

ROB LONG: LIBERALISM & FAKE INDIANS

**OBAMA'S
GAY EVOLUTION**
—The Editors

NATIONAL REVIEW

Euro Clash

JOHN O'SULLIVAN
*on Europe's currency
from hell*

PLUS:

PETER HITCHENS on Philip Larkin
DAVID PRYCE-JONES on Bernard Lewis



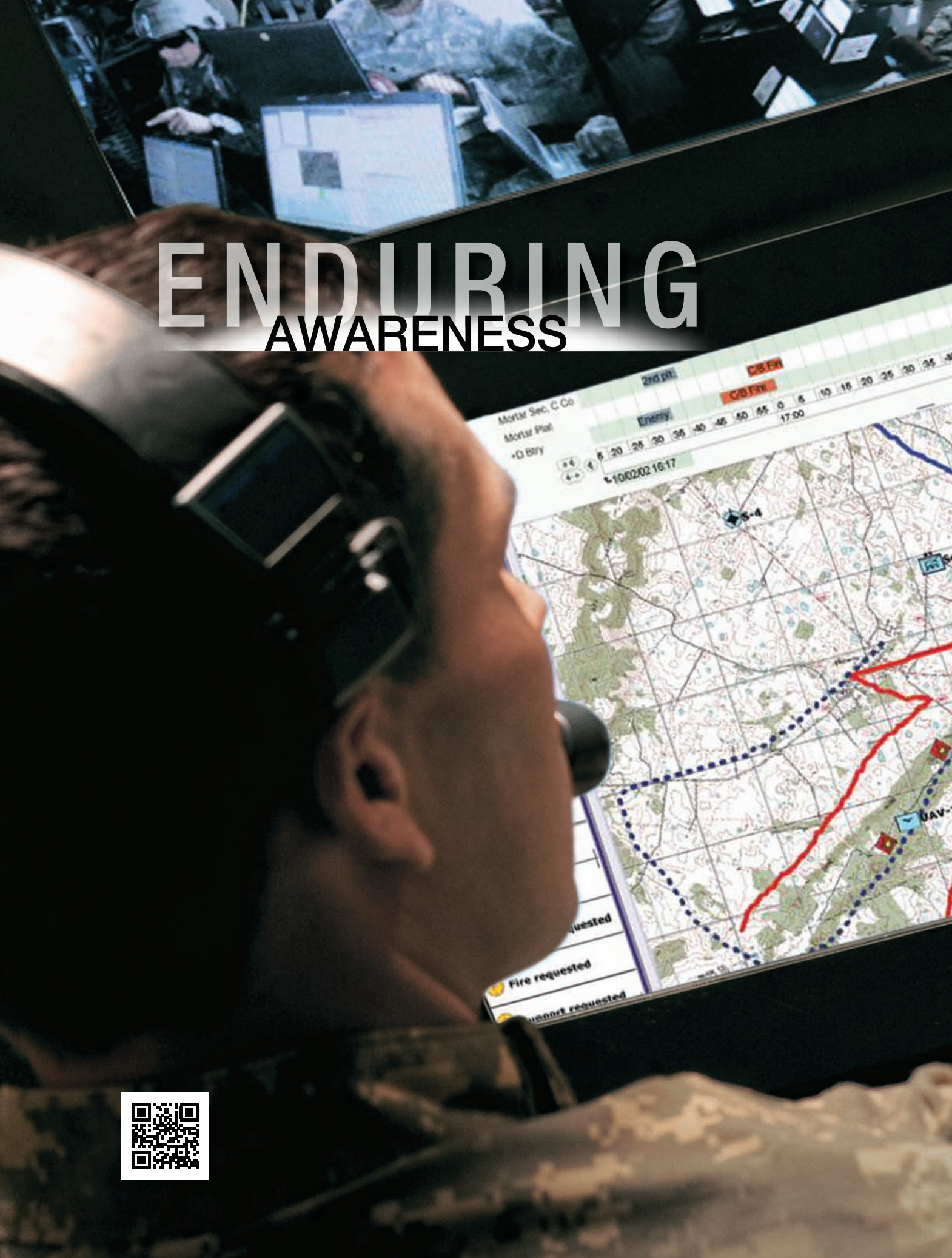
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Four Kinds of Dreadful

European governments and central banks meet, discuss, reiterate previous assurances, and, after an EU summit ends, resume their drift towards disaster, because every single one of the practical solutions to the euro/Greek crisis has dreadful consequences. *John O'Sullivan*



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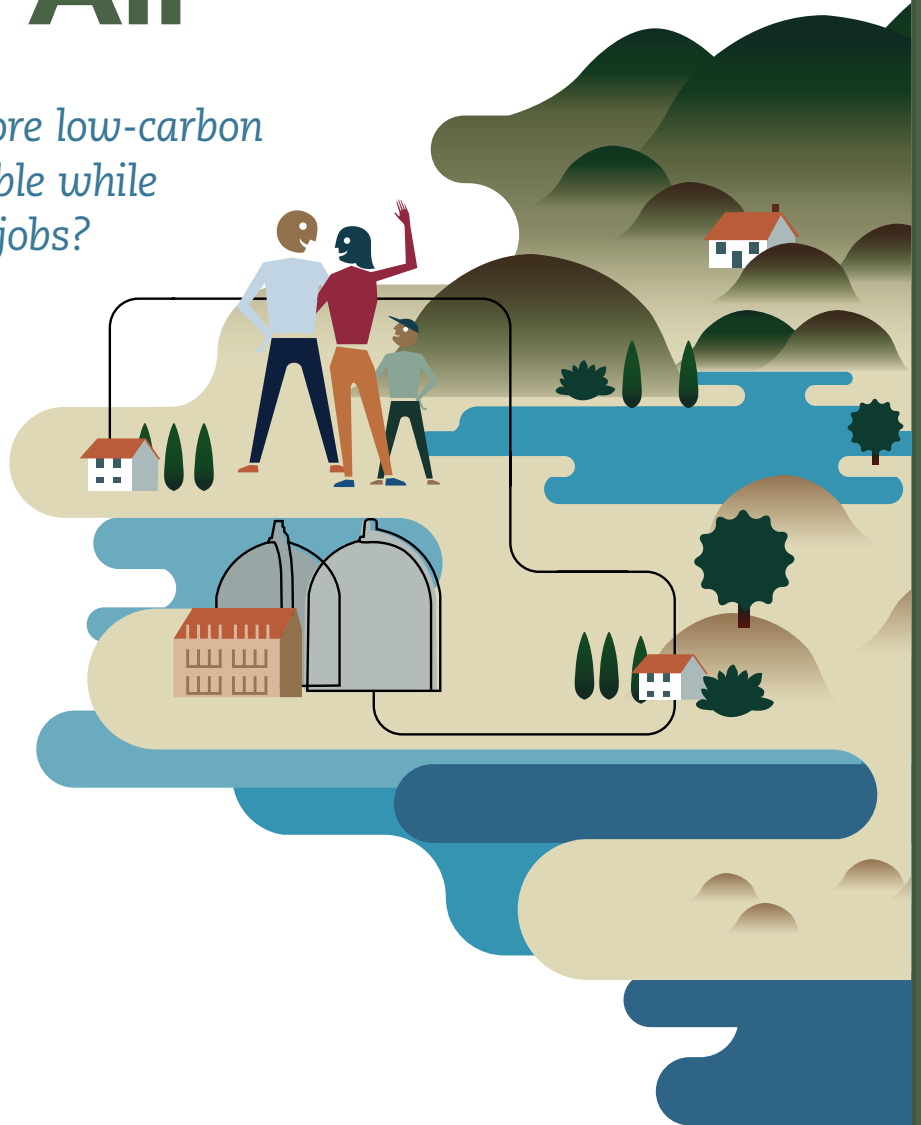
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*As edited by White House staff



A Childish Question

In “The Empty Playground and the Welfare State” (May 28), Ramesh Ponnuru proposes increasing the child tax credit. Much of the argument is compelling, but I found one aspect confusing.

Mr. Ponnuru says that raising children constitutes a contribution to the nation’s fiscal health and therefore should count toward tax payments; he cites research suggesting a \$5,000 credit per child. And yet he says that the credit shouldn’t be refundable—that is, families that owe less than \$5,000 in taxes for every child they have would not be able to take full advantage of the credit, and families with no income-tax liability (a situation that about half of households find themselves in) would not benefit from the credit at all. The only explanation he gives for this is, “That arrangement would enable them to start getting their own free ride: receiving pension benefits without having contributed through either children or taxes.”

I’m not familiar with the formulas that determine pension benefits, but it seems to me that this is a rather unfair way of addressing the problem. If a two-child family contributes \$10,000 to the nation’s fiscal health, but our tax policy says it should owe only \$4,000, it should get the missing \$6,000 back—just as it would if it overpaid \$6,000 in conventional taxes. In addition, if tax policy overall discriminates against families with children by failing to give parents credit for their investment, then this policy does as well: It treats a family with no tax liability and four kids the same as a family with no tax liability and zero kids.

What am I missing?

*Albert Rolan
Chicago, Ill.*

RAMESH PONNURU REPLIES: Most people with no federal-income-tax liability pay payroll taxes, and the credit should be available to offset those taxes. But a family with five kids and \$20,000 in total tax liability (income and payroll combined) should be eligible for only \$20,000 of tax relief. The argument for the large tax credit is that taxpaying parents are overtaxed relative to non-parents. They are contributing to the future of entitlement programs with both their taxes and their investments in their children, whereas the childless are only contributing with their taxes. The tax credit recognizes that double contribution. A family that doesn’t pay taxes is still making a contribution to the future of the entitlement programs, as Mr. Rolan writes. But it is not making a double contribution—in that respect it’s in the same position as a childless taxpayer—and so there’s nothing to offset.



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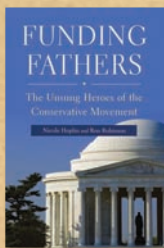
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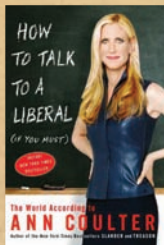
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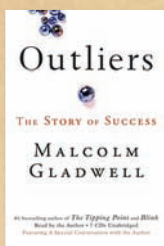
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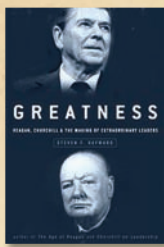
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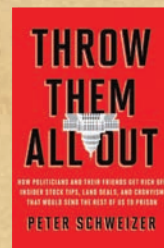
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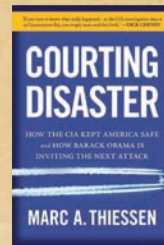
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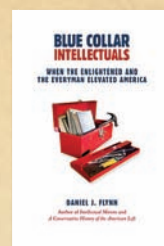
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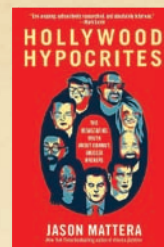
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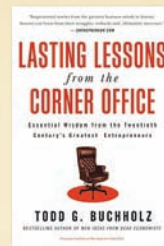
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Blue Collar Intellectuals
by Daniel J. Flynn



Hollywood Hypocrites
by Jason Mattera



Lasting Lessons from the Corner Office
by Todd G. Buchholz



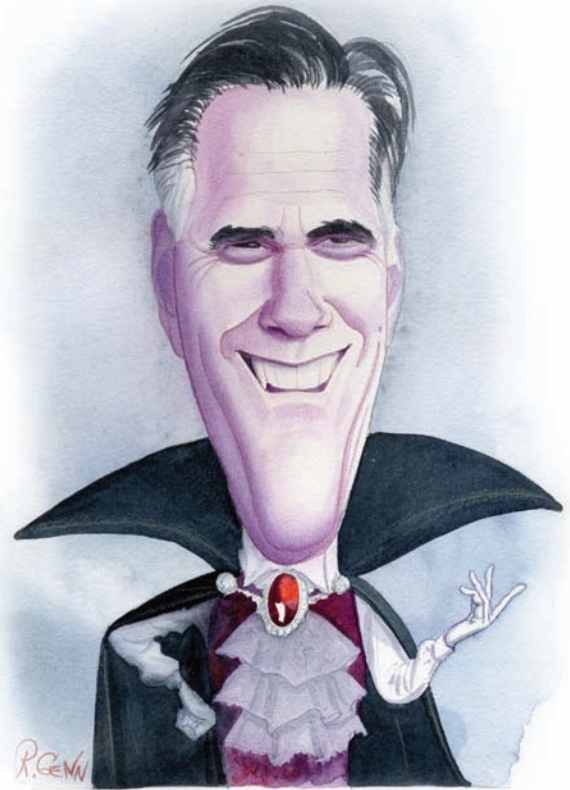
The Week

■ A prisoner took 40 percent of the vote in a Democratic presidential primary against Obama. We see the makings of a John Edwards comeback.

■ President Obama has renewed his attacks on Mitt Romney's investing career at Bain Capital, going so far as to avow that such attacks are "what this campaign's going to be about." The president's anti-business rhetoric dismayed, among others, Newark mayor Cory Booker, who pronounced himself "nauseated" by the assault—and who then promptly released a hostage video from the Pakistani school of cinematography, declaring his allegiance to the president and his crusade. It is clear that the president intends to make this election an exercise in class-warfare politics, and that Romney intends to cover much of the same ground in his own way, portraying himself as a successful private-sector executive with a portfolio of successful investment and turnarounds on his résumé. This should redound to the benefit of Romney: If we are to spend the next several months talking about business practices, we should be inclined to listen to the man who has practiced business.

■ In 1806, after he encountered Napoleon riding to the Battle of Jena, the German philosopher Hegel wrote that he had seen a "world soul" incarnate. Two centuries later, American liberals saw their own world soul: Barack Obama, the post-racial, post-national transformer. It takes a lot of transformation to become a transformer—witness the latest discovery by the folks at Breitbart News. A 1991 authors' catalogue, sent out by Acton & Dystel, young Barack Obama's literary agents, described their new client thus: "the first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review . . . born in Kenya and raised in Indonesia and Hawaii." Breitbart has not gone birther. What they see in this story is yet one more instance of the uncritical enthusiasm with which a certain kind of American greeted Obama's unusual biography: *He's lived everywhere, think what he can tell us.* It was an enthusiasm encouraged by the ambitious young man himself. If our national binge ends this November, Obama had better not seek work as a copy editor.

■ Say a conservative Republican president had a controversial minister in his background. Then say that the minister granted a former editor of *The New York Times Magazine* a lengthy interview. In that interview, he said that, in the previous campaign, a close friend of the president had offered him \$150,000 to keep quiet until after Election Day. Would not this disclosure, or allegation, be a huge story, pursued by every media outlet in America, night and day, until there were no more questions about it? "What did the president know," they would be saying, "and when did he know it?" In real life, the Reverend Jeremiah Wright gave an interview to Edward Klein about President Obama. Wright said he had indeed been offered \$150,000 by an Obama pal (Eric Whitaker). The response of the mainstream



media has been—silence, except for annoyance at Republicans' continuing interest in Wright.

■ It was old news, but big news: The *Washington Post* reported that, in 1965, Mitt Romney, a senior at Cranbrook Schools, a tony prep school north of Detroit, led a posse of students in cutting the long, dyed locks of John Lauber, another student. Romney's fellow bullies were quoted expressing remorse at their misdeed. The story prompted a quick and generically contrite response from Romney—"I did some dumb things. . . . Obviously, I apologize"—coupled with a denial that he remembered this specific incident. It also prompted some pushback: Lauber's sisters attacked the *Post* for using their brother—who is dead—to "further a political agenda," and it turned out that Obama pushed a plump black girl when he was a lad (source: *Dreams from My Father*, the gift that keeps on giving). What the *Post* is really reporting is that it will be a long slog to November.

■ One thing Team Obama turns out to be good at: snooping on its enemies. Kimberley Strassel of the *Wall Street Journal* laid out the case of Frank VanderSloot, CEO of a green-cleaning and health-care-products company in Idaho. Last summer he gave a cool million to Romney's super PAC. Now an Obama-campaign website has fingered him and seven other Romney donors as "wealthy individuals with less-than-reputable records."



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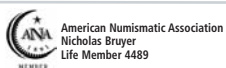
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An opp-research gnome has trolled Idaho courthouses for dirt on VanderSloot's business and his divorces. *Salon* blogger Glenn Greenwald and MSNBC host Rachel Maddow, doing the president's work, have attacked him. Politics is a contact sport, especially as played in Chicago (that, by the way, is the best proof that Barack Obama is a 100 percent American). Memo to the Obama campaign: There was another presidential reelection effort, 40-some years ago, that dug deep for dirt. It did not end well.

■ President Obama visited the ladies of *The View* on a recent campaign swing, and Sherri Shepherd asked him how tight he thought the election might be. "When your name is Barack Obama," he said, "it's always tight." What was interesting here was the disjunction between sound and sense. The meaning of Obama's riposte was that a half-African politician must always overcome the resistance of those who cling to prejudice, as to God and guns. A solemn thought, which prompted Joy Behar to interject "Barack *Hussein* Obama" for the slowpokes in the

Cut to Grow

AUSTERITY measures in Europe have been the topic of a heated and mostly confused debate in the economic world. During the May summit of the leading industrial nations at Camp David, German chancellor Angela Merkel and other European leaders pushed for continued European austerity. Keynesian critics argue that these policies destroy economic growth.

Economist Alan Blinder recently stated the Keynesian case concisely in the *Wall Street Journal*, writing that "in the short run—let's say within a year or so—a larger deficit, whether achieved by spending more or taxing less, boosts economic growth by increasing aggregate demand."

Supporters of austerity do not deny that government spending can have this impact on GDP growth, but they emphasize another effect that the Keynesians tend to ignore: the expectational effect. This term refers to the positive effect on consumption and investment that occurs when unsustainable government spending policies have been curtailed. Cutting government spending reduces government activity, but this change might be offset by an increase in private activity, since, no longer expecting a dramatic future tax hike, consumers and investors might be willing to spend more. The traditional Keynesian effect is the short-term negative impact that reduced government spending irrefutably has on GDP growth. If austerity measures cut spending dramatically, the question is: Which effect dominates, the expectational one or the Keynesian one? Opinions vary widely. But what do the data say?

The nearby chart is a scatter plot of data concerning changes in government spending and GDP growth in the United States and the European members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Since, as Professor Blinder notes, the impact of government spending on GDP growth might be spread out over a year or so, the chart plots (on the X-axis) the percentage-point change in government spending between 2009 and 2010, and (on the Y-axis) the percentage-point change in GDP from 2010 to 2011. Data for 2012 are not provided because they are not available yet; Greece and Ireland are excluded because they are extreme outliers.

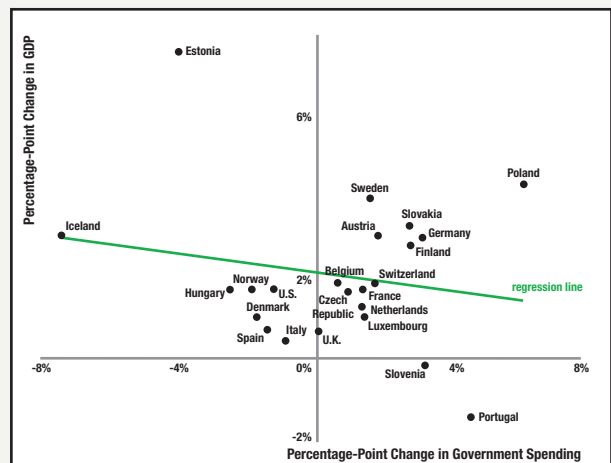
The green regression line highlights the most important takeaway from this chart: that there is no obvious relationship between a decrease in government spending and a decrease in GDP. Keynesians would expect the line to slope upward; in fact, it slopes slightly downward. But the slope of the line is not significantly different from zero (in fact, this is true whether or not the analysis includes the two outliers, Greece and Ireland).

A possible explanation is that the two effects mentioned earlier—the expectational one and the Keynesian one—cancel each other out. GDP is lower as a result of government-spending cuts, but GDP hasn't plummeted (except in Greece, which is a story of its own) because of the positive expectational effect, the hope of better days to come.

The chart has two policy implications. First, austerity has not caused even near-term harm to countries that have undertaken it. Second, austerity is something of a free lunch. This is because, as studies (such as a 2010 paper by economists Andreas Bergh and Martin Karlsson) show, longer-run growth is higher in countries with smaller governments. Nations that reduce spending today can do so without fearing that the longer-run growth is being purchased with a costly near-term recession.

Advantage Merkel.

—KEVIN A. HASSETT



SOURCE: AUTHOR'S CALCULATIONS USING WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND, APRIL 2012 EDITION



The MOST DANGEROUS room in your home... the bathroom

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*BAKALAR, NICHOLAS. "Watch Your Step While Washing Up." New York Times 16, Aug. 2011, New York Edition ed., Section D sec.: D7. Web **CDC - Center for Disease Control and Prevention

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audience. But Obama's manner was jaunty, almost comic. Which either means he wasn't thinking; or, he has played the race game so often that he can do it without breaking a sweat; or, he knows the Behars of the world will do the heavy lifting for him. We hope for his sake that the first is true, though the arc of his career and the nation's response to him suggests some combination of two and three.

