Twitter Thread by Michael Beaton



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The assertion & question of unity, unifying the country, wondering what the hell the problem is, and why is all this happening is taking center stage. Dramatically.
As is the corollary question being tossed about, "How to heal the Nation?".

There is a #systems principle

> An excellent piece that raises a key question going forward:
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> Should we ever "unify" with the worst among us?
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> "Unifying with those seeking white supremacy, voter suppression, and government overthrow seems like the very definition of madness."https://t.co/UgmPQfy05F
>
> — Bob Geiger (@GeigerNews) January 16, 2021

that is a powerful insight into these, & related, questions.

"You cannot solve a problem at the same level it was created."

If the problem we were solving for were some detail, 'where to place a road; what $ to allocate to this or that project' sort of thing, then the way to

think about the problem, the impasse, is to appeal first to the functions of prior planning, history - meaning what did we do the last time, maybe pragmatics...Eventually, if the organization (whether business, community, or governance) may make a decision and that becomes the

decision. Often, typically, the decision is some sort of amalgam of the various ideas and 'camps' in the room. Rarely, but sometimes, the decision is made out of pure hierarchy..."What the boss says goes, I don't care what you think..." sort of thing. Largely that is old school

and is not the normal way of conflict resolution. Especially in the context of solving a problem.
But a decision is made, and typically people, and the various factions, come together and get to work in the context of the decision. Sometimes called 'teamwork'.

If this works, it works because there is a tacit, typically unconscious agreement to the rules and structure of the organization, and everyone moves on and gets to work on the resolution.

In other words, the problem was actually solved at the level of the commonly held values

and principles that everyone essentially shared. It made the resolution at the level of the problem at hand able to be resolved.

The problem we are having today is exactly of this type, but the levels are far deeper. Deep enough to where there are no more levels upon which

there is a general, unconscious, or better a' priori, agreement. The breaches that are becoming the concretized divisions within our country are finally being driven down into levels we do not typically "work out of".

Historians understand how these divisions are the drivers

of history. Our own American history has many confluence, including the Enlightement, Capitalism - itself a conclusion of economic reality, theory, and practical social relationship developed in the same crucible as the "New World" and its political dimensions. Science, later

the practical applications that became the Industrial Revolution... all of it... and much more, are the ingredients that made/make up what is America. Ultimately these ideas were expressed & manifested in the Constitution.

This catalog of the deep, axiomatic, paradigmatic principles that organized the basic relationships of power, the Governed to the Government, and the underlying first causes for establishing a new state... all of it, is embedded and embodied in the Constitution and relevant

documents. The ones often appealed to, but few have actually read, and fewer actually understood. But that line for another chapter....

For now it is relevant to assert the proposition that the Constitution is the bedrock of America. It is the axiomatic premise upon which

everything after is predicated upon. The laws, layers of organization and etc.
And, more darkly, who is and who is not part of this experiment... Not so much stated in terms of "why", that is the social context... but in absolute terms of "Is".

It is upon this point that the American Experiment almost did not get off the ground. The compromises required to gain the Southern states are well known.

Later, because of the unresolved, inherent contradictions, the country would be plunged into the Civil War.

As Lincoln put it: 'To see if that nation or any nation so constituted could long endure...".

That was a hard example of the principle I am attempting to articulate.

In the end there was no deeper appeal to common values. As such there was no room for compromise, an agreed

vision or desired outcome. The divide was not at the day to day level of practical life and living....but at the deeper, typically unconscious level of ones axiomatic values. Those beliefs, values, ideas and principles that do not have a deeper predicate. "It is just who I am".

At the level of tribal affiliations, it is "This is who we are.". There is no questioning why. There is no rationalization of whether it is a good or bad thing. It is the essential "isness" of ones-self. Or, the tribe, or community, state, sports team.... Or.... Country.

This is the state we are in now. The divisions in the country are not at the policy level. Not at any level that has an appeal to a deeper level for calm... for coming together and working things out.

Now, as many times before, we are busting at the seams with fundamental

contradictory notions of what is, and what is right.

I submit it is this basic fact that is the context of the manifest strife, and its seeming impossible reconciliation. Impossible, because, it is, in fact, impossible.

Not without thinking (being) different. And no one wants

to make that move. To be the first to examine their values, beliefs and motives in light of the times. Much easier to demonize the opposition, cling to the tribe that is your community, be absolutely certain of your rightness, held with unwavering righteousness.

So here we are. With the rumblings of a new 'civil war', once distant and easy to ignore, now shoved onto the main stage and impossible to ignore...
Now what?

Others have done a deep dive into some of the particulars that make up this fundamental division. What is interesting, to me, is the recursive nature of the problem.

It is said the Original Sin of America (even before its founding 1776 version) was slavery.

That fundamental fact, so complex in terms of economy (who does the work that creates the wealth), human nature (I will be comfortable at your expense. Me first), religion (We will use you for our purposes as "god" decreed it should be"), power (who has it, and who does not)

and more, all going to the singular question: Who is and who is not part of this community, state... Country.

Constitutionally this was answered with whitewashed contradictions in terms of blacks, and also the American Indian. But it was the issue of Slavery, which has

riddled our social contract from before the very beginning.

And...it is still a vital force that once again is forcing the question onto the main stage.

It is a question so deep that it has no deeper level to appeal to in order to find a common ground from which to resolve it.

A reason the opposing sides are so inscrutable to one another is, I suggest, on this point. The premises of the opposing world views - how the world is understood to be, to work, what is right and what is wrong - what once was a common value that could be appealed to to help

resolve conflict, is now the conflict. There is no deeper level of agreement to appeal to.

This, of course, is not true. But it is functionally true.

To end this endless loop into the imperative questions of who, what, why and how all this is happening. How did Jan6 happen? How did Trump happen? And "why cant you, the other side, see how wrong you are?"

These are the questions that people now want to sweep under the rug

again in the wan hope of "calming things down", under the impossible resolution of "Unity".
One side, the losers in this particular battle, want to "move on" for the sake of unity. "Don't tear the country apart by impeaching Trump". Or investigating who was involved in the Jan6

insurrection. Don't even call it that. Some of this comes with the implicit, sometimes explicit threat of "if you do they will do it again.".

So we are facing the same daunting question as we have in the past outbreaks at this level: How shall we deal with this irreconcilable division at the level of first values? The basically different a priori' premises?

A problem cannot be solved at the same level it was created.

What if the problem is created at the very first level?

It sets up the stresses that become untenable compromises, that eventually break out again in a Civil War. And again in the Jim Crow era, sanctioned & instantiated by the arbiter of our foundational Constitutional norms,

the Supreme Court. And etc throughout our history. We have been struggling with this one non stop, in varying degrees of social outrage, for ever. Making incremental gains on our way to a "More Perfect Union".

But now, those gains are again the center of the dispute of these

different foundational value systems.

How we go about finding a true common ground (which is, in fact actually there for the taking, if we could just see it) will determine just how hard these next months & years are going to be.