June 2020 annular solar eclipse. Thus there will have been three eclipses in the space of a month that will have effects upon the US, as [outlined in a recent post](#).

This is a south node eclipse, giving the sense of closing one door prior to opening a new one, with old relationships being the focus. The eclipse axis is at the 14th degree of Cancer/Capricorn and will be activated first by the Sun just after New Year's day, and then by Mars at the median date of 16 May 2021, just preceding the Wesak period next year. The Sun is conjunct Sirius (the Dog Star) in the eclipse figure and the Moon is conjunct Ascella (ζ Sagittarii). The conjunction of the Moon and Ascella is said to auger new and influential friends, valuable gifts and the love of influential women.⁸ Sirius conjunct the Sun is said to give success in business, occupation connected with metals or other martial affairs, domestic harmony.⁹ That has certainly been true of the US, which has Sirius between its natal Sun/Jupiter conjunction. Now the US faces an existential crisis, where foundational change is needed. We will see why as we go along.

As for the remainder of the eclipse/full moon figure, there are two midpoints which cast a different light on the fixed stars just mentioned. Those are the Saturn/Node and Uranus/Neptune midpoints, which form a t-square with the eclipse axis. Those two midpoints are problematic for relationships, pointing to seclusion and/or separation, as well as a sudden or general weakness. This would be a terrific figure for esoteric work, though, as in spiritual retreats or delving into esoteric matters, as well as exploration of the inner realms, as in sleep yoga or occult meditation. In a national chart one will not see that sort of effect, though. There will be quite a bit of stimulating thought and exchanges, due to a Mercury/Jupiter midpoint at the same place as the other two, but the work will necessarily be subjective. It would have been a good vehicle for a group like the telepathic communicators, for instance, mentioned previously. The chart shows a mix of optimism and frustration – optimism in terms of the development of ideas, and frustration in the execution of plans.

A word to the wise: Before we go any further, there is a word to the wise, worldwide: Save as much as you can in these immediate months ahead, meaning finances. This will be especially true for the US and UK. We just had recent examples of why, and it relates to the coronavirus. There are other factors in play as well. In Continental Europe and the East there will probably not be nationwide lockdowns again. The same is probably true in Australia and New Zealand. However, there will be isolated pockets that will be locked down, [as we just saw in China](#), the UK and Germany. And the [Germans are not happy](#)

[about it](#) for a variety of reasons. The US and the UK are a different matter, and we will likely be seeing individual states locking down in the US again, as well as further regions in the UK. I understand that Victoria in Australia is re-imposing restrictions again, too. Such will be life for the next 12 months or so. The reasons why will be explained in a bit. But now we move on to the US, with its Cancer Sun in the national horoscope and the crisis of soul it is facing. Because of its control over energy, finance and military, what happens there will be of world importance. That said, it will require careful handling.

The US national horoscope: The national horoscope of the US is set for the declaration of independence from England, 4 July 1776, giving it a Cancer Sun. That is sufficient for our purposes here. Washington, DC is said to be ruled by Cancer (soul) and Sagittarius (personality).¹⁰ The following is stated of Washington and the US in general, given those rulerships:

The capital city, Washington, is ruled by Cancer and Sagittarius, and it is this fact which leads the United States to act like the Crab (Cancer) and be pre-occupied with its own house which it carries on its back and to vanish into hiding at the first signs of trouble. Because also the Sagittarian influence is strong, there is a potent determination to stick one-pointedly to any decision made. This its sixth ray personality enforces at times almost to the point of a fanatical blindness and to the detriment of the long range vision which is needed at such times as these.¹¹

The quote and the rulerships, especially Cancer, have a particular bearing on the present state of affairs in the US. Fear and insecurity is the biggest glamour that distinguishes the sign, and it has led in the case of the US, both logically and perversely to the establishment and widening of the security state. It has also led to the Beltway (DC) casting any nation or group who doesn't see things their way as a threat, even an enemy. That has brought us to the very strained state of affairs between the US and the rest of the world, especially since 9/11. But it has been growing since the end of WWII. The security state had its beginnings in 1947 with the formation of the CIA. With these points in mind, we can now continue with a wider discussion.

