

# NATIONAL REVIEW

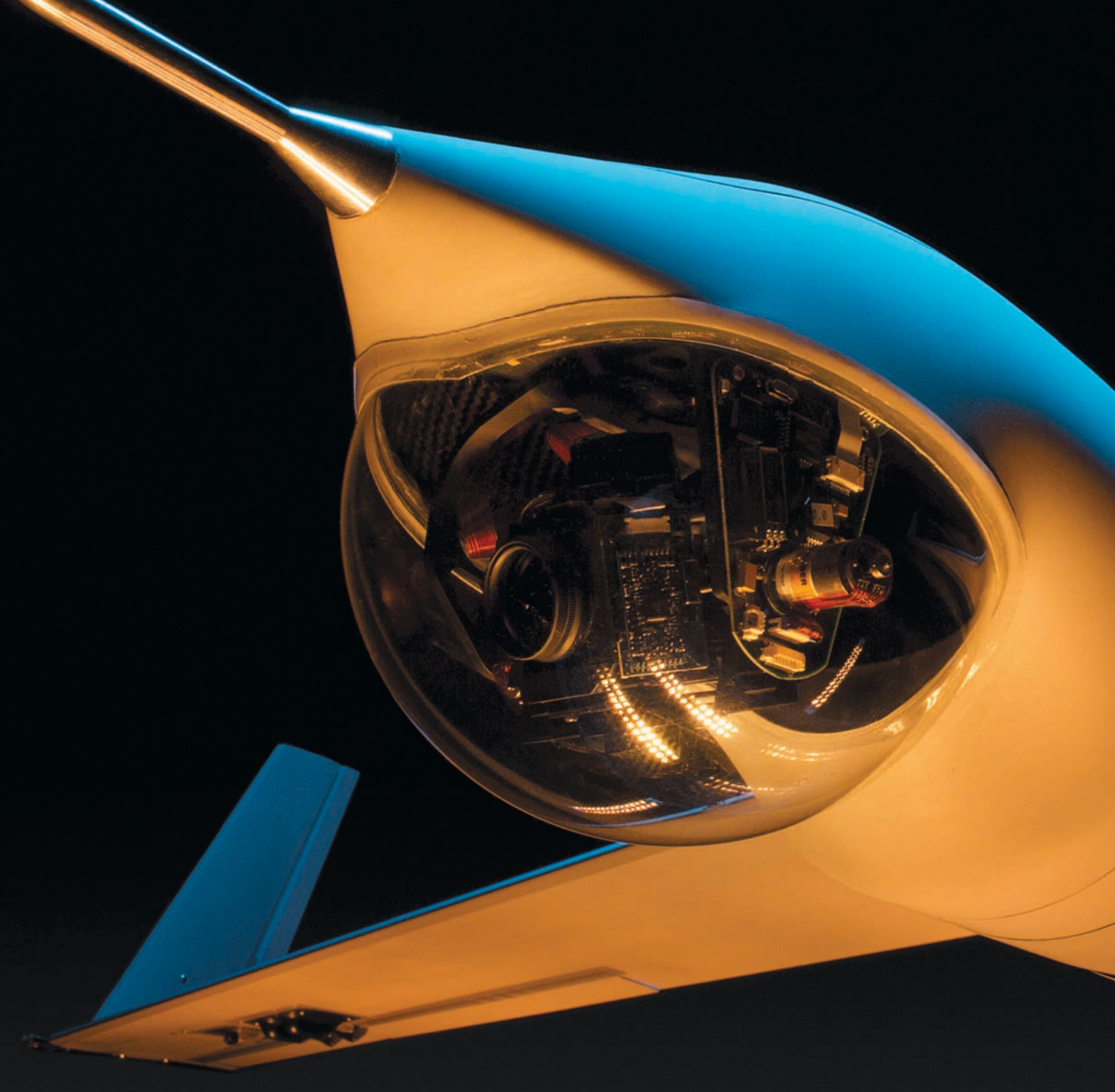


# AGAINST TRUMP

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# Contents NATIONAL REVIEW

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## ON THE COVER Page 26

Donald Trump is not deserving of conservative support in the caucuses and primaries. Trump is a philosophically unmoored political opportunist who would trash the broad conservative ideological consensus within the GOP in favor of a free-floating populism with strong-man overtones.



COVER: LUBA MYTS



Reihan Salam on Bernie Sanders  
p. 20

## ARTICLES

- 18 **TOWARD A CONSERVATIVE POPULISM** *by Ramesh Ponnuru & Richard Lowry*  
How to draw Trump's supporters into the fold.
- 20 **THE BERNIE TAX** *by Reihan Salam*  
Sanders's socialism is very different from the Danish model he admires.
- 22 **THE ART OF NATIONAL-SECURITY ADVISING** *by Jay Nordlinger*  
Meet Victoria Coates, a key Ted Cruz aide.
- 24 **MORE THAN A 'MISANTHROPE'** *by John O'Sullivan*  
On the late, great Florence King.

## FEATURE

- 26 **CONSERVATIVES AGAINST TRUMP**  
A NATIONAL REVIEW symposium.

## BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

- 41 **A MAN IN FULL**  
*Clark S. Judge reviews* *Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush*, by Jon Meacham, and *The Quiet Man: The Indispensable Presidency of George H. W. Bush*, by John H. Sumnu.
- 43 **THE REAL JOHN BIRCH**  
*John J. Miller reviews* *John Birch: A Life*, by Terry Lautz.
- 45 **THE BIG LIAR**  
*John Fund reviews* *Speer: Hitler's Architect*, by Martin Kitchen.
- 50 **FILM: FOG OF WAR**  
*Ross Douhat reviews* *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*.
- 51 **WHAT BROWN CAN DO FOR YOU**  
*Richard Brookhiser observes the colors of winter.*

## SECTIONS

- 4 **Letters to the Editor**
- 6 **The Week**
- 39 **Athwart** . . . . . James Lileks
- 40 **The Long View** . . . . . Rob Long
- 45 **Poetry** . . . . . Jennifer Reeser
- 52 **The Misanthrope's Corner** . . . . . Florence King

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## A People and Their Idea

Of the many fine essays in NATIONAL REVIEW's 60th-anniversary issue (November 19, 2015), perhaps none rewards careful reading and reflection as much as John O'Sullivan's "A People, Not Just an Idea." So first and above all, I want to thank him.

As I read, I was struck by his statement that "an American identity rooted in cultural familiarity will be more genuinely liberal than one attached to the American idea" because "it allows someone to reject the dominant ethos of his society without losing his claim to be an American." The question arises: What do we mean by "cultural familiarity"? (Surely nothing so trivial as the names of NFL teams.) The answer is suggested, perhaps, when Mr. O'Sullivan later says that "if Americans are a distinct people, with their own *history, traditions, institutions*, and common culture, then they can reasonably claim that immigrants should adapt to them and to their society rather than the reverse." "Culture" appears alongside the terms I have italicized, but perhaps history, traditions, and institutions are better understood as constituents of culture.

Now our legal and political institutions certainly embody the liberal principles of the "American idea." And basic familiarity with American history and traditions—which, as the essay makes clear, do not derive from a single ethnic group or religion and evolve over time—is a precondition for participation in those liberal institutions (and in the liberal American economy), for the simple reason that a separate people cannot readily take a place of equal standing in our civic and economic life. We might mention a common language, too.

So to my mind, the American idea and the American common culture are not competing ways of understanding American identity. Rather, the idea guides us toward a humane and reasonable understanding of which aspects of the culture should matter. Mr. O'Sullivan is surely right that, in the abstract, liberalism does not distinguish America from other liberal nations. But it has played—and plays still—a decisive role in preventing American cultural identity from becoming narrow and exclusionary. It has played that role to a unique degree in world history, and in a way of which Americans are uniquely conscious. And in that sense, I think it is true rather than paradoxical to say that America is not just a people, but also an idea.

Conrad Ensign  
Via e-mail

JOHN O'SULLIVAN RESPONDS: I am grateful to Conrad Ensign for his kind remarks on my essay, and even our disagreements seem rooted in a common outlook. I see the American idea less as competing with cultural nationhood than as a useful but inadequate distillation of it—Cliff Notes to the *Federalist Papers*. It might keep America from being exclusionary, as he argues, but the concept of "Un-Americanness" shows how it can be used to exclude internally when separated from the rich culture of American liberty. For instance, how does the American idea cope with the native American Marxist? He denies the American idea but he can't be denied entry to American institutions? At least in principle the idea insinuates disloyalty but offers no solution to it. A broader cultural concept holds that an American is likely to be a less consistent Marxist in practice than someone brought up in a despotic culture. (Orwell pointed out that radical critics of English liberalism would sometimes slip and declare in outraged tones that some measure or other was a betrayal of the high standards of British liberty.) And, finally, the American idea offers little or no reply to multiculturalism even though the danger that a separate people might "readily take a place of equal standing in our civic and economic life" is no longer entirely theoretical.

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# The Week

■ We appreciate the concern, Donald, and we'll be sure to consult with you should we ever need advice about bankruptcy.

■ If the GOP race comes down to Trump or Cruz, the party's leadership will support . . . Trump. Bob Dole: "You know, he's got the right personality and he's kind of a deal-maker." Representative Peter King: Trump is "pragmatic enough to get something done." Rudy Giuliani: "If it came down to Trump or Cruz, there is no question I'd vote for Trump." Why? In part, Ted Cruz is reaping what he has sown. Since arriving in the Senate in 2013, he has attacked colleagues as timid and unprincipled; his grandest gesture in that line was publicly to call Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell a liar. However, GOP wise men err in preferring Trump. They think they can deal with him, because they believe (rightly) that he is at bottom unprincipled. But the unprincipled man is out for himself, and he can turn on you in a minute if self-interest dictates. If a feckless leadership backs Trump, they, and we, will reap the bitter harvest.

■ At a joint appearance in Ames, Iowa, Sarah Palin endorsed Trump. Not quite eight years ago, she was a supernova. She wrapped the GOP convention that nominated her for vice president around her finger, and briefly boosted running-mate John McCain even over light-worker Barack Obama. Liberals swarmed at her. But she, alas, helped them in their work of destruction by choosing to be a niche media star rather than a politician or a serious student of issues. Personal troubles dinged her, time dimmed her luster. Now the roar of the greasepaint has drawn her back into the fray. She must think Trump is the new her, but how different they are: She was fresh, he is pure calculation; she was optimistic and quirky, he is sniggers and bluster. Sad to see her carrying spears for an oaf. But that too is a choice.

■ One of the problems with Trump is that he is a thief, albeit a not very good one. On the eve of the Iowa caucuses, Ted Cruz ran an ad that accused Trump of attempting to use eminent domain—a "wonderful" practice in Trump's words, under which government seizes private property—to turn a widow out of her home so that he could build a limousine garage for one of his tacky casinos on the property. Trump whined that this was "false advertising," that he had done no such thing. Which is true: He tried, and tried, and had New Jersey authorities threaten the woman on his behalf, but, in the end, he failed, his bid for using the government to seize the widow's home being tossed out by the courts. The lady in question described the man who would be president as "a maggot, a cockroach, and a crumb." We are not sure about all that, but he does have defective judgment. Eminent domain is an occasionally necessary last resort used in the pursuit of genuine public goods—and a limo garage isn't one of those. Governments have been using eminent domain simply to seize private property and hand it over to another private party, generally a politically connected



one (why do you think Trump made all those donations to Chuck Schumer and Mrs. Clinton?), in the name of "economic development." For a good look at the sort of economic development that Trump performs, drive through Atlantic City some evening. But lock your doors.

■ When an atheist in Waverly, Iowa (yes, there are some, or at least one), taxed Marco Rubio with running for "pastor-in-chief" rather than "commander-in-chief," Rubio began by assuring him that salvation is a "free gift" that cannot be forced on anyone. Rubio next pointed out that "Judeo-Christian values influenced America. . . . Our rights come from our Creator. If there's no Creator then where did your rights come from?" He perorated: "I think you should hope my faith influences me" because it "teaches me that I have an obligation to care for the less fortunate. My faith teaches me that I have an obligation to love my neighbor. . . . My faith teaches me that if I want to serve Jesus, I have to serve . . . other[s]. And I think that you should hope that influences me. I know it's made this a greater country." Calm, earnest, well reasoned—and so unlike Campaign 2016 so far.

■ Chris Christie says that he never gave money to Planned Parenthood, even back when he was pro-choice, contrary to a newspaper account from the 1990s that quoted him saying he had. He says he supported the Senate confirmation of Justice Sonia Sotomayor only after it had happened; actually, he issued a press release beforehand, urging it. He says he vetoed a bill

# Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

**CHICAGO:** A local board-certified Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

**"Perhaps the best quality-to-price ratio in the hearing aid industry" — Dr. Babu, Board-Certified ENT Physician**

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's disease. **He could not understand why the cost of hearing aids was so high when the prices on so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones, and digital cameras had fallen.**

Since Medicare and most private insurance plans do not cover the costs of hearing aids, which traditionally run between \$2,000-\$6,000 for a pair, many of the doctor's patients could not afford the expense. Dr. Cherukuri's goal was to find a reasonable solution that would help with the most common types of hearing loss at an affordable price, similar to the **"one-size-fits-most" reading glasses** available at drug stores.

He evaluated numerous hearing devices and sound amplifiers, including those seen on television. Without fail, almost all of these were found to amplify bass/low frequencies (below 1000 Hz) and were not useful in amplifying the frequencies related to the human voice.

## Inspiration from a Surprising Source

The doctor's inspiration to defeat the powers-that-be that kept inexpensive hearing aids out of the hands of the public actually came from a new cell phone he had just purchased. **"I felt that if someone could devise an**

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affordable device like an iPhone® for about \$200 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at a similar price."

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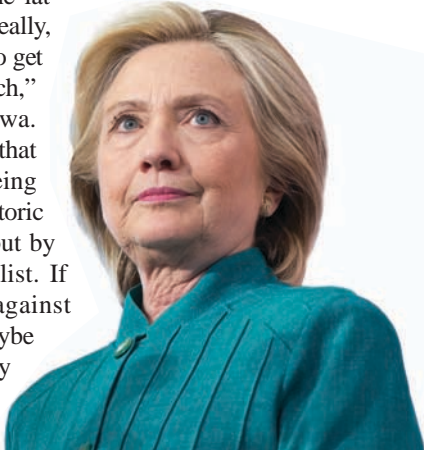


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banning .50-caliber rifles; and while he did veto a bill including that ban, it is a ban he called for in 2013. Any one of these comments could be explained away: a lapse of memory; a garbled report he did not have time or reason to correct. Together they suggest that one of the casualties of this campaign will be his reputation as a straight shooter.

■ Like a character in *The X-Files* or some other paranoid TV series, Hillary Clinton is reliving 2008. Once again, years of effort, pots of money, and a monster campaign machine risk being upended. The first sign of trouble was her attack on Bernie Sanders for wanting to “rip [Obama-care] up and start over.” He wants to substitute single-payer, an even more statist and disruptive health-care plan, but Hillary tried to make him sound like an anarchist: not the tactic of a confident front-runner. The second sign of trouble is the sudden interest in her hefty speaking fees from Goldman Sachs and other bigfoot investment firms. Was she a president-to-be laying down the law to Wall Street, or a greedy insider catering to it? Sanders says it’s the latter: “You got to be really, really, really good to get \$250,000 for a speech,” he snarked in Iowa. And the rub of it is that now Hillary is being shaken not by a historic young black man but by a cranky old socialist. If she’s struggling against Bernie Sanders, maybe she’s . . . just not very good at this.



■ Mounting evidence suggests that then–secretary of state Clinton and her top aides used her private, unsecure e-mail system to transmit hundreds of messages containing classified information, including some involving the nation’s most closely guarded intelligence secrets. FBI director James Comey acknowledges that an investigation is proceeding, and scores of agents are reportedly digging. Yet Clinton’s presidential campaign, echoed by the *New York Times*, claims she is not even a subject of a government investigation. This may be technically correct. For now, even if the FBI’s investigation is serious, it cannot lead to charges against anyone unless the Justice Department convenes a grand jury, which has not been done. The Obama administration seems to be walking a razor’s edge: wanting neither to be seen as obstructing the FBI, nor as signaling that the Democrats’ putative front-runner may be guilty of weighty offenses. But the time is coming, probably soon, when Comey—who was a highly regarded prosecutor with a reputation for nonpartisan law enforcement—may well recommend Clinton’s indictment. Ostensibly, the decision will rest with Attorney General Loretta Lynch. In reality, it will be Obama’s call, and the politics will matter more than the law.

■ The Benghazi attacks have been given the Hollywood treatment. In Michael Bay’s new movie, *13 Hours*, moviegoers are shown the extraordinary sacrifices that a handful of American soldiers made in September 2012. The film is not partisan—there are no references to political parties, contemporary presidential candidates, or real-life bureaucrats—but there is no doubt as to what its makers think of the government’s record. Time and time again, the protagonists are seen calling for backup that never comes, and, as a result, they are forced to take over from the frozen authorities and to stage a terrifying fightback against the odds. This is a movie that should keep Hillary Clinton up at night.

■ On January 6, a ghost from Hillary’s past stirred: “I was 35 years old when Bill Clinton, Ark. Attorney General raped me and Hillary tried to silence me,” Juanita Broadrick tweeted from her home in Van Buren, Ark. “I am now 73. . . . It never goes away.” In the catalogue of accusations against Bill Clinton, Broadrick’s is not only the most serious but the one about which the Clintons have said the least. That may be because her allegation is credible—alarmingly so. In April 1978, when, she alleges, he sexually assaulted her in a Little Rock hotel room, Broadrick was a nursing-home administrator in Van Buren and Bill Clinton was the state’s Democratic candidate for governor. Five witnesses recall Broadrick’s telling them about the alleged assault within hours or days of its happening. Details in her account line up with details reported by other Clinton accusers. And Broadrick’s account appears to have remained consistent across several decades, from 1978 to her now-famous 1999 interview with *Dateline NBC*’s Lisa Myers and beyond. But there’s more: According to Broadrick, two weeks after the alleged assault, Hillary Clinton approached her at a Clinton campaign event and said, with an edge: “I want you to know that we appreciate everything you do for Bill.” Was the future first lady sending a message? “There was no doubt in my mind,” Broadrick told *NATIONAL REVIEW* recently. “She threatened me.” If Broadrick is telling the truth, not only did America elect a rapist to the presidency; it may be about to elect his enabler.

■ Since 1993, each year’s federal budget has included as a matter of course a provision prohibiting federal Medicaid funds from being used to finance abortion except in cases of rape, incest, and danger to the life of the mother. This policy is a concession to the fact that eight in ten Americans agree that at some unspecified moment before birth, a fetus stops being a “clump of cells” and becomes a baby, and most people do not want Congress involved in financing its deliberate killing. Hillary Clinton is not among those people. Shortly after receiving the endorsement of Planned Parenthood, Clinton—whose idea of a “reasonable restriction” on abortion is something at “the very end of the third trimester,” she told Chuck Todd last year—called for unrestricted Medicaid funding of abortion. In other words, not only does Hillary Clinton want abortion on demand up until the moment you can shake Junior’s hand; she also wants to force taxpayers, abortion opponents included, to pay for it. Her husband used to say that abortion should be “safe, legal, and rare”; perhaps she will amend the last word of that slogan to “subsidized.”

■ Jane Mayer of *The New Yorker* has published a book, in an emergency subgenre of fantasy literature, titled “Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires behind the Rise of the



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Jane Mayer

Radical Right.” It is mainly a vituperation against Charles and David Koch, the libertarian philanthropists and political activists. Their crime? “What they’re aiming at,” she writes, “is changing the conversation in the country.” Yes, philanthropists and activists sometimes seek that, as do journalists. The problem with the Kochs is that they believe things that the likes of Jane Mayer would rather not hear spoken. It is notable that the Kochs’ most energetic critic—Harry Reid, who has repeatedly denounced them from the floor of the Senate—is also the man who recently sought to repeal the First Amendment and its protections for those who wish to

“change the conversation.” Jane Mayer is a fantasist, and fantasies need villains.

■ Flint, Mich., one of America’s most liberal cities and a long-time Democratic-party monopoly, has been poisoning its children. A Democratic mayor, a Democratic emergency manager (appointed by Republican governor Rick Snyder), a Democratic city council, and a city agency dominated by a Democrat-affiliated public-sector union got into a spat with Flint’s water supplier, in Democrat-run Detroit. The city engaged in a large, expensive public-infrastructure project of its own, using the Flint River as a temporary water source. But it lacked the requisite expertise in water treatment, with the consequence that lead and other contaminants leached from older pipes into the water. When Barack Obama’s EPA found out about this government-created disaster, it did—nothing. And yet Mrs. Clinton and Senator Sanders, along with many others, angrily aver that the episode demonstrates the failure of Republican leadership and its insistence on free-market approaches to economic problems. It seems their ability to think has been contaminated, too.

■ Obama remains determined to shutter the detention center at Guantanamo Bay. Congress will not cooperate by transferring the roughly 91 remaining detainees to stateside federal prisons, so the president is leaning on other countries to accept them, with who knows what enticements. The deceitfulness of the project reached a new low when two dangerous terrorists were accepted by Ghana. Even Obama’s Gitmo task force rated the two Yemenis, Muhammad bin Atef and Khalid Muhammad Salih al Dhuby, as continuing threats to the U.S. and stipulated that they were suitable for transfer only if subjected to “continuing security measures,” including “conditional detention.” Yet Ghana’s foreign ministry falsely claimed that they had been “cleared of any involvement in terrorist activities” and announced that they would be permitted to leave Ghana without conditions in two years. Meanwhile, previously released jihadists have continued to rejoin the fight and take up leadership positions in al-Qaeda and ISIS. A commander-in-chief who willfully replenishes the enemy is guilty of a profound dereliction of duty.

■ President Obama bumped up hard against the limits on his power in January when, after months of promising big, he an-

nounced a set of anti-gun executive actions that did nothing but tinker impotently around the edges. For gun-control groups that had hoped for serious measures, it was a serious let-down. A few days later, at a CNN town hall that had been contrived to help him sell the measures, the president was boxed repeatedly into a corner by an audience that wanted him to assure them that he was opposed to reforms more serious than those he had announced. Hoping to focus on his limited measures, Obama obliged, thereby confirming the weakness of his position and the deficiency of his supposed remedies.

■ Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio have proposed conservative plans to make higher education more affordable by reducing and simplifying the federal government’s involvement in it. Rubio moved first: He proposed making it possible for private investors to finance a student’s education in return for a share of his future income. He also wants to give students and their parents more information about how well graduates fare depending on which college and major they pick, and he supports efforts to break the federal stranglehold on accrediting new institutions. Then Jeb Bush came out with an even bolder plan. His would replace various loan programs and tax credits with a new federal line of credit students could draw on; repayments would be a set percentage of their incomes. This program would be designed to cost no more than today’s system while restraining tuition inflation (one of the loan programs Bush eliminates has no borrowing limit, for example) and making debt burdens more predictable. Surveys suggest that Americans are deeply concerned about the cost of higher education, and federal policies have done a lot to raise those costs. Not many people have paid attention to these ideas, but more Republicans should.

■ If you believe the Obama administration, the regime in Tehran is simply bubbling over with generosity. When ten American sailors experienced “mechanical failures” and drifted into Iranian waters, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, like AAA, transported them to the local equivalent of the Days Inn, made sure they got a good night’s rest, and helped them back into international waters after serving them a full and hearty breakfast. In fact, Iran seized the sailors at gunpoint and made sure to circulate photographs and video of their surrender on Iranian news media, in explicit violation of the Geneva Conventions. No matter. Secretary of State John Kerry groveled in “gratitude” for the regime’s “cooperation.” One week later, Iran released four more American hostages—*Washington Post* reporter Jason Rezaian, pastor Saeed Abedini, former U.S. Marine Amir Hekmati, and Nosratollah Khosravi-Roodsari—all of whom had been languishing in an Iranian prison, some for years. This was not an act of generosity, either. Iran received seven of its own back, including some convicted of trying to steal U.S. military technology, in a prisoner swap timed to soften President Obama’s announcement that Iran had fulfilled its end of the nuclear deal and would receive \$1.7 billion—a separate payment from its \$150 billion in frozen assets—wired from D.C. Iran still has American hostages; it’s just holding them in the White House.

■ On New Year’s Eve, 18-year-old Michelle and her group of eleven friends were walking down to the Rhine in Cologne, Germany, to watch the fireworks over the river, when “suddenly we were surrounded by a group of between 20 and 30 men,” as

she told a local television station. “They were groping us, and we were trying to get away as quickly as possible.” Michelle and her friends were just a few of the hundreds of young women—in Germany, Finland, and elsewhere—attacked by mobs of men identified to police as being of “Arab” or “North African” origin, none of whom were interested in chivalry: In Cologne, officers arrested one man who had a note with Arabic–German translations for phrases including “Nice breasts,” “I’ll kill you,” and “I want to have sex with you.” The massive, coordinated assault is a product of the clash of cultures occasioned by the recent refugee crisis—and a troubling reminder of the high rates of sexual violence among North African and Middle Eastern populations in Europe. The European political class frets that the attacks will reduce the public’s appetite for more such immigration, but refuses to consider the possibility that it should.

■ Taiwanese have elected Tsai Ing-wen their president. She won in a landslide. She is the first female president of Taiwan, and one of the few female leaders ever to appear in East Asia. She is a member of the Democratic Progressive party. This is the party that emphasizes Taiwanese democracy, sovereignty, and distinctiveness. It also emphasizes a free economy. Like the DPP, Tsai does not want to provoke China, but neither does she want her country swallowed by it. The Chinese Communist Party reacted to her election with fury. Tsai responded in measured tones. Her election is cause for rejoicing—but then, so is Taiwan, which shows the world what a democratic China is.

■ Saint Elijah’s Monastery, or Dair Mar Elia, was founded by an Assyrian monk in A.D. 595. Located just south of Mosul, it was

the oldest extant Christian monastery in Iraq before ISIS razed it. It was abandoned in the 18th century, but in recent years U.S. troops worshiped there and worked to restore it. Recognizing its historical and cultural significance, the Obama administration, the United Nations, and the Vatican have denounced its destruction, which mirrors the fate of northern Iraq’s Christians at the hands of jihadists. Violence against Middle Eastern Christians should elicit a stronger reaction than does violence against their sacred architecture, but if it doesn’t—if we fail to hear their appeals for help—the stones will cry out.

■ In Norway in November, the Child Welfare Service seized the five children of Marius and Ruth Bodnariu, a Romanian man and his Norwegian wife, Pentecostal Christians who were raising their family according to their faith. Officials charged that the parents were engaged in “Christian radicalization and indoctrination.” According to one report, the trouble began when, following rules, a scrupulous school principal duly reported that the Bodnariu children were, one of them told her, sometimes spanked by their parents. The children were then interrogated by investigators who asked leading questions, and the spankings got translated into “child abuse.” Authorities have threatened to adopt the children out to other families. Neighbors, including the principal, have testified that the family is fine, and the children well adjusted and normal. Demonstrations in support of the family have been organized across Europe. A delegation from the Romanian parliament recently met with Norwegian authorities to try to resolve the mess. The Bodnariu parents are scheduled to appear in court in March. There is abuse and child endangerment in this story, but it is not coming from them.



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■ In late January, University of Missouri professor Melissa Click was finally called to account for her misconduct. Click, who teaches communications and journalism at Mizzou, had been caught on film in November taking away a camera from a student journalist and calling for “muscle” to prevent him from covering a protest of which she approved. Until this week, there had been no repercussions whatsoever, even from Click’s employer. Now she is facing a charge of third-degree assault, which, if prosecuted successfully, could see her serve up to 15 days in jail. News of the action was welcomed by the man she aggressed, 22-year-old Mark Schierbecker, who told NATIONAL REVIEW that the university had given him the impression that Click, rather than he, had been wronged. It is peculiar, Schierbecker observed, that “those of us who actually know the Constitution and fight to uphold it have to educate the professors, instead of the other way around.” Unfortunately, the professors seem uneducable.

■ Wisconsin’s legislature has passed a bill that would allow hunters to wear fluorescent pink protective clothing instead of blaze orange. The idea is to get more women interested in hunting. It might seem uncontroversial, but the Wisconsin Women’s Hunting and Sporting Association has criticized the bill as patronizing, while traditionalists complain that pink is an even tackier color than blaze orange. And a University of Wisconsin scientist says that deer see pink less well than orange in a forest environment, while humans see it slightly better, so the law is a lose-lose from the deer’s perspective. As we went to press, the bill was on the desk of Governor Scott Walker—who is no stranger to controversy but probably never expected to face such a tough decision on this particular issue.

■ Life used to be so simple: Ever since 1930, our solar system had nine official planets. Then the astrophysicists had to go and ruin it all by demoting plucky little Pluto. But a pair of Caltech scientists have discovered orbital anomalies in some bits of space rubble that can be accounted for only by the gravity from a massive unseen object, which they call Planet 9. No one has actually seen Planet 9, but professors have detected its influence in many places. (It’s sort of like Hillary Clinton’s right-wing conspiracy.) If its existence is confirmed, order will finally be restored to the universe.

■ In the comic strip *Dustin*, Ed Kudlick, Dustin’s father, says he is going back to his old clothes. “I realized I’m just too conservative to pull off the ‘GQ look.’ If I’m going to take fashion advice from a magazine . . . it’ll have to be *National Review*.” Pat Buckley would chortle heartily. A fashion plate, she always wanted WFB to dress better. What she thought of the rest of us is better left unrecorded.

■ The United States “has more to be proud of and less to be ashamed of than any other nation on the face of the globe,” wrote the historian Forrest McDonald in his 2004 memoir, *Recovering the Past*. “I did not set out to prove that proposition; my instincts and my research led me to it, and I have little patience for those who say otherwise.” A native Texan who became a longtime professor at the University of Alabama, McDonald was a rare avist: a patriot scholar. His books engaged in the best kind of revisionist thinking—the kind that serves as a necessary correc-

tive. *We the People*, for example, repudiated the claims of Charles A. Beard that the Founders wrote the Constitution to protect their elite class interests. Progressives loved the allegation because they loved to deride the Founders, but McDonald’s meticulous work made it impossible for honest academics to take it seriously. Other books—on George Washington, the intellectual origins of the Constitution, and the institution of the presidency—also were triumphs. McDonald preferred to write longhand, on yellow legal pads, and once said on C-SPAN that he sometimes composed on his porch in the nude. (“It’s warm most of the year in Alabama and why wear clothes? I mean, they’re just a bother.”) However he did it, he wrote well, in penetrating and accessible prose that general readers will continue to appreciate. Dead at 89. R.I.P.

■ Ted Stanley was a great friend of NR, a great friend of WFB, a great friend of mankind. He served on our board for many years. He was thoughtful, commonsensical, and gentlemanly. He was a great believer in free enterprise, and an example of it. He co-founded the Danbury Mint in Connecticut and made a fortune. He and his wife, Vada, had a son who suffered from a mental disorder. Determined to do something about this, for him and others, they gave nearly all their money to medical research: more than a billion dollars. This made him one of the top philanthropists in the country. Vada died in 2013, and Ted died in January. It was a privilege to know them. R.I.P.

■ George Weidenfeld was a famous publisher, a social ornament as host or guest, on the best of terms with presidents and prime ministers and popes, irresistible to women and much married, a penniless refugee from Nazism in his native Austria who became brilliantly successful and well-to-do, a knight and peer of



the realm in the Britain he had adopted. Proud of the rabbis and scholars on his family tree, he saw himself as a sort of honorary ambassador of the Jewish people to everyone else, on a mission to explain ideas and change disagreement into agreement. Laying to rest the ghosts left by Nazism, he wrote a column in a leading German newspaper. To friend and foe, he represented supercharged energies and powers of imagination. Fittingly, his grave is on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem; he died aged 96. R.I.P.

■ Last issue, in this space, we commented on the Mandera Heroes, the Muslim bus passengers who risked their lives to protect the Christians among them when the bus was attacked by al-Shabaab gunmen in northeast Kenya in December. Salah Farah, one of the Muslims who refused to separate

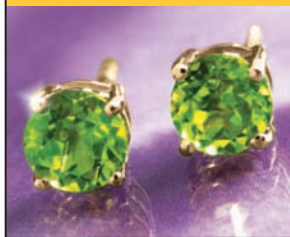
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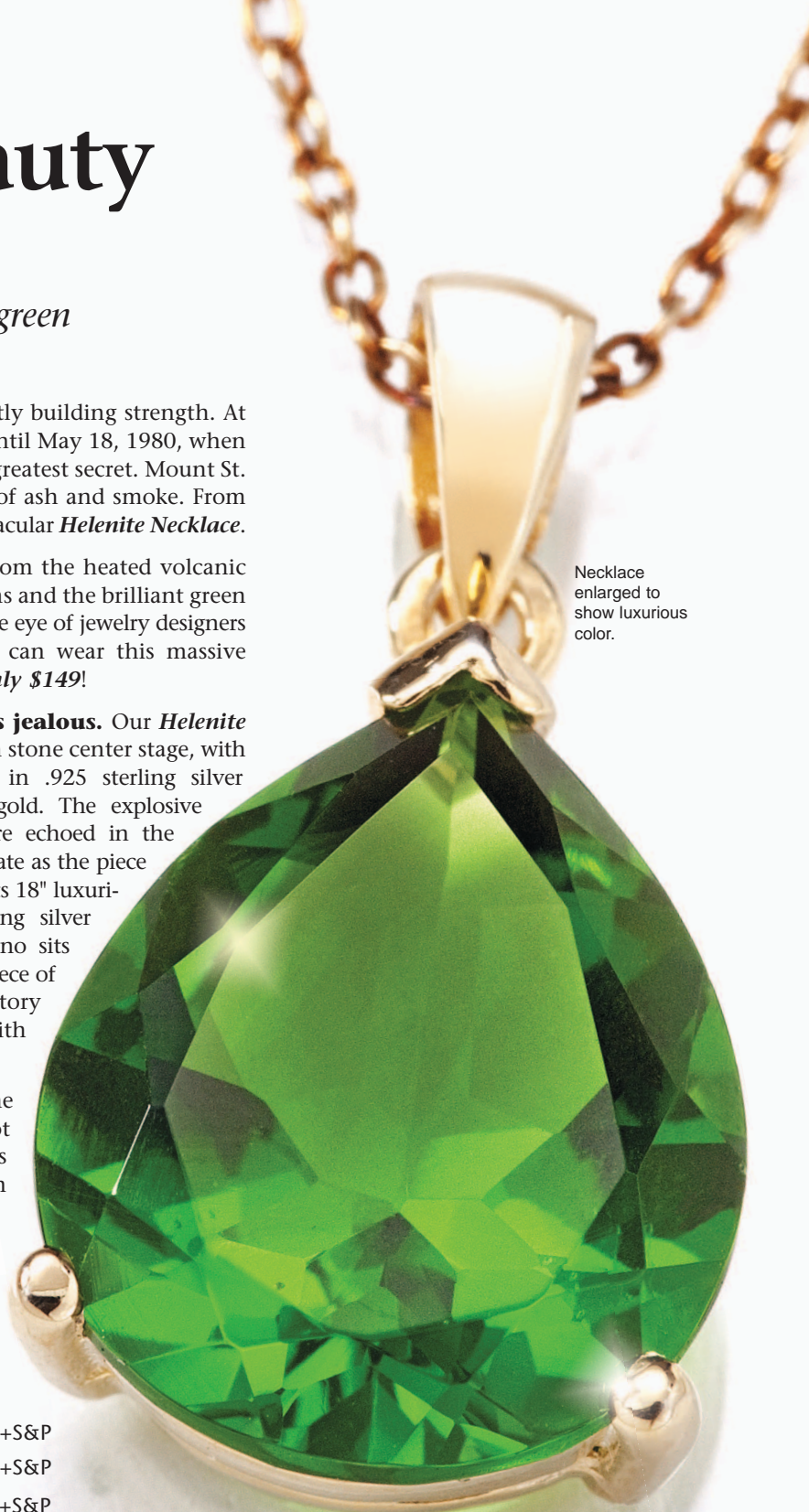
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himself from, and thereby identify, his fellow passengers who were Christian, was shot. “I do not know what got into me, but I knew these were bad people and had to be stopped,” he told journalists from his hospital bed. “I ask my brother Muslims to take care of the Christians so that the Christians also take care of us,” he told Voice of America. He died in surgery to treat his bullet wound, at age 34. We extend our solemn gratitude. R.I.P.

2016

## Against Trump

**D**ONALD TRUMP leads the polls nationally and in most states in the race for the Republican presidential nomination. There are understandable reasons for his eminence, and he has shown impressive gut-level skill as a campaigner. But he is not deserving of conservative support in the caucuses and primaries. Trump is a philosophically unmoored political opportunist who would trash the broad conservative ideological consensus within the GOP in favor of a free-floating populism with strong-man overtones.

Trump’s political opinions have wobbled all over the lot. The real-estate mogul and reality-TV star has supported abortion, gun control, single-payer health care à la Canada, and punitive taxes on the wealthy. (He and Bernie Sanders have shared more than funky outer-borough accents.) Since declaring his candidacy he has taken a more conservative line, yet there are great gaping holes in it.

His signature issue is concern over immigration—from Latin America but also, after Paris and San Bernardino, from the Middle East. He has exploited the yawning gap between elite opinion in both parties and the public on the issue, and feasted on the discontent over a government that can’t be bothered to enforce its own laws no matter how many times it says it will (President Obama has dispensed even with the pretense). But even on immigration, Trump often makes no sense and can’t be relied upon. A few short years ago, he was criticizing Mitt Romney for having the temerity to propose “self-deportation,” or the entirely reasonable policy of reducing the illegal population through attrition while enforcing the nation’s laws. Now, Trump is a hawk’s hawk.

He pledges to build a wall along the southern border and to make Mexico pay for it. We need more fencing at the border, but the promise to make Mexico pay for it is silly bluster. Trump says he will put a big door in his beautiful wall, an implicit endorsement of the dismayingly conventional view that current levels of legal immigration are fine. Trump seems unaware that a major contribution of his own written immigration plan is to question the economic impact of legal immigration and to call for reform of the H-1B-visa program. Indeed, in one Republican debate he clearly had no idea what’s in that plan and advocated increased legal immigration, which is completely at odds with it. These are not the meanderings of someone with well-informed, deeply held views on the topic.

As for illegal immigration, Trump pledges to deport the 11 million illegals here in the United States, a herculean administrative and logistical task beyond the capacity of the federal government. Trump piles on the absurdity by saying he would re-import many of the illegal immigrants once they had been



deported, which makes his policy a poorly disguised amnesty (and a version of a similarly idiotic idea that appeared in one of Washington’s periodic “comprehensive” immigration reforms). This plan wouldn’t survive its first contact with reality.

On foreign policy, Trump is a nationalist at sea. Sometimes he wants to let Russia fight ISIS, and at others he wants to “bomb the sh\*\*” out of it. He is fixated on stealing Iraq’s oil and casually suggested a few weeks ago a war crime—killing terrorists’ families—as a tactic in the war on terror. For someone who wants to project strength, he has an astonishing weakness for flattery, falling for Vladimir Putin after a few coquettish bats of the eyelashes from the Russian thug. All in all, Trump knows approximately as much about national security as he does about the nuclear triad—which is to say, almost nothing.

Indeed, Trump’s politics are those of an averagely well-informed businessman: Washington is full of problems; I am a problem-solver; let me at them. But if you have no familiarity with the relevant details and the levers of power, and no clear principles to guide you, you will, like most tenderfeet, get rolled. Especially if you are, at least by all outward indications, the most poll-obsessed politician in all of American history.

Trump has shown no interest in limiting government, in reforming entitlements, or in the Constitution. He floats the idea of massive new taxes on imported goods and threatens to retaliate against companies that do too much manufacturing overseas for his taste. His obsession is with “winning,” regardless of the means—a spirit that is anathema to the ordered liberty that conservatives hold dear and that depends for its preservation on limits on government power. The Tea Party represented a revival of an understanding of American greatness in these terms, an understanding to which Trump is tone-deaf at best and implicitly hostile at worst. He appears to believe that the administrative state merely needs a new master, rather than a new dispensation that cuts it down to size and curtails its power.

This is unpopular to say in the year of the “outsider,” but it is not a recommendation that Trump has never held public office. Since 1984, when Jesse Jackson ran for president with



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<b>Standing Up for Faith &amp; Freedom Seminar</b>	April 8 to 9	Reston, VA
<b>High School Conference at the Reagan Ranch</b>	June 23 to 25	Santa Barbara, CA
<b>National High School Leadership Conference</b>	July 6 to 9	Chevy Chase, MD
<b>National Conservative Student Conference*</b>	July 25 to 30	Washington, D.C.
<b>Summer High School Conference at the Reagan Ranch</b>	August 11 to 13	Santa Barbara, CA
<b>High School Conference at the Reagan Ranch</b>	October 20 to 22	Santa Barbara, CA
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no credential other than a great flow of words, both parties have been infested by candidates who have treated the presidency as an entry-level position. They are the excrescences of instant-hit media culture. The burdens and intricacies of leadership are special; experience in other fields is not transferable. That is why all American presidents have been politicians, or generals.

Any candidate can promise the moon. But politicians have records of success, failure, or plain backsliding by which their promises may be judged. Trump can try to make his blankness a virtue by calling it a kind of innocence. But he is like a man with no credit history applying for a mortgage—or, in this case, applying to manage a \$3.8 trillion budget and the most fearsome military on earth.

Trump's record as a businessman is hardly a recommendation for the highest office in the land. For all his success, Trump inherited a real-estate fortune from his father. Few of us will ever have the experience, as Trump did, of having Daddy-O bail out our struggling enterprise with an illegal loan in the form of casino chips. Trump's primary work long ago became less about building anything than about branding himself and tending to his celebrity through a variety of entertainment ventures, from WWE to his reality-TV show, *The Apprentice*. His business record reflects the often dubious norms of the milieu: using eminent domain to condemn the property of others; buying the good graces of politicians—including many Democrats—with donations.

Trump has gotten far in the GOP race on a brash manner, buffed over decades in New York tabloid culture. His refusal to back down from any gaffe, no matter how grotesque, suggests a healthy impertinence in the face of postmodern PC (although the insults he hurls at anyone who crosses him also speak to a pettiness and lack of basic civility). His promise to make America great again recalls the populism of Andrew Jackson. But Jackson was an actual warrior; and President Jackson made many mistakes. Without Jackson's scars, what is Trump's rhetoric but show and strut?

If Trump were to become the president, the Republican nominee, or even a failed candidate with strong conservative support, what would that say about conservatives? The movement that ground down the Soviet Union and took the shine, at least temporarily, off socialism would have fallen in behind a huckster. The movement concerned with such “permanent things” as constitutional government, marriage, and the right to life would have become a claque for a Twitter feed.

Trump nevertheless offers a valuable warning for the Republican party. If responsible people irresponsibly ignore an issue as important as immigration, it will be taken up by the reckless. If they cannot explain their Beltway maneuvers—worse, if their maneuvering is indefensible—they will be rejected by their own voters. If they cannot advance a compelling working-class agenda, the legitimate anxieties and discontents of blue-collar voters will be exploited by demagogues. We sympathize with many of the complaints of Trump supporters about the GOP, but that doesn't make the mogul any less flawed a vessel for them.

Some conservatives have made it their business to make excuses for Trump and duly get pats on the head from him. Count us out. Donald Trump is a menace to American conservatism who would take the work of generations and trample it underfoot in behalf of a populism as heedless and crude as the Donald himself.

2016 II

## A Brief Reply to Our Critics

THE editorial above and the symposium that begins on page 26 were released prior to publication and generated a tsunami of attention—and a lot of rage. Herewith a brief reply to the main themes of our critics.

*Who are you to tell us what to think?* Well, we're an opinion magazine. This is what we do. People are free to agree or disagree, admire us or detest us. But this is what debate in a free society looks like.

*Won't your criticism just help Trump?* This is certainly possible. But we aren't a super PAC or a political campaign. We don't focus-group our content. Our role is to call it as we see it and let the chips fall where they may. It has happened before that candidates we opposed won the Republican nomination (see Bob Dole in 1996 and John McCain in 2008), and it may well happen again this year.

*You are the dastardly establishment.* If Brent Bozell and Dana Loesch, Katie Pavlich and Erick Erickson—all contributors to our Trump symposium—are the establishment, the world really has been turned upside down. In reality, people who can more reasonably be described as belonging to the Republican establishment have been negotiating the terms of their surrender to Trump before a single vote has been cast, in an astonishing display of fecklessness.

