

# DREAMING UPSIDE DOWN

I dreamed the other night that all the maps in the world had been turned upside down. Library atlases, roadmaps of Cincinnati, wall-sized maps in war rooms of great nations even antique maps inscribed "Here be Dragons" were all flipped over. What had been north was now south, east was west. Like melting vanilla ice cream, Antarctica now capped schoolroom globes.

In my dream a cloud of anxieties closed around me. The United States was now at the bottom. Would we have to stand upside down, causing the blood to rush to our heads? Would we need suction-cup shoes to stay on the planet and would autumn leaves fall up? No, I remembered, the apple bopped Newton on the head -no need to worry about these things.

Other matters troubled me more. Now that we're at the bottom, would our resources and labor be exploited by the new top? Would African, Asian and Latin American nations structure world trade to their advantage?

Would my neighbors and I have two-dollar-a-day seasonal jobs on peach and strawberry plantations? Would the women and children work from dawn to dusk to scratch survival from the earth of California and Virginia? Would the fruit we picked be shipped from New Orleans and New York to Thai and Ethiopian children who hurriedly eat it with their cereal so they won't miss the school bus?

Would our children, then, go not to school but to fetch water from two miles away and to gather wood for cooking and heating? Would a small ruling class in this country send their daughters and sons to universities in Cairo and Buenos Aires?

Would our economy be dependent upon the goodwill and whims of, say, Brazil? Would Brazil send war planes and guns to Washington D.C. to assure our willingness to pick apples, pecans and tobacco for export while our children went hungry? Would Brazil or Vietnam fight wars with our sons in our country?

Would we consider revolution?

If we did revolt, would the Chilean government plot to put their favorite U.S. general in power and uphold him with military aid?

Would we work in sweatshops to manufacture radios for the Chinese? Would our oil be shipped in tankers to Southeast Asia to run cars, air-conditioners and microwave ovens while most of our towns were without electricity?

Would religious leaders from "the top-of-the-world" call us stubborn pagans upon whom God's Judgment had fallen, causing our misery?

Would they proclaim from their opulent pulpits that if we simply turned to God, our needs would be met?

In my dream, I saw a child crying in Calcutta. Her parents wouldn't buy her any more video games until her birthday. I saw her mother drive to the supermarket and load her cart with junk food, vegetables, cheese, meat and women's magazines.

I saw a mother in Houston baking bread in an earthen oven. She had been crying because there were no more beans for her family. One of her children, a blonde boy about six years old, listlessly watched her. He slowly turned his empty, haunting gaze toward me.

At that I awoke with a gasp. I saw I was in my own bed, in my own house. Everything was okay. It was a bad dream. I drifted back to sleep, thinking, "It's all right, I'm still on top."

Thank God!

Tom Peterson, Editor, Seeds

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