

The PLAIN TRUTH

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U.S.A. Riding to Total Collapse in 20 Short Years!

Here are the naked facts that ought to astonish and shock you into immediate action.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

YOU'RE GOING to be shocked to read what goes on *undercover* in the United States. Five major vices threaten the total collapse of our country inside of 20 years. The handwriting is on the wall of America, now!

Lifting the LID Off Vice

Five major vices are combining to bring America to total collapse, to a fall greater than that of ancient Rome, because we are now more WEALTHY, more POWERFUL than ancient Rome—and the bigger they come, the harder they fall.

Now I use the word "undercover" paradoxically. These gigantic fatal vices are not hidden, actually, and yet, we don't see them, because we don't recognize them for what they are. We are totally oblivious to what they are doing to us.

First, what was it, specifically, that caused the fall of ancient Rome?

The acknowledged authority on the history of that period is Edward Gibbon, the famous historian of 165 years ago. His famous textbook, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, is the standard and recognized authority. Gibbon lists five chief reasons for the fall of Rome. You probably never read them, but you would think he was writing a description of America today, if you did.

These five specific causes for the fall of Rome are the five outstanding characteristics of American life today. It's

time we wake up and take a look at them.

The Number ONE Vice

FIRST, there was the rapid INCREASE IN DIVORCE, homes being broken up. Look at America today! Here are the actual figures: In 1890 there was one divorce for every 18 marriages. But the divorce rate began to rise. Twenty years later, by 1910, we were having one divorce to every eleven marriages. By 1930, the divorce rate in America had risen to one in every six, and by 1945, this tragedy of divorce had skyrocketed to one divorce out of every THREE AND ONE-HALF MARRIAGES! That was the year that the war ended, and a lot of hasty marriages ended the same year.

Since, the rate has leveled off in a fairly constant one in every four, with more divorces, of course, in the metropolitan areas. In some, it's at least one in three.

Do you realize that the HOME is the very foundation of any society, and when our homes are being broken up, the very foundation is crumbling away beneath us. The United States is going the way of ancient Rome.

What TAXES Are Doing to YOU

SECOND, just before Rome collapsed, there was a rapid INCREASE IN TAXES. Rome had grown fat and pros-

perous; and people sought leisure, less work, more play, idleness, and as they shirked work, they began looking to the government to provide. Today, we call it doles, relief, pensions, and government aid. When any nation begins to look to its government to provide, that nation is on a greased toboggan-slide to decay and to oblivion. It brought about the fall of Rome. It brought about the fall of proud Babylon long before. And it's bringing about the fall of America today.

Now, LOOK AT US TODAY! Like Rome, we've grown fat and prosperous and lazy. We Americans are rolling in money. We have more money than any people ever had. Money has come SO EASY! Too many of us are trying to get it the easy way with less work. Business is raising prices. Labour demands shorter hours, more pay.

Yes, we've grown prosperous and lazy. We've started on the way of ancient Rome, seeking government aid, relief, pensions. We're looking to the government to take care of us, and just like that of ancient Rome, our government has grown TOO BIG, and we've had a rapid increase in taxes.

What Are the Facts?

Brace yourself for a shock. How much money do you suppose it cost to run the United States government, through all

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of its history, from 1776 until 1933—that's from the very beginning of Washington's administration until the time of Franklin Roosevelt.

Well, the total cost in 167 years was \$112 billion. That is \$112 billion for that whole 167 years, Washington through Hoover, until Roosevelt.

Now hold yourself for a real shock.

SEVEN TIMES AS MUCH!

In only 20 years of the New Deal and the Fair Deal, only two presidents spent \$776 billion as against only \$112 billion for ALL of the other presidents COMBINED in the entire history of the United States—almost seven times as much as all previous presidents COMBINED, beginning with George Washington. Now THINK of that! That's \$776 thousand million spent in 20 short years.

Now the tax rate per person—the TAXES you pay—has multiplied, too! How much do you suppose taxes have multiplied just since 1933? Do you suppose they've doubled—multiplied 4 times over? Oh MUCH more than that! Ten times over? Would you say a hundred times over? A thousand times over since 1933? Do you think that's fantastic?

Does that sound impossible? It's much more than that!

1500 TIMES AS MUCH!

YOUR taxes that you are paying have multiplied 1500 TIMES what they were in the year of 1933. If you were paying one dollar taxes then, you pay 1500 dollars now. For every dollar you paid then—as incredible as it sounds—the tax rate per person today is 1500 times more than it was in 1933.