*How dare you attack someone so dominant in the polls?* This is hard to fathom. If Trump were running second everywhere, it would be less urgent to criticize him, not more. As Trump explained in a recent debate, he began attacking Ted Cruz only when the Texan started rising in the polls. Trump's supporters want to impose a set of rules whereby no one may look askance at him while he himself acts as a one-man political wrecking ball.

*You just don't get Trump's appeal.* Actually, we have written extensively about Trump's appeal—from his emphasis on immigration to his resistance to political correctness—and believe his candidacy holds important lessons for the GOP. You can learn from him without nominating him (see Ramesh Ponnuru and Richard Lowry's piece on page 18).

*You created Trump* (from the left). Liberals (and libertarians) fault us for inveighing against latitudinarian immigration policies and stoking opposition to President Obama. We plead guilty on both counts, but obviously there is no reason that the endpoint of either of these things need be Donald Trump.

*You created Trump* (from the right). The conservative version of this critique is that we ignored immigration as an issue and enabled a GOP establishment that has dismissed and angered voters. The first charge is absurd, given how intensely we have fought repeated attempts at “comprehensive immigration reform.” As for the second, for years we have published writers who have urged the GOP to adopt economic policies addressing the discontents of the American working class.

*Bill Buckley would be ashamed.* This is what Donald Trump himself said. He was apparently unaware that Buckley hated crude populism and had called Trump a “narcissist” and a “demagogue” back in 2000. While Trump's positions on many issues have changed since then, that description still fits.

Amid the denunciation and the debate, many of you, our readers, have reached out with messages of support, and we have been awed at the tens of thousands of dollars of unsolicited donations that have poured in. You understand that NR is here to hold up the banner of conservatism, without fear or favor, and we are deeply grateful for your friendship.



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# Toward a Conservative Populism

*How to draw Trump's supporters into the fold*

BY RAMESH PONNURU & RICHARD LOWRY

**M**ANY of Donald Trump's supporters are not conservatives. Many of them have not been active in politics before.

Conservatives should be glad when a public figure leads newcomers to join our cause. We should welcome it even when the new recruits have somewhat different views and passions than the long-timers do. Some older-line Republicans were appalled when, starting in the late 1970s, northern Catholic ethnics and southern Evangelicals, some of them newly active in politics, joined the party, gave it a more downscale economic profile, and forced it to talk about school prayer instead of an Equal Rights Amendment. But these changes were mostly for the better. The country was riven by new moral conflicts, and conservatism could not carry on as though it were not. And because these changes brought in more new Republican voters than they repelled old ones, they made it possible for a changed conservatism to command a majority in many elections and, thus, to implement conservative policies.

The happiest story conservatives could tell about Trump would be an updated version of that one: A newcomer to conservatism himself, he is leading others to join an enlarged conservative coalition

while simultaneously injecting it with a skepticism about mass immigration that is much more sensible than past conservative leaders' enthusiasm for it.

This way of looking at the Trump phenomenon raises several large questions. One is whether his defects as a political leader outweigh these potential gains—and they do. For reasons of character, temperament, and experience, he is a poor fit for the presidency, and if nominated he could very well cost Republicans an election that they might otherwise win. Another is whether Trump, even today, is rightly described as a conservative—and whether the coalition he seeks to lead is, either.

During this campaign and the years immediately preceding it, Trump has taken a range of conventionally conservative positions. Whether from honest conviction or political expediency, he has gone from being a strong supporter of legal abortion to being an opponent of it. He opposes same-sex marriage. He no longer favors banning "assault weapons." He is for large—irresponsibly, comically large—tax cuts.

But there is also a key element of conservatism that Trump has either ignored or contradicted. Missing from both his policies and his rhetoric is any interest in

freeing markets or reducing the federal government to something closer to its proper constitutional dimensions.

Some of his Republican rivals advocate reforming the entitlement programs that take up more and more of the federal budget, so as to make them fiscally sustainable and less harmful to the economy. Others pay lip service to the idea. Trump is one of the few who oppose meaningful change. Some Republicans have plans to replace Obamacare with a system that would have a much smaller government role and much freer markets; some have no plan but endorse the goal. Trump doesn't talk much about health care, but when he does, the outcome he describes sounds like a compromise between President Obama and Bernie Sanders. When it comes to economics, Trump's greatest enthusiasm is for raising taxes on people and businesses that buy products or inputs from China. The other Republican candidates talk about appointing judges who will strike down laws that violate explicit constitutional prohibitions and who will otherwise defer to legislatures; Trump rarely raises the issue and flails when asked about it. ("I'm going to appoint people that have great reputations, that are great with the legal profession . . .")

Trump promises not to limit government but to manage it better. He will hire the best, smartest people, who will come up with terrific plans, and the results will be excellent. What's wrong with our government, on Trump's telling, is not that it has overextended itself, taking on tasks that it has no business performing and by its very nature cannot perform well. It is that "we are led by very, very stupid people" rather than the "terrific" people who would staff his administration and bring America back to greatness.

None of this, of course, has particularly hurt Trump to this point. His success so far is, in part, a testament to how limited government and free markets are the weak sisters of conservatism. Yes, voters say they want less government—it's an impulse built into the country—but there just aren't that many voters highly motivated by those causes. When push comes to shove, voters care more about national strength, jobs, and their own government benefits than the relative abstractions of a smaller state and robust markets.

This political weakness is why conservatism constantly deals with attempts to repudiate or water down its commitment

to limited government. In the 1990s, Pat Buchanan advanced a “conservatism of the heart” that prefigured Trumpism, and he favorably cited FDR: “Better the occasional faults of a government that lives in a spirit of charity than the consistent omissions of a government frozen in the ice of its own indifference.” George W. Bush’s compassionate conservatism was also a break with limited government, albeit one with a softer, less tribal inflection than Buchanan’s.

The weak attachment of even many Republicans to limited-government conservatism made the rise of the Tea Party remarkable. It led to a re-baptizing of the GOP in the limited-government, constitutionalist faith—especially when Paul Ryan worked assiduously to marry it to his own zeal for entitlement reform. In retrospect, it is even more extraordinary that the Tea Party took populist, anti-establishment sentiment and put it in the service of ideological purity, given that this same sentiment is now fueling the rise of the ideologically indifferent Trump.

Trump at least has had to gesture toward taking social-conservative concerns seri-

ously; his campaign might have been a non-starter, and would certainly have been less potent, had he remained pro-choice. But he hasn’t felt the same pressure on economic issues. Indeed, he has probably gone farther in the direction of Republican orthodoxy than he needed to. He mused about making the rich pay more taxes without suffering any harm in the polls. Then he came out with a massive tax-cut plan stacked in favor of the highest earners.

Recognizing that limited government lacks natural mass appeal should not entail jettisoning it. Limiting the state and keeping it within constitutional bounds are necessary to maintaining a free, dynamic society that rewards and insists upon individual responsibility. We have ample reasons, both empirical and theoretical, to believe that adding protectionist tariffs to our existing welfare state will undermine the goal of making America great. We will not be able to maintain a strong defense and a thriving economy if we don’t rein in entitlements. And what has always made American nationalism distinctive, and distinctively valuable, is that it is rooted in our founding principles.

Conservatives can and should try to accommodate Trump supporters while sticking with our basic philosophy of government. Conservatives have done as much before. Conservatives did not shun George Wallace supporters, for example, but they rejected his most noxious and least conservative views. (Wallace supported both segregation and an expansive welfare state.) Ross Perot’s supporters were an uneasy fit with conservatives but were welcomed into a conservatism that retained its support for free trade and moral traditionalism. We should take the same approach with Trump’s followers.

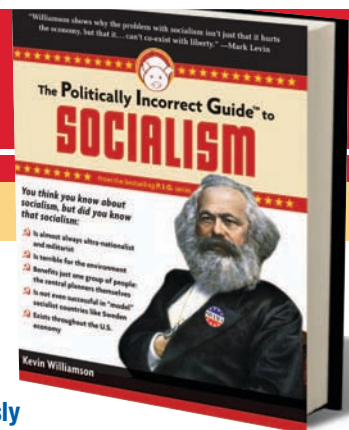
The worst outcome of this political season would be for Trump to win the nomination—remolding conservatism in his image and weakening its attachment to limited government—and then lose the election. Not as bad, but still a cause for alarm, would be for Trump to lose the nomination and anti-Trump conservatives to breathe a sigh of relief and carry on as though nothing had happened.

There are a few obvious steps toward an intelligent recalibration in reaction to Trump’s potency. Conservatism’s eco-

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conomic agenda has overlapped too closely with the interests of big business and rich people. We should devote more attention to government-limiting steps that would be good for the broad mass of people—including the people who have been left behind in our economy—and we should highlight the concrete benefits of those steps. Neither Trump nor his supporters within conservatism have outlined much in the way of a practical agenda for these struggling Americans; but his opponents within conservatism have not always even paid attention to them. One hopes that Trump has opened up space for this conversation.

Another necessary step, of course, is to come up with a realistic immigration platform—which means, in various ways, rejecting the approach of each of the Republican factions today.

Many influential Republicans want more low-skilled immigration. But this is foolhardy. We don't need it: The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the 2013 immigration bill would have doubled immigration levels while making a negligible contribution to per capita income. We don't want it: Polls consistently show that only a minority of Americans favor higher immigration levels. And it would work against the national interest in assimilating newcomers. These Republicans also tend to favor granting legal status or citizenship to illegal immigrants, even at the risk of attracting more such immigrants.

Conservatives who reject these ideas have repeatedly managed to defeat attempts to implement them, in both the Bush and the Obama years. (NATIONAL REVIEW has done its part to rally the opposition.) But the attempts have been repeated, and determined, too, enjoying strong support from both Republican and Democratic leaders, mainstream media outlets, business groups, unions, and church leaders—much stronger support than they have received from Americans at large. To opponents this has had the feel of a conspiracy about it, especially when their legitimate objections have been treated as pure bigotry. It is no wonder that many people are distrustful and angry on this issue, especially in light of President Obama's efforts to effect amnesty through diktat.

But a policy of mass deportation is wholly unrealistic. Even more unrealistic is deporting and then returning the immi-

grants—Donald Trump's cracked version of a "touchback" amnesty. We're not going to do it, and we shouldn't. The better alternative is to enforce immigration laws, reduce low-skilled immigration, insist on assimilation, and then deal with the remaining illegal population—perhaps even with a limited amnesty.

Yet practically nobody in the GOP is advocating this policy. The presidential race originally appeared as though it would be confined to candidates who favored increasing immigration levels. Now it includes candidates who appear to reject these ideas. These candidates, however, also favor mass deportation; or they wish to rule out legal status for any illegal immigrants under any circumstances. The general public, on the other hand, appears to want neither higher immigration nor mass deportation, and to be open to amnesty if it will not lead to more illegal immigration in the future. It's a sensible set of views; perhaps Republicans should consider representing them.

George Will likes to say that when votes were counted for Goldwater 16 years later, he won. To win that "recount," conservatives had to adjust and get rid of some rough edges. It turns out you can't go to Tennessee and say no to the TVA (even today!). You can't promise to slash and burn entitlements (even if you will get accused of wanting to when you propose modest reforms). But Will is right. Through the Goldwater revolution, the party became newly oriented around limited-government conservatism, and eventually a better politician than Goldwater, Ronald Reagan, came along to represent the new dispensation and get elected president.

Maybe Trump could serve roughly the same function. He could lose badly this year and yet give rise to a future GOP that takes enforcement of the immigration laws seriously, reduces low-skilled immigration, and does more to represent the less-schooled wage earner, while also rejecting fantasies of mass deportation. Those gains would, however, come at a fearful cost that conservatives should strive to avoid. It's possible—and advisable—for the party to reject Trump as its nominee but learn from his rise. This way, the party would get the benefit of a worthwhile readjustment without risking the abandonment of important principles or suffering a potentially Goldwateresque liberal landslide. **NR**

# The Bernie Tax

*Sanders's socialism is very different from the Danish model he admires*

BY REIHAN SALAM

**I**N late January, during a town-hall forum at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, Bernie Sanders, a senator from Vermont and Hillary Clinton's chief rival for the Democratic presidential nomination, said something legitimately ground-breaking. When Chris Cuomo of CNN asked Sanders whether he was willing to raise taxes to finance his proposed "Medicare for all" single-payer health-care system, the self-described socialist was admirably frank: "We will raise taxes. Yes, we will." And he's not kidding. Sanders is proposing over \$1 trillion in tax increases, according to the Tax Policy Center.

You might be wondering why Sanders's tax pledge is so remarkable. After all, it is a commonplace that Democrats want to raise taxes on high-earning households, and Sanders is certainly eager to do so. He goes much further than most mainstream Democrats on that front, as you'd expect from a man who is very self-consciously working to push the American mainstream leftward. Among other things, Sanders has called for drastic increases in capital-gains taxes, in top income-tax rates, and in taxes on corporate profits. He has also come out in favor of a new financial-transactions tax. All of these measures are designed to soak the rich, even though all of them will likely cause collateral damage for working Americans who benefit from capital investment and economic growth.

What's really interesting about Sanders's tax pledge is that he is making a bold break with Clintonism. Back in the 1990s, Bill Clinton and his disciples swore off tax hikes on U.S. households earning \$250,000 or less a year (roughly \$414,000 in today's dollars), and in doing so they helped neutralize what had been a Reagan-era GOP advantage on taxes. It turns out that as long as middle-income voters are convinced that *their own* taxes aren't going up, they are quite happy to



support candidates who pledge to raise taxes on the rich. Shrewd Democrats such as Senator Chuck Schumer and House minority leader Nancy Pelosi, of Brooklyn and San Francisco, respectively, have clung tightly to this Clintonite strategy. Though fewer than 5 percent of U.S. households earn over \$200,000 a year, many of those who fall in this slice of the upper middle class are loyal Democrats who resent being lumped in with those wealthier than they.

Sanders is taking an entirely different tack. He is explicitly in favor of substantial increases in payroll taxes, which would impact all working households. To help finance Medicare-for-all, Sanders is proposing a 6.2 percent employer tax (in Sanders's words, an "income-based health premium"), which will be paid by workers in the form of reduced wages, and a 2.2 percent income tax (also an "income-based premium"). He is quick to point out that these tax increases will substitute for the health-care premiums that Americans with private coverage now pay directly or through their employers, a subject to which we'll return.

Sanders's stance in favor of middle-class tax increases doesn't just represent a fitting rejection of Clintonism. He is violating a taboo that has kept Democrats in check since 1984, when Walter Mondale, the Democratic presidential nominee, told the delegates assembled at the Democratic National Convention that "Mr. Reagan will raise your taxes, and so will I." According to Mondale, Reagan's tax-cut promises were a deception. The former vice president claimed that Reagan had a secret tax plan that would "sock it to average-income families" while leaving the rich untouched, a claim that is roughly the opposite of what in fact happened under the 1986 tax-reform legislation Reagan championed in his second term.

Yet Mondale did have the germ of a point: If the U.S. was going to dramatically increase public spending, which was very much his goal, the money would have to come from somewhere, and it couldn't all come from the rich. By calling for higher payroll taxes, Sanders is trying to refashion the American social contract in a larger, more ambitious way. In keeping with his admiration for Europe's social democracies, and in particular his love of Denmark, a country he ritualistically invokes as his model of a good society, Sanders wants to nudge us towards a



Senator Bernie Sanders

model in which much higher government-spending levels are balanced by much higher taxes.

So what could possibly go wrong? By and large, Europe's social democracies finance their high spending levels with high consumption taxes, which are embedded in the cost of virtually all goods and services. There is much to be said for relying on consumption taxes over income taxes. For one thing, there is some evidence to suggest that relying more heavily on consumption taxes is more conducive to economic growth than relying more heavily on income taxes, as consumption taxes encourage savings and investment. The downside of high consumption taxes is that they are regressive: Low-income households consume a higher share of their total income than high-income households, so consumption taxes will tend to hit low-income households harder.

There are ways around this dilemma. The most obvious is to ensure that, while the tax burden might be somewhat regressive, government spending flows to low-income households more than high-income households, thus ensuring that the overall tax-and-transfer system is progressive. This is roughly the tack taken by Europe's successful social democracies.

The trouble is that this Danish path that Sanders would like the U.S. to follow is rooted in an entirely different historical experience. Let's leave aside the fact that Danes are Danes and Americans are Americans; we don't even need an elaborate story about deep-rooted cultural

differences to explain how our experiences have diverged. As the Northwestern University sociologist Monica Prasad argues in *The Land of Too Much*, Europe's social democracies were the product of a bargain between elites and the working class. To raise economic-growth rates in the wake of devastating wars and the economic challenge posed by the hyper-productive United States, workers would accept relatively low wages and high consumption taxes. In exchange, they'd get generous cradle-to-grave welfare states.

Organized labor was strong in much of Western Europe. But as the legal scholar Matthew Dimick has observed, unions in countries such as Denmark and Sweden operate under what we call "right-to-work" rules. People join labor unions not because of closed-shop rules, but because they find it advantageous to do so. For much of the post-war era, tax systems were more regressive in Western Europe than in the United States, and labor-management relations were far *less* adversarial over there than over here.

The U.S. settled on a very different model. While European social democrats accepted that the working class would pay for the welfare state through high consumption taxes—an arrangement that European elites were happy to accept—the American Left fought for steeply progressive income taxes, which turned more-affluent voters against big expansions of government social programs. U.S. unions, meanwhile, fought to extract as much as they could in employer-provided benefits, which led them to favor policies such as the tax break for employer-sponsored insurance coverage. And as long as job-based coverage was the norm, working- and middle-class voters never really clamored for a government takeover of medical care of the kind Bernie Sanders is now proposing.

Love them or hate them, the genius of Europe's socialists is that they found a way to make peace with capitalism. They found a way to finance expansive welfare states while still allowing the rich to get richer. America's socialists, from Bernie Sanders on down, have never quite figured this out. And so our dyed-in-the-wool socialists keep losing to liberal hucksters such as Bill and Hillary Clinton, who keep pretending that higher taxes on the rich will pay for middle-class entitlements as far as the eye can see despite knowing full well that the math will never add up. **NR**

# The Art of National-Security Advising

Meet Victoria Coates,  
a key Ted Cruz aide

BY JAY NORDLINGER

**'S**HE'S an art historian, you know!" said Donald Rumsfeld to me, when I dropped by his office in 2009. He said it with a look of wonder and glee. He was talking about his director of research, Victoria Coates. She and others were helping the former defense secretary with his memoir, which would be titled "Known and Unknown."

I indeed knew she was an art historian. In fact, I had been friends with Victoria for several years.

After working for Rumsfeld, she worked for Governor Rick Perry of Texas. Now she is working for another Texas politician, Senator Ted Cruz. She is his top foreign-policy aide. If he makes it to the White House, will she be national-security adviser? I wouldn't bet against it.

She has just published a book, *David's Sling: A History of Democracy in Ten Works of Art*. In addition to Michelangelo's *David*, she discusses the Parthenon, Monet's *Water Lilies*, Picasso's *Guernica*, etc. "David's Sling," by the way, is also the name of an Israeli missile-defense system. The Jews are still coming up with ways to defend themselves against fearsome enemies, as Victoria points out.

This is an unusual moment in her life: Her boss, Cruz, is in the midst of a white-knuckle presidential campaign; and she has this new book to promote. So, she accompanies the candidate to one television studio, and then, hours later, goes to another to be interviewed herself. This is good for both Cruz and book sales.

The Marxists have an apt expression: "the correlation of forces."

Chatting with her, I say, "I want to call you 'Victoria' in print, because it would

be so awkward not to. 'Coates' would seem both odd and cold." She will answer to "Mrs.," "Professor," and even "Dr." (as in "Dr. Kissinger," "Dr. Brzezinski," "Dr. Rice" . . .). But she is happy with "Victoria," which, after all, she notes, means "victory."

She was born and raised in Lancaster, Pa.—"the middle of Pennsylvania," as she says, using a fond term for the vast stretch of Pennsylvania between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. "We cling to our guns and religion, bitterly." With these words, of course, she is alluding to an infamous statement of Barack Obama, uttered when he was campaigning for president in 2008. He was talking about "small towns in Pennsylvania."

Victoria's paternal grandfather, Paul Gardner, was a virtual orphan who rose to make a fortune in business. Horatio Alger would blush. On her mother's side, Victoria is descended from Andrew Gregg Curtin, who, during the Civil War, was governor of Pennsylvania.

Her father, Gene Gardner, started an investment firm in Lancaster. Her mother, Anne, is an executive in the firm. The Gardners are keen art collectors. When a student at Harvard, Mr. Gardner studied art history with Seymour Slive, an expert on Rembrandt and other Dutchmen. Victoria never met Professor Slive, "but he has played a profound role in my life," she says: "He inspired my father to be interested in art history, and Dad then thought it was worthwhile for me to go into the field."

When Victoria was six, in 1974, the family went on a trip to Europe. In Amsterdam, they marched straight to the Rijksmuseum, where they saw *The Night Watch* (Rembrandt). It was the first work of art that made an impact on Victoria. It is one of the ten works in *David's Sling*.

For college, Victoria went to Trinity, in Hartford, Conn. She intended to major in political science, but "I was bitten by the art-history bug." So, she switched. For her master's degree, she went to Williams College, in Williamstown, Mass. She wrote about Pontormo and the influence on him by Dürer. For her doctorate, she went to the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia. She specialized in 16th- and 17th-century Italians and Frenchmen.

Her dissertation? It's on Camillo Massimo, an Italian cardinal and

diplomat who was also a major patron of the arts. Among his beneficiaries was Poussin.

With a smile, I tell Victoria, "I know Poussin chiefly through the Cold War." It takes her about a second and a half to figure out what I mean: Anthony Blunt, the Cambridge spy, was the preeminent authority on Poussin. Victoria's undergraduate adviser was himself advised by Blunt.

Asking a too-simple question, I say, "Would you care to name favorite artists?" It is not too simple for her. In any event, she is happy to answer: "Poussin. Cellini. Raphael. Those are the ones I would take to a desert island."

While studying at Penn, Victoria married George Coates, who is a wine dealer. They have two children, a girl, Gardner, and a boy, Gowen. They live in Chestnut Hill, a neighborhood of Philadelphia. They also have a long-term lease on a place at Andalusia, the estate of Nicholas Biddle overlooking the Delaware River. Biddle was president of the Second Bank of the United States. George Washington had crossed the Delaware 20 miles north of the estate.

