**[It is about sharing and caring](https://nation.com.pk/23-Jan-2020/t-he-united-states-us-ambassador-alice-wells-is-on-her-visit-to-pakistan-her-speech-at-a-think-tank-event-is-suggestive-of-the-white-man-s-burden-still-very-much-in-place-she-wants-pakistan-to-rethink-its-involvement-with-the-china-pakistan" \t "_new)**

Dr Farid A Malik January 23, 2020

Common purpose, destiny, legacy, good have all become uncommon in the 21st century, Greed dominates, sharing and caring has diminished it is not just a unipolar world it has became uniperson. Everyone is for himself, civil society is in serious decline. Even environment has not been spared. While forests have been denuded, no one seems interested in planting new ones. Is the world that we have known for thousands of years coming to an end? Is this the new world order?

Human beings have always had common purpose and destiny for which there have always been collective efforts. Till the eighties human rights were respected world over. The white supremacist, Apartheid Government in South Africa had to face sanctions. The Warsaw Pact countries that operated behind the Iron Curtain had to remove it and then undo the alliance. The two Germanies were united. Peace treaty was signed for the creation of a Palestinian State.

Then came the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York. In retaliation United States decided to invade Afghanistan. NATO coalition forces invaded the territory that has always been unconquerable being rightly named the ‘Graveyard of Empires’. It did not end here in March 2003 United States and United Kingdom attacked Iraq blaming it for links with Al-Qaeda and stockpiling Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). After toppling Saddam Hussein the occupying forces are still there. Then it was the turn of Yemen. Libya, Syria, Somalia, Sudan are also in disarray. Law of jungle prevails in the entire region. The ‘Arab Springs’ did topple a few dictatorial regimes but it is back to the usual control and exploitation.

While we claim to live in an information age, disinformation has become the order of the day. New concepts of ‘Engineered Consent’ have come to the fore. There is a great disconnect between the rulers and the ruled. No one seems to be interested in the welfare of the masses. Concentration of wealth in a few hands has taken place. While the rich are getting richer, poverty is on the rise.

Accountability and transparency has been taken over by cover up and mystery. Numbers game is played to suit the influential and powerful. What looks glamorous on the screen, stinks in reality. Most leaders lie with impunity. The powerful can bend the rule of law at will. Most 20th century mechanisms of sharing and caring have been dismantled. Millions perished in the two world wars and upheavals for an equitable world, their sacrifices have gone in vain.

Countries rich in natural resources are unable to lift their masses out of poverty. Nation’s wealth is squandered and then parked in Western countries. In the Nordic Welfare states such resources have been declared public property, to be used for their welfare. From cradle to grave every citizen is taken care off. Taxes are high but people pay willingly as all their needs are met by the state.

Weakening of state and the regulatory oversights have left the disadvantaged segments of society unprotected. The power of vote has been neutralized by powerful board members of the Multinational Corporations(MNCs) who operate in the interests of the shareholders not the public at large. Most democracies are in serious trouble. In India the minorities are being targeted by the fundamentalist majority.

With hunger, famine and poverty on the rise for the many, the party has to end for the few. An orderly sharing and caring is much better than disorderly snatching, rioting and plunder. Greed and excessive accumulation of wealth has challenged the gains of civilized societies. Hopelessness is becoming the hallmark of the 21st century.

Amrita Sen the Nobel Laureate of India said, ‘A country with a free press has never experienced famine’. It was perhaps the strongest statement of the last century but does it holds true in the new millennium? Press is relatively free yet starvation and malnutrition is on the rise. Developing third world countries like Pakistan are confronted with serious challenges of stunted growth. In the land of the pure 38% children under the age of five suffer from this menace. It is a serious emergency, in Sindh it touches 50%.

All is not well in the flourishing world of plenty. The rat race for glory has been carried too far. Fundamental human rights have to be revisited and re-defined. Freedom of action without economic emancipation is meaningless. In the 21st century every human being should be entitled to a basic living. No one should have to sleep hungry at night unless advised by the doctor. Hunger has to be addressed, food should be included as a fundamental right to be ensured by the state. Violation should carry UN sanctions.

Food Banks can be established to ensure healthy staples to the living. As I write this article I hear voices of wheat shortages. Today an agricultural country like Pakistan is unable to ensure food autarky whether artificial or real only time will tell. Without sharing and caring for humanity there is no way forward. Humans need humans to grow and flourish. There has to be hand holding for humanity to advance. Our destiny is intertwined. As a human race we must seek commonalities not divisions and conflict. The world can be made a better place for all of us where there is peace and happiness. Instead of arms buildup there should be peace and prosperity networks to lift the human race. Militaries have to be replaced with Peace Corps to ensure negotiated settlements of conflicts within and amongst nations. Humanity must come first to make the world a better place to live for all of us. Let us learn to share and care as it used to be before the information age hit us to spread disinformation.