The post-fact world: When it comes to public opinion, perception outweighs facts, and belief trumps data nearly every time, especially when it comes to elections and referenda. This has led to our present state of public affairs being called a 'post-fact world', or post-truth world, which became a catch phrase after the 2016 US election and Brexit referendum. Post-fact is probably closer to being correct, because truth is a matter of interpretation. And now it applies equally to the debates raging online about COVID-19. The one piece of data that can swing elections and referenda, though, is how much money people have in their pockets at the end of each pay period and how much they are able to do with it. We have had some recent examples of perception vs. facts, and in fact the effort to shape public perceptions goes on all the time. But that effort is especially in force when there is a crisis situation, as we are seeing now in the West. Given all that has taken place since the start of this year, it will be useful to review some of the facts that have emerged since the coronavirus took hold, because that review will lead to a larger picture for the US, yet will be interlinked with and key to that picture.

Since COVID is still with us and probably will be throughout the next twelve months at least, it provides a good example of how public opinion is shaped. There are ongoing debates in social media about secondary matters related to the current crisis, such as masks, herd immunity, the lockdowns, who is at fault, the severity or not of the disease, death rates, whether or not it is all a plot and so forth. [Some people are quite adamant about their views](#) on such matters. And while those topics might be of interest and serve to refine (or not) outlooks and policies later on, they detract and distract from the main point, the one thing people of power and influence want us to avoid examining: Why the state was unprepared for the pandemic and why people were unprotected, both health-wise and economically when the virus began to take hold, and why they are not being helped to any marked degree now. That question brings us to a salient point regarding the sign Cancer and especially the United States – why was the public afforded in the US little to no security? Why were they not cared for? We could ask the same about the UK.

There has been obvious incompetence and even malfeasance in the handling of the whole COVID affair. And then the protests in the US have provided a convenient (perhaps too much so) distraction from the ongoing theft from the taxpayer purse, the rise in the COVID caseload, the strain on health services in certain regions of the US and the fact that the government allows and even promotes the divisions

between people and states to persist, all the while the crisis deepens. And it is deepening. We start with the virus and what is happening there.

There is a timeline to the virus. This is fact, as is the overall case with any type of infectious disease. It usually takes about a week, perhaps two, after exposure and initial infection with this coronavirus to test positive for the disease and to show symptoms. If the disease takes a strong enough hold, in about two weeks after initial infection the caseload in the local hospitals begins to spike. Once in the hospitals, death will come, if it does, about two weeks later. That is an entire month, from infection to death, *with* medical intervention. Without intervention death will come much quicker, if it does. So what happened in the US with the pandemic? The disease was at a low point at around June 9th, after which the new cases began to rise. A week before, we saw the nationwide protests prompted by the death of [George Floyd](#), along with a few states beginning to relax restrictions and reopen.

As a result and as of this writing, [Texas and Florida are both re-imposing restrictions](#), as in bars and restaurants initially, as the COVID caseloads in hospitals began to reach 100%. These are two states, if we recall, where there were protests against social distancing, closing churches and wearing masks. Going back to the post-fact world, then, why were nations locking down? Death rates had nothing to do with it. People die more from other causes every year than from COVID. There had to be another reason, and [it goes back to health care](#). Nations who had proper health care in place and were able to stay ahead of the admission rates in hospitals, like China and South Korea, did not have nationwide lockdowns. And speaking of other post-fact COVID stories, we now see a culture war in the US regarding the idea of social distancing and wearing surgical masks.

