

# NATIONAL REVIEW

## QUIET!



The “tolerant” assault on free speech

MARK STEYN





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When it comes to free expression, Britain, Canada, Australia, and Europe are ever less lands of laws and instead lands of men—and women, straights and gays, Muslims and infidels—whose rights before the law vary according to which combination of these various identity groups they belong to. *Mark Steyn*



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# Letters



## Lochner in Rehab

Reading Joseph Tartakovsky's review of David Bernstein's *Rehabilitating Lochner* ("Rights Revisited," July 4), I got the sense that both gentlemen embrace the proposition that the 1905 *Lochner* decision was "a defensible application of a long-standing natural-rights tradition of individual liberty" and "that the logic of 'liberty of contract' is really the logic of unenumerated rights . . . whose existence we deduce from proper understandings of liberty."

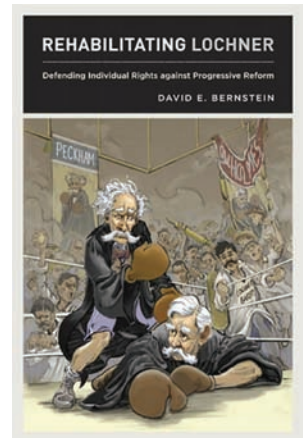
First of all, the *Lochner* decision—in which the Supreme Court struck down a state law limiting how many hours bakery employees might work, and held "liberty of contract" to be a Fourteenth Amendment right—has been justly criticized because the justices "deduced" an erroneous understanding of the word "liberty" as used in the due-process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Liberty in the due-process clause had a defined meaning for the amendment's framers. It was passed down from Locke, Blackstone, and the founders, and was correctly cited by Justice John Harlan in *Plessy v. Ferguson*:

"Personal liberty," it has been well said, "consists in the power of locomotion, of changing situation, or removing one's person to whatsoever places one's own inclination may direct without imprisonment or restraint unless by due course of law."

As to the matter of "natural rights," it is disheartening to read a favorable review in your magazine of a book that promotes that concept as an acceptable consideration for the Supreme Court. I would think that conservatives would be more likely to align themselves with an observation by Justice John McLean: "It is for the people . . . in making constitutions and in the enactment of laws, to consider the laws of nature. . . . This is a field which judges cannot explore. . . . They look to the law and to the law only."

James W. Cotter  
Via e-mail

JOSEPH TARTAKOVSKY REPLIES: I thank Mr. Cotter for his letter, but I would observe, first, that Justice Harlan, cited by Mr. Cotter for his "correct" understanding of the word "liberty," wrote a dissent in *Lochner* in which he agreed that "liberty of contract" existed—he just felt it hadn't been violated in this particular case. Second, the sentence quoted from Harlan's *Plessy* opinion is really a quote from William Blackstone, who, in his next sentence, told us that "personal liberty" was a "right strictly natural." Natural law, contrary to Mr. Cotter's suggestion, does not merely shift control from the legislature to the courts—that's a positivism of a different kind. Rather, it requires that judges enforce the will of the people, as expressed in the Constitution, always. But when difficult questions arise—what, *concretely*, does that immortal document say about police searches through walls using heat-imaging technology?—natural law is a wise and often unavoidable way to discern their intent.





# Start Your Engines

## American Entrepreneur Sells off Silver Fortune

I have a friend in the Midwest who lives life in the fast lane. Every time I talk to him he tells me of some new adventure. He's got great taste to boot. He has a particular passion for fast cars... really fast cars. More often than not he'll call me while he rockets toward his ranch in his newest supercar. When he's not driving himself, he's checking in on the drivers from the Indy race team he used to own. I knew about his need for speed, but when he told me about his spectacular vintage Morgan Dollar collection, I was dumbfounded.

### A 'few bags' become *thirty*!

To call my friend a coin collector is an understatement. When he said he had a few 1000-coin bags of silver coins I was interested. When those silver coins turned out to be New Orleans Mint Morgan Silver Dollars from the 1880s I was intrigued. And when those few bags turned out to be thirty, I was astounded. My buddy wasn't sitting on a collection, he had a hoard!

For a man who loves only the best things in life, I guess I shouldn't have been so surprised.

### One of the largest Silver Dollar hoards in decades

For serious numismatists, hoards can come around once in a lifetime. Silver hoards are enormous collections of coins that have been stored away, often secretly, for safe-keeping. With silver prices steadily rising over the past few years, many silver hoards have been sold off.

Most assumed that hoards of Morgan Silver Dollars were a thing of the past... until now.

Morgan Dollars are some of the most coveted coins on the market today. And with the hot silver market, most dealers cannot keep Morgan Dollars around for long. Due to this heavy demand, especially for the finest quality pieces, the price of many Morgan dollars has gone up dramatically in the last six months alone. But because



of the sheer scale of this massive hoard, we have been able to keep the price at a pre-frenzy level.

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My fast-lane friend worked for 25 years to amass this huge collection. He scoured the country looking for the finest Morgan Silver Dollars. He did that work for you—and this hidden silver treasure is now within your reach. These coins are over 100 years old—but they can now be yours for a little as \$85!

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# The Week

■ Who would have guessed that Moammar Qaddafi would outlive America's AAA rating?

■ Wisconsin Democrats have gone to extraordinary lengths ever since Republicans introduced legislation to scale back the collective-bargaining privileges of the state's public-sector unions. Each time their unprecedented efforts have been thwarted. First Democratic state senators left the state to deny a quorum, until Republicans found a procedural remedy for the problem. Then Democrats mounted a campaign to deny reelection to a justice on the state supreme court in the hope of getting a liberal majority that would strike down the new law—only to see the justice narrowly win. Now six recall elections against Republican state senators have concluded. The Democrats needed to gain three seats to take control of the body, but won only two. The Democrats' next move is likely to be to try to recall the governor, but they would be unwise to extrapolate too far from their two victories: One of the defeated Republicans had left his wife for a younger woman, and Democrats made the most of it. It has been a long and bitter fight, but so far Republicans have successfully vindicated an important principle: that the government's workforce should not also be its primary constituency.

■ The Tea Party has become, in the rhetoric of its critics, an agent of terrorism. "Never negotiate with terrorists," wrote *New York Times* columnist Joe Nocera after the budget deal, in a piece titled "Tea Party's War on America." "We have negotiated with terrorists," said Rep. Mike Doyle (D., Pa.) in a meeting of the House Democratic Caucus. "They have acted like terrorists," Vice President Biden agreed. Nocera, to his credit, recognized that he had overstepped and apologized in a subsequent column. Biden, recognizing that he could be criticized for overstepping, denied using "the terrorism word," compounding shoddiness with cowardice. Politics is not, and never has been, for the faint of heart. But ten years ago, almost 3,000 Americans experienced actual terrorism at the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon and on Flight 93. Could the vice president and Representative Doyle honor the commemoration, in a few weeks, by keeping their mouths shut?

■ Texas governor Rick Perry, a Republican, led a prayer rally in Houston, formally ecumenical, in fact saturated with evangelical piety. He prayed for President Obama ("Impart Your wisdom upon him . . . guard his family"); for the "loved ones" and "warrior brothers" of special forces killed in Afghanistan; for all who have lost "jobs," "homes," or "hope." Pundits and political scientists can debate whether presidents should be more like Thomas Jefferson writing the Danbury Baptists, or Franklin Roosevelt singing "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" on the deck of HMS *Prince of Wales* alongside Winston Churchill. Perry's conspicuous convocation reminds us that

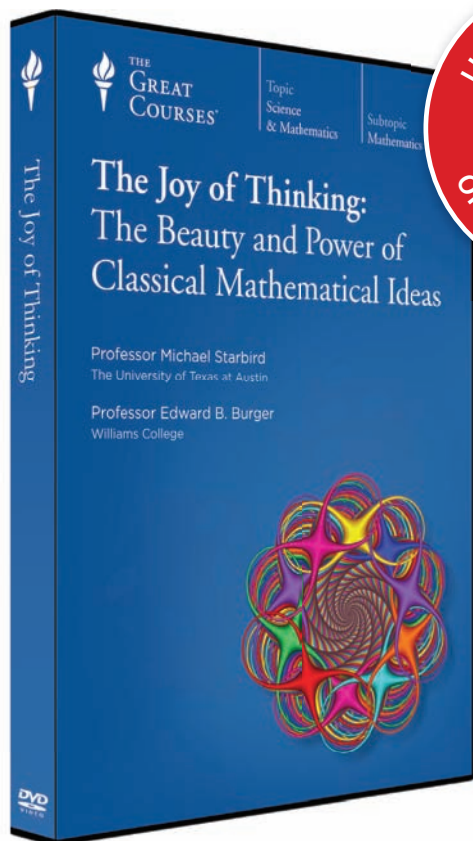


his great strength as a not-quite-candidate, newness, is also a potential weakness. He is a blank slate both for Republican dreams and for the scribbles of opponents, right and left, as the details of his life and personality become nationally known. Perry's acquaintance curve will be short, steep—and not entirely under his control.

■ Unhappy days are here again as Democrats see the second coming of FDR become the reincarnation of Jimmy Carter. The budget deal pushed left-wing unhappiness with Barack Obama up a notch. Sen. Bernie Sanders, the Vermont socialist, prescribed a structural remedy. "One of the reasons the president has been able to move so far [*sic*] to the right," said Sanders on a radio talk show, "is that there is no primary opposition to him." Sanders called for a candidate who could show "what is a progressive agenda, as opposed to what Obama is doing." The deeper fear, however, is not that Obama is trapped in a bad political dynamic, but that he is a bad leader: weak, befuddled, unforceful. Maybe it was a bad idea to tap a tyro U.S. senator, a "present"-voting state senator, and a community organizer for the toughest executive job in the world.

■ A Chinook helicopter was shot down in Wardak Province in eastern Afghanistan, killing 30 special-forces members,





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including 22 Navy SEALs belonging to the same unit (though not the same team) that killed Osama bin Laden. Irony is the inevitable accompaniment to any long war. Eight hundred eighty sailors died when the USS *Indianapolis* was torpedoed in July 1945 between Guam and the Philippines. The ship had just delivered materials for “Little Boy,” the atom bomb destined for Hiroshima. Ironists only comment on wars, they do not win them. Our blows then were harder than the enemy’s, just as our blows are now. “It’s a combat incident,” said a Pentagon spokesman of the Chinook crash. “We take casualties. . . . We still have the Taliban on the run.”

■ For months now, journalists and legislators have been trying to pry information from the government about Operation Fast and Furious, the misguided sting operation in which agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives deliberately allowed gun traffickers to purchase weapons at Arizona gun shops and sell them to Mexican cartels. One important question: Was this bizarre plan hatched among a few ATF officials, or was knowledge of it widespread? Recent congressional testimony by William Newell, a former ATF special agent who was in charge of the Phoenix area, revealed that a raft of other federal agencies—the Department of Homeland Security, the Internal Revenue Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement—were also involved. Add the White House to that list: Newell informed Obama’s national-security director for North America, Kevin O’Reilly, about the operation in an e-mail that began, “You didn’t get this from me.” Instead of letting details leak out one at a time, the executive branch should let them out fast. We’ll supply the fury.

■ About a year from now, insurance plans will be required to provide birth control—including the morning-after pill “ella,” which seems to work as an abortifacient in some cases—free of charge. This is thanks to new rules from the Department of Health and Human Services, which is acting under the blank-check authorization of Obamacare. Of course, insurance companies don’t provide anything for free; any time they cover a new service or eliminate co-pays, they charge higher premiums to make up the lost revenue. So the department is forcing people who do not use birth control to subsidize it, through higher premiums, for people who do. The complications do not end there: It is unclear whether the mandate will override state laws that require parental consent for minors who want birth control, and while the policy does allow for some religious exemptions, many religious health-care providers will not qualify for them. Meanwhile, it is hard to see what this measure is supposed to accomplish; there is no evidence that making birth control even less expensive than it is now will decrease unwanted pregnancies or abortion rates. This is yet more evidence that Obamacare represents a takeover of Americans’ health-care decisions, and deserves to be repealed.

EDITOR’S NOTE: The next issue of NATIONAL REVIEW will appear in three weeks.

■ The No Child Left Behind education reform enacted under President Bush requires that all students be judged proficient in reading and math by 2014, but leaves it to each state to define proficiency. The perversities of the law are many. States are encouraged to set the bar for proficiency low. They are discouraged from devoting time and money to making proficient students exceptional, or bringing subpar students closer to proficiency. The Obama administration has sought to make changes that address some of these concerns, but Congress has not acted (including when Democrats had full control of it). So Education Secretary Arne Duncan is handing out waivers: If states adopt education reforms to the administration’s liking they can get out of the act’s requirements. Perhaps this is the correct solution, although it gives the executive branch of the federal government rather a lot of power over schools. But it does not appear to be a solution that the law permits: The act does not confer such broad discretion on the secretary. If they still teach civics, perhaps Secretary Duncan should be required to prove his proficiency?

■ London is burning, Philadelphia has imposed a curfew to contain racially charged “flash mob” rampages, and the Wisconsin State Fair, of all places, was the scene of a full-scale race riot. Transcripts of 9-1-1 calls from Wisconsin contain these observations: “There’s a white guy getting beaten up by about 100 black people”; “It’s like a fucking riot out there, they’re jumping on our cars and everything”; “My mom just got attacked by a black mob. . . . She’s bleeding a lot.” The Milwaukee police chief conceded that “some people were singled out for violence because of their race.” The Milwaukee NAACP put out a perfunctory statement calling for the redress of the riot’s “root causes,” in the words of Reuters, but the organization’s main concern at present is undermining a new law designed to prevent voter fraud. Some early media reports dutifully obscured the racial angle of the story, and liberal commentators strayed predictably far from reality: A Milwaukee columnist called for more funding for programs that “offer an alternative for those who need outlets for their rage and frustration.” The president of the local Urban League fretted that “we cannot allow this to divide our community along racial lines.” Attitudes like these do not cause criminality, but they are the root cause of the authorities’ helplessness in response to it.

■ “Ignorance is behind the criticism of Sohail Mohammed,” says New Jersey governor Chris Christie, defending one of his judicial picks. “I’m tired of dealing with the crazies.” But Mohammed has served on the board of the American Muslim Union, which has, as NR’s Andrew McCarthy points out on our website, “a checkered past of rationalizing jihadist attacks and supporting jihadists.” Mohammed has been a vocal defender of the Holy Land Foundation and Sami Al-Arian, both of which were found in court



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to be involved in terrorism. The truly dangerous ignorance, in other words, is behind this appointment, and it belongs to Governor Christie.

■ London's Tottenham neighborhood erupted into riots in early August when locals responded with outrage after the police shot dead local man Mark Duggan. The disorder soon spread to other parts of the city, with shops being looted, buildings being set alight, and one man being murdered.

Although there appeared to be some genuine dismay at the shooting, the scale of the disruption suggests that the event was seized upon by anarchists and employed as a neat excuse for a general revolt. Home Secretary Theresa May did little to inspire confidence when she refused to countenance using water cannons to disperse the mob, instead assuring reporters that she had a "different attitude to the culture of policing," and in Britain "the way we police . . . is through consent of communities." When the will of portions of those communi-

## Competing for Last Place

"Is Paris Burning?" No, not yet. That smell (at least as of this writing) is London aflame (you can tell from the peatier notes to the smoke). Greece has been a barely contained conflagration for about a year now. Italy appears to be a tinderbox. Japan is still reeling from the tsunami earlier this year. Oh, and China? Well, China's looking a bit iffy too. A recent high-speed-rail crash so vexed the leadership that it ordered the media to find only "uplifting" stories in the wreckage. Meanwhile, their economy is starting to slow, inflation is starting to rise.

This should all be awesome news for America, right? I mean, if the plan is to "win the future" by being more competitive than China and Europe, then we should cheer every time one of our trading partners takes it in the neck, right?

Wrong.

The idea that "competitiveness" is vital to our economic health is bunk. If China spiraled out of control tomorrow with riots and civil war, that would be very bad for China's economy, hence good for our "competitiveness," but it would also be very bad for our economy (it could be in our long-term strategic interest, of course, but in the short term it would be awful).

If competitiveness with our trading partners is so zero-sum, why isn't Obama citing the Japanese earthquake as a boon to our economy? Because it wasn't one. That's why he always mentions the disruption to the supply chain as one of the causes of the downturn. Of course, the downturn has more to do with other things, including his craptacular economic policies. But he is not wrong about Japan.

One hates to admit it, but one of the best things ever written on this point was an essay called "Competitiveness: A Dangerous Obsession," by *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman. He produced it for *Foreign Affairs* in 1994, back when he was an interesting writer

endowed with an abiding hatred of the Clinton administration. Krugman notes that the appeal of competitiveness lies in its power as a buzzword, not in its seriousness as an economic concept. Business audiences love to hear that running a country is like running a big corporation fighting for market share (it's not). And Americans like the idea of "beating" other countries at this or that.

But, most of all, liberal politicians love the concept of competitiveness because it allows them not only to avoid tough-and-dreary economic decisions, but to pick exciting new "investments" that sound bold and visionary, making themselves seem cool and government vital. We will beat the Chinese by having faster trains that waste money at three times the rate of conventional trains! We will crush the Europeans with our windmills. Sure, they may be expensive, but they're really inefficient too!



Competitiveness empowers supposed internationalists with the language of nationalism so they can get away with industrial policy. But being more competitive doesn't necessarily make an economy richer. Being more productive does. Other than doing such relatively boring things as improving education (which is so not the same thing as spending more on education), government's role in boosting productivity is modest at best. It can get out of the way, of course. If we opened up our domestic energy resources, we might become less competitive in terms of solar-panel production, but we would get richer.

I'm not sure whether President Obama believes the Tom Friedmansque competitiveness claptrap he spouts at every stump speech or simply sees it as useful spin for selling statism. I suspect it's a little of both. Regardless, as the world burns around us, one thing is clear: Nobody's winning the future right now.

—JONAH GOLDBERG



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*Neutronic Ear is the easy, virtually invisible and affordable way to turn up the sound on the world around you.*

"I'm 96 years old, and I think Neutronic Ear is a great product. I had a digital hearing aid that cost over \$2000, but I lost it in the supermarket. There's nothing wrong with my hearing, I can hear sounds just fine, like a car door shutting or a plane going overhead, but when someone talks to me, I can't understand the words. My daughter has what I call a "Lauren Bacall" voice—very low, and I just can't hear her. It's embarrassing to have to constantly say "Excuse me" and although people say they don't mind repeating themselves, I think they are only saying that because I'm 96! With Neutronic Ear I can hear and understand her. If I need to, I can turn up the volume. I'm originally from Missouri, and Neutronic Ear has sure "Shown Me" that it works.

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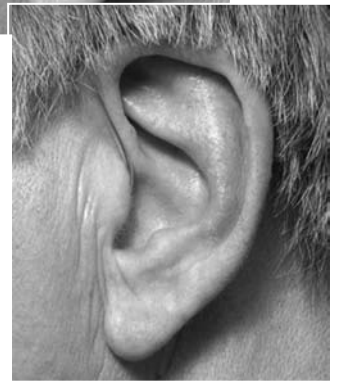
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PSAPs, everyone was required to see the doctor, have hearing tests, have fitting appointments (numerous visits) and then pay for the instruments without any insurance coverage. These devices can cost up to \$5000 each! The high cost and inconvenience drove an innovative scientist to develop the Neutronic Ear PSAP.

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ties is to set fire to their buildings, perhaps another strategy is needed.

■ Some 2,000 people have been shot dead so far in the streets of Syria, and another 12,000 or so have disappeared. Some tens of thousands have fled into neighboring Lebanon and Turkey and some even to Iraq. Bashar Assad is evidently stopping at nothing in order to save his despotic rule. He is a member of the Alawis (a minority Shiite sect), and the victims of his regime are the majority Sunnis, who constitute about three-quarters of the population. Alawi units have brought in tanks and heavy artillery to shell the two Sunni cities of Hama and Deir al-Zour, and to cut off water and power. With one side of his mouth Assad promises reform, and with the other he arrests potential reformers like Walid al-Bunni and his sons. Assad and the Alawis are making sure that the Sunnis will do everything possible to have an equally brutal sectarian revenge. As murderous folly spreads, the world's response is pitiful. The United Nations cannot even pass a resolution to condemn Assad. Marvelously true to stereotype, a Russian official said, "We are not categorically against everything," and the egregious Navi Pillay, supposedly commissioner for human rights, could come up only with the customary weasel words "gravely concerned." Officials say there is little Washington can do, and President Obama has conceded impotence in the inapposite remark that Assad is on "the wrong side of history." King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, the premier Sunni country, has at least withdrawn his ambassador to Syria and told Assad to "stop the killing machine." The Syrian tragedy has a long and dangerous course to run.



■ The slow-motion conversion of Turkey into an Islamist state is the work of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, its prime minister. The constitution charged the army with defending secular and democratic values, and Erdogan has devised a way around that obstacle. The armed forces are accused of complicated conspiracies involving Greeks, Christians, Kurds, anyone and everyone, to overthrow the government.

Some 250 senior officers, including 40 generals, are under arrest. So far, not one has been convicted in a court. The implicit trial of strength has come to a head. Warrants are out for more arrests. Late at night and all of a sudden, Gen. Isik Kosaner, head of the Turkish armed forces, and three other generals in charge of the army, navy, and air force, resigned. The purging of so many colleagues, they said, made their task impossible. In all likelihood, they expected to be arrested themselves. Perhaps they intended to turn the fantasy of a coup into a reality. Asli Aydintasbas, a prominent columnist, has no hesitation saying that this is the moment when "the first Turkish republic ends and the second republic begins." Erdogan has announced his intention to change the constitution, and having broken the armed forces he can draft it to suit himself and give the weight he wants to Islam.

■ Back at the beginning of the year, few people expected that popular demonstrations would force Hosni Mubarak to resign the presidency of Egypt, and even fewer people expected he would ever be brought to trial for supposed misdeeds during his 30 years as head of state. Eighty-three now, he is reported to be mortally ill, and besides, it hurts the national sense of honor that the former and once respected president should be publicly humbled. But humbled he most certainly was, dressed in prisoner's uniform, brought to a Cairo courtroom on a hospital gurney, and placed within a smallish metal cage—which may be standard procedure, but is mightily symbolic all the same. With some anger he refuted the accusation of corruption and complicity in the killing of demonstrators during the uprising leading to his downfall. The death penalty is theoretically possible. Saddam Hussein was executed, but that was thanks to the Americans. Half-thrilled and half-shocked, Arabs everywhere are saying they have never seen any attempt like this trial to reach justice in any of their countries. And they are right.

■ "China is doing moon shots," columnist Tom Friedman gushed in the *New York Times* last year. One such "shot" was that country's "web of high-speed trains connecting major cities." Today, it looks like China has missed its target. On July 23, two high-speed trains collided in Shuangyu when a lightning strike caused a malfunction, killing 40 people. Yet this is only the latest scandal for Friedman's, er, China's pet project. Earlier this year, rail minister Liu Zhijun was removed after taking bribes, and the National Audit Office discovered that 187 million yuan had been embezzled from the Beijing-Shanghai bullet-train line. China's high-speed-rail network isn't the technocratic triumph Friedman imagines. It is a tangled mess of bureaucratic corruption.

