

Men, like nations, think they're eternal. What man in his 20s or 30s doesn't believe, at least subconsciously, that he'll live forever? In the springtime of youth, an endless summer beckons. As you pass 70, it's harder to hide from reality

Nations, too, have seasons. Imagine a Roman of the second century contemplating an empire that stretched from Britain to the Near East, thinking: This will endure forever. Forever was about 500 years, give or take.

France was the thing in the 17th and 18th centuries. Now the land of Charles Martel is on its way to becoming part of the Muslim ummah. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the sun never set on the British Empire. Now Albion exists in a perpetual twilight. Its 95-year-old sovereign is a fitting symbol for a nation in terminal decline. In the 1980s, Japan seemed poised to buy the world. Business schools taught Japanese management techniques. Today, its birthrate is so low and its population is aging so rapidly that an industry has sprung up to remove remains of elderly Japanese who die alone.

I was born in 1946, almost at the midpoint of the 20th century—the American century. America's prestige and influence were never greater. Thanks to the Greatest Generation, we won a World War fought over most of Europe, Asia and the Pacific. We reduced Germany to rubble and put the rising sun to bed.

It set the stage for almost half a century of unprecedented prosperity. We stopped the spread of communism in Europe and Asia and fought international terrorism. We rebuilt our enemies and lavished foreign aid on much of the world.

We built skyscrapers and rockets to the moon. We conquered polio and COVID. We explored the mysteries of the universe and the wonders of DNA, the blueprint of life.

But where is the glory that once was Rome? America has moved from a relatively free economy to socialism, which has worked so well nowhere in the world. We've gone from a republican government guided by a constitution to a regime of revolving elites. We have less freedom with each passing year. Like a signpost to the coming reign of terror, the cancel culture is everywhere. We've traded the American Revolution for the Cultural Revolution. The pathetic creature in the White House is an empty vessel filled by his handlers. At the G-7 Summit, Dr. Jill had to lead him like a child.

In 1961, when we were young and vigorous, our leader was too. Now a feeble nation is technically led by the oldest man to ever serve as president. We can't defend our borders, our

How Nations Fail

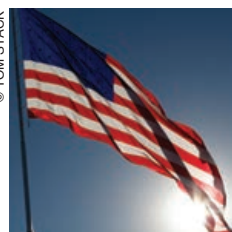
Is America on a path of permanent decline?

By Don Feder

history (including monuments to past greatness), or our streets. Our cities have become anarchist playgrounds. We are a nation of dependents, mendicants, and misplaced charity. Homeless veterans camp in the streets while illegal aliens are put up in hotels.

The president of the United States can't even quote the beginning of the Declaration of Independence correctly. Ivy League graduates routinely fail history tests that fifth graders could pass a generation ago. Crime rates soar and we blame the Second Amendment and slash police budgets.

Our culture is certifiably insane. We have



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men who marry men. Men who think they're women. People who fight racism by seeking to convince members of one race that they're inherently evil and others that they are perpetual victims. A psychiatrist lecturing at Yale said she fantasizes about "unloading a revolver into the head of any white person." We slaughter the unborn in the name of freedom, while our birthrate dips lower year by year.

Our national debt is so high that we can no longer even pretend that we will repay it one day. It's a \$28 trillion monument to our improvidence and refusal to confront reality. Our "entertainment" is sadistic, nihilistic and as enduring as a candy bar wrapper thrown in the trash. Our music is noise that spans the spectrum from annoying to repulsive. Patriotism is called insurrection, treason celebrated, and per-

version sanctified. A man in blue gets less respect than a man in a dress. We're asking soldiers to fight for a nation our leaders no longer believe in. How meekly most submitted to "Fauci-ism" (the regime of face masks and hand sanitizers) shows the death of the American spirit.

How do nations slip from greatness to obscurity?

- *Fighting endless wars they can't or won't win*
- *Accumulating massive debt far beyond their ability to repay*
- *Refusing to guard their borders, allowing the nation to be inundated by an alien horde*
- *Surrendering control of their cities to mob rule*
- *Allowing indoctrination of the young*
- *Moving from a republican form of government to an oligarchy*
- *Losing national identity*
- *Indulging indolence*
- *Abandoning faith and family—the bulwarks of social order.*

In America, every one of these symptoms is pronounced, indicating an advanced stage of disease. Even if the cause seems hopeless, do we not have an obligation to those who sacrificed so much to give us what we had?

I'm surrounded by ghosts urging me on: the Union soldiers who held Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg; the battered bastards of Bastogne; those who served in the cold hell of Korea; the guys who went to the jungles of Southeast Asia and came home to be reviled or neglected.

This is the nation that took in my immigrant grandparents, the uniform which my father and most of my uncles wore in the Second World War. I don't want to imagine a world without America, even though it becomes increasingly likely.

During Britain's darkest hour, when its professional army was trapped at Dunkirk and a German invasion seemed imminent, Churchill reminded his countrymen, "Nations that go down fighting rise again, and those that surrender tamely are finished."

The same might be said of causes. If we let America slip through our fingers, if we lose without a fight, what will posterity say of us?

While the prognosis is far from good, only God knows if America's day in the sun is over. ■

This column was reprinted, with permission, from <https://www.frontpagemag.com> in June 2021. Don Feder worked for the Boston Herald for 19 years and now writes a weekly column for the Washington Times and frontpagemag.com. He lives in Massachusetts. [Editor's note: Our national debt is now more than \$31 trillion.]