Culture wars and class wars: I addressed the aspect of culture wars somewhat in [a recent blog post](#). Many people in the US refuse to wear masks. This is actually an old story and [goes back a century](#) to the Spanish flu. With the Spanish flu there were no proper masks available then. [Those were not developed until the 1920s](#), so there was little real protection offered. But even then, many of the same arguments against wearing masks were in evidence in the US. People who object to wearing them in general see it either as an infringement on their liberties or that “only sissies wear them”, supposedly supported by the notion that somehow wearing masks are harmful, which is [easily debunked](#). Then on the other side there are people who know that masks cut and slow the infection rate, which is why doctors, nurses, health care workers and many lab technicians wear them as a matter of practice every day, for hours at a time. We see no high death rates or rates of illness out of the ordinary among health care workers. The people on this pro-mask side of the argument say to those who don’t want to wear them, “Get over yourselves, have some consideration for others and put on the mask”. The latter is pretty much the attitude in Europe and Asia.

Of particular interest here in Italy is that it is the younger people and the elderly who will don the masks more so than the middle aged, and even though we don’t have to wear them in Italy now except in the stores, many people still do when outside. The wearing or not of masks in the US, on the other hand, has been turned into a political statement and a cultural divide, quite aside from what was intended. Europeans see the wearing of masks as being socially considerate and as a health issue, as is also the case in Asia. There are exceptions, of course. There are still many people in the US who will wear the masks and a few people in Europe who object to them. But on the whole, the difference it makes in wearing them and practising social distancing when it comes to this disease is stark. [A simple graph shows why](#). That same graph also puts paid to the notion that masks increase the infection or cause greater illness. Then there is the question of community, or herd immunity.

“Herd” immunity: [The possibility of herd/community immunity for COVID-19 is increasingly coming into question](#). Recent small studies are showing that the [antibodies to the virus decrease rapidly after a few months](#), much like we see with the common cold, which is also caused by a strain of coronavirus. That would mean, if the studies hold true, that people who have the virus now may be susceptible to the disease again in the northern autumn and winter. On that, we will have to wait and see. We just do not know enough about the disease yet. But if true, it would mean that natural herd immunity (re: without a vaccine) would not be achievable. The US, for instance, has yet to reach even 1% of the documented cases of COVID in the population. The situation is similar in the UK, and also in Sweden. Even if the case load were 10 times higher it would still be well below what would be needed for community immunity.

If there is no ‘herd immunity’ and if people may be able to re-contract the disease, it raises some rather uncomfortable scenarios and questions. It also means that medical services will be that much more burdened in the future due to long-term medical conditions. COVID-19 is not the flu. It can and does damage organs, mainly the lungs, kidneys, liver and nervous system. It thickens the blood and people develop thromboses, so there is danger of heart attack, stroke and organ failure without hospital treatment. And [even asymptomatic carriers can develop some of those conditions](#), though to lesser degree. [It is turning out to be an insidious disease](#). This is not to scare people, but to warn people off the idea that they should just ‘get it and get it over-with’. Let the buyer beware, as the saying goes. One’s chances of getting it are still very low, especially if common sense measures are taken, and the chance of death is even less. But the main burden is on the health systems in any nation, along with the debilitating nature of the disease.

COVID-19 typically requires a months-long convalescence in more serious cases. And though the elderly are certainly more at risk of death from the disease, people of all ages can and do get it, sometimes with devastating results. As was recently stated, [most people who catch the new coronavirus don’t experience severe symptoms, and some have no symptoms at all. COVID-19 saves its worst for relatively few](#). Read the testimonials in the linked article if you think this is nothing more than a mild flu. That said, it is better not to contract any infectious illness, as some of them can have some very nasty side effects sometimes much later in life. Shingles is a case in point, from what used to be considered a very mild disease – chickenpox. We recently had experience with that here. And there has been a rash of shingles cases (no pun intended) in this region since the virus took hold here. Anecdotal, but we trust the people who are reporting it. The good news with COVID is that the death rate is dropping. That is probably due to several factors, one of which is that more effective treatments have been found. The use of blood thinners, better ventilation procedures, better monitoring, especially of blood oxygen levels, has led to people receiving timelier and better treatment. So, there are reasons to celebrate, yet to remain aware of what can happen. The drop in death rates still does not address the strain the virus puts on health care systems, though, and that leads us to our wider considerations.