All government administration, from Washington through Hoover, spent \$112 billion. The Franklin Roosevelt administration in just 12 short years spent THREE TIMES that, or \$336 billion, and the Truman administration in only 8 years spent still more than Roosevelt's 12 years—\$596 billion! That's what our government is spending! The United States is going the way of Rome.

The CRAZE for Pleasure

The THIRD major cause of Rome's downfall listed by this very famous historian, the acknowledged authority, was the MAD CRAZE FOR PLEASURE. Sports became yearly more exciting, and more brutal.

We need to have this brought home to us so we really see it, really understand it, and really understand where it's leading America today. Today, instead of participating in healthy games ourselves, we like to take our sports sitting down, while we pay others to amuse us and to excite us by playing the game for us.

Football is a big national sport. It's a pretty rough game. From 70,000 to more than 100,000 people crowd into the stadiums practically every Saturday in the fall seasons, at the major games at least.

Millions of Americans love to watch prizefights, to see men slug, pummel, and injure one another. The victor is the one who inflicts the greatest damage, who is the most destructive—NOT the one who helps the most, who serves the best in a constructive way. Today, 30 to 50 million people enjoy this brutal sport every week in front of their television screens in their own living rooms.

One of the fastest of all sports is ice hockey. It's also rough, and often the players get into a fight with their clubs.

Yes, we like our sports fast! We like them exciting and we like them rough and brutal, just as Rome before her fall.

Millions seek exciting entertainment every night sitting down, in the movies, and another 60 or 70 million seek entertainment every night seated before their TV sets. They want exciting programs, programs that carry them AWAY from the reality of life into the pleasing land of make-believe.

Running AWAY from Life

But you don't make life happy, full, abundant, by running away from life and its problems and its realities!

The Creator intended life to be PLEASANT, INTERESTING, FILLED WITH JOY. He set inexorable laws in motion to make that peace and that happiness the true reality of life, if instead of seeking escape from reality, we would face it, and if we would seek the Eternal our Creator and live by His living laws. But instead of that, we seek to satisfy our real heart-hunger in a whirl of material pleasures.

There still are a few kinds of pleasures and excitement, however, that America likes to take standing up! Hundreds of thousands go dancing every night, and especially among the younger set. Dancing, too, tends to become faster and more exciting.

And gambling is on the increase. One of the fastest growing cities in America is Las Vegas where gambling is legal. It runs wide open all night—24 hours around the clock, 7 days a week.

Sometimes a man or a woman loses a fortune in just a few hours, desperately trying to win a few hundred or thousand dollars without earning it. There you can see roulette wheels, crap tables and other forms of gambling. It's a portion of America going the way of Rome!

And, let's face it! Millions MORE would be at the gambling tables if it were legalized in other states, and yet, a lot of this sort of thing is going on secretly UNDER COVER, and behind closed

and guarded doors, if you know where to find it.

Yes, America is a pleasure-mad nation today. We're the WEALTHIEST, as compared to any other nation, and we are fast growing LAZY and SOFT, seeking luxury and pleasure, and excitement, idleness and ease, labour-saving, step-saving devices and gadgets. They are in top demand. We seek shorter hours, we want bigger wages. We want bigger profits. We want EASY MONEY, but we are losing the true values of life. We are fast disintegrating, and we're going the way of Rome to our downfall as a nation, and, apparently, we won't wake up until we hit the bottom of this fall with the most horrifying thud and crash that ever happened to any people!

Do ARMAMENTS Save a Nation?

Now the FOURTH of these major causes of Rome's downfall, as listed by this number one historian of that era, was the building up of GIGANTIC ARMAMENTS when the REAL ENEMY WAS THE DECADENCE OF THE PEOPLE FROM WITHIN.

In 1900 the United States spent less than \$60,000,000 on its military establishment. By 1910, 20 years later, we spent four and one-half times that much, \$280,000,000. But 8 years after that, by 1918, in World War I, we spent 6 thousand millions of dollars!

In 1945, in World War II, in that one year, we spent 80½ thousand million dollars on war! And today, in a so-called peace time, we are spending 45 thousand millions of dollars EVERY YEAR. That's 45 billion dollars! Your mind doesn't grasp that, because that's more money than you could conceive. Ancient Rome was a piker in building up gigantic armaments! I wonder what an ancient Roman would think if he could come to life and see some of our armaments today? You might not call the new jet planes gigantic in size, but they are gigantic in speed, and the atomic missiles they can drop are SUPER GIGANTIC!

