[The Greatest Depression Has Already Begun: An Autopsy of Western Decline]

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The Greatest Depression Has Already Begun: An Autopsy of Western Decline



> My heart breaks. This is not a metaphor, nor journalistic exaggeration for effect. It is a physical, raw sensation I feel every time I look at the state of the United States, every time I see how Europe voluntarily acts as a vassal at the feet of a fading empire, and every time I realize that the world my grandfather knew – a world of building, of working, of honest sweat – has been replaced by a casino of illusions, manipulation, and rhetoric.

By Frank Dumon: A Witness to Two Worlds

To understand how deep the decay runs, one must look at what has been destroyed. My father was born in Detroit. Not the Detroit of today, a ghost town of emptiness and despair, but the Detroit of the early 20th century, the pulsating heart of industrial power. My grandfather, Gustaaf Dumon, worked there for Packard Automobile from 1906 to 1923. In those days, America was not just building cars; it was building the backbone of the global middle class. It was a time when labor had dignity. My aunt Valentine Dumon was married to Peter Corteville, the owner of the *Gazette van Detroit*. That newspaper was the voice of the community, a connection

between people, not a vehicle for corporate propaganda.



I experienced this transition from production to parasitism firsthand. In my youth, I hitchhiked from Canada to Mexico, with a joint in my mouth and the wind in my face, searching for truth but still too naive and ignorant to understand the full picture. I worked twelve hours a day as a welder/deep-sea diver on the oil and gas pipeline barges of Brown & Root and McDermott worldwide. I worked with "rednecks", rough guys with dirt under their fingernails and honor in their hearts. In the evenings, after a 12-hour shift that cracked your bones, we played poker. We looked each other in the eyes. There was trust. There was a code. If your word was good, you were a man. If your work was good, you were paid well.

Today? That world is gone. The "redneck" is mocked by the coastal elite, while his job has been exported to Asia. The pipelines are still there, but the profits no longer go to the workers or the local community. They go to shareholders in New York and London, to companies like BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street. Three companies. That is all.

> They own approximately 88% of the S&P 500. One percent of Americans own 54% of the stock market. This is not capitalism. This is feudalism with smartphones. This is, as Mussolini once defined it, fascism: the total merger of state power and corporate power.

The Illusion of the Market and the AI Bubble

Look at the markets today. They seem to be thriving. Stocks are rising. But it is a hallucination. It is market manipulation in its purest form. As American trend forecaster Gerald Celente states, politicians are "criminal syndicates," and the markets are their laundering operation. When fear of a war with Iran flared up, we saw the markets drop. Why? Because "smart money" – the private equity groups – knew that the AI hype was a bubble about to burst. AI sweeps away software companies, eliminates jobs, creates no real value for the general public, and concentrates power.

But when war rhetoric escalated, the markets jumped back up. War is good for business. War distracts. War justifies emergency budgets and money printing. Celente points out that political leaders lie about military capabilities and ship

movements to keep the markets calm. It is all theater. And we, the public, buy the tickets.

Price-to-earnings ratios (P/E ratios) are absurd. We are in a bubble that makes the Dotcom crash of 2000 look pale. But this time it is worse. This time, the entire economy is financialized. They have hollowed out the real economy – the factories, the skills, the infrastructure – to enrich China. Bill Clinton brought China into the WTO in 1999. We gave them our industry. We gave them our technology. In return, we got cheap plastic junk and a huge mountain of debt.

Today, China is the leader in electric vehicles, in AI, in infrastructure. While we in America look at a rotting Amtrak railway system – mockingly called "Am-crap" by Celente – which takes ten hours to travel from New York to Montreal, the Chinese are building high-speed lines that crisscross the landscape like arteries of progress.

In China, nearly 70% of 18-year-olds go to university, and they study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Nine of the top ten universities are Chinese. Their lead and ambition are enormous.

And America? They study ideological fads, flashy but mostly useless professions, lawyers and financial "experts," trade engineers who do not understand the world, while saddling themselves with unpayable student debts. The result? A generation intellectually unarmed and financially chained. Just like the Europeans, but there education, or what passes for it, is subsidized. Most of their "teachers" and "professors" should go back to school. Talkers who are intellectually lazy but pose as "Experts" while being empty shells. Thus, they fill the censored and manipulated Western media with their hollow arguments. There are, of course, exceptions in education, but the dictatorial pillar system is detrimental to their creativity and the much-needed renewal.

Gen Z: The Revolution of the Desperate

And this brings us to Generation Z. Look at what is happening in Nepal, in India, in the cities of America. Young people are taking to the streets. Not because they are "woke," but because they are angry. They have no future. When I grew up, you could buy a house with a high school diploma, drive a car, and start a family. You could become a butcher, plumber, baker, etc. You could become middle class by working hard. Today? Those shops are gone, replaced by Walmart and Amazon. The only jobs remaining are service-oriented, uncertain, and poorly paid. We are champions of Flexi jobs: the symbol of complete social erosion. A brilliant young tech nephew of a friend has submitted more than a thousand applications. One interview. No offer. What do you do then? What do you do when you have followed the system, done

your best, and the system spits you out?