I might mention, too, that Victoria is a fanatic about Philadelphia sports teams—a Philly phanatic.

Politically, Victoria has always been a conservative. She never had a flirtation with the Left. Are there others in art history? Other Republicans or conservatives? Victoria knows one other. And she tells me something amusing about Mary Beard, the famous English classicist, who is far from a conservative (except in the sense that all classicists are conservative). Beard and Victoria are friends. And Beard will say to her, "Victoria, why aren't more conservatives like you?" Victoria will respond, "Mary, I'm the only conservative you ever talk to!"

In the mid 2000s, Victoria was teaching at Penn. She was also blogging under the name "AcademicElephant" for *RedState*, the conservative website. Most of her posts had to do with foreign policy, national security, and war, though she also wrote about art history. Victoria may have been blogging anonymously, but she was a very bold person . . .

. . . to the point of wearing a hat that said "Rumsfeld Fan." One day, she was jogging in a Philadelphia park while wearing this hat. Another jogger stopped

her. “Does your hat say what I think it does?” he said. Naturally befuddled, Victoria said, “Well, yes.” He then spat at her.

In the Office of the Secretary of Defense, a couple of Rumsfeld aides were reading *AcademicElephant* at *RedState*. They included some of the blogger’s writings in the secretary’s daily folder. Before long, Rumsfeld and his people were wondering, “Who is this military guy who knows so much and thinks so well?”

Through a “weird series of accidents,” says Victoria, the military guy, who was actually a female art-history professor, wound up working for Rumsfeld, after he left office. At first, Victoria worked part-time. What did her academic colleagues think, by the way? Were they shocked? “They were surprised,” recalls Victoria. And one of them, who had been a close colleague, stopped speaking to her.

Eventually, part-time work became full-time, and Victoria ceased to teach art history. When the Rumsfeld project wrapped up, the 2012 presidential cycle was in gear. One of the candidates was Governor Perry—who recruited Victoria to advise him. At this point, yet another of Victoria’s close colleagues in academia stopped speaking to her.

The Perry presidential campaign did not work out—as it would not four years later—but, in early 2013, Victoria signed on with that second Texas politician, the new senator, Cruz. Public figures, like others, evidently value Victoria’s expertise, versatility, talent, efficiency, and notably pleasant manner.

Thinking about Rumsfeld, Perry, and Cruz, Victoria says, “I’m drawn to the shy, retiring type.” More seriously, she says, “What the three of them have in common is patriotism. They love America and feel compelled to defend it.”

When I ask about her favorite presidents, she starts with this: She has a dog named Calvin. Full name, Calvin Coolidge Coates. She goes on to cite Lincoln and Reagan. “But my absolute favorite is George Washington. Without him, it doesn’t happen. It just doesn’t.”

And how about her favorite world leaders, of recent vintage? Well, she has a second dog: Thatcher. Reflecting on the late prime minister, Victoria says that she showed how you can be a

woman and play at the highest levels, affecting history. She then mentions Lee Kuan Yew, the father of Singapore. And Benjamin Netanyahu, the current prime minister of Israel.

This prompts me to tell her about a public interview I did of Paul Johnson, the British historian, about ten years ago. He has known everyone, and, if not, has certainly thought about everyone. “Who are the truly impressive figures of our age?” I asked. He first said Lee Kuan Yew. Then he said, “I think Netanyahu is a man of destiny.” And that was it.

About Obama’s foreign policy, Victoria has much to say, obviously, but she leads with these two sentences: “It’s backwards. It is the opposite of what is productive.” Iran is a prime

example, she says. And a Cruz foreign policy would be starkly different.

Some opponents of the senator, on the right, have tried to make an issue of Victoria. They’ve whispered to donors, “He’s advised on foreign policy by an art historian, you know.” For his part, Cruz is delighted to introduce her to donors—who conclude that she’s a feather in the candidate’s cap.

Whether he is elected president or not, his national-security aide, Victoria Coates, is likely to make a splash, whether in her foreign-affairs work or her art-historical work. She already has. And the waves, in all probability, will get bigger. And when I write about her from now on, she will not be “Victoria.” I’ve gotten used to “Cruz” (he’s also an old friend). I can get used to “Coates,” too. **NR**

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# More than a 'Misanthrope'

*On the late, great Florence King*

BY JOHN O'SULLIVAN

**W**HEN Florence King revealed her post-graduate dabbling in lesbianism, she was inundated with invitations to address feminist groups. She would write on the invitations "I think you should know I'm a Republican" and send them back. She had also written pornography—37 books in all, which one day will surely be the basis for earnest feminist theses—and she was both funny and candid about its absurdities: how, for instance, an experienced pornographer would meet her word quota by writing a succession of paragraphs containing nothing but the word "Yes." And in her review of a biography of Helen Gurley Brown, who had been her admired and admiring employer, Florence sympathized with Brown's Sixties skepticism towards campaigns against sexual harassment while also, however, doubting Brown's view that an office game involving the removal of secretaries' panties was no more than a little teasing.

You might suppose that such a frank and admitted libertine would be an awkward fit for a magazine such as NATIONAL REVIEW, which defends veils as well as virtues even if we don't always practice the latter religiously. In fact, she fitted us like a glove from the very first—in her ruthless distaste for the conventional wisdom, her admiration for courage against fashion and the mob, her rational and perceptive nostalgia, her deep but lightly worn scholarship, her wit that wandered wherever it felt like, and the simple brilliance of her writing. That last quality—also the most important one—has been celebrated since her death in tributes from many other writers who recognized the genuine article.

We discovered Florence late. When we did, she was already well established as a writer with other audiences. She had moved on from pornography and by the mid Seventies was writing regularly for mainstream women's magazines such as

*Redbook* and *Cosmopolitan*. She went on to publish a serious novel, a historical novel (a.k.a. bodice-ripper), collections of her magazine pieces, and a series of nonfiction books that combined autobiography, history, cultural commentary, and much else along the way. She was established and she had a good professional profile. But she had not yet found a home—magazine pages where she felt comfortable, among friends, and not continually irritated by the voguish silliness or sentimentality of the article next door. On our side, NATIONAL REVIEW was always looking for distinctive writers who would ideally be conservative but who absolutely had to be word-jugglers.

It was Maggie Brimelow who effected the necessary introduction between us when she placed two of Florence's books—*Confessions of a Failed Southern Lady* and *O Wasp, Where Is Thy Sting?*—on my bedside table when I was staying with her and Peter one weekend in the late 1980s. I remained awake till 4 A.M. reading and laughing and came down to breakfast tired but raving. Not long afterwards we asked her to write for NR, and she soon became a regular with her own column, "The Misanthrope's Corner," which after an even shorter interval had devoted fans who included Bill Buckley. She stayed with us until her recent death.

Not without the occasional storm. Good writers can be difficult people because they care about what they have written and don't always agree with how their editors think it can be improved. They are sometimes right, but not always. There was a regular cycle in Florence's relations with editors responsible for her copy. She would begin by welcoming the new editor as a vast improvement on his illiterate and barbarian predecessor, then object mildly to some modest changes, then fall ominously silent, then finally demand his execution. That would lead to a new editor assigned to Florence's copy, and the cycle would begin again. "STET, Damnit!" was the title of one of her collections, and it was a good, if partial, summary of her relationship with NR's engine room.

I largely escaped any angst in working with Florence, for a number of reasons. I had invited her onto NR, and she was grateful for that. Also, I like writers who send in copy that can be read, enjoyed, and sent to the printers without editorial intervention. Florence was such a writer,

and we suited each other. Even so, I realized that a row was bound to break out between us if I continued personally to edit her copy. So I took the coward's way out and handed the poisoned chalice to junior editors. Problem solved.

My final protection was that Florence (who liked mothers much more than children—see below) took a shine to my own mother on the basis of some quotations from her in my column. She especially liked the story that my mother had bought up great quantities of beef when "mad-cow disease" had caused a drop in prices. When I had raised the risk to her health, Mum had replied that the incubation period for mad-cow disease was 20 years and that she was 86. "Remind me when I'm 105," she said. To Florence this showed the right stuff; she gave off vibes that the wrong O'Sullivan was editing NR but that with luck my good genes might win through.

It helped that Jack Fowler got on well with her, talked her through the crises with the copy editor of the hour, and warned us if he thought the situation was getting out of hand. He was her good friend and defused many rows. Without his interventions, Florence and NR might have parted company long ago.

Essentially, though, we stayed together because we loved her writing, which was superb in so many different ways. She wrote literary parodies, social satires, devastating analyses of political fashion, book reviews in which she skewered self-satisfied writers used to skewering others (notably, the haughty Gore Vidal), autobiographical essays that tested feminist theories against her own family's experience, and historical set pieces such as her forensic demonstration that Lizzie Borden *had* murdered her father and stepmother but that nonetheless she was rightly liked by most people because she had standards: "Some students of the crime think she committed both murders in the nude, but Victoria Lincoln disagrees and so do I. Murder is one thing, but . . ."

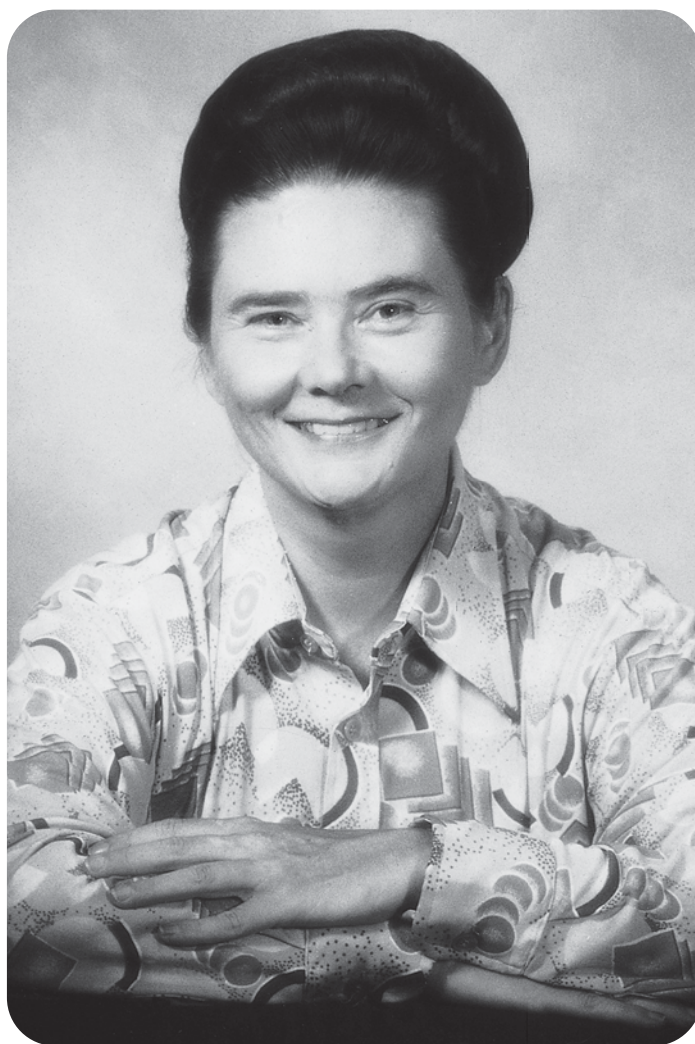
In these different genres she demonstrated, like Sherlock Holmes, an ability to observe where others merely saw. She was astonishingly well read, able to reach into her own head for the apt quotation or allusion without ever sounding like a dictionary of quotations or, worse, a blue-stocking. She had a sharp wit. And she had a keen eye for pretension or

fraudulence. Here she tackles two kinds of fraudulence in one, in an imagined novel by Ayn Rand about the Clintons: “He strode purposefully through the woods, his eyes fixed straight ahead, seeing nothing but the next election. He tried to clamp his lips shut with inflexible contempt but it was hard when you smiled all the time.”

In addition to its obvious virtues, her writing did clever things with three suspect causes: nostalgia, misanthropy, and romance.

Nostalgia hasn’t had a good press lately; it is seen as a way of retreating from reality. One of the strengths of Florence’s writing, however, was that she exploited knowledge and fondness of the past to illuminate present reality. She subverted the feminist account of the middle-class home as a comfortable concentration camp, for instance, by pointing out that the homemaker had socially isolated herself by choosing a life of leisure and labor-saving devices. As a result, the parade of tradesmen, from knife-grinders to encyclopedia salesmen, who used to appear at her mother’s backdoor and accept a cup of tea or coffee as partial reward for their company gradually tailed off, leaving the homemaker with only a washing machine or a fridge to talk to. (Florence was delighted when I told her that in my youth these tradesmen had included French onion-sellers who came over from Brittany and biked around England.) It wasn’t capitalism but comfort that had destroyed the social life of the kitchen—a bad bargain, in her view, but one made by Woman in her own sphere.

Florence accused herself of misanthropy, but this was a false charge. Misanthropy, properly considered, is an accurate view of human nature with the residue of decency and the possibility of grace left out. A misanthropist will therefore be right most of the time but wrong on most of the occasions when it



*Florence Virginia King, 1936–2016*

really counts. Florence King was in reality a moralist exposing the false niceness and hypocrisies of modern life. She felt a special distaste for the conscription of children as the front men for progressive causes:

Recently, my little corner of the world was shaken by the discovery of a man with fifty pet cobras in his basement. Quoth a neighbor in our local paper: “My God, there’s kids around here!” (My God, there’s a great line in Elsa Lanchester’s autobiography: “I held a baby once. It felt like a bag of hot snakes.”)

Doubtless she didn’t like kids much, but she disliked salesmen for the mommy state even more. And resisting the tyranny of niceness is not misanthropy; it’s benevolence.

Romance pervades her most noticed book, *Confessions of a Failed Southern Lady*, which, as Lauren Weiner pointed

out in a perceptive obituary tribute (to which I am indebted here), was rooted in a divided sensibility. King’s affection for her mother’s and grandmother’s aristocratic Virginian pretensions was undermined by a realization that those pretensions would not survive too close a look: “Think of the sadness of a child who knows that she fails to meet a standard; but then think of that child’s perceiving how deluded and vain the standard-bearer is, and the comedic/sardonic possibilities start to become apparent. King mined this comedic/sardonic vein for all it was worth.”

Unlike most writers who deal in this coinage, however, the satirist in King does not win all the battles, and maybe not the most important ones. She sees that the romantic standards that her grandmother and others revere may have shrouded a good many scoundrels and a great deal of chicanery. But they were at least standards and, as such, they

also inspired others to better behavior and gentler manners. That outcome is better than no standards at all—when vice pays no tribute to virtue—and much better than the standards of the modern world in which she unwillingly found herself. Presented with contemporary standards on any topic, she was withering. Here again—and, significantly, here again with the Clintons—she skewers pious frauds past and present:

My main objection to Hillary’s psychic quest is her taste in ghosts. Why would anyone want to talk to Eleanor Roosevelt and Mahatma Gandhi? Unless the spirit world has turned them in the direction of rational thought and logical discourse—not something a spirit world is likely to do—they must make even less sense now than they did when they were alive.

And now she is telling them that in person. R.I.P. **NR**



# Conservatives Against Trump

GLENN BECK

**A**s the election of 2008 approached, America was in crisis. And as we would soon learn, that crisis would not go to waste. Years after Bill Clinton disingenuously claimed that the era of big government was over, Obama won his party's nomination by promising its furious revenge.

For constitutional conservatives, the Republican contest functioned less like a primary and more like an abandonment. Politically orphaned by their party, conservatives were forced to either stay home or hold their noses and vote for a progressive Republican.

There was a silver lining, however. Rising out of the ashes of that electoral defeat came the Tea Party. The media struggled to explain it away as racist, xenophobic, and jingoistic. But the truth is, the Tea Party did not arise because Barack Obama defeated his opposition. It arose because there was no opposition.

Over the years, there have been endless fractures in the façade of individual freedom, but three policies provided the fuel that lit the tea-party fire: the stimulus, the auto bailouts, and the bank bailouts.

Barack Obama supported all three. So did Donald Trump.

While conservatives fought against the stimulus, Donald Trump said it was “what we need,” praising Obama’s schemes of “building infrastructure, building great projects, putting people to work in that sense.”

While conservatives fought against the auto bailouts, Donald Trump claimed “the government should stand behind [the auto companies] 100 percent” because “they make wonderful products.”

While conservatives fought against the bank bailouts, Donald Trump called them “something that has to get done.” Let his reasoning sink in for a second: The government “can take over companies, and, frankly, take big chunks of companies.”



When conservatives desperately needed allies in the fight against big government, Donald Trump didn't stand on the sidelines. He consistently advocated that your money be spent, that your government grow, and that your Constitution be ignored.

Sure, Trump's potential primary victory would provide Hillary Clinton with the easiest imaginable path to the White House. But it's far worse than that. If Donald Trump wins the Republican nomination, there will once again be no opposition to an ever-expanding government.

This is a crisis for conservatism. And, once again, this crisis will not go to waste.

*Mr. Beck is a nationally syndicated radio host, the founder of TheBlaze, and a best-selling author.*

## DAVID BOAZ

**A** LOT of Americans think it would be better to have a businessman than a politician as president, and I sympathize with them. Alas, the only businessmen crazy enough to run for president seem to be, well,

protectionism, or his passionate defense of eminent domain, I think we can say that this is a Republican campaign that would have appalled Buckley, Goldwater, and Reagan.

*Mr. Boaz is the executive vice president of the Cato Institute and the author of The Libertarian Mind.*

## L. BRENT BOZELL III

**L**ONGTIME conservative leader Richard Viguerie has a simple test for credentialing a conservative: Does he walk with us?

For the simple reason that he cannot win without conservatives' support, virtually every Republican presenting himself to voters swears so-help-me-God that he is a conservative. Many of these politicians are calculating, cynical charlatans, running as one thing only to govern in a completely different direction. See: McConnell, McCain, Hatch, Boehner, et al. And for decades it's worked. Conservatives look at the alternatives—Reid, Pelosi, Obama, Clinton, et al.—and bite the bullet. We so often “win”—only for nothing to come of it.

If Donald Trump wins the Republican nomination, there will once again be no opposition to an ever-expanding government. This is a **crisis for conservatism**.

crazy. At least Ross Perot kept his craziness confined mostly to private matters, such as the looming disruption of his daughter's wedding. Donald Trump puts it front and center.

From a libertarian point of view—and I think serious conservatives and liberals would share this view—Trump's greatest offenses against American tradition and our founding principles are his nativism and his promise of one-man rule.

Not since George Wallace has there been a presidential candidate who made racial and religious scapegoating so central to his campaign. Trump launched his campaign talking about Mexican rapists and has gone on to rant about mass deportation, bans on Muslim immigration, shutting down mosques, and building a wall around America. America is an exceptional nation in large part because we've aspired to rise above such prejudices and guarantee life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to everyone.

Equally troubling is his idea of the presidency—his promise that he's the guy, the man on a white horse, who can ride into Washington, fire the stupid people, hire the best people, and fix everything. He doesn't talk about policy or working with Congress. He's effectively vowing to be an American Mussolini, concentrating power in the Trump White House and governing by fiat. It's a vision to make the last 16 years of executive abuse of power seem modest.

Without even getting into his past support for a massive wealth tax and single-payer health care, his know-nothing

The GOP base is clearly disgusted and looking for new leadership. Enter Donald Trump, not just with policy prescriptions that challenge the cynical GOP leadership but with an attitude of disdain for that leadership—precisely in line with the sentiment of the base. Many conservatives are relishing this, but ah, the rub. Trump might be the greatest charlatan of them all.

A real conservative walks with us. Ronald Reagan read *NATIONAL REVIEW* and *Human Events* for intellectual sustenance; spoke annually to the Conservative Political Action Conference, Young Americans for Freedom, and other organizations to rally the troops; supported Barry Goldwater when the GOP mainstream turned its back on him; raised money for countless conservative groups; wrote hundreds of op-eds; and delivered even more speeches, everywhere championing our cause. Until he decided to run for the GOP nomination a few months ago, Trump had done none of these things, perhaps because he was too distracted publicly raising money for liberals such as the Clintons; championing Planned Parenthood, tax increases, and single-payer health coverage; and demonstrating his allegiance to the Democratic party.

We conservatives should support the one candidate who walks with us.

*Mr. Bozell is the chairman of ForAmerica and the president of the Media Research Center. He has endorsed Ted Cruz for president.*



## MONA CHAREN

IN December, Public Policy Polling found that 36 percent of Republican voters for whom choosing the candidate “most conservative on the issues” was the top priority said they supported Donald Trump. We can talk about whether he is a boor (“My fingers are long and beautiful, as, it has been well documented, are various other parts of my body”), a creep (“If Ivanka weren’t my daughter, perhaps I’d be dating her”), or a louse (he tried to bully an elderly woman, Vera Coking, out of her house in Atlantic City because it stood on a spot he wanted to use as a garage). But one thing about which there can be no debate is that Trump is no conservative—he’s simply playing one in the primaries. Call it unreality TV.

Put aside for a moment Trump’s countless past departures from conservative principle on defense, racial quotas, abortion, taxes, single-payer health care, and immigration. (That’s right: In 2012, he derided Mitt Romney for being too aggressive on the question, and he’s made extensive use of illegal-immigrant labor in his serially bankrupt businesses.) The man has demonstrated an emotional immaturity bordering on personality disorder, and it ought to disqualify him from being a mayor, to say nothing of a commander-in-chief.

Trump has made a career out of egotism, while conservatism implies a certain modesty about government. The two cannot mix.

Who, except a pitifully insecure person, needs constantly to insult and belittle others, including, or perhaps especially, women? Where is the center of gravity in a man who in May denounces those who “needlessly provoke” Muslims and in December proposes that we (“temporarily”) close our borders to all non-resident Muslims? If you don’t like a Trump position, you need only wait a few months, or sometimes days. In September, he advised that we “let Russia fight ISIS.” In November, after the Paris massacre, he discovered that “we’re going to have to knock them out and knock them out hard.” A pinball is more predictable.

Is Trump a liberal? Who knows? He played one for decades—donating to liberal causes and politicians (including Al Sharpton) and inviting Hillary Clinton to his (third) wedding. Maybe it was all a game, but voters who care about conservative ideas and principles must ask whether his recent impersonation of a conservative is just another role he’s playing. When a con man swindles you, you can sue—as many embittered former Trump associates who thought themselves ill used have done. When you elect a con man, there’s no recourse.

