Posted to the Gilder forum - September 15, 2001

Clash of Civilizations

On September 11, 2001 we witnessed the latest battle in the Clash of Civilizations. Let's not call it WW3 because this war is being waged on a much more fundamental level than any prior war. This war is not about a village raid to pick a few women of child bearing age. This war is not about annexing territory, colonial or otherwise. This war will define which of our civilizations will rule the world for the rest of this millennium.

At this time the main protagonists are the West vs. Islam. The other Asiatic civilizations, up to now, don't seem to have taken a united stand in the saga. Some countries side with the West and some some oppose the West.

What is this war all about? It is about the survival of national life styles including religion, economics and customs. Before the age of the Internet, before the age of jet travel, before the age of global television, each country had a more or less impermeable border with gates that could keep the barbarians out. Those gates are crumbling at an alarming rate. Imagine for a moment that in your community all the front doors are torn off and that anybody can now enter your house at will. Would you be upset or do you like communal life? With the advances in communications the same thing is happening at national levels, those absolutely ghastly comic book characters called The Simpsons now pollute the homes in my country. And there is nothing that less powerful nations can do to defend their borders, their integrity. These vile Simpsons are beamed down from commercial satellites. We have no gates that we can lock against satellites.

The weaker nations fight back any way they can. France bombs MacDonalds because they are offended by the fact that a vile hamburger is upstaging glorious French Cuisine, the best in the world. Islam reinstated the old religious ways as a means of fighting what they perceive as evil customs from the barbarians in the West. Image, a half naked woman on the cover of American Spectator!

This is how it is perceived from the other side.

If the world continues to develop in the future as it has in the past, newer, more virile, more vibrant, more energetic civilizations will overcome older, weaker ones.

Sat, Sep 15, 2001 4:52 PM

But the older civilizations will not go down without a fight and it will be a cruel fight because it is a fight for survival.

There have been many conquering civilizations before America came on the scene: Alexander, Rome, the Turks, the Spanish, the English, Napoleon, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union just to mention some of the more modern ones. Just because you don't use weapons of destruction does not mean that you are not a conquering nation, on the contrary, commerce and communications are much more powerful in the long run than machines of war.

The choice facing America is not between conquering and staying home. America will conquer. The choice facing America is not between war and peace. War is upon us. The only choice facing America is how it will execute the conquest. History shows that those conquerors who allowed the largest amount of self determination and extracted the least amount of taxes had the more peaceful and enduring empires.

America needs a long term strategy to implement a global Pax Americana because the American Empire will be global.

Denny

"Demand creates queues. Supply gets rid of them."

Software Times

Sat, Sep 15, 2001 4:52 PM