Gen Z has nothing to lose. And that makes them dangerous to the elite. The billionaires – Bezos, Musk, Gates – look down on them. Celente puts it succinctly: look at the photo of my parents from 1934, in the midst of the Great Depression. They radiate dignity. Look at the billionaires of today. They look like "crap." They are pathetic, narcissistic, and detached from humanity. They flee to bunkers in New Zealand, knowing that if the system collapses, their money will be worthless. But they cannot stop it. They are addicted to power. This anger of Gen Z is neither left nor right. It is an existential scream. It is "Off with their heads 2.0".

And the elite, in their ivory towers in Davos and Washington, do not understand it. They think they can buy it off with slogans and diversity quotas and LGBTQ chatter. But you cannot live on quotas. You cannot pay rent with inclusive language.

War as Distraction: The Racket of Death



Why does the West continue with war? Why does the situation in Ukraine escalate, why are there threats against Iran? Because war is the only industry that is still growing. Smedley Butler, a Marine Corps General, called it a century ago: "War is a racket." It is the oldest, most profitable, and most vicious racket in the world. Profit in dollars, loss in lives. The US has not won any major war since 1945. Vietnam? A complete disaster. Iraq? Chaos. Afghanistan? A humiliation. And yet they continue. Why? Because the Military Industrial Complex, which Eisenhower warned about, robs the national genius, steals the sweat of the worker, and sells the future of the children.

Look at Ukraine. Europe sends billions to a war it cannot win, at the expense of its own economy. German industry, once the engine of Europe, is being dismantled by expensive energy and sanctions. And why? To prolong American hegemony? To enrich arms manufacturers? It is madness.

And Iran. Tensions are rising. Israel, under Netanyahu, tries to escalate the war to ensure its own political survival. His son is safe in Miami, while young men die. The US threatens intervention, but has no ammunition. The magazines are empty. The ships are old. The pilots are tired. If a war breaks out with Iran, it will not be a quick victory. It will become a regional inferno. And with the involvement of Russia and

China, it could easily escalate into World War III.

Celente warns: the Russians are furious. They feel enclosed. They remember Napoleon. They remember Hitler. They will not give in. And the West, blinded by arrogance, pushes them further into a corner. We dance on the edge of the nuclear abyss, and the DJ is a bunch of corrupt politicians hoping the music never stops.

The Death of the Dollar and the Rise of the South



While we prepare for war, our economic basis dies: the dollar. The US uses the dollar as a weapon by imposing sanctions on anyone it wishes. But the consequence is that the rest of the world – the BRICS countries, the Global South – turns away from the dollar. They seek alternatives. Gold. Yuan. Digital currencies. When I travel to Vietnam later, I take gold bars of 100 grams with me. Gifts for my real friends. I can easily detach myself from possessions.

The US debt load is not 40 trillion dollars. If you include unfunded liabilities (Social Security, Medicare), it is more than 120 trillion. This is unsustainable. The Federal Reserve cannot keep printing. Every time they print, the dollar loses value. Inflation rises. The purchasing power of the average person declines. This is "stagflation" on steroids, or as Celente calls it: "dragflation." Same in Europe.

The Western economy is further broken down, while prices explode.

And what does the EU do? Blindly follows. Instead of seeking independence, Europe chooses vassalage. Macron, Scholz, Starmer, Bart De Wever are puppets. Their approval ratings drop to historic lows. They govern for the 20%, not for the 80%. And the 80% is beginning to realize it. But the Flemish are victims of their Russophobia and Islamophobia. Long live the Vlaams Belang - it is not possible to find bigger idiots.

What Can Be Done? The Call for a Renaissance

First: become physically, emotionally, and spiritually strong. The system wants you weak, dependent, and afraid. Break those chains. Learn a trade. Not a digital skill that AI can replace, but a real trade. Carpenter, electrician, plumber, farmer. People will always need houses, water, and food. The "trade" is the new freedom.

Second: unite. Gen Z is already doing this via social media, but it must be translated into real action. The elite are masters of divide and conquer. Left against right, white against black, young against old. Break that. The enemy is not your neighbor. The enemy is the system that sucks you both dry.

Third: demand the return of antitrust legislation. Break up the monopolies. BlackRock, Amazon, Google – they are too big. They stifle innovation and democracy. In the time of Teddy Roosevelt, trusts were broken up. It is time to do that again. Glass-Steagall must return. Banks must not gamble with savings.

A Personal Reflection

My heart breaks because I see what has been lost. I have worked with the "rednecks" on pipeline barges worldwide. I have tasted the freedom of hitchhiking through North America in the seventies. I have seen how America changed from a country of builders to a country of speculators.