*Mona Charen is a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.*

## BEN DOMENECH

THE case for constitutional limited government is the case against Donald Trump. To the degree we take him at his word—understanding that Trump is a negotiator whose positions are often purposefully deceptive—what he advocates is a rejection of our Madisonian inheritance and an embrace of Barack Obama’s authoritarianism.

Trump assures voters that he will use authoritarian power for good, to help those who feel—with good reason—ignored by both parties. But the American experiment in self-government was the work of a generation that risked all to defeat a tyrannical monarch and establish a government of laws, not men. A government of the people, by the people, and for the people is precisely what the Constitution offers, and what is most threatened by “great men” impatient to impose their will on the nation.

Conservatives should reject Trump’s hollow, Euro-style identity politics. But conservatives have far more to learn from his campaign than many might like to admit. The Trump voter is moderate, disaffected, with patriotic instincts. He feels disconnected from the GOP and other broken public institutions, left behind by a national political elite that no longer believes he matters.

Trump’s current popularity reveals something good. President Obama’s core domestic-policy agenda was designed to pull working- and middle-class voters left. It assumed that once they received the government’s redistributive largesse, they would be invested in maintaining it—and maintaining the Left in power. Trump’s rise bespeaks the utter failure of this program for the American working class: They have seen the Left’s agenda up close and do not believe it is good enough to make a nation great.

In order to build a governing majority, conservatives do not need Trump’s message or agenda, but they urgently need his supporters. Trump proves that these disaffected Americans can be won by those who respect the pro-American Jacksonian

spine that runs through the electorate. The challenge now is for conservatives to give these voters the respect they deserve.

*Mr. Domenech is the publisher of the Federalist.*

## ERICK ERICKSON

I WOULD vote for Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton. Many of the Republicans who have declared that they would never vote for Trump gave carte blanche to politicians who have been complicit in the growth of the government leviathan. These Republicans have ignored conservatism in the name of party politics, and their broken promises gave rise to Donald Trump's candidacy.

Nonetheless, I will not be voting for Donald Trump in the primary. I take my conservatism seriously, and I also take Saint Paul seriously. In setting out the qualifications for overseers, or bishops, Saint Paul admonished Timothy, "If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, . . . he must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I Timothy 3:1, 3:6).

## STEVEN F. HAYWARD

AFTER Obama—after three generations of liberalism only slightly interrupted by the Reagan years—the conservative president we desperately need requires a paradoxical combination of boldness and restraint. The president will need to be bold in challenging the runaway power and reach of his own branch, against the fury of the bureaucracy itself, its client groups, and the media. This boldness is necessary to restore the restraint that a republican executive should have in our constitutional order.

Trump exhibits no awareness of this supreme constitutional task. His facially worthy challenge to political correctness is not a sufficient governing platform. Worse, his inclination to understand our problems as being managerial rather than political suggests he might well set back the conservative cause if he is elected, if not make the problems of runaway executive power even worse. Restraint is clearly not in his vocabulary or his character.

*Mr. Hayward is the Ronald Reagan Distinguished Visiting Professor at Pepperdine University.*

Like Obama, he is **astoundingly ignorant** of everything that to govern a powerful, complex, influential, and exceptional nation such as ours he would have to know.

I think this is also true of political leaders, including those within the conservative movement. In October 2011, when many of the other Republican candidates were fighting Barack Obama, Donald Trump told Sean Hannity, "I was [Obama's] biggest cheerleader." Trump donated to both the Clinton Foundation and Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign, as well as to Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid, Chuck Schumer, and other Democrats. In 2011, according to the website OpenSecrets.org, "the largest recipient [of Donald Trump's political spending] has been the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee with \$116,000."

In a *60 Minutes* interview with Scott Pelley, Trump aggressively supported universal health care, saying, "This is an un-Republican thing for me to say. . . . I'm going to take care of everybody. . . . The government's going to pay for it." He supported the prosecution of hate crimes. He favored wealth-confiscation policies. He supported abortion rights. On all these things, Donald Trump now says he has changed his mind. Like the angels in heaven who rejoice for every new believer, we should rejoice for Donald Trump's conversion to conservatism.

But we should not put a new conservative in charge of conservatism or the country, so that he does not become puffed up with conceit and fall into condemnation. Republicans have wandered in the wilderness already by letting leaders define conservatism in their own image. Donald Trump needs more time and more testing of his new conservative convictions.

*Mr. Erickson is the editor of The Resurgent and an Atlanta-based talk-radio host.*

## MARK HELPRIN

A DIET, caffeine-free Marxist (really, the only thing wrong with being a Marxist is being a Marxist); a driven, leftist crook; and an explosive, know-nothing demagogue—all are competing to see who can be even more like Mussolini than is Obama. But in the caudillo department, surpassing even our own Evita, the Donald wins.

Forget hair like the tinsel on discarded Christmas trees. Forget the long-term connections to New York *politichiens*, into which scores of opposition researchers and Pulitzer-seeking media moles are undoubtedly tunneling at this very moment. Forget his former wife's claim that he kept a book of Hitler's speeches at his bedside. Forget even his raging egomania, matched only by Obama's, which the president sometimes tries to conceal beneath a laughably transparent gossamer of false modesty.

And forget trying to determine whether he's a conservative. Given that, at the suggestion of Bill Clinton, he has like a tapeworm invaded the schismatically weakened body of the Republican party, it's a pointless question, because, like Allah in Islamic theology, he is whatever he pleases to be at the moment, the only principle being the triumph of his will.

All such things, except (maybe) his hair, are disqualifications for high office, but two fundamental portents of disaster usually pass unnoticed: Like Obama, he is astoundingly ignorant of everything that to govern a powerful, complex, influential, and exceptional nation such as ours he would have to know.



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*"It stands athwart history, yelling Stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it."*

("Our Mission Statement," National Review, November 15, 1955.)

I recall that 30 or more years ago he said he could master the politics of the Cold War, nuclear strategy, and arms control in two weeks, the proof being that he had fixed the Wollman ice-skating rink. Evidently he didn't spare the time, revealing in debate that he was clueless about the nuclear triad—something that could be rather dangerous if the person always at his side with the briefcase of nuclear codes cuffed to his wrist were not a stolid military officer but Britney Spears or Ozzy Osbourne (and don't count that out).

He doesn't know the Constitution, history, law, political philosophy, nuclear strategy, diplomacy, defense, economics beyond real estate, or even, despite his low-level-mafioso comportment, how ordinary people live. But trumping all this is a greater flaw presented as his chief strength. Governing a great nation in parlous times is far more than making "deals." Compared with the weight of the office he seeks, his deals are microscopic in scale, and as he faced far deeper complexities he would lead the country into continual Russian roulette. If despite his poor judgment he could engage talented advisers, as they presented him with contending and fateful options the buck would stop with a man

success, and is based on blindness to the nobility of the effort, is vulgar." Isn't Donald Trump the very epitome of vulgarity?

In sum: Isn't Trumpism a two-bit Caesarism of a kind that American conservatives have always disdained? Isn't the task of conservatives today to stand athwart Trumpism, yelling Stop?

*Mr. Kristol is the editor of The Weekly Standard.*

## YUVAL LEVIN

**D**ONALD TRUMP is no conservative. That's not a crime, it's just a reason to vote against him. Many fine people are not conservatives. But the reason Trump's candidacy should worry the Right runs much deeper than that: He poses a direct challenge to conservatism, because he embodies the empty promise of managerial leadership outside of politics.

Trump's diagnoses of our key problems—first and foremost, that America's elites are weak and unwilling to put the interests of Americans first—have gained him a hearing from many on the right. But when he gestures toward prescriptions,

He poses a **direct challenge** to conservatism, because he embodies the empty promise of managerial leadership outside of politics.

who simply grasps anything that floats by. Following Obama's, a Trump presidency would be yet more adventure tourism for a formerly serious republic.

*Mr. Helprin is a celebrated novelist. Among his best-known works are Winter's Tale and A Soldier of the Great War.*

## WILLIAM KRISTOL

**L**ET us, as conservatives, seek guidance from those we admire.

*The Federalist* (No. 39) speaks of "that honorable determination which animates every votary of freedom to rest all our political experiments on the capacity of mankind for self-government." Hasn't Donald Trump been a votary merely of wealth rather than of freedom? Hasn't he been animated by the art of the deal rather than by the art of self-government?

William F. Buckley Jr. proclaimed, in the founding statement of this journal, that conservatism "stands athwart history, yelling Stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it." Hasn't Donald Trump always been a man inclined to go along—indeed, impatient to get along—with history?

In a letter to *NATIONAL REVIEW*, Leo Strauss wrote that "a conservative, I take it, is a man who despises vulgarity; but the argument which is concerned exclusively with calculations of

Trump reveals that even his diagnoses are not as sound as they might seem.

Conservatives incline to take the weakness of our elite institutions as an argument for recovering constitutional principles—and so for limiting the power of those institutions, reversing their centralization of authority, and recovering a vision of American life in which the chief purpose of the federal government is protective and not managerial.

Trump, on the contrary, offers himself as the alternative to our weak and foolish leaders, the guarantee of American superiority, and the cure for all that ails our society; and when pressed about how he will succeed in these ways, his answer pretty much amounts to: "great management."

The appeal of Trump's diagnoses should be instructive to conservatives. But the shallow narcissism of his prescriptions is a warning. American conservatism is an inherently skeptical political outlook. It assumes that no one can be fully trusted with public power and that self-government in a free society demands that we reject the siren song of politics-as-management.

A shortage of such skepticism is how we ended up with the problems Trump so bluntly laments. Repeating that mistake is no way to solve these problems. To address them, we need to begin by rejecting what Trump stands for, as much as what he stands against.

*Mr. Levin is the editor of National Affairs.*



## DANA LOESCH

I've fought progressivism for a long time. Before 2008, I crashed progressive protests using "Protest Warrior" signs. After 2008, I was on that fateful inaugural call to organize the first modern-day tea parties around the country. I stood on sidewalks with placards, phone-banked, went door to door, and traveled at my own expense to evangelize liberty and fire people up. For disagreeing about matters of public policy, we were called racists and bigots, and conservative women were accused of betraying their sex. Dissent used to be "patriotic"—until the Obama administration used its alphabet agencies to persecute groups such as True the Vote and deny conservative organizations nonprofit status. Lately, dissent on the right is regarded as treasonous.

I know Donald Trump. He's been a frequent guest on my radio and television programs, and I introduced him at the Conservative Political Action Conference in 2015. He has always been amiable and complimentary. I genuinely like him.

But not as my presidential pick.

I love conversion stories. I have my own, from when I became a conservative 15 years ago. But I'm not running for president. Donald Trump is. And his "conversion" raises serious questions. Trump wrote in his book *The America We Deserve* that he supported a ban on "assault weapons." Not until last year did he apparently reverse his position. As recently as a couple of years ago, Trump favored the liberal use of eminent-domain laws. He said that the ability of the government to wrest private property from citizens served "the greater good." Is that suddenly a conservative principle?

Why is there a double standard when it comes to evaluating Donald Trump? Why are other politicians excoriated when they change their minds—as, for example, Rick Perry did on the question of whether HPV vaccinations in Texas should be compulsory—but when Trump suddenly says he's pro-life, the claim is accepted uncritically? Why is it unconscionable for Ted Cruz to take and repay a loan from Goldman Sachs to help win a tough Senate race but acceptable for Donald Trump to take money from George Soros? Why is vetting Trump, as we do any other candidate, considered "bashing"? Aren't these fair questions?

Just a few years ago, I, along with many others, was receiving threats for promoting conservative policies and conservative principles—neither of which Donald Trump seems to care about. Yet he's leading.

Popularity over principle—is this the new Right?

*Dana Loesch is the host of a nationally syndicated radio program and of Dana on TheBlaze. She also appears regularly on Fox News. Her second book, Flyover Nation, will be published this spring.*

## ANDREW C. McCARTHY

THE presidency's most crucial duty is the protection of American national security. Yet, interviewed by Hugh Hewitt months into his campaign, Donald Trump did not know the key leaders of the global jihad. The man who would be commander-in-chief was unfamiliar with



Hassan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah leader who has been murdering Americans for over 30 years; Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's longtime deputy who has quite notoriously commanded al-Qaeda since the network's leader was killed by U.S. forces in 2011; and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, self-proclaimed caliph of the Islamic State (ISIS) and a jihadist so globally notorious that many teenagers are aware of him.

Of course a man who wants to be president should make it his business to know such things. But even the casual fan who does not know the players without a scorecard at least knows who the teams are and why they are competing. Trump failed even that basic test, confusing the *Kurds* (a minority ethnic group beleaguered by ISIS) with the *Quds* Force (the elite operatives of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps).

The global jihad is complex, comprising terrorist organizations and abettors that include rogue nations and other shady accomplices. Their fluid alliances and internecine rivalries often defy the Sunni-Shiite divide. Matters are complicated further still by ideological allies such as the Muslim Brotherhood that feign moderation while supporting the jihadist agenda. The threat is openly aggressive on its own turf but operates by stealth in the West. A president may not have to be good with names to oppose it effectively, but he has to grasp the animating ideology, the power relations, and the goals of the players—and how weakening one by strengthening another can degrade rather than promote our security.

SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

Donald Trump does not have a clue about any of this, careening wildly from vows to stay out of the fray (leaving it in Vladimir Putin's nefarious hands) to promises that the earth will be indiscriminately scorched. The threat against us has metastasized in our eighth year under a president who quite consciously appeases the enemy. But the remedy is not a president oblivious of the enemy.

*Mr. McCarthy is a former chief assistant U.S. attorney who prosecuted terrorism cases.*

## DAVID MCINTOSH

**D**ONALD TRUMP is no conservative. He's a populist whose theme is: Our government is broken, and I'll fix it.

He's right on point one: Both parties have failed to lead. Obama and congressional Democrats manipulate the levers of power to push America farther toward European socialism; Republicans promise free-market alternatives but end up caving in to pressure or carrying water for the GOP's own big-government special interests.

The American people have signaled in recent elections that they've had enough of business as usual, and now they want to

reining in government so the private sector could thrive. That's economic conservatism. It is not Donald Trump.

*Mr. McIntosh is the president of the Club for Growth.*

## MICHAEL MEDVED

**W**HICH dictionary definition of the word "conservative," as either an adjective or a noun, applies comfortably to Donald Trump?

Is he "traditional in style or manner; avoiding novelty or showiness"? (Please stifle your laughter.)

Does he count as "cautiously moderate"?

Would he describe himself as an individual who is "disposed to preserve existing conditions and institutions, or to restore traditional ones, and to limit change"?

Trump's defenders insist that his flashy, shameless, non-conservative style will help win support for his views, which are, they say, substantively conservative. But where, exactly, do we find the conservative substance?

His much-heralded hard line on immigration discards pragmatic reform policies favored by the two most popular conservatives of the last half century, Ronald Reagan and George W.

Worst of all, Trump's **brawling, blustery, mean-spirited** public persona serves to associate conservatives with all the negative stereotypes that liberals have for decades attached to their opponents on the right.

clean house. Yet Trump is no better than what we already have. He'll say anything to get a vote but give us more of the same if he gets into office.

Trump beguiles us, defies the politically correct media, and bullies anyone who points out that the emperor has no clothes. None of that makes him a conservative who cherishes liberty.

For decades, Trump has argued for big government. About health care he has said: "Everybody's got to be covered" and "The government's going to pay for it." He has called for boycotts of American companies he doesn't like, told bureaucrats to use eminent domain to get him better deals on property he wanted to develop, and proudly proposed the largest tax increase in American history. Trump has also promised to use tariffs to punish companies that incur his disfavor. He offers grand plans for massive new spending but no serious proposals for spending cuts or entitlement reforms.

These are not the ideas of a small-government conservative who understands markets. They are, instead, the ramblings of a liberal wannabe strongman who will use and abuse the power of the federal government to impose his ideas on the country.

My old boss, Ronald Reagan, once said, "The Founding Fathers knew a government can't control the economy without controlling people." Reagan fought for economic freedom, for

Bush. Building a *yuuuuge* wall along the southern border hardly qualifies as a "cautiously moderate" approach, nor would uprooting 11 million current residents (and, presumably, millions more of their American-citizen children and spouses) in the greatest forced migration in human history.

Worst of all, Trump's brawling, blustery, mean-spirited public persona serves to associate conservatives with all the negative stereotypes that liberals have for decades attached to their opponents on the right. According to conventional caricature, conservatives are selfish, greedy, materialistic, bullying, misogynistic, angry, and intolerant. They are, we're told, privileged and pampered elitists who revel in the advantages of inherited wealth while displaying only cruel contempt for the less fortunate and the less powerful. The Left tried to smear Ronald Reagan in such terms but failed miserably because he displayed none of the stereotypical traits. In contrast, Trump is the living, breathing, bellowing personification of all the nasty characteristics Democrats routinely ascribe to Republicans.

And then there's the uncomfortable, unavoidable issue of racism. Even those who take Trump at his word—accepting his declaration that he qualifies as the least racist individual in the nation—can imagine the parade of negative ads the Democrats are already preparing for radio stations with mainly black audiences and for Spanish-language television. Even if

Trump won a crushing majority of self-described white voters, he could hardly improve on Romney's landslide victory—59 percent to 39 percent—in that demographic group.

If Trump becomes the nominee, the GOP is sure to lose the 2016 election. But the problem is much larger: Will the Republican party and the conservative movement survive? If Asians and Latinos come to reject Republican candidates as automatically and overwhelmingly as African Americans do, the party will lose all chance of capturing the presidency, and, inevitably, it will face the disappearance of its congressional and gubernatorial majorities as well. There is one sure strategy to pursue if the GOP for some reason wishes to suffer such self-inflicted wounds: nominate a presidential candidate who exemplifies the most unpleasant, and non-conservative, characteristics that the mainstream media and liberal pundits invoke to demonize the Right.

*Mr. Medved hosts a daily radio talk show heard on more than 300 stations across the country.*

### EDWIN MEESE III

**T**HERE are two tactical approaches for candidates seeking their party's nomination in election campaigns. One is to strongly debate the issues and firmly advocate your positions, but to avoid personal attacks on your opponents or needless divisiveness. The other is to vigorously attack your fellow candidates, disparaging them personally and seeking to raise yourself up by dragging them down.

Ronald Reagan was famous for epitomizing the former path. Donald Trump, unfortunately, has chosen to follow the latter course.

When Reagan first ran for governor of California, in 1966, his party was deeply divided by past electoral conflicts. To restore unity, he adopted a new political rule, which had been proposed by the party chairman: the Eleventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not speak ill of any fellow Republican." The goal was to avoid internecine warfare during the primary, which could lead to defeat in the general election.

While contending for the nomination, Reagan showed respect for his primary opponent and even left open places in his campaign organization so that he could eventually include those party leaders who had initially opposed him. The resulting coalition won the general election by an overwhelming margin. Reagan kept the Eleventh Commandment in his subsequent contests for the presidency, and it was a unifying factor in his victories in the 1980s.

At the beginning of the current campaign for the Republican presidential nomination, it appeared that the party had one of the strongest arrays of candidates in many years—successful governors, senators, business and professional leaders, etc. Today, however, the political atmosphere is polluted by the vicious personal attacks that the Republican contenders have unleashed against one another.

Heading the attackers, in both vigor and vitriol, has been Donald Trump. His broadsides can almost be predicted by the other candidates' standing in the polls. The result has been to divide and discourage potential Republican-party supporters.

Questionable assertions that an opponent is not eligible to run, or that another cannot be elected, or that still another lacks enthusiasm or energy, are a poor substitute for addressing the real issues that should be the basis for a positive campaign: restoring economic growth, strengthening national security, eliminating cronyism and corruption, and improving the lives of all Americans.

At a time when the nation is suffering under one of the most divisive and incompetent presidents in history, our people need positive, unifying leadership, not negative, destructive political rhetoric.

*Mr. Meese served in Ronald Reagan's gubernatorial and presidential administrations. These views are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of any organization with which he is affiliated.*

### RUSSELL MOORE

**I**N 2009, the Manhattan Declaration, led by Chuck Colson and Robert P. George, reaffirmed the three primary goals of religious conservatives: to protect all human life, including that of the unborn; to reinforce the sanctity of marriage and the family; and to conserve the religious freedom of all persons. All three goals would be in jeopardy under a Trump presidency.

Yes, Trump says that he is pro-life now, despite having supported partial-birth abortion in the past. The problem is not whether he can check a box. Pro-life voters expect leaders to have a coherent vision of human dignity and to be able to defend against assaults on human life in the future—some of which may be unimaginable today and will present themselves only as new technologies develop.

Trump's supposed pro-life conversion is rooted in Nietzschean, social-Darwinist terms. He knew a child who was to be aborted who grew up to be a "superstar." Beyond that, Trump's vitriolic—and often racist and sexist—language about immigrants, women, the disabled, and others ought to concern anyone who believes that all persons, not just the "winners" of the moment, are created in God's image.

One also cannot help but look at the personal life of the billionaire. It is not just that he has abandoned one wife after another for a younger woman, or that he has boasted about having sex with some of the "top women of the world." It's that he says, after all that, that he has no need to seek forgiveness.

At the same time, Trump has made millions off a casino industry that, as social conservatives have rightly argued, not only exploits personal vice but destroys families.

One may say that Trump's personal life and business dealings are irrelevant to his candidacy, but conservatives have argued for generations that virtue matters, in the citizenry and in the nation's leaders. Can conservatives really believe that, if elected, Trump would care about protecting the family's place in society when his own life is—unapologetically—what conservatives used to recognize as decadent?

Under withering assault in the Obama years, social conservatives have maintained, consistent with the beliefs of the Founders, that religious freedom is a natural right, not a matter of special pleading to be submitted to majority vote. Most Americans do not agree with the Little Sisters of the Poor on contraception, and



the sisters do not have a powerful lobby in Washington. This shouldn't matter. Trump's willingness to ban Muslims, even temporarily, from entering the country simply because of their religious affiliation would make Jefferson spin in his grave.

Trump can win only in the sort of celebrity-focused mobocracy that Neil Postman warned us about years ago, in which sound moral judgments are displaced by a narcissistic pursuit of power combined with promises of "winning" for the masses. Social and religious conservatives have always seen this tendency as decadent and deviant. For them to view it any other way now would be for them to lose their soul.

