

## THE FLIM-FLAM MAN

In the movie 'Outlaw Josey Wales', one of the characters that Josey runs across is a traveling salesman whose product is something similar to an old medicinal compound called Hadacol. Comprised of nothing more than sugar syrup, a little cocaine, and a healthy percentage of alcohol, this nostrum guaranteed that it could 'cure whatever ails 'ya'. Cancer? You bet. Palsy? Sure. Dementia? Step right up. This was snake oil in the purest sense. Guaranteed for either fifty feet or fifty seconds, whichever came first.

The American people have just been witness to one of the greatest cons in political history perpetrated by one of the most talented grifters of all time. Unfortunately, many of us have bought it, hook line and sinker, and are still on the false hope and hyperbole-induced coma that it provided. That hope and its associated high will last until the aftereffects of the nostrum have set in, the patient has come back to reality, and the euphoria has died out.

Donald Trump was selling whatever you wanted to hear, if you bought the product, aimed in a major way at white male America. The stereotype of the circa 1950's family and society is what was sold.

Want to return to the dominant position in your family? Just listen to me.

Want to treat women like the secondary citizens that you feel they really are? Listen to what I have to say.

Want to return to all those Biblical values that you feel you've lost in your community? Hallelujah.

Want to get back that manufacturing job that some damn foriegner took? I'm your guy.

Want to feel like our country is the master of the world which every other country has to bow down to? We'll do it together.

Want to slap these damn terrorists back to the stone age for 9/11? Elect me for president.

Want to make sure you're safe and secure from all these criminal elements that roam the streets shooting people at random? Just say the word.

Want to make sure your guns stay in your possession? Just give me your vote and keep your ammo dry.

Want to make your bathrooms safe and get these damn queers out of our faces? I'll help you out.

It's amazing what can be projected on an empty screen. The master flim-flam man can paint a picture that corresponds with whatever you're

feeling. They can provide the exact cure for whatever ails you. They provide the medium and you just project whatever you want onto it. This was true in the old west's snake-oil salesmen; it was true with Hadacol; and it's true today in politics.

That dominant position in the family that you think you want? Dinner at six when you get home? Wifey waiting at the door after looking to the kids? Reality: It doesn't exist any more except in reruns of Leave it to Beaver. It's gone. Nowadays, it many times takes two incomes just to make ends meet and dinner is pre-packaged and in the freezer. The kids are busy playing violent interactive games on the Internet and you won't see 'em.

Treat 'your' woman as a second-class citizen? Reality: if you faced the real world at all, she never was that. Most families were run by the women, and once the paycheck hit the front door, you never saw it again. Great white hunter returned from the fray, and deposited the spoils for 'his' woman to make clothes and feed him. Those days are gone. In fact, most women recoil at going back to that time, having had a taste of their own economic value and self-worth.

Return to those 'Biblical' values you think you lost? Reality: they were mostly theoretical. Jim Baaker, Jimmy Swaggert, and a host of other proponents of those values wound up on the wrong side of the law for being fakes and hypocrites, conning their parishoners out of millions while committing debauchery out of sight of their flock. Many of the parishoners are no better, talking values on Sunday and seeing their mistresses on Tuesday and Thursday or fleecing their customers for as much as they can garner.

That manufacturing job that's coming back for you? Reality: they're gone forever. Techonolgy and robotics are taking over at an ever-increasing rate. Even if the jobs hadn't been shipped overseas, the tech world would have invaded almost all manufacturing within the same time span anyway. Fact.

Making America Great Again? Reality: We're just one of a hundred-some-odd countries in the world, with our own aspirations and culture(s). To say that we have to be dominant in the world and have all the other countries worship us is absurd. Every country has nationalist pride and aspirations ... territorial as well as economic. As in the sport of fencing, thrust and parry is the name of the game. There will always be greater and lesser powers, and our country will wax and wane just like all other societies have done. The globe is global and there's no going back to isolationism.

Kick the terrorists back to the stone age? Reality: they're already

there and happy with it. You think the caves of Tora-Bora were modern suburbia? You may be able to kill a lot of true believers that have nothing to lose but a simple existence, but you'll never be able to kill the ideology that drives them. It's an unwinnable war, and history has proven that in Afghanistan, with multiple conquests dating back to Alexander the Great being unable to conquer and control that part of the world.

Want to get rid of all the criminal elements that 'roam the streets'? Reality: most people don't experience what Chicago or Baltimore or Los Angeles does in their ghettos. Unless you actively seek out that locale, the chances of your being shot in your neighborhood are slim to none. If you want to cure the major cities of crime, give the people something to do, a reasonable wage, and a little pride in their work.

Want to keep your guns? Reality: With 300+ million guns out in the general population, the chance of eliminating them is zero. With ammo in the billions of rounds already stockpiled in tens-of-thousands of personal arsenals, the odds of the local sheriff coming to your house and confiscating it is virtually nil, nada, zip. And what county sheriff wants to risk his deputies lives trying to enforce a ban on weapons? It's pretty much like trying to pick up mercury with your fingers with just as toxic results.

Want to keep the trannies and gays out of your face? Reality: they've always been among us. Just ask most women if they know a gay hairdresser, or think how many in the entertainment business are homosexual. As ChickenMan used to say 'We're everywhere. We're everywhere.' Just suck it up and if you don't bother them, they won't bother you. It's when you try to assert your moral values (that have no substance except for a passage in your holy scripture) on everyone that you get pushback. Also, if you offer a product or services to the general public, that includes the general public. All of it.

One other general reality ... while the United States as a nation happened to be founded by mostly Christian immigrants, the original inhabitants who preceded us here certainly weren't. And the immigrants /invaders that followed brought other faiths and cultures with them, and managed to assimilate into the fabric of our nation. To separate and divide the population now based on culture and religion is a fool's errand which will only erode our national standing and ability to function as a coherent society.

These are the realities, folks. The flim-flam man has just taken us

for a ride. The ultimate Atlantic City pitchman has sold us a ShamWow, SuperSnakeOil, and Hadacol all at the same time. When we recover from this hyperbole-induced coma and come to our senses, we can all hope that it's not too late. If we allow all his sycophants and camp-followers to claim all the goodies and enact all the policies that they can while we remain comatose, we may not recover in time. It shouldn't have happened, but it did, and lots of us have buyers remorse. It's what we do to counter this event and take OUR country back that matters.

As the Indian in Josey Wales told the snake-oil salesman ... "You drink it."