My grandfather Gustaaf Dumon worked at Packard as a mold maker. He built something tangible. My aunt Valentine and her husband Peter Corteville connected people through the press with “De Gazette van Detroit”. We, the current generation, have lost that connection. We have been replaced by algorithms and shareholder values.

Gerald Celente is right: we are not on the eve of a correction. We are in the midst of the "Greatest Depression Ever."

And the worst part? Most of you don't even notice it yet, because the symptoms are suppressed by an artificial respiration of money printing and propaganda. But the patient is dead. Let us begin the autopsy.

The solution does not lie in more of the same. It lies in a rebirth of culture, craft, and community. Like the Medicis in Italy after the Black Death, we must find a new focus on quality, beauty, and human dignity. We must return to the essence of what it means to be human, to work, to build. The billionaires in their bunkers in New Zealand know that their money will be worthless if society collapses. But the maniacs cannot stop it. Only we can. By becoming strong. By being united. **By demanding that the system serves, rather than rules.**

It is time to take Celente's "Occupied Peace" movement seriously. Not as a political stance, but as an existential necessity. Peace is not just the absence of war; it is the presence of justice, prosperity, and human dignity. Let us stop looking at the TV screens with the elites and the endless babble. Let us look at each other. Let us learn from the past, from my grandfather who built cars, from my uncles and aunts who made America great, from the rednecks who worked the land. They understood that value comes from work, not from speculation. The greatest depression has already begun. But the greatest renaissance can also begin. If we want it. If we dare. If we stop being afraid and start building.

Addendum - Awakening from the Western Bubble – A Return to the Heartbeat of Hanoi

> While the West wraps itself deeper and deeper in its own financial and ideological illusions, there is a world that simply continues to build, live, and breathe. The Westerner lives in a bubble. A bubble of fiat money, of endless debts, of a culture that eats itself alive in identity politics and geopolitical arrogance. They have lost touch with reality. But reality still exists, and you do not find it in the ivory towers of Davos or the abandoned factory floors of the American Rust Belt or in Europe. You find it in Southeast Asia.



For me, this is not an abstract sociological observation; it is a deep, personal truth. Between 1982 and 1988, I worked in Vietnam, during the renovation of the Pasteur Institutes and amidst the construction of the spinning mill in Hanoi. I know the smell of cotton dust, the tropical heat, but above all, the unmatched resilience and dignity of the Vietnamese worker. I saw there what it means to build a future with bare hands and an unbending spirit, far from the cynical financial games that are now ruining the West. My heart beats faster at the thought of the friends I will see again and the streets I will walk again. The pho that I can already taste.

It is therefore with a heart full of expectation that I pack my bags. On October 15, I will board the Vietnam Airlines plane again for the connection between Brussels/Amsterdam/Hanoi. I have an appointment with the flight attendant who helped me so much in February when my back locked up in Laos Luang Prabang and

have booked a nice room at the Mercure Hanoi La Gare, located on the famous Ly Thuong Kiet Street in the French Quarter, right opposite the Hanoi train station. It is the perfect base, not only for train trips to the misty mountains of Sapa or the wonderfully beautiful landscape of Ninh Binh, but especially as an observation post for real life. A personal guide/interpreter will always accompany me. In the 80s, I paid for my hotel stays in the then worthless Dong's. Now a comfortable 5-star room costs at least 100 € per day. It is well deserved.



I will stay there for at least a month. And I am not going as a blind tourist. I am going to listen. I will hold conversations and conduct interviews with both the elders who bear the scars of history, and with the young people who are shaping the new Asian century with unprecedented energy. What a contrast with the West! Unlike the desperate, unemployed, and disillusioned Western 'Gen Z', I see in the Vietnamese youth a generation that still knows what ambition, family, respect for elders, and tangible progress mean. They are building the future; the West is only busy managing its own decline.

European leaders watch as their industry is dismantled and their population falls into poverty, trapped in a geopolitical vassalage that defies all historical logic. They have no eye for the shifting power relations in the world. But in Southeast Asia, one feels that shift keenly. Here, there is no talk of deformation; here, work is done.

The West performs an autopsy on its own decay, trapped in the "Greatest Depression Ever." But in the streets of Hanoi, between the streams of scooters and the scent of pho and jasmine, beats the heart of a region that embraces the future instead of fearing it. The Western bubble will burst, as all bubbles eventually do. But the ground underfoot in Southeast Asia is stone, earth, and human connection. There, on the banks of the Red River, I will breathe in reality again. Then I can die peacefully, but I am in no hurry.

This article is based on the insights of Gerald Celente as outlined in his interview "The Greatest Depression EVER Has Already Started", combined with personal experiences and historical context. The goal is to start a constructive dialogue about economic sustainability, cultural renewal, and societal resilience. Therefore, I also launched my website in April.