Americans have no true security: Putting all this aside, there are many people in the US and abroad who think COVID-19 is all a hoax, saying that the economic catastrophe unleashed by the handling of it was intentional and far worse than the disease itself. There is another side to that argument, and I put it forward in the Taurus letter this year under the heading, “[In an ideal world...](#)” It is true there is no such ideal nation, where everyone is cared for and economies can function sufficiently during a pandemic or other natural disaster. Yet, there are a few nations who do approach it, they all have mixed economies and – most importantly – universal health care. Nations locked down because of their overloaded health care systems in most instances. Italy is a good example of why nations chose to lock down.

There was a recent TV interview (no link) with the president of Lombardia, who described events leading up to the lockdown of the region, followed by the nation. He was told by the national government in Rome there was nothing to worry about in the early days, before the pandemic was announced and before much was known about the disease. But then, the classic mistake was made – not sufficiently protecting the residents of the nursing homes and mismanagement of the same. Once the virus took hold there and began to tear through, the die was cast. Italy became a case study in what not to do at the beginning of an epidemic and what happens when a government waits too long to act. Nations who acted swiftly fared much better. And nations that had sufficient health care fared better still. One of Italy’s biggest problems at the start for was the effect that years of austerity measures had on the nation’s health care services – insufficient PPE, too few hospital beds, lack of equipment and personnel, cuts to social services, etc.

The COVID situation quickly reversed once the public was motivated, but for at least a month there, the situation in northern Italy was very dark. It was worse still in parts of the US and across the UK. That unpreparedness goes straight to what the real problem is, which is the effect globalization mixed with financial capitalism has had on manufacturing, social services and government policy worldwide. Once proper measures were taken in Italy, the situation quickly peaked and began to reverse, less than two weeks after the lockdown was introduced. The biggest single factors were social distancing, PPE and isolation of those affected. For the US and UK, Brazil as well, the battle to find the proper solution rages

on. But America, which has Cancer Sun in its national horoscope, offers a unique perspective on many of the topics discussed thus far, especially relative to the sign, as in care for the masses, security, history and so forth. The one thing the virus has done for Americans, perhaps more than anything else, is to show them how little security they actually have.

Tall shadows: It has been said that America casts a big shadow. There is more than one way to read that. Psychologically, a big shadow is a great hindrance to any sort of psychological and spiritual progress. Right now, America's shadow is taller than its soul, to purloin a song lyric. The shadow is out in full view now, for everyone to see, and it has taken away the security and the immediate progress forward for the nation's Aquarian soul. What follows will be dark, and likely evoke strong reactions, but shadows always do that. These things need to be called out, though, and seen for what they are if they are to be re-integrated, resolved and the energy in them released for good purpose. Americans have no security for several reasons – and they are big reasons. Those can be summarized as follows, starting with the insecurities felt by the state (establishment):