*Mr. Moore is the president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and the author of Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel.*

## MICHAEL B. MUKASEY

**F**OR a hint of why a Donald Trump presidency would imperil our national security, consider just a couple of Trump's suggestions for protecting us against Islamist terrorists.

He would start with a "temporary" ban on the entry of alien Muslims into the United States until "our leaders can figure out what the hell is going on." This prescription overlooks that many people already have figured out precisely "what the hell is going on"—that we face a supremacist movement based in Islam that is intent on destroying Western civilization—and have intelligent suggestions for dealing with it. Moreover, Trump's proposal would assure the enmity of all Muslims, including those whose support we need if we are to prevail.

Even assuming an infallible way to identify who is Muslim, the proposal is both under- and over-inclusive. It is under-inclusive because it does not address potential terrorists who have U.S. passports or residence permits, or are already here, or may threaten us abroad; it is over-inclusive because it bars the huge majority of Muslims who are not potential terrorists.

Trump says he would order the military to kill the families of terrorists. That would be a direct violation of the most basic laws of armed conflict, which require that deadly force be used only when required by military necessity, under circumstances that allow distinction between military and civilian targets, and when incidental damage to non-military targets is proportional to the military advantage gained. A military that adhered to the laws of armed conflict would necessarily disobey such an order; if it

followed the order, both the person who gave it and those who followed it would be subject to prosecution for war crimes.

We have already suffered seven years of feckless leadership that has invited the contempt of our enemies and the distrust of our friends. We remain the world's strongest power and can recover; but to inspire the respect that creates fear and trust when and where each is necessary, we will need a president who summons our strength with a reality-based strategic vision, not one who summons applause with tantrums and homicidal fantasies.

*Mr. Mukasey served as U.S. attorney general from 2007 to 2009 and as a U.S. district judge from 1988 to 2006. He has advised the Jeb Bush campaign on national-security issues.*

## KATIE PAVLICH

**G**IVEN the high stakes both at home and abroad, America cannot afford to elect a man who is not rooted in conservatism. And Donald Trump, a political con man who sympathizes with hit man Vladimir Putin and "Republicans" such as Charlie Crist, manifestly is not.

Trump has made a living out of preying on and bullying society's most vulnerable, with the help of government. He isn't an outsider, but rather an unelected politician of the worst kind. He admits that he's bought off elected officials in order to get his way and that he has openly abused the system.

The rabid defense he gets from some quarters is astonishing. Trump's liberal positions aren't in the distant past—he has openly promoted them on the campaign trail. Trump isn't fighting for anyone but himself, which has been his pattern for decades.

Conservatives have a serious decision to make. Do we truly believe in our long-held principles and insist that politicians have





records demonstrating fealty to them? Or are we willing to throw these principles away because an entertainer who has been a liberal Democrat for decades simply says some of the right things?

In short, do our principles still matter? A vote for Trump indicates the answer is “No.”

*Katie Pavlich is the editor of Townhall and a best-selling author.*

## JOHN PODHORETZ

**D**ONALD TRUMP is the apotheosis of a tendency that began to manifest itself in American culture in the 1980s, most notably in the persons of the comic Andrew Dice Clay and the shock jock Howard Stern: the American id. Guys like the Dice Man and Stern had been told and taught and trained by respectable middlebrow culture to believe that their tastes and desires were piggish and thuggish and gross, and they said: So be it! Clay filled stadiums across the country with young men who chanted dirty nursery rhymes along with him. Stern invited young actresses onto his show to discuss their breasts. The screams of outrage that greeted them were part of the act.

Clay had nowhere to go with his shtick after a few years and faded away. Stern adapted to changing circumstances. But the American id remained, as ids do. *You want to call me a goon? Fine, so I'll act like a goon, see how you like it.* The cultural signposts Trump brandished in the years preceding his presidential bid are all manifestations of the American id—his steak business, his casino business, his green-marble-and-chrome architecture, his love life minutely detailed in the columns of Cindy Adams, his involvement with Vince McMahon's wrestling empire, and his reality-TV persona as the immensely rich guy who treats people like garbage but has no fancy airs. This id found its truest voice in his repellent assertion that the first black president needed to prove to Trump's satisfaction that he was actually an American.

In any integrated personality, the id is supposed to be balanced by an ego and a superego—by a sense of self that gravitates toward behaving in a mature and responsible way when it comes to serious matters, and, failing that, has a sense of shame about transgressing norms and common decencies. Trump is an unbalanced force. He is the politicized American id. Should his election results match his polls, he would be, unquestionably, the worst thing to happen to the American common culture in my lifetime.

*Mr. Podhoretz is the editor of Commentary.*

## R. R. RENO

**T**RUMP has always been Trump. His public pronouncements over the last few decades give no evidence of consistent or coherent political views. By comparison, Hillary Clinton is a principled public figure. He made noises about running in 2000 and was serious in 2012, but the talk went nowhere. When he declared in 2015, we laughed again.

Donald Trump? Absurd!

Boy, were we wrong.

I suppose we should have known better. The Republican party has become home to a growing number of Americans who want to burn down our political and economic systems and hang our cultural elites. They're tired of being policed by political correctness, often with the complicity of supposed conservatives. They don't like Republican candidates who denounce them as “takers” with no future in the global economy. And they suspect, rightly, that the Chamber of Commerce will sell them down the river if it adds to the bottom line.

All true, but it's sad that this frustrated cohort now fixes on Trump as its savior.

He presents himself as a Strong Man who promises to knock heads and make things right again. In this, he has a lot more in common with South American populist demagogues than with our tradition of political leaders.



But I suppose that's the reason for his popularity. The middle-class consensus in America has collapsed. This is the most important political and social earthquake since World War II. The conservative movement's leadership isn't up to the challenge, and a good number of voters are willing to gamble on Trump's bluster. Bad bet. Our nation's solidarity is being tested. It will only make things worse if we go Trumpster diving.

*Mr. Reno is the editor of First Things.*

## THOMAS SOWELL

**I**N a country with more than 300 million people, it is remarkable how obsessed the media have become with just one—Donald Trump. What is even more remarkable is that, after seven years of repeated disasters, both domestically and internationally, under a glib egomaniac in the White House, so many potential voters are turning to another glib egomaniac to be his successor.

No doubt much of the stampede of Republican voters toward Mr. Trump is based on their disgust with the Republican establishment. It is easy to understand why there would be pent-up resentments among Republican voters. But are elections held for the purpose of venting emotions?

No national leader ever aroused more fervent emotions than Adolf Hitler did in the 1930s. Watch some old newsreels of German crowds delirious with joy at the sight of him. The only things at all comparable in more recent times were the ecstatic

in Argentina, Obama in America, or Hitler in Germany, is very sobering, if not painfully depressing.

After the disastrous nuclear deal with Iran, we are entering an era when people alive at this moment may live to see a day when American cities are left in radioactive ruins. We need all the wisdom, courage, and dedication in the next president—and his or her successors—to save ourselves and our children from such a catastrophe.

A shoot-from-the-hip, belligerent show-off is the last thing we need or can afford.

*Mr. Sowell is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.*

## CAL THOMAS

**I** WANTED to like Donald Trump, much as I wanted to like Richard Nixon's vice president, Spiro Agnew. Both men have said many things with which I agree. Agnew attacked media bias, and Trump attacks the establishment's failure to "make America great," as he nonspecifically puts it. But a proper diagnosis does not equal competence in administering a cure.

If I developed a brain tumor, I would want Ben Carson to operate on me, but do I want Donald Trump "operating" on America?

Everyone has a temperament. The dictionary defines it as "the combination of mental, physical, and emotional traits of a person." Would Trump's "combination" make him a good president? I think not.

I once compared Trump to Lonesome Rhodes, the character played by Andy Griffith in the 1957 film *A Face in the Crowd*. Trump might also be compared to Elmer Gantry, the fictional evangelist who used religion to mask his dark side.

On January 13, Trump spoke to a packed convention center in Pensacola, Fla. While he made many good points—especially when it came to uncontrolled immigration—he was rambling and unfocused. He spent time criticizing his "poor-quality" microphone and said he wasn't going to pay for it. A far cry from Ronald Reagan's "I am paying for this microphone" line during the 1980 New Hampshire–primary campaign, which conveyed strength, not petulance.

In Pensacola, Trump again drew wild applause when he repeated his promise to build a wall along the Mexican border and make Mexico pay for it. The wall keeps getting higher as the story gets older. He never says how he will force Mexico to pay.

Anger is not policy. Trump channels a lot of the righteous (and some of the unrighteous) anger of voters and sees the solution as himself. Isn't a narcissist what we currently have in the White House?

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crowds that greeted Barack Obama when he burst upon the political scene in 2008.

Elections, however, have far more lasting and far more serious—or even grim—consequences than emotional venting. The actual track record of crowd pleasers, whether Juan Perón

## Federalism Is for Losers!

SAY, this Trump fellow has everyone's bloomers in a knot, eh? What a character!

Why, I'm starting to think he may go places.

Hence I have paid keen attention to the tantalizing pearls of insight he strings with such care, in the hopes that his pronouncements—scant as they are—might yield an insight into the Man Himself. In an interview with *Field & Stream*, which I gather is a magazine devoted to agriculture and quaint, picturesque waterways, he defended federal ownership of vast swathes of land, and quashed the idea of letting the states control, you know, the actual land that makes up the states.

"I don't like the idea because I want to keep the lands great, and you don't know what the state is going to do."

Bravo for wanting to keep lands great; from my offhand study of the fellow, I gather that a project of sustained and vigorous engreathening is a key aspect of his appeal. But you might wonder if the statement that "you don't know what the state is going to do" might reflect on his long midnight cogitations about federalism. If you devolve power to the states, you don't know what they are going to do.

It does seem like an awfully big risk.

From the masterfully opaque nature of his gnostic rhetoric, you could imagine a journalist asking him about his views of federalism and receiving the following reply:

Look, I love federalism. When I'm president, we're going to have so much federalism you won't believe it. You won't. You can't imagine. And all these things—these great things you can't begin to think, they're going to be even more, and we're going to make things again. We don't make anything. It's a disaster. China is eating our lunch. I want Americans eating their own lunches.

Yes, but when it comes to the rights of states to pursue their own—

Look, I had to negotiate contracts with the vendors who ran the restaurants in casinos, and they said, "We can't sell filet mignon at this price," and I knew they were getting their beef from Brazil, okay, and Brazil, I don't know if you know this, they're made up of states, just like us. Different names of course. So I found a different state in Brazil that sold the steaks cheaper. Fantastic meat, best you ever had. Got it for a song. I understand states. I love states.

Such a response would reassure many that Mr. Trump would dissolve the Department of Education and let the states set their own standards and practices. I can see how one would draw that conclusion, but I am also quite adept at probing the entrails of birds and oxen to see if the auspices are propitious.

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

These stories will not convince everyone, of course. Some people will always display a mulish insistence on specifics, as if the Parable of the Steaks did not contain its own truth. It's like asking for details on the story about the loaves and the fishes. *Jesus? Great guy. Fed them all. I know supply-chain management. Quality work.* But other people who call themselves conservatives seem uninterested in whether Trump's statement supporting federal control over the states indicates not just a worrisome principle but a lack of intellectual engagement with the issues.

You can imagine the issue coming up in a presidential debate, where the candidates are blindsided with the question of federalism much as they were sandbagged with questions about the nuclear triad. We all remember Senator Rubio polishing the teacher's apple with his pert little reply, right? No doubt Mr. Trump's supporters would relish a win like this:

MODERATOR: The matter of federal control of state lands, which flared up in an occupation in Oregon over a reinstatement of criminal penalties relating to some private-land management that encroached on federal properties, has many wondering about your views on the relationship between Washington and the states. Governor Kasich.

GOVERNOR KASICH: My father was a mailman. He delivered mail sent from one state to another, but it was the national postal service. We can work together.

GOVERNOR BUSH: When I entered office, Florida was a state. After two terms in office, Florida was still a state. I think my record of experience speaks for itself.

MR. TRUMP: You know, Jeb's at 3 percent. And I like him. But he's a loser. If the state of Florida was at 3 percent, it would be a tiny sliver and everyone who lived there would be piled up on top of each other. A disaster. A lot of people don't know this but I had the chance to build a hotel in Key West, it's what I do, I'm good at it. I looked at the numbers. I looked at the bridge that connects the islands—they're islands you know, not everyone does—and I thought, What if terrorists blew it up? Your occupancy rate, it'd be a disaster. It's time we bombed the sh\*\* out of ISIS.

SENATOR RUBIO: Federalism, as a system that distributes power from a centralized source to constituent entities, has always been an important part of our system of government. It's what keeps us free from tyranny. It's what gives our states their distinctive character.

Thanks, Dr. Brainiac. Note: Nothing about ISIS. Do you want the Key West bridge to be blown up while we debate federalism? Of course not. On the other hand, do you want illegals using the bridge? Of course not. Whether the bridge should be blown up to stop illegals, I can't quite decide, but at least we're having a conversation about it.

And by conversation I mean "Listen, then cheer!"  
Grand times, these.

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# The Long View

BY ROB LONG

## *From the Twitter feed of Kim Jong Un, @youthcaptain*

What's fake about @hillaryclinton's laugh again? To me she seems warm and genuine. But then I never knew my mom and my dad never once hugged me. #leavehillaryalone #problemwith-boundaries #raisedbystrangers

Disappointed to discover #netflix show #MakingAMurderer about someone else. #whatdoigottado #norespect #firinghillandknowlton

That feeling when your H-bomb doesn't work. #nothatsnota euphemism #someoneisgoingtopay

@disney @lucasfilm Wondering if the light saber that @kyloren uses in #the-forceawakens is possibly a prototype for a real one and if so how much are we talking? Follow me back so we can DM. I AM A MOTIVATED BUYER @jjabrams @badrobot @bobiger

Any Tweeps out there know why @mileycyrus blocked me?? We were DM'ing and then suddenly I'm blocked. What up?? Was it the pic?

Lots about #ISIS I find interesting and inspiring but can't get behind their treatment of women. Possible to dress both modest and sexy. May I respectfully suggest orange jumpsuits for the ladies? #worksforus #its2016fellas

Uber but for firing squads

Uncle Baek is not on Twitter so I can say this without worrying: if he doesn't stop making that lip slurping noise when he eats his noodles I'm gonna go super old-school on him. I mean, like, Kim Il-sung gangsta style and I'm being real.

Hey! @realDonaldTrump! Don't appreciate being called a "maniac" by a man I have always looked up to and

admired. We're both trying to deal with the establishment powers in our own way so how about #stopthehating and #takemyhand

Re previous Tweet: do not mean to imply that I wouldn't want to live in the #trumptower! The guy has excellent taste. Restrained, subtle, classy. #brothersfromanothermother #lovethepalette #goldgoeswitheverything

Uber but for nuclear scientists

TBT to when Dad and I went swimming together that summer. And yes, we're nude in the pic and no, I don't know exactly which way I was facing and yes, the water was really cold. twit-pic.3dds6t.com

I know he's supposed to be "my candidate" in a lot of ways—socialism, from the '50s, blah blah blah—but having a real hard time #feelingthebern. Weird coming from me, I know, but he's just WAY WAY too liberal, amirite?

To the guys @twitter: how many family members does a guy have to execute before I get verified?? #needthe-bluecheck #ipromiseitsme

If you ever had any doubts about the US gov, Tweeps, the latest news from @usda re dietary guidelines should seal the deal: basically pro-Atkins after years of anti-Atkins #protein #nocarbs #food-pyramidalisalie!

Anybody seen that GIF where the dog is wearing glasses and falling asleep? Cuz that's me RN. #militarymeeting #boring #noonetoldmethere wouldbemat

Showed Uncle Baek some #black-livesmatter posts on #tumblr and he was like, "Don't all lives matter?" And I was just like, WHAT? YOU DON'T GET IT OLD MAN! I mean, seriously? It's not me, right??

Disagree with him on some things—I'm not a fan of Kelo and think SocSec and Medicare need overhauls—but impressed with the way @realDonaldTrump stays frosty and on message. #wearebothmaniacsbro #masterclassinpolitics

Please note, Tweeps, previous Tweet NOT an endorsement of @realDonaldTrump. Think he's raised some important issues but I remain #readyforhillary

Thinking maybe when I sent @mileycyrus this pic she decided to block me. You tell me, Tweeps: hot or not? TwitPic3d88h.com Warning: NSFW!!

Trying to talk to Uncle Baek about nuclear program and he doesn't get the timing problem. Have only 12 months to get one up and running until next POTUS is in there and we're not going to have this opportunity again. Me: Right, Uncle? Uncle Baek: slurp slurp slurp. SO ANGRY

Spent the afternoon watching physics videos from @khanacademy on @youtube. Not too cheerful about our ability to get a warhead into the air, in the right direction, to MERV at the right time, and the rest. #whydoesthishappen-tome? #runningoutofunclesto kill

Not sure if you're following me back, @hillaryclinton, but sending good vibes and thoughts to you. Have you considered taking all the FBI investigators on what you tell them is a "fun boat outing" and then putting them all in a giant net and dragging it behind you? #worked-forme #tryingtohelp #readyforhillary

Totally insane afternoon spent trying to talk #ISIS into going in halvesies on some nuclear scientists. I was all like, we could kidnap some, we could hire some, and they're all, tie them in a sack and toss them from the minaret. 1/3

And I'm like, guys? Hello? How is that helpful? We NEED scientists to build the bombs. And they just look at me like I'm eating a pork dumpling in front of them . . . 2/3

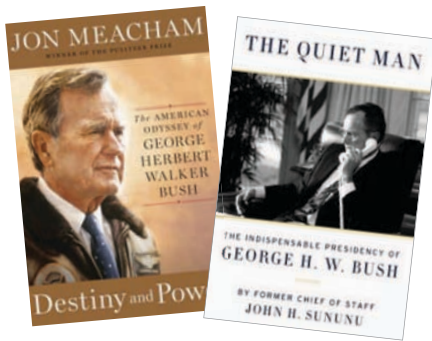
Which I was, because it was between lunch and dinner and I get very snappy but still, can we just put the religious stuff on hold for two seconds and figure this H-bomb stuff out? Frustrating. 3/3

That feeling when you've had your uncle eaten by wild hogs and now you're missing your uncle. #regretslve-hadafew #priceofleadership #cantwin

# Books, Arts & Manners

## A Man In Full

CLARK S. JUDGE



*Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush*, by Jon Meacham  
(Random House, 864 pp., \$35)

*The Quiet Man: The Indispensable Presidency of George H. W. Bush*, by John H. Sununu  
(Broadside, 432 pp., \$28.99)

**A**MERICAN administrations don't fall silent when their president leaves office. Just the opposite: Inauguration Day for the successor is the starting gun for memoirists and journalists-turned-historians.

The modern exception has been the presidency of George H. W. Bush. Yes, with his national-security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, the former chief executive co-authored a firsthand account of his making of foreign policy. And his secretary of state, James Baker, produced his own survey of the global scene in those years. But the full sweep of the Bush tenure has received only limited explanation and defense from those sympathetic to it. No longer.

In the second half of 2015, both former Bush chief of staff John Sununu and former *Newsweek* editor-in-chief Jon Meacham published volumes on Mr. Bush's presidency. Each deserves a care-

ful reading from those interested in understanding not just that period but our own. For if ever a presidency was an omega and an alpha—an end and a beginning—it was George H. W. Bush's.

Meacham's *Destiny and Power* is particularly noteworthy. Author of celebrated volumes on Andrew Jackson, Thomas Jefferson, and Franklin Roosevelt, Meacham received full access to the 41st president's diary and personal letters. Bush and members of his remarkable family also granted him extensive interviews, as did veterans of the former president's official family and administration. The result is a judicious, fair, admiring, and yet genuinely, as the author calls it, "independent" work.

Meacham takes the reader into Bush's thoughts and feelings both at the time of events and later, after reflection, in retirement. The sensation is of listening to an entirely candid inner voice—a voice that is, in turns, emotional and rational, sometimes self-critical, never self-congratulatory, and, so far as I could tell, never spinning the crowd.

We meet a statesman whose actions, whether we agree with them or not, are consistent with the highest and most honorable of our traditions. The man would fight hard for political office—as he did in the 1988 election—but would set politics aside for what he regarded as overriding national interests, as with the 1990 budget deal that violated his famous "read my lips, no new taxes" pledge and would lead, as he intuited at the time, to his 1992 electoral defeat.

It is clear from both Meacham's and Sununu's accounts that when Bush gave his word on tax increases, he intended to keep it. But shortly after he assumed office, the savings-and-loan crisis broke, changing circumstances dramatically. Much like the financial crisis of 2008–09, the tidal wave of S&L collapses was unforeseen until it hit in 1989. Also like the later financial crisis, the S&L debacle was rooted in residential-real-estate lending and the official determination—going back to Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, if not the Roosevelt and Truman administrations—to maintain the national pace of home construction at all costs.

In the inflation of the mid 1960s to the mid 1980s, thrift institutions had been whipsawed between low-interest, fixed-rate mortgages, which reflected the economic and regulatory environment of a prior era, and the Federal Reserve's high-interest-rate policies for halting inflation. The Government Accountability Office ultimately estimated that taxpayers delivered over \$124 billion to cover the deposit insurance and related costs.

These new expenses and the slowing of the economy that started in mid 1990 combined to accelerate the growth of the deficit alarmingly beyond what economists had predicted in 1987 and 1988. The Democrats who controlled both houses of Congress refused to engage in any budget discussions if taxes were off the table. Years later, Bush would tell Meacham he had intended to honor the no-new-taxes pledge, but said that "when you're faced with . . . the practical reality, of shutting down the government or dealing with a hostile Congress, you get something done."

Meacham's most striking chapters cover the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany, and the collapse of the Soviet Union. In this period, every utterance, every gesture, every glancing look from the American president had to be exactly right. It was essential to stand for the nation's core values but not humiliate the foundering Soviets—and constantly to reassure the Soviets about peaceful U.S. intentions.

So, with British and French leaders skeptical if not vocally opposed, Bush proposed that, in Meacham's words, NATO "shift its emphasis from a military alliance to a political one; shift its defense posture from 'forward' positions to more mobile units; open up conventional arms negotiations; and outline a 'new NATO nuclear strategy.'" Following intense personal diplomacy, the Bush proposal prevailed. Then, immediately after NATO's vote, the president sent a personal note to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev: "As you read the NATO declaration, I want you to know that it was written with you importantly in mind. . . . I hope [it] will persuade you that NATO can

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and will serve the security interests of Europe as a whole.” Gorbachev, writes Meacham, “got the message.”