■ An election is upcoming in the African nation of Zambia, and the nation's constitution requires both of a candidate's parents to be Zambian-born. This clause of the constitution was inserted in 1996 by the then-ascendant enemies of Kenneth Kaunda, who had been the nation's first president, but whose parents came from Malawi. The clause is still in play, though, and opponents of current president Rupiah Banda claim it disqualifies him because his father, like Kaunda's, was Malawian. The nation's highest court has now dismissed the case. Banda will run, and likely get another five years as president. The disputes seem a bit academic, since these nations did not exist when the principals were born: Zambia was Northern Rhodesia and Malawi was Nyasaland, both British colonies. We await a deep analysis from the media on the motives of these Zambian birthers.

■ The late paleoconservative Sam Francis coined the expression "anarcho-tyranny" to describe that state of society in which, as he put it, "we refuse to control real criminals (that's the anarchy) so we control the innocent (that's the tyranny)." There could hardly be a better







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illustration of the phenomenon than the current rash of police action against kids' lemonade stands. Authorities in Bethesda, Md., did not stop at merely closing down a stand, but also hit the offenders' parents with a \$500 fine (which was later waived after public protest). There is life in American democracy yet, though: In reaction against these outrages, the website [www.LemonadeFreedom.com](http://www.LemonadeFreedom.com) has been established. It offers an action guide for the harassed, is diligently logging lemonade-stand shutdowns nationwide, and has declared August 20 Lemonade Freedom Day. That's Americans for you: When life hands us anarcho-tyranny, we make lemonade.



■ The Unemployed Philosophers Guild, a firm based in Brooklyn, has for some time been selling novelty breath-mint candies with punning names: Retire Mints for oldsters, Atone Mints for guilty sinners, Anti-Establish Mints for radicals, and so on. A co-owner of the firm, contacted by the *Chicago Tribune*, says they

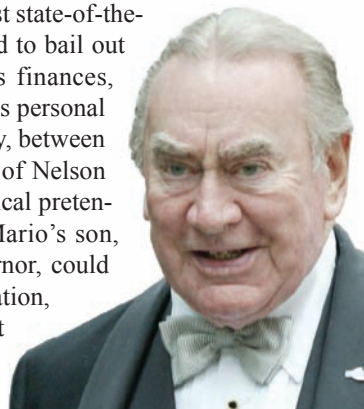
“lean[] liberal”; and indeed, their website also features Sarah’s (guess who) Embarrass Mints. They went too far, however, with a line of Disappoint Mints. The box carries a picture of President Obama and the question: “This is change?” Seeing the Disappoint Mints on sale at a University of Tennessee bookstore, state representative Joe Armstrong (D.) took exception and forced the university to withdraw them. The story, when it came out, proved irresistible to punsters. They called for a new line of First Amend Mints with Representative Armstrong’s picture on the can, and for comments from U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint of nearby South Carolina. We decline to join in the low punning, noting only that if Armstrong’s actions are indicative, perhaps the Democratic party is in the market for some Sour Patch Kids.

■ Many of the leftist fulminations over the Budget Control Act of 2011, a.k.a. the debt deal, were colorfully vituperative. Some others were just strange. Emanuel Cleaver, a Democratic congressman from Missouri, called the deal “a sugar-coated Satan sandwich.” What did he mean? How do you get the Prince of Darkness into a sandwich? One of those “urban dictionary” websites suggested merely “a sandwich made by Satan,” though it offered as an alternative something involving deviled eggs and Hellmann’s mayonnaise. A Southern friend advises us, however, that in expressions like this, “Satan” is the common regional euphemism for a different filling whose name also begins with “s.” We make no judgment, but note with interest that a Thai restaurateur in Palm Beach has developed a Satan Sandwich recipe. “He stuffed it with B.S.—beef short ribs, that is,” reports the *Palm Beach Post*. The chef elaborates: “You got a lot of B.S. in that compromise.”

■ The holy grail of automotive technology is the self-driving car. Big automakers are known to be experimenting with computer-controlled vehicles. Software firms too: The ubiquitous Google Inc. has been test-driving robotic cars on the roads of California for some time. The company recently boasted that its vehicles had logged 160,000 miles without incident. Naturally everyone who follows these matters has been waiting for an incident. One duly took place near Google’s Mountain View, Calif., headquarters on August 6 when a computerized Google Prius struck another, non-Google Prius, triggering a chain collision that damaged four cars. Fortunately no one was hurt. Before representatives of the anti-robot underground could begin to crow, however, Google released a statement saying that the offending vehicle had been under manual control at the time. Human error, then. At least that resolves the cop’s dilemma of what to write on the accident report in the box for “driver.”

■ After ascending to the mayoralty of Sunland Park, N.M., in 2008, Martin Resendiz pledged to “create a better tomorrow” that would be “respectful and compassionate as well as fiscally well managed.” The border town of 14,000 is currently being sued by a California architecture firm that claims it is owed \$1 million for work on a series of projects commissioned by the mayor. But Resendiz has a defense: “The day I signed [the contracts], I had way too much to drink. It was after 5 P.M. . . . and I didn’t know what I was signing,” he stated in a 2010 deposition. He further clarified: “Again, this was after two or three hours of us drinking . . . not exactly the best time to read over legal documents.” The deposition transcript was released last month after city attorney Frank Coppler publicly accused the mayor of negotiating the deal while inebriated. Resendiz has since issued a statement expressing his regret over Coppler’s “lack of professionalism.”

■ Hugh Carey had the makings of a fungible politician: a last-century Irish Catholic Democrat, devoted to his 13 children, and to mainstream liberal politics. From 1975 to 1982, however, he was a unique thing—a governor of New York who cut spending and taxes and left the budget smaller, in real terms, than he found it. Over the last 65 years, no predecessor or successor has matched his record. His opportunity was a crisis: the looming bankruptcy of New York City as he entered office. “The days of wine and roses are over,” he said in his first state-of-the-state address, and managed to bail out the city while keeping its finances, and the state’s, in order. His personal style was agreeably frumpy, between the billionaire pretensions of Nelson Rockefeller and the rhetorical pretensions of Mario Cuomo. Mario’s son, Andrew, the current governor, could look a lot further for inspiration, and do a lot worse. Dead at 92. R.I.P.





## A Downgraded President

**B**ARACK OBAMA promised to make history, and he has: The United States has lost its AAA credit rating, which it had enjoyed for as long as there have been national credit ratings. The Obama administration, dismayed but not surprised by the development, has made rhetorical war on Standard & Poor's, the first of the major rating agencies to downgrade the U.S., and it has extended its campaign of ritual denunciation to the conservative populists who have been demanding reductions in the budget deficit, with Democrats calling this the "tea-party downgrade."

Democrats' rhetorical assault on S&P and the Tea Party also puts them at war with the facts, which are these: The credit-rating agencies suggested that the United States needed to lop about \$4 trillion off of future deficits in order to maintain the AAA rating, but the original debt-ceiling deal put forward by the Obama administration contained not one penny in debt reduction, leaving us far short of the savings that the credit-rating agencies suggested would constitute a "credible" step toward avoiding a downgrade. This nothing-down program was the so-called clean debt-ceiling bill—the one that contained not a farthing of debt reduction. Even congressional Democrats could not endorse irresponsibility on that scale, and 82 of them joined every Republican in the House in voting against it, and for good reason: Doing nothing at all is hardly a "credible" program. To the extent that there was one dollar in debt reduction in the final deal, it is because Republicans, including the Tea Party Caucus, insisted that it be so.

The Democrats have suggested that Republicans' refusal to accede to tax hikes is the main reason Standard & Poor's felt it necessary to issue a downgrade. In their assessment of Standard & Poor's reasoning, the Democrats are acutely at odds with Standard & Poor's: "Standard & Poor's takes no position on the mix of spending and revenue measures that Congress and the Administration might conclude is appropriate for putting the U.S.'s finances on a sustainable footing," the agency wrote in its report. But S&P, along with the other credit-rating agencies, has long taken a position on one aspect of our fiscal troubles: entitlement reform. From S&P again: "The plan envisions only minor policy changes on Medicare and little change in other entitlements, the containment of which we and most other independent observers regard as key to long-term fiscal sustainability."

As anybody who has looked at our long-term deficit projections knows, entitlement spending is the major driver of our future deficits. With unfunded liabilities for Social Security and Medicare already running into trillions of dollars—many multiples of our GDP—it is implausible that taxes will be raised sufficiently to meet those obligations. Sustaining present spending levels over coming decades while maintaining current levels of debt would mean nearly doubling every federal tax: income, payroll, inheritance, excises, etc. To repeat: That's to maintain current debt levels, not to reduce them. Even if the political will existed to inflict such tax increases on the American people, doing so would prove economically ruinous. Entitlement reform, then—not taxes, not President Obama's fictitious "balanced approach"—is rightly understood, as S&P argues, as the



"key to long-term fiscal sustainability." Tea-party leaders, far from being a barrier to entitlement reform, have demanded it. Democrats have obstructed it. And that is why we have been downgraded.

### THE BUDGET

## Dealing with Debt

**T**HE deal to raise the debt ceiling had some merit: It included some cuts to domestic spending, it did not raise taxes, and it avoided the risk of disruption to the operations of the federal government and the credit markets. While it did not incorporate the major reforms to the welfare state we will need to make to safeguard the nation's fiscal and economic future, nobody could reasonably have expected President Obama and a Democratic Senate to accede to those reforms.

The worst feature of the deal is its establishment of a "supercommittee" that is to identify further measures to reduce the deficit; if it does not identify sufficient savings, or Congress fails to enact them, planned spending on defense and domestic discretionary programs will have to be reduced starting in 2013. These automatic cuts have been structured so that both parties have an incentive to see the supercommittee succeed. They have not been structured with any particular national-security strategy in mind.

The defense cuts would total at least \$500 billion over the next ten years. It may be possible in theory to extract those savings without harming our military readiness. But the politically easiest course will be to take the money out of procurement and training. The deal is, in short, irresponsible. New defense secretary Leon Panetta has said as much.

Liberals want to force conservatives to choose between a strong defense and low taxes. But there is no mathematical need to do so: Restrain entitlement spending, and we can have both. Nor is there any political need for defense hawks and anti-tax activists to turn on each other, a fight liberals dearly hope this deal will occasion. Conservatives on the committee can foil this plot by holding the line on taxes while proposing entitlement reforms that save money over the next ten years. As we have previously editorialized, the Coburn-Lieberman legislation to trim Medicare—by raising eligibility ages, increasing premiums, and

J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

so on—is, though imperfect, the place to start seeking near-term entitlement savings. If Democrats balk at these reforms, they will have to accept much lower domestic discretionary spending than they otherwise would have.

Speaker John Boehner and Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell should make appointments to the committee that can be expected to follow this strategy. If it does not work, Republicans—and defense-minded Democrats—will simply have to restore funding for the military, which will require getting legislation through both chambers of Congress and the White House. Which in turn suggests that the defense budget should be an issue in the 2012 elections, with Republicans running as the party that can be trusted to ensure that any defense cuts will be carefully considered so as to leave our security undiminished.

Where defense savings can responsibly be made, they should be. But we should not set arbitrary targets to spare the welfare state, let alone to initiate a game of chicken. National defense is the first responsibility of the federal government, which means it is the first responsibility of those who hold national office, and those who seek it.

#### THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

## The Euro in Retrospect

**A**BOUT twelve years ago, at an American Enterprise Institute conference in Boulder, Colo., a brilliant forecast about the future of the euro (then merely the embryo of a European single currency) was made in the form of a joke. Helmut Schmidt was urging the conference to move on from the tedious annual clash between economists who argued that a single European currency could not succeed and European leaders who insisted that it was certain to be introduced. Someone interjected (Antonio Martino, the Italian economist and politician, if memory serves): “And what happens if they are both right?”

They were both right. The euro was introduced in January 2002, and it is manifestly not working almost a decade later.

The essential problem is that—as economists from Martino to British finance minister Norman Lamont saw and argued—the 17 countries that constitute the eurozone are too diverse to be a workable currency area, let alone an optimal one. A single currency means a single interest rate, whereas the 17 national economies constituting the eurozone require several different rates.

That simple discontinuity has many damaging effects. In the real economy it means that a monetary policy set to restrain inflationary economies will impose unemployment on stagnant ones, and vice versa—and lower the general economic performance of the entire zone in both cases. In the financial markets it means that governments with poor credit histories can borrow as readily as governments with strong ones—for quite a long time. Even if investors are skeptical of their promises, they will calculate that other EU governments are likely to bail them out. (Not wrongly.) And that expectation provides a further incentive for overspending and general financial recklessness.

All this, of course, is exactly what has happened. Economies in the eurozone have had a lower average rate of economic growth than European economies outside it in the last decade. The overspending and excess borrowing of countries such as

Greece and Portugal have produced mayhem in the bond and currency markets. This market reaction is now undermining the Italian and Spanish economies and threatening the breakup of the euro itself. That in turn promises financial turmoil and economic stagnation to nations in and out of the single currency.

These malign consequences may be less surprising once we realize that the euro is less an economic project than a political one. It was designed as one further and vital step towards the creation of a single European political entity. If it created an economic crisis on the way, that was simply collateral damage. Some euro-enthusiasts, realizing that a single currency needed a single fiscal policy to work, even welcomed such a crisis as a way of getting reluctant Europeans to accept the kind of centralized economic government in Brussels (i.e., political integration) they would otherwise resist. The crisis engulfing us has surely been more dangerous than they calculated. Yet they still hope that a euro-government, issuing its own euro-bonds and harmonizing common European tax and spending levels, will emerge from it before the voters realize what has happened.

If that were to happen—which, fortunately, is unlikely—it would be a direct denial of democracy rather than merely a “democratic deficit.” It would amount to a rejection of the principle of “no taxation without representation.” *And it still wouldn't work.* What would Brussels do when the Greeks refused to respect the spending levels decided by “Europe”? Or the Germans the taxation levels? What common memories could Eurocrats call upon to justify joint sacrifices? What police or tax inspectors could they order to enforce their edicts? Eventually the euro—and perhaps the entire project of European integration—would collapse in the messiest possible way.

Ordinary Europeans have already suffered needlessly from a currency policy that subordinates their economic welfare and democratic rights to the great-power fantasies of their political elites. The time has come to dismantle the euro before it collapses—and crushes more than a dream of Europe in its ruin.





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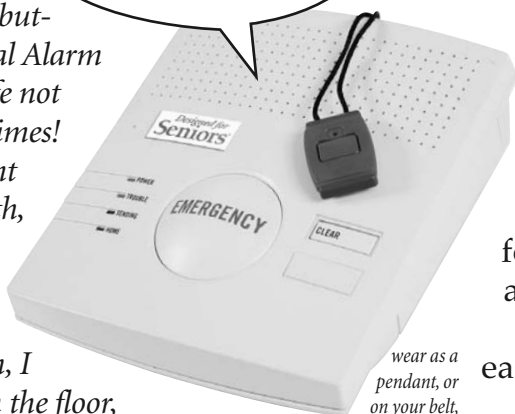
*The first incident was on May 15th, when I had a stroke. The second incident*

*was on Oct 15th, I found myself on the floor, with a knot on my head and a*

*hole in the wall. The third incident was on Oct 23rd, I felt strange sitting in the chair. I could not move my right arm or leg. I learned that the hole in my heart (from birth), was forcing the high blood pressure through the hole and right up to my brain, this was the reasons for all three strokes. I can walk and talk with the exception of a weak right arm. If it was not for the Medical Alarm, who knows what the outcome could’ve been.”*

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# A Tea-Infused Party

*Of conservative populism, past and future*

BY RAMESH PONNURU

**T**wo years ago, the Tea Party was a collection of racists in the liberal mind. Nowadays the epithet of choice, blessed by the vice president, seems to be “terrorist.” This is not progress: While we shun racists, we kill terrorists. But this evolution in perception is probably a testament to the tea parties’ political progress. Nobody these days is afraid of a bunch of racists.

It is not just political invective that clouds our understanding of the tea parties. They have been misunderstood not only by their foes, but by their friends and even their members. Liberals have sometimes portrayed them as the creation of Koch Industries, and conservatives have responded by noting that they are a decentralized, grassroots movement. Yet some of these same conservatives have not hesitated to announce what “the Tea Party” believes. The mainstream media are generally not nuanced observers of right-of-center political phenomena, but can perhaps be excused in this instance by the

confusing self-presentation of their subjects.

Whatever the reasons, misleading tropes have dominated coverage of the tea parties. Among them: They are unsophisticated newcomers to politics. They detest compromise. They hate the recent debt-limit deal, and feel betrayed by Republicans who supported it. They do not care about social issues. They are ready to defeat any incumbent Republican politician who refuses to toe their line. This is not just the impression of the tea parties one would get from the press. It is also the impression one would get from reading the press releases of the organizations most identified with them.

But it requires only a look at the recent congressional action on the debt limit to reveal the falsity of the impression. In the final days of the standoff, Speaker John Boehner tried to get House Republicans to vote for legislation to increase the debt limit three times. First, he advanced a measure to cut spending while raising the

limit. When he found that he did not have enough votes, he added to the measure a provision stating that Congress would have to approve a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution for the debt limit to increase. A few days later, he supported a bipartisan agreement to raise the debt limit, make spending cuts, and establish a “supercommittee” to identify further cuts.

Most House Republicans backed him all three times. That includes most freshman Republicans, who are usually lumped into the tea-party caricature. It includes most members of the “Tea Party Caucus” in the House, and such well-known tea partiers as Allen West of Florida and Renee Ellmers of North Carolina. Several prominent organizations associated with the Tea Party said that they would hold votes for the first and third bills against congressmen, and some of them opposed all three. These threats did not sway many votes.

One question this split raises is: Who is more likely to have his finger on the pulse of tea-party opinion? The activist groups who claim to speak for tea partiers? Or the congressmen who got elected by winning tea partiers’ votes? We will have a test soon enough: Some of the tea-party groups are saying they will mount primary campaigns against such alleged turncoats as Representative West.

The record of the 2010 primary season suggests that Representative West and like-minded colleagues do not have much to fear. That record, too, has been shrouded in myth. Tea-party victories over establishment candidates in the primaries have led to speculation that Republican incumbents who stray from the tea-party line—with the “tea-party line” again being defined in terms of the activist groups and the caricature—will lose their seats.

But the pattern of tea partiers’ beating the Republican establishment held true mostly in open seats. Mike Castle, Jane Norton, Sue Lowden: None of these establishment-backed Senate candidates who lost primaries was an incumbent. (Nor was Charlie Crist, who backed out of the Republican primary rather than lose.) Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska did narrowly lose her primary to a tea partier, but she may not have had all the benefits of incumbency, since she had been appointed rather than elected to her seat; and she managed to keep her seat in the end by running as an independent. Sen. Arlen



Specter was an incumbent who left the Republican party rather than lose a primary, but he did that just as the tea parties were beginning to take shape rather than as a response to them. Sen. Bob Bennett of Utah lost his party's nomination, and his seat, in a convention. Most observers doubt he would have lost in a primary election. The tea parties, in short, did not knock off a single Republican incumbent in a primary.

In the House, only two Republican incumbents, both southerners, lost to challengers supported by tea partiers. Rep. Parker Griffith of Alabama was a Democratic congressman who switched parties and then lost his first Republican primary a few months later. Rep. Bob Inglis of South Carolina supported TARP, like a lot of tea-party targets last year, but also supported a carbon tax and opposed the Iraq surge. This isn't a list that should strike fear into the hearts of Republican congressmen planning to run for reelection in 2012.

nance in recent decades has seen an upsurge of conservative activism. This was true of the Johnson, Carter, and early-Clinton eras, as it is now of the Obama years. In some of these periods the conservative reaction to liberalism was actually stronger, in some ways, than the current one. The conservative tide of the mid-1990s defeated Clinton's health-care plan while Obama's went through. And it carried Republicans to victory in both chambers of Congress in the midterms while the 2010 Republicans won only the House.

Each of these periods saw an increase in both the number and the zeal of conservatives. People who had not voted Republican, or sometimes voted at all, joined the ranks. People who had merely voted Republican became activists. The Tea Party is simply the form the reaction took this time. In a January 2010 look at survey data on the tea parties, Kate O'Beirne and I argued that they were made up of Republicans who were more ideological,

parties are if anything more amorphous. O'Beirne and I did not mention another parallel that has grown in importance. A recurrent temptation of Christian conservatives has been to think of themselves as a silent majority of the country just waiting to be given voice. On some issues, they did speak for the majority—but the majority never accorded even those issues the same importance that the Christian conservatives did. They were a sizable minority that could have a large impact on American politics if they formed coalitions with other types of conservatives, and with some voters who were not conservatives.

That's what the tea partiers did in 2010 where they succeeded. Marco Rubio's primary victory in Florida drew on traditional free-market Republicans and social conservatives as well as tea partiers. Bob Inglis lost his primary because of tea partiers and defense hawks—and, again, some of these were the same people. In the general elections, Republicans had

Every period of liberal governance in recent decades has seen an upsurge of **conservative activism**. This was true of the Johnson, Carter, and early-Clinton eras, as it is now of the Obama years.

A closer look at the 2010 primaries complicates the narrative of tea-party victories in another way. The pattern of results seems inexplicable without reference to abortion, an issue that "the Tea Party" supposedly doesn't care about. Why did John McCain, Dan Coats, Carly Fiorina, and Kelly Ayotte all win their Senate primaries against candidates who associated themselves with the tea parties and accused their opponents of a fondness for big government? And why did Specter, Crist, Murkowski, and Castle lose? Doubtless each race featured its own idiosyncrasies. But it is impossible to deny that pro-lifers associated with the party establishment fared much better than pro-choicers. (And when pro-life establishment figures lost Senate primaries, as in Colorado and Nevada, it was to pro-life tea partiers.)

Here is another way of looking at the tea parties that might make sense of these patterns. It begins by dismissing the idea of them as something wholly new under the sun. Every period of liberal gover-

but less committed to the party, than others in the GOP.

As we also noted, the Christian Right followed a parallel track in the late 1970s. Its themes were not new to the Republican party: Barry Goldwater had campaigned in 1964 on a platform that inveighed against "moral decline and drift," for example. But the emphasis was new, and so was the political style. Similarly, the tea parties did not bring to the Republican party the ideas that the Constitution places limits on the welfare functions of the federal government and that legislators should abide by them. But the tea parties gave those ideas renewed political vitality. And just as Christian conservatism was the path through which former Democrats, and formerly apolitical voters, joined the Republican party, so too have the tea parties been a source of both growth and controversy.

The boundaries between Christian conservatives and other types of conservatives were always blurry, and the tea

the support of all kinds of conservatives as well as independent voters who had the sense that the Obamacare-and-stimulus-passing Democrats had gone too far.