- [The loss of military supremacy](#). This had been coming on for a few decades prior, and was demonstrated in 2014 and 2015 when Russia intervened in Crimea and Syria. There was no American military response. The final nail, as it were, was shown when the Iranians bombed the American bases in Iraq after the US assassinated Soleimani. There was no retaliation. The US can no longer fully militarily back up its economic control over world finances. It can threaten, bluster and sanction all it likes, but not even that is working now. And with weapons development in other nations, the security of US troops anywhere is now seriously in question. Wall Street owns the military industrial complex. This needs to end.
- The loss of economic supremacy, at least as far as its populace goes. This was demonstrated in 2013, when China achieved purchasing power parity with the US. The gap has widened since, with China in the lead by that measure. It is also shown in the ability of nations like Russia, Iran and Venezuela to bypass American sanctions, and further, to advance their economies in the process, at least as far as the former two go.
- The loss of energy dominance. Since the COVID crisis, the US shale industry has gone bust. [Russia has joined OPEC+](#), a move that increasingly side-lines the US. The Saudis are visibly turning toward Russia for a variety of needs. The loss of the petro-dollar, based with the Saudis, will be a mortal blow to the world dominance of the US dollar. [Nord Stream II will be completed](#) by the end of this year, in spite of American huffing and puffing. Europe increasingly looks eastward, especially Southern Europe.
- Foreign policy since the fall of the Soviets has produced a string of errors that has set US foreign policy back, perhaps irreparably. This is primarily due to hubris in Washington and an inability to acknowledge emerging trends and to bend with circumstances. The US has lost face internationally and is no longer seen as trustworthy. It is rapidly losing its allies in Europe and the East. Isolation is the trend now, and there are no real statesmen any longer in the US diplomatic pool. A university degree in political science does not make for good diplomats, especially when the curriculum is strongly biased toward US interests.

Domestically, the situation is just as troublesome:

- The financial capitalist (neoliberal) system has hollowed out American productivity and industry, producing a service and gig economy that has proven it cannot support itself in times of crisis. 47 million US workers filed for unemployment benefits when the COVID crisis hit. That is just unheard of in a country that is supposedly as rich and powerful as the US. And the safety net for those workers is about to end.
- Fear around the virus will continue, hindering economic recovery. Many people will be afraid to return to work, but will be forced to by cutting off benefits. This will cause further questioning and resentment and will cause political blow-back. The US economy will not snap back soon, regardless of what we are told.
- Endemic corruption, especially between Congress and the defense and energy sectors has reduced trust in America's leaders to an all-time low. This has been exacerbated by the mishandling of the COVID crisis. Congress has become self-serving and doting on corporate

and foreign handouts. Without trust in their leaders a country devolves into anarchy. The old saying absolute power corrupts absolutely comes to mind.

- The American mainstream media is nothing other than a propaganda service for billionaires of varying stripes. A most recent flagrant example was the tired story from The Gray Lady about Russians offering bounties for American scalps in Afghanistan. [The story is utterly false](#). The stories we hear all the time about Russian and Chinese threats are likewise false.
- The educational system in the US has devolved to a point where it fails to produce real thought, and is often about one's particular identity focus, with the major goal in life being geared toward which fast food outlet one wishes to work for after graduation. [Bread and circuses](#) are the order of the day in American education and social life. Even university education, once the gem of American educational systems, is now focused more on identity politics than on real education. Civic duty seems to have lost its meaning in the eyes of many Americans.
- Health care, unless one can pay for it, is becoming non-existent in the US. The nation desperately needs universal health care. This is strenuously resisted by Big Pharma, Wall Street and the insurance industry, some of the most powerful lobbying groups in Washington. Universal health care is not communism. It is just common sense.
- The class divide, indeed what is evolving into a caste system in the US. This goes straight back to the system of financial capitalism that has been instituted in the US. It is contributed to by all of the points listed above. Racism is part and parcel of the American caste system.
- The illusion of democracy. This goes toward campaign financing. Americans should not have to choose between two terrible candidates for the office of President. Yes, 'terrible' is my opinion, but many readers share it. Big Money wins elections in the US. Campaigning in the US amounts to bread and circuses – spectacle instead of issues.
- [The tyranny of identity politics](#) that supposedly passes for 'the left' and progressive values. This is so-called liberalism. There is no 'left' in US politics. Nor is there any 'right'. What passes for conservatism in the US political divide is now a false libertarian, financial capitalist club that rabbits on about family values, religious freedom and 'restoring the constitution' instead of actually doing anything to fix the country's problems. And the vitriol that passes between the two sides has produced a chasm instead of a divide. Screaming, censorship and hurling insults are not debate, the latter being sorely needed. One needs pretty thick skin these days to post anything online unless one disallows comments. Those mentioned on both sides are a vocal and militant minority. Thankfully, most people I have encountered espouse neither of these extremes.
- The three companies (asset managers) who by 2030 will have control of 20 trillion in assets, more than the present economy of the US. Wall Street will own the US. Those companies need to be broken up and/or nationalized. The three are [BlackRock, Vanguard and State Street](#). And [the Fed is now in the pocket of BlackRock](#), a situation that should never have happened and that should alarm every American.