■ Obama is not shy about saying "I" and "me"—except on the rarest of occasions. At the end of 2009, he said he would give himself "a good, solid B-plus" for his performance in office. But asked recently to grade his handling of the economy, he said, "You know, I won't give us a letter grade. I think it's still incomplete." "Us"! And if the economy were roaring, or even perking, would it still be "us"?

■ WhiteHouse.gov features a set of short presidential bios, compiled by Hugh Sidey and Michael Beschloss. Seth Mandel at *Commentary* noticed that many of the recent ones now end with a fun fact linking a past president to . . . President Obama (e.g., "On Feb. 22, 1924, Calvin Coolidge became the first president to make a public radio address. . . . President Obama became the first president to hold virtual gatherings and town

fiasco of her undocumented claim of being part Cherokee. But Harvard Law should be embarrassed, too, having bragged that Professor Paleface was its first tenured "woman of color." (By "color," they did not mean "ivory.") One would think that Harvard's law school and one of its most prominent professors might have some interest in the question of evidence, and there is no evidence that Professor Warren is even a smidgen Cherokee. But there is evidence she has profited from that phony claim: Harvard used her to burnish its diversity credentials, while Professor Warren repeatedly listed herself as a minority in the law-faculty directory and was even associated with a hokey cookbook called "Pow Wow Chow," which featured recipes apparently plagiarized from *Le Pavillon* (which was located in the famous Cherokee territory of Fifth Avenue, across from the St. Regis Hotel—happy hunting grounds, indeed). Such dishonest exploitation is an inevitable outgrowth of academia's racial spoils system (the controversial leftist academic Ward Churchill was another phony Indian), and another bit of documentation that it is the so-called progressives who are obsessed with racial bloodlines.

■ In Wisconsin, the recall election against Governor Scott Walker took an unexpected turn when the state's largest news-

Like any Washington-establishment figure, Joe Biden is nowhere near being part of the middle class; he merely visits it from time to time, like a college kid vacationing in Europe.

halls using Twitter"). The RNC had a field day, with an "Obama in History" website, showing Obama with the Beatles on *Ed Sullivan*, and crossing the Delaware with George Washington. Here's another parallel: Martin Van Buren, Herbert Hoover, and George H. W. Bush were one-term presidents who compounded policy failures with campaign missteps . . .

■ You know you've been inside the Beltway too long when living the lifestyle of a senator instead of a lobbyist makes you feel middle-class. That's as near as we can figure out to what our Sancho Panza-esque vice president meant when he said, "I get tired of being called 'Middle Class Joe,'" a complaint that would almost make sense except that (1) the only person on record as calling him that is himself and (2) he immediately went on to embrace the label: "We're like the rich guys—we have dreams, we have aspirations." Like any Washington-establishment figure, Biden—who, with his wife, owns a home worth \$2.8 million (in Delaware, yet) and makes nearly \$400,000 a year—is nowhere near being part of the middle class; he merely visits it from time to time, like a college kid vacationing in Europe. It's said that in America everyone thinks he's middle class. Does the vice president suffer from this delusion, or is he embarrassed to be rich, or is he just making a spectacularly clumsy political appeal? With Joe Biden, it's always hard to tell.

■ Elizabeth Warren has been thoroughly embarrassed by the

paper, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, endorsed Walker's retention. Walker has held a solid five-point lead in almost every poll leading up to the June 5 election, which appears not to have gone unnoticed by the Democratic National Committee, which reportedly denied the Democratic party of Wisconsin's request for \$500,000 to aid in its recall efforts. A handful of public-sector unions have begun spending millions of dollars in order to salvage the recall effort, but polls show only about 2 percent of Wisconsin's electorate to be undecided, with only days left before the election. Walker's opponent, Milwaukee mayor Tom Barrett, has begun focusing on criminal charges brought against some of Walker's former county-executive staffers. But these charges have been around for months, while Walker's lead has only increased. Barrett's reliance on ancillary issues demonstrates how weak the public unions' argument to recall Walker was in the first place. Reining in their privileges was horrific enough to merit a recall, but not enough to merit mentioning during the recall campaign.

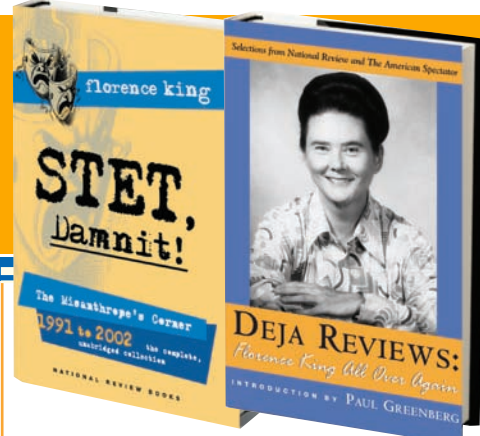
■ Most national political observers had hardly heard of Nebraska state senator Deb Fischer when she surged from a distant third place to win an upset victory in the GOP Senate primary on May 15. Until the final weeks of the campaign, the race had been a contest between front-runner state attorney general Jon Bruning and state treasurer Don Stenberg, who was backed by the Club for Growth and Senator Jim DeMint's Senate Conservatives Fund. Her opponents' bruising ad war, as well as key last-minute endorsements from Sarah Palin and Rep-

representative Jeff Fortenberry, helped catapult Fischer to a surprising win over Bruning. Though Fischer has never held statewide office, by all accounts she is an experienced and tough legislator (“one of the most talented and effective senators in the body,” according to a Democratic colleague). She has supported the Keystone XL pipeline, voted consistently for pro-life measures, and pledged to repeal and replace Obamacare. She now faces a fight with former Nebraska governor and U.S. senator Bob Kerrey, who has spent the last ten years ensconced in liberal academia as the president of New York City’s New School. If a recent poll showing Fischer with an 18-point lead in the match-up is any indication, a lot more Washingtonians are going to be making her acquaintance.

■ An imprisoned felon took 40 percent of the Democratic-primary vote against President Obama in West Virginia. Liberals quickly intimated that the protest vote, and the increasingly Republican tilt of the state in presidential politics, is a reflection of racism. But the state has been moving toward the Republicans since well before Obama. One of its sharpest turns came between 1996 and 2000, two years when both major parties had two white men on their tickets and racial issues were not prominent. Our guess is that what explains the timing of the state’s shift is not black skin but black coal, or rather the Democrats’ growing hostility to it. American party realignment is in any case more interesting than liberal morality tales allow.

■ Americans Elect was all set to be a resounding success, replacing the “tired” two-party system with an online national primary. Just ask Tom Friedman. “What Amazon.com did to books,” the *New York Times* columnist predicted, “what the blogosphere did to newspapers, what the iPod did to music . . . Americans Elect plans to do to the two-party duopoly that has dominated American political life—remove the barriers to real competition, flatten the incumbents and let the people in. Watch out.” Instead, the group dissolved in May after failing to choose a candidate for this year’s presidential election. Americans, it seems, will have to elect the old-fashioned way.

■ Will Dennis Kucinich, squeezed out by redistricting in Ohio, run for Congress from Washington State? No, he finally told supporters there in May, after months of speculation. Cleveland’s former “boy mayor” has long felt the allure of the West. In the 1980s it sent him to California, where he befriended Shirley MacLaine, and then to New Mexico, where he sought “meaning.” He had already mastered the language of the Left Coast when in 2003 he began running for president. Taking the national stage, he tried to shed his longstanding identity as a midwestern pro-life Democrat, whose instinct to defend the weak had situated him squarely in the anti-abortion camp. He renounced the principle that had made his political message coherent. Now he looks to “serve from outside Congress.” Far outside, please.



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■ And so it begins: Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, and Ave Maria University near Naples, Fla., have decided to drop their student health-insurance plans rather than bend to the recent HHS mandate requiring religious employers to provide coverage for contraceptives, sterilization, and abortifacients. “We will not participate in a plan that requires us to violate the consistent teachings of the Catholic Church on the sacredness of human life,” states Franciscan’s new Campus Health Insurance Policy. But while these universities’ moral message is compelling, their economic considerations may be more revealing. In addition to the HHS mandate, both schools cited as a reason for their decision the economic burden of new Obamacare provisions increasing the mandated maximum coverage amount for student insurance policies to \$100,000. Student premiums for the 2012–13 academic year would double at Franciscan and increase by 66 percent at Ave Maria, with further increases expected in years to come. That the HHS mandate is an egregious overextension of federal power was already apparent. What these universities’ financial plight confirms is that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, just as so many predicted, will neither protect patients nor reduce costs.



■ Speaker of the House John Boehner gave a speech noting that he would support an increase to the debt limit only in return for dollar-for-dollar spending cuts. It’s the right stand. Because nobody has a workable plan to bring the deficit to zero next year, the limit will have to rise. While recognizing this unfortunate reality, we should address the problem that gave rise to it. Liberals are in their

highest dudgeon, accusing the Republicans of threatening the country’s economic health, or taking it “hostage,” to get their way. They should calm themselves. President Obama is equally insistent on attaching a condition to a debt-ceiling increase: in his case, that it come with no spending cuts. But his condition is less sensible. Last year, Speaker Boehner held out for spending cuts combined with a debt-ceiling increase. Having gotten them, how can he ask for less this time? And how can President Obama, having then acquiesced to them, credibly label the idea outrageous now?

■ Just two weeks after President Obama’s “evolution” on gay marriage, the NAACP board of directors voted 62–2 to endorse same-sex marriage as a “civil right.” While this is not the first time NAACP top brass have weighed in on the issue—the previous chairman declared that, “like race, our sexuality isn’t a preference” and testified in favor of gay-marriage legislation in New Jersey—the group had been grappling with the issue for years, and polls continue to show low levels of support for gay marriage among black Americans. The day before the NAACP vote, a dozen pastors from the Coalition of African-American Pastors met in Memphis to protest the “hijacking” of the civil-rights movement and called on President Obama to reconsider

his new stance. Blacks voted overwhelmingly (70 percent) in favor of Proposition 8 in California, and last month North Carolina blacks voted by a 2–1 margin for an amendment reaffirming marriage as the union of a man and a woman. Last election cycle, the NAACP condemned the Tea Party as “explicitly racist”; now it risks calling black Americans bigots.

■ *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published an article called “Black Studies: ‘Swaggering into the Future.’” It had a sidebar, describing some of the dissertations being written by the best and brightest students. Naomi Schaefer Riley, who was a blogger for the *Chronicle*’s website, had a biting post about these dissertations. “What a collection of left-wing victimization claptrap.” A sadly apt characterization. The Left, with predictable fury, came down on Riley (an alumna of NR and the *Wall Street Journal*). MSNBC attacked. Some 6,500 people, many of them professors and grad students, signed a petition calling for her firing. The *Chronicle* first stuck with her, then complied with the mob, having received its own higher education.

■ California is in desperate fiscal straits, facing a nearly unbridgeable deficit of \$16 billion, the result of the welfare-state model of governance in its full maturity. Intransigent public-employee unions use the collective-bargaining process to maintain their inflated compensation packages, while poorly administered programs for the elderly and indigent have produced a permanent dependent class with attendant expenses that are difficult or impossible to reduce. When Governor Jerry Brown attempted to impose co-pays on some recipients of medical benefits, the Obama administration blocked him. Governor Brown’s attempts to cut spending on health care by lowering some physicians’ reimbursements and subsidies for low-income Californians were blocked by the federal courts. Governor Brown has demonstrated very little that might be called fiscal responsibility, but such attempts as he has made at spending discipline have been blocked by federal authorities when they have not been blocked by Democrats in the state legislature. California, like many states, is facing a crisis in unfunded liabilities for public employees’ pensions, and businesses are fleeing the state for friendlier climes. Sacramento has hiked taxes, but California’s already high tax burdens and its untenable long-term position have depleted the state’s tax base, so receipts are falling. Its distressed debt means borrowing costs are rising: one more expense the Golden State cannot afford. As goes California, so goes the nation—unless serious fiscal reform begins in all 50 states and, especially, in Washington.

■ What is the value of being an American? This question arose in early May when, in anticipation of Facebook’s IPO, co-founder Eduardo Saverin renounced his U.S. citizenship and settled permanently in Singapore. That a successful entrepreneur such as Saverin felt it prudent to leave is certainly an indictment of a tax code under which America is struggling to compete. But while pointing to his departure to make such an argument, one should be careful not to relegate discussion of what it means to be an American solely to the economic sphere. His life in danger as a child, Saverin fled here from his native Brazil and was afforded the opportunity to attend Harvard and become a bil-

lionaire. While Chuck Schumer's kneejerk proposal to ban anyone who renounces his citizenship from ever entering the United States again reflects a vindictiveness beneath our country, the widespread condemnation of Saverin as an ingrate is just.

■ As we've noted in this space previously, the prosecutor's affidavit in the Trayvon Martin case was less than convincing: While the prosecutor charged George Zimmerman with second-degree murder, the evidence in the affidavit does nothing to prove that Zimmerman pulled the trigger out of spite rather than fear, which is a key ingredient of that charge. Now, a trove of documents bolsters key aspects of Zimmerman's story: Zimmerman was found injured and bleeding, Martin had injuries on his knuckles, witnesses reported having seen Martin on top of Zimmerman, and there were traces of marijuana in Martin's blood. Most of this merely confirms information that was released shortly after the incident, and none of it proves how the fight got started in the first place, which will be a key issue. There is also still plenty of evidence that has not yet been released to the public, such as Zimmerman's statements to the police. But unless the prosecution is sitting on a key piece of evidence that completely changes the case, it should downgrade its charge.

■ Non-Hispanic whites now represent only a minority of births in the U.S. Breathless reports augured the coming of a majority-minority America. But by the standards of the past, we have been a majority-minority country for a long time. Irishmen,

Italians, Slavs, and many others came here and became Americans through their efforts and those of the natives. The long pause in mass immigration from 1924 to 1965 aided the process of assimilation. If we recommit ourselves to that process, in no important sense will we become a majority-minority country—whatever our future racial make-up.

■ House Republicans voted to abolish the Census Bureau's detailed American Community Survey based on concerns about intrusiveness. Participation is mandatory for citizens selected to take part. We sympathize with the abolitionists, but cannot endorse the cause. Perhaps there would be no need for such a survey if we had a minimal state. Given the governments we actually have, however, it is important to have data that bear on which states' policies are working best, where population shifts will require more road-building dollars to move, and whether public-sector employees tend to be overpaid. The alternative in many cases would be policy by anecdote, which often generates stupid results. The survey comes, as it should, with pretty strict privacy protections: Disclosure of personal information by government agents is to be punished with jail time. We've got the right policy now, in other words, and we should leave it in place.

■ Among their other environmental offenses, windmills chop up birds that have the bad luck to stray into their blades. This tendency pits wildlife lovers in a green-on-green conflict with clean-energy dreamers, and in the latest round, the dreamers

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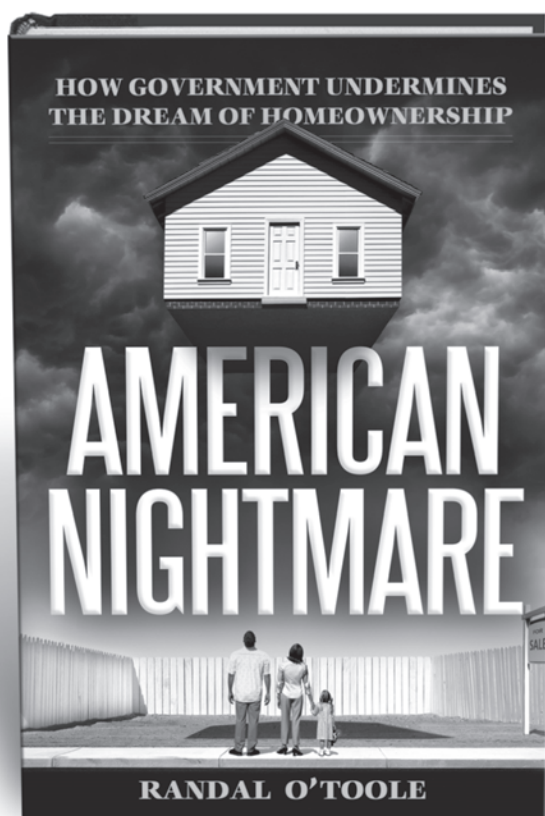
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Associate Professor of Economics, Suffolk University, and co-editor of *Housing America: Building Out of a Crisis*

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have won. Under a proposed rule from the Fish and Wildlife Service, wind-power farms will be granted exemptions from federal laws dating to 1940 that protect bald eagles from being killed. The bald eagle's comeback has been an inspiring success; from a mere 417 nesting pairs in the lower 48 states in 1963, there are now more than 7,000, and the species is no longer imperiled—*was* no longer, that is, until the Obama administration decided that propping up wind power was more important. Now hundreds are expected to be dismembered every year. Meanwhile, as NRO columnist Deroy Murdock points out, a federal prosecutor has fined petroleum producers after a couple dozen dead birds of assorted species were found on their sites, and a Wyoming electric utility had to shell out more than \$10 million for the 232 birds killed in two and a half years by its power lines. Under Obama, even our national symbol must be sacrificed to tip the scales in favor of wind power.

■ Chen Guangcheng is one of the bravest and most admirable men in the world. He is the “blind peasant legal activist,” or “barefoot lawyer,” who blew the whistle on China's forced abortion and sterilization. For his troubles, he was imprisoned by the Chinese government and tortured in the usual, unspeakable ways. With the help of a network of supporters, some of whom have paid dearly for their goodness, he escaped house arrest on April 20. He ran to the U.S. embassy in Beijing—not any of the other 130 embassies in that capital, but the embassy of the United States. Americans should be proud of that, or at least ponder it. After weeks of negotiation between Beijing and Washington, Chen has arrived in New York with his family. He will work with his friend Jerome A. Cohen, a professor at New York University. Cohen is one of the handful of China scholars who are open and friendly to dissidents. Maybe one day China will have a government that does not imprison, torture, and hound its best people.

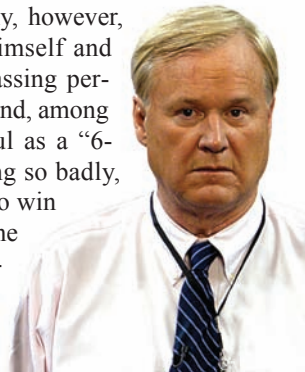
■ The prospect of a Greek exit from the euro zone has become so serious that it now has its own shorthand: “Grexit,” a term as unlovely as its real-world unfolding would likely be. The break-up of the euro—at least the currency separation of the euro zone's core and peripheral economies—may nonetheless be the least-bad option Europe now has. If they stay in the zone, the peripheral countries face years of depression even if they receive lavish transfers from Germany, transfers that are by no means sure to be forthcoming from an increasingly angry German electorate. If the European Central Bank were willing to tolerate more inflation in Germany, terms of trade would improve for the periphery. In effect, they would get an “internal devaluation” within the euro but without having to negotiate wage cuts one company at a time. But future crises would be guaranteed, because it would remain the case that different monetary policies suited different parts of the zone. If the euro is to break up, better for all concerned that it happen soon.

■ In the lengthy and sad list of atrocities committed by terrorists, the murder of eleven members of the Israeli team at the Olympic Games held in Munich in 1972 stands out as an act of exceptional barbarity. Black September was the work of Palestinians who said they were carrying out the orders of Yasser Arafat, their leader at the time. Eight of them broke into the undefended quarters of the Israeli athletes, killed two of them, and held nine as hostages.

In front of a world anticipating the games, German security forces finally bungled an exchange of fire. All the hostages and five Palestinians were killed. Israel does not forget its victims, and at every Olympics has asked for a minute's silence in memory of the eleven athletes. With the London Olympics coming up, a senior Israeli minister repeated this request to the International Olympic Committee, whose decision is final in all Olympic Games issues. Representatives Eliot L. Engel and Nita M. Lowey, Democrats of New York, made the same request. The president of the IOC, the Swiss Jacques Rogge, has turned it down. He will instead be attending the reception hosted at each Olympics by the Israelis to commemorate the eleven who died. Or in plain words, Israel has to rely on itself—as it often does.

■ Over the last few years, we at NR have had fun citing stories of Middle Eastern paranoia about Israel and its wily use of animals. You remember how the Israelis sent sharks to Sharm El-Sheikh, to eat German tourists and thereby harm the Egyptian tourism industry? They also used “poison-resistant rats” to drive Arabs from their Jerusalem homes. And sent a team of squirrels to spy on Iran. (The adorable rodents “were stopped before they could act, thanks to the alertness of our intelligence services.”) Switching to birds, the Israelis sent a griffon vulture to Saudi Arabia (“detained” as part of a “Zionist espionage plot”). Etc. The latest is this: “Turkey suspects bird of being Israeli spy: Ankara investigating possibility that bee-eater was ‘implanted with Mossad surveillance device.’” Yes, it's funny—but it's also sad, pathetic, and alarming. There is hardly any more urgent business in the world than the sobering up of Middle Eastern societies.