What these can do was strikingly demonstrated in the war games held by the army and the air force throughout 12 Southern states in the late autumn of 1955. These were the largest United States military maneuvers since World War II. They tested the new radar warning system, and the tests showed that they would have only 17 minutes of warning if enemy jets came in on a surprise invasion—just 17 minutes of warning—think of that! That's all we would have. In this simulated practice invasion the attacking force in the next 23 minutes (not hours, but 23 minutes) dropped what represented 4 hundred thousand tons of TNT; by light jet bombers, jet atomic bombers. And this

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massive blow in 40 minutes time after the radar gave the first warning represented the same amount of explosive power as was delivered in 250 thousand sorties in three years in the Korean war—our latest war when we had the most modern equipment.

Is that frightful? Yes, but notice! This demonstrated that in the flash of 40 minutes after the first radar warning HALF of the entire United States striking force in the entire area—and that's 12 southern states—would have been knocked out, and 80% of its known air bases destroyed. That's a sample of the danger that you live in, THIS VERY MINUTE!

Soon even jet planes will be obsolete. WITH ROCKETS, our scientists tell us that they will soon be flying to the moon or to Mars inside of 25 years. But, of course, the most gigantic of all armaments of total destructive power so far is the ATOMIC and the HYDROGEN bomb.

A Nation of CRIMINALS

We're living in fearful and terrifying times. But as it was in Rome of old, our real enemy is the decadence of our own people WITHIN!

Not many of us have degenerated into

derelicts, yet, but we're certainly on our way, and we don't realize it. Most cities today have a skid row.

Not all of us are criminals, but a larger percentage are becoming criminals EVERY YEAR.

ARE we deteriorating? So many people seem to doubt it! A lot of people won't believe it. We don't seem to realize the facts. WE CAN'T BUILD PRISONS FAST ENOUGH! Our prisons are filled to overflowing. We have prison riots. We have strife between management and labour, with rioting during strikes!

Our hospitals are overflowing! Today, there are more patients in MENTAL hospitals than in any other kind of hospital! And the forecast for 10 years from now in a national magazine article, is that, while we will be getting into the fantastic push-button age, now being designed by science and industry, EVERY TENTH CHILD IN TEN YEARS WILL BECOME A MENTAL PATIENT! THINK OF THAT!

We are a nation of criminals, and we don't realize it.

Last year saw another 5% increase in crime, the seventh consecutive year of increase in major crimes. Last year, there

were 2,267,000 major offenses. Just think of that!

Do you realize that there is a major crime every FOURTEEN SECONDS in our country? Actually, whether you realize it or not, hundreds of major crimes have been committed since you began reading this article! Crime has grown much greater proportionately than our population.

In 1954 there were 34 murders every day. And 256 other felonious assaults, 49 rapes, 3674 larcenies, 529 cars stolen, 1422 burglaries daily. THAT'S EVERY DAY! Do you call that decadence? Is that deterioration in our nation? Read the hard cold facts given out by J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI:

People spend eight times more hours at movies than they do at Sunday School. Fifteen million sex magazines are circulated monthly, mostly in the hands of teenagers, to stimulate lust and immorality. More bar maids exist in the United States than college girls. There are one million illegitimate babies born annually in America. One million girls have venereal disease. Three times as many criminals exist in the United States as college students! Is that enough? (Please continue on page 11)

MIGHTY ATOMIC GUN! A 280 mm. atomic gun is manned in Louisiana during "Exercise Sagebrush" which ended Dec. 4, 1955.

The mushroom cloud from history's first atomic artillery shell rises in background.



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U.S.A. Riding to TOTAL COLLAPSE

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Why WAR Is Coming

Maybe you don't believe it when you read in Jeremiah in the 30th chapter and the 14th verse where God says this: "All thy lovers,— that's King James English for "your allies"—we've been making many allies thinking that we could rely on them—"All your allies," let's read it that way, "have forgotten thee. They seek thee not. For I," God says, "have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, FOR THE MULTITUDE OF THINE INIQUITY." Why? "BECAUSE THY SINS WERE INCREASED!" We don't believe our sins have increased! But they have!