There is quite a bit more we could mention here and much that has been purposely left out. We could go on, but is it really necessary? There are other nations who share these same problems to varying degrees, the UK being one such. But back to Cancerian themes, security starts in the home. Care for others is learned at home, too, or at least it should be. Those are noble Cancerian traits. The above points are listed with few links. I have many, but have chosen not to include them. The points are there to provoke thought and to educe investigation. They may be seen as 'fake news' by some readers, as 'post-truth'. But what if they are true? We are in the process of finding out. This much we do know: Magic is not going to happen in the US. The people in power and who have influence will not suddenly wake up one day with an epiphany and change their stripes. They are going to fight tooth and nail to keep what they have. They feel entitled to it. Media personalities are well paid to parrot the information their media masters have copy-pasted to them every day. They will say what is needed to keep their high-paying salaries and comfortable lives. Congress is not going to self-impose restrictions on revolving-door policies and limits on donations, nor will they vote in term limits, salary caps and limit the influence special interests, not without public pressure to do so. [Keep in mind, over half of the members of Congress are millionaires](#). How many of us are?

I had prepared many paragraphs that I wanted to include in this letter which would have gone to explain many of the points above, but we already know about most of them. Plus, we have examined those in many previous letters. The protests and sporadic violence we see in the US now are symptoms of what is outlined above, as well as the beginning of a process to correct them. The coronavirus, or we should say the mishandling of the response to it, has brought all of the problems that have been gnawing at Americans now for years to the surface. Some topics, like the opioid crisis, [the militarization of police](#), the [prison-for-profit system](#), [the protests](#), [America's history with slavery](#), [exorbitant privilege](#) and so forth are not mentioned here. Then, there are hidden issues which fly under the news radar, but which are souring relations with other nations at an accelerating rate, like the law-fare in which the Beltway engages¹², its [shadow dealings in events like the Greek debt crisis](#) (audio, starting 30:55), its use of NGOs in covert operations [like we see in Hong Kong](#) and so on.

The US, as in Washington and the establishment, has a strong Machiavellian streak, represented by the Sun/Saturn square in the national horoscope. That same aspect also leans toward hubris and defiance. It definitely contributes toward American ambition and the cold, calculating outlook that Washington often displays in its dealings with other nations. For all of its self-professed exceptionalism, the US typically puts on a terrible showing when it comes to human rights at home and abroad, and in taking care of its own people. Katrina and Puerto Rico immediately spring to mind. We won't even go into war crimes over many years committed by Americans and the effects of American sanctions on other nations here.

I said at the outset much of this was going to sound dark, and it is. Shadows are dark, and what was mentioned in the preceding is representative of the American shadow, So, do I have anything good to say about the US? Certainly. But unless we look at the issues that are hindering the progress of the nation and besetting it, squarely and honestly, nothing will be resolved. The nation will continue its downward slide. What good is America, then? The question is worded that way purposely.

The soul of any nation is in its people. Americans on the whole are good, kind folks, generally welcoming of others, curious about everything, adventurous, inventive, hard-working and interested in a fair shake for everyone. I grew up there. I know. That they are misinformed, poorly educated now, caught in a web of desire for material wealth and attainment and manipulated by appeals to their ideals does not take away the inherent qualities of the soul of the nation. The soul qualities are temporarily hidden by a veil of materialism, in the broad sense of that word. America has a great destiny in the emerging Aquarian orders, as does Russia, China, Europe and many other nations. Those nations have their esoteric mottos mentioned in *The Destiny of the Nations*.¹³ The US will eventually throw off its gross materialism, its latent fascism and will reconcile its past. People worldwide have no trouble with and actually like the average American citizen, and many people want to travel to the US. They do have big problems with the regime in Washington, though.