Without new participants and passion, conservatives would never have won back the House or made big gains in the Senate and the states in November 2010. Nor would they have been able to re-center the political debate on federal spending and indebtedness. The tea parties have been remarkably effective in a short period of time, in part because so many of their members have been more practical than they are often portrayed. To the extent tea partiers indulge in factionalism—for example, threatening to defeat Representative West in a primary—they will limit their future effectiveness. They will fail to unite all the people who consider themselves tea partiers, let alone reach beyond that group. And they will quickly find that political actors who do not deliver on their threats are neither feared nor loved.

NR

# The Roadmap Back to AAA

*Medicare and Medicaid cuts  
are not optional*

BY KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON

THE blame for Standard & Poor's downgrade of U.S. sovereign credit belongs almost exclusively to the president, the most socialistic American chief executive in living memory, but also to key congressional Republicans, who got carried away by their emotions. The president is Lyndon Baines Johnson, and the congressional Republicans are the 70 members of the House and 13 senators who, led by Rep. John W. Byrnes (R., Wis.), voted to create Medicare, a welfare handout disguised as an insurance program and structured as a Ponzi scheme. The handiwork of these illustrious gentlemen has taken some time to catch up with us, but catch up it has.

Take a moment to pity the fellows at Standard & Poor's, the feckless Mister Magoo of Wall Street. Beaverling away at a credit-rating agency is no way for a man to make a living in finance; an S&P drone may earn in a year what a serious money runner earns on a single trade, and his work is held in rollicking contempt by the guys with the big swinging dividends. The credit-rating agencies are basically the nerds who check Wall Street's math after the fact, putting their official, federally recognized seal of approval on propositions of conventional wisdom that are by definition stale by the time the likes of S&P or Moody's or Fitch gets around to them. But somebody had to be the first to say it: Uncle Sam is looking subprime. Ask Cassandra how that sort of thing turns out.

S&P wasn't actually the first, but it was the first firm with a name that insurance salesmen and grocerymen up in Poughkeepsie and down in Albuquerque had heard of, and they have a very fancy office building within view of Wall Street, and that is enough to catch the attention of Pres. Barack Obama, who seems set on being LBJ's heir at home and abroad.

The United States was downgraded not because it has a heavy public debt, but because its public debt has turned cancer-

ous, and its growth shows no sign of abating. The United States has a metastatic debt for many reasons, the fundamental one being a lamentably juvenile refusal by the American people and their elected representatives to bring spending and taxes into some kind of arithmetic balance, a task that has not proved too great in recent history for such non-superpowers as Canada, Bolivia, and Paraguay. The same Americans who left their guts in the grass at Gettysburg and ran face first into hot hell on the beaches at Normandy will pay any price and bear any burden except a balanced federal checkbook. That is because the main expense unbalancing the checkbook is medical entitlements, Medicare and Medicaid chief among them, and Americans would rather face Old Cloots himself than pay a doctor's bill out of pocket. We are kind of stupid that way.

Medicare, thanks to Representative Byrnes, is Dr. Frankenstein's version of the Aetna benefits provided to federal employees circa 1965, with a key difference: Unlike Aetna, Medicare cannot go out of business, no matter how boneheaded its financial decisions. Because enrollment in Medicare is automatic rather than voluntary, because it is funded mainly out of payroll taxes, and because its premiums are mostly symbolic, Medicare encourages beneficiaries to make maximum use of it, which drives up both overall health-care expenses and the deficit. We have managed to cut ourselves with both sides of that double-edged sword.

If American fiscal matters unrelated to health care were left to run the course set by present law, the national debt would

more or less stabilize on its own as tax rates rose to the levels that obtained before Pres. George W. Bush's tax cuts and recent years' unusually high levels of military and domestic spending reverted to their historical levels. Nobody would much like it, but it would flatten out—except for those health-care entitlements. Practically all of the growth of our national debt in the long term is accounted for by health-care spending. Even Social Security, the other unsustainable Ponzi scheme, could be kept going for a good long while with a couple of little tweaks here and there. Not so Medicare and Medicaid.

And it's really Medicare. Medicaid is a clear and present fiscal danger, but it will be relatively easy to fix, because it is easier to take benefits away from poor people than to take them away from well-off people, and the oldsters who collect Medicare are one of the most affluent and therefore politically powerful demographic groups in the country, age and wealth going together in our society more or less as God intended. It is worth keeping in mind that, as a National Bureau of Economic Research report found, "Medicare has led to net transfers from the poor to the wealthy, as a result of relatively regressive financing mechanisms and the higher expenditures and longer survival times of wealthier beneficiaries. Even with recent financing reforms, net transfers to the wealthy are likely to continue for at least several more decades." Thus does Grandmother pillage the poor.

Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security are untouchables so far as Democrats are concerned, to an even greater extent than military spending is untouch-



*Where the downgrade really started*



able for most Republicans. But the untouchables, together with interest on the debt, will exceed 2011 revenues. If we cut 10 percent in each of the untouchables—a prospect that surely would be denounced as radical—we could balance the 2012 budget with additional cuts elsewhere, but they would be cuts of such a scale as to ensure their denunciation as even more radical. They would in fact be unprecedented: eliminating 100 percent of federal education spending, for instance, and shuttering entire cabinet departments, and more or less liquidating food stamps, housing subsidies, and the rest of the welfare state in its entirety, etc. Many conservatives would no doubt be happy to order a round of that and make it a double. It is, unfortunately, an implausible outcome.

But it is also implausible that we can raise taxes sufficiently to offset the entitlement burden, which grows onerous each year as our population grays. The economy is growing at something less than 2 percent a year, if indeed it is growing at all under the destimulating ministrations of President Obama. Entitlement spending, on the other hand, is growing at 7 to 9 percent annually. If the entitlements continue to grow at 9 percent and the economy continues to grow at 1.8 percent, Medicare and Medicaid spending will, by themselves, exceed the entire output of the U.S. economy in less than 40 years. Which means that entitlements will swallow us whole, left unchecked. Those figures are admittedly pessimistic (which is not to say unimaginable). If you want a brighter scenario, entitlement growth at a more modest 7.5 percent and economic growth closer to our recent historic average at 3.5 percent yields a situation in 40 years in which Medicare and Medicaid together account for about 30 percent of GDP, meaning that the two programs would represent more spending than does the entire federal budget today—much more, indeed, than has any federal budget since 1945, when we had bigger things on our national mind than prescription-drug co-pays.

Our friends at the Congressional Budget Office put it this way in 2010: “The single greatest threat to budget stability is the growth of federal spending on health care—pushed up both by increases in the number of beneficiaries of Medicare and Medicaid (because of the aging of the population) and by growth in spending per beneficiary that outstrips growth in per

capita GDP. For the nation’s fiscal situation to be sustainable in future decades, growth in such spending will have to be reduced relative to its historical trend and to CBO’s projected path. Today, outlays for Medicaid and Medicare combined (excluding offsetting receipts) equal about 5.5 percent of GDP. Under current law, spending for those two programs is expected to keep growing faster than the economy, reaching 6.6 percent of GDP by 2020 and potentially reaching 10 percent by 2035.” Which is to say, the Medicare that already is bankrupting us will be double-bankrupting us in a few short years.

The downgrade was a judgment of American public finances in general. Less discussed is the fact that it is a severe judgment of President Obama’s signature health-care bill, and particularly of its plan to control medical-entitlement spending through (what else?) a panel of bureaucrats endowed with regulatory superpowers, to be called the Independent Payment Advisory Board. Democrats have been known to scoff at proposals for entitlement reform, arguing that they’ve already hung that trophy on the lodge wall. Nobody believes them. CBO has doubts about those alleged Medicare savings. S&P sure wasn’t buying it. Notably, the gentleman who runs the numbers over at Medicare HQ doesn’t buy it, either. Richard S. Foster, the chief actuary for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, told a congressional committee that he was not confident that President Obama’s health-care legislation would in fact deliver the promised savings. He prefers the approach outlined in Rep. Paul Ryan’s Roadmap: “If there’s a way to turn around the mindset for the people who do the research and development . . . to get them to focus more on cost-reducing tech and less on cost-increasing technology—if you can do that, then one of biggest components turns to your side. . . . The Roadmap has that potential.”

Which is to say, if Americans want that AAA rating back, they should consult Paul Ryan, who has done more than anybody else in our national discourse—except, perhaps, now, for S&P—to bring to our sluggish attention the scope and the depth of the medical-entitlement spending problem. That problem, and not five minutes’ worth of political drama on Capitol Hill in August, is why the United States has been downgraded—and why we deserve the downgrade.

NR

# Making Believe

*Our terrorism non-policy*

BY DANIEL PIPES

WITH trumpets and drum rolls, the White House has released a new policy paper on methods to prevent terrorism, a study said to have been two years in the making. Signed personally by Pres. Barack Obama and vaunting “the strength of communities” and the need to “enhance our understanding of the threat posed by violent extremism,” the document looks anodyne.

But beneath the calm lies a counterproductive—and dangerous—approach to terrorism. The import of this document consists in its firm stand on the wrong side of three distinct counterterrorism questions currently being debated, with the responsible Right (and a few sensible liberals) on one side, and Islamists, leftists, and multiculturalists on the other.

The first question concerns the nature of the problem. The Right points to one immense threat, Islamism, a global ideological movement that has motivated some 23,000 terror attacks worldwide since 9/11. Islamism’s apologists deny that their ideology spawns violence, and they categorize those 23,000 attacks as the work of criminals, crazies, or misguided Muslims. Western leftists and multiculturalists concur, bringing their formidable cadres, creativity, funds, and institutions to support the Islamists’ denial of responsibility.

Hearings held this year by the House of Representatives illustrate this difference. Rep. Peter King (R., N.Y.), chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, insisted that the hearings deal exclusively with Muslim radicalization. The ranking Democrat, Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, took exception, noting that “there are a variety of domestic extremist groups more prevalent in the United States than Islamic extremists, including neo-Nazis, environmental extremists, anti-tax

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groups, and others.” He argued that the hearings “should be a broad-based examination of domestic extremist groups, regardless of their respective ideological underpinnings.”

King rejected this approach, countering that “while there have been extremist groups and random acts of political violence throughout our history, the al-Qaeda attacks of 9/11 and the ongoing threat to our nation from Islamic jihad were uniquely diabolical and threatening to America’s security, both overseas and in our homeland.”

The second question concerns how to identify the enemy. The Right talks about Islamism, jihad, and terrorism, as do responsible parties generally; for example, a New York Police Department report from 2007, titled “Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat,” refers in its first line to the “threat from Islamic-based terrorism.” Islamists and their allies talk about everything else—violent extremism, al-Qaeda and Associated Networks, overseas-contingency operations, man-caused disasters, and (my favorite) a “global struggle for security and progress,” as the Department of Homeland Security puts it. The forces of multiculturalism have made deep inroads: A U.S. Department of Defense inquiry into the 2009 Fort Hood rampage by Maj. Nidal Hasan, killing 14, generated a report, “Protecting the Force,” that never mentioned the terrorist’s name or acknowledged his obvious Islamist motivation.

The third question concerns the appropriate response. The Islamist-Left-PC crowd finds the solution in partnership with Muslims, together with an emphasis on civil rights, due process, nondiscrimination, goodwill, and avoiding a backlash. The responsible Right accepts all this but sees it as ancillary to the main law-enforcement and military methods, such as intelligence gathering, arrests, long detentions, deportation, aerial bombardments, raids, renditions, prosecution, and incarceration.

Into these three debates waddles a long, poorly written, ill-organized White House report vehemently advocating the leftist position.

Nature of the problem: “neo-Nazis and other anti-Semitic hate groups, racial supremacists, and international and domestic terrorist groups.”

Naming of the enemy: The paper itself

never mentions Islamism. Its title, “Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States,” delicately avoids even mentioning terrorism.

Response: “Violent extremism, while of paramount importance given the potential for harm, is only one among a number of threats our Nation is facing. Communities face an array of challenges to their safety, including gang violence, school shootings, drugs, hate crimes, and many others. Just as we respond to community safety issues through partnerships and networks of government officials, Mayor’s offices, law enforcement, community organizations, and private sector actors, so must we address radicalization to violence and terrorist recruitment through similar relationships and by leveraging some of the same tools and solutions.” The mention of gang violence and related problems reveals a conceptual failure. The White House praises the Justice Department’s Comprehensive Gang Model, deeming it a flexible framework that “has reduced serious gang-related crimes.” That is good news in the battle against gangs. But gangs are criminal enterprises, and Islamist violence is ideological warfare. Gang members are hoodlums, Islamists are zealots. To liken them distorts more than it helps. Yes, they both resort to violence, but applying techniques appropriate to one to the other is akin to asking cooks to advise firefighters.

The lone sentence in the report that recognizes the danger of Islamism fixates on one small group, stating that “al-Qa’ida and its affiliates and adherents represent the preeminent terrorist threat to our country.” This ignores the 99 percent of the Islamist movement unconnected to al-Qaeda, such as the Wahhabi movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb ut-Tahrir, the Iranian government, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Jamaat ul-Fuqra. Rep. Sue Myrick (R., N.C.) found that the report “raises more questions to me than it answers.”

While the document unobjectionably emphasizes American constitutional values and the need to partner with Muslims, it says not a word about the need to distinguish between Islamist and anti-Islamist Muslims, between foe and friend.

It ignores the dismal fact that Islamists dominate the organized American Muslim leadership, whose objectives have more in

common with those of the terrorists than those of the counterterrorists.

Representative King expressed concern that the report discourages “legitimate criticism of certain radical organizations or elements of the Muslim-American community,” but such criticism is necessary to distinguish friend from foe.

Indeed, the authors of the report seem quite content to partner with Muslims who reject our values, which surely accounts for the Islamist organizations’ delight at the document. The Council on American-Islamic Relations, a group with well-established radical ties, praised it as “objective and holistic,” while the like-minded Muslim Public Affairs Council called it “very useful.”

In contrast, Melvin Bledsoe, who testified before the King hearings about his son, Carlos Bledsoe, a Muslim convert who in 2009 shot and killed a soldier at a military-recruiting center in Little Rock, Ark., said of the report: “It’s never going to fix the problem, when they’re trying to dance around the issues.” Ed Husain of the Council on Foreign Relations dismissed it for saying “worryingly little” and being primarily designed “not to offend Muslims.” An organization connected to terrorists swoons over the administration’s pretend counterterrorism policy, while the father of a terrorist dismisses it. What does that tell us?

The intellectual roots of this report go back to a George Soros-funded 2004 study, “A Promising Practices Guide: Developing Partnerships Between Law Enforcement and American Muslim, Arab, and Sikh Communities,” by Deborah A. Ramirez, Sasha Cohen O’Connell, and Rabia Zafar. They made their outlook clear: “The most dangerous threats in this war are rooted in the successful propagation of anger and fear directed at unfamiliar cultures and people.” The most dangerous threat, in other words, is not Islamist terror, which claims thousands of lives, but an alleged bias held by Americans against minorities. As I wrote upon the document’s appearance, “The guide might present itself as an aide to counterterrorism but its real purpose is to deflect attention from national security to the privileging of select communities.”

What now, with the enshrining of a fringe study as national policy? There are no shortcuts: Those who want a genuine counterterrorism policy must work to remove the Left and the multiculturalists from government.

NR



# London Aflame

*What happens when you let teenagers run your country*

BY JONATHAN FOREMAN

*London*

**Y**ESTERDAY, August 8, I was watching live looting footage—some of it from districts near mine or where friends were hunkered down behind locked doors—with appalled fascination, when the 1992 L.A. riots came to mind. It was not because here in London we have had anything like the savage assault on Reginald Denny or the gun battles between cops and street gangs. It was the reports from shopping districts where stores were in flames and the police nowhere to be found. It reminded me of that first day or so of the L.A. riots, when LAPD chief Daryl Gates allegedly held his officers back and allowed South Central to burn, just to show propertied Angelenos how much they needed him and his men.

Given the cuts in police budgets planned by the Cameron government (which has “ring-fenced” or increased money for foreign aid, climate-change prevention, and Britain’s grossly inefficient health service), anyone could be forgiven for wondering whether the Metropolitan Police’s leadership was allowing neighborhoods to burn to make an economic point.

If that was the plan, it was a foolish idea. The Cameron administration is dominated by liberal young men from privileged backgrounds or the media-marketing elite. They would never live in the kind of neighborhoods that bore the brunt of the violence, and who are unlikely to empathize with the white-working-class and immigrant shopkeepers whose stores were trashed and burned. Law and order has not been a Coalition priority, as should have been obvious from Cameron’s notorious “hug a hoodie” campaign before the election, in which he called for more understanding of the alienated youths who make

urban life a misery for the old and the weak.

But in any case, it has since become clear that London’s Metropolitan Police was doing its feeble best considering its inadequate equipment, training, and public-order doctrine, not to mention its poor leadership by politically correct apparatchiks. It was unprepared to counter the planned looting, which had been organized using mobile phones and social networks—though this has happened before in London, as well as in foreign cities hosting G12 and G20 summits. Worse, it foolishly assumed that sending small numbers of riot police—or rather police in riot gear—would intimidate looters into giving up and going home.

Instead, in some places, gangs of 30 or more hooded teens sent the cops scurrying

trol—as if burning department stores did not. It was telling that there were injuries among the police but none among the rioters. “The way we police in Britain is not through use of water cannon,” claimed Home Secretary Theresa May. “The way we police in Britain is through consent of communities.”

You can make of her peculiar logic what you will, but the sentiment is shared by the entire law-enforcement establishment in Britain, if not the ordinary constable in the street. Watching the footage of rampaging youths taunting the London police, I remembered how, when I was living in New York’s East Village during the L.A. riots, there were the beginnings of a copycat riot in the neighborhood. A couple of hundred kids, many of them the anarchist youths who had taken over Tompkins



*London, August 8, 2011*

in retreat. In other areas, the police stood their ground and bravely took the bricks and rocks hurled in their direction, but did not—perhaps could not—stop or disperse the youths setting fire to stores and sometimes the homes above them. They seemed to be waiting for the rioters to exhaust themselves and go home—which took many hours and much destruction. It was only where there were police horses and dogs—and there were too few equine and canine units to be in every riot area at once—that looters were driven off or arrested in significant numbers.

As usual, the Met did not equip its officers with baton rounds or tear gas or water cannon or any of the non-lethal riot-control technologies in standard use around the world. This was because, as its leaders subsequently said, with the support of the home secretary, the use of such weapons would represent an unacceptable escalation. It would signal a loss of con-

Square Park that summer, marched up St. Mark’s Place to Second Avenue and started breaking windows. A line of police appeared on the avenue—ordinary street cops, but many wearing helmets—and walked calmly but determinedly in the direction of the bottle throwers. It was over in less than two minutes.

The cops knew what the British bobbies have forgotten—that if you nip a riot in the bud, fewer people get hurt, and it’s better for everyone. It is why in Paris, where I also once lived, the police break out the tear gas the minute they see a crowd getting out of hand—it demonstrates that the forces of law own the street, and it saves lives. I would not necessarily want a version of France’s extremely aggressive and tough CRS in London—though arguably it is what Britain needs—but I cannot help thinking that if the patrolmen of Gotham’s 9th precinct, with a few reinforcements, had been flown here on Sunday morning,

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they would have brought the whole thing to an end within hours.

On this the third day since the violence began, any racial and ethnic dimensions of the looting have yet to be parsed, at least in the mainstream media. From the footage it is clear that the rioters are mostly young and male—and that the mobs include plenty of white youths, though in some areas they seem to be disproportionately black.

On the other hand, members of Britain's South Asian and Muslim minorities seem to have played little or no part in the violence. On the contrary, large numbers of Muslim youths in the Bangladeshi-dominated sections of London's East End first guarded their mosques and then went to defend stores and banks from marauders.

In North London on the second day of the violence, Turkish and Kurdish storekeepers banded together, took up bats and broomsticks, and chased away would-be looters, despite being threatened with arrest by the police. (That is not a typo. The police were doing little or nothing to stop the looting, yet felt an urgent need to preserve their monopoly on the lawful use of force.) Though the victims were more diverse than the perpetrators, who tended to attack shopping areas in edgy, trendy mixed neighborhoods, it was striking that only immigrants seemed to show any serious inclination to defend their property and their livelihood. They were like L.A. Koreans, only without guns, a fact that made their courage even more remarkable.

As well as helping themselves to liquor and jewelry, the looters seemed to have a typically teenaged predilection for sportswear, mobile phones, and flat-screen TVs. However, they were also happy to smash up hairdressers, fast-food restaurants, and grocery stores.

Despite talk in the media and in left-wing circles about the riots' being the result of public-sector cuts and unemployment (which is indeed high among Britain's undereducated youth), the rioters showed little compunction about destroying the workplaces of others. Moreover, the footage, much of it taken by the looters and their pals and then posted on the Web, showed little evidence of anger. Their mood seemed exuberant and excited—not unlike that of the students and sports fans who have recently rioted in North American cities after the local team wins or loses a major game.

None of the major commentators here in

the U.K. seem to have heard of the sports-inspired riots in Vancouver and at Ohio State. They reflexively assume that anyone who sets cars on fire or smashes up a Starbucks must be motivated by anger or oppression. Perhaps because its members generally come from sheltered backgrounds, the British commentariat has little sense of the potential for violence, or the joy in disorder and aggression, to be found in most young men of military age. It is an odd thing, because I remember how, as Cambridge undergraduates, some of my friends and I did some dumb and destructive and illegal things—when we were confident that we would not be caught or that the price to be paid would be minimal.

Of course, there is a much more savage, bullying edge to this looting and vandalism than there was in my generation's drunken undergraduate pranks. And it is perhaps not altogether surprising that neither the police nor the public generally—with the exception of the tough Turks and Kurds—felt like taking on what were relatively small numbers of tough kids (seldom more than a couple of hundred). It is not just that many “hoodies” carry knives (this fact was cited as a reason for police caution by one of the ineffective cops the *London Times* quoted) and have no compunction in using them. They are accustomed to extreme, close-up, *Clockwork Orange*-style violence.

They are also accustomed to being given the free run of the streets. This is largely because Britain's police have over the last two decades adopted the hands-off, low-key, reactive model that American police departments disastrously moved to in the 1970s but then abandoned in the 1990s, most spectacularly in New York City. But in any case, the hoodies who this weekend demonstrated and revelled in their violent power like the gangsters in Walter Hill's classic 1979 movie *The Warriors* tend to be utterly unafraid of adults or any of the feeble sanctions offered by the adult world.

Britain's schools, laws, media, youth-worship, and policing have created what an angry Harlem preacher once called a “pediocracy”—literally a polity ruled by children, but here meaning one ruled by teenagers. As the world saw and the British public is having to acknowledge, it is not pretty. We can only be grateful that they don't have Kalashnikovs like their counterparts in such places as Somalia—yet.

NR



*Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to  
argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.*

# Gagging Us Softly

*Have we no sensitivity for those who would be free?*

BY MARK STEYN

**T**o be honest, I didn't really think much about "freedom of speech" until I found myself the subject of three "hate speech" complaints in Canada in 2007. I mean I was philosophically in favor of it, and I'd been consistently opposed to the Dominion's ghastly "human rights" commissions and their equivalents elsewhere my entire adult life, and from time to time when an especially choice example of politically correct enforcement came up I'd whack it around for a column or two.