■ MSNBC's Chris Matthews made mocking references to how badly Sarah Palin would supposedly do if she competed on *Jeopardy*. Recently, however, Matthews went on the show himself and turned in a thoroughly embarrassing performance, finishing last overall and, among other gaffes, proposing Istanbul as a “6-Letter World Capital.” By losing so badly, Matthews forfeited the chance to win a year's supply of Rice-a-Roni, the San Francisco Treat. He also exposed the emptiness of his condescension.



■ Davis High School, in Kaysville, Utah, was fined \$15,000 for selling soda at the wrong time of day. As the recipient of federal nutrition funds, the school was required to turn its vending machines off during lunch hour. As the school's bewildered principal explains: “Before lunch you can come and buy a carbonated beverage. You can take it into the cafeteria and eat your lunch, but you can't first go buy school lunch, then come out in the hallway and buy a drink.” Between the fine and the niggling, school officials decided to pull the plugs on the machines completely, with several consequences: Money from soda sales that used to fund student activities has been lost; students get their sugary drinks anyway, from nearby convenience stores; and federal bureaucrats have, in effect, expanded their authority from running a lunch program to banning soda machines from the school.

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The discouraging part is that Department of Agriculture honchos consider this outcome a success.

■ Men and women sang *lieder*, or German art songs, before Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and they will sing them long after. But Fischer-Dieskau set a standard. He was brainy, understanding what must be understood about the words and the notes. But he also had a golden throat—one of the most beautiful voices we have ever heard. This combination is hard to beat. Fischer-Dieskau, a German baritone, sang many types of music, but it is for *lieder* that we will most remember him. On a question of German diction, the great mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne once cited Fischer-Dieskau in a master class: “He’s the Bible.” The baritone’s career happened to coincide with the burgeoning of the recording industry. As a result, we can hear him in almost everything he ever sang, in perpetuity. Art songs in particular lend themselves to recordings: In their intimacy, they are captured better than are sonatas, symphonies, and operas. But there is nothing like live, and anyone who ever heard Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau glows at the memory. He has died at 86. R.I.P.

■ At first glance, disco may seem a perfect symbol of the 1970s: synthetic, disposable, easily tired of, a favorite of vacuous celebrities—something to look back on afterwards with embarrassment. In other words, just like Jimmy Carter. With the passage of several decades, though, even the angriest punk rocker can admit that beneath all the strings and lushness and overproduction, and that monotonous beat, the industry at its peak produced some enduring artifacts that can be better appreciated today (unlike Carter). Perhaps the two most successful practitioners of the genre were as unlike as could be: Donna Summer, a sultry, glamorous newcomer with a supple and ethereal voice, and the Bee Gees, shaggy, pudgy Australian retreads whose nasal tones had been familiar on the pop scene for a decade. The usual agitators injected racial politics into disco, as they did into everything else, but no one except rock critics paid them any mind. Now cancer has claimed both Summer and Robin Gibb, second to die of the three brothers who made up the Bee Gees: Summer at 63, Gibb at 62. R.I.P.

PUBLIC POLICY

The Devolution of Marriage

PRESIDENT OBAMA is getting credit, even from some critics, for finally being honest and consistent in his position on same-sex marriage now that he has announced his support for it. But he is still being neither honest nor consistent. And his dishonesty is not merely a matter of pretending that he has truly changed his mind about marriage, rather than about the politics of marriage. (Although that species of dishonesty, and the media’s acceptance of it, is breathtaking: We are supposed to believe that Obama thought that American ideals of equality required same-sex marriage, then forgot this insight, then remembered it again.)

His claim that he believes that states should decide marriage policy is also impossible to credit. One of the purposes of the federal Defense of Marriage Act was to block this scenario: A same-sex couple that resides in a state that does not recognize same-sex unions as marriages goes to a state that does so recognize them, gets married there, returns home, sues in federal court to make the home state recognize the “marriage,” and prevails. Obama has



The president affirms his support for gay marriage on ABC News

long favored the repeal of the act. He does not truly want states to be able to continue to define marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

And really, why should he, given his premises? Does anyone doubt that he believes that the marriage laws of most states are not only wrong but unjust? His spokesmen have repeatedly said as much when registering his opposition to states’ attempts to undo judicial decisions to impose same-sex marriage. If these marriage laws amount to unjust discrimination against certain persons, then it follows that states have no right to enforce them. If Obama’s appointees to the Supreme Court join a majority that requires all states to recognize same-sex marriages, does anyone think that he will do anything but applaud? There is no reason to believe that Obama’s long-advertised “evolution” on marriage is now complete.

All people, whatever their sexual orientation, have equal dignity, worth, and basic rights, by virtue of being human beings. We do not believe that this premise entails the conclusion that the marriage laws should be changed. The only good reason to have marriage laws in the first place—to have the state recognize a class of relationships called “marriage” out of all the possible strong bonds that adults can form—is to link erotic desire to the upbringing of the children it can produce.

We have already gone too far, in both law and culture, in weakening the link between marriage and procreation. To break it altogether would make the institution of marriage unintelligible. What possible governmental interest is there in encouraging long-term commitments with a sexual element, just as such? What reason is there to exclude from recognition caring long-term relationships without such an element? (In previous editorials we have mentioned the case of two brothers who raise a child together following a family tragedy; other hypotheticals are easy to devise.)

Many people who support same-sex marriage sincerely believe that they are merely expanding an institution to a class of people who have been excluded from it rather than redefining it. But this view is simply mistaken. We will not make our society more civilized by detaching one of our central institutions from its civilizing task.

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US Surgeon General candidate, Paul Nemiroff, Ph.D., MD, FASC

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A 'Bonus' Effect?

Elizabeth was pleasantly surprised with one of the formula's 'bonus effects.'



Elizabeth K., NY

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Dr. Nemiroff became aware of the formula when he was working nearly 80 hours a week as a surgeon.

"I noticed that I would look at a page and read it, but I wasn't retaining the information as I had before," he says.

"I began studying everything I could about brain enhancers," says Dr. Nemiroff.

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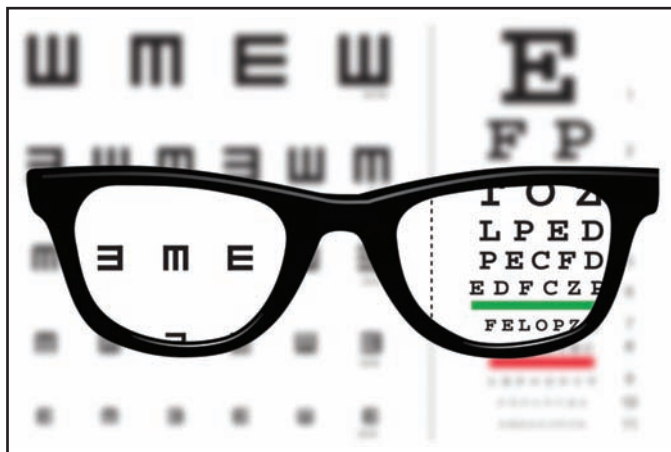
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Canadian Crackdown

It's not easy opposing gay marriage in the north country

BY MICHAEL COREN

A CONSIDERED and empathetic opposition to same-sex marriage has nothing to do with phobia or hatred, but that doesn't stop Christians, conservatives, and anybody else who doesn't take the fashionable line from being condemned as Neanderthals and bigots. This is a lesson that Canadians have learned from painful experience.

Same-sex marriage became law in Canada in the summer of 2005, making the country the fourth nation to pass such legislation, and the first in the English-speaking world. In the few debates leading up to the decision, it became almost impossible to argue in defense of mar-

riage as a child-centered institution, in defense of the procreative norm of marriage, in defense of the superiority of two-gender parenthood, without being thrown into the waste bin as a hater. What we've also discovered in Canada is that it can get even worse than mere abuse, and that once gay marriage becomes law, critics are often silenced by the force of the law.

Although precise figures about gay marriages in Canada are elusive, there are thought to be fewer than 30,000, after an initial surge of around 10,000 as soon as the law was passed. But if large numbers of gay people failed to take advantage of the law, the law certainly took advantage of its critics. Again, definitive figures are almost impossible to state, but it's estimated that, in less than five years, there have been between 200 and 300 proceedings—in courts, human-rights

commissions, and employment boards—against critics and opponents of same-sex marriage. And this estimate doesn't take into account the casual dismissals that surely have occurred.

In 2011, for example, a well-known television anchor on a major sports show was fired just hours after he tweeted his support for “the traditional and TRUE meaning of marriage.” He had merely been defending a hockey player's agent who was receiving numerous death threats and other abuse for refusing to support a pro-gay-marriage campaign. The case is still under appeal, in human-rights commissions and, potentially, the courts.

The Roman Catholic bishop of Calgary, Alberta, Fred Henry, was threatened with litigation and charged with a human-rights violation after he wrote a letter to local churches outlining standard Catholic teaching on marriage. He is hardly a reactionary—he used to be known as “Red Fred” because of his support for the labor movement—but the archdiocese eventually had to settle with the complainants to avoid an embarrassing and expensive trial.

In the neighboring province of Saskatchewan, another case illustrates the intolerance that has become so regular since 2005. A number of marriage commissioners (state bureaucrats who administer civil ceremonies) were contacted by a gay man eager to marry his partner under the new legislation. Some officials he telephoned were away from town or already engaged, and the first one to take his call happened to be an evangelical Christian, who explained that he had religious objections to carrying out the ceremony but would find someone who would. He did so, gave the name to the man wanting to get married, and assumed that this would be the end of the story.

But no. Even though the gay couple had had their marriage, they decided to make an official complaint and demand that the commissioner be reprimanded and punished. The provincial government argued that, as a servant of the state, he had a duty to conduct state policy, but that any civilized public entity could accept that such a fundamentally radical change in marriage policy was likely to cause division, and that as long as alternative and reasonable arrangements could be made and nobody was

Mr. Coren is a Canadian TV host and columnist, and the author, most recently, of Heresy: Ten Lies They Spread about Christianity. His website is www.michaelcoren.com.

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The Two-State Illusion

Would it solve the Middle East problem?

There seems to be almost universal consensus that in order to bring peace to the Middle East the creation of a Palestinian state is unavoidable. What is more, such a “solution” is the policy of the United States.

What are the facts?

The lesson of Gaza. In previous *hasbarah* (educating and clarifying) messages we made clear that a Palestinian state would be impossible for Israel to accept. It would lead inevitably to Israel’s destruction. The reason is primarily the lesson learned from the Gaza experiment. Under pressure from most of the world, Israel evacuated Gaza, displacing hundreds of families who had lived there for generations and who had built substantial communities and extensive agricultural installations. Instead of making even the least gesture of acknowledgment and gratitude, the Palestinians, almost from the very first day of their “liberation” from the hated Jews, began to lob rockets into Israel. Ultimately, Israel was forced to defend itself against those attacks and invaded Gaza in force. There was much damage and many casualties. As could be expected, “world opinion” condemned Israel’s defensive action and called it “disproportionate.”

If Israel were foolish enough to yield to the unrelenting pressure and were to turn Judea/Samaria (the “West Bank”) over to the Palestinians, it would find itself surrounded by enemies, whose ultimate goal is not the creation of a Palestinian state but the destruction of Israel – to use the common rhetoric, to wipe Israel off the map and push the Jews into the sea.

Statehood opportunities rejected. The reality is that the Palestinians are not really interested in their own independent state. Such a state never existed and the concept of a “Palestinian” people is a fairly new one. If the Palestinians were really interested in their own state, if that were their aspiration, they could have had such a state side-by-side with Israel, for a very long time. The first partition of Palestine – all of which, by the Balfour Declaration and by the mandate of the League of Nations was to be the Jewish home – occurred in 1921. Winston Churchill, who was then the Colonial Secretary, split the mandated territory, allocating the great bulk to the Arabs for the creation of what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. But, of course, that did not satisfy the Arabs. After much bloody fighting over

It is important to understand that the creation of a Palestinian state is not the true ultimate goal of the Arabs. It is, at best, meant to be a stepping stone toward the ultimate goal: the destruction, the disappearance of Israel and of the hated Jews from any portion of what they consider “holy Muslim soil.” The Arabs are not interested in putting an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people. That could have been accomplished long ago. On the contrary, to be martyrs is a source of pride and assurance of victory to the Arabs. They compare their willingness to sacrifice hundreds of thousands of their own with the Zionist enemy, who is concerned about combat losses or even the fate of one single abducted soldier.

the decades, other efforts were made to create an additional state for the Arabs (who by then called themselves “Palestinians”). There was the Peel Partition Plan of 1937, and, most importantly perhaps, the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947. Under the UN plan, the territory west of the Jordan River was to be split, with the major portion to be allocated to the Arabs and the smaller, disconnected, portion going to the Jews. Jerusalem, a bone of contention, was to be “internationalized” – it would not

“...the ultimate goal is not...
a Palestinian state...
but the destruction of Israel.”

belong to either. The Jews, anxious to form their state, accepted this plan under which they were granted only a small fraction of the “Palestine” that they had been promised to be their homeland by the Balfour Declaration and by the mandate of the

League of Nations. But the Arabs rejected the partition out of hand. Almost the same day that Israel declared its statehood and its independence, six Arab armies invaded Israel from north, east and south. In what could be called a Biblical miracle, the ragtag Jewish forces defeated the combined Arab might.

Following the Six-Day War of 1967, in which Israeli forces defeated the combined invasion forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan, Israel offered generous terms for the formation of a Palestinian state. But it was not accepted. Instead, the Arabs convened in Khartoum (Sudan) and pronounced their famous Three No’s: No peace with Israel, No negotiations with Israel, No recognition of Israel. Other offers of statehood were made over the course of the years. Ehud Barak, then prime minister of Israel, and U.S. President Bill Clinton offered the Palestinians almost total withdrawal to the 1967 armistice lines. The Palestinians rejected the offer, presumably because it did not include Israel’s willingness to accept hundreds of thousands of Palestinian “refugees,” who would with one stroke accomplish what the Arabs had not accomplished in their wars: the destruction of Israel. The creation of a Palestinian state could have been accomplished many times. But it is the unalterable goal of the Palestinians, indeed of most Arabs and most Muslims, to destroy the Jewish state and never to recognize and legitimize Israel in whatever shape and size as a Jewish state.

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inconvenienced, they would not discipline their employee for declining to marry same-sex couples. Anybody hired after 2004 would have to agree to conduct such marriages, they continued, but to insist on universal approval so soon after the change would lead to a large number of dismissals, often of people who had given decades of public service. This seemed an intelligent and balanced compromise. Yet the provincial courts disagreed, and commissioners with theological objections are now facing the loss of their jobs, with the situation replicated in other provinces and also at the federal level.

So far, churches have been allowed to refuse to consecrate same-sex marriages, but a campaign has begun to remove tax-free status from religious institutions that make this choice. When asked about how this would undermine charitable efforts in behalf of the poor and homeless undertaken by numerous Christian churches, one of the leaders of Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere, a Canadian gay-rights advocacy group, replied: "We'll only take away charitable status from the buildings where the priests live and where the people pray."

As colossally ignorant and threatening as this sounds, it is also downright disingenuous. Four years ago, a Christian organization in Ontario that works with some of the most marginalized disabled people in the country was taken to court because of its disapproval of an employee who wanted to be part of a same-sex marriage. The government paid the group to do the work because, frankly, nobody else was willing to. As with so many such bodies, it had a set of policies for its employees. While homosexuality was not mentioned, the employment policies did require that employees remain chaste outside of marriage, and marriage was interpreted as the union of a man and a woman. The group was told it had to change its hiring and employment policy or be closed down; as for the disabled people being helped, they were hardly even mentioned.

In small-town British Columbia, a Knights of Columbus chapter rented out its building for a wedding party. They were not aware that the marriage was to be of a lesbian couple, even though the lesbians were well aware that the hall was a Roman Catholic center—it's

increasingly obvious that Christian people, leaders, and organizations are being targeted, almost certainly to create legal precedents. The managers of the hall apologized to the couple but explained that they could not proceed with the arrangement, and agreed to find an alternative venue and pay for new invitations to be printed. The couple said that this was not good enough, and the hall management was prosecuted. The human-rights commission ruled that the Knights of Columbus should not have turned the couple down, and imposed a small fine on them. The couple have been vague in their subsequent demands, but feel that the fine and reprimand are inadequate.

As I write, two Canadian provinces are considering legislation that would likely prevent educators even in private denominational schools from teaching that they disapprove of same-sex marriage, and a senior government minister in Ontario recently announced that if the Roman Catholic Church did not approve of homosexuality or gay marriage, it "would have to change its teaching." What has become painfully evident is that many of those who brought same-sex marriage to Canada have no respect for freedom of conscience and no intention of tolerating contrary opinion, whether that opinion is shaped by religious or by secular belief. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which has just turned 30 years old, fundamentally changed the direction of the legal system, emphasizing communities more than individuals. This has empowered minority groups with the most appeal to quash individual freedom by exercising their political and judicial influence. The system in the United States is different, more concerned with freedom of speech, and generally more respectful of the individual. But the groups and activists trying to silence their opponents are arguably even more radical and vociferous south of the border and, anyway, legal and political assumptions are capable of change; they certainly changed in Canada.

The Canadian litany of pain, firings, and social and political polarization and extremism is extraordinary and lamentable, and we haven't even begun to experience the mid- and long-term results of this mammoth social experiment. I seldom say it, but for goodness' sake learn something from Canada. **NR**

Tea-Party Prequel

Will today's conservative grassroots go the way of FDR's constitutionalist foes?

BY DANIEL FOSTER

THE three-plus years of the Obama administration have been something of a roller coaster for the Republican party and the broader conservative movement. On one hand there was Scott Brown's Obamacare-backlash-fueled taking of "Ted Kennedy's seat," the recapture of the House, and the debt-ceiling battle. On the other, there was the bloody presidential primary, the divided base, and, well, the debt-ceiling battle.

It's hard to imagine we would have been heading into the election with any of the above—Brown, a Republican House, a rightward-shifting base, a slugfest over the debt, not to mention a vulnerable presidential incumbent—without the tea partiers, who are, with apologies to the occupiers, easily the most consequential American political grassroots movement of the young century. And, indeed, their small-government constitutionalism and anti-Beltway-establishment furor persists (just ask Dick Lugar). So with the stakes even higher in a presidential than a midterm election, logic suggests the Tea Party should take on an even bigger and more decisive role, right?

If past is prologue, then I'm afraid not. You see, the last time a traditionalist/constitutionalist grassroots movement emerged to check the statist ambitions of a progressive president, its wave crested too early, and a first-termer named Franklin Roosevelt was reelected handily, ushering in an era of Democratic dominance in all three branches of government that would endure, with little interruption, for half a century. If the Tea Party wishes to avoid the fate of its progenitors, it would do well to understand their story.

In 1933, Republicans stood dazed and demoralized in the aftermath of what many feared wasn't just a defeat but a death blow. Franklin Roosevelt was untouchable, with robust congressional majorities and reserves of popular support few presidents could dream of. But by the summer of 1935, those same Republicans

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were, according to a *New York Times* story, “facing 1936 with their chins and hopes . . . high.” This turnabout was due in no small measure to the American Liberty League, an organization that has become a footnote in American history but that, for a time, was in both genesis and guiding principles a kind of Tea Party Beta.

The League was formed in 1934 by a group of conservatives and independents from both parties: Its founder, John Jacob Raskob, had been a chairman of the DNC, and it counted two Democratic presidential nominees among its early members. Most were businessmen, and the early goal of the group was to rehabilitate the reputation of free enterprise from the beating it had taken in the early years of the Depression. But organizers soon settled on another, broader cause to champion publicly: the preservation of the Constitution in the face of an assault by the New Deal. In this way, the League spoke for countless Americans who felt estranged from Rooseveltism and clung to the traditional American values they saw being displaced by the growth of government and the redistribution of wealth (the League’s first press release was about the dangers of the federal deficit).

In great numbers these Americans began contributing to the League, often in amounts as little as a dollar, and the group emerged as a major player in American politics during FDR’s first term. Early on, it was subject to charges of what we’d now call “astroturfing.” To wit, a sketch at the 1934 Gridiron dinner lampooned top-hatted League fundraisers, joking that “if anybody’s in favor of saving the Constitution, it’s a sure sign he’s got at least a million dollars.” The Roosevelt administration was equally dismissive. FDR frequently took cracks at the League in press conferences, while interior secretary and New Deal fixer Harold L. Ickes called it a coalition of “industrialists, constitutional lawyers, and captains of finance who drove our good ship onto the rocks.” (Sound familiar?)