It would be hard for anyone to come away from this graceful and penetrating account without wondering whether there was any eligible person in any quarter of American life who could have met the epoch-shaping demands of the presidency in that time half so well as George H. W. Bush—or, indeed, have met them at all. The same can be said for the combination of strength, restraint, and diplomatic virtuosity he displayed in reversing the Iraqi seizure of Kuwait, establishing a global post-Cold War norm against territorial aggression that stood for a quarter century.

From his experience in World War II, to his work in the oil business (which gave him a firsthand understanding of the global role of oil, which was a pillar

the personnel and information flows into and out of the Oval Office.

Democratic administrations gained reputations as unruly free-for-alls, Republican ones as disciplined and efficient. But from Eisenhower’s Sherman Adams to Reagan’s second-term Donald Regan, most GOP chiefs of staff left their posts in the same way Sununu did—under a cloud, to one degree or another forced out.

The reason was not that they were bad at their jobs but, generally, that they were too good. For, as with Sununu, an essential part of their role was to say no, which meant to make many of the nation’s most powerful figures angry with them rather than with their boss. Let’s put it this way: Having every person of substance in official Washington believing that you personally nixed presidential support for his or her most

is unlikely that it was as formative to the administration’s ultimate agenda as Sununu believes. The future president had behind him years of schooling in every aspect of domestic and international policy. Looking to the coming campaign, he was receiving advice from the widest possible range of sources, including, for example, future Council of Economic Advisers chairman Michael Boskin, and experts at Stanford’s Hoover Institution and other universities and think tanks throughout the country. Sununu seems unaware of this vast swirl of activity.

Then, too, early in the term, James Baker advised him that working the press was essential to his job. The president took another view, telling him to shun the media. Sununu accepted this instruction without question rather than enlisting Baker’s support in

## If ever there was an indispensable man at an essential time, it was George H. W. Bush.

of the Soviet economy), to his heading of the U.S. Liaison Office in Beijing after the Nixon-Kissinger opening to China, to his service as CIA director and then as Reagan’s vice president in the years leading up to the Soviet collapse, his entire life pointed to that mission. If ever there was an indispensable man at an essential time, it was he.

John Sununu’s *The Quiet Man* provides useful backup to Meacham’s account. From Inauguration Day until five days past the administration’s third anniversary in office, he was a central player in most major events of the presidency. He left the White House with a reputation for arrogance, and much of Washington muttered “Good riddance.” Yet, though he doesn’t appear to realize it even now, Sununu had taken on a job that was almost preordained to lead to that outcome.

After the precedents of Franklin Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower, there had developed separate Democratic and Republican ways of organizing the White House. Democrats preferred the FDR model, in which all cabinet members and senior staff enjoyed more or less direct access to the president. Republicans followed Ike’s example, and had a strong chief of staff who controlled

cherished policy chew toy is not a prescription for job security.

One of the few exceptions to this GOP-chiefs-of-staff-as-political-cannon-fodder rule was Ronald Reagan’s James Baker. But in addition to having extraordinary political skills, Baker was never in a position to block determined players from getting to the president. In the first Reagan term, each member of the “troika” of Baker, counselor to the president Edwin Meese, and deputy chief of staff Michael Deaver could open the Oval Office’s doors—as, in a pinch, could national-security adviser (and subsequent interior secretary) William Clark and CIA director William Casey. Sununu’s position was far stronger than Baker’s and so, over time, whatever his personal qualities, untenable.

As they come through in his book, those personal qualities are not what the reader expects. Far from the West Wing warlord of legend, Sununu appears, yes, smart and loyal, but also, in places, myopic and overawed by his chief.

For example, while a pre-campaign consultation with governors that the future chief of staff organized for Vice President Bush was no doubt useful, it

reversing it. Some of the saddest passages in either volume report Bush’s anger, late in his term, about the administration’s treatment in the media and his frustration with the failure to communicate his message.

Sununu is clear-eyed, though, about the dysfunctions of the White House after he left. His conclusion—in which, Meacham suggests, Bush concurred then (and presumably does now), and which I endorse—was that whatever the issues that led to his departure, the price of his going far outweighed the benefit.

But neither Meacham nor Sununu quite grasps the reasons Bush lost the 1992 race. Neither seems to appreciate the essential role that Ronald Reagan played in the 1988 campaign, ensuring by his energetic support that the coalition that elected him would unite behind his vice president. The breaking of the no-new-taxes pledge came after almost a year and a half of probably unintended but nevertheless widely noted signals that the Bush White House did not respect or even particularly like parts of that coalition.

Sununu (though, according to Meacham, not Bush) was surprised when House minority leader Newt Gingrich refused to sign on to the 1990

bipartisan tax-and-budget deal. He seems not to have understood that a revolt was under way in the party throughout the country. Gingrich was a messenger, and his message was that a major segment of the party's voters no longer trusted the administration they had helped to elect. Early in 1992, this alienation gave rise to Pat Buchanan's candidacy, and later to Ross Perot's.

Bush might still have been reelected had it not been for the economic downturn that started early that election year. Many of the disaffected saw the sagging GDP as evidence that the tax hike had been misguided. In fact, in the budget deal he initially cut, Bush had held to the same pro-growth line as Ronald Reagan, blocking marginal-rate increases. Only after that package lost to a GOP Right–Democratic Left coalition in the House was he—unable to prevail owing to his splintered congressional party—forced to accept the higher-marginal-rates agenda of the by-then-united Democrats.

Conservative critics may have been partially right about the impact of the budget deal on the economy, but only partially. For what neither they nor the administration nor anyone else appears to have grasped is that, as a result of negotiations among major central banks, economy-dampening changes were under way in international financial regulation. These changes were intended to make the global banking system less susceptible to panics. Inadvertently, though, this “Basel I Accord”—named after the Swiss city in which it was hammered out—ended up restricting lending to the very category of entities that had driven GDP, technology, and job growth in the United States for at least the prior two decades: small and medium-sized businesses. As implementation of the accord got under way, the U.S. economy started to falter.

Jon Meacham and John Sununu have both produced readable, instructive, interesting accounts of the George H. W. Bush presidency; Meacham's book is also a full biography of the 41st president. Both volumes are rightly admiring of one of the most admirable men of our age. Neither may provide the last word on the topic—but it would be hard to find better (almost) first words.

**NR**

# The Real John Birch

JOHN J. MILLER



*John Birch: A Life*, by Terry Lautz  
(Oxford, 344 pp., \$29.95)

**G**ROUCHO MARX supposedly joked that he would not want to belong to any club that would accept him as a member. Here's a related question: Would John Birch have joined the John Birch Society? He never had a chance, as he died more than a dozen years before Robert Welch formed the controversial JBS. Because of the group, Birch became better known as a legacy than as a living person—and in this good and fair-minded biography, China expert Terry Lautz peels back the layers of a myth and uncovers the man whose bizarre afterlife shaped the conservative movement in its early days.

Birch was a “mish kid”—the child of Christian missionaries posted to India. His first words included Hindi phrases. By the time he was two, however, his parents had moved back to the United States, where their son grew up as a Baptist fundamentalist during the Depression. Even as a boy, Birch wanted to be a missionary himself. Friends would remember his determination and intensity.

At Mercer University, Birch made a mark in academics, becoming his school's candidate for a Rhodes Scholarship. He was also an earnest believer who joined with a dozen other students in charging several of his professors with heresy. The offenders included a physicist who described the solar system as having

taken longer to create than the six days of Biblical reckoning. Lautz's account of the controversy feels like a report from our current campus culture wars, though in this case Christian students played the part of the persecutors rather than the persecuted. Years later, in what would be the final letter he wrote to his parents, Birch seemed to express regret for his role in the “teacher episode,” as he called it: “I was just a fumbling college boy, scared of hurting people's feelings, and yet trying to tell them about the Lord Jesus Christ.”

In 1940, Birch departed for China, which for decades had been a focus of evangelical fervor. “There is war, starvation, disease, sin, idolatry, superstition, suffering, and death on every side,” he wrote soon after his arrival, “but our wonderful Savior keeps saving souls, answering prayers, and giving joy in the midst of sorrow.”

Japan had yet to attack Pearl Harbor but was already at war in China—and Birch recognized that the “bigger battle” of converting the Chinese to Christianity would require a military victory over the invaders. In 1942, he volunteered his services to the American Military Mission to China, noting his ability to speak Mandarin and hoping to become a chaplain. Within a few days, he played a bit part in one of the war's early dramas.

On April 18, Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy Doolittle led 80 men in 16 B-25s on a daring air raid over Tokyo. They caused little direct damage, but by delivering the first U.S. strike on the Japanese homeland, they demoralized their enemies and inspired their countrymen. The operation called on them to drop their bombs and keep flying west, into China, where they ditched their planes. By sheer coincidence, Birch was visiting churches near the Lan River, where he came upon Doolittle and several others, hiding in a boat. The missionary was the first Westerner the airmen had seen since taking flight. Birch helped them to safety, traveling with them briefly and translating along the way.

By summer, he was in the military—“a very religious man who daily invoked the help of God to help him kill Japanese,” according to a contemporary. He performed intelligence

work, identifying targets and working with militias and secret agents. He was also a romantic who fell in love three times, twice with nurses and once with a fellow translator. In letters to these women as well as his parents in the United States, Birch made clear that he wanted a wife who would help him continue his missionary work after the war. Upon hearing suggestions that he build a career in the Office of Strategic Services, a forerunner to the CIA, he demurred: "I'd rather be a poor preacher."

Shortly after atomic bombs leveled Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Emperor Hirohito announced that Japan would surrender. For Birch, however, the war wasn't quite over: His superiors asked him to go on a final mission to gather intelligence in Jiangsu Province. On August 25, 1945, Birch and his

Although his speech didn't draw much notice at the time, it sat in the Congressional Record, where businessman Robert Welch found it three years later. Welch saw Birch as a latter-day Nathan Hale, the Revolutionary War spy who was executed by the British, though not before uttering his famous last words: "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

Welch worked as a salesman for his brother's now-defunct candy company—if you've ever enjoyed a Junior Mint or a Sugar Daddy, then you've sampled one of its lasting products—but his real passion was for exposing Communist conspiracies. In 1958, with the approval of Birch's parents, he organized the John Birch Society, which Lautz describes as "the most effectively managed and best financed

Jr., in 2008, in an essay for *Commentary* that was one of the last things he ever published. Buckley recounted a conspiracy of his own, hatched in 1962 with Barry Goldwater, Russell Kirk, and others, to excommunicate Birch and his group from the conservative movement but not to alienate its well-meaning rank and file. It involved a 5,000-word "excoriation" of Welch in *NATIONAL REVIEW*, followed by a letter from Goldwater in which the future GOP presidential nominee urged Welch to resign.

Welch did no such thing—he continued to oversee the JBS until his death in 1985—but his influence nearly vanished. Just as important, the dispute demonstrated the seriousness of Buckley and his allies in nurturing a conservative movement that was wor-

## Welch worked as a salesman for his brother's now-defunct candy company, but his real passion was for **exposing Communist conspiracies.**

team encountered Chinese Communist soldiers. In a dispute that probably was avoidable, Birch turned aggressive, grabbing one of Mao's men by the collar and shouting insults at others. Lautz suggests that after five years of mental and physical exhaustion, Birch suffered from "combat fatigue," or what doctors today would call post-traumatic stress disorder. Whatever the circumstances—the details are sketchy, drawn mainly from the report of a single witness—Birch was shot dead. Eight days later, on the same morning as Japan's formal surrender aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, Birch was buried on a hilltop near Xuzhou.

His story might have ended there, in semi-obscurity as one of more than 400,000 American deaths in World War II. In 1949, however, China fell to the Communists, and American Cold Warriors worried about what had gone wrong. The next year, shortly after the start of the Korean War, Republican senator William F. Knowland tried to make Birch a symbol of the new struggle, calling him "the first casualty of World War III."

grassroots conservative movement in the United States." At its height, it may have had 100,000 members—most of them sincerely concerned about the Communist threat abroad and the rise of big government at home. However worthy these causes, Welch soon revealed himself as delusional, claiming that President Eisenhower was an agent of the Soviet Union. This was the most flamboyant in a series of outrageous claims, ranging from the fear that water fluoridation was a Communist plot to the charge that the Bay of Pigs disaster was a bid to keep Cuban dictator Fidel Castro in power.

By the early 1960s, the John Birch Society posed a problem for the responsible leaders of the emerging conservative movement. They admired the way Welch had rallied ordinary Americans against New Deal liberalism but also saw him as a deeply flawed figure—a dilemma that has echoes in the current conundrum of Donald Trump's presidential campaign. "His influence was near-hypnotic, and his ideas wild," wrote *NATIONAL REVIEW* founder William F. Buckley

thy of political success. Although the JBS has survived, its main function today is to let liberals launch ad hominem assaults whenever they want to defame some new outburst of conservative popularity. Shortly before the Republican congressional victories of 2010, for instance, Princeton historian Sean Wilentz took to the pages of *The New Yorker* to claim that tea-party groups were just those paranoid John Birchers, going by a new name.

Back in China, Birch was not merely forgotten but deliberately shoved down the memory hole. The place of his death bears no historical sign of the type routinely seen along American highways. His hilltop gravesite once displayed a marker, but it went missing long ago. His remains probably were moved as well. Their whereabouts are currently unknown, though Lautz speculates that an answer may lie hidden in one of China's closed archives.

The only way to learn about the real John Birch is to read about him—and Lautz's biography is the right place to start. **NR**



# The Big Liar

JOHN FUND



*Speer: Hitler's Architect*, by Martin Kitchen  
(Yale, 456 pp., \$37.50)

**I**N *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler discussed the use of a lie so “colossal” that no one would believe that someone “could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously.” He said such a “Big Lie” was often more effective than a small one. For Albert Speer—a colleague of chief Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels who was Hitler’s architect and later, during World War II, served as Germany’s armaments minister—the notion of a “Big Lie” proved useful after the war ended.

As the Nazi regime collapsed around him, Speer fashioned a story about his

role in it that saved him from the hangman at Nuremberg. After he served a 20-year prison sentence, his story helped him establish a last career as “the good Nazi”—an apolitical technocrat who, tempted by power and blinded by a charismatic leader, had fallen in with a genocidal and criminal gang. He succeeded beyond his wildest dreams at building a new image for himself as, in the words of historian Martin Kitchen, the author of this new biography, “the gentleman among the gangsters.” He published two best-selling volumes of memoirs, which became a respectful Hollywood mini-series on his life, and gave interviews to everyone from the BBC to *Playboy*.

Speer died in 1981, at age 76, with many people believing his claim that he hadn’t known about the mass murder of the Jews, which in turn allowed other former Nazis to explain away their own failure to ask questions or bear responsibility. Historian Eugene Davidson, author of a popular 1966 history of the Nuremberg Trials, went so far as to write that in Speer’s “long, painful struggle for self-enlightenment . . . we may see that whatever he lost when he made his pact with Adolf Hitler, it was not his soul.”

But Kitchen, the author of a dozen works on 20th-century Germany, comprehensively disassembles Speer’s alibis and excuses in this new book. His mastery of the revisionist evidence against Speer is complete. He cites Rudolf Wolters, Speer’s closest outside

confidant while in prison, as saying that Speer “had told him that his confession of guilt, his acts of penance, the hair-shirt, the public display of sackcloth and ashes and the professed yearning for atonement were nothing but ‘tricks.’”

Speer became famous at the Nuremberg Trials for being the only defendant to accept “collective responsibility” for the crimes of the Nazi government he served. But as Kitchen points out, Speer never actually said he was guilty of specific crimes; he was careful to accept only “overall responsibility for things that had happened while he was in office, but with which he was not directly concerned.”

What Kitchen convincingly shows is that Speer comprehensively constructed a Big Lie about his wartime activities. An ally excised sections of a record of his time planning the transformation of Berlin into Hitler’s new capital of “Germania” before turning the record over to Germany’s National Archives. The missing records would have shown that Speer approved the eviction of 70,000 Berlin Jews from their homes; most of them did not survive their “transfer” to the East.

Speer also claimed that, although a letter he wrote to SS chief Heinrich Himmler about the eviction of 40,000 Jews from the Bialystok ghetto had been sent under his signature, he had never seen it. He denied knowing that his staff helped the SS select slave labor from the tide of Jews arriving at Auschwitz’s train platforms in

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## MUSK AND MYRRH

Indebted to the camel covering I wore  
on our first evening, with the Oriental mist  
of Opium by Saint Laurent sprayed on my wrist,  
I drop the empty bottle, and slide closed the drawer.  
The scent is yet upon me, lasting evermore,  
exotic but discreet. This hand—that you have kissed—  
still smells of musk and myrrh as I approach the store,  
adjusting the fine mayhem of my hair’s French twist.  
Dior will never do, my love, nor any faint,  
saliferous perfume remindful of the sea;  
but only coriander, clove, plum, pepper, peach  
begot by the imagination of a saint:  
to lift you from your field, and lure you back to me;  
to raise you from the dead, secure within my reach.

—JENNIFER REESER

# 2016 Post-Election Cruise

**Join Victor Davis Hanson, Allen West, Bing West, Heather Higgins, Steven Hayward, James Buckley, Jonah Goldberg, Andrew McCarthy, John Podhoretz, Neal Freeman, James Lileks, Kathryn Lopez, Eliana Johnson, Charles Cooke, Kevin Williamson, Jay Nordlinger, Ramesh Ponnuru, Jim Geraghty, Jillian Melchior, Rob Long, John J. Miller, Charmaine Yoest, John Hillen, David French, Ed Whelan, and Reihan Salam as we visit Ft. Lauderdale, Half Moon Cay, Cozumel, Grand Cayman, & Key West**

It's time for you to sign up for the *National Review* 2016 Post-Election Caribbean Cruise, certain to be the conservative event of the year. Featuring an all-star cast, this affordable trip—prices start at \$1,999 a person, with a \$100 per-person discount for anyone who signs up by February 1st—will take place November 13–20, 2016, aboard Holland America Line's beautiful MS *Nieuw Amsterdam*. From politics, the elections, the presidency, and domestic policy to economics, national security, and foreign affairs, there's so much to debate and review, and that's precisely what our conservative analysts, writers, and experts will do on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*, your floating luxury getaway for fascinating discussion of major events, trends, and the 2016 elections. Our wonderful group of speakers, there to make sense of politics, elections, and world affairs, includes acclaimed historian **Victor Davis Hanson**, former Congressman **Allen West**, terrorism and defense experts **Bing West**, **Andrew McCarthy**, and **John Hillen**, Independent Women's Forum chairman **Heather Higgins**, conservative icon and former U.S. Senator **James Buckley**, best-selling author and policy expert **Steven Hayward**, Americans United for Life president **Charmaine Yoest**, conservative legal expert **Ed Whelan**, NRO editors-at-large **Kathryn Lopez**, *Commentary Magazine* editor **John Podhoretz**, conservative media guru and former NR Washington Editor and WFB expert **Neal Freeman**, NR senior editors **Jonah Goldberg**, **Jay Nordlinger** and **Ramesh Ponnuru**, NR essayists **David French**, **Charles C. W. Cooke**, **Kevin D. Williamson**, and

**Reihan Salam**, NR Washington Editor **Eliana Johnson**, NR columnists **Rob Long** and **James Lileks**, ace political writers **Jim Geraghty**, **John J. Miller**, and ace investigative reporter **Jillian Melchior**.

No wonder we're expecting over 500 people to attend! They'll enjoy our exclusive event program, which will include

- eight scintillating seminars featuring NR's editors and guest speakers;
- two fun-filled "Night Owl" sessions;
- three revelrous pool-side cocktail receptions;
- late-night "smoker" featuring superior **H. Upmann** cigars (and complimentary cognac); and
- intimate dining on at least two evenings with a guest speaker or editor.

Surely, the *best* reason to come on the *National Review* 2016 Post-Election Caribbean Cruise is the luminary lineup. But talk about accentuating the positive: As we did in 2014, we're planning to expand the cruise experience by adding even more conservative superstars to our overall event package. On the night before the cruise—November 12th to be specific—we are hosting a special gala at the Ft. Lauderdale Marina Hotel featuring a number of conservative titans who will be join our editors for an exclusive (NR cruise attendees only, and at that, limited to 300 happy people on a first-come, first-served basis), intimate, and sure-to-be memorable discussion of the election results and their impact on America; all of that followed by a wonderful reception.

Stay tuned for more information. But be assured it will be a spectacular night.

To be followed by a spectacular week of world-class cruising on the beautiful and luxurious *New Amsterdam*, as it sails a Western Caribbean itinerary that will include Ft. Lauderdale, Grand Cayman (always an ideal place to snorkel—you must visit Sting Ray City, or catch the other rays on Seven Mile Beach), Half Moon Cay (Holland

## JOIN US FOR SEVEN BALMY DAYS AND COOL CONSERVATIVE NIGHTS

DAY/DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART	SPECIAL EVENT
SUN/Nov. 13	Ft. Lauderdale, FL		5:00PM	evening cocktail reception
MON/Nov. 14	Half Moon Cay, Bahamas	8:00AM	4:00PM	afternoon seminar "Night Owl" session
TUE/Nov. 15	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars
WED/Nov. 16	Georgetown, Grand Cayman	8:00AM	4:00PM	afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
THU/Nov. 17	Cozumel, Mexico	11:00AM	11:00PM	morning seminar late-night Smoker
FRI/Nov. 18	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars "Night Owl" session
SAT/Nov. 19	Key West, FL	8:00AM	5:00PM	afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
SUN/Nov. 20	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	7:00AM		Debarb



## GET \$100 PER-PERSON DISCOUNT WHEN YOU SIGN UP BY FEB. 15TH!

America's private island, home to a most pristine blue lagoon and tons of fun), Cozumel (your gateway to the Mayan ruins at Tulum), and Key West (with its beaches, beaches and beaches—and of course lime pie).

And for those times when we are "at sea" or, well, you feel like staying on board rather than descending the gangway, the *Nieuw Amsterdam* (need I say it offers well-appointed, spacious state-rooms and countless amenities, and hosts a stellar staff that provides unsurpassed service and sumptuous cuisine?) has a classy, terrific spa, a must-attend Culinary Arts Center, pools, luxury boutiques, plenty of nooks and crannies to hide in with a good book, and, oh yeah, a casino!