But I don't think I really understood how advanced the Left's assault on this core Western liberty actually was. In 2008, shortly before my writing was put on trial for "flagrant Islamophobia" in British Columbia, several NATIONAL REVIEW readers e-mailed from the U.S. to query what the big deal was. C'mon, lighten up, what could some "human rights" pseudo-court do? And I replied that the statutory penalty under the British Columbia "Human Rights" Code was that *Maclean's*, Canada's biggest-selling news weekly, and by extension any other publication, would be forbidden henceforth to publish anything by me about Islam, Europe, terrorism, demography,

welfare, multiculturalism, and various related subjects. And that this prohibition would last forever, and was deemed to have the force of a supreme-court decision. I would in effect be rendered unpublishable in the land of my birth. In theory, if a job opened up for dance critic or gardening correspondent, I could apply for it, although if the Royal Winnipeg Ballet decided to offer *Jihad: The Ballet* for its Christmas season I'd probably have to recuse myself.

And what I found odd about this was that very few other people found it odd at all. Indeed, the Canadian establishment seems to think it entirely natural that the Canadian state should be in the business of lifetime publication bans, just as the Dutch establishment thinks it entirely natural that the Dutch state should put elected leaders of parliamentary opposition parties on trial for their political platforms, and the French establishment thinks it appropriate for the French state to put novelists on trial for sentiments expressed by fictional characters. Across almost all the Western world apart from America, the state grows ever more comfortable with micro-regulating public discourse—and, in fact, not-so-public dis-

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ical guru **Ralph Reed**, social critic and humorist **James Lileks**, domestic-policy expert **Sally Pipes**, bestselling conservative authors **Andrew Klavan** and **Michael Walsh**, ace economist **Kevin Hassett**, State Policy Network executive **Tracie Sharp**, Americans United for Life president **Charmaine Yoest**, and, from *NR*, editor **Rich Lowry**, *Liberal Fascism* author **Jonah Goldberg**, *NRO* editor-at-large **Kathryn Jean Lopez**, senior editors **Jay Nordlinger** and **Ramesh Ponnuru**, *NRO* "Campaign Spot" blogger **Jim Geraghty**, *NRO* "Exchequer" blogger **Kevin D. Williamson**, "Long View" columnist **Rob Long**, "The Straggler" columnist **John Derbyshire**, national correspondent **John J. Miller**, former *NR* editor **John O'Sullivan**, political reporter **Bob Costa**, and artist **Roman Genn**.

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DAY/DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART	SPECIAL EVENT
SAT/Nov. 12	Ft. Lauderdale, FL		5:00PM	evening cocktail reception
SUN/Nov. 13	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars
MON/Nov. 14	Grand Turk	7:00AM	3:00PM	morning/afternoon seminars "Night Owl" session
TUE/Nov. 15	San Juan	1:00PM	11:00PM	morning seminar late-night smoker
WED/Nov. 16	St. Thomas	8:00AM	5:00PM	morning/afternoon seminars evening cocktail reception "Night Owl" session
THU/Nov. 17	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars
FRI/Nov. 18	Half Moon Cay	8:00AM	4:00PM	afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
SAT/Nov. 19	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	7:00AM		Debark



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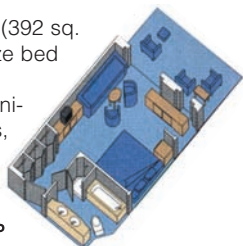


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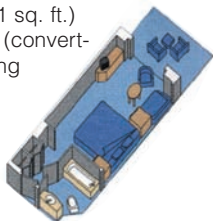


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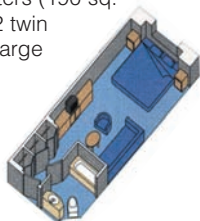


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# National Review 2011 Caribbean Cruise Application

Mail to: National Review Cruise, The Cruise Authority, 1760 Powers Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30067 or Fax to 770-953-1228

Please fill out application completely and mail with deposit check or fax with credit-card information. One application per cabin. If you want more than one cabin, make copies of this application. For questions call The Cruise Authority at 800-707-1634.

## Personal

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GUEST #1: Name as listed on Passport (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)

Date of Birth

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Passport Number

Expiration Date

Citizenship

Size: S-XXL

Are you a past Holland America cruiser? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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GUEST #2: Name as listed on Passport (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)

Date of Birth

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Passport Number

Expiration Date

Citizenship

Size: S-XXL

Are you a past Holland America cruiser? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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GUEST #3: Name as listed on Passport (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)

Date of Birth

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Passport Number

Expiration Date

Citizenship

Size: S-XXL

Are you a past Holland America cruiser? ☐ Yes ☐ No

## Cabins, Air Travel, & Other Information

All rates are per person, double occupancy, and include all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and *National Review* activities. Cruise-only rates include all of above except airfare and transfers. Failure to appear for embarkation for any reason constitutes a cancellation subject to full penalties. Personal items not included. **PLEASE CHECK ALL APPLICABLE BOXES!**

### I. CABIN CATEGORY (see list and prices on previous page)

First cabin category choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Second cabin category choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Bedding: Beds made up as ☐ Twin ☐ King/Queen

BOOKING SINGLE? ☐ Please try to match me with a roommate. (My age: \_\_\_\_\_)

### II. DINING w/ FRIENDS/FAMILY: I wish to dine with \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Every Night ☐ 3-4 times ☐ 2 times ☐ Once

### III. PRE- AND POST-CRUISE TOUR PACKAGES

☐ Please send me information on pre-/post-cruise packages in Ft. Lauderdale.

## Payment, Cancellation, & Insurance

Deposit of \$600 **per person** is due with this application. If paid by credit card, the balance will be charged to the *same* card on 8/12/11 unless otherwise directed. If application is received after 8/12/11, the full amount of the cruise will be charged.

☐ My deposit of \$600 **per person** is included.  
(Make checks payable to "National Review Cruise")

☐ Charge my deposit to: ☐ AmEx ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐

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Expiration Date   /   Security Code

Month

Year

Amex 4 digits on front, others 3 digits on back

Authorized Signature of Cardholder

Name of Cardholder (please print)

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of the *Eurodam*. **RESPONSIBILITY:** Notice is hereby given that the cruise advertised herein, including all tickets, vouchers and coupons issued and all arrangements for transportation or conveyance or for hotel or lodging or for sightseeing/shore tour services are made by H20 Ltd. d/b/a The Cruise Authority (TCA) on behalf of National Review (NR), as agency for Holland America Line (HAL), and/or service providers and/or suppliers providing services necessary for operation of the tour upon the express condition that TCA shall not be liable for injury, acts of terrorism, acts of war, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity to any tour participant or his or her property that may result from any act or omission of any company, contractor or employee thereof providing services in connection with the tour, including but not limited to transportation, lodging, food and beverage, entertainment, sightseeing, luggage handling and tour guiding. Furthermore, TCA shall not be responsible for delays or costs incurred resulting from weather, road connections, breakdowns, acts of war-declared or undeclared, acts of terrorism, strikes, riots, acts of God, authority of law or other circumstances beyond its control. In the event that a participant be entitled to a refund of monies paid, TCA will not be liable in excess of amount paid. TCA reserves the right to decline any persons as a tour participant at any time. TCA shall not be held financially or otherwise responsible should NR cease to exist and this cruise not go forth as planned. In the event of the demise of NR, and guest(s) elect not to sail on this cruise, every effort will be put forth to refund as much of the payment as possible dependently solely on the cruise lines cancellation terms. TCA is not responsible for price increases or surcharges imposed by HAL and/or service providers. TCA is not responsible for breach of contract or any intentional or careless actions or omissions on the part of HAL and/or service providers, such as suppliers of tours or other services used or obtained on or at the time of the cruise or shore excursions, which result in any loss, damage, delay or injury to you or your travel companions or group members. TCA does not guarantee any of such suppliers rates, booking or reservations and TCA shall not be responsible for any social or labor unrest, mechanical or construction difficulties, diseases, local laws, climate conditions, acts of war-declared or undeclared, acts of terrorism, abnormal conditions or developments or any other actions, omissions or conditions outside of TCA's control. TCA, nor NR, shall be responsible for the accessibility, appearance, actions or decisions of those individuals promoted as guest speakers for this cruise. On behalf of those guests listed in this application, I authorize TCA/NR to use image(s) (video or photo) for purposes of promoting future NR cruise events. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** I understand and accept the terms and conditions of booking this cruise package and acknowledge responsibility for myself and those sharing my accommodations:

## MAILING AND CONTACT INFORMATION

--	--

Mailing address

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City / State / Zip

--	--

Email Address

--	--

Daytime Phone

Cell phone

Be assured that National Review and The Cruise Authority retain this information for internal use, and do not release or distribute your personal information to third parties.

## CREDENTIALS

Your legal first and last name are required for travel documentation. If you have an informal name you would like reflected on your name badge, please indicate it here:

Guest #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Guest #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Guest #3 \_\_\_\_\_

## IV. AIR/TRANSFER PACKAGES

☐ We will provide our own roundtrip air and transfers to and from Ft. Lauderdale (arriving there on 11/12/11 by 1:30PM EST and departing 11/19/11 after 10:30a.m.).

☐ We would like The Cruise Authority to customize roundtrip air from \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Coach ☐ First Class Air

Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred carrier: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please note that The Cruise Authority does not have control over the flight schedule or carrier assigned by the cruise line. Times and connections may not always be ideal.)

## V. MEDICAL / DIETARY / SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please enter in the box below any medical, dietary, or special needs or requests we should know about any of the members of your party:

--

☐ The card's billing address is indicated above. ☐ The card's billing address is: \_\_\_\_\_

**CANCELLATION PENALTY SCHEDULE:** (cancellations must be received in writing by the date indicated): PRIOR to June 13, 2011 cancellation penalty is \$100 per person; June 13 to August 12, 2011 cancellation penalty is \$600 per person, AFTER August 12, 2011 cancellation penalty is 100% of cruise/package.

**CANCELLATION / MEDICAL INSURANCE** is available and recommended for this cruise (and package). Costs are **Age 0-49:** 7% of total price; **Age 50-59:** 8% of total price; **Age 60-69:** 9% of total price; **Age 70+:** 11% of total price. The exact amount will appear on your cruise statement. Purchase will be immediate upon your acceptance and is non-refundable.

☐ **YES** I/we wish to purchase the Trip Cancellation & Medical Insurance coverage. Additions to the cruise package will increase my insurance premium.

☐ **NO** I/we are declining to purchase the Trip Cancellation & Medical Insurance coverage and understand that I/we will be subject to applicable cancellation penalties.

**PASSPORT REQUIRED!** Everyone cruising, including children, will be required to bring a valid passport. Current passports must be valid through May 20, 2012. Failure to do so will result in being denied boarding.

SIGNATURE OF GUEST #1

DATE



course: Lars Hedegaard, head of the Danish Free Press Society, has been tried, been acquitted, had his acquittal overruled, and been convicted of “racism” for some remarks about Islam’s treatment of women made (so he thought) in private but taped and released to the world. The Rev. Stephen Boissin was convicted of the heinous crime of writing a homophobic letter to his local newspaper and was sentenced by Lori Andreachuk, the aggressive social engineer who serves as Alberta’s “human rights” commissar, to a lifetime prohibition on uttering anything “disparaging” about homosexuality ever again in sermons, in newspapers, on radio—or in private e-mails. Note that legal concept: not “illegal” or “hateful,” but merely “disparaging.” Dale McAlpine, a practicing (wait for it) Christian, was handing out leaflets in the English town of Workington and chit-chatting with shoppers when he was arrested on a “public order” charge by Constable Adams, a gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community-outreach officer. Mr. McAlpine had been overheard by the officer to observe that homosexuality is a sin. “I’m gay,” said Constable Adams. Well, it’s still a sin, said Mr. McAlpine. So Constable Adams arrested him for causing distress to Constable Adams.

In fairness, I should add that Mr. McAlpine was also arrested for causing distress to members of the public more generally, and not just to the aggrieved gay copper. No member of the public actually complained, but, as Constable Adams pointed

DNA samples, removed her jewelry and shoelaces, put her in a cell for three and a half hours, and questioned her on suspicion of committing a Section Five “racial public-order offence.” “An allegation of a serious nature was made concerning a racially motivated remark,” declared the headmaster, Antony Edkins. The school would “not stand for racism in any form.” In a statement, Greater Manchester Police said they took “hate crime” very seriously, and their treatment of Miss Stott was in line with “normal procedure.”

Indeed it was. And that’s the problem. When I ran into my troubles up north, a very few principled members of Canada’s bien-pensants stood up to argue that the thought police were out of control and the law needed to be reined in. Among them was Keith Martin, a Liberal MP and himself a member of a visible minority—or, as he put it, a “brown guy.” For his pains, he and a few other principled liberals were mocked by Warren Kinsella, a third-rate spin-doctor for the Liberal party and a chap who fancies himself Canada’s James Carville. As Kinsella taunted these lonely defenders of freedom of speech, how did it feel to be on the same side as Steyn . . . and anti-Semites . . . and white supremacists? Eh, eh, how’d ya feel about that, eh?

Mr. Kinsella was subsequently forced to make a groveling apology to “the Chinese community” after making a joke about ordering the cat at his favorite Chinese restaurant in Ottawa: Even the most censorious of politically correct

‘Free speech’ doesn’t mean ‘the brown guy’  
is on the same side as the ‘white supremacists.’  
It means he recognizes that the other fellow is  
entitled to have a side.

out, Mr. McAlpine was talking “in a loud voice” that might theoretically have been “overheard by others.” And we can’t have that, can we? So he was fingerprinted, DNA-sampled, and tossed in the cells for seven hours. When I was a lad, the old joke about the public toilets at Piccadilly Circus was that one should never make eye contact with anyone in there because the place was crawling with laughably unconvincing undercover policemen in white polonecks itching to arrest you for soliciting gay sex. Now they’re itching to arrest you for not soliciting it.

In such a climate, time-honored national characteristics are easily extinguished. A generation ago, even Britain’s polytechnic Trots and Marxists were sufficiently residually English to feel the industrial-scale snitching by family and friends that went on in Communist Eastern Europe was not quite cricket, old boy. Now England is Little Stasi-on-Avon, a land where, even if you’re well out of earshot of the gay-outreach officer, an infelicitous remark in the presence of a co-worker or even co-playmate is more than sufficient. Fourteen-year-old Codie Stott asked her teacher at Harrop Fold High School whether she could sit with another group to do her science project as in hers the other five pupils spoke Urdu and she didn’t understand what they were saying. The teacher called the police, who took her to the station, photographed her, fingerprinted her, took

enforcers occasionally forget themselves and accidentally behave like normal human beings. But, before the Chinese cat got his tongue, the Liberal hack was, like so many of his ilk, missing the point: “Free speech” doesn’t mean “the brown guy” is on the same side as the “white supremacists.” It means he recognizes that the other fellow is entitled to have a side. By contrast, Canada’s “human rights” commissions and Britain’s gay-outreach officer and Europe’s various public prosecutors seem to think there should be only one side of the debate, and they’re ever more comfortable in arguing for that quite openly.

Thus, after Anders Breivik gunned down dozens of his fellow Norwegians, just about the only angle on the story that got the Western Left’s juices going was the opportunity it afforded to narrow the parameters of public discourse even more. They gleefully fell on his 1,500-page “manifesto,” wherein he cites me, John Derbyshire, Bernard Lewis, Theodore Dalrymple, and various other names familiar round these parts. He also cites Winston Churchill, Thomas Jefferson, Mahatma Gandhi, Mark Twain, Hans Christian Andersen, and my leftie compatriot Naomi Klein, the “No Logo” gal and a columnist for *The Nation* in the U.S. and the *Guardian* in Britain. Just for the record, my name appears four times, Miss Klein’s appears four times.

Yet the British, Canadian, Australian, European, and American Left—and more than a few likeminded Americans—rose as one to demand restraints on a very narrow sliver of Anders Breivik’s remarkably—what’s the word?—diverse reading material.

“I cannot understand that you think that it is fine for people to go out and say we should kill all Muslims,” sighed Tanya Plibersek, the Australian minister for human services, on a panel discussion, “and that that has no real effect in the world.” Because, after all, calling for the killing of all Muslims is what I and Bernard Lewis and Theodore Dalrymple and Naomi Klein and Hans Christian Andersen do all day long.

She was addressing Brendan O’Neill, a beleaguered defender of free speech on a show where the host, the guests, the studio audience, and the post-broadcast tweeters were all lustily in favor of state regulation, and not of human acts but of opinions. And not just for inciters of Norwegian nutters, but for Rupert Murdoch, too. To one degree or another, they were also in favor of the government’s taking action to whip the media into line. Into line with what? Well, with the government, presumably. Whether or not they’ll get their way Down Under, in London the British state is being actively urged to regulate the content of the press for the first time in four centuries.

How did we get to this state of affairs? When my travails in Canada began, somebody reminded me of an observation by the American writer Heywood Broun: “Everybody favors free speech in the slack moments when no axes are being ground.” I think that gets it exactly backwards. It was precisely at the moment when no axes were being ground that the West decided it could afford to forgo free speech. There was a moment 40 or so years ago when it appeared as if all the great questions had been settled: There would be no more Third Reichs, no more fascist regimes, no more anti-Semitism; advanced social democracies were heading inevitably down a one-way sunlit avenue into the peaceable kingdom of multiculturalism; and so it seemed to a certain mindset entirely reasonable to introduce speech codes and thought crimes essentially as a kind of mopping-up operation. Canada’s “human rights” tribunals were originally created to deal with employment and housing discrimination, but Canadians aren’t terribly hateful and there wasn’t a lot of that, so they advanced to prosecuting “hate speech.” It was an illiberal notion harnessed supposedly in the cause of liberalism: A handful of neo-Nazi losers in rented rooms in basements are leaving Xeroxed white-supremacist flyers in payphones? Hey, relax, we’ll hunt down the extremist fringe losers and ensure they’ll trouble you no further. Just a few recalcitrant knuckle-draggers who decline to get with the beat. Don’t give ’em a thought. Nothing to see here, folks.

When you accept that the state has the right to criminalize Holocaust denial, you are conceding an awful lot. I don’t just mean on the specific point: The Weimar Republic was a veritable proto-Trudeaupia of “hate speech” laws. In the 15 years before the Nazis came to power, there were over 200 prosecutions for “anti-Semitic speech” in Germany—and a fat lot of good it did. But more important than the practical uselessness of such laws is the assumption you’re making: You’re accepting that the state, in ruling one opinion out of bounds, will be content to stop there.

As is now clear, it isn’t. Restrictions on freedom of speech undermine the foundations of justice, including the bedrock principle: equality before the law. When it comes to free expression, Britain, Canada, Australia, and Europe are ever less lands of laws and instead lands of men—and women, straights and gays, Muslims and infidels—whose rights before the law vary according to which combination of these various identity groups they belong to. Appearing at a Vancouver comedy club, Guy Earle found himself obliged to put down a couple of drunken hecklers. Had he said what he said to me or to Jonah Goldberg, we would have had no legal redress. Alas for him, he said it to two drunken hecklers of the lesbian persuasion, so they accused him of putting them down homophobically and he was fined \$15,000. Had John O’Sullivan and Kathryn Lopez chanced to be strolling by the Driftwood Beach Bar on the Isle of Wight when, in the course of oldies night, Simon Ledger performed “Kung Fu Fighting,” they would have had no grounds for complaint, even if he’d done the extended dance remix. However, the passersby in question were Chinese, and so Mr. Ledger was arrested for racism.

In such a world, words have no agreed meaning. “There were funky Chinamen from funky Chinatown” is legal or illegal according to whosoever happens to hear it. Indeed, in my very favorite example of this kind of thinking, the very same words can be proof of two entirely different hate crimes. Iqbal Sacranie is a Muslim of such exemplary “moderation” he’s been knighted by the Queen. The head of the Muslim Council of Britain, Sir Iqbal was interviewed on the BBC and expressed the view that homosexuality was “immoral,” was “not acceptable,” “spreads disease,” and “damaged the very foundations of society.” A gay group complained and Sir Iqbal was investigated by Scotland Yard’s “community safety unit” for “hate crimes” and “homophobia.”

Independently but simultaneously, the magazine of GALHA (the Gay and Lesbian Humanist Association) called Islam a “barmy doctrine” growing “like a canker” and deeply “homophobic.” In return, the London Race Hate Crime Forum asked Scotland Yard to investigate GALHA for “Islamophobia.”

Got that? If a Muslim says that Islam is opposed to homosexuality, Scotland Yard will investigate him for homophobia; but if a gay says that Islam is opposed to homosexuality, Scotland Yard will investigate him for Islamophobia.

Two men say exactly the same thing and they’re investigated for different hate crimes. On the other hand, they could have sung “Kung Fu Fighting” back and forth to each other all day long and it wouldn’t have been a crime unless a couple of Chinese passersby walked in the room.

If you’re not gay or Muslim or Chinese, you’re maybe wondering to yourself: How can I get a piece of the action? After all, if the state creates a human right to be offended and extends it only to members of certain interest groups, it is quite naturally incentivizing membership in those interest groups. Andrew Bolt, Australia’s leading columnist, was struck by the very noticeable non-blackness of so many prominent Aussie “blacks” and wrote a couple of columns on the theme of identity-group opportunism. He’s now been



dragged into court and denounced as a “racist”—“racism” having degenerated into a term for anyone who so much as broaches the subject. But, if the law confers particular privileges on members of approved identity groups, how we define the criteria for membership of those groups is surely a legitimate subject for public debate.

One of the great strengths of common law has been its general antipathy toward group rights—because the ultimate minority is the individual. The minute you have collective rights, you require dramatically enhanced state power to mediate the hierarchy of different victim groups. In a world of Islamophobic gays, homophobic Muslims, and white blacks, it is tempting to assume the whole racket will collapse under the weight of its own absurdity. Instead, the law increasingly bends to those who mean it the most. In some of the oldest free societies in the world, the state is not mediating speech in order to assure social tranquility, but rather torturing logic and law and liberty in ever more inane ways in order to accommodate those who might be tempted to express their grievances in non-speechy ways. Consider the case of Elisabeth Sabaditsch-Wolff, a Viennese housewife who has lived in several Muslim countries. She was hauled into an Austrian court for calling Mohammed a pedophile on the grounds that he consummated his marriage when his bride, Aisha, was nine years old. Mrs. Sabbaditsch-Wolff was found guilty and fined 480 euros. The judge’s reasoning was fascinating: “Pedophilia is factually incorrect, since paedophilia is a sexual preference which solely or mainly is directed towards children. Nevertheless, it does not apply to Mohammad. He was still married to Aisha when she was 18.”

Ah, gotcha. So, under Austrian law, you’re not a pedophile if you deflower the kid in fourth grade but keep her around till high school. There’s a useful tip if you’re planning a hiking holiday in the Alps this fall. Or is this another of those dispensations that is not of universal application?