But as Jeff Shesol closely chronicles in *Supreme Power*, his history of Roosevelt’s battle with the courts over the meaning of the Constitution, by 1935 “the real vitality belonged to the American Liberty League, which was looking more and more like a third party than a ‘non-partisan’ pressure group.” That year, the League raised more than, and spent twice as much as, the GOP, and “establish[ed] its presence in every congressional district in America.” By

January 1936, the League boasted a membership of 100,000 and had a Washington headquarters in the National Press Building replete with massive policy, field-organizational, and public-relations teams. Its members filed amicus briefs and even represented plaintiffs challenging the constitutionality of the New Deal in the Supreme Court. They jumped to the aid of the businesses being taxed to pay farmers for *not* growing wheat under the Agricultural Adjustment Act. They organized Constitution Day celebrations across the country, and pressured candidates to pledge not to pass legislation of questionable constitutionality. Roosevelt speechwriter and White House counsel Samuel Rosenman admitted that, heading into election season, “Roosevelt’s friends took the American Liberty League seriously. So did he.”

So what happened? Why couldn’t the Liberty League ride its newfound popularity to a defeat of Roosevelt in 1936? The press, for one. The *New York Times* called the League’s pretensions to non-partisanship “false whiskers” and labeled the group “a guerrilla ally of the Republicans.” A *New York Post* editorial accused the League and its allies of perverting the ideals of the Founders. “The ideals of Madison,” the editors fumed, “had little in common with those of the great corporation lawyers, the semi-Fascist ‘patriotic’ groups and the Hearsts.” (The substitution of “the Koch brothers” for “the Hearsts” of course suggests itself.) Elected Democrats and their adjuncts got in on the act as well, defaming the “American Lobby League” as “puppets” of the Morgans, Rockefellers, and du Ponts (the last, it should be conceded, with some justice—the du Ponts were major boosters). The Democratic Senate majority leader even launched a witch-hunt campaign—finance investigation against the League with Roosevelt’s blessing. In the end, the propaganda campaign was so successful that the RNC begged the League to “stay aloof” from Republican nominee Alf Landon’s 1936 campaign. Within four years of that fall’s landslide defeat, the once-mighty group had disbanded.

Two further factors contributing to the Liberty League’s demise, and Roosevelt’s victory, have disturbing parallels in the current environment. First, Roosevelt took the fight over the future of the country directly to the League’s most natural allies in government: the fragile constitutionalist

majority in the federal courts, which had, according to legal scholar Rick Pildes, issued some 1,600 injunctions against aspects of the New Deal in the summer of 1935 alone. Roosevelt’s counteroffensive peaked with his infamous “court packing” plan of 1937, which broke the back of the anti-New Deal coalition, but the rhetorical groundwork had been laid well before. In 1935, after complaining that the Court’s interpretation of the Commerce Clause was outdated and “relegated [the government] to the horse-and-buggy definition of interstate commerce,” the president appealed directly to the American people in one of his fireside chats, asking: “Are the people of this country going to decide that their federal government shall in the future have no right under any implied power or any court-approved power to enter into a national economic problem?” This evolved into his ominous pledge to do something to “save the Constitution from the Court and the Court from itself.”

Of course, bad-mouthing the courts is something the current president has shown a similar willingness to do, from his January 2010 State of the Union knock on the *Citizens United* decision—even as several justices sat at his feet—to his preemptive warning this spring that “overturning a law [Obamacare] that was passed by a strong majority of a democratically elected Congress” would be an “unprecedented, extraordinary step.” Admittedly, the president has yet to turn his trash talk into separation-of-powers-eschewing legislation, but then neither did Roosevelt—until his second term.

Secondly, as Burton Folsom points out in the indispensable *New Deal or Raw Deal?*, the League was left with an imperfect alternative to Roosevelt in the form of Republican Alfred Mossman “Alf” Landon, who holds the distinction of being the FDR opponent with the least distinction, behind Herbert Hoover, Wendell Willkie, and Thomas Dewey. Landon was a millionaire who started out as a banker before moving into oil. He had at one time considered himself a “progressive” and a leader of the liberal wing of the Republican party in Kansas, where he won the governorship against a Democratic wave. A weaker public speaker than the charismatic FDR, he faced the nearly impossible task of securing the conservative base by railing against government programs without alienating the huge numbers of general-election voters who held federal jobs or

depended on federal cash for their livelihoods. This led to flip-flopping, such as when Landon told a New York crowd he was against agricultural subsidies weeks after he had promised an Iowa crowd he would fight to continue them. As a result there emerged a kind of mutual estrangement between the Liberty League and the establishment Republicans, with the latter seeking to distance themselves from the former for the purposes of the general election, and the former coming out less than ebulliently for the Republican candidate.

Constitutionalist movements with natural allies in the courts, branded by Democrats and their media allies as pawns of corporate fat cats, awkwardly matched with a less-than-ideal Republican candidate: The parallels between the Liberty League and the Tea Party—and between 1936 and 2012—are obvious. But does that mean that the Tea Party is doomed to defeat as the Liberty League was?

Not necessarily, since there are some crucial differences as well: First, while both movements grew out of defeats, the Tea Party delivered a victory in the first election in which it intervened—the 2010

midterms—while the Liberty League did not. Second, the Tea Party has proven itself robust in the face of the kind of media scrutiny and political mudslinging that helped spell the end for its New Deal progenitor, thanks in large part to the emergence of an extensive alternative media centered on the Web and various social-media platforms. Third, a once-sympathetic judiciary eventually abandoned the constitutionalism represented by the Liberty League, whereas the Tea Party has reason for cautious optimism that the current Court will continue to check the Obama administration's more ambitious statist expansions—most notably Obamacare. Lastly, the Tea Party has been able to move the GOP rightward in a way the Liberty League never could, and has even shown signs of embracing Mitt Romney.

Which is more salient in forecasting the Tea Party's fortunes in 2012, its similarities with the Liberty League or its differences from it? I don't know the answer, but I do know the question. They say that history repeats itself first as tragedy. What happens when the first go-round was itself tragic? **NR**

Taxpayers Take the Puck

A think tank defends them from the NHL

BY JOHN J. MILLER

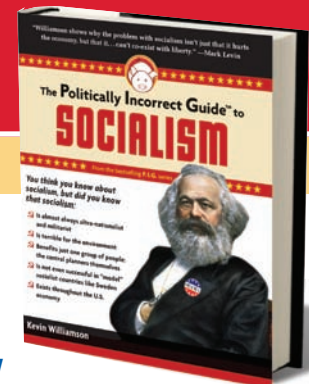
THE Phoenix Coyotes are having the best season of their short history. In April, they finished atop the National Hockey League's Pacific Division. In the postseason, they beat the Chicago Blackhawks in six games and the Nashville Predators in five. Never before had the Coyotes advanced past the first round of the playoffs. At press time, they were skating in the Western Conference championship against the Los Angeles Kings, fighting for a berth in the Stanley Cup finals.

Yet the Coyotes soon could lose something much more important than a game or even a playoff series: They could lose their city, all because of a plucky free-

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market think tank named after Barry Goldwater. “We’re cheering for the Coyotes,” says Darcy Olsen, president of the Phoenix-based Goldwater Institute. “But we’re also trying to protect taxpayers.”

The problem is that the Coyotes can’t turn a profit. They drew fewer than 13,000 fans per game during the regular season, the lowest attendance in the NHL. Three years ago, they actually declared bankruptcy, and the NHL assumed control of the team. The league is desperate to find a new owner, but prospective buyers understand the fatal economics of the franchise and expect the massive public subsidies that have become so common in professional sports. Right now, the only thing keeping the Coyotes afloat is Glendale, the Phoenix suburb where the team plays in Jobing.com Arena. The city already has pumped tens of millions of dollars into the Coyotes and appears ready to spend even more as part of a new ownership deal involving hockey executive Greg Jamison.

Yet the Goldwater Institute stands in the way, threatening a lawsuit that NHL commissioner Gary Bettman has condemned and Republican senator John McCain has branded “disgraceful.” Olsen is astonished by the charges: “This is a time of fiscal austerity, with lots of people out of work, and taxpayers are supposed to buy a hockey team for a multimillionaire?” Whatever happens next—fateful decisions are coming soon—her group showcases the growing influence of right-leaning policy organizations that operate mainly in the states.

A generation ago, a handful of conservative and libertarian think tanks advanced their ideas on the federal level in Washington, D.C. Yet there was nothing similar in state capitals. By the late 1980s, activists had recognized the vacuum, and groups started to sprout in Michigan, South Carolina, and elsewhere. “We saw the need for a think tank in Arizona,” says Michael Sanera, who was a professor of political science at Northern Arizona University at the time. “We were going to be a local version of the Heritage Foundation.”

An initial effort to launch something called the Arizona Policy Institute floundered. Then inspiration struck Sanera and his allies: What if they rebranded, naming their group after Barry Goldwater, the conservative hero who had just retired



Darcy Olsen, president of the Goldwater Institute

from the Senate? They sent the old man a letter. He declined to lend his name.

“We decided to make a second appeal,” says John Shadegg, one of Sanera’s pals (who would go on to serve eight terms as a GOP congressman before stepping down last year). Shadegg’s father, Stephen Shadegg, had been Goldwater’s campaign manager and ghostwriter. The object of a quick lobbying effort, Goldwater agreed to the request, and the Goldwater Institute was born. Today, the 1964 presidential candidate’s son—Barry Goldwater Jr., a retired congressman—sits on the board. “You won’t find a better group out there,” he says.

During the 1990s, the Goldwater Institute stayed small, employing no more than a few people at once. It earned a reputation for criticizing Republicans who strayed from conservative principle. After Sanera left, its president was Jeff Flake. When he was elected to Congress as a Republican in 2000—he’s now running for the Senate—the Goldwater Institute needed a new chief.

To the surprise of many, it turned to Olsen, who was then a 29-year-old education wonk at the Cato Institute. Under her leadership, the Goldwater Institute continued to battle government growth and contributed to a number of conservative policy successes, such as the creation and expansion of education savings accounts for Arizona schoolchildren. The hockey fight is the latest in a long line of battles,

as well as one of the most unusual. Earlier this year, the *Hockey News*, based in Toronto, published its list of the hundred most powerful people in hockey. Olsen ranked 64th, a resonant number for Goldwater fans. It put her just behind Detroit Red Wings defenseman Nicklas Lidström (62) and just ahead of New York Rangers goalie Henrik Lundqvist (67).

The Coyotes arrived in Phoenix a few years ahead of Olsen. In 1996, the franchise was called the Winnipeg Jets, and it abandoned the snows of Manitoba for the deserts of Arizona, in a league-wide migration that saw teams pop up in Florida, Georgia, and elsewhere. The hope was that they would sink roots in the Sunbelt and turn hockey into a sport for southerners as well as northerners. But teams such as the Carolina Hurricanes and the Florida Panthers have struggled to fill their arenas. Last year, after eleven seasons of disappointment, the Atlanta Thrashers quit their hometown and moved to Winnipeg, giving the city that had lost the Jets a second chance.

The Coyotes could move as well, unless Glendale comes up with a brand-new sweetheart deal, which it can ill afford. On April 13, the *Arizona Republic* ran a story with this headline: “Glendale budget looking bleak.” It described a projected shortfall of \$35 million, representing about a quarter of city revenue. The proposed remedies combine spending reductions, including cuts to the police department, with a sales-tax hike. Approval of the tax increase would give Glendale the highest sales-tax rate among major American cities, according to the Tax Foundation, with a combined city and state sales-tax burden of 10.3 percent. Meanwhile, Glendale would continue to make annual debt payments of more than \$12 million on Jobing.com Arena and also pay the NHL a hefty management fee. The NHL’s latest proposal to Glendale would have the city fork over \$271 million through 2033 to keep the team, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Glendale is by no means the first city to throw money at a sports boondoggle. The estimated cost of this summer’s Olympics in London was originally about \$5 billion. Now it has tripled. On May 14, Minnesota governor Mark Dayton, a Democrat, signed a bill to have his state spend at least \$500 million on a new stadium for football’s Minnesota Vikings. “Teams every-

where want to socialize their costs and privatize their profits,” says Neil deMause, author of *Field of Schemes* and a prolific anti-subsidy blogger.

Economists disagree about many things, but sports subsidies aren’t one of them. Several years ago, Robert Whaples, chairman of the economics department at Wake Forest University, surveyed a random sample of members of the American Economic Association. One question asked if “local and state governments in the U.S. should eliminate subsidies to professional sports franchises.” A whopping 86 percent concurred. It’s hard to find that level of agreement on anything else, Whaples says. Owners and teams like to talk up urban revitalization, but it’s simply a feel-good, redistributive myth: “Everyone who is at a restaurant near a new arena is not at a restaurant somewhere else,” says Dennis Coates of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. “Arenas take economic activity that would occur in one place and move it to another place. That’s all.”

The Goldwater Institute hasn’t merely issued a study that warns about costs, in the fashion of a traditional think tank. Instead, it’s threatening a lawsuit. Five years ago, it opened a litigation center—the first state-level free-market think tank to do so, in what has become a growing trend—on the theory that lawsuits could help it achieve policy goals. Citing a provision of the Arizona constitution that blocks government subsidies for anything but clear public purposes, the Goldwater Institute says it will sue Glendale if the sale of the Coyotes involves taxpayer funds.

The face-off has irritated people who would rather not answer uncomfortable questions about government subsidies. When the threat of a lawsuit surfaced last year, Senator McCain called it “basically blackmailing by the Goldwater Institute.” NHL commissioner Bettman also chimed in: “I quite frankly don’t know who the people there report to or are accountable to,” he said, “but it fascinates me that whoever is running the Goldwater Institute can actually substitute their judgment for that of the Glendale City Council.”

Olsen laughs at these words. “We’re not in the business of getting invited to cocktail parties or luxury suites,” she says. “We’re in the business of delivering justice to taxpayers.”

NR

Getting Irreligion

How should conservatives respond to declining church attendance?

BY REIHAN SALAM

THERE was a time when American politicians could condemn godless heathens almost anywhere in the country and expect nothing but lusty applause. Now, however, there are large swathes of the country in which the unchurched are just as important as the churched. The United States remains the most religiously observant of the world’s affluent countries: According to the World Values Survey, 38 percent of Americans say they are active members of a church, which is markedly higher than the 16 percent of Australians and the 4 percent of French who say the same.

Yet the number of Americans with no religious affiliation has been increasing at an impressive clip. According to the U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, the religiously unaffiliated constitute roughly 16 percent of the U.S. population. To be sure, this category includes many people who profess a belief in God, as only 4 percent of respondents explicitly state that they are firm non-believers. But it seems safe to assume that the worldview of the religiously unaffiliated, whether they believe in some loose sense or not, is different in important respects from that of the 39 percent of Americans who report to Pew that they attend church every week or almost every week.

The growth of the religiously unaffiliated population looks particularly stark when viewed through a generational lens. According to the General Social Survey, 26 percent of Americans born in 1981 or later are not affiliated with a religion. By way of contrast, the same is true of only 5 percent of those born before 1928, 6 percent of those born between 1928 and 1945, 13 percent of those born between 1946 and 1964, and 20 percent of those born between 1965 and 1980. To be sure, religious observance can fluctuate over

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the life cycle. Some people embrace religion in middle age, while others fall away from it. But among older generations, the share who attend church has remained very stable. One gets the strong impression that patterns of religious observance formed in childhood and young adulthood tend to persist.

If this is indeed true—if the so-called millennial generation born in or after 1981 doesn’t dramatically change its religious stripes—the share of the U.S. population that is unaffiliated will surpass the share that belongs to mainline Protestant churches, and it might even overtake the share that belongs to evangelical Protestant churches. Moreover, this process could easily accelerate, as what we might call America’s religious middle continues to hollow out. While a large share of evangelicals attend church every week, the number of Catholics attending Mass every week has declined considerably in recent decades, as has the number of mainline Protestants who attend weekly services. One assumes that as Catholics and mainline Protestants continue to fall away from church attendance, many will join the ranks of the unaffiliated.

This obviously matters to religious proselytizers of all kinds, since the business of saving souls is perhaps the most serious business of all. But it should also matter to conservative political strategists. This year, for example, the Faith and Freedom Coalition, led by evangelical activist Ralph Reed, found that just over 50 percent of the ballots cast in Republican primary races through mid-March were cast by evangelicals, an increase from 44 percent in 2008. And late last year, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life found that 70 percent of evangelicals identified as Republicans while only 24 percent identified as Democrats. Among the unaffiliated, the numbers were almost the reverse, with 61 percent identifying as Democrats and 27 percent identifying as Republicans. Many of the Republican gains of the 1980s and 1990s can be attributed to the rising political engagement of evangelical Protestants and, more broadly, of non-black weekly churchgoers of all Christian denominations. Yet as Robert Putnam and David Campbell report in their indispensable 2010 book *American Grace*, the evangelical boom that started in the early 1970s had mostly run its course by the 1990s. If the unaffiliated population has as big an



impact on U.S. politics in the decades to come as evangelicals have had in the decades since Ronald Reagan's election as president, conservatives will face a serious challenge.

Putnam and Campbell argue that the ranks of the religiously unaffiliated are swelling in part because church attendance has become closely associated with political conservatism. Whereas it was once common for political liberals to be churchgoers, the battle over legal abortion created a new dynamic in which liberals who favored abortion rights felt increasingly alienated from anti-abortion denominations. In a similar vein, socially liberal Republicans have felt increasingly unwelcome in the GOP as the party has embraced moral traditionalism and as devout evangelicals have attained greater influence within the party. In Putnam and Campbell's metaphor, the evangelical boom of the 1970s and 1980s represented the first aftershock in the wake of the sexual revolution. The social transformation wrought by birth control and the rise of the feminist movement sparked a reaction among large numbers of Americans, who turned against cultural permissiveness and towards more demanding forms of religious practice.

This rise of the so-called religious Right, however, sparked a second aftershock, in which large numbers of young people came to see religion as judgmental, intolerant, and excessively political. They did so despite the fact that religious conservatives tend to see their political engagement as essentially defensive. As evidence for their

second-aftershock thesis, Putnam and Campbell point out that the religiously unaffiliated are drawn heavily from the ranks of the center and the left. Changing attitudes regarding homosexuality seem to have played a particularly powerful role in turning young Americans against formal religious affiliation.

This isn't to suggest that a shift to the cultural left on the part of evangelical churches would have stemmed the growth in the number of religiously unaffiliated young Americans. Mainline denominations have been extremely keen to move left, and in doing so they've lost adherents in large numbers. One obvious question is why the mainline denominations failed to capture a large share of young Americans hostile to the religious Right. A number of possibilities come to mind. It could be that the mainline denominations had grown complacent during their period of demographic vibrancy, and they were thus unprepared to win converts as effectively as denominations that emerged in a more competitive environment. Or it could simply be that their more relaxed theology failed to offer a sufficiently compelling alternative to socializing with friends or consuming sports media on Sunday mornings.

What we can safely say is that the mainline denominations are not on the verge of a mighty comeback, and the growth of the evangelical churches has slowed considerably. It is difficult to say how conservatives should approach this changing religious landscape. The religiously unaffiliated are and will remain a small minority of American voters for a long time to come. Yet the growing unaffiliated population, like the growing Latino population, poses a challenge: Conservative candidates can afford to lose these voters by a large margin for the time being, but not by an overwhelming margin indefinitely.

The unaffiliated vote may be lost to even the most accommodating conservative candidates. One wonders, however, if there might be some room to maneuver on the social issues that most animate young, unaffiliated voters. For example, conservatives might rally around a more explicitly federalist stance on same-sex marriage. Now that a narrow majority of Americans back same-sex marriage, Democratic politicians, including President Barack Obama, are moving towards the position that the federal government should recog-

nize same-sex marriages. Some see this as the position of the Obama White House, which has decided not to defend key provisions of the Defense of Marriage Act. Some on the left even argue that it would be right for the Supreme Court to impose same-sex marriage nationwide. Rather than continue to back a constitutional amendment defining marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman, conservatives might consider offering a spirited defense of the status quo, in which individual states may permit same-sex civil marriages but other states will be under no obligation to recognize them.

Many social conservatives will condemn this as a concession too far. But it is worth considering the alternative. Support for same-sex marriage has become so entrenched that the alternative to its legalization might be a broader "deinstitutionalization" of marriage, i.e., an effort to create universal civil unions that would serve as a kind of "marriage lite." This step would likely prove far more damaging to the institution of marriage than same-sex civil marriage, since it would undermine the centrality of marriage in social life. It is hard to imagine that a federalist approach will prove inspiring to social conservatives determined to resist the redefinition of marriage. But if accompanied by a more determined policy effort to strengthen traditional families—by, for example, advocating a more generous child tax credit and marriage-promotion initiatives aimed at the most vulnerable communities—it could help build support for social conservatives among the more open-minded unaffiliated voters.

More broadly, conservatives need to give the religiously unaffiliated their due. Just as politicians respect the ethnic affiliations of voters by embracing all manner of cultural holidays and symbols, it would be sensible and savvy for conservative politicians—especially those who are most expressive about their religious faith—to metaphorically tip their hats to those of a secular bent. Recognizing that the religiously unaffiliated represent a large and vocal segment of the Democratic electorate, Barack Obama has made a point of referencing secular Americans. In 2006, as a freshman U.S. senator, he said, "I do not believe that religious people have a monopoly on morality." This might sound like a fairly banal sentiment, and it is, but it is the kind of message that secular voters want to hear. **NR**

Many Boots, Many Faces

*The problem of moral selectivity
in human rights*

BY JAY NORDLINGER

Oslo, Norway

VIRTUALLY every cause under the sun gets a hearing at the Oslo Freedom Forum, sooner or later. The Freedom Forum is an annual human-rights conference, held here in the Norwegian capital. It is distinguished by its ecumenism. Its only slant, it seems, is toward freedom.

