

THE JACK H. BROWN COLLEGE, PRESENTS:

A PRME NEWS FLASH: Vol.1(8) July-August 2022

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The 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse & The U.N.'s 17 SDGs



Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, an 1887 painting by Viktor Vasnetsov. From left to right are Death, Famine, War, and Conquest; the Lamb¹ is at the top.

PLANETARY DISASTERS: The vision of the United Nations is explicated within the 17 Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. These interventions, we are told, can destabilize the plagues that now threaten the planet. Such plagues are explicated within the well-known metaphor of the “*Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*”—portents found variously within the Book of Revelations², the Bhagavatam Puranas: 2.21:1-5; Hopi Prophecies,³ and the Old Testament of both Christian and Jewish traditions—and other texts. All portend existential disruption at the end of days because of mankind’s careless and evil deeds. One might look at the 17 UN-SDGs as warnings about such scourges for all earthly life forms.

Pratchett and Gaiman, 1990, in their comedic novel, *Good Omens*, make the Four Horsemen germane to our era: War (portrayed as a war correspondent who deliberately sows strife and dissension), Famine (a restaurant tycoon who specializes in selling rich people extremely small portions of absurdly overpriced food), Pollution (which took over after Pestilence retired after the invention of penicillin), and Death (the leader of the group). Instead of horses, the four ride on motorcycles. This is a cautionary saga for humanity. Below are some of the manifestations these metaphoric ideas, as well as the tactical interventions of the 17 SDGs, express.

¹ Savior

² Final Book of the New Testament, John 6:1-8

³ Blue Star Prophecy – Hopi & World War III, [Part I](#) – [Part II](#) – [Part III](#) –

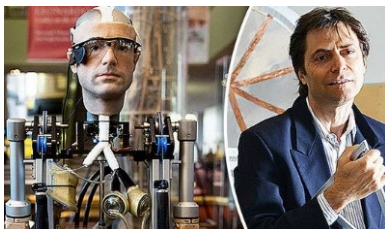
THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT, 2022: One step in the right direction was the passage of the above bill which was passed unanimously by the US Senate on 8/7/2022. Of this \$430 billion, \$370 billion goes to energy and climate programs—the largest clean energy investment by the federal government in American history. (Porterfield, C., 7/7/2022, Forbes). The bill has several approval steps before being sent to President Biden to sign. When the law becomes finalized, it remains to be seen how well corporate America will react to this important step in climate reform. Despite this, the *Four Horsemen* continue to ride closer to the planet every day, unless *all nations undertake proactive legislation of a similar nature.*

THE FOUR PESTILENCES: NUCLEAR, ECOLOGICAL, SOCIOECONOMIC, AND GEOPOLITIC HAZARDS:

J.P. Harpignies (2017), in *Bioneers*⁴ shows four main integrated points of threats that exist today--nuclear annihilation, environmental destruction, radical socioeconomic war, and geopolitical instability. Unpacked, these represent all 17 of the UN-SDGs which must be solved before the slippery slope gains momentum by 2050—when life as we know it will likely be unsustainable. (Left: Painting by Adam Weisenzapfel.)



NUCLEAR AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: With China flexing its geopolitical muscle, many see the possibility return of global nuclear warmongering. In the 20th century mankind had become wary of such powerful weapons. After catastrophic nuclear events like those of Hiroshima, Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, etc., many nations, such as Sweden⁵, halted their emerging nuclear agendas. Others like Ukraine, almost 30 years ago, abdicated their nuclear efforts⁶, others abandoned their warheads, e.g., South Africa, Belarus and Khazakstan.⁷ However with the rise of China's increased hegemonic ambitions and the perceived U.S. power decline, many Asian countries, could reconsider development of their nuclear armories. Modern science, particularly in AI disciplines, seems to provide the pathway.



In his book *War in the Age of Intelligent Machines*, (1991) Michael DeLanda explores how socioeconomic conditions influence war machines—today more than ever, aided by technological innovation. (Image: www.express.co.uk)

⁴ “The 21st Century’s Horsemen of the Apocalypse: The Big Four Deep Drivers of Destabilization”

⁵ Nations that Gave up on Nuclear Bombs (newsweek.com)

⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/05/science/ukraine-nuclear-weapons.html>

⁷ Countries Who Gave Up Nuclear Weapons - WorldAtlas

ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION: By now many more people know about the consequences of environmental damage (*ecocide*)⁸ but rather, can go beyond talk to the real work needed to deflect this in the geopolitical environment of today. So far the UN SDG agreements between nations signed in 2015 have proved to be little more than talk—with China and India continuing on as leading perpetrators of global warming.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, shows that Earth will warm between two and six degrees Celsius⁹ over this century depending on CO₂ emissions. Under such scenarios habitation for humanity will become unsustainable.

We have only to look around us to see the effects of environmental degradation—fires, droughts floods. (Below: Yosemite fire, CBS, 2022; Kentucky Floods 2022, www.nydailynews.com; and Western Drought 2022, americangenetwork.com).



SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND GEO-POLITICAL EFFECTS: The leading nations of today talk about such issues as ballot tampering, terrorism, radical political action, and development of dominant power bases, but with less emphasis on the interdependent nature of planetary resources—which are at the forefront of existential concerns.

U.N. Secretary, General, Antonio Guterrez, (right) sounded a doleful warning in 2020 about four looming threats to human progress: surging geopolitical tensions, the climate crisis, global



mistrust and the downsides of technology. He exhorted nations to take advantage of the UN's 75th

anniversary to secure a peaceful future for all people. “*These four horsemen,*” he declared, “...can jeopardize every aspect of our shared



⁸ Man-made destruction of the environment.

⁹ 2 degrees Celsius=5.6 degrees Fahrenheit; 6 degrees Celsius =42.8 degrees Fahrenheit.

future ...That is why commemorating the UN’s 75th anniversary with nice speeches won’t do. We must address these four 21st-century challenges with 21st-century solutions.” The UN chief recommended that **education systems** be redesigned to address this reality by teaching people how to learn to be ethical across the course of their entire lives. At JHBC we strive for this outcome.



“We also must usher in, order to the ‘Wild West of cyberspace,’” said Guterrez--“Terrorists, white supremacists and others who sow hate are exploiting the internet and social media. Bots are spreading disinformation, fueling polarization and undermining democracies. Next year (he meant in 2021), cybercrime will cost \$6 trillion.” (Image: U.N.com; eligiblemagazine.com; www.gettyimages.com).

THE 17 SDGS point us in a hopeful direction, yet, to be honest, it is often difficult to be sanguine. The corporate interests, the billionaires who pull their strings, and the thoughtless masses, need to come to ethical mentalities. Until this truly happens, George Orwell’s cynical dictum seems more prescient, than ever. *“The war is not meant to be won, it is meant to be continuous* (quotefancy.com).

OUR PRME PLATFORMS WORLDWIDE: Still, there is some cautious optimism that the **PRME** institutions can influence our young, new, emergent leaders to create paths for us to maintain life at a reasonable and equitable level. In this endeavor, **PRME** Chapters develop their own internal arrangements and activities while committing to:

- Providing a platform for dialogue, learning, and action on responsible management and leadership education and research
- Increasing the visibility of **PRME** and its signatories in the region
- Adapting the Six Principles into a local context
- Developing and promoting activities linked to the Six Principles and the Sustainable Development Goals

We at CSUSB-JHBC keep this in mind through our **PRME** programs, creative educational initiatives and through constant exhortations to our faculty to keep the discourse going among our students. AACSB is a signatory to the six **PRME PRINCIPLES**.

PRME Principles for Responsible
Management Education

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