Western governments have gone far too far down this path already. “The lofty idea of ‘the war on racism’ is gradually turning into a hideously false ideology,” the French philosopher Alain Finkielkraut said in 2005. “And this anti-racism will be for the 21st century what Communism was for the 20th century: a source of violence.” Just so. Let us accept for the sake of argument that racism is bad, that homophobia is bad, that Islamophobia is bad, that offensive utterances are bad, that mean-spirited thoughts are bad. So what?

As bad as they are, the government’s criminalizing all of them and setting up an enforcement regime in the interests of micro-regulating us into compliance is a thousand times worse. If that’s the alternative, give me “Kung Fu Fighting” sung by Mohammed’s nine-year-old bride while putting down two lesbian hecklers sending back the Cat of the Day in a Chinese restaurant.

As John Milton wrote in his *Areopagitica* of 1644, “Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.”

Or as an ordinary Canadian citizen said to me, after I testified in defense of free speech to the Ontario parliament at Queen’s Park, “Give me the right to free speech, and I will use it to claim all my other rights.”

Conversely, if you let them take your right to free speech, how are you going to stop them from taking all the others? **NR**

# Not a RACE CARD

*Photo IDs are necessary to the integrity  
of our elections*

**BY HANS A. VON SPAKOVSKY**

**A** NUMBER of states have recently passed voter-ID legislation—among them, Texas, Alabama, Kansas, South Carolina, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Rhode Island. Two others, Georgia and Indiana, implemented such laws years ago. This trend has the Left hyperventilating. From former president Bill Clinton to NAACP head Benjamin Jealous, irresponsible cries of “Jim Crow” have been uttered in a losing attempt to sell Americans a great lie: that requiring someone to authenticate his or her identity at the polling place by showing a government-issued photo identification is anything like the despicable discrimination that once existed in the South.

Jealous blamed “the worst and most racist elements” in conservative tea-party groups for the voter-ID push. In truth, the vast majority of Americans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds (more than 75 percent in the latest Rasmussen poll) support voter-ID laws. Perhaps that’s because Americans have to use a photo ID to obtain a library card, drink a beer, cash a check, board an airplane, buy a train ticket, or check in to a hotel. They understand that requiring voter ID is a commonsense reform that helps protect the security and integrity of our election process. Happily, it’s a requirement voters can easily meet.

Once you get past the race-baiting, you will find that opponents of voter ID generally rely on two arguments, equally specious: 1) There is no need for photo ID, because there is no voter fraud in the United States; 2) This is a deliberate effort to suppress the turnout of minority voters, who often don’t have photo ID. Liberals keep repeating these false claims despite the fact that they have been disproved both in the courtroom and at the polling place.

The claim that there is no voter fraud in the U.S. is patently ridiculous, given our rich and unfortunate history of it. As the U.S. Supreme Court said when it upheld Indiana’s photo-ID law in 2008, “Flagrant examples of such fraud . . . have been documented throughout this Nation’s history by respected historians and journalists.” The liberal groups that fought Indiana’s law didn’t have much luck with liberal justice John Paul Stevens, who wrote the 6–3 decision. Before being named to the Supreme Court, Justice Stevens practiced law in Chicago, a hotbed of electoral malfeasance.

Some opponents have tried to narrow down the argument, claiming that voter ID can stop only impersonation fraud, and that this particular type of fraud is rare or nonexistent. But as the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals pointed out in the Indiana case,

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the relative rarity of prosecutions for impersonation fraud can be “explained by the endemic underenforcement” of voter-fraud cases and “the extreme difficulty of apprehending a voter impersonator” without the tools—a photo ID—needed to detect such fraud.

One of the most egregious examples was revealed by a Brooklyn grand jury in 1984, a case the *New York Times* conveniently ignores whenever it rails against voter ID. The grand jury detailed a widespread conspiracy that operated without detection for 14 years, involving not only impersonation of voters at the polls, but also voting under fictitious names that had been successfully registered. Thousands of fraudulent votes were cast in state and congressional elections.

When I mention that case in debates, the inevitable reply is that it happened a long time ago, as though the 1980s were the Dark Ages. Another well-documented case occurred in a city-council election in Hoboken, N.J., in 2007. The former zoning-board president noticed a group of men near his polling place being given index cards by two people. One of those men later entered the polling place and tried to vote in the name of another registered voter who no longer lived in the ward. The impostor was caught only because he happened to be challenged by the zoning-board president. He admitted to the police that the group of men from a homeless shelter had been paid \$10 each to vote using others’ names.

## Voter ID can prevent voting under fictitious registrations, double voting by individuals registered in more than one state, and voting by illegal aliens.

One of the reasons that Wisconsin changed its voter-ID law was the finding of a special task force, set up by the Milwaukee Police Department after the 2004 election, that residents from other states had registered and voted. Numerous staffers from out of state working for the John Kerry campaign and the Environmental Victory Campaign, a liberal political-action committee, had illegally registered and voted in Milwaukee.

If liberals couldn’t convince Justice Stevens, they may also have a hard time with Chris Matthews, a former Tip O’Neill staffer and reliable liberal cheerleader in most circumstances. When the topic came up on *Hardball*, Matthews admitted that this type of impersonation fraud has “gone on since the Fifties.” He explained that people call up to see whether you voted or are going to vote, and “then all of a sudden somebody does come and vote for you.” Matthews knows that this is an old strategy in big-city politics: “I know all about it in North Philly—it’s what went on, and I believe it still goes on.”

**I**N addition to deterring and preventing impersonation fraud, voter ID can prevent voting under fictitious registrations, double voting by individuals registered in more than one state, and voting by illegal aliens. There are numerous cases of these types of fraud. Dozens of ACORN employees have been prosecuted for voter-registration fraud—and those are only the

ones who have been caught. If a fraudulent form gets through the minimal-to-nonexistent screening efforts made by election officials when they process new voter-registration forms, then the potential exists for bogus votes to be cast in the names of nonexistent people.

The possibility of double voting was illustrated by an incident that was highly embarrassing to the League of Women Voters in the Indiana voter-ID case. A newspaper in Indiana decided to interview a voter who was highlighted by the League as a victim of disenfranchisement in its amicus brief contesting the law. It turned out she had had difficulty voting because she had tried to use a Florida driver’s license to vote in Indiana. Not only did she have a Florida driver’s license, she was also registered to vote in Florida, where she owned a second home. In fact, she had claimed residency in Florida by filing for a homestead exemption on her property taxes.

More than one study has found individuals who are registered in more than one state. A *New York Daily News* article in 2004 found 46,000 New Yorkers registered to vote in both New York and Florida. Between 400 and 1,000 had voted in both places in at least one election. (Remember, George W. Bush won Florida in 2000 by a margin of only 537 votes.)

There have also been many reported cases of non-citizens’ registering and voting. A federal grand-jury report released in 1984 found large numbers of aliens registered to vote in Chicago.

The U.S. attorney estimated that at least 80,000 illegal aliens were registered, and dozens were indicted and convicted for registering and voting.

Readers may remember that a California congressional election was almost overturned in 1996 because of illegal voting by non-citizens. Loretta Sanchez beat incumbent U.S. Rep. Bob Dornan by a mere 979 votes. The election was investigated by a House committee that found “clear and convincing” evidence of 624 invalid votes by non-citizens and “circumstantial” evidence of another 196 non-citizens’ voting. This election might have been stolen by illegal voting (and it probably was, since the House investigation compared the voter list only to INS records, which do not contain information on illegal aliens who have not been detained).

There may not be massive voter fraud in all of our elections, but there are enough reported cases and prosecutions to make it obvious that we need to take basic steps to ensure the security of our voting system.

**T**HE baseless claim that voter ID is a Republican plot to depress the votes of minorities, who disproportionately support Democrats, certainly isn’t made by those Democrats who overwhelmingly control the Rhode Island legislature that passed voter ID. State representative Jon Brien, a



Democratic sponsor of the bill, said it was wrong for party leaders to “make this a Republican-versus-Democrat issue. It’s not. It’s simply a good-government issue.” Brien added that “we as representatives have a duty to the citizenry to ensure the integrity of our elections, and the requirement to show an ID will ensure that integrity.” State senator Harold Metts, a black Democrat whose support of Rhode Island’s voter-ID bill angered the ACLU and other leftist organizations, said he was “more interested in doing the right thing and stopping voter fraud.” And polling shows that the so-called leaders of the civil-rights establishment who oppose voter ID are actually out of touch with their constituents, who recognize that voter fraud often hits hardest in minority communities.

Election data in Georgia demonstrate that concern about a negative effect on the Democratic or minority vote is baseless. Turnout there increased more dramatically in 2008—the first presidential election held after the state’s photo-ID law went into effect—than it did in states without photo ID. Georgia had a record turnout in 2008, the largest in its history—nearly 4 million voters. And Democratic turnout was up an astonishing 6.1 percentage points from the 2004 election, the fourth-largest increase of any state. The black share of the statewide vote increased from 25 percent in 2004 to 30 percent in 2008, according to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. According to Census Bureau surveys, 65 percent of the black voting-age population voted in the 2008 election, compared with only 54.4 percent in 2004, an increase of more than ten percentage points.

For those who might reply that this was because Barack Obama was on the ballot, think again. Mississippi, with an equally large black population and no voter ID, had its Democratic turnout increase by only 2.35 percentage points. Georgia’s registration records show that while only 42.9 percent of registered black Georgians voted in 2006, when there was no photo-ID requirement, 50.4 percent voted in the 2010 congressional elections—an increase of more than seven percentage points. Georgia’s secretary of state recently pointed out that, compared with 2006, voter turnout in 2010 “among African Americans outpaced the growth of that population’s pool of registered voters by more than 20 percentage points.”

Indiana witnessed similar results. In the state considered to have the nation’s strictest voter-ID law, turnout in the Democratic presidential primary in 2008 quadrupled from the 2004 election, when there was no photo-ID law. In the general election, the turnout of Democratic voters increased by 8.32 percentage points from 2004, the largest increase in Democratic turnout of any state. Neighboring Illinois, which has no photo-ID requirement and is Obama’s home state, had its Democratic turnout increase by only 4.4 percentage points—barely half of Indiana’s increase. In the 2010 election, Indiana was one of the states with a substantial increase in black turnout: “The black share of the state vote was higher in 2010 than it was in 2008, a banner year for black turnout,” according to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. The black share of the total vote went from only 7 percent in 2008 to 12 percent in 2010.

## THE FRANKLIN CENTER FOR GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC INTEGRITY IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

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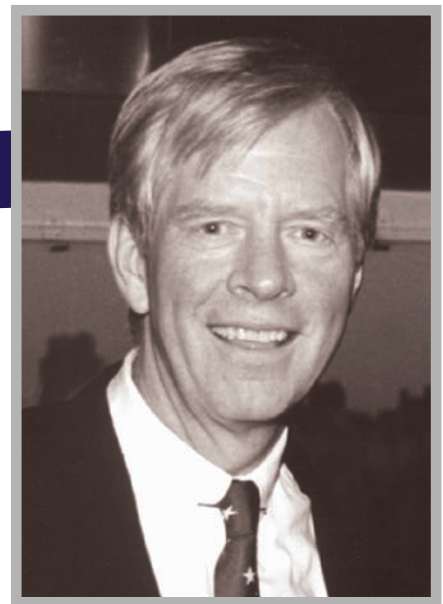
Mr. Stiles will report for *National Review* on matters related to taxes and fiscal policy. This one-year fellowship was created to honor “Dusty” Rhodes, a true conservative leader and the former Chairman of *National Review* and The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, which has generously provided funding for this position.



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Numerous studies—including those by the Heritage Foundation, the University of Missouri, the University of Delaware, and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln—have looked at data from many states and several elections and concluded that voter ID does not depress turnout. In fact, the Delaware/Nebraska study said that “concerns about voter-identification laws affecting turnout are much ado about nothing.”

About the only thing the Left has had to rely on for its hollow claims about photo ID is a flawed 2006 study—titled “Citizens without Proof”—by the Brennan Center at NYU’s law school supposedly showing that millions of Americans who are eligible to vote lack photo ID. The Brennan Center has been vigorous in opposing almost every sensible voter reform, from voter ID to requiring proof of citizenship when registering to vote. This 2006 study is dubious in its methodology and especially suspect in its sweeping conclusions. It is based on a survey of only 987 “voting-age American citizens,” although it contains no information on how it was determined whether a respondent was actually an American citizen entitled to vote, and might easily have included illegal and legal aliens, felons, and others who are ineligible. The survey then uses the responses of these 987 individuals to estimate, based on the 2000 Census, the number of Americans without valid documentation. Although the report

THE weakness of the case against voter ID has been much in evidence in courtrooms. The Indiana and Georgia voter-ID laws were upheld by state and federal courts. In the Georgia case, the federal court pointed out that after two years of litigation, none of the plaintiffs, including the NAACP, could produce a single otherwise eligible voter who did not have a photo ID or could not easily obtain one. That failure was “particularly acute,” the court wrote, “in light of the Plaintiffs’ contention that a large number of Georgia voters lack acceptable photo ID.” Similarly, in the Indiana case, the federal court noted that “despite apocalyptic assertions of wholesale voter disenfranchisement, Plaintiffs have produced not a single piece of evidence of any identifiable registered voter who would be prevented from voting.”

The Georgia court said that the claim that voter ID is the same as a poll tax “represents a dramatic overstatement.” Imposing tangential burdens “does not transform a regulation into a poll tax” and “the cost of time and transportation” to obtain a free ID “cannot plausibly qualify as a prohibited poll tax because those same ‘costs’ also result from voter registration and in-person voting requirements, which one would not reasonably construe as a poll tax.” All of the states implementing voter ID have provided free IDs for anyone who does not already have one. As Rhode

## With the courts against them, the public against them, and the turnout in actual elections against them, what do liberals have left? Only racial polemics and fear-mongering.

says it was weighted to account for underrepresentation of race, it does not provide the methodology used.

By neglecting to ask whether respondents were actual or likely voters, registered voters, or even eligible voters, the study ignored the most relevant data: the number of eligible citizens who would have actually voted but could not because of voter-ID laws. All pollsters know that the only really accurate polls are of likely voters, not of the voting-age population. Surveys of registered voters have shown the exact opposite of the Brennan Center study: American University found that less than one-half of 1 percent of registered voters in Maryland, Indiana, and Mississippi lacked a government-issued ID. A 2006 survey of more than 36,000 voters found that only 23 people in the entire sample would be unable to vote because of an ID requirement.

Also, the Brennan Center survey didn’t ask whether people had IDs; it asked whether IDs were “readily available.” And the question about citizenship documentation asked whether respondents had access “in a place where you can quickly find it if you had to show it tomorrow,” even though elections are not scheduled on such a short-term basis. This was obviously intended to skew the results. The survey also failed to ask whether respondents had student IDs, which are acceptable under many state laws, or tribal IDs, which are acceptable in some states, including Georgia and Arizona. On one question, 14 percent of respondents were so confused that they said they had both a U.S. birth certificate and naturalization papers.

Island state senator Harold Metts said, “In this day and age, very few adults lack one of the forms of identification that will be accepted, and the rare person who does can get a free voter-ID card.”

With the courts against them, the public against them, and the turnout in actual elections against them, what do liberals have left? Only racial polemics and fear-mongering. Vitriolic rhetoric is a sign of desperation, since claims of “suppression” and “intimidation” have been shown to be completely untrue. Is the problem here that certain liberals want to be able to preserve what Chris Matthews says still goes on in the Democratic machines in places like Philadelphia? We can be grateful that even some Democrats at the local level are finally realizing that everyone who believes in our democratic system has an interest in ensuring the security and integrity of our election process. That’s why it was Democrats who passed the Rhode Island law, and Democrats in Kansas who signed on with their Republican colleagues to pass their voter-ID law.

As Texas state representative Joe Pickett, a Democrat from El Paso, said, “If I really, truly thought that this would disenfranchise somebody, I would’ve voted against. In these days and times, it’s just not the case. . . . Having a basic identification is a function of everyday life.”

Nobody likes standing in line at the DMV, but elections come only every other year, and are scheduled well in advance. There is no reason for a voter to lack a photo ID, and every reason to require one.

NR



# Build, Hold, And Clear

*An American strategy for Asia*

BY MICHAEL AUSLIN

AMERICA'S next global era is dawning. As we scale down military operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq, our future prosperity, influence, and security will be determined by what happens in the rising Indo-Pacific region. If we play a leading role in the great area stretching from India to Japan, the coming decades will see the strengthening not only of American power, but also that of our liberal, democratic allies. Conversely, surrendering the high ground in Asia to China will likely result in the ebbing of the post-war liberal international system and the establishment of a region, and world, of greater insecurity and instability. Two questions face a Washington focused on cutting budgets and stressed after a decade of combat in the Middle East. First, do we have the will to succeed in the Indo-Pacific? And second, do we have the means to continue to lead?

The answers may lie in our recent combat experiences. A cornerstone of America's counterinsurgency approach in Iraq and Afghanistan has been the strategy of "clear, hold, and build"—that is, clear out insurgents, hold the area, and then build up local political and economic institutions to maintain stability. While many observers worry that the Defense Department under former secretary Robert Gates became too monolithically focused on counterinsurgency, the reigning counterinsurgency doctrine may actually provide a strategy for America's policy in the Indo-Pacific region over the next decades—but only if it is turned upside down, into a "build, hold, and clear" strategy.

The Indo-Pacific is and will remain the most dynamic region on earth. After World War II, we—a nation with a traditionally Eurocentric mindset—naturally placed Europe at the apex of our national-security concerns, despite our involvement in proxy wars around the globe. As the Soviet Union peacefully dissolved in 1991, our focus moved to the Middle East, spurred by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. The following decade saw American involvement in that region slowly deepen, as al-Qaeda and Islamic terrorism generally impinged more and more on U.S. interests, culminating in the global war on terror from 2001 onward. Now, with the end of combat engagement in the Middle East, America is being drawn farther east, to the Indo-Pacific region.

Obviously, during each of these periods, Washington remained engaged around the world, dealing with multiple crises in the Middle East during the Cold War and confronting

Chinese assertiveness during the 1990s and in the months just before 9/11. But during each of the post-WWII periods, there was a broad national consensus on the key threats to America's safety and the key opportunities for its prosperity, and Europe and the Middle East dominated national-security thinking throughout. In the coming Indo-Pacific era, the U.S. will not abandon its commitments to the Middle East, and will have to deal with a potentially nuclear-capable Iran, possible European economic collapse, and continued terrorist threats. But our new national consensus will undoubtedly center on the opportunities and threats that Asia poses to America's future.

The Indo-Pacific region stretches from the Indian Ocean to the Western Pacific. It contains over half the world's population, including India and China, the two most populous countries; the world's largest democracy, in India; two of the largest economies, in China and Japan; and at least three nuclear-capable powers. The struggle for democracy and liberalism has made extraordinary strides in the Indo-Pacific over the past several decades. The region has been anchored by Japan, Australia, and India, and countries ranging from South Korea to Taiwan, Mongolia, and Indonesia either have become full-fledged democracies or are continuing their liberal political evolution; others, such as Thailand and the Philippines, struggle with democratic stability.

The Indo-Pacific is the world's economic engine and is responsible for the bulk of global consumer production. With a growing middle class in the hundreds of millions stretching from India through China to Japan and Korea, it is also one of the primary growth markets for global exporters. Already, the region accounts for about \$1 trillion in trade in goods with the United States. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce calculates that around 11 million U.S. jobs depend in some fashion on trade with the broad Asian region.

The growth of the Indo-Pacific region, while beneficial to consumers, nonetheless poses significant challenges for future economic stability. China's energy consumption has doubled since 2000, and it accounted for 78 percent of the global increase in the use of coal in the past decade. Japan is the world's fourth-largest consumer of energy, while Korea clocks in at number ten. All of these countries are dependent on imports. The long-term economic expansion in Asia not only will put increasing pressure on global energy prices in coming decades, but has implications for the security of maritime transport routes, port safety, terrorism, and regional conflict over potential energy resources. Such conflict has spiked in recent years, with conflicting claims over territory in the East and South China Seas that holds oil and natural-gas reserves.

The Indo-Pacific region also hosts some of the world's largest militaries. China, Japan, South Korea, and Australia have sophisticated, modern air and naval forces, while developing countries such as India, Indonesia, and Vietnam are buying new submarines (and, in the case of India, new ships and fighter jets as well). North Korea maintains a million-man army and an active nuclear- and ballistic-missile program. Over 40,000 U.S. troops remain permanently based in the Indo-Pacific, and the majority of our aircraft carriers, destroyers, and submarines are either in the Indo-Pacific region or based on the West Coast of the U.S. In coming years, the U.S. will likely base a larger percentage of its bomber and fighter fleet in the Pacific region.

*Mr. Auslin is a resident scholar, and a director in Asian and security studies, at the American Enterprise Institute.*

Of particular concern is China's military buildup. Beijing is developing military capabilities to reduce America's qualitative superiority and effectively target our bases and forces. Its hope is to create an environment in which the U.S. military will be hindered from accessing the region and operating freely within it. Among the programs especially worrisome to U.S. military planners are the DF-21 anti-ship ballistic missile, which is designed to track U.S. large ships at sea; the J-20 stealth fighter, which could reduce the edge of our stealthy F-22s and future F-35s; the growing submarine fleet, which now numbers over 70; and ongoing cyber-warfare programs, designed to attack the networked structure of America's defense machine.

**P**OLICYMAKERS need to begin planning and implementing a strategy for the next American era today, before we lose more ground economically or before insecurity leads to instability and the possibility of military conflict.

Like traditional counterinsurgency, this takes time, commitment, and resources. The way forward is to build, hold, and clear.

The core of American strategy in Asia for the past six decades has been a system of bilateral mutual-defense alliances. These pacts, with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines, not only committed the U.S. to the protection of these nations during the Cold War, but also made possible a permanent U.S. presence in the region, particularly because of the alliance with Japan, which provides the major bases for U.S. forces in Asia.

While these bilateral alliances have served us well, and will remain the core of U.S. security relationships in Asia, it is time to build a larger community in the Indo-Pacific region with partners both old and new. By building such a new structure, the U.S. can more explicitly promote a more democratic, prosperous, and stable region. This new community should comprise liberal or liberalizing nations large and small that collaborate with one another and with Washington to promote regional stability and enhance security. This new architecture can be conceived of as a set of "concentric triangles," linking regional powers with smaller, developing nations. It is not an alliance system, but rather a community of interests that will provide varying levels of public goods—stability and security—necessary for future economic growth in the Indo-Pacific.

The outer triangle should comprise Japan, South Korea, and Australia, all American allies, along with India, the next great rising power in the region. The basic political and social values shared by these four countries, along with their growing commitment to global free trade, provide a common foundation for promoting democratic governance, civil society, and rule of law throughout the region. Each is involved with numerous

countries, providing aid, concluding free-trade pacts, and sometimes doing joint military exercises. Most important, each is influential among its neighbors, so all four might take leadership roles in their immediate neighborhoods, in partnership with U.S. military forces. Washington should aim at a permanent high-level forum with these four liberal nations to discuss region-wide security issues, identify common threats and challenges, and speak with a common voice when possible in regional and international institutions.