There is more crime in the United States than in any other nation now on the face of this earth, or more crime than has ever existed in any nation in the history of this world. It's about time we wake up!

The DECAY of RELIGION

The fifth and the FINAL major cause for the collapse of Rome was the decay of true religion. Religion was becoming more popular, but fading into a mere form, losing touch with life and with God, becoming impotent to guide the people.

Here of all places, America is DECAYING TODAY! We've been having a popular upsurge of religious interest, that's true. Church attendance is at an all time high, but just as your Bible foretold, there has come a great falling away from the truth of God, and from OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

These are the days that you will find described in your Bible in II Timothy 3:1-5. "Know this also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy—and it continues to mention many other kinds of transgressions of God's Ten Commandments—and in the 5th verse, "having a FORM of godliness,"—yes, we attend church, we sit there sanctimoniously for an hour on Sunday, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such," says God, "TURN AWAY!"

Yes, we have much of the form of religion, but almost NONE of the real POWER OF GOD in our private lives—in our national life. We have an EMPTY

FORM of religion, but our sins—our crimes—are FAST INCREASING!

Now maybe you don't believe it, when you read in Ezekiel 5:12: "A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with the famine." This is a prophecy for America!

Even the assistant chief of the Weather Bureau at Washington is telling us that there is going to be a devastating drought in great portions of the nation in less than 20 years! Bible prophecy says it's going to happen even sooner than that. Notice!

"A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and the famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee, and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee, and," God says, "I will scatter the third part," that is the remaining third, of course, to the winds and draw out a sword after thee."

Next, notice the 6th chapter and the sixth verse. "In all your dwelling places, the cities shall be laid waste." That could not have happened in all our cities until NOW, because it couldn't have happened until our enemies had the hydrogen bomb!

We have been told that it is now possible to lay waste the entire North American Continent overnight. The Russians have the hydrogen bomb! You don't know when it might come!

Propheesied to HAPPEN

I've shown you from the very word of God what is next coming in prophesied events—the famine, the disease epidemic to be followed almost immediately by World War III! It's prophesied for 15 to 20 years or less.

Now notice Jeremiah 30, again, and verse 11. God says, telling that this is all going to happen to us, that we are going to be scattered in an invasion: "But I," He says, "will CORRECT thee in measure, and will NOT leave thee altogether unpunished." Now that's just a verse or two ahead of where He says, "because our sins HAVE INCREASED!"

God help you to heed THE HAND-WRITING IS ON THE WALL OF AMERICA, NOW!

You are living in the very END of this world, but soon God Almighty is going to step in and intervene to SAVE humanity from committing suicide—yes, the suicide of the human race—and to usher in the happy WORLD TOMORROW!

Western Alliance in TROUBLE

(Continued from page 9)

We have no effective propaganda or talking point. We have no real faith in democracy—no real goal to inspire our allies.

Instead, we have lost our moral and spiritual strength. We are content just to "coexist" with Communism, and with our own sins—hoping that the worst will not happen—hoping that the trend of events in the world against us will somehow change. Stubbornly, blindly, we still hope to buy peace with dollars.

When will we wake up?

America Decays Within

The obvious decay of America is in its collective character and ideals. The growth of crime and violence, the increase in divorces and broken homes, and the shocking disrespect for society and all constituted authority—all these are indicators of a nation that is in serious trouble within.

But the corrosion and decay of our moral principles in the international arena have largely gone unnoticed by the American people. A sage pronouncement on this condition was made in a speech recently by George Meany, president of the newly merged AFL and CIO labor unions. Study his words carefully:

"Too many in the free world seem to have lost their capacity for moral indignation against the most brutal inhumanities when they are perpetrated by Communists. It is painful, but we must face the cruel facts of life."

Yes, America and Britain have now come to the point where "peace at any price" is the popular sentiment. No longer do we stand for something—we are just plain fearful.

Not too many months ago, Red China was labeled by Britain, America, and the United Nations as the real international gangster nation which engineered the Korean war. Over 35,000 American young men were slaughtered in that needless crime. And no peace papers have as yet been signed by the United Nations and the "outlaw" Red China regime.

But at this moment it seems almost certain that the British and American leaders are going to let this murderous outlaw regime—the regime which was officially declared the aggressor in the Korean war—continue to now going to let this regime come into the United Nations!

And, remember, Red China is still officially (and in fact) AT WAR with the United Nations!

In these matters a new vocabulary is