Plain Talk
The Trap Is Set

COLUMN BY ROB BUKSAR

In route to taking my van in for service I noticed the city's "animal control guy" on the job preparing to trap a large dog. I was intrigued by the process so I decided to pull over and watch awhile.

The dog catcher had a snare attached to the end of a long pole. He had already caught the dog's attention by laying down a generous pile of yummy treats. Then he laid a trail of goodies for the dog to continue to feast and at the same time obliviously follow—moving closer and closer to the snare.

The animal control guy stood motionless at the end of his long pole patiently waiting as the dog moved toward the trap. The big dog delightfully gorged himself until he reached the point of no return. Then in the blink of an eye the hunt was over. The dog was now caught in the snare and in total submission to the man. His days of running free were over.

Pondering what I had just seen, I couldn't help but be impressed with the brilliant simplicity that led to the capture and total submission of the big dog. Whether time, chance, circumstance or some sinister clandestine plot determined the dog's fate, I haven't a clue. But there sure seems to be uncanny similarities between contemporary America and trapping a big dog.

Americans have been living the good life for a long time. Compared to the rest of the world we haven't had to do a whole lot in order to receive a bunch. Very few would argue that we've been abundantly blessed as a nation beyond comprehension and above all others. We all have become accustomed to the good life and now expect it's some sort of "right." Many of our children today are so spoiled in their thinking and behavior it's almost unbearable being around them.

Yet profit and abundance are not dirty words. It's lust and sanctified greed that are. I believe we've crossed the line over to the dark side and in the process shown the world (to include our enemies) our Achilles' heel. Just lay down a path of short-term killer profits and we follow like a big dumb dog with no thought there may be a snare at the end of the path.

The signers of the Declaration of Independence, our founding fathers, were the movers and shakers of that time. They were prominent individuals with great assets, power and influence. They pledged themselves and all they owned on the mere chance that the American idea might work. It was a heck of a risk but they took it because they knew if they succeeded it would be worth it.

Today we have more people with great assets, power and influence than ever before. The difference between then and now is our current aristocrats only think of themselves.

If moving an already profitable company out of the U.S. in order to create a better return on investment (ROI) and a far greater CEO compensation plan, the move is justifiable by today's corporate standards. An entire town may be wrecked in the process and lives destroyed, but with this mindset that's OK.

The short term monetary bait is leading big business and government into the trap that will snare the entire country.

As a rule, American big business and government are no longer investing in America. There is the continued exodus of manufacturing and now outsourcing to lands of cheap labor. The recent passage of CAFTA (Central America Free Trade Agreement) will do little more than exacerbate the great sucking sound of outsourcing started with NAFTA.

Let's not forget the flood of cheap imports from China and India, which makes the United States ever more dependent on those countries financially underpinning our burgeoning federal debt.

There is no pleasure or profit to me being the fly in the potato salad. Americans thrive on bliss. Gloom and doom messages aren't popular even if they are true. Yet what side of the ledger you're on—profitable or terminal—doesn't change anything. The traps are baited and we're headed for a snare that not only will cost many more livelihoods but possibly our freedom and maybe the entire country.

Our political and big business leaders need to be motivated to change direction. We all still teach our children that the best investment they can make is in themselves. Following the lead of corporate America, the best investment they can make is in someone else's country.

How long is the path of short-term treats and goodies that leads right into a trap and the loss of all we consider sacred? How close are we to the point of no return?

God bless the land of the free, home of the brave, and please help us from becoming endangered.

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