This year, we hear from a West Papuan tribal chief, outfitted in a spectacular headdress. He talks about the horrors visited upon him and his people by the Indonesian overlords. We hear from three former slaves, out of Cambodia, Haiti, and Nepal. They tell of their ordeals, and how they are trying to help others trapped in the same. We hear from a Zimbabwean about Mugabe. From South Americans about Chávez and his littler imitators.

There is even a drug legalizer from the United States, laying into our drug laws. He is immediately followed at the podium by a Syrian dissident, detailing the slaughter of his fellow citizens in the streets. Something for everybody.

When I was coming of age, human rights meant three things, basically: Pinochet in Chile; Marcos in the Philippines; and, above all, the apartheid government in South Africa. Not much was made of human-rights abuses behind the Iron Curtain. If you brought them up, you were lectured about the need to coexist with the Soviet Union. *Don't rock the boat, don't provoke war. Understand the Soviets.* There was hardly anything less cool than anti-Communism: It was almost a mental disorder, evidenced by McCarthyites, businessmen, and Babbits in general.

Which is why I rub my eyes a little to see Tomas van Houtryve at the podium. He is very cool—an international photo-journalist. He has put together a book called *Behind the Curtains of 21st Century Communism*. We all know, he says, that Communism collapsed many

years ago. We all saw that wall come down. And yet, for many millions of people, Communism is all too uncollapsed.

We see photos from, and hear stories about, China, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Nepal. They are not pretty pictures, or happy stories. The sheer brutality of man is flabbergasting—his sadistic imagination. “We should never forget the consequences of totalitarian power,” says Houtryve. He cites 85 million dead, along with “a legacy of famines, purges, and gulags.” He also notes the many “intellectuals, artists, and normal people who have cheered on the Communist Party: from Pablo Picasso and Charlie Chaplin to Jean-Paul Sartre and Ernest Hemingway.”

He ends with pictures of the Hmong, hunted and butchered by the Lao People's Army. “It would never cross their minds to tell you that Communism is dead.”

The world can be fickle in its concern for human rights. Mysterious too. For the last ten years, there has been no hotter human-rights issue than genocide in Darfur. Yet, before that, there was another genocide in Sudan: in the south of that country. It went on for a full 20 years. Elie Wiesel called it a “slow-motion genocide.” And the world yawned, ex-



*Benny Wenda, a tribal chief and activist
from West Papua*

cept for some evangelical-Christian groups in the U.S.

In the weeks and months before the Beijing Olympics in 2008, there was much criticism of the ruling Chinese Communists: but for what they were doing to Tibetans, not so much for what they were doing to their fellow Chinese. Tibet has long been a popular cause. In the last couple of years, the cause of Chinese democracy and human rights has picked up a little. This may have to do with the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo, a political prisoner. And with the drama of Chen Guangcheng, the blind legal activist who escaped his confinement in April, fleeing to the American embassy.

The one cause the world at large embraced was the anti-apartheid cause. Speakers at the Oslo Freedom Forum mention it a lot. You sometimes get the impression that activists sort of miss the anti-apartheid cause: a pure one, involving the oppression of a black majority by a white minority. Consider what happened to South Africa in the realm of sports alone.

From 1964 to 1992, South Africa was banned from the Olympics. Also, athletes from other countries paid a penalty if they competed in South Africa. The United Nations kept a list of athletes who traveled to that country, called the U.N. Register of Sports Contacts with South Africa. This was meant to shame and correct the straying athletes.

We might debate whether individual citizens, such as athletes, should be punished for the policies of the governments that rule them. We might also debate whether any country should be off-limits to athletes or others. But what about the fact that, from 1964 to 1992, athletes governed by other beastly regimes were allowed to compete in the Olympics? These include athletes from Hoxha's Albania and Kim Il Sung's North Korea. In 1980, you remember, the Games were held in the Soviet Union.

When speakers here in Oslo list the great dissidents and human-rights symbols—when they call the roll—they always begin with Nelson Mandela. Often, Sakharov, Sharansky, and Aung San Suu Kyi are on the list, though the Burmese heroine's name is hard to pronounce. (Desmond Tutu once joked that he got the Nobel Peace Prize “because I have an easy surname. What if it were

Waokaokao?") But Mandela is always on the list, and heads it.

Repeatedly, he is referred to as a "prisoner of conscience." But he was not. "Prisoner of conscience" is a term coined by Amnesty International to refer to someone who has been jailed for his opinions. Mandela was jailed for his engagement in an armed struggle. Therefore, Amnesty could not classify him as a prisoner of conscience (though the organization supported him nonetheless).

Mandela is a great man, whose presidency was key: It launched a democracy after decades of nasty undemocratic rule. But his admirers tend to look away from aspects of his record. When it came to human rights, his advocacy was less than universal. "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?"

Throughout his imprisonment, he was supported by some of the worst dictators and regimes: Castro, Qaddafi, the Soviets. They did not support him because they were kindhearted democrats, but because they were warring with the West, broadly speaking. It was only natural for Mandela to be appreciative of support, wherever it came from and whatever the motivation. But it also should have been natural for him to recognize, especially after his release, that dictators who were kind to him were monstrous to people under their control.

Mandela evinced no such recognition. He praised Qaddafi's "commitment to the fight for peace and human rights in the world." About Castro's Cuba, he said, "There's one thing where that country stands out head and shoulders above the rest. That is in its love for human rights and liberty." The Cuban people surely love those things; their rulers for 50-plus years, no. Mandela was the most revered statesman in the world, and one word from him would have done a world of good for political prisoners in Libya, Cuba, and elsewhere. But Mandela kept mum. Worse than keeping mum, he lent his moral authority to the jailers and persecutors.

One Libyan prisoner, he did visit: That was Abdelbaset Megrahi, the state agent convicted in the Lockerbie bombing (which killed 270 people). In 2002, Mandela went to Glasgow to see Megrahi in his prison cell. He pleaded for better conditions for this prisoner. "He says he is being treated well by the officials, but

when he takes exercise he has been harassed by a number of prisoners. He cannot identify them because they shout at him from their cells through the windows and sometimes it is difficult even for the officials to know from which quarter the shouting occurs."

During this same period, Qaddafi and Libya were imprisoning five Bulgarian nurses and one Palestinian doctor, whom they had falsely accused of infecting children with AIDS. The prisoners were not shouted at through windows as they took exercise. They were tortured beyond human description, with rape, dogs, electricity, and more. One of the nurses, in her desperation, tried to kill herself by chewing the veins in her wrist. She had no other recourse.

Moral selectivity is a fault of most human beings, probably. Rare is the person who has equal concern for all. Almost no one keeps an eye on every falling sparrow. William F. Buckley Jr. once wrote that everyone has within him a tank of indignation. It is only so big. What do you spend your fuel on? You can't go around being indignant about everything all the time.

Politics can get in the way of equal concern. If you like the Castros' anti-Americanism and socialism, you will want to look away from what goes on in Combinado del Este Prison. If you don't like confrontation with Iran, you may avert your eyes from Evin Prison. If you hated the 2003 invasion of Iraq, you may not want to hear about Saddam Hussein's atrocities (the "children's prisons," the "rape rooms," the cutting out of tongues for dissent, the chemical gassings).

Probably the group of people that the world is most interested in is the Palestinians. Sometimes it seems that the entire United Nations is organized around them. But the world is interested only if Israel can be interpreted as abusing them. The world has next to no interest in the abuses of Palestinians by Palestinian bosses, in the West Bank and Gaza. It is a glaring blind spot.

Orwell wrote of "a boot stamping on a human face." Does it matter what color the boot is—black or red, fascist or Communist or something else? Does it matter what color the face is? It certainly does not. And those who know this, and prove their knowledge of it, are some of the most valuable people we have. **NR**

Diverse Like Me

Our Mexican writer reflects on the Cherokee Senate candidate

BY ROB LONG

ONCE, not too long ago, when I was hiring writers for a television show, a network executive called me up.

"We're really hoping you'll keep diversity in mind when you make your choices," he said. "It's sort of company policy to hire as many diverse writers as possible."

How a writer—or anyone—can be described as "diverse" is a mystery to me. But when someone says something I don't understand, my general policy is to simply agree with it and move on. Asking for clarification, in my experience, always leads to one of two undesirable outcomes—either I end up even more baffled, or, worse, I end up knowing exactly what was meant. Not a great result either way.

So I agreed to the general goal—"Sure, sure, very important, very important"—and then ended up hiring the writers I wanted to hire. The conversation about diversity, as with almost every other aspect of contemporary liberalism, was an exercise in kabuki theater: The guy has to call me and say the word "diversity" a few times, I have to pretend to listen, everybody's happy.

That was, as I said, a few years ago. Things have changed a bit since then. Everyone is a little hipper to the game.

Two months ago, when I was again hiring a staff of writers, I tried the old agree-and-move-on trick and was brought up short.

"We're really committed to diversity hires, Rob," the executive said. "In fact, we run a whole program for young diverse writers."

"Sure, sure, very important, very important."

"No, I mean, seriously. We're sending over a list of writers who qualify as 'diverse.' We'd really like you to hire one of them."

In the end, I ran out of money in the budget for writers. And if there's one thing networks care about more than diversity,

it's money. But before I was allowed to shut down the exercise, I was also warned that many writers—sometimes through their agents—will claim to be “diverse,” but that when you get them in a room face to face, there's less diversity there than you were expecting.

“We get a lot of people claiming to be half-Asians,” I was told. “And pretty much everybody is claiming to be part Hispanic.” But then, apparently, when they arrive at your office with roundish blue eyes sparkling and blond hair waving, it's awfully hard to square with the “Caribbean-Asian” checkbox.

In other words, people lie about stuff in order to get a job.

Lying about your qualifications is a time-honored job-hunting tradition—which is why in the old days, in order to get a job as a secretary, you had to pass a typing test. And why, even now, Google administers a series of brain-teasers to folks who want to work there. The trouble is, since the single most important qualification a job-seeker can boast of, when going for a position in such frivolous and irrelevant institutions as movie studios, government bureaucracies, and major universities, is ethnic and racial background—diversity, in other words—applicants have to find an ethnicity they can claim without eliciting laughter.

Now, speaking as someone who, if family lore is to be believed, has more than a hint of Tabasco in his background, I get the problem. Personally, I'm way too ruddy and freckly to pull off “Hispanic mix” in a racial-background questionnaire—I usually decline to fill these out, by the way—despite being able to back it up, should it come to that. But I am who I am, and there's some Mexican in the family tree, and though good taste—and pink skin—have kept me from using it to my advantage, I'm rethinking that.

Elizabeth Warren, who is, if possible, even whiter than I am, is running against Scott Brown for the Massachusetts Senate seat. She's also, according to her, about 1/32 Cherokee Indian, which is something she's been dining out on for years. Listed in faculty directories as a minority, fulfilling diversity quotas, getting invited to lunches—her Native American heritage has been a pretty good career move. Even at 1/32 Cherokee—which by my shaky math means that one of her great-great-grandparents was a feather-wearer—she hits the right diversity notes.

She wouldn't pass muster with a television network's HR-defined meaning of the word—they operate, you'll recall, on the basis of a visual inspection—but then, universities are a lot looser about that stuff. A gal shows up with blond hair and blue eyes claiming to be Cherokee, and Harvard Law School says, “Me smoke-up peace pipe.”

(I can make jokes like that. I'm Hispanic.)

In fact, claiming Cherokee heritage is a pretty perfect way to go for an enterprising academic. In the first place, there is no spot more like an Indian reservation than a college campus, with its subsidized lifestyle, taxpayer support, separate-seeming nationhood, and heavy alcohol use. And more important, at a ratio of one part Cherokee to 31 parts Scot (or whatever), you're getting a terrific diversity bang for a low-risk Anglo-Saxon buck. And as long as no one ever matches the name of Elizabeth Warren, Cherokee, with a photo of Elizabeth Warren, she's all set.

But someone did. And now she's in trouble. Because Massachusetts voters—who, remember, tend to vote pretty liberal—didn't like the idea of an Obama-administration bureaucrat, a white-skinned Harvard Law professor, a person who by all measures and metrics is a powerful member of the ruling American establishment, claiming some kind of special protected status.

They don't like the multiple—and feckless—explanations coming out of the Warren campaign. That she just wanted to make friends and get invited to “lunches.” That she's from Oklahoma, where everybody is part Injun. That it didn't count anyway. And when it was pointed out that it did count, at least to Harvard, that she's a proud Cherokee with cookbook entries to prove it. None of that seemed plausible. All of it seemed laughable.

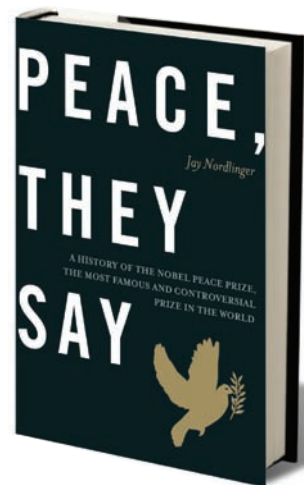
Put it this way: If Elizabeth Warren is Native American, then I'm Cantinflas.

(And I can make jokes like that.)

When liberalism collapses—and it will, won't it?—it may not be because we conservatives out-argued it. It may not be because of the sum-total columns of our rational, reasoned dissent. We may not persuade a single lefty that we're right.

What may happen—and what's happening, I think, in Massachusetts—is that it will descend into farce. Liberalism may slip on its own banana peel. Let's all stay out of the way when it does. **NR**

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Angela Merkel crosses the Camp David grounds with her G8 counterparts, May 19, 2012.

Four Kinds of Dreadful

On the possible outcomes of the Greek debt crisis

BY JOHN O'SULLIVAN

ONE day before the G8 summit, there was a “leak” from the office of German chancellor Angela Merkel that revealed some of the thinking behind how Germany wants to resolve the long-running euro crisis. The leak was that Chancellor Merkel would ask the Greek prime minister to hold a referendum on Greece’s membership in the euro zone at the same time as the June 17 Greek election. But because it was immediately and embarrassingly denied, it also revealed that the German government was increasingly desperate as it juggled solutions to the euro/Greek crisis. You could follow the thought processes that led to the leak and later to its retraction.

Before the leak:

Chancellor, what we want is for the Greeks to stay within the euro and also to meet their obligations to repay debt and reform their economy. The Greeks hope to avoid meeting their obligations, natürlich, but polls show that 80 percent of them, more than ever, would choose to remain in the euro. So let us tell them to hold a referendum on the euro. If it passes, any new govern-

ment, however Greek, will not be able to use the threat of exiting from the euro in order to blackmail us into giving it more money. We will have tied their hands. And we will have kept the euro zone virgo intacta. A master stroke, nein?

After the leak:

Unfortunately, Chancellor, there are some unforeseen difficulties with our brilliant plan to hold a Greek referendum on the euro. First, you may recall that we actually dismissed the last-but-two Greek prime ministers for suggesting exactly the same referendum. Second, our colleagues in Brussels remind us that we dislike referendums in general because they have a way of not giving the required answer. And, third, a referendum would tie our hands only slightly less than those of the Greeks. It is, of course, unthinkable that Greece should leave the euro. At the present moment. But the costs of keeping them in might ultimately become so high that a “Grexit”—that is what the frivolous Anglo-Saxons call the Greeks’ returning to the drachma—might well become thinkable.

Fortunately, Chancellor, all of these difficulties can be easily

resolved by one single action: deny the leak. A master stroke, nein?

These monologues are, of course, a fancy; but they are not fanciful. They reflect the real and increasingly divided thinking of German political elites since the construction of the euro—especially since Greece was admitted into the single currency despite elite nervousness and popular opposition, and more especially since Greece’s finances began to resemble a black hole sucking the wealth of Europe, including Germany’s, into itself and nothingness.

Germany is not the only begetter of the euro; the French were always keener on it, and Germany was never united behind it. Ordinary Germans never wanted to lose their beloved D-mark, the symbol of their postwar recovery and respect; German economists and bankers always had a healthy complement that was skeptical of a single currency on the technical grounds outlined below; only the politicians—all the politicians—saw its adoption (or, rather, the abandonment of the D-mark) as the decisive sacrifice Germany needed to make to seal its integration into a united, democratic European Union. Their reasons were always more political than economic, more concerned with binding European nations together than with basing the new currency on an “optimal currency area.” As the euro gradually took shape, economic decisions that had been made for political motives gradually undermined the new currency. But because the euro was valued above and beyond economics, its practical difficulties could never be honestly faced by the politicians. It became a fetish for Germany’s political elites. It had to be defended at all costs—and the costs keep on mounting.

The history of the euro, if it were a horror movie, would be called something like “The Revenge of the Fetish.” Its original design was flawed because it sought to include too many countries, with too-diverse economic characters and histories, too-different levels of unemployment, and so on. It was impossible to set a single interest rate that would be suitable for all these countries at the same time. Above all, the euro zone did not include the three things needed to reconcile these differences in a practical way: downward flexibility of nominal wages; transnational labor mobility; and transnational monetary transfers. Union-heavy societies such as France would not tolerate wage reductions. Labor mobility between, say, Portugal and Poland was obstructed by the kind of cultural and linguistic differences that do not exist between Texas and Massachusetts. And Germany, as the EU’s banker of last resort, was strongly opposed to the ramping up of monetary transfers from rich to poor nations and regions. Unfortunately for the German argument, monetary transfers are the omission most easily repaired.

Such gaping holes in the currency’s defensive structure were likely to produce crises sooner rather than later. Indeed, one theory going the rounds was that the currency’s strongest advocates *wanted* a crisis. A former Brussels official who resigned in protest, Bernard Connolly, wrote in *NATIONAL REVIEW* as early as 1997 that his senior colleagues knew a single currency required a single budget, a single treasury, and a single fiscal policy in order to work efficiently. Only in a crisis, however, would governments be prepared to surrender the sovereignty needed to establish such central controlling mechanisms. Certainly one curiosity of the early history of the

euro is the relative ease with which the Stability and Growth Pact—intended to enforce fiscal responsibility at the national level—was sidelined and eventually abandoned by France and Germany as well as smaller countries with little or no protest from Brussels. That removed one roadblock on the way to the euro—a roadblock that, as it happens, explains why some classical-liberal economists supported a single currency. They saw it as potentially a necessary restraint on the spending proclivities of Europe’s social-democratic governments. Yet when it was wanted, it suddenly wasn’t there.

Now we come to a further absurdity. Having constructed a new international currency covering 17 nations in the knowledge (and arguably with the intention) that it would eventually fail, provoke a massive crisis, and require the establishment of a full-blown European political union with a single treasury, central bank, and common budgetary system, the governments and officials responsible made no preparations for the time when that happened. They acted on the logic advanced by Amanda, and immediately demolished by Elyot, in Noël Coward’s *Private Lives*:

AMANDA: We should have to trust to the inspiration of the moment.

ELYOT: It would be a moment completely devoid of inspiration.

And so it has proved. Faced with the intended result of their handiwork—albeit a far more severe and intractable crisis than they had bargained for—Europe’s politicians and central bankers have embarked on a series of rescue packages designed to prop up banks, keep vulnerable southern-European countries inside the euro, and help them begin the long process of paying off their mountainous debts. None of the packages has been large enough to solve the problem. The markets have been appeased but not defeated. What began as a Greek crisis has since spread to Portugal, Ireland, Spain, and . . . well, the heat could be felt in France. A few months after every settlement, the crisis has resumed at a faster pace and with higher stakes. And despite an escalating rhetoric of crisis, European governments and central banks seem in the grip of a curious passivity. They meet, discuss, reiterate previous assurances, and, after an EU summit or G8 meeting ends, resume their drift towards disaster, because every single one of the practical solutions to the crisis has dreadful consequences, and some have unimaginable ones.

CONSIDER the Greek crisis in isolation. It combines two questions: Should Greece leave or stay in the euro, and should Greece default or pay its debts?

In reality, Greece has already defaulted on its debts in a grand “haircut” of private investors that scalped more than 50 percent of their loans. This was orchestrated by EU finance ministers and the European Central Bank, and justified as a full settlement that would finally resolve the crisis. It manifestly did not resolve the crisis, but it will likely ensure that any vulnerable European economies will be able to borrow money only at punitive rates for some time ahead. That was the reason the ECB initially resisted this robbery. When it finally gave way, it felt guilty about surrendering to anti-banker populism and pressure from governments, and disguised the default as a civilized restructuring. But a default had occurred all the same.

References below to defaults should therefore be read as meaning additional or future defaults by Greece.

That said, there are four possible options to choose from.