While it might be easier initially to work with America's three current allies, no realistic diplomatic and security initiative is possible without India's participation. U.S. policy should encourage all four nations to commit to shaping regional political institutions in a liberal vein and to committing resources to uphold regional security both broadly and, more specifically, in their immediate areas. Working with the U.S., each should slowly expand the range of its maritime patrols, conduct larger and more regular military exercises, enhance and share intelligence, and work with smaller nations to encourage liberal development.

While this outer triangle is focused on the grand strategy of the Indo-Pacific region, the U.S. should also build an inner triangle, comprising Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam. This triangle is centered on the lower South China Sea and, particularly, crucial sea lanes including the Malacca Strait, through which over 60,000 vessels and one-quarter of global trade passes every year, not to mention half of global oil shipments. This area is the hinge between the Indian and Western Pacific Oceans, linking together the two halves of the Indo-Pacific. These countries are strategically located, deeply involved in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), pressed by Chinese maritime territorial claims, economically crucial, and (with the exception of Vietnam) liberalizing in varying degrees.

Economic growth in all these countries is creating a new, affluent middle class, and each government should be encouraged to further liberalize its political and economic systems. Already Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia have joined in anti-piracy patrols and cooperated with the U.S. and Australia on anti-terrorism policy. Each has pushed ASEAN to take a firmer stand against Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and has also been involved in developing the East Asia Summit (which is the only all-Asia multilateral forum, and in which liberal nations are trying to play a leading role). Their interests and location make them ideal partners to contribute to enhanced security in the crucial sea lanes, providing valuable intelligence locations and possibly new access for U.S. and allied naval and air forces. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam in particular seek to build up their naval and air capabilities to patrol their widespread coastlines and maritime territories.

The U.S. and the countries of the outer triangle should work with the inner-triangle states to identify common security concerns, develop the inner-triangle countries' military capacity, increase professional military exchanges, engage grass-roots political movements and civil-society leaders, and encourage further political liberalization. The aim should be building a steady movement toward openness and democracy while strengthening the inner-triangle countries' security capabilities and cooperation.





**B**UILDING a new community of interests in the Indo-Pacific is of little value if the U.S. does not hold its position in the region. A holding strategy requires committing the diplomatic, economic, and military resources required to carry out the building policy described above.

We must have a clear diplomatic line that does not confuse our friends and realistically calls out those nations that act in destabilizing ways. The Obama administration has begun to openly put such pressure on China over maritime territorial claims, but our reluctance to make clear China's negative policies with respect to North Korea, Burma, Iran, and other nations, as well as its continuing abysmal human-rights record, means we are sending mixed messages to those nations that seek to adhere to higher standards of international and domestic behavior. Washington needs not only to play a more prominent role in regional institutions such as the East Asia Summit, but host Indo-Pacific democracy forums to give a voice to liberal elements throughout the region.

The Indo-Pacific's great economic dynamism makes it especially unfortunate that, under the Obama administration, the U.S. has surrendered the high ground on free trade. We are losing to China, which has steadily expanded its free-trade zones, including with ASEAN, though in ways that do not protect workers' rights or include rigorous consumer-safety mechanisms. Washington needs to recapture leadership on free trade, ensuring markets for American exports, continued affordable consumer goods at home, and the free flow of ideas that fosters economic activity. Our position in the Indo-Pacific will become less tenable if we are a bystander to the growth of India, Vietnam, Indonesia, and other countries.

Holding our military position in the region is of seminal importance, particularly in the face of China's development of advanced weapons systems that may one day equal our naval and air forces. In the foreseeable budgetary future, this will be one of the most difficult elements of the strategy to carry out, but the expense is far outweighed by the potential cost of losing our military edge in a rapidly changing security environment. Holding our position requires a careful mix of maintaining top-level forces in the theater as well as expanding our access throughout the region. Rebalancing our global forces so as to put more submarines, ballistic-missile defense measures, and stealth aircraft in Asia will reassure allies and complicate any aggressive plans of potential adversaries. Gaining basing rights in Australia, and seeking access for air and naval units in Southeast Asia, will provide flexibility in times of crisis. Given China's increasing ability to target our forward bases in Japan and Guam, however, part of holding our position in the Indo-Pacific must include developing next-generation long-range strike capabilities that can be based securely on U.S. soil but will be able to reach areas where adversaries will attempt to deny access to U.S. air and naval units.

Even as the U.S. builds and holds in the Indo-Pacific, the region will continue to change. Enmities among Asian nations are unlikely to disappear anytime soon, China's military growth already is resulting in other nations' building up their naval and air forces, and North Korea continues to threaten its neighbors and regional stability. Thus, America must be willing to clear out obstacles to stability and political development. This means not a simple reliance on military force, but rather a plan to apply the forms of national power discussed above.

Washington should look for ways to reduce the maneuvering space of regionally disruptive actors. This means ramping up pressure on North Korea by reinstituting broad financial sanctions, and refusing to do business with Chinese companies that are supporting Pyongyang's economic activity. With regard to China, this means not ceding "water space," as the U.S. Navy puts it, and continuing full surveillance in regional waters and airspace. It also means that the U.S. must more aggressively shadow Chinese naval ships that are in the process of harassing neighbors, and maintain a constant presence in sometimes contested waters. If China continues to abet Pyongyang's missile proliferation or acts in other disruptive ways, the U.S. should not hesitate to limit or cancel the military exchanges with Beijing that we have been eager to keep going as proof of our earnestness.

Ultimately, the U.S. must be serious about its willingness to deal with problems that threaten to precipitate conflict. The steady erosion of stability caused by North Korea's ongoing provocations and China's growing assertiveness may lead to miscalculation or such heightened tensions that military conflict erupts. For example, South Korea has made clear that it will respond to any further attacks on its territory, and U.S. war planners must be willing to take action to degrade North Korean capability to carry out such attacks. We also must be ready to exploit weaknesses in China's military systems and command structures so as to ensure decisive victory in any confrontation, in part as a way to reduce the likelihood that a conflict will break out. As serious as such steps would be, even worse would be to reach a tipping point at which U.S. credibility is lost, and a more *Machtpolitik* competition among regional powers leads to long-term instability.

**A** BUILD, hold, and clear strategy is the most flexible and realistic approach to maintaining American influence and protecting our interests in the Indo-Pacific region. No doubt some, especially those in Beijing, will see this as a plan to contain China. In reality, this approach is not anti-China, but pro-Asia. Our goal should be an unreserved commitment to defending against the slow deterioration of security in the Indo-Pacific region, leading the continuing growth in economic production and trade, and furthering the trend of political liberalization.

America's economic health and global leadership in the next generation depend on maintaining our role in the world's most dynamic region. This means deepening the liberal order that has driven Asia's growth over the past half century. It also means providing a viable alternative to China's growing political, economic, and military influence. By promoting a more prosperous and more stable Indo-Pacific region, not just we, but our allies and partners, will benefit, and China, too, eventually may decide to play a more constructive role in upholding a system from which it has benefited as much as any other nation.

**NR**





# The Bent Pin BY FLORENCE KING

## The Virgin Mother

**A** NEW version of an old song is running through my head. “‘M’ is for the million threats against you. ‘O’ is for Orlando’s mounted cops. ‘T’ is for tattoos about the fast lane. ‘H’ is how you framed your poor old pops. ‘E’ is for your eyes so cold and empty. ‘R’ means lots of royalties in store . . .”

Put them all together and they spell Casey Anthony, Mother of the Year.

I have a dog in this fight. If the West Point class of 1915 is called “the class the stars fell on” for the number of World War II generals it produced, my junior-high class of 1950 is the class a ton of bricks fell on from Hollywood’s gut-wrenching portrayals of mother-love in ’40s-era movies. They have since been shown so many times that they have become virtual lodestars of America’s cultural baggage, which is why two-thirds of the country plus Nancy Grace (the other third) all hate Casey Anthony.

Three movies raise the bar of maternal devotion so high that it is hard to see over it, much less clear it. The first is *Stella Dallas*, starring Barbara Stanwyck as a low-class woman who marries a high-class man on the rebound and finds that she can’t shake her innate commonness. They soon separate, and Stella takes up self-immolation, living only for their daughter, who takes after her father and, like him, is embarrassed by her mother’s trailer-park tastes and habits. After each faux pas, feisty Stella swallows her tears and tries, tries again until we accept that motherhood means being bravely hurt, spunkily crushed, and gaily heartbroken on a daily basis.

At last, with only one sacrifice left, she makes it and gives the girl up to her father. In the final scene, she stands happily in the pouring rain gazing through the window of a mansion whose aristocratic guests she fears to embarrass with her presence, watching her daughter wed a rich boy. Afterwards she walks away, overjoyed at the thought of her daughter’s brilliant future and utterly unmindful of her own bleak one.

In case we miss the most vital point, Stella drives it home. Discouraging a flirtation, she says: “I’m so wrapped up in Lolly that I don’t think a man could light a fire in me anymore.” It was motherhood versus sex and sex lost.

The second movie in our cultural baggage room is *To Each His Own*, starring Olivia De Havilland as Jody Norris, a small-town virgin who gets pregnant by a World War I pilot who is soon killed in action. She has the baby, a boy, in New York and returns home with a bizarre scheme to have him left on a poor family’s doorstep so that she can offer to adopt him. But before she can bring it off, a middle-class townswoman has a nervous breakdown when her own newborn dies. The doctor tells Jody that the woman will lose her mind if she

doesn’t have a baby to love, so she has no choice but to give up her son to her (married) friend.

Thus begins her obsessive, undeviating devotion to somebody else’s adopted baby that no one could fail to interpret correctly. She starts a cosmetics business and turns it into an empire so that she can buy him anything he wants. She even tries to buy *him*, using her influence with the bank to pressure the adoptive family to let him live with her, but she swarms over him like an adoring bat until he recoils from her and she is forced to send him home.

In despair she moves to England to oversee the London branch of her business. She never marries, contenting herself by keeping scrapbooks on her son with the photos and old report cards sent her over the years by the adoptive mother, who has long since guessed the truth. She is still living in London during World War II when her love child, now an Army pilot, arrives with the American forces. Overcome with joy, devouring him with her eyes, she fixates on him as before, showering

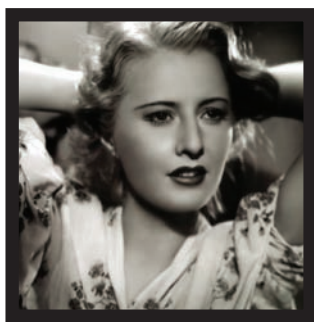
him with money, tickets, reservations, and luxury accommodations, and using her influence with the British government to fix his leave problems until at last he figures out who this “family friend” really is. I’ve always maintained that it was seeing the bulging scrapbooks that did it, but in any case he got the movie’s last line just right. When he says “May I have this dance, Mother?” there wasn’t a dry eye in the house, and one woman had to be supported up the aisle.

Like *Stella Dallas*, Jody Norris led a completely chaste life after childbirth. When a platonic admirer who knows her secret tries to point out the difference between loving a child and loving a man, she disagrees, saying, “It’s the same love, really.” That really raised the bar and the casting did not help: The same actor—John Lund—played both father and son.

The third movie in our cultural baggage room is *Johnny Belinda*, starring Jane Wyman as a deaf mute on a Canadian farm who is raped by a brutal clod and gives birth to a boy. Everyone assumes the father is her sign-language teacher but the rapist, knowing better, decides to take “his son” away from “the dummy.” But when he moves toward the crib, Wyman grabs her father’s shotgun and blows him to bits.

The movie audience exploded with applause and audible gasps of “Maternal instinct!” People kept talking about maternal instinct. Men especially liked this angle, often quoting “The female of the species is deadlier than the male” in sonorous tones, and nodding solemnly when women compared themselves to “a lioness with her cubs.” The message was clear. The ideal mother, when she is not being a sacrificial lamb and a worshipful benefactress, can take a day off and be red in tooth and claw, but she’d better not be sexy.

Casey Anthony’s jury examined the evidence but the rest of us examined the baggage. **NR**



Barbara Stanwyck in *Stella Dallas*

Florence King can be reached at P.O. Box 7113, Fredericksburg, VA 22404.



## The Empire Goes Hungry

WE could spend our time together here detailing the ideas that separate the Right and the Left, but if Maureen Dowd has taught us anything, it's that it's more fun to cast things in the terms of fatuous, ancient pop-culture references. The other day she used *Star Wars*—something about Obama was once a Jedi, and then the Tea Party took his lightsaber away. Wow! That'll get the kids reading the paper. Next week: Is Obama more like Fonzie or Scooby-Doo?

So let's get really hip 'n' current and go back to *The Odd Couple*. Not the sitcom, but the movie. Oscar and Felix are having the Pigeon sisters down for supper. Felix—played with twitchy peevish perfection by Jack Lemmon—has been slaving over a meat loaf, timed to come out at eight. Oscar—Walter Matthau at his slovenly best—cruises in late with a wolfish grin, ready for a night of meat, liquor, single entendres, and some slap-and-tickle with the ripe and flighty neighbors. Felix is incensed: You're late, the meat loaf's ruined. Oscar tells him to pour gravy on it. Felix snaps: Where the hell am I going to get gravy at eight o'clock at night? Oscar: I don't know. I thought it just comes when you cook the meat. Felix: You're an idiot. You have to make gravy. It doesn't just come.

There's the Right-vs.-Left view of wealth, right there. One side believes it's something that naturally arises by some strange arcane process, and the real issue is the size of the ladle you use to scoop it up and pour it over the meat loaf. The Right is more concerned with how the gravy's made.

May I have a *Times* column now? No? Well, let's water-board the metaphor some more. The Left, informed that gravy does not naturally arise, is remarkably incurious about the means by which gravy is produced, impatient with the details. Oh, they have a vague idea—the meat loaf inherits a lot of gravy unfairly, or it's made by people in a kitchen who will be hapless slaves unless they join the Bouillon Congealer's Local #23, or it comes out of the ground, and must be subject to strict regulation lest deep-water gravy wells blow up and foul beaches with rich, delicious sauce. It doesn't matter. What matters is that gravy gets made somehow, and it's the job of the government to regulate its existence and oversee its distribution.

Caring little for the mechanics, they now find themselves irritated and confused that the meat loaf is done, there's no gravy to pour over it, and the neighbor from whom you have borrowed 14 trillion cups of gravy doesn't answer the door when you knock. What now?

Simple. The world ends. And that's a good thing. During the debt-ceiling festival of joy, former Speaker Pelosi summed up the progressive intention quite succinctly: "We're trying to save the world." Oh, is that all. By "the

world" she means everything and everyone in the United States, whose continued happiness is predicated on increasing transfer payments from their modern shameful levels. Never again shall we revisit the dark days of, say, 2007, when skeletal armies thronged the White House gates banging empty bowls on the fence; and the less said about the horrors of 1999, when federal spending was 50 percent less than today, the better. We still remember the heart-rending pictures of congresspeople with their empty eyes and swollen bellies, too weak to bat away the flies, barely able to muster the strength to increase the marginal rates. For heaven's sake, we hardly spend anything on general welfare now—only 66.13 percent of the budget is spent on payments to individuals—and we're talking about going down to 66.02 percent? Just so a handful of people can continue to sail on private gravy-lakes towed around by low-flying corporate jets?

Help me,  
Obi-Dowd!  
You're my  
only hope!

Yes. Because that old world is over. The old world where a mysterious, secretive priesthood called "business" conjured wealth out of the ether so the governing class could strain it through a hundred institutions: done. The idea that no child will be educated if the Department of Education shuts its doors: nonsense. Uterus-to-quietus welfare: sorry. Ever-escalating benefits, paid for by magic sacks of money: impossible.

A half-century experiment in draping steamship anchors around the necks of the productive class and expecting them to run a four-minute mile has ended in failure. The confiscation of rights and property, the moral impoverishment of generations caused by the state's usurpation of parental obligations, the elevation of a credentialed elite that believes academia's fashions are a worthy substitute for knowledge of history and human nature, and above all the faith in a weightless cipher whose oratorical panache now consists of looking from one teleprompter screen to the other with the enthusiasm of a man watching someone else's kids play tennis—it's over, whether you believe in it or not. It cannot be sustained without reducing everyone to penurious equality, crippling the power of the United States, and subsuming the economy to a no-growth future that rations energy.

To which some progressives respond: You say that like it's a bad thing.

You don't know how to reply to that. Help me, Obi-Dowd! You're my only hope! Okay, a pop-culture finish. When the *Odd Couple* have their big fight, Oscar calls Felix's dinner "spaghetti." Felix replies with cold contempt that it's linguini, but it's actually a metaphor for the United States' credit rating. Oscar picks it up and throws it at the wall. "Now," he says, "it's gawbage."

Indeed. The audience laughs when Felix insists he's not going to clean it up. Of course he will. Oscar has no idea where to start.

NR

Mr. Lileks blogs at [www.lileks.com](http://www.lileks.com).



# The Long View

BY ROB LONG

## Official Transcript: Larry Ching Live on CCTV,

SEPTEMBER 9, 2011

**LARRY CHING:** From Harbin, in Heilongjiang Province, ni hao!

**CALLER:** Ni hao, Larry, and ni hao to your guest.

**LARRY CHING:** Ni hao, caller. Do you have a question for the American secretary of the treasury, Mr. Geithner Tim?

**CALLER:** I do, Larry, thank you. I'd like to ask Mr. Tim if he is regretful about the recent downgrading of American sovereign debt?

**LARRY CHING:** Good question! What about it, Mr. Tim? But before answer, can call you Geithner? Is that too familiar?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** Well, Larry, actually, in English it's reversed. So my first name is Tim and my second name is Geithner.

**LARRY CHING:** How about that! Weird! Fun stuff! I am enjoying this nutty interview!

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** If I may, to answer your caller's question, I am of course regretful about Standard & Poor's decision to downgrade the United States' debt, but I am hopeful that this situation can be resolved. As you know, the American economy is still the most powerful and energetic in the world, and our ability to meet our financial obligations remains strong.

**LARRY CHING:** So when do you have to go to the prison farm?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** Well, never, I hope.

**LARRY CHING:** Will you or any of your cadre be executed?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** No, as I've said, this is really not a big problem. The United States remains solvent, and

while I disagree with the decision by Standard & Poor's, I agree with their basic assessment of the current political environment in the United States, which is making it very difficult to address these critical issues.

**LARRY CHING:** Who in the Standard & Poor's economic unit will be imprisoned for this humiliation?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** Well, um, no one, I think.

**LARRY CHING:** No one? An economic unit of the state is not prohibited from humiliating and demeaning the leaders and the people's government?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** Well, no, I mean, I see your point, but . . .

**LARRY CHING:** Will there at least be televised show trials?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** No.

**LARRY CHING:** Will Miss Bachmann Michele be publicly rebuked?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** Only by the media.

**LARRY CHING:** Will anyone in the American ruling cadre have their lakeside retreat or Audi confiscated?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** We operate on a different system . . .

**LARRY CHING:** Surely your children's careers have been ruined?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** My children are very young still . . .

**LARRY CHING:** Wonderful! A family man! How many instruments do your children play?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** I don't . . . I mean . . . I think one of them is starting piano . . .

**LARRY CHING:** One of them is starting piano? Okay. Moving on. What are their most recent test scores in the math or science arena?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** I'm really not comfortable discussing my children, Larry.

**LARRY CHING:** Ouch! That bad, huh?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY**

**MR. GEITHNER TIM:** If we could get back to the subject at hand?

**LARRY CHING:** Okay, okay. Let me recap. No one will be executed, no one will be humiliated on television, no one will lose their lakeside retreat or their Audi, no one will have their children's futures destroyed, no one will face imprisonment or public trial? Am I hearing this correctly? This is crazy crazy!

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** We don't do that in the United States.

**LARRY CHING:** Don't do that! My viewers, don't you love this guy? Tomorrow night! The whole hour with Donnie Yen, Simon Yam, and Siu-Wong Fan! The cast of Ip Man! From Chengdu, in Sichuan Province, ni hao!

**CALLER:** Ni hao, Larry, ni hao Mr. Tim!

**LARRY CHING:** It's just Tim. It's backwards over there. Am I right, Tim?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** That's correct.

**CALLER:** I am wondering if Tim has spoken to Obama Barack about this debt situation and if either one of them is planning on repaying this debt to the glorious Chinese people and culture?

**LARRY CHING:** Good question! Very loosey-goosey operation you have over there. Should we be worried about our money?

**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** As I've said, Larry, the ability of the United States to meet its obligations has never been questioned.

**LARRY CHING:** Yeah, but you know, you've got all this debt here and then you tell me your kids are morons, hard to see how you get out of this mess.

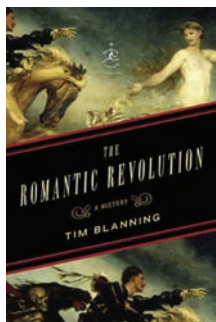
**SECRETARY OF THE U.S. TREASURY MR. GEITHNER TIM:** I didn't say my kids were—

**LARRY CHING:** Up next! The Mrs. Hu tells us all how to eat more healthy! Stay with us! Unless you are at work, in which case please report to your supervisor for an additional assignment!

# Books, Arts & Manners

## Isn't It Romantic?

ALLEN C. GUELZO



*The Romantic Revolution: A History*,  
by Tim Blanning (Modern Library,  
223 pp., \$22)

IN 1836, Alfred de Musset created two fictional blockheads, Dupuis and Cotonet, and allowed them to make themselves ridiculous in the pages of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, trying to define “Romanticism.” At first, they “thought that romanticism meant imitating the Germans.” Then, in 1830–31, they were sure it meant writing historical novels about “Charlemagne, Francis I, or Henry IV.” Then it occurred to them that “romanticism might be a system of philosophy and political economy.” But on further reflection, it seemed more likely to have “consisted in not shaving, and in wearing waistcoats with long, stiffly starched lapels.” In despair, they finally wondered, “Is it *anything*, or is it only a fine-sounding word?”

Defining Romanticism has not gotten any easier since 1836, but neither has our sense of its importance diminished. Isaiah Berlin thought Romanticism was “the greatest single shift in the consciousness of the West”; Kenneth Clark believed that it introduced an entirely new sensibility into European art. But what it certainly was, at the very least, was a revolt against the Enlighten-

ment—against the bourgeois capitalism the Enlightenment had turned into the stuff of heroism, against natural law and natural rights, and against the balance and predictability that Newtonian science had imparted to the 18th-century world. It clothed itself, as so many revolts do, in the costume of what it deemed an unjustly despised past—Hugo’s medieval Paris, Ossian’s epics, the Grimm brothers’ German fairy tales—but its real grasp was for the future, a future that would glorify the politics of race and blood, the philosophy of Dionysian passion, and the aesthetic of the mysterious.

