**The General Speaks. Should We Listen?**

***James Mattis, our former National Security Advisor to the President, former Secretary of Defense and former Commandant of our Marine Corps, recent book, "Call Sign Chaos," gives lessons on how to deal with Tribalism.***

**Defining Tribalism**. Tribalism is the natural emotional biases to people who are like ourselves because of blood, or race, or cultural reasons, or linguistic and/or religious reasons. When people who are different must exist close to each other, tribalism often surfaces. When these differences are unresolvable, conflicts can result. At its extreme, we will have war. It is said that tribalism is part of our DNA. Thus dealing with tribalism is a real challenge as we must fight our natural tendencies.

It is not often that a senior military officer gives advice on civilian issues, especially not advice on cultural, racial and political questions. That senior military officer speaking out is retired Marine General James Mattis.

It is now early in 2022, our Country is engulfed in tribalism, racism, multiple cultures and polarizing politics, and income inequality that is dividing our nation and our people much more than in past history. If our differences are not effectively resolved, too many Americans will be fighting other Americans, treating each others like enemies, and that will make our nation weak and also jeopardize our democratic institutions.

As our nation is entangled with tribalism and other divisive issues that threaten our unity and healthy existence, the General gives us lessons on how our Marine recruit training eliminates tribalism. While there are multiple issues that divide us, we must

In his interview in the WSJ, and on national media interviews, Gen Mattis warned about a divided America, and voiced his concern about external threats and our internal divisiveness. Within America, he noted that America is now divided into hostile tribes that are not acting in a cooperative manner and are extremely hostile to each other which weaken our nation. Our various groupings, despite our racial and cultural differences, need to be mutually supportive and "seek common ground." This national disunity jeopardizes our nation and distracts everyone from finding solutions to the many challenges America faces in this century.

General Mattis’ advises that our Marine Corps can serve as a marvelous example for the rest of our Country. Our warriors in the Marine Corps, include our citizens of many races and socioeconomic background. If anyone with tribal related attitudes joins the Marines, the rigorous military training in team building and camaraderie eliminates tribal attitudes. Virtually every member of the Marines will tell you that they have lived, ate and trained together, and will die for each other. Togetherness has made our Marines great, how can we emulate their methods to take on tribalism.

Mattis notes that until recent history, tribalism in America had not been a serious and divisive issue.

Today, with the challenges we face from the Chinese, Russians, militant Muslims, North Koreans and Iranians, our national unity is more important than ever. 'Thus, we must find a way to eliminate tribalism and promote unity and cooperation among all races and groups in America.' Reminded by the General, we must all remember: **E Pluribus Unum.** We must Unite from Many.

Tribalism does not have to be hostile, and it is not always race related. In our American history, different Caucasians from different parts of Europe, have in the past displayed hostile tribalistic attitudes and behavior, usually when they threaten jobs.

Today, the presence of multiple races with different backgrounds linked to politics has evolved into volatile situations that in some instances even has resulted in mass murders where we have Americans killing Americans. Obviously, these extreme tribal behaviors must cease, for everyone’s peace of mind, and in the best interests of our Country. How can get started to unify our Country.

In the opinion of Yale University Professor, attorney and writer**, Anna Chua, her thesis in “Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations,” is that tribalism, the emotional inclination to love and be loyal to one’ own group is universal attribute to most human beings.** (Recall that Prof Chua is the author of “Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother,” which discusses the strict child rearing practices of some Chinese American moms.)

Her opinion in Political Tribes, Professor Chua suggests that ordinary citizens must reach out and learn to understand each other. Face to face contact is needed to discuss common ground and turn away from dangerous prejudices. We need to acknowledge that we are fellow human beings who all want the same things, and reject prejudices. With more diversity than most other nations, each American needs to make a greater effort to find the common ground, or risk self- destruction.

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**SOURCEs:**

**Duty, Democracy and the Threat of Tribalism**

***Lessons in leadership from a lifetime of service, from fighting in the Marine Corps to working for President Donald Trump***

**By Jim Mattis, *WSJ*, Aug. 28, 2019**

In late November 2016, I was enjoying Thanksgiving break in my hometown on the Columbia River in Washington state when I received an unexpected call from Vice President-elect Mike Pence. Would I meet with President-elect Donald Trump to discuss the job of secretary of defense?

I had taken no part in the election campaign and had never met or spoken to Mr. Trump, so to say that I was surprised is an understatement. Further, I knew that, absent a congressional waiver, federal law prohibited a former military officer from serving as secretary of defense within seven years of departing military service. Given that no waiver had been authorized since Gen. George Marshall was made secretary in 1950, and I’d been out for only 3½ years, I doubted I was a viable candidate. Nonetheless, I felt I should go to Bedminster, N.J., for the interview.

I had time on the cross-country flight to ponder how to encapsulate my view of America’s role in the world. On my flight out of Denver, the flight attendant’s standard safety briefing caught my attention: If cabin pressure is lost, masks will fall…Put your own mask on first, then help others around you. In that moment, those familiar words seemed like a metaphor: To preserve our leadership role, we needed to get our own country’s act together first, especially if we were to help others.

The next day, I was driven to the Trump National Golf Club and, entering a side door, waited about 20 minutes before I was ushered into a modest conference room. I was introduced to the president-elect, the vice president-elect, the incoming White House chief of staff and a handful of others. We talked about the state of our military, where our views aligned and where they differed. Mr. Trump led the wide-ranging, 40-minute discussion, and the tone was amiable.

Afterward, the president-elect escorted me out to the front steps of the colonnaded clubhouse, where the press was gathered. I assumed that I would be on my way back to Stanford University’s Hoover Institution, where I’d spent the past few years doing research. I figured that my strong support of NATO and my dismissal of the use of torture on prisoners would have the president-elect looking for another candidate.

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[***https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy\_Chua***](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Chua)

***https://youtu.be/XXhq\_\_0Zr08***

Chua has written five books: two studies of international affairs, a parenting memoir, a book on ethnic-American culture and its correlation with socio-economic success within the United States, and a book about the role of tribal loyalties in American politics and its foreign policy. …

In February 2018, Amy Chua published. “Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations’, it covers the topic of how loyalty to groups often outweighs ideological considerations. She examines how a failure to realize this has played a role in both the failure of US foreign policy abroad and the rise of Donald Trump domestically. The book received overwhelming positive reviews from across the political spectrum. David Frum, writing for The New York Times, praised Chua for her willingness to approach "the no-go areas around which others usually tiptoe."[33] The Washington Post described the book as "compact, insightful, disquieting, yet ultimately hopeful,"[34] and Ezra Klein called the book "fascinating" on his podcast.[