We need good gardeners to arise in the US and reshape the American landscape. What is in process now is the preliminary stage of laying waste to the weeds and debris that has accumulated there. The people protesting now, primarily young and full of their ideas, their ideals and with a good dose of identity politics, have no real plan for the future, not that I have seen. They instead seem to want to tear things down, aside from addressing police violence against blacks and minorities. That is needed to a certain extent, but not when it takes away the good parts with it. We don't want another Bolshevik Revolution, nor another Civil War or the violence of the French Revolution. Violence in the protests now will only be co-opted to favour right-wing agendas. The cries for justice are strong, but how to get there is another matter. Taking over city districts and tearing down statues will not get us there. History needs to be remembered and examined in its proper context. Europeans have a better way of doing it. The offending images and statues are put in museums, where they can be used to educate future generations, with history seen in its proper context. It is all very Cancerian, you see? That is beginning to happen in the US, but in the flush of emotion, unfortunate destruction takes its toll. There are also other ways besides museums to deal with such images and statues.

Conclusion: In closing, the sense looking forward is that the virus will be around for months ahead, will cause rolling lockdowns, more uncertainty with the public and more economic stress. And if it comes back more fully in the American autumn, the situation in the US will get even more 'interesting'. The elections will go ahead, however. That is in the Constitution, federal, state and local law, and [the](#)

[military will ensure that it is enforced](#). In other words, Trump will have to go through with the election and accept the result. Whether the public accepts it is another matter. But at the time of the last election, taking a look forward to the 2021 POTUS inauguration, the mood of the nation will be very volatile, and the next administration will be faced with some very serious dilemmas. This is good. This is right. We need this period of unrest and deep questioning. And we need the protests to swell, to be more inclusive and *to remain non-violent*, if that is possible.

Hopefully soon the US will become a normal country and shed its delusion of exceptionalism. Most Americans with whom I have contact see through the delusion. How to draw out the soul of the nation? The idealists have to face realities. The people need good information instead of infotainment. Informed debate needs to replace partisan bickering and one-upmanship. It has been said that one should never waste a good crisis. The current crisis facing the US and the Western world in general is indeed a good one. It should serve to draw out the souls of people and governments alike. And there are incidents of this in the US, and in nations worldwide. We see it in volunteering, in shows of solidarity between groups and races, and in the breaking down of barriers to understanding. America doesn't need to be made 'great again'. It simply needs to show the greatness of its soul, which is welcoming, cooperative in times of need and crisis, giving to those who are less advantaged, enthusiastic in the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge, tolerant of differences and upholding of international law and its responsibilities to the same. That also includes reckoning with the past and correcting misused soul force. I have seen the fact of the American soul, as well as the shadow. When Washington shows the positive, welcoming side of its Cancer Sun instead of its fearful, protective side, Americans will find a welcoming world waiting. It will take time, but we are headed there as we speak.

Happy July 4th celebrations, everyone!

Malvin

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These letters are sent as a service. If you wish to be added to or deleted from the mailing list, let me know. Feel free to pass them along, but do so without charge or alteration.

¹ Bailey, Alice A., *Esoteric Astrology*, Lucis Publishing, NY, NY (1936), p. 322

² Ibid, p. 312

³ Ibid, p. 344

⁴ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age I*, p. 140

⁵ Ibid, p.523

⁶ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, pp. 528 – 532

⁷ *Discipleship in the New Age I*, p. 511

⁸ Robson, Vivian E., *Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology* (1923), p. 141

⁹ Ibid, pp. 34, 208, 235

¹⁰ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, p. 70

¹¹ Ibid, p. 89

¹² Pierucci, Frédéric, *The American Trap: My battle to expose America's secret economic war against the rest of the world*. Hodder & Stoughton (2019)

¹³ Table, page 50