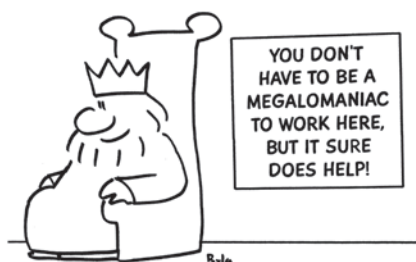
The bulk of Tim Blanning’s long career as a historian at Cambridge has been devoted to the closing scenes of the ancient regime—to Joseph II of Austria (the Enlightenment’s model emperor), to the onset of the French Revolution and its wars, and to the reorganization of the German cities and states after Napoleon’s dismemberment of the Holy Roman Empire. But he has also had a longer view for the history of European culture (as the editor of the *Oxford History of Modern Europe*), and especially for 19th-century music. All of this puts him in a particularly good position to speak of the arrival of Romanticism on the European scene, and he does so with a verve, a breadth, and an authority that exceed every expectation of what might otherwise have been an indecently brief slide show of the Romantic revolution.

Picking a starting point for Romanticism has long been a favorite parlor game: For Berlin, it was Herder and Kant; for Clark, it was alternately the Lisbon earthquake, the nightmare in 1764 that set Horace Walpole to writing *The Castle of Otranto*, Burke’s *Inquiry into the Origins of the Sublime* (1757),

and Piranesi’s *Imaginary Prisons* (1749). For Blanning, it was the day in July 1749 that the eye of Jean-Jacques Rousseau was caught by an advertisement for an essay contest on the question: “Has the progress of the sciences and arts done more to corrupt morals or improve them?” The promoters of the contest were confidently expecting variations on *improve*; it suddenly swam into Rousseau’s head that the real answer was *corrupt*, and from there flowed a lifelong declaration of war against reason, calculation, balance, law, and orderliness, which Rousseau believed had snatched away the “innocence” of humanity.

Isaiah Berlin was deeply suspicious of fingering Rousseau as Romanticism’s progenitor, and Rousseau merits only one passing reference in Clark’s *The Romantic Rebellion* (1973). And Blanning himself introduces a fairly extensive supporting cast for Romanticism’s debut, including Wordsworth (on the sublime), Hamann (on passion), Johann Heinrich Merck (on the deadness of reason), and Kant. But his fundamental instinct for fixing on Rousseau is, I think, straight and true, for Rousseau represented a repudiation of everything the Enlightenment held at its core. Chief among those antagonisms was Rousseau’s (and Romanticism’s) hostility to both democracy and commerce. In a world of natural plenty, Rousseau believed commerce created artificial scarcity (Locke had believed the exact opposite—that this was a world of scarcity that commerce and property turned into a cornucopia). Those who led commercial lives did so under the most deadeningly and harshly rational rule of all, the bottom line, which reduced Nature to mere utility.

The bourgeoisie, therefore, was nothing more than what Goethe called “the gawping public.” What Rousseau hoped to be ruled by was a mysterious “general will” emerging from “the people” as a tribal mass, not by the checks and balances of individuals and their representatives. Nations, as culturally defined organisms rather than assemblies of free and equal citizens, became the object of Romantic ardor.



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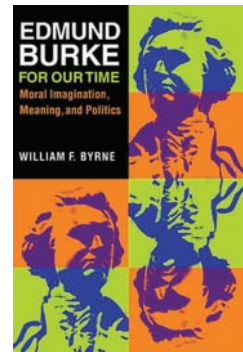


One of the most remarkable aspects of Blanning's little book, and the one most often missing from historical surveys of Romanticism, is his easy grasp of Romantic music, and particularly Beethoven, Wagner, and Berlioz. Only Jacques Barzun (and, in a more strictly academic sense, Charles Rosen) are more effective at connecting the dots between the likes of Goya and Friedrich on one hand, and Carl Maria von Weber and E. T. A. Hoffmann on the other. If there is a serious gap anywhere, it lies in Blanning's failure to draw Romantic politics into this net. For certainly, authoritarian notions of society and politics built on *Blut und Eisen* feed their souls on a Romantic rejection of democratic universalism and natural law. In that sense, Romanticism's darkest legacy is the one that stained the 20th century with fascism and socialism.

The Routledge *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era* takes 1850 as a cutoff date for the Romantic revolution, and there was at that time no shortage of voices that wept for Romanticism's demise at the hands of the triumphant bourgeoisie. Blanning is unconvinced: Rousseau's curdled contempt for reason may have lost its initial momentum a century after his epiphany on the road to Vincennes, but not its enduring attraction, something that Blanning picks out unerringly in Schoenberg, Gropius, and postmodernism. "All postmodernists have in common a rejection of grand narrative, teleology, and rationalism," and when postmodernism is mixed with "a vaguely leftist" touch of "anarchic hedonism," the result belongs "squarely . . . in a line that stretches back to . . . romanticism." I should add only this: that the sound we hear, pulsing beneath, is the thump of jackboots. **NR**

## Was Burke a Burkean Conservative?

DANIEL FOSTER



*Edmund Burke for Our Time: Moral Imagination, Meaning, and Politics*, by William F. Byrne  
(Northern Illinois, 246 pp., \$40)

**B**EN FRANKLIN wrote in 1787, a year of some moment, that "only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters." In many ways, avoiding the latter consequence was the central preoccupation of the Anglo-Irish statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke, a Franklin contemporary. It is also the preoccupation of William F. Byrne's new study of Burke's moral and political thought.

From Burke's time to ours, he has waxed and waned and, with the caprices of intellectual fashion, waxed again in the estimation of conservatives—at the mean, a kind of patron saint of stodgy, staid, cautionary politics more about process than about substance. But Burke was not so easy to pin down even in his own day. A reform-minded, pragmatic British MP, he had expressed sympathy for the American Revolution, worked on behalf of the oppressed Catholics in Ireland, and stridently opposed the Crown's imperial policies in India. So Thomas Paine, who'd assumed he had a natural ally in Burke, was perhaps understandably taken aback by Burke's pique at the revolution in France in 1789, and his famed *Reflections* on the same. Similarly, though Burke was a Whig during most of his parliamentary

## SOUTHERN STORM

To the east is subtropical fern  
Whose shadows imprint the trails to the springs,  
More ancient than the forests themselves.

To the west of these too-deep predawn pools  
There are rolling fields and oaks,  
Green ladies trailing gray lace who shade

The horses grazing there.

Far from northern cities I feel the rain  
Blasting the roof where I have sought cover  
From the lightning which, oddly enough,  
Never strikes the horses who have turned  
Their backs to the storm.

I look out at the sudden dark  
As it moves toward me and the lashing  
Ropes of light as they try to strike the sky.

It moves toward me, then away.  
I wish to measure it and understand its weight.  
But it is gone.

I wonder at the force of its wave  
And the intensity of its light as much as  
I fear the age of the forests  
And the depth of the springs.

—RICHARD E. TRENNERT

career, he counted no less a figure than Samuel Johnson—who had called Whiggism “the negation of all principle” and japed that “the first Whig was the Devil”—as his good friend and admirer. Burke despised the programmatic fixity of “metaphysicians,” but wrote a treatise on aesthetics that influenced the young Immanuel Kant.

And while he has been read by many as a Natural Lawyer of one stripe or another, he’s also been accused, per Byrne, of being “some sort of utilitarian, or proto-progressive, or historical determinist, or pragmatist, or even nihilist.” The muddle is such that there is a growing segment of scholarship that concludes Burke had no coherent philosophy at all, that he was a politician who dealt with questions *à la carte*.

Byrne, a political scientist at St. John’s University, means with this book to push back against this conclusion. He argues that Burke’s writings contain the elements of a rich and robust system of thought that can accommodate Burke’s seemingly scattershot judgments, one centered on a respect for tradition, for caution, and for the place of both reason *and* sentiment in human intercourse as ingredients for a society both publicly virtuous and politically free. It’s a familiar picture of Burke, if also a subtler one with some novel elements. As the title suggests, Byrne also promises a *usable* Burke, a Burke “for our time.” This the author delivers as well, though perhaps not in the way he intends.

Behind Byrne’s scholarship is the sociological fact that he is a working, presumably tenure-tracked academic offering a full-throated normative defense of canonical conservative thought. This makes for some fairly pained attempts to distance both the author and his subject from the kind of right-wing politics that are anathema in faculty halls everywhere. (Often as not, the word “conservative” appears in scare quotes, and the fear is palpable.) Nor would I be surprised to learn that Byrne’s slim book had a previous life as a doctoral dissertation. Like the conscientious graduate student, Byrne zeroes in on his thesis statement early and then spends each subsequent chapter hammering it from a different oblique angle, frequently falling into the trap of telling us what he’s going to argue, arguing it, and then telling us what’s he’s just argued. With

the exception of these stylistic tics, however, Byrne’s prose is highly readable, and his reading of Burke both plausible and illuminating.

Byrne invests much (perhaps too much) of his reading of Burke in a phrase—“moral imagination”—that though Burke appears to have coined, he used only once, in a famous passage from the *Reflections*. It is worth quoting in full:

All the pleasing illusions which made power gentle and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different shades of life, and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns and the understanding ratifies as necessary to cover the defects of our naked, shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

There is much going on here. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, Burke saw the substitution of a cold and unmoored rationalism, novel in the worst sense of the word, for the body of mores and morals that had long held French civil life together. Byrne’s Burke understands our moral faculty as an admixture of reason and sentiment. Healthy judgments of right and wrong come from an application of what he repeatedly calls “prejudices”—instincts, habits, virtues culturally inherited—aided by reason. White papers, economic models, and graduate seminars get you only so far. The rest requires the wisdom of “nations and . . . ages” (Burke’s words) that is all too often dismissed as (our words) “the conventional wisdom.”

We thirst for this conventional wisdom, for the common sense that can’t be gleaned from an Ivy League education but comes only from participation in a multigenerational order greater and more enduring than any passing ideological fad. (How else to explain Sarah Palin?) “Prejudice,” Burke wrote, “renders a man’s virtue his habit, and not a series of unconnected acts.” He placed so much stock in the power of our manners, sentiments, and habits to under-

write our political order that, in a kind of counter-Marxism, he argued that “even commerce and trade and manufacture, the gods of our economical politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures, are themselves but effects which . . . we choose to worship.” In other words, it takes a people with the right sort of habits—the right moral imagination—to create a functioning capitalist society. (And how can we doubt this, as Americans grow shyer of work and increasingly expect the government to vouchsafe a middle-class living?)

What, in particular, furnishes this “moral imagination”? Family and community, for starters, “the little platoon[s] we belong to in society” that are “the first principle . . . of public affections.” Religion, too, which Burke calls “the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort,” and which Byrne reads as important to Burke not only (and perhaps not even primarily) for the literal truth of its doctrines, but for its “rites, narratives, and other trappings.” The *trappings* of power are a big deal for Burke, and he doesn’t apologize for it. Indeed, as Byrne shows, there is a deep agreement between Burke’s writings on politics and his treatise on aesthetics on this score. Burke’s treatment of “the sublime” in art and nature focuses on our appreciation of the awe-inspiring: those objects and ideas that, in their sheer scale, complexity, and power, dumbfound and awe us. Likewise, he understands that part of what is required for real political order is a sense of—strange as it may sound—terror, an appreciation for our part in a whole that is itself beyond our comprehension. So, for Burke, the Catholic Church must be *catholic*. Her Majesty must be *majestic*. There is a real connection between this idea and Burke’s recognition of the fundamental viciousness of political programs that assume in principle that every problem is solvable, all points of view worthy of consideration, and each man the equal of every other.

Education is another furnisher of moral imagination, and Burke saw in revolutionary France a prefiguring of our present cult of self-esteem when he admonished that “instead of forming their young minds . . . to an admiration of famous examples, and to an averseness to anything which approaches to

pride, petulance, and self-conceit,” the revolutionaries “artificially foment these evil dispositions, and even form them into springs of action.”

He cites as well “the theatre” (read today: music, television, film), and believed that a society and its arts could either provide a base of mutual support for a healthy society, or chase each other in a vicious cycle. Although Burke himself authored a long-form satire, he believed strongly that some subjects were not laughing matters. He wrote of his concern about “Players, who daily more than burlesque by their vile Alterations, the Authors from whom they have their daily Bread; and, not content with the many Pieces they have already of that Nature . . . turn all that we have, great or noble, to Farce.” Think of the transition from Edward R. Murrow to Stephen Colbert; from *Pride and Prejudice* to *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*.

As Americans—Left and Right—we’re prone to sniff at a conception of political order that has more to do with submission than with choice, with emotion than with reason. So it is perhaps important to stop here and realize that Burke is not defending the French crown per se, and that his own political tradition, which the *Reflections* seeks to protect against the dangers of Jacobinism, is itself a fairly liberal constitutional monarchy that took its then-current form only after a violent revolution and restoration. Burke’s very point is Benjamin Franklin’s, that *free societies as such* cannot exist without these virtues and sentimental ties.

Byrne spends roughly the first two-thirds of his book on Burke’s concept of moral imagination. This constitutes an argument about the *how* of political order: How, for Burke, is a stable, functional social-political order built? The latter third of the book Byrne spends attempting to answer the question of what the ultimate good is, at which politics should aim. The answer involves the doctrine most often ascribed to Burke *qua* Burkean conservative: the doctrine of gradualism.

While it is prominent throughout Burke’s works, Byrne finds the earliest evidence of this gradualism in an unfinished history of England Burke undertook at the age of 28. In it, Burke praises Pope Gregory I and his successors for

converting the pagan Anglo-Saxons slowly, allowing them to retain—in certain cases right up to the Reformation—those native customs and festivals compatible with Christianity, “in order that the prejudices of the people might not be too rudely shocked by a declared profanation of what they had so long held sacred.”

Burke was himself a pious Christian, so he must see the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons as a good thing. But this is supposed to be problematic, since Burkean conservatism as it is typically understood assumes that traditional practices are, ipso facto, good and worthy of retention. But Byrne suggests that passages like the above show that Burke cares less about whether a standing order is objectively good and more about how it is subjectively perceived by a people: The old “prejudices” of the pagans are to be preserved only so as not to rock the societal boat, smoothing and stabilizing the transition to the new prejudices provisioned by Christianity. But this reading, in turn, raises the question of whether Burke is at root a relativist—or, at best, concerned with order *simpli-citer*, while being agnostic as between particular orders. (There is other evidence of this, such as Burke’s apparent 180 on the concept of natural rights, from generally for to generally against around the fulcrum of 1789, and more generally the muddle and dissonance of his political positions over his career.) Byrne’s answer is nuanced, but it amounts to a kind of “yes, but.” The idea is that Burke believes in something like natural law and an objectively good order authored by Providence, but that we can grasp it but faintly, and our politics must grope toward it humbly, not make bold sallies under the inspiration of grandiose theories.

That Burke can be *read* as relativist or instrumentalist—whether or not he *actually* is one—gets to the core of the doubt that Burke should be considered a figure of the Right at all, and opens up space for his appropriation by liberals as well as conservatives (as we understand those terms today). When President Obama is described as “temperamentally conservative,” we may snicker, but in fact it is quite possible for a committed political progressive to prefer his progress gradual. The organizing principle of Fabianism, the late-19th- and

early-20th-century social-democratic movement, was the slow, piecemeal introduction of socialism to the United Kingdom. It is hard not to see Burke’s fingerprints.

There is now a debate on the right that is not usually described in Burkean terms, but perhaps should be. It centers on the following question: If, the Reagan revolution notwithstanding, American political discourse has become *pre-judiced*, in the Burkean sense, toward progressivism and statism by the consolidation and entrenchment of the New Deal and the Great Society, does that make the Right’s political program itself *radical*? Does it make progressives in Washington *conservative*? (Consider the popularity of such books as *Rules for Radical Conservatives*.)

Why is fear-mongering on Social Security and Medicare reform such a potent tool for opportunists on the left? Is it because the idea of a world in which senior citizens rely even slightly less on the machinery of the state is now alien to people’s political prejudices? Or, to put it more forcefully: Is it because the old American political prejudices, including the emphasis on industriousness and self-reliance, and on a safety net that is at least as much familial and civil-societal as it is governmental, have been vitiated by the slow, steady progress of progressive liberalism?

And if this is the case, what of Burke’s usefulness to “conservatives” on the right? Byrne flutters in the general vicinity of this question only briefly, in a concluding section titled “Burke and the Twenty-First Century,” in which he wonders whether we have come to a point where we must choose between a “liberal order” in the sense Burke would have venerated, and “the sort of radical Enlightenment liberalism that undermines meaning and . . . exists in opposition to its cultural heritage.” But again, fear of “the C-word” prevents him from saying much of use here. So we must ask: Would Burke venerate the status quo and argue for a slow, cautious evolution? Or would he see the vitiation of our moral imagination at the hands of “this new conquering empire of light and reason” and call for something more drastic? If Burke’s legacy is as the Cassandra of Jacobinism, we may ask: What if the Jacobins have already won?

NR



# Something To Fear

RONALD RADOSH

*The Fear Within: Spies, Commies, and American Democracy on Trial*, by Scott Martelle  
(Rutgers, 296 pp., \$26.95)

**D**ECADES ago, the historian Theodore Draper wrote about what he called the “minor academic industry” dedicated to resurrecting the reputation of the American Communist party. The industry’s ranks were composed of “post-New Leftists [who] have turned back to the Communist past in their search for a new faith and vision,” and—despite all that has been learned since Draper wrote those words—their effort continues without pause. Each year brings a variety of new books informing readers of how the American Communists were a major positive force for necessary progress in our country, and how, had not repression been heaped upon them, they would have been able to preserve those institutions—including the trade-union movement—that might have prevented the rise of American conservatism.

The latest in this genre is by a Los Angeles journalist, Scott Martelle, and he offers in *The Fear Within* a study of the post-war Smith Act trial that took place in 1949, when the Justice Department brought to the docket the top leaders of the American CP, and indicted them for conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government by force. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court. In *Dennis v. U.S.*, the Court, led by Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson, ruled in a 6–2 decision that the convictions were legal and that the Smith Act under which the defendants were indicted was constitutional. The Court’s majority decision stated that the government had a right to prohibit the intention to commit acts meant to overthrow the American republic, and to prosecute the plotters before they acted.

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In 1957, the new Warren Court modified the *Dennis* decision. In *Yates v. U.S.*, the Court argued that proving a defendant’s intent to teach revolution was not sufficient to prove that the defendant actually intended to try to make a revolution (and thus run afoul of the Smith Act). The defendants in *Yates* were acquitted. Even Justice Felix Frankfurter, who had concurred in the earlier decision, changed his mind: He had come to believe that First Amendment protections of free speech and assembly had been compromised. As Martelle writes, *Yates* “brought the Smith Act prosecutions to a screeching halt.”

The heart of Martelle’s book is a day-by-day account of the first trial, which led to the conviction of Eugene Dennis and the other first-string Communists. Although Martelle has made use of the papers of the presiding judge, Harold Medina, as well as the papers of some Communist leaders and the CPUSA’s archives at the Tamiment Library in New York, most of his account depends on the transcript of the nine-month trial. He would like his readers to share his conclusions: that the trial “helped propel [the ‘Red Scare’] by giving legal sanction to political persecution” that went far beyond the CPUSA itself, and that “the marginalization of progressive politics shifted the electoral mainstream to the right.”

It is clear, therefore, that Martelle writes from the perspective of the political left. His approach leads him to ignore much evidence in his own book that undercuts his arguments. Over the past two decades, since the release of the so-called Venona decrypts of Soviet intelligence operations in the U.S. and the more recent Vassiliev KGB files, as well as documents found in Moscow by Harvey Klehr and John Earl Haynes, much evidence has been assembled that proves beyond any doubt that the American Communist party was not just another political party, but an institution whose policies, leadership, and programs were forged in Moscow, and that served as a recruiting ground for Soviet intelligence, with the participation and cooperation of the American party’s top leaders.

The name of the late political philosopher Sidney Hook appears nowhere in Martelle’s book, but had he read Hook’s major essay “Heresy Yes—Conspiracy No,” he might have had to take into account those who, even back at the time of the trials, understood that the American Communist party was an organ of Joseph

Stalin and a ready fifth column in the event that war broke out between the U.S. and the USSR. Martelle understands that Soviet spying was not a figment of the imagination, and that the Smith Act indictments took place concurrently with the revelations by Elizabeth Bentley concerning the spy networks she handled in the United States. Yet he exempts the American CP leaders from any connection to espionage, arguing that “no one was accused of spying,” and that no one indicted was charged with any “overt acts” or “detailed plans to attack the government.”

Martelle therefore buys the argument of the defendants’ allies that they were indicted only for the books they read, the institutions they supported, and, “in essence, their thoughts.” From the beginning, readers are told to understand that the trial was one of Americans for their ideas alone, and clearly a violation of our fundamental rights as citizens. It is highly ironic that, as Martelle acknowledges, the Communists themselves were initially supporters of Smith Act prosecutions: In 1941, he writes, the CPUSA “applauded” the wartime indictment of its Trotskyist enemies. What Martelle does *not* mention is that, in the 1941 case, the Communist party—in the words of party boss Earl Browder’s associate Philip Jaffe—“prepared for the Department of Justice an important collection of documents to help prove the guilt of the Socialist Workers Party”: These documents emphasized the SWP’s position that the war was an imperialist war, and concluded that the SWP was essentially a “sabotage organization, concentrating upon the disruption of the war effort.” What the CP argued in defense of the Smith Act is exactly what the 1949 Justice Department would argue was the danger posed by the CPUSA in the Cold War era.

When it comes to the 1949 trial, Martelle believes that all the testimony against the defendants from FBI informants and from ex-Communists was false. The Communists claimed, as one of them said at the trial, that they were “fighting the battle of constitutional democracy versus fascism” and the “right to associate, form a political party of their choice . . . without interference by the government.” The irony that cadres who wanted a dictatorship of the proletariat, with only one political party ruling all, would claim to believe in the principles of American democracy, evidently does not register with Martelle.

He writes that one prosecution witness testified that “party members were told that an emissary from Stalin had sent word that war was in the offing,” and that “when it began they were to go underground and sabotage the capitalist war machine from within.” He says this underscored other testimony “about the secretive nature of the party.” Were these statements as far-fetched as he implies? A few years ago, a labor historian named Albert V. Lannon wrote a post on a historians’ Internet discussion group. Lannon is the son of Al Lannon, later a Smith Act defendant in the second New York Communist trial in 1951, who was the CP’s head of Communist waterfront dock workers in New York City. Lannon wrote that, at the time of his father’s trial, his father told him that while he was in Moscow at the Lenin school for party cadres, he was instructed that if war broke out between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, he was to organize party cadres in the factories and get those at the Celanese plant in Cumberland, Md., to engage in sabotage.

Martelle also writes that one defendant, Gil Green, acknowledged that he had, in a speech, urged the use of violence to attain the party’s goal of achieving Communism in America. Green, he writes, “admitted that he had at times advocated violence—though only . . . if, ‘heaven forbid, America becomes the victim of a fascist dictatorship and change became impossible by orderly, majority, and, above all, democratic means.’” Martelle accepts this as a solid explanation. He ignores what he has, earlier in the book, demonstrated: that, hard as it is to comprehend, in 1949 the CPUSA believed that the U.S. was most of the way to fascism already, and that Pres. Harry S. Truman was the leader of the Wall Street warmongers who desired war with the USSR and the head of an essentially fascist government. Thus Green’s own words reveal that the prosecution was indeed correct in its assertion that the Communists were advocating force and violence, necessary because they lived in a fascist America.