First, Greece could both leave the euro and repudiate its international debts on some such grounds as that the loans were “predatory” or that democracy must wrest back power from the markets. If the rhetoric of the radical European Left is taken seriously, something like that is what they favor. Their Greek representative is Alexis Tsipras, leader of the Radical Left Coalition, whom many expect to be prime minister after the June 17 election. Other parties are uniting against him, however, and he should not be difficult to defeat if the Greeks are guided by anything close to rational self-interest. A policy of leaving the euro and repudiating debt would mean cutting Greece off simultaneously from private-sector investment and from such loans, subsidies, and grants as are available from international agencies and European governments. Argentina is sometimes cited as a successful example of this strategy. But Argentina was initially the undeserving beneficiary of a raw-material boom. It is now seeking additional resources by expropriating foreign companies. Lacking Argentina’s raw materials, Greece would hit the buffers far earlier—and therefore both its public and its private sectors would face austerity on a far greater scale than at present. It might be prudent, however, to blunt Mr. Tsipras’s complaints preemptively by pointing out that markets enjoy no power over countries that don’t want to borrow their money or that pay investors a reasonable rate of return. Their sole power—that of refusal to lend—is effective only against those seeking to rob them.

The second option is for Greece to default while remaining inside the euro. That seems possible in principle—just as California could default within the “dollar zone.” But what benefit would anyone gain from it? As under Option 1, neither markets nor official European bodies would then lend Greece money. Yet the country would be committed to repaying its debts in expensive euros. Again as under Option 1, it would have to impose a still more savage austerity than the current one in order to finance quite crushing debt repayments. Unless Greeks suddenly become Prussians, this is simply an impractical solution. Worse is that if the Greeks were to be bailed out yet again, it would encourage the other vulnerable countries to allow their public finances to run riot.

The third option is that Greece would leave the euro but credibly promise to pay its debts. Those debts would have to be redenominated, admittedly. The whole point of Greece’s leaving the euro would be to adopt a new Greek drachma at a value of, say, half that of the euro. In theory (and in the immediate term) switching to a cheaper currency would both devalue the total of Greek indebtedness and increase the country’s ability to pay by stimulating exports and tourism. It would not be that simple, of course. Very likely the euro-zone countries and the ECB would scale greatly back any financial assistance to Greece, for the bank’s main purpose so far has been to keep Greece within the euro. But everyone has an interest in solving the Greek problem with as little instability as possible. So Europe might well find it useful to grease the “Grexit” with a little short-term assistance. And if the economy began an early recovery—some economists suggest that it might happen in 18 months—the drachma would presumably rise accordingly, so that the bondholders would get back more of their money than now seems likely. There are horrendous transitional difficulties attached to this solution. Many

West European banks have huge Greek loans on their books that would have to be sharply devalued. But this option does offer at least hope of recovery long term. Its advocates tend to stress the rapid recovery of the British pound and economy after Britain’s exit from the Exchange Rate Mechanism.

The fourth and final option is the status quo: Greece would remain inside the euro and commit to full repayment of its loans, which would naturally be in euros. The status quo is always an option; just as there is always a Plan B. As it has developed over the last two years, however, the fourth option seems to rest on an indefinite transfer of resources from northern Europe (Germany, Holland, Belgium, the Baltic states) to southern Europe (Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Italy). This resource transfer is necessary to enable the latter to overcome the crucial obstacle that within the euro they are at an effective exchange-rate disadvantage of about one-third to northern Europe. Germany can therefore sell cheaply in their countries (and, not coincidentally, in third-country markets) while their own goods are overpriced once they travel north. How can southern-European countries raise the export surpluses necessary to pay their outstanding debts? The answer is that they can’t; they therefore face an endless struggle through the valley of the shadow of austerity.

In the real world the choice seems to lie between Options 3 and 4. Most free-market economists and the private sector would probably choose Option 3, because it seems to offer a greater and quicker prospect of economic recovery. Most governments favor Option 4 because it seems to include a greater chance of persuading the Germans to continue sending money—and indeed to send more money—to them and their neighbors.

It is this distinction that explains why the French president, Greek political parties, and left-wing organizations throughout Europe have suddenly begun discussing an end to “austerity” and a beginning of “growth.” It is starting to look as if the high-water mark of euro austerity was reached in December 2011 when Angela Merkel persuaded 24 other European countries to support the Treaty on Stability, Coordination, and Governance, which amounts, in effect, to a rerun of the Stability and Growth Pact with the implied codicil “And this time we really mean it.” Europe now seems to be moving away from that and towards a more indulgent “growth” policy. But since most euro countries have no money, a question arises as to who will pay for the return to growth and stimulus. The implied benefactor of last resort is Germany again.

Since the G8 meeting European leaders such as Italian premier Mario Monti and European Commission president José Manuel Barroso have been talking up the prospect of something called “project bonds” to replace the proposal for “euro bonds” that Germany had made clear it would resist. “Project bonds” differ from euro bonds in some particulars, but they are the same in two important ways: They are a mechanism for moving towards the mutualization (collectivization) of national debt obligations, and an attempt to lure the Germans into dipping their toes into this concept. And as Mrs. Merkel looks at the way the euro debate is developing, she must be wondering how best to restrain the demands upon Germany’s purse strings and restore some kind of punishment for those who continue to use the euro as a way of getting more money from Berlin.

Maybe it is to throw someone out of the euro *pour encourager les autres*.

NR

MONETARY REGIME CHANGE

An old order fails

**BY DAVID BECKWORTH
& RAMESH PONNURU**

TWICE in the last century, economic turmoil revealed the failure of a monetary regime and forced the West to abandon it for another. During the Great Depression of the 1930s one country after another abandoned the gold standard—a decision vindicated when they recovered in the same order. The inflation of the late 1960s and 1970s, meanwhile, persuaded most of the developed world’s central bankers to quit trying to “fine-tune” the real growth rate of the economy and instead concentrate on achieving price stability.

It is once again time for regime change. The crisis in Europe and our stagnation at home both have primarily monetary causes, and a solution will require a new approach to monetary policy that learns from both the successes and the failures of the past.

It’s all but universally accepted that the interwar gold standard made the Great Depression worse. When the French government hoarded gold, its value increased. So in countries that defined their currencies in terms of gold, all other prices, including wages, had to drop. Labor markets tend to react badly to such downward price pressure, resulting in high unemployment and reduced output. A vicious circle then sets in: The economic pain calls into question the government’s commitment to staying on the gold standard, which encourages gold hoarding, which in turn raises the value of gold further and thus makes the pain worse. Only an actual departure from the gold standard made it possible to exit the trap.

Central banks largely avoided deflation in the following decades. As time passed, however, they increasingly erred in the opposite direction, attempting to increase economic growth through monetary stimulus. The high inflation of the 1970s had two causes. The lesser cause was a set of negative supply shocks. Rising oil prices reduced Westerners’ standard of living and raised price levels generally: regrettable outcomes, but not ones that central banks can do anything sensible to prevent. The more important cause, however, was overly loose monetary policy.

After both of these episodes, policymakers in most developed countries drew the lesson that both high inflation and

deflation should be avoided. The typical approach central banks adopted was to manipulate interest rates in a way that would keep inflation at a low and stable level. Some nations even imposed the goal of low and stable inflation on their central banks by statute—although not the United States, which asks its Fed to seek both full employment and stable prices. But few countries adopted a rigid inflation target, preferring instead a “flexible” one that allowed central banks, for example, to risk a bit more inflation as they fought recessions.

For more than two decades flexible inflation targeting seemed to work pretty well, but its flaws have of late become more apparent. It can yield inappropriate responses to supply shocks because monetary authorities may fail to distinguish them from loose money. Thus the Federal Reserve at the height of the financial crisis in September 2008 refrained from cutting interest rates, and the European Central Bank in the midst of the euro-zone crisis in 2011 actually raised interest rates twice, in response to rising commodity prices.

Flexibility also means, in practice, unpredictability, undermining the crucial purpose of a sound monetary policy: making it easier for economic actors to make and coordinate their plans. For example, for people to make long-term plans, central banks should make up for undershooting the inflation target in one year by overshooting it in another, and vice versa. The goal should be to make the price level of ten years from now as predictable as possible. Perhaps because inflation is unpopular, however, central banks have been unwilling to raise their inflation targets to make up for the deflation and disinflation that have occurred over the past few years.

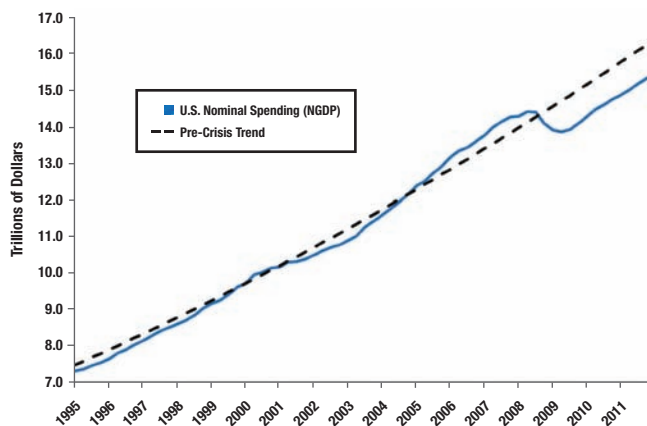
Making matters worse is that the gradual decline in the economy’s trend rate of growth, combined with the decline in inflation, made nominal interest rates very low, especially in recessions. Given that central banks have grown accustomed to running monetary policy by manipulating interest rates, this situation left them in a bind. Their instinctive response to a slump was to try to reduce interest rates—but they had no room to do so. Thus the ad hoc resort to unorthodox policies such as quantitative easing.

The Fed’s initial response to the recession that began in 2007 and deepened in 2008 was to tighten money. It did so actively by paying banks interest on reserves at a rate higher than they could get from alternative safe investments such as U.S. Treasury securities. The banks, therefore, were incentivized to hold money instead of investing it. The Fed passively tightened by failing to offset the sharp drop in the total number of dollars being spent in the economy. When this number—called nominal spending—drops, it is because the demand to hold money increases or the supply of money decreases. By mid-2008 both forces were at work. Households and firms were holding more money and spending less at the same time financial firms were creating fewer assets that serve as money. When the number of dollars spent falls, so of course must the number of dollars made (nominal income). Either prices have to fall, the real economy has to shrink, or both. We got some of both. The Fed has not done nearly enough since then to correct its mistake.

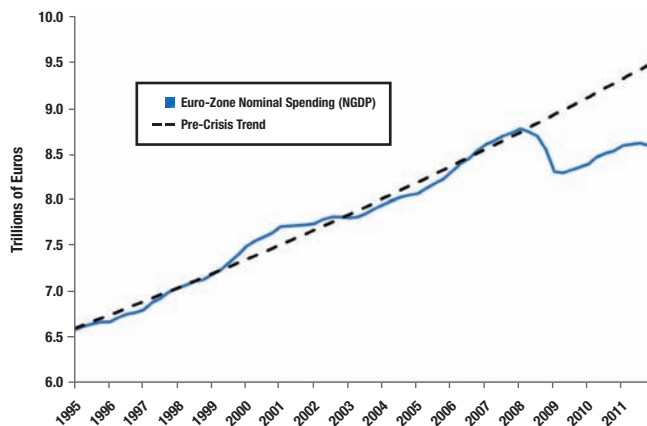
The Bank of England and the European Central Bank have also been much too tight. (The Bank of Japan has been too tight for a generation.) Americans, especially American con-

Mr. Beckworth, formerly an economist at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, is an assistant professor of economics at Western Kentucky University. Mr. Ponnuru is a senior editor of NATIONAL REVIEW.

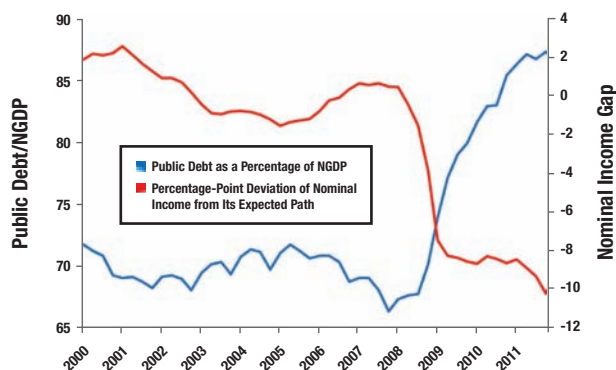
Monetary Policy Is Tight In the U.S.



Monetary Policy Is Tight In the Euro Zone



Euro-Zone Crisis Is a Nominal-Income Crisis



servatives, tend to think of Europe’s current crisis as the result of overspending welfare states. And these states would indeed be better off with lower spending levels and less regulated labor markets. But many of the nations swept up in the euro-zone crisis, such as Spain and France, had spending and tax revenues well aligned before it hit. The true problem has again been monetary. Europe has for a decade had a monetary policy well suited to the circumstances of Germany but not to those of the rest of the euro zone and especially its periphery. Nominal income in Germany has stayed on a fairly steady trend line. In the periphery, however, it first went way up and then crashed. For the euro zone as a whole, nominal spending has fallen far below its previous trend—and has been continuing to fall farther away from it. Monetary policy therefore remains very tight in the euro zone overall.

One effect of that drop-off, in Europe and in the U.S., has been to make debt burdens more onerous. Most American mortgages, for example, are made in nominal terms. For a generation before the crisis, those debt contracts were made against a background of stable growth of nominal income: Every year the economy, in dollar terms, grew about 5 percent. When nominal income abruptly fell off that trend, debt loads suddenly became much heavier than people had expected. (Contracting new debts also became much riskier.)

In Europe, the drop-off in nominal income compared with trend made for a sharp and simultaneous increase in the ratio of debt to nominal income. Yet the European Central Bank has been unwilling to let expected inflation rise above its 2 percent target, even to make up for the deflationary crash. “The credibility of the ECB,” its president, Mario Draghi, said recently, “is one of the few things left.” The remark was reminiscent of Herbert Hoover’s boast, during his 1932 reelection campaign, of having defended the dollar value of gold.

What we now have is an inappropriately tight monetary policy that afflicts much of the globe. It is by no means clear that the Federal Reserve will act to keep nominal spending on even its current, anemic trend if the euro-zone crisis sets off another velocity-reducing panic. Nor is it clear that the Fed will offset the effect of the automatic tax increases and spending cuts scheduled to take effect at the start of next year.

WHAT is needed, then, is a new monetary-policy regime that moves nominal spending back toward its pre-crisis trend and keeps its future growth stable.

Doing so would promote a faster recovery, prevent the Fed and the ECB from mistakenly responding to supply shocks, and firmly anchor long-run inflation expectations. A nominal-spending-level target is just such a regime.

Under this rule, central banks would be required to try to keep nominal spending growing at a certain rate and to correct for past failures to hit the target. In the United States, it would be reasonable to set that growth rate at 5 percent a year, in keeping with the pattern of the economically stable quarter century prior to the crisis. If the real economy grows by 3 percent a year on average, as it has done in recent decades, the rule would lead to an average inflation rate of 2 percent per year. As noted earlier, however, nominal spending is currently far below the pre-crisis trend. So the Fed would for some

time have to accommodate nominal-income growth above 5 percent annually to shrink the gap.

The Fed could do this by committing to buy up as many securities as needed to hit its target. Unlike previous large-scale asset purchases by the Fed, this would be a *conditional* purchase tied to an explicit target. It therefore would be more effective in guiding market expectations and, in turn, less costly for the Fed. If Fed chairman Ben Bernanke announced that the Fed was going to act to bring nominal spending back to the pre-crisis trend, it would send shock waves through the markets.

Portfolios would automatically adjust toward riskier assets in anticipation of the Fed action. This would create expectations of higher asset prices, as would expectations of higher nominal-income growth. As a result, the demand for money would fall and financial firms would start making more money assets. Current nominal spending would quickly respond to these developments, helping the Fed hit the target and thus reducing the need for the Fed to purchase more assets. The Fed's balance sheet, therefore, would not have to expand as rapidly as it has over the past few years. Australia provides a useful example of how markets do the heavy lifting under a sound monetary policy. It has kept nominal income rising—it has avoided recession for 20 years—but it

nominal income would instead simply keep total current-dollar spending stable and allow the supply shock to work itself out. In an important sense it would, as it should, take no notice of it.

Alternatively, imagine that a new technology significantly increased the speed of computers. This one-time productivity-enhancing supply shock might temporarily result in 5 percent real economic growth and 0 percent inflation under our rule. A 2 percent inflation target would again have a perverse consequence; this time it would require a potentially destabilizing surge in nominal spending to raise inflation. Better to ignore the supply shock and allow the temporary disinflation than to have a boom in spending.

A final virtue of the rule is that it would anchor long-run inflation expectations. If it were widely known that current-dollar spending would be kept on a stable long-run path, with corrections for short-term deviations, long-run inflation expectations should be stable as well. There is therefore no need to worry that moving closer to the pre-crisis trend of nominal spending would yield 1970s-type inflation.

THE West's previous monetary regimes succeeded to the extent they approximated a rule stabilizing the growth of nominal income and failed to the extent they did

If central banks adopted an explicit rule for the growth of nominal income, they could pocket the gains we have made in monetary practice while fixing some serious remaining flaws.

has a much smaller monetary base (compared with the size of its economy) than we do.

Two other benefits could be expected. First, the pickup in economic activity would increase the demand for credit by households and firms. This increased demand, in turn, would cause interest rates to rise, helping savers. (The fact that interest rates are currently so low is a testament to the failure of flexible inflation targeting to restore robust economic growth.) Second, a strong increase in nominal spending would eliminate any arguments for further fiscal stimulus. Moreover, it would allow for meaningful budget cuts without jeopardizing the economic recovery. To the extent spending cuts reduced nominal income, the central bank could act to keep it on trend. Indeed, market expectations that the trend would continue would do most of the work automatically. Fiscal austerity would become far easier to implement.

A nominal-spending-level target would also help central bankers avoid the temptation to respond to supply shocks. Consider, for example, a super virus that temporarily shut down many computer systems. Under the monetary-policy rule, this negative supply shock might temporarily result in 0 percent real economic growth and 5 percent inflation. Sticking with an inflation target of 2 percent would require a tightening of monetary policy that would further constrict an already weakened economy. A central bank that was targeting

not. The interwar gold standard contributed to a disastrous collapse of nominal income. The inflationist policies of the 1960s and 1970s made it grow at an unpredictably accelerating rate. For many years flexible inflation targeting came close to a nominal-income rule. Since today's crisis began, it has done better than the interwar gold standard—but not nearly well enough.

If central banks adopted an explicit rule for the growth of nominal income, with the proviso that they would correct for short-term departures from the target, they could pocket the gains we have made in monetary practice while fixing some serious remaining flaws. The difficulty of using interest rates as an instrument at the zero bound, the inability to restabilize long-term expectations after a deviation, and the inappropriate responses to supply shocks would all cease to be problems. The Fed's dual mandate would be obeyed, but its flexibility would be constrained by a rule and thus its behavior made predictable.

Adopting a nominal-income rule would not, of course, solve all the structural problems that beset modern economies. The reform of entitlements, tax codes, and labor laws would all remain pressing concerns in many countries, and failure to reform them would undermine long-term prospects for real growth. But monetary policy would do what only it can do to promote macroeconomic stability. Without that stability no set of reforms is likely to succeed, on either side of the Atlantic.

NR

Scandal Street

Profit and loss vs. crime and punishment in the world of high finance

BY KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON

THESE are two kinds of scandal on Wall Street: making money and losing money. Senator Carl Levin (D., Mich.) cited “record profits from 2004 to 2007” in explaining his investigation of Moody’s and Standard and Poor’s, and then in May cited losses at JPMorgan in calling for a swift regulatory response. President Barack Obama cites “record profits” for energy companies as constituting a case for federal action, and then cites losses at banks as justification for federal investigations. Perhaps there is a sweet spot in there somewhere, say a flat, reliable 10 percent return year after year—like Bernie Madoff’s.

The scandal of profit is easy enough to understand, if one can but appreciate the fact that Washington and Wall Street are complementary antechambers of Hell—specifically, the fourth circle of Dante’s inferno, in which the avaricious and the profligate, being a matched pair, spend eternity punishing one another:

As does the wave there upon Charybdis,
That breaks itself on that which it encounters,
So here the souls must dance their roundelay.

Here saw I people, more than elsewhere, many,
On one side and the other, with terrible howls,
Rolling weights forward by force of their chests.

They clashed together, and then at that point
Each one turned backward, rolling retrograde,
Crying, “Why do you hoard?” and, “Why do you squander?”

Thus they returned along the lurid circle
On either hand unto the opposite point,
Shouting their shameful curses evermore.

Avarice and envy are deadly sins, always a good starting point in the analysis of the relationship between high finance and low politics. Profit will always scandalize politicians, because scandal provides a pretext for seizing other people’s wealth, which is what politics in a modern democracy is all about.