NR's 2016 Post-Election Cruise will be remarkable, and affordable. Prices start as low as \$1,999 a person, with "Single" cabins starting at only \$2,699. In many cases, our rates are even lower than we charged in 2012. And taking them even lower for you: Sign up by February 15th and you'll receive a \$100 per-person discount (limited to 2 per cabin). And then there's this: Get a friend or family member to sign up (a single or a couple who have never been on an NR cruise, and who will stay in a separate cabin) and you'll receive an additional \$100 discount (and so will they!)

If you've always wanted to go on an NR cruise but could never pull the trigger, couldn't send in the application, chickened out, for whatever reason, you've just got to give in. Make the *National Review* 2016 Post-Election Caribbean Cruise, the one where you finally yes. You will not regret that decision: Take the trip of a lifetime with America's preeminent intellectuals, policy analysts, and political experts. Reserve your cabin online at [www.nrcruise.com](http://www.nrcruise.com). Or call The Cruise Authority (M-F, 9AM to 5PM EST) at 800-707-1634. Or fill out and mail/fax the application form on the following page.

We'll see you—in the company of Victor Davis Hanson, Allen West, Bing West, Heather Higgins, Steven Hayward, James Buckley, Jonah Goldberg, Andrew McCarthy, John Podhoretz, Neal Freeman, James Lileks, Kathryn Jean Lopez, Eliana Johnson, Charles C. W. Cooke, Kevin Williamson, Jay Nordlinger, Ramesh Ponnuru, Jim Geraghty, Jillian Melchior, Rob Long, John J. Miller, Charmaine Yost, David French, Ed Whelan, and Reihan Salam—this November 13-20 aboard the *Nieuw Amsterdam* on the *National Review* 2016 Post-Election Caribbean Cruise.

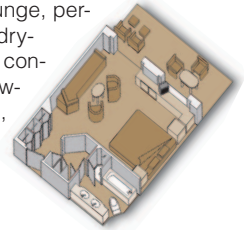
For more information or to apply online go to  
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<b>Categories C to N</b>	17-younger: \$ 567	18-up: \$ 748
<b>Category VC</b>	17-younger: \$ 617	18-up: \$ 798
<b>Categories SS &amp; SA</b>	17-younger: \$ 670	18-up: \$ 851

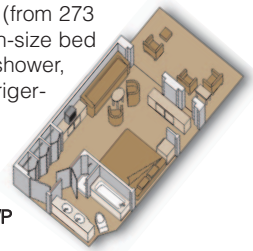
**DELUXE SUITE** Magnificent quarters (from 506 sq. ft.) features use of exclusive Neptune Lounge, personal concierge, complimentary laundry/dry-cleaning service, large private verandah, convertible king-size bed, whirlpool bath/shower, dressing room, large sitting area, DVD, mini-bar, refrigerator, safe, much more.



### Category SA

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 4,899 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 7,599

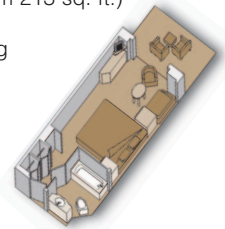
**SUPERIOR SUITE** Grand stateroom (from 273 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), whirlpool bath/shower, large sitting area, TV/DVD, mini-bar, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows, safe, and much more.



### Category SS

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 3,799 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 5,999

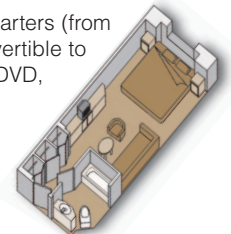
**DELUXE OUTSIDE** Spacious cabin (from 213 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), bath/shower, sitting area, mini-bar, TV/DVD, refrigerator, and floor-to-ceiling windows.



### Category VA

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 2,899 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 4,299

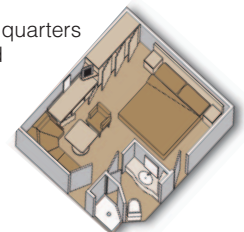
**LARGE OCEAN VIEW** Comfortable quarters (from 174 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), bathtub/shower, sitting area, TV/DVD, large ocean-view windows.



### Category C

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 2,399 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 3,299

**LARGE INSIDE** Cozy but ample cabin quarters (from 151 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), shower, sitting area, TV/DVD.



### Category J

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 1,999 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE:	\$ 2,699



New Amsterdam







1944. When it was discovered that he had attended a meeting in 1943 at which Himmler had explicitly announced a program to exterminate the Jews, Speer constructed an alibi, claiming he had left early and missed Himmler's revelations—and had never been told about it by others later.

Speer's prevarications didn't stop at concealing guilt. Part of the Speer myth is that he was an organizational genius who engineered a miraculous increase in armaments production—including that of such wonder weapons as the V-2 rocket—that prevented Germany's collapse for months if not years. Kitchen plows through the facts and demonstrates that, as a minister, Speer had two main talents: First, he recognized his shortcomings and readily delegated to people of exceptional talent and

against technology that would please a Luddite of today. In 1979, he published a book Kitchen dismisses as "a muddle-headed hodgepodge of semi-digested ideas from radical ecologists and peace activists" that also included "some comments by John Kenneth Galbraith on increasing inequality." It shouldn't surprise anyone that Speer, once released from prison, was by no means a conservative. He still believed in socialism and told journalist Dan van der Vat that he proudly supported Germany's left-wing Social Democratic party.

Speer's career as an architect also doesn't survive Kitchen's searchlight. As a student, he latched on to Heinrich Tessenow, a noted architect who advocated modest buildings. As soon as fate delivered him a commission to

Haffner, a German journalist who, in exile in Britain in 1944, wrote of Speer:

To a far lesser extent than any other German leader does he resemble anything typically German or typically National Socialist. He symbolizes indeed a type, which among all the belligerents has become increasingly important: the pure technician, the classless, brilliant man without a background, who knows no other goal than to make his way in the world, purely on the basis of his technical and organizational capabilities. . . . This is his age. We can get rid of the Hitlers and the Himmlers, but not the Speers.

Kitchen notes in chilling fashion that Speer took Haffner's comments as a compliment, both during and after the war.

## Speer's true genius manifested itself in an ability to **ingratiate himself** with whichever audience he had to persuade.

energy; and second, he was able to cleverly manipulate statistics "in order to appease Hitler." As Kitchen notes, "this left the Wehrmacht wondering where on earth these weapons were that were listed in Speer's public recitations of staggering production figures."

In actuality, Speer's almost religious belief in the value of central planning helped undermine the German war effort. Otto Ohlendorf, a top SS official who was also a trained economist, clashed with Speer. He believed that Speer's overly bureaucratic approach was "totally Bolshevistic" and led to a regime of "hyenas and monopolists" that seriously weakened the state. Kitchen concludes that, under Speer, "a capitalist system in which firms responded freely to government requirements had been replaced by a command economy that was driven by either force or idealism, but, unlike the Soviet planned economy, it failed to maintain a stable monetary system, without which accurate accounting was impossible."

After his release from Spandau prison in 1966, Speer continued in his gauzy belief in central planning but combined it with hackneyed warnings

renovate Hitler's offices in Berlin, he found a new mentor in Hitler's favorite architect, Paul Ludwig Troost, known for his penchant for luxury. After Troost's sudden death in 1934, Speer became Hitler's court architect at the astonishing age of 28. His job became to slavishly satisfy Hitler's immense love of gargantuan projects. His construction of a new Reich Chancellery for Hitler resulted in a pompous pile that had little usable working space. Kitchen notes that "even his finest achievement, the Cathedral of Light [searchlight display] at Nuremberg, was probably suggested to him by the filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl and her cameraman."

Kitchen demonstrates that Speer's true genius manifested itself in an ability to ingratiate himself with whichever audience he had to persuade. He fooled most people, most of the time—but not all. Airey Neave, a British officer at Nuremberg who later became a top adviser to Margaret Thatcher, saw in Speer a "smooth hypocrisy" that made him "more beguiling and dangerous than Hitler."

Neave's assessment of Speer was remarkably similar to that of Sebastian

Kitchen does give Speer his due. He notes that Speer complained about the starvation rations given to slave laborers in his factories—albeit out of a desire that they work harder rather than from humanitarian concern. He also gives Speer credit for making frenetic efforts, at some risk to himself, to countermand Hitler's "scorched earth" order to destroy German industry as the Allies advanced in 1945. He awoke from his moral slumber just before the Deluge.

The book ends with a discussion of the warning signals implicit in the career of Albert Speer. Any country that falls prey to authoritarianism needs people like Speer, to whom Kitchen refers as "the type that made National Socialism possible." Kitchen sums up Speer as "a hollow man, resolutely bourgeois, highly intelligent, totally lacking in moral vision, unable to question the consequences of his actions, and without scruples." As Sebastian Haffner noted in 1944, such smooth opportunists will always be with us, standing ready to serve whoever offers them power, prestige, or piles of money. Like Albert Speer, they are as dangerous as mass murderers but more insidious for being able to charm many into thinking they are less harmful. **NR**

Film

# Fog of War

ROSS DOUTHAT

THE phrase “a restrained Michael Bay movie” has the same inherent tension as, say, “a tasteful Donald Trump property” or “a platonic hug from William Jefferson Clinton.” Combine Michael Bay with a story about the most controversial overseas fiasco of the Obama era, and the possibility that America’s most shamelessly chest-pounding director might actually underplay things seems . . . well, about as plausible as the plot of the last few *Transformers* movies.

And yet: Here we have *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*, a war movie based on a (somewhat contested, naturally) memoir by a group of CIA security contractors who were on the ground in Benghazi during the events of September 11, 2012. It is, of course, still a Michael Bay movie, which means there will be oversaturated colors, plastic sheeting billowing in slow-motion breezes, big explosions, and even a mortar’s-eye view of the assault on the CIA safe house. (*The Spy Who Came In from the Cold* this is not.) Yet Bay, who can usually resist anything except temptation, actually keeps his wild story on a leash.

In part, of course, he’s restrained by the obligation to keep faith with his subjects and the facts—an obligation that did not exist in, say, *Bad Boys 2*. But there’s room for creative license even in a “based on true events” movie, and it would have been easy for him to synthesize an al-Qaeda Big Bad for his heroes to contend with, or to play up and embellish the election-year politics (a subject of great interest, obviously, to conservatives) behind the Obama administration’s slow and somewhat strange response to the disaster.

But instead, almost everything except for the immediacy of battle is understated and oblique. Maybe Bay feared having his story swamped by a partisan debate; if so, so much the better for his movie, because it pressed him toward a very un-Bay-like artistic subtlety. There’s a passing reference to the “it was a riot about a videotape” coverage and a few scenes of Pentagon officials discussing the situa-

tion, but mostly the fact that the people in charge failed the people on the ground is made clear through the invisibility of high politics, the absence of the tense war-room scenes and presidential briefings that you get in a typical action film. For 13 hours, the world outside Benghazi disappears—and that’s the point.

Likewise the depiction of the men who stormed our embassy and besieged the CIA base: There’s one who seems like the ringleader, but we learn exactly nothing about him; again, the movie stays with the perspective of our fighting men, for whom the main thing about the situation was its surreal unknowability, the constant circulation of armed men who might be foes, or friends, or just tourists along to see a burning embassy and have a little bit of fun.

The men are played by John Krasinski, his “Jim from *The Office*” past buried under facial hair and muscle, plus James Badge Dale, Pablo Schreiber, and several other actors

talked like this since 1955, but such are the ways of screenwriting.)

Of course he’s terribly wrong, just as he’s wrong to hold them back from rushing to the diplomatic compound when it’s first attacked, which means that when they do arrive, they’re too late to save Ambassador Christopher Stevens (Matt Letscher), and barely in time to save his contractor bodyguards. Though, in fairness, the station chief *is* right that his own compound could be the next target, because so it is, and half of the 13 hours is spent fending off a siege there.

That siege is the only action in the movie that’s really intelligible; the fighting at the diplomatic compound is just a chaos of men in beards with guns yelling and running, which probably captures the real feel of it but leaves the audience somewhat adrift. The personal stuff, meanwhile—Krasinski’s got a wife who doesn’t understand why he can’t come home, etc.—is just pro forma, a set of pre-



Dominic Fumusa and John Krasinski in *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*

(including David Denman, Jim’s *Office* romantic rival!) whose names you wouldn’t recognize and whose characters blur into one another amid the fire-fights. They work for the film’s American bad guy, a pissy CIA station chief (David Costabile) who explains early on that their presence is unnecessary, and anyway they don’t have degrees from *Yale* and *Harvard* like his field agents so they should just keep out of everybody’s way. (I’m pretty sure no station chief has

dictable beats and heartstrings that you’ve heard plucked before.

Yet the movie has an undeniable power, and its portrait of the essential futility of our Libyan intervention carries a political message that transcends the politics of Hillary. Bay-style sound and fury and all, *13 Hours* fits in well alongside *American Sniper* and *Lone Survivor*—in a triptych of movies about heroes forged in wars gone sour, and soldiers worthier than the strategies for which they died. **NR**



# What Brown Can Do For You



RICHARD BROOKHISER

**W**HEN the snow fails, the world turns brown. Brown is the base paint, the color of the blank slate.

Things that were bright before winter began vanish, change, or dim. For a little while, red berries decorate the wiry arms of bushes like Christmas lights. But in time even the unpalatable holly berries are consumed. Leaves that were electrified by frost now bleach to the color of the ground they have embraced. Grass is still green, but what a sickly shade of it: In grade school we learned that green was the product of blue and yellow; this looks like the wedding of ice and resentment. Weeds simply bid chlorophyll goodbye, standing in ditches and fields like devils' toothpicks.

When other colors flee or fade, brown remains. Bark seems to be everywhere. Look down, it's on roots and toppled trunks; look up, it's on twigs; look sharp or it's a *twig!* in your face. Some bark is smooth as skin; some is blighted as a skin rash; ash trees show pale splotches where the emerald ash borer has taken up deadly residence. Where the limb of a tree has fallen off, the bark circles the amputation like a mouth; the bark on a hickory can curl as delicately as the scrolls on an 18th-century cabinet. Before cheap paper, people wrote on bark; some bark looks as if it's been written on by the tree itself. What is in the bark headlines? Powerball numbers? Trump vs. Cruz? Trees have other concerns.



The most common color on wooden houses in my part of the world is white: not New England ye olde white, but Benjamin Moore from the hardware store white. But wooden houses that aren't painted are brown. That goes double for outbuildings—garages, sheds, any place for stuff you can't store someplace else but don't want sitting out in the rain. Barns start red, then they darken, then the paint flakes away, then the slats come apart, then the barn falls. Telephone poles, those dead conscripted trees, are brown. There are a lot of them; we're not all wireless yet.

Cars are our chariots, our astral bodies, our objects of desire. Because we want them to shine, no one, since the demise of the woodie, has ever ordered a brown car. But over the course of even a mild winter, what with salt and splash and fleck, every car acquires a dirty skirt of brown. They drive along, beyond shame, looking like dogs that have been out to play or the reputations of sexting teenagers. We wait for a clear day to take them to the car wash, then the first flurry or drizzle brings the brown back. When a car runs over a creature, it too gravitates toward brown. There is blood with the fur, but come back later in the day, or the next day, and the roadkill palette will have evened out.

So the world isn't all hummingbirds, northern lights, and Academy Awards. Drill down and there is a lot of brown. What can you see from the brown level that you might otherwise miss?

I mentioned bark, but I did not say enough about trees. Don't lose sight of them, for the bark or for the forest. Apart from cruises, I have probably seen trees every day of my life; I grew up in a suburb

and there is a slice of park visible from my 14th-floor apartment window now. But not until I got a house in the woods did it occur to me that a naked tree is like a lung. Trunk and limbs are pulmonary arteries, branches and twigs are bronchi. In the tree/lung there is a constant commerce of vital material from the tips to the core and back. Trees typify a larger pattern. Parmenides thought the universe was one thing, and that that thing was a sphere. Maybe he was right; but lots of things in the universe are not spherical and self-contained, but expansive and particularizing, drawing out, pulling back: trees, lungs, hands, feet, the IRS.

Once I saw that a tree is a lung, I began to see each tree—that is, any one I happened to consider—as an individual. These here are fighting for light (and among them, these are losing). That one must have gotten bent in a heavy winter. That one picked a bad place to grow—wet, rocky soil. This one, ahem, has another tree growing out of its side (they said David Bowie was strange). A lot of this gets hidden by the glorious distraction of leaves, but the brown season makes it evident. Woods become populous; the edge of a yard is a subway platform at rush hour, a hillside can look like a mob.

The other thing you see in the brown season is the lay of the land. My house is in foothills. The road to it goes up and down, mostly up. That is evident to the meanest understanding. I have driven it so often that I can replay the windings in my head. But in the brown season your angle of vision expands. You get glimpses, sometimes vistas off to the sides. That roadside trickle—so slight that it exists only in seasons that are cool and damp—reappears (there must be a culvert) over here, and runs away down there. This stream, a few hundred yards on and several dozen down, must be where it ends up.

Along with a view of the land, you get a view of the opportunities and problems that other men have had with it. Who would put a herd of cows up here? There are the cows; once there must have been more of them, for there are unused barns in nearby fields. It must have been—must still be—a trek to get milk to market. Or are they now being bred to be sold to more efficient farms?

Brown is bare, but solid. You can stand on it.

NR

## The Misanthrope's Turtle

**T**HIS seems to be the season for chipping away at the diminishing rock of my childhood. First Jimmy Stewart died, and then Woolworth's five-and-ten announced that it was going out of business.

To be honest, Stewart was the antithesis of my taste in men. The lovable boy-next-door type has always irritated me, and physically he turned me off because he was too tall and skinny. Solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and five-foot-ten is more my style, but I liked Stewart anyway because he was *there*. Where childhood memories are concerned, thereness is what counts. I probably wouldn't shop at a Woolworth's today, but I want it to be there, and now it won't be, not ever again.

Woolworth's needed no Official Greeters. The moment you walked in you were enveloped in an overpowering aroma of hot sweetness issuing from the sugary batter in the doughnut fryer, the boiling caramel in the candied-apple machine, the flavored syrups that were drizzled over crushed ice to make snowballs, and the mountains of candy corn, butterfingers, and chunked-up chocolate in the cavernous food bins.

The sweet smell was a year-round fixture. In summer when the doors sat open, it wafted out to the street. In winter the hissing steam heat trapped it inside and mixed it with the cloying scents of the cosmetics counter, where they sold big blue bottles of Evening in Paris perfume, cans of dusting powder named Quelques Fleurs and Djer Kiss (which no one could pronounce), and tiny satin bags of gardenia sachet to scatter in bureau drawers—or, for serious wafters, to tuck into bras.

The hardwood floors were black with age and squeaked, just like the floors of our apartment. The store served our regular needs—a ten-cent envelope of phonograph needles, Granny's advanced knitting books with instructions to rival the quantum theory—as well as some highly irregular ones, e.g., the glittery earrings my father bought to decorate the head of the banjo he made, the oil my mother used to soften her baseball glove, and my penknife fixation.

It was at Woolworth's that I got my first pet: a miniature turtle that I persuaded Granny to buy me before we went to the movies. They put him in a white pasteboard carton, like Chinese take-out, and I named him Mergatroyd after a cartoon character.

During the movie I kept whispering "Hello, Mergatroyd" and sticking my finger in the box to pet him. I couldn't wait to get home and make him a rock garden, but Granny was absorbed in *Back Street*, which met her definition of a good movie ("She dies in the end"). At long last, when the movie ended and the lights came on, I opened the box to check on Mergatroyd, but he was as dead as Margaret Sullavan.

I burst into tears and ran up the aisle. "She's not old enough to understand about kept women," somebody whispered in disapproval, which made me cry harder. Granny offered to buy me another turtle but I wanted only Mergatroyd. Nor would I

let her ask for a refund because that put him on a level with light bulbs or a can opener. I wanted to give him a funeral, so back we went to Woolworth's to buy a soap dish for a coffin and two tongue-depressors to make a cross.

The orgasmic transports that today's retailers call a "shopping experience" swept through Woolworth's on December 8, 1941, when a man began smashing everything stamped "Made in Japan." No security guards converged on him and no one worried about lawsuits. As the crowd cheered, the manager winked and said, "I needed to get rid of this stuff today anyhow."

It would have been futile to expect my mother to stay out of the fray. Grabbing an illustrated teapot, she was about to sidearm it, shortstop-style, against the wall, but just then Granny showed up, waving a length of hat veiling she had been inspecting when she heard the ruckus.

"Oh, Louise! I turn my back for a minute and you act like whitetrash!"

"I'm going to break every piece of junk those sneaky grinning runts ever made!"

"Then go home and break your ashtrays where nobody can see you!"

She did—and bought new ones stamped "Made in U.S.A." from Woolworth's.

Besides the infinite variety of its stock, Woolworth's offered the masses an ongoing morality tale in Barbara Hutton, the Woolworth heiress who went through six husbands and \$50 million. Her Babylonian highjinks were chronicled regularly in newsreels, and since the dimestore was a block from the movie theater, the audience usually was eating something from her redolent candy bins as we watched her exchange vows with yet another playboy.

"Money cwan't buy happineth," said Granny through her salt-water taffy.

"Oh, sh\*\*!" Mama snorted. "It can if you do it right. She should have been made to work in a Woolworth's for a few years, find out where her money comes from, and learn the business from the ground up so she could run it herself. Then she wouldn't have time to get mixed up with all those lounge lizards." Leave it to Mama to define real feminism and responsible capitalism in one breath: an unassisted double play.

Such easy lessons are impossible in a non-Woolworth's economy; how can you have a Barbara Hutton if you have to do research in *Forbes* to find out who really owns a store? It also takes plutocrats of variegated swath to personify the titanic ruin that makes for a really effective I-told-you-so morality play. Bill Gates could become another Jack the Ripper but it's doubtful that anyone could think of anything memorable to say about it.

Today I shop from catalogues whenever possible to avoid characterless suburban malls. "I found a million-dollar baby in FootLocker" lacks something. "Diamond bracelets Wal-Mart's doesn't sell" scans, but despite their eternally falling prices Wal-Mart's comes up short in that raffish gypsy-pushcart atmosphere I loved.

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*Florence King, a NATIONAL REVIEW columnist for many years, died in January. This article was first published in the September 1, 1997, issue of NR.*





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