Another defendant, Carl Winter, admitted that—in Martelle’s paraphrase—“the new communist government might have to use force to dissolve class distinctions and against the ‘repressive’ police forces.” According to Martelle, the defendants’ “long-winded answers decrying capitalism and the failures of the modern state to defend the poor and minorities

reinforced [the prosecution’s] argument that these men were dangerous radicals bent on sowing the seeds of revolution.” Of course it did—because they were. After the guilty verdict came in, a few of the convicted defendants fled while on bail, and hid out for years. One of them was World War II hero Robert Thompson, who had received the Distinguished Service Cross. He came to the home of another underground party cadre, Carl Ross, asking to be put up in a safe house. He told Ross it was important that he, Thompson, stay free because he was both a senior CP leader and had military experience in both World War II and the Spanish Civil War, and he would be needed to lead U.S. Communist guerrillas against the American fascist regime, or during World War III should war break out between the U.S. and Russia.

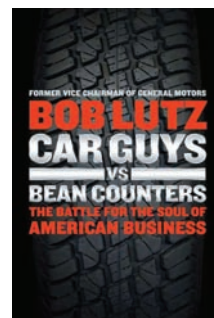
So when key FBI informants—including ex-Communist Louis Budenz and Herbert Philbrick, an FBI infiltrator into the party—testified that, in the event of domestic repression, they would have become underground saboteurs, they were telling the truth. John Gates and Gil Green, two of the defendants who contended that that was not true, were both lying.

Years after the trial, I came to know John Gates. As I sat with him by a swimming pool in upstate New York one summer, he told me that going to prison was the best thing that had happened to him, because it was there that he both discovered America and learned the need to break away from the sectarian Communist world. In prison, he said, he had time to read and think. Later, after Khrushchev’s speech denouncing Stalin and after the Soviet invasion of Hungary, Gates led those American Communists who wanted to change the CP into a democratic organization. Gates would soon leave the party’s ranks and, eventually, go to work for David Dubinsky’s anti-Communist ILGWU garment-workers’ union, where he saw himself for the first time helping patriotic American workers with their real problems. Like Sidney Hook, Gates proudly defined himself as an anti-Communist social democrat, and strongly defended the U.S. war in Vietnam.

How unfortunate that writer Scott Martelle, unlike John Gates, still sees the U.S. during the Cold War years as a repressive power bent on stifling the free speech of innocent revolutionaries. **NR**

# Failure of Design

ARTHUR HERMAN



*Car Guys vs. Bean Counters: The Battle for the Soul of American Business*, by Bob Lutz  
(Portfolio, 256 pp., \$26.95)

WHEN I was born, one out of every two cars sold in the United States was made by General Motors. As the biggest corporation in the world, GM produced 10 percent of everything the United States made to win World War II. When GM CEO Charles Wilson was (mis)quoted as telling Congress in 1953, “What’s good for General Motors is good for the country,” some were furious but few doubted he knew what he was talking about.

Fifty years later, GM was in pieces on the floor, as were Ford and Chrysler. Despite rising sales after the trough of the early Eighties, costs and debt were so overwhelming that even a \$17 billion loan from the Troubled Asset Relief Program in 2008 to GM and Chrysler couldn’t save them from looming bankruptcy (a humiliation that Chrysler had been spared once already by Jimmy Carter). A year later, President Obama ordered a government-supervised reorganization of both—which left Washington owning 61 percent of the company that once symbolized American free enterprise.

Explaining this decline and fall on a Gibbonesque scale is what Bob Lutz, GM’s former vice chairman, who left shortly after the government takeover, tries to do in his new book. Lutz is no

*Mr. Herman is a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.*

Gibbon, and the story is already familiar to any reader of Paul Ingrassia's *Crash Course* or Alex Taylor's *Sixty to Zero*. But it's good to be reminded again of just how America all but killed off its most important manufacturing industry—and how nearly every attempt to reverse the decline only made things worse.

Lutz started at GM in the glory days of the Fifties and Sixties, when its divisions produced classics such as the Pontiac GTO, the Buick Riviera, the '55 Chevrolet with its V-8 engine (which sold in record numbers), and the Cadillac Coupe de Ville. GM designers Harley Earl and Bill Mitchell are Lutz's archetype "car guys," who understood how to create cars that were both innovative and appealing to the American public, and were built for every purse and purpose, as GM's *Pater Patriae* Alfred Sloan once put it.

Then in the Seventies and Eighties, the accountant "bean counters" took over—including Lutz's biggest *bête noire*, GM CEO Roger Smith. They understood numbers better than they knew cars. Steadily but inexorably, GM, like Ford and Chrysler, began to move in the direction of short-term profits instead of long-term vision and growth.

Yet as Lutz himself admits, the two forces that backed GM and the rest of the auto industry into a corner had nothing to do with beans. The first was Congress, with its decision in 1975—in the shadow of an Arab oil boycott and a growing green movement—to impose Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards on cars sold in America, set at 18 miles per gallon by 1978 and 27.5 mpg by 1985. Overnight, the cars that had made GM's reputation, and the sales numbers for the Big Three, became "gas guzzlers" that the companies couldn't produce even if customers wanted them. All three scrambled to retool and redesign. Chrysler, already in trouble, tipped into bankruptcy. At GM, as Lutz describes it, the CAFE standards became the excuse for a disastrous change to front-wheel-drive designs. The result was a series of mediocre models that no one wanted to drive, let alone buy. But German and Japanese auto companies, living with higher gas prices for years, had entire fleets ready to go to market.

Suddenly cars by Volkswagen, Honda, and Toyota were no longer for oddballs but defined the mainstream. A race began

for the sale of small and mid-sized cars, with America's auto industry trying desperately to catch up, shedding factories and jobs along the way. When Roger Smith (the man Michael Moore chases after in his 1989 movie *Roger & Me*) decided that GM had to beat Toyota at its own high-productivity, low-cost game, he set up GM's Saturn division, which proved a financial head-on crash.

The CAFE madness continues to this day, of course, steadily tightening the screws on America's car makers. In fact, it permanently skewed the auto market. It relegated the two- and four-door sedan market to the former Axis powers, but left light trucks like the Dodge Ram, Ford 150, and Jeep Cherokee exempt. GM, Ford, and Chrysler came to rely on rising sales of SUVs to remain profitable, because SUV buyers didn't care how much gas the vehicles burned as long as they did the job and looked tough. The result was that, far from cutting back on oil imports, Washington's policies expanded them. In 1973, they accounted for 35 percent of U.S. oil consumption; in the past decade, they have reached as high as 60 percent.

Even so, the Big Three could have remained profitable by dominating this strong if narrow domestic market, except for a second major factor. This was the unions, specifically the United Auto Workers. After World War II they and the Big Three developed an uneasily cozy relationship, as Lutz admits, with the UAW negotiating with one carmaker every three years for a contract that was the model for everyone else. The employee benefits in those contracts went steadily upward until 1990, when GM CEO Bob Stempel gave way on everything the UAW wanted, including zero-co-pay health insurance for workers and their families. Ford and Chrysler were forced to follow suit, even though the policy held all future profitability hostage to the cost of x-rays and hospital stays.

"In 2001," Lutz writes, "I repeatedly



"You're not fooling anybody but yourself."

"So?—you other people are all illusory anyway."

asked those who were present in 1990 just what the hell they were thinking at the time." It turned out GM's "bean counters" had assumed that health-care costs had peaked, and would go down over the next decade. They turned out to be wrong as, Lutz asserts, they were so often wrong. Then came 9/11, followed by the 2008 financial panic, in which the mountain of debt became a landslide and General Motors found itself transformed into Government Motors.

As for the future, GM has put its faith in its electric Chevy Volt. Lutz mounts a spirited defense of the car, calling it "a shining testimonial to the company's vision and willingness to accept large risk." But that risk is cushioned by billions in loans from the federal government, which have yet to be repaid. In addition, there's something bizarre in citizens' paying a subsidy of \$7,500 in tax credits on a car costing \$41,000 made by a company that's still partly owned by those same citizens.

Still, as Paul Ingrassia has pointed out, the GM bailout may have a silver lining. It forced the unions to claw back their mammoth benefits packages, which has enabled both GM and Chrysler to regain some control over their costs. A decade ago, employee wages and benefits accounted for a third of the cost of building a car; now they're less than 10 percent. UAW workers still pay only 5 percent of their health-care costs, and pictures of Chrysler workers smoking pot on the job haven't done much to reassure the public that Detroit is back. But it's a step toward recovery.

The real test is whether GM and America's other car companies can sell cars again. But sell to whom? Right now, U.S. sales are less than 20 percent of the world market, whose fastest-growing sector is China. The reigning king of world auto sales is Japan's Toyota, which surpassed GM for the first time in 2007 (the tsunami has sent its numbers down this year, but that's likely to be only a short-term problem). Meanwhile, analysts agree that South Korea's Hyundai is today's hottest car company, and that the man who most resembles Henry Ford in his drive and vision is Ratan Tata of India's Tata Motors.

Lutz surely has it right: Car makers with a "passion for excellence" will always win out. It's just been a long time since they spoke English. **NR**



Film

# Roads Not Taken

ROSS DOUTHAT

LATE summer, like midwinter, is a time of year when it's best to shun the big studio releases. Any star-studded blockbuster or crowd-pleasing comedy that's actually worth its budget (i.e., not *Cowboys & Aliens* or *The Change-Up*) would have elbowed its way into theaters between Memorial Day and July 4th; any drama with more than a hint of Oscar potential (i.e., not *The Help*) would have been saved for November or December. Moviegoers are better off seeking out the smaller releases instead, looking for the curious pieces of artistic driftwood that sometimes wash up in a season's dying days.

Perhaps this year's strangest such offering is *Another Earth*, a movie notable for its leading lady (about whom more anon) and its peculiar genre-bending premise. Late on a New England night, the teen-aged and MIT-bound Rhoda Williams (Brit Marling) hears a radio report about a newly discovered Earth-like planet, drunkenly leans out her car window to stare up into the night sky, and plows into a college professor and his family, killing

his wife and son and unborn daughter. The professor (William Mapother) is thrown into a coma, while Rhoda spends four years in prison. Then the movie leaps ahead to after they've both been released—him into grief, her into guilt—and tracks her attempts to forge some kind of connection with the man whose life she recklessly destroyed.

So far this probably sounds like a typical aftermath-of-tragedy melodrama, by turns wrenching and implausible. But there's a science-fiction twist: That "Earth-like planet" turns out to be literally Earth-like, a carbon copy of our own world that suddenly looms up, moon and continents all, in the sky above Rhoda's New Haven home. Moon and continents and people and all: When a SETI scientist tries to make radio contact with the mysterious new world, she ends up having a conversation with her doppelganger on Earth 2.

I just called this "science fiction," but really it's better to call it a *Twilight Zone* conceit, since no real scientific explanation is ever proffered for the doubled Earth, beyond vague references to hidden orbits and alternate universes. It's the latter possibility—that the new world represents some sort of road not taken, where the same people might be living out very different lives—that makes the other Earth an object of obsession for Rhoda, and a destination that she begins plotting desperately to reach.

If the symbolism here seems more than

a little heavy-handed—well, it is. But *Another Earth* deserves points for owning its heavy-handedness and playing its genre mash-up completely straight, without a trace of sub-David Lynch surrealism or ironic self-awareness. One joke or wink, one suggestive dream sequence, one hint that the entire Earth 2 phenomenon might be happening inside Rhoda's guilt-wracked mind, and the spell would be broken. Instead, the movie's unwavering commitment to its premise lends *Another Earth* an interesting sort of integrity, and enables the movie to at least approach the mix of dread and wonder that the filmmakers are clearly aiming for.

The visuals help. *Another Earth* depicts New Haven—the faded brick-and-concrete city, not just the Yale oasis—as a kind of wintry limbo, all sunsets and blue-gray dawns, with the huge Earth 2 looming like a promise of paradise (or damnation?) overhead. In the New England farmhouse where the bereaved professor has hunkered down, the Earthlight washes in at all hours, like a searchlight sweeping over an Andrew Wyeth exhibit. The budget is obviously shoestring and the digital video sometimes feels a little ragged, but overall the movie has a strange beauty all its own.

But it's the cast that really sells the story. Mapother (recognizable to fans of *Lost* and the 2001 indie darling *In the Bedroom*) has a great face for suffering, with sunken eyes and furrows like ravines. Marling has a great face, period: Long and luminous and expressive, with precisely the mix of loveliness and mystery that separates the potential movie star from the mere onscreen beauty. She's in almost every scene, and she holds the film together: The melodrama may creak and the fantastic element may teeter on the edge of absurdity, but the audience never stops believing in Rhoda's humanity, her anguish, or her heart.

Marling co-wrote Rhoda as well as bringing her to life. (The script for *Another Earth* is her collaboration with the film's director, Mike Cahill, who's also her ex-boyfriend.) I'm not sure if she should stick with screenwriting: This movie is too strange to tell us much about what its makers might be capable of writing next. But her acting is another matter. Whether Brit Marling keeps turning out scripts or not, every director in Hollywood should be lining up to make sure that she keeps on starring in them.

NR



Brit Marling as Rhoda Williams

*The Straggler*

# A Glimpse Of Hell



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

I—'ave—marched—six—weeks in  
'Ell an' certify  
It—is—not—fire—devils, dark, or  
anything,  
But boots—boots—boots—boots . . .

**A**LSO shoes, skirts, dresses, blouses, lingerie, jeans, and sportswear. Jewelry, too; fine leather and luggage; housewares and home furnishings. Kipling's soldier didn't know the 'alf—sorry, half—of it.

We had been visiting with friends in upstate New York. Now we were driving home. The first hundred miles was delightful: lovely scenery, clear empty roads under bright skies. Then the landscape flattened out somewhat, traffic thickened as we got closer to New York City, and towns became more frequent. We decided to stop and get something to eat before braving the suburban expressways.

Mrs. Straggler was at the wheel; I was in the passenger seat, half dozing, half listening to some Teaching Company lectures; the kids were in the back with their gadgets. My lady saw an exit she liked, saying: "I've heard of this place. They have a food court."

I grunted assent, assuming this was some kind of mall or service area. We took the exit. We parked. We walked to a Disneyland-sized complex of buildings and open plazas, teeming with people.

Quite suddenly I awoke to the nature of the place. It wasn't a regular mall at all. I wouldn't have minded that: A mall generally has a bookstore. No, this was a sort of little village *containing nothing but designer outlets!*

I know about designers, of course.

They design things. Then they put their names on them. Then people—people whose thought processes are as inaccessible to me as those of a Siberian shaman—pay premium prices for the thing with the name on it, which they carry home in an ostentatious bag that also bears the designer's name. Those people will even journey long miles from New York City out here to the bear-haunted wildernesses beyond the Tappan Zee Bridge to gather their designer items.

And there they were: Gucci! Izod! Tommy Hilfiger! Lacoste! Ralph Lauren! I know the names of course. How can you live in the world today and not know them? I had hoped, though, to make it clear through to the Garden of Rest without ever having to engage with any of them. Plainly this grace was not to be vouchsafed to me.

I need to pause here to explain my utter failure as a consumer. I am totally the wrong person to be living in a consumer society. I buy things only when I need them and cannot get them otherwise. Then I use them until they disintegrate. My car is a 1993 Mercury. My TV is a 1992 Sony Trinitron, humongous old glass tube in wooden cabinet: It needs two healthy adult males to lift it. My bicycle was given to me by a neighbor who moved house seven years ago; it had been at the back of his garage so long he'd forgotten he owned it.

It's true that I purchased a new laptop computer recently, but only because my wife had commandeered the old one. That's "old" as in "six years old." I tell you, if my habits of consumption were the norm among Americans, our economy—not to mention China's—would have collapsed long since even without the attentions of Messrs. Obama, Geithner, and Bernanke.

All that applies twice over for clothing. I buy an item of menswear about once every five years, and then only after some nagging by my wife. My best suit is one I had made by a London tailor during a spell of unmarried prosperity in the early 1980s. My second best is newer—late 1990s. I bought some white shirts last year on a whim, but that was extraordinary—possibly I was on some kind of medication.

You can't be less of a consumer than I am, unless you're Amish. Yet here I was in consumer heaven. (Practically none of whose inhabitants, I noted with curious

interest, are Caucasian, though New York's Orange County, where the place is situated, is reckoned by the 2010 census to be 68.2 percent non-Hispanic white.) Heaven for them, 'Ell for me.

Jean-Paul Sartre wrote a play portraying Hell as a locked room in which three very unpleasant people must endure each other's company for ever. The moral of the thing was supposed to be that Hell is other people. Though far from gregarious, I had never previously had much sympathy with this notion. I have always thought that personally, if stuck in that room, I'd try to get a game of cribbage going. Now, among these happy consuming throngs, I saw Sartre's point.

The shoppers drifted to and fro, talking of Uggs and Ferragamo. I saw a certain light in Mrs. Straggler's countenance, and in my daughter's, and was at once gripped with a terrible fear: that I might be forced to browse the stores with my womenfolk. I tried to make eye contact with my son, but he was sunk in hopeless apathy. In imagination I saw my happy terrestrial home, as I suppose the dead must, and yearned for it—my quiet study, my desk, my books. Would I ever be there again?

Then suddenly—a miracle! We heard a muffled collective gasp from the nearest building, followed by some laughter. People began to surge out, from this and the other stores. "Power outage," explained a passing shopper when we inquired. It was, very appropriately to the drift of my imagination, a searing hot day. Apparently the local air-conditioning burden had proved too much for some transformer. The whole place had lost power.

Soon the stores were empty. Employees bolted the doors closed. Fire trucks arrived with great clamor, though their relevance to the situation was not clear to me. Some of the shoppers stood around disconsolate in the plazas; most headed for the parking lots. So did the Stragglers: two disappointed, one passive, one inwardly exulting.

In the great crawling press of traffic, it took us 45 minutes to get out of there and back on the expressway. I begrudged not one of those minutes, for we were facing the right way, towards the light and air. Virgil has Aeneas emerge from the Underworld through the gate of false dreams—a passage that commentators have always had trouble explaining. It is no longer mysterious to me. **NR**

## Old Blighted

I HAD a new book out the other day. Usual doom and gloom, as the more alert reader may just about be able to discern from the subtle title: *After America: Get Ready for Armageddon*. One always hopes, in a competitive market for shrill apocalyptic alarmists, that there will be some topical news peg to give the release date a bit of a lift. And sure enough, the weekend before the launch day, S&P obligingly downgraded the United States from its triple-A rating for the first time in history. You can't buy publicity like that. Well, okay, you can, if you've got \$15 trillion and toss it in the Potomac and watch it float out to sea, as the government of the United States has done. But other than that, the stars have to align pretty darn precisely. (It is untrue, by the way, that S&P stands for Steyn & Publicity.)

A few days after the U.S. release, the book debuted in the United Kingdom. Halfway through my narrative, there's a chapter about civic disintegration in the old country called "The Depraved City." Obliging enough, 48 hours before the British launch, London erupted in flames. Switching on the TV to find a beautifully posed image of one of those double-decker buses beloved by tourists vividly ablaze and as perfectly lit as the iconic shot in a disaster movie (the aliens zapping the White House in *Independence Day*, say), I wondered if my publicist had perhaps let things get a little out of hand. You probably want to be out of town when she decides the nuclear finale could use a bit of a plug.

What's happening in London is part of the same story as the downgrade. S&P run the numbers, factor in the political probabilities, and produce a green-eyeshade assessment. London reminds us that, as I wrote in this space a couple of issues back, culture trumps economics. The blazing double-decker is where the plot goes after the financial pages.

I quote a little bit of Anthony Burgess in my book. Burgess isn't as famous a name in the futuristic-dystopia biz as Orwell or Huxley, but he was remarkably prophetic and in a rather lightly worn way. His most famous novel is *A Clockwork Orange*, thanks to the Stanley Kubrick movie. At one point in the book, the precocious psychopathic teen narrator offers his dad some (stolen) money so his parents can enjoy a drink down the pub. "Thanks, son," says his father. "But we don't go out much now. We daren't go out much now, the streets being what they are. Young hooligans and so on. Still, thanks."

Burgess published his book in 1962, an era when working-class Britons lived in cramped row houses on dingy streets that were nevertheless some of the most tranquil on the planet. Their residents kept pigeons and tended vegetable allotments. The idea that the old and not so old would not go out, "the streets being what they are," "young hooligans and so," was not just the stuff of fiction but of utterly transformative fantastic fiction.

But it happened in little more than a generation. The men on our TV screens rampaging through the streets were born

three decades after Burgess's novel, yet he had their measure. There is no great "cause," despite the best efforts of leftie commentators to kit them out with one. They are the children of dependency, the product of what Sir William Beveridge, the father of the British welfare state, called a world without want. And certainly these ski-masked bandits do not want. They do not want to work, they do not want to marry and raise children, they do not want the responsibilities of adulthood, they do not want to live productive lives of any kind. So instead, under the eyes of a cowed and craven politically correct constabulary, they smash the windows of electronics stores and steal the latest toys.

Nineteen sixty-two was a good year for Burgess. He published a second, less well-known futuristic novel. If *A Clockwork Orange* predicted the Morlocks of the 21st century, *The Wanting Seed* with disarming ease conjured our Eloi. The other day, a reader reminded me of this passage, written in a Britain with very little television (and certainly no sets in bedrooms) and a healthy fertility rate, and well before either Ehrlich's *Population Bomb*, mass vasectomies and tube-tying, or even the decriminalization of homosexuality:

How long had it been in England since anyone had seen a play? For generations, people had lain on their backs in the darkness of their bedrooms, their eyes on the blue watery screen on the ceiling: mechanical stories about good people not having children and bad people having them, homos in love with each other, Origen-like heroes castrating themselves for the sake of global stability.

He anticipates an entire aesthetic there, although it barely existed even in embryo back then.

The Eloi and the Morlocks do not interact much except during street riots, but occasionally the former are obliged to acknowledge the latter—as when a handsomely remunerated London advertising designer gets the contract for a stylish campaign about public violence. At bus stops in London, there are posters warning, "DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON US." At the Underground stations, you see the slogan "IF YOU ABUSE OUR STAFF, LONDON SUFFERS" above a poster of Harold Beck's iconic Tube map rendered as a giant bruise—as if one of those energetic young rioters had punched London itself in the kisser and beaten the map Northern Line black and Piccadilly Line blue, with other parts of the pulverized skin turning Circle Line yellow and even Central Line livid red.

It is a visually striking ad, made with all the award-winning expertise of the Soho advertising world. Alas, on the streets of London, the real thing didn't look half so stylish and witty.

My book's thesis is stated upfront: It starts with the money, but it never stops there—in part because it's never really about the money. What's worse than debauching your finances? Debauching your human capital. As London reminds us, much of the Western world is too far down that grim path.

NR

Mr. Steyn blogs at SteynOnline ([www.steynonline.com](http://www.steynonline.com)).



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