

—Slug:.....COMM-0853.opin.col.clift
—Contributor.....Elayne Clift
—Contributor email.....elayneclift@gmail.com
—For section.....Voices/Column
—Format.....Column
—Dateline.....
—Article Number:.....43113

Notes from editor (not for publication):

Elayne, again — please be more careful with your direct quotes. You always capture the spirit, but too often the words aren't what the writer you're quoting actually wrote.

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Our new world disorder

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 China, the U.S., and Russia have leaders devoid of a
3 commitment to peace, equity, rules of law, and social democracy,
4 making a global humane vision seemingly impossible

####END SUBHED####

5 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

6 THIS YEAR HAS barely begun, and already we find
7 ourselves facing a dangerous world in which old norms and rules
8 are changing or disappearing rapidly.

9 We have yet to realize what the ramifications will be of
10 what is taking place — not just for our own country but for all

11 countries, irrespective of geography, economic stability, and
12 political leadership.

13 A [piece](#) in *The Washington Post* in December shared a
14 speech by Ishaan Tharoor on behalf of the World Food Program
15 USA. It began like this. “A troubling dynamic seems to be
16 shaping global politics. Humanitarian crises are surging, even as
17 the support systems and international cooperation required to
18 address them are failing.”

19 Tharoor cites a report by the International Rescue
20 Committee, which chose the theme “New World Disorder” for its
21 2026 [Emergency Watchlist](#) report, which illuminates
22 unimaginable and growing crises in at least 20 countries already
23 facing huge humanitarian crises.

24 These crises are directly connected to shifting global
25 politics that will affect every one of us in one way or another
26 because of increasing conflicts and their impact, resulting in
27 crises that are no longer local.

28 These critical situations will pose the threat of wars
29 driven by international power plays, which Tharoor described as
30 “the growing importance of profit over protection in the world’s
31 conflict zones.”

32 Tharoor adds that “we can no longer say that the rules-
33 based order is the defining anchor of the global system.” He
34 worries about an “anarchic form of globalization without rules,”
35 and believes more than ever that we are in an “age of impunity”
36 that includes the loss of legal rights and ignores laws, including
37 those related to war.

38 The U.S. actions in Venezuela are a sign of what could
39 happen, in part because of growing impunity for world leaders,
40 including Donald Trump and his attempts to interfere with
41 Columbia, Cuba, and Greenland for starters. Who knows what he
42 plans to do in other countries?

43 It’s clear already that the breakdown of national systems
44 and international relationships are leading to chaos and possible
45 anarchy, which has huge implications. Analysts are already

46 worrying about China taking over Taiwan, Russia taking over
47 Europe, and, under Trump, the United States taking over several
48 countries in Latin America while eying countries in the Middle
49 East.

50 Talk about a new world order in which oligarchs and
51 dictators take over the world and fascism prevails.

52 * * *

53 THE IDEA OF a revised world order is not new. At the end
54 of World War II, for example, Franklin Roosevelt, Winston
55 Churchill, and Joseph Stalin met in Yalta to consider the postwar
56 reorganization of Germany and Europe.

57 The meeting had significant implications for other
58 regions of the world. Some analysts suggest that the idea of
59 colonization became an issue there.

60 Politicians, academics, and economists have debated the
61 idea of a world order historically and long before Yalta. It's just
62 that it seems terrifying in today's global political landscape.

63 The possible collapse of the NATO alliance is now real.
64 That alliance has kept us safe from global disasters for nearly 80
65 years. If it collapses, every country will be on its own should wars
66 proliferate in every region of the world. It's a stunning and
67 frightening thing to contemplate.

68 The term "new world order," as it's being used now,
69 already suggests a significant and dramatic shift in the global
70 balance of power, political thought, economic justice, food
71 security, legal rights, and other issues that affect daily life.
72 Migration, immigration, education, scientific advances, and
73 access to health care are already threatened.

74 There are important lessons to be learned from the past.
75 These lessons require qualified and humane leaders and advisors
76 who can view the world as a global community through the lens
77 of social justice, human rights, and a sustainable planet.

78 That's a tall order, and it's no secret that the three great
79 powers right now — China, the U.S., and Russia — have leaders

80 devoid of a commitment to peace, equity, rules of law, and social
81 democracy, making that humane vision seemingly impossible.

82 * * *

83 BUT MORE THAN EVER, the need for global cooperation on
84 myriad issues is vital, because issues like climate change,
85 pandemics, and economic crises now transcend national borders.

86 Each of these potential crises highlights the limitations of
87 a state-centric system and the need for new, negotiated, and
88 agreed-upon forms of governance.

89 Most of us realize that alliances like that seem too
90 difficult to achieve, but any change in governing arrangements
91 and power dynamics among nations will ultimately require
92 accountability, viable and effective legal structures, institutions
93 grounded in shared progress, and guardrails if all of us are going
94 to avoid a catastrophic future.

95 * * *

96 AS HISTORIAN and social critic Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.
97 once said, "We are not going to achieve a new world order
98 without paying for it in blood as well as in words and money."

99 But we can still hope and try to effect a likely new global
100 order that calls for and is grounded in honesty, genuine
101 collaboration, and a commitment to survival — no matter who
102 we are and where we inhabit our shared world.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

103 **ELAYNE CLIFT** (elayne-clift.com) has written this column
104 about women, politics, and social issues for almost 20 years.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

105 0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

106

####BEGIN LINKS####

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

107

####BEGIN VIDEO####

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

108

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

####END LOGLINE####