

Chapter 1

Things Have Changed

2050

So much has changed over the past thirty years.

Israel is a joint venture partner in many projects with several Arab countries improving agriculture, developing new technologies and finding breakthrough medicines and treatments for chronic diseases. Over a hundred animal species have been taken off the endangered species lists; bees and monarch butterflies have re-established healthy populations. There is a moon base occupied by over a dozen countries and a Mars base shared by six countries. Many cancers are now under control and the intelligent distribution of food has all but eliminated death by starvation around the world. Global water projects provide clean potable water to every population on every continent.

All drugs are legalized in the US and in most developed countries.

Those needing addictive substances like heroin and cocaine have to be in a supervised program which includes psychological and medical services to help them break their addictive behavior. Anyone found taking drugs outside of such programs are sentenced to a 30-day security-hold in a detoxification treatment center. Drug gangs no longer exist in the U.S. Even in less developed countries they are quickly disappearing due to little demand and profitability.

Some fifteen years ago the use of “cash” ended in America.

All financial transactions are being done electronically, from the purchase of a breath mint to booking a safari in East Africa. Credit cards are still in use; they too will soon be obsolete. Most people have a tiny chip embedded in the side of their wrist; with either a finger print or eye scan, all transactions are processed through a person’s bank account. Even those who beg on the streets must take charity electronically. With the end to “Cash transactions,” which often went untaxed, no longer do cities, States and the Federal government lose billions in tax avoidance. Thus, tax revenues, through a lower tax rate, now provides more income to municipal coffers. Every citizen is automatically registered to vote when they are eighteen based on their social security number. Billionaires are taxed five percent of their net worth each year to help support social programs including universal health care. Each person eighteen or older receives monthly Social Security income on a sliding scale from the most given to those who need it to be above the “Poverty Level,” phasing out for those above a certain income level.

Multibillion-dollar tech and media companies including Amazon, Facebook, Apple have been forced to spin off divisions into independent public companies. The Supreme Court has been increased to thirteen justices; Citizens United was overturned and the Electoral College no longer exercises decisions in national elections. A major Immigration Law allows legal and controlled access to immigrants. No longer being forced to leave their countries due to civil wars. These immigrants receive basic health care and a minimum of financial support while they wait to become citizens. Even visitors to the U.S. are covered by basic health care in the event they become ill during their visit. The disparity between the wealthy and working class has been closing with more opportunities provided to all citizens who now have access to top universities on merit, not quotas, while trade schools and community colleges are free to all Americans.

All cars, trucks, buses and a variety of other vehicles are electric or hydrogen vehicles made of light weight hardened plastics. Few people own cars; most homes are built without garages.

The vast majority of the population uses car services operated by spin-offs of vehicle manufacturers or international conglomerates like Google, Amazon, Lyft, Apple, Tesla, Nio, Uber, or Nikola. These driverless vehicles pick up passengers, take them to their destination, then retrieve them to take them home or to some other location. The expense of these services is far less than the cost of purchasing a

car; paying the energy cost, insurance, and managing the inconvenience of bringing a vehicle in for service, recalls or repairs. There are many vertical take-off (VTO) flying cars particularly in less populated areas of the country. These VTO's and passenger drones are frequently seen ferrying passengers back and forth to airports from within cities. All are remote, pilotless, computer-controlled vehicles also either electric or hydrogen powered.

Global warming has not only been slowed; it's being reversed due to a 95% reduction in the use of fossil fuels. The US has become the largest producer of renewable energy technology, like microwave solar collection and battery storage in the world.

Thirty years ago, America faced its most serious existential threat since WWII; primarily a threat from within.

While business boomed in American and around the world after the war, a middle class rapidly grew thanks to unions, increasing wages and new businesses. However, overt racism plagued parts of the US for a hundred years after the Civil War ended in 1865 until the Civil Rights Act of 1965. Unfortunately, racist feelings did not die with the confederate soldiers or even several generations thereafter. It was kept alive and nurtured in the minds and hearts of many Americans. From overt racist actions taken by some to more benign systemic racism, the playing field of life was unfair, effectively making those Americans with black or brown skin play with their laces tied together rather than being free to run and compete fairly. While many Americans believed there might be five or ten percent of their fellow Americans who held these views, it became apparent as this crisis evolved, there might be twice as many; maybe one third of the population.

Discontent among white and non-white citizens grew through the late Twentieth Century and early Twenty First Century as income disparity ballooned. So finally, when there was a chance to really shake up the political system, Americans took a risk on a candidate who asked, "What do you have to lose?" This discontent with politicians in general, erupted since so many had so little to lose. Sixty-five million Americans voted for a TV personality who was in a scripted "Reality "Show" which falsely portrayed him as a good businessman who would fire contestants face to face for doing a bad job. His racist campaign likely attracted many of his votes as well. Sadly, a hundred million Americans did not even vote. Even though he lost the total vote by three million, he was able to barely win enough Electoral votes to become the next president of the United States. He did this with the coordinated help of the Russian dictator, Vladimir Putin, who worked with his campaign to discredit his opponent.

Historians witnessed his party in the Senate totally abandon their Oaths of Office, instead they protected the lawlessness and abuse of power of this President.

The US was heading to become an authoritarian State. We could only take solace in that it became evident this person was such a damaged human being, ignorant of almost every aspect of humanity, dignity, politics and the rule of law, that if he had succeeded in winning a second term, he and his enabling Party in Congress would have totally dismantled the American institutional form of our democratic republic. It might have even the end to American elections. Following his overwhelming loss, more people working in, or with his administration, including family, were indicted for crimes, found guilty and sent to prison, than all those following the Nixon resignation.

While so many social issues have been addressed the world has enjoyed the longest period of international peace. Women have become empowered, taking on more executive positions in major corporation, sitting on corporate boards in record numbers, taking more high-level political offices than men, permitted and even encouraged to take more than one husband.

Now a silent threat sweeps the globe. Not another virus or infectious killer.

The human species is on the brink of extinction

The Corona Virus pandemic of 2020 with over 350,000 US dead, pales compared to an all nations war to protect humanity from ZFB!