The scandal of loss is a more modern phenomenon, probably with its origin in the stock-market crash of 1929. Like subsequent bubbles, the run-up in stock prices in the 1920s is an example of an unalterable universal law: The hotter the market, the dumber the new entrant. This holds true of both professional investors and amateurs. Investors in the 1920s were borrowing more money than they could afford to lose in order to invest in a market that they believed, against every known economic fact in human experience, could only move in one direction: up. They were analogous to the turn-of-the-century idiots buying \$500,000 houses on \$80,000 incomes with nothing down and negligible or negative net worths, who were only marginally more foolish than the fools

who were lending them the money. We saw the same thing in the early 1990s with both institutional and individual investors who bet basically every farthing they had to their names on derivatives they did not understand in the slightest, or a few years later with the ones who dumped their kids’ college funds into such can’t-lose propositions as CDNow and Pets.Com, a firm that went from the NASDAQ to the outer darkness in 268 days, which is more or less what happens when you have a multi-million-dollar advertising budget and no profits. More than a few of the investors who survived the dot-com crash went big into real estate in the subsequent years, convinced, once again, that they had found a sure thing, which they had: a sure loser. In every bull run, there are a million “my brother-in-law made 20 percent last year” investment strategies.

THE sob stories are the worst part of it. In 2010, *Business Week* very sympathetically related the tale of one Leona Miller, a retired beautician in San Diego who sank twenty grand into a derivatives position, which the magazine describes thus: “Miller had bought a structured note—a bond combined with a derivative. In her case, it was a reverse-convertible note with a knock-in put option tied to Merck stock. The option meant the security could offer a relatively high interest rate. It also added risk, as Miller learned too late. A decline in the drug-maker’s shares, to below 32 from 40 when Miller bought the notes, triggered the put option. That allowed the note’s issuer, the Oslo-based export-credit agency Eksportfinans, to pay Miller off with Merck shares, then trading at 26.” Other than not quite understanding the meaning of “derivative,” “structured note,” “reverse-convertible,” “knock-in,” “put,” or “option,” she was unimpeachable in the due-diligence department. Why would she direct her investment manager to put what was presumably a good-sized chunk of her life’s savings into such an exotic product? “I just wanted him to make some money for me, like anybody else,” she said. “I still don’t understand too much about it.” Also, Merck manufactured one of the prescription drugs Ms. Miller took, so there’s that.

There is an explanation, it turns out, and that explanation is stupidity compounded by greed. That reverse-convertible, knock-in-put, Merck-stock-derivative monstrosity came with an interest rate of 9 percent, which is a heck of a lot better than Treasuries or CDs have been doing lately. It also came with the possibility of a meltdown. We have been here before: In the 1980s, a fair number of individual investors and professionals who should have known better took a hit on junk bonds, and the papers were full of their tales of woe, and a few years later the same thing happened with derivatives. And then a decade later 10 million liars committed bank fraud in order to get loans to buy houses they could not afford, and these dishonest, greedy little graspers are held up as a collective subject of public sympathy. But they were not the victims of unscrupulous mortgage lenders—they were their co-conspirators. A great many of Mr. Madoff’s “investors” were sophisticated financial players who ought to have taken one look at the flat, 45-degree line describing his annual returns and known that something was amiss—but there were above-market returns to be had. These clowns, too, should be regarded as possible criminal associates rather than as victims.

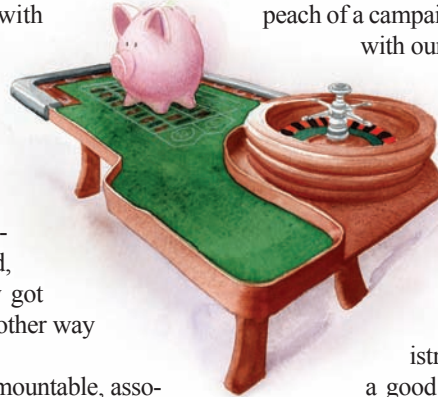
Instruments such as derivatives and junk bonds serve a useful purpose, but that purpose is not to dominate the retirement nest eggs of retired beauticians. Take the 1980s junk-bond roller coast-

er, for example. Despite all of the angst and wailing over Michael Milken, corporate raiders, and the alleged decade of greed, junk-bond investors did pretty well: From 1981 to 1991, junk bonds returned 14.1 percent, vs. 12.9 for the Dow. But it was a pretty crazy ride, and the only investors who were able to weather the storm had relatively large and sophisticated portfolios with a significant diversification of risk—i.e., they were the kinds of investors who had any business investing in junk bonds in the first place. Investors working from the “my brother-in-law” strategy, unable to deal with the volatility of the junk-bond market, got themselves wiped out. The same was true in the derivatives fiasco of the 1990s, when the local government of Orange County, Calif. (to take one famous example), got greedy and stupid and put way too much into exotic instruments it did not need and did not understand, simply to chase returns. (Orange County got bailed out by its banker; now we do it the other way around.)

There are two problems, probably insurmountable, associated with the scandal of loss. One is that politicians’ self-interest causes them to respond to losses in the wrong way; the second is that Washington is not very good at telling a bad investment from a crime.

Democratic institutions have strong incentives to flatter the feelings of the ignorant and greedy among us, who are a large voting constituency. For this reason, Congress and the regulatory agencies treat the inevitable parting of fools and their money as a deficiency in the marketplace. When Granny puts all of her money into baht-denominated commodity swaptions and then loses it, the fault cannot possibly be hers: Surely there is something wrong with the market, surely those marginally employed and penniless borrowers were tricked into thinking they could afford half-million-dollar suburban spreads, surely companies with no profits or assets would have been *outstanding* investments if only we’d had the right regulations, etc., and we have to figure out a way to give people their money back. But when JPMorgan makes a bone-headed sort-of-a-hedge-sort-of-not investment and takes a \$5 billion (and counting) lump, obviously JPMorgan is at fault, and it’s a national scandal.

THAT populist impulse actually inhibits useful financial regulation. The Dodd-Frank financial-reform package unleashed a swarm of regulatory fleas to nibble at pin-striped ankles on behalf of dozens of popular interest groups, but for all of the micromanaging of bank-card fees, point-of-sale disclosures, and executive-compensation practices, it did not impose any regulations that would address the system-risk problems that were made apparent in 2008–09. Evidence of that fact is undeniable: The too-big-to-fail banks are bigger than ever, as Bloomberg reports: “Five banks—JPMorgan Chase & Co. (JPM), Bank of America Corp., Citigroup Inc., Wells Fargo & Co., and Goldman Sachs Group Inc.—held \$8.5 trillion in assets at the end of 2011, equal to 56 percent of the U.S. economy, according to the Federal Reserve. Five years earlier, before the financial crisis, the largest banks’ assets amounted to 43 percent of U.S. output. The Big Five today are about twice as large as they were a decade ago relative



to the economy, sparking concern that trouble at a major bank would rock the financial system and force the government to step in as it did during the 2008 crunch.” Our “too big to fail” reforms addressed everything but banks’ being too big to fail. One of the problems is that more robust systemic reforms, such as higher capital requirements and stronger leverage-ratio rules, are impossible to explain to voters between episodes of *Cake Boss* and do not have any broad natural constituency. But tell Americans that you’ll cap ATM withdrawal fees at \$1 and you’ll have yourself a peach of a campaign issue. Never mind that that has nothing to do with our recent financial turmoil.

JPMorgan’s recent unexpected loss has commanded official Washington’s attention precisely because official Washington is cognizant of its own failure to enact the right kind of Wall Street reform, and one of its worst fears is that voters will catch on to that fact. The Obama administration in particular must be on tenterhooks: It would not take a 2008–09 repeat to reveal that the administration has done very little to curtail systemic risk; a good bear market probably would accomplish that and, given that the stock market has roughly doubled over the past three years and may be due for a correction, everybody’s a little jumpy.

IF things go south in the markets, you can expect the Inquisition. The Obama administration and its Justice Department have managed to conduct not one serious investigation into the events of 2008–09, but a relatively small loss at JPMorgan suddenly is all over the federal radar. Financial disruptions rarely are the consequence of criminal wrongdoing, though they often are an occasion for it—Wall Street, like any street, has its share of criminals, and there is nothing like the impending loss of wealth and livelihood to bring out the criminal in us all. But the political class tends to conflate malinvestment and malfeasance. Michael Milken-era junk bonds often are blamed for the subsequent savings-and-loan meltdown, but in fact the thrifts already were in trouble, and junk bonds composed a tiny fraction (1 or 2 percent) of their holdings. There was criminal wrongdoing at Enron, but Enron was going to collapse with or without it: The criminality at Enron seems to have been more a response to the company’s collapse than a cause of it. It was bad decisions, not bad morals, that brought down Long-Term Capital Management.

Making normal business losses a scandal—or, worse, a crime—makes no sense. As any small-town loan officer will tell you (and tell you, and tell you), most new businesses fail. As anybody who is paying attention will tell you, nobody—nobody—beats the market in the long term. The problem on Wall Street (which is also the great thing about Wall Street) is that the collection of people futilely trying to beat the market is known as: the market. High finance consists of a great many very smart people with lots of money trying to outsmart one another; big wins and big losses are baked into the capitalist cake. (Somebody made a whole pot of money when JPMorgan lost that \$5 billion, after all.) There are ways to make that work for us as a society, and there are ways to exploit it for political gain. Guess which one is keeping Washington busy.

NR



The Long View

BY ROB LONG

From the
Palo Alto, Calif.,
Craigslist:

MISSED CONNECTION: W4M

Hi! Saw you walking into Caffe del Doge with a messenger bag from Facebook. Do you work there?? So cool!! Can't wait for the IPO next week!! Wondering if you'd like to get together. I'm the gal with the brown eyes who locked them with yours. Thought there was a spark. Was there???? Let's get together and find out!!!

THINGS FOR SALE

Selling futon, old bike, small sofa, and hot plate. Am participating in the Facebook IPO next week and no longer need these things as I'm trading WAY up. Let me know if any of this interests you. Will be selling them FAST.

MISSED CONNECTION: M4W

Hi there! You: sharp, smart, dazzling gal walking into the Curves gym this afternoon. You had on workout clothes and I noticed the Facebook parking permit sticker on your car. I think you're super hot! Me: nice guy looking for a long-term thing. And I have no idea what you're doing at Curves, which is for women with weight trouble, and you are perfect!! Lots of you to LOVE and HOLD ONTO!! Wondering: Are you part of that whole Facebook IPO craziness that's happening next week? (Not that I care. Just curious.) Lemme know if you want to get together for a meal or something. Would love to get to know you. PS: I bake.

THINGS FOR SALE

Selling a 1994 Subaru Outback. Will take any offer. Participating in Facebook IPO in two days and want to get rid of a lot of stuff to make room for my new car. Hit me back.

MISSED CONNECTION: M4W

Hey! That was me going into Caffe del Doge on University. And yes! I am a Facebook employee and totally psyched for the IPO!! Hard to concentrate, really. So cool that you thought I was hot. Don't get that a lot from girls due to my vestigial sixth finger and backwards knee. Spend so much time coding I don't have time for relationships. But hoping to change that once the IPO goes through. Hit me back and tell me what my T-shirt said so I know it's you.

MISSED CONNECTION: W4M

I think that was me you saw going into Curves. But I have to be honest. Since the Facebook IPO was announced, a lot of us Facebookers have been getting a lot of attention from gold diggers. I'm sort of shy and want to know if this is real. So just to be clear: I do work at Facebook, but I just started there. I really won't be participating in the IPO tomorrow. Does that matter? Hit me back.

THINGS TO BUY

Need to buy a futon, a hot plate, a bike, a sofa, and an old Subaru. If you're the guy who bought them from me, please understand that the IPO didn't go as well as we all expected. I'd like to buy the stuff back.

MISSED CONNECTION: W4M

Hello?

MISSED CONNECTION: W4M

Hello? I'm guessing you were only interested in me because of the Facebook IPO. Okay. I get that. But just so you know, I was a recent hire at Facebook, which is why I wasn't part of the IPO. But I came there from Instagram, which they bought from me and six other people for about \$1 billion. Not that it should matter, right?

MISSED CONNECTION: M4W

Hi! I never heard back from you! I'm the guy who locked eyes with you outside Caffe del Doge. Wondering if you're still up for coffee or whatever. You were the brown-eyed beauty. I was the guy with the Facebook messenger bag. You asked about the IPO. Well, it didn't go as well as expected, but I made enough to take care of that sixth finger and the backwards knee. Ready to start a wonderful new relationship. Hit me back!!!

THINGS FOR SALE:

2012 Bentley Convertible. Less than six days old. Less than 40 miles. Drove it from the dealer to my place and then to my Merrill Lynch office to watch the Facebook IPO price. MUST SELL.

MISSED CONNECTION: M4W

Hi there! Saw you going into Patsy's Pizza on University with a Twitter messenger bag. Do you work there?? So cool!! You: fun, tall, great smile. Me: shy, loving, cuddler, looking for something long-term. Any interest in getting together for a slice and some great conversation? Any idea when Twitter is going to have an IPO?? Not that it matters. Just wondering.

To Boldly Politick

IT'S one thing to read that scientists are working on teleportation devices. It's quite another to learn they not only got one to work but beamed something 143 kilometers between two islands off North Africa. Just photons, granted—particles so evanescent and slight they have no more mass than a politician's promise, but they're fast. Imagine the speed it takes for a thought to go from Joe Biden's brain to his mouth, and then double it. *That fast.*

It's not ready for people yet. MIT's Technology Review blog notes that "the quantum information that photons carry cannot survive the battering it gets in passing through the atmosphere. It simply leaks away." Best-case scenario: If you start wearing a plaid jacket, you end up on the other side wearing a solid color. Worst case: Your body is transferred across great distances, but arrives as formless goo. CLEAN UP ON PAD SEVEN. You'd think travel insurance would cover that, but there's probably a clause.

There are practical applications to teleportation: It can be used to establish secure, unhackable communications with orbiting satellites, because there's nothing to hack. It's here, and then it's there. So they hope, anyway; once media companies start using teleportation to transmit pornography or *Game of Thrones* episodes, the geeks will have the system cracked in a week, and through some peculiar quirk of the quarks, pirated episodes will appear on computers before they're even filmed.

Ridiculous? Hah! They laughed at Galileo's assertion of a heliocentric cosmological model, but that was because he usually described it in limerick form. This is just the start. When it comes to quantum physics, we are pygmies in a dark room handling an elephant's trunk, thinking: Pretty sure this is a garden hose. In 200 years people will be carrying around microscopic personal black holes they can use to send objects anywhere in the world. And the Post Office will still be unable to close a small-town branch.

Teleportation has been a science-fiction idea for decades. In the 1958 movie *The Fly*, a scientist perfects a transportation device, but when he tests it on himself a fly gets into the booth, their DNA is mixed up, and the egghead ends up with a huge *Musca domestica* noggin on his shoulders. (He still has his intelligence, or else the second half of the movie would consist entirely of him banging against a window screen.) Since this was the Fifties, some critics probably thought it revealed anxiety over people turning into Communists, albeit unattractive ones with compound eyes. The movie was set in France, so perhaps it's a cautionary tale about unwise economic integration.

A few years later, *Star Trek* made the transporter a pop-culture standard. Kirk and crew stepped on the pad, looking resolute; Scotty pulled a lever, and they dissolved in

sparkles and reappeared on another set on the Desilu backlot. Sometimes it went wrong, and turned Captain Kirk into a woman who was 1/32 Cherokee, or something equally bizarre.

Point is, everyone working on teleportation today saw *Star Trek* as a kid. You know the guy who started the recent experiment whispered "Energize" when he pushed the button. *Star Trek* was the future, yes, but the future has to start sometime.

It has to start somewhere, too. The article at Technology Review notes that the European scientists are locked in a scientific race with Chinese scientists, and concludes: "The contrast with the US couldn't be clearer."

Meaning, we've ceded this terrain to Europe, which still has brainiacs tending the flame of scientific inquiry as the continent shudders and devolves, and to China, which is probably looking for a way to beam unruly protesters to Jupiter. Talk about your Great Leap Forward. Why isn't the U.S. in the race? You can imagine the excuses.

- Relatively low gas prices and provincialism make Americans uninterested in teleportation; years of propagandistic brainwashing from Madison Avenue have rendered us incapable of giving up our cars. Solution: higher gas taxes, which will be used to fund start-ups like BrightBlink or LeapSprint. After the bankruptcy an audit will show that most of the loan went for logo design and espresso machines, and while the prototype successfully transported a particle 200 miles, they used FedEx.

- Lack of a clear national enemy. If this had happened during the Cold War, it would have been another Sputnik-spasm. Hordes of Red Army soldiers can suddenly materialize in Times Square, rudely pointing guns and sneering at the Constitution! The Teleportation Gap would have been an election issue; a crash program would have paid hundreds of men with buzz cuts and black-rimmed glasses to peer at slide rules, figuring out a way to beam a dog 30 miles away. *We can do 25, but after that they end up all inside out.* We'd have beaten the Russians, but the transportation and auto-worker unions would have lobbied to ban the technology, and then Carter would have insisted that the teleportation streams keep it under 55 mph.

- Fictional fantasies are far more fun. We explored the universe with *Star Trek* shows, so the grunt work of building spaceships is a bore. Our contribution to the future will be "Liking" the Chinese moon base on Facebook.

- National greatness has new definitions. A thousand years from now history might note that the United States put a human being on the moon, but that will pale compared with accomplishments like bringing down the out-of-pocket costs on birth control.

Now, if you could figure out a way to teleport fetuses out of the womb without requiring a trip to Planned Parenthood, HHS might be interested. Should be cheap, too. Don't have to worry about where they end up. **NR**

Books, Arts & Manners

Stark Beauties

PETER HITCHENS



The Complete Poems, by Philip Larkin, edited by Archie Burnett (Farrar, Straus, 729 pp., \$40)

It would be a fine cosmic joke if Philip Larkin were eventually remembered as a great religious poet. Yet it may happen. William Blake said of John Milton that he was of the Devil's party without knowing it. There is a far better case for saying that Larkin was of God's party while grumpily insisting otherwise.

Larkin's dogged, shabby Englishness has so far largely limited his appeal to his own country. His verse inhabits a distinct, grey territory of windy railway platforms, drizzle, sad suburbs, sadder cemeteries, and damp raincoats. He is also famous, to the extent that he is famous, for the wrong things. There is that rather silly verse whose opening lines Adrian Mitchell once gloriously parodied as "They tuck you up, your mum and dad, / They read you Peter Rabbit too." And there is the one that is in danger of becoming wholly hackneyed, about sexual intercourse's starting in 1963. Then there are his awful, embarrassing letters, which he rightly never intended for publication.

Larkin is much, much better than that. It seems quite possible to me that he will survive long enough to attain the classic

Mr. Hitchens is the author, most recently, of The Rage against God.

standing of Robert Frost or W. B. Yeats, once he has shaken himself free of his popular reputation and emerged as what he really was: profound, melancholy, and in rebellion against the materialism and modernism of the nasty century in which he lived.

A rather fine and desirable new edition of his verse, edited by Archie Burnett, allows us to see just how serious he was, and for how long. There are of course the complete published poems and genuinely interesting notes on their conceptions and births. There is also a great cloud of lesser work, much of it showing glimmers of the brilliance that was to come. Here too there is death, and there are hospitals. There is plenty of gloom, solitude, and sexual discontent. If you read Larkin on a brilliant sunny morning, you would emerge from his pages expecting to be greeted by a gust of gritty wind, and a slash of sleet.

What might the new reader, unprejudiced by reputation, see in this odd, ugly man's poetry? There is first of all a great deal of gentle kindness, not very well hidden behind a grumpy and unsympathetic public persona. Take "The Mower," in which Larkin tells how he accidentally killed a hedgehog—a small, benevolent, and prickly garden-dwelling animal that features in many English children's stories—in the blades of his motor mower. The notes tell us that he was genuinely distressed by this real incident. One of his girlfriends records that "when it happened, he came in from the garden howling. He'd been feeding it, you see." Later, when he told his secretary about it, "he had tears streaming down his face." The poem itself is no bigger than the dead animal. At the heart of it is the desolate word "unmendably," and at the end the regret-filled conclusion "we should be careful / Of each other, we should be kind / While there is still time."

And why should we? Time for what? There is something more than faintly Biblical about this ending.

Much heavier in the mind is "Ambulances." It is typical of Larkin that he should have made a poem about these disturbing vehicles that "thread / Loud noons of cities" and are "closed like

confessionals." "All streets in time are visited," warns the poet, once more using language that has the urgent, alarming power of Scripture.

For borne away in deadened air
May go the sudden shut of loss
Round something nearly at an end,
And what cohered in it across
The years, the unique random blend
Of families and fashions, there

At last begin to loosen. Far
From the exchange of love to lie
Unreachable inside a room
The traffic parts to let go by
Brings closer what is left to come
And dulls to distance all we are.

In a civilization that seeks to avoid death, these initially comforting vehicles, passing close by with their gigantic electronic howls, are not so reassuring when we think too hard about them. They are the most insistent reminder that life does and must end. Older warnings on this subject are largely confined to ancient churches, where the curious visitor can still sometimes see and be silenced by stone cadavers, macabre sculptures of the deceased as they might be expected to look some weeks after death. Larkin must have encountered them. But the tomb he writes about is quite another sort, the 14th-century earl and countess of Arundel, side by side in cold, worn marble, but her hand tenderly resting in his. Larkin doesn't want to like this. His carefully cultivated, snorting skepticism is plainly holding him back from saying what he wishes to say. The extensive notes on the poem make it clear he was uncomfortable about it. Yet paradoxically, this reluctance makes the conclusion a thousand times more powerful than if it had come from the pen of a cuddly sentimental believer such as John Betjeman:

The stone fidelity
They hardly meant has come to be
Their final blazon, and to prove
Our almost-instinct almost true:
What will survive of us is love.

This great peeling line, wrung out of the author despite himself, comes at the end of a depiction of the passage of time

that is one of the most evocative and moving in the English language, almost as good as music, or perhaps better. As for that “almost” in his text, as we shall see later, Larkin likes to use this barrier against the temptation of belief. But it is not really much of an obstacle.

He had done this before, in “Church Going,” a lament about the decay of England’s hundreds of ancient churches, once again all the more potent for having been written by a man who professes bleak unbelief. We learn from the notes that, before writing it, he had been surprised to see a ruined church in Ireland. “It made a deep impression on me. I had seen plenty of bombed churches, but never one that had simply fallen into disuse, and for a few minutes I felt the decline of Christianity in our century as tangibly as gooseflesh.”

The magazine to which he first sent this poem procrastinated about publishing it, and then lost it for months before eventually finding it. So we too can experience the gooseflesh, while shuddering to think the whole thing might easily have been stuck forever at the back of a forgotten closet. It is rather terrifying, this somber vision of a near future in which the very purpose of the place will have been forgotten, and it will be the resort of “dubious women” who “come / To make their children touch a particular stone; / Pick simples for a cancer.”

His conclusion, once again founded on the dourest pessimism, is surprisingly heartening: “A serious house on serious earth it is, / In whose blent air all our compulsions meet, / Are recognized, and robed as destinies. / And that much never can be obsolete.” This is no rallying call blasted across a stadium by some noisy revivalist. But to the thoughtful mind it is surely a door in the wall, through which the most arid materialist can briefly step and in “tense, musty, unignorable silence” feel an “awkward reverence.”

In this way does poetry ambush not only the hearts of those who read it, but also the hearts of those who write it, with thoughts they never really meant to entertain.

For instance, I have never been able to read the lines “The trees are coming into leaf / Like something almost being said” without hot tears forming behind my eyes. I have no real idea why this

happens (it just happened again) but I know that it does and that these two immensely simple lines contain a mystery of language which I shall never solve in this life. Alas, the notes are for once silent. No history is given, no explanation offered, no relevant letter unearthed. But note, once again, that cautious, reserved, rather bad-tempered “almost.” Philip Larkin knew perfectly well that when the trees come into leaf, something is being said. It was his greatest success that he—almost—put it into words. **NR**

TIME AND THE RIVER

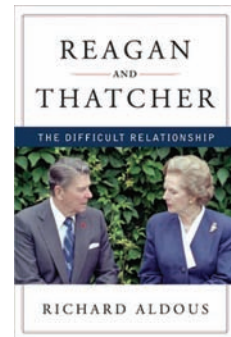
Time and the river have always
 their place in life
 as the essential things
 never to be brought home
 in triumph or in sorrow;
 never lost as they can
 never be possessed;
 and if neglected because
 of the implacable urgency
 of work, illness, tragedy,
 or the foolishness
 of having been forgotten,
 they will again, in their own time,
 loom large, with remembrance,
 and potential.

As remembered, in the savage beauty
 of overwhelming high water, winter’s end,
 the brown god of swift,
 devastating destruction, cleansing
 the land of man’s encroachments and debris,
 soon to sparkle with the splashing ducks,
 the sweet innocence, of spring and summer.
 The seasons portray time and the river
 with an expectancy grown beyond
 their joyous annual return,
 not through some quiet grove,
 nearly still, for hopeful contemplation,
 but through bright, moving waters,
 and their melody of uneven transparencies,
 where the mysteries we have
 come to know, or believe,
 are always, always,
 exceeded by those we desire.

—WILLIAM W. RUNYEON

The Odd Couple

JOHN O’SULLIVAN



Reagan and Thatcher: The Difficult Relationship,
 by Richard Aldous (Norton,
 342 pp., \$27.95)

BOTH the subtitle of Richard Aldous’s book—“The Difficult Relationship”—and its foreword proclaim it to be an exercise in historical revisionism. Justifying this, he quotes Sir Nicholas Henderson, former British ambassador to the U.S., telling left-wing firebrand-cum-elder statesman Tony Benn: “If I reported to you what Mrs. Thatcher really thought about President Reagan, it would damage Anglo-American relations.”

We are only at the bottom of page 2, and I am already irritated. But this is the low-water mark of Aldous’s theme. It gets much better from page 3 onwards. And there is less revisionism in those later pages than meets the eye.

That’s mainly because earlier historians of the relationship have never disguised that it was marked by occasional but serious disagreements that provoked both the principals and their aides into harsh expressions of anger and distrust. Geoffrey Smith’s path-breaking 1991 study *Reagan and Thatcher* (also published by Norton) went into those disagreements in depth. He interviewed some of the leading players in the Reagan and Thatcher administrations at a time when their memories of these episodes were still fresh. His accounts have stood up very well to later publication of original documents from the archives. Which is fortunate because intervening historians and writers, including this reviewer, have relied heavily on them.

Twenty-one years later, Aldous is able to examine the same disagreements, drawing on an avalanche of documents, freshly unclassified and helpfully ordered by archivists such as Christopher Collins of the Margaret Thatcher Foundation (for whom, as Aldous gracefully acknowledges, no praise is too high). That gives to his account many fascinating details denied to earlier writers and the basis for proposing one or two major revisions to the historical record. In the main, however, his revelation that Reagan and Thatcher had major disputes repeats what Smith and others have already established. In some of those cases—or so it seems to me—he exaggerates either the dispute or the discord it produced in Anglo-American relations. His history, as well as highly readable, is broadly accurate—just not as groundbreaking as his title claims.

What were the main disputes that divided Reagan and Thatcher one way or another? They included the Falklands War, the Grenada crisis, the U.S. deficit, the Soviet gas-pipeline dispute, the bombing of Libya, “Star Wars,” and Reagan’s willingness to trade away the West’s nuclear deterrent at the Reykjavik summit with Mikhail Gorbachev. It is on the Falklands War that Aldous can make his strongest claim of revisionism. Declassified documents show clearly that the Reagan administration was pressuring Britain to make concessions to the Argentinian government that would have amounted in practice to the surrender of sovereignty over the Falklands to Buenos Aires. Everybody realized this except, apparently, the Argentinian junta. Mrs. Thatcher coolly calculated that a bunch of macho fascists would never accept this victory if it required the intervening step of withdrawing their troops from the islands, and she won the diplomatic hand.

But Washington’s pressure on London continued until British troops landed on the islands and took over from the diplomats. Even then, at the very last moment, Reagan himself asked Thatcher to offer a compromise to Buenos Aires rather than insist on outright victory. She refused—“We have lost a lot of blood. And it’s the best blood.” All this shilly-shallying infuriated the British (and some U.S. officials, such as the CIA’s Admiral Bobby Inman), and it produced harsh exchanges between the two capitals. Aldous is right to argue that Thatcher was angry with

Secretary of State Al Haig and with the diplomatic posture of the Reagan administration.

But even as the diplomatic shilly-shallying was in full progress, the Pentagon and the CIA were shoveling out military and intelligence help to the British from the back door. Without that help—which began on Day One and continued up to the Argentinian surrender—the British could not have won the Falklands War. It was crucial, recognized as such by the British, and subsequently rewarded when the Queen made Caspar Weinberger “Knight Cap.” Aldous discounts its importance on the somewhat faint grounds that Reagan didn’t know about this help. His trump card for this claim is that Reagan says so in the privacy of his diary. Would the president really have lied to his diary?

Well, I’m afraid that he might well have. Presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers, and ambassadors have known for a century that historians will one day mine their diaries for information. So they write there, in part, to justify their actions. Reagan once said that the problem with his administration was that its right hand didn’t know what its far-right hand was doing. On this occasion, such ignorance wasn’t a problem but a solution.

In the Grenada crisis, it was Mrs. Thatcher who was kept in ignorance. She knew nothing of the impending U.S. invasion of a former British colony, whose sovereign was still Queen Elizabeth II, until it was too late for her to halt it. Thatcher was wounded, personally and politically, by this public humiliation. It led to another set of angry exchanges between London and Washington. And, on the face of it, it seems to have been a needlessly harmful oversight. Why would Reagan not seek the support of a close and interested ally such as Thatcher for the defeat of a violent Marxist coup that she might be reasonably expected to find equally objectionable? Aldous never explains this persuasively. But the answer is that the U.S. had earlier found British diplomats in the Caribbean to be strongly hostile to any intervention in Grenada by anyone. Washington therefore decided to keep Britain out of the loop to avoid either diplomatic opposition or intelligence leaks. Mrs. Thatcher was legitimately angry at this deception. But she herself had been woefully

under-briefed by a Foreign Office anxious to keep Britain out of any American adventure (and perhaps worried, as Reagan was hopeful, that she might support an intervention once she learned of it). Besides, Britain had abrogated any responsibility for Grenada four years before, when an earlier Marxist gang had seized power illegally.

In short, the dispute was much less fundamental than it appeared at the time; and, though serious, it was therefore smoothed away quite quickly. Reagan telephoned Thatcher and apologized in a long dialogue that ended, when she left to return to a parliamentary debate, with his urging her to “go get ’em. Eat ’em alive.” This is one matter on which Aldous exaggerates the divide between the two leaders. To ensure that we draw the right lessons, he adorns the transcript of their conversation with helpful stage directions such as (of Thatcher) “almost as if talking to an eager but misinformed child” and (of Reagan) “missing Thatcher’s ironic tone.” Yet that conversation began the speedy repair of the relationship. The intervention was welcomed by the Grenadians. And three years later, Thatcher gave permission for U.S. Air Force planes to fly from bases in Britain to launch an air attack on Qaddafi’s Libya—undermining her earlier complaints about the illegality of Grenada and suggesting at least a partial change of mind and some convergence of views.

A more fundamental dispute arose from Thatcher’s disquiet over the president’s offer to trade away the West’s nuclear deterrent at Reykjavik. Reagan was an anti-nuclear disarmer; Thatcher supported traditional deterrence. But she may well have also doubted that he understood the full consequences of his policy. This is perhaps one example of Nico Henderson’s wider insinuation that she doubted Reagan’s intellectual capacity. She sought a meeting with him and obtained the assurances of continuing deterrence that she wanted. At that meeting, however, she asked directly if Reagan understood that abandoning nuclear missiles would leave the Soviets with the huge advantage of conventional-force superiority in Europe. Reagan replied—I am tempted to add “stonily”—that he did indeed understand this. Thatcher accepted his reply.

In doing so she revealed her own realization that Reagan was a more formidable mind and personality than she had initially believed. She had always shared his broad free-market and anti-Communist ideas. She liked him personally. And she admired his more obvious political and election-winning skills. But with her diligent work habits and mastery of detail, she had never quite understood how someone with such an apparently easygoing leadership style managed to achieve so much. Like his own aides, she now understood that there was some tough and deep substance under the charm that explained his mysterious success. And as she made clear in her memoirs, her respect for him grew and grew.

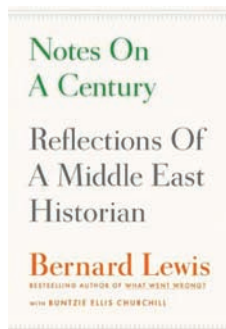
Was their relationship difficult? Well, yes, because all serious relationships are difficult. Reagan and Thatcher had the disagreements described above because their national interests differed on occasion. They debated these disagreements frankly in private and in the main discreetly in public. Each conceded to the other on occasion. After initial rows, Reagan yielded to Thatcher on the Falklands, Thatcher to Reagan on Grenada. But they supported each other without “fractious” dispute on a wider range of policies, often against substantial international opposition, and they succeeded against the odds in winning the Cold War. If that relationship counts as a difficult one, what relationship doesn’t? And what relationship did either have with another national leader that was warmer or more cooperative or crowned with greater success?

Maybe the most striking and persuasive aspect of Aldous’s revisionism, therefore, is that it amounts to a thorough refutation of the British Left’s view of the Reagan-Thatcher relationship. That view was expressed most sourly by Denis Healey, who said: “When President Reagan says, ‘Jump,’ Mrs. Thatcher asks, ‘How high?’” Healey was so fond of this one-liner that he was still producing it a few years ago in Cold War retrospectives. It was never true; indeed, it is close to a reverse of the truth. But Aldous’s account of Thatcher’s record of blowing into Washington, blowing up, and blowing out again surely destroys it once and for all.

And that’s my kind of revisionism. **NR**

The Scholar

DAVID PRYCE-JONES



Notes on a Century: Reflections of a Middle East Historian, by Bernard Lewis with Buntzie Ellis Churchill (Viking, 400 pp., \$28.95)

BERNARD LEWIS is far and away the single most influential commentator in the English language on the Muslim world past and present. In the course of a long lifetime, he has published books of general political and historical interest, monographs that are the last word on some aspects of Islam, and innumerable articles in learned journals or the press. His affinity for all things Muslim is unmistakable, and survives the growing perception that the Middle East is the stage of a drama that may not end well. Publicly a Princeton professor emeritus, privately he was welcome in the Bush-Cheney White House, and he is known to have contributed to policy on Iraq at this level.

Notes on a Century, then, is the autobiography of a scholar whose researches have unexpectedly found their way into vital issues of the day. Easy to read, completely free from jargon, the book has the cheerful conversational fizz of someone able to give a good account of himself. He dearly loves anything funny. Going out of his way to have a laugh, he recalls that a lady from New York, obliged to state her religion on a form for Muslim officials, put, “Seventh Avenue Adventist”; and “Kuwaitis interruptus” is the

Mr. Pryce-Jones, a senior editor of NATIONAL REVIEW, is the author of many books, including The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs.

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pun he coined after the first Gulf war against Saddam Hussein. Saudi Arabia goes to lengths to exclude Jews, and the racist King Faisal could not resist telling Henry Kissinger, secretary of state at the time, that he was receiving him as a human being. Lewis quotes with relish Kissinger's retort: "Some of my best friends are human beings." At a conference in Rome, he recounts, a Soviet historian was asked whether historians should try to predict the future. "In the Soviet Union," the historian replied, referring to Communist rewriting of history, "the most difficult task of the historian is to predict the past." On another occasion, Lewis overheard a Turkish general explaining that the trouble with having Americans as allies is that you never know "when they will stab themselves in the back."

Born in Britain in 1916 into a Jewish family, Bernard Lewis had the distinct

student of conventional subjects. Even thoughtful people then took it for granted that, whatever Arabs and Muslims might or might not be doing in the present, they were not fully masters of their fate and therefore of interest only to specialists. Lewis could perfectly well have turned out to be just another such specialist unknown outside the university. Picking up Russian, Turkish, and Farsi without apparent difficulty, he prepared himself for greater things.

Linguistic skills were vital during World War II. In the whole of England, Lewis surmises, probably fewer than a hundred people knew Arabic. Recruited into MI-6, the branch of the British secret service dealing with foreign intelligence, Lewis had to translate or summarize texts in Arabic, some of them in code or cipher. His onetime boss, a major, made a comment on his file that showed he had the measure of one

embassy. In Turkey in 1949, he was the first Westerner given permission to read in the Ottoman archives and so accumulated material for studies—sometimes written decades later—on subjects as controversial as race, slavery, and color in Islam. His tone is invariably judicious, even when addressing something as painful as Muslim anti-Semitism.

As the deadlock of the Cold War settled in place half a century ago, Lewis was already predicting the repetitive violence and confusion that would spread throughout the Middle East. Some put the blame for this exclusively on the United States and the Soviet Union, as both superpowers were pressuring Arab-nationalist leaders of that moment into alliances and policies that served their interests at the expense of the Arab masses. Lewis had the different insight that what might look like an ideological clash was more profoundly civilizational. Mus-

The great and the good soon recognized that they had a lot to learn from **Bernard Lewis**, and he gossips most enjoyably about high-life encounters.

advantage of growing up fluent in Hebrew. Knowledge of that language has been the point of departure in the careers of the significant number of Jews who have distinguished themselves as Orientalists. As a teenager on a visit to Carlsbad, the Czech spa, he was taken to meet Nahman Bialik, the great Jewish-nationalist poet who wrote in Hebrew and helped to revive what had been a dead language. One of his treasured possessions, Lewis is proud to reveal, is a signed copy of one of Bialik's books. As a schoolboy he learned French and wrote a poem in Latin against Hitler. His father, a businessman in textiles, liked to sing arias from operas, and the attentive Lewis soon added Italian to his portfolio of languages.

When he set out as a young man in the 1930s to study and teach Arab history, he says, all he could expect were "musty archives and academic conferences." At the School of Oriental Studies in London he learned Arabic. Sir Hamilton Gibb at Oxford and Louis Massignon in Paris, both eminent Orientalists in their day, directed him towards medieval Islam, intending him to become a conventional

important facet of this unlikely subordinate: "His sense of humour should not be taken as seditious." Although still today under oath not to reveal secrets, Lewis nevertheless reports a few newsworthy items, for instance that British intelligence was bugging the Saudi embassy in Vichy France.

In the aftermath of the war, Lewis traveled and made friends in Egypt, Iraq, and what for a short while longer was still the British Mandate of Palestine. At the time of his first visit to Iran, there was no piped water in Tehran and he had to be granted access to a spring at the British

lims had discovered the West only to misunderstand and misrepresent it. Their longstanding cultural and intellectual failure to modernize has left the legacy of a severe identity crisis, for which they and everyone else will be paying for a long time to come. Short of revolution, the sole possible protest open to Arabs on the streets has been seditious humor of the kind Lewis himself used to practice, and he has a special delight in jokes about Gamal Abdel Nasser, the windiest and most unrealistic of nationalists.

The great and the good soon recognized that they had a lot to learn from Lewis, and he gossips most enjoyably about high-life encounters. There he was at a ceremonial dinner in Tehran given to honor Senator Edward Kennedy when the host, the shah of Iran—in a deliberate snub—did not turn up. At a lunch in Buckingham Palace, he was asked to interpret for British and Arab royalty. Pope John Paul II invited him to annual highbrow get-togethers in his country residence at Castel Gandolfo outside Rome, and Moammar Qaddafi flew him out to Libya for 48 hours of political and personal slapstick. In England, before



emigrating to Israel, Abba Eban asked Lewis whether Eban's style of speaking might suit the House of Commons. No, Lewis answered, the House of Lords. An admired friend was Muhammad Shafiq, prime minister of Afghanistan, hanged after the Soviet invasion of his country. One of Lewis's graduate students was a Palestinian who had spent World War II in Berlin, and afterwards he, too, was hanged, for shooting King Abdullah of Jordan.

In more than one chapter Lewis gives professional advice about writing history. Freedom of expression and the exchange of ideas, he says, have an absolute value. The inflexible rule is to follow the evidence wherever it leads, even or especially if that means rejecting some prior hypothesis or exposing wrongdoing on the part of one's own nation or some of its representatives. That was really the core of Lewis's celebrated controversy with Edward Said. As the foremost spokesman of Palestinian nationalism, Said was unable or unwilling to consider that he or his people could act self-destructively. This meant that Jews were held responsible for the plight of the Palestinians. Singling out Lewis partly because of his reputation and partly because he was Jewish, Said concocted a syllogism: Lewis is an Orientalist; by definition Orientalists are at the service of imperialism and this is bad; therefore Lewis is at the service of imperialism and bad. Pure and simple tribalism of this kind carries the unspoken charges that a Jew has no right to an opinion about anything to do with Muslims and that Israel is an imperialist creation with no right to exist.

The fantasy that Orientalists are secret agents of Great Powers further presupposes that Muslims are victims whose destiny is in the hands of Lewis and others like him. A Turkish journalist who was a correspondent in Washington for seven years has just testified that, in 1997, in the State Department building, he saw Lewis conspiring with Madeleine Albright and others to arrange the military coup of that year in Turkey. In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, an Egyptian journalist has been asserting that Lewis is part of an American plot to split the country four ways. Lewis has achieved so much, in other words, that he can do almost anything that can be imagined.

NR

Running Deep

FLORENCE KING



Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking, by Susan Cain (Crown, 333 pp., \$26)

THE problem awaiting any author seeking to define introversion is that, in essence, it is about not needing, and not particularly liking, people. This is a felony in America, so ways must be found to confuse and overcomplicate the subject so that no one is sure what you are talking about.

Susan Cain, a corporate lawyer, lecturer, and fixture at *Psychology Today*, gets the camouflage ball rolling with her title. "Quiet" sounds like a Stephen King title, like his *Thinner*, the one about a glutton who keeps losing weight because of a gypsy curse. We don't hear about introverts until we get to the subtitle, but subtitles tend to get lost in the shuffle, so she succeeds in getting us to accept her premise that introverts are simply quiet people. A neat trick, but one that raises sticky questions, e.g., how can Trappist monks tolerate communal living?

She avoids such head-on collisions by assuring readers that "we are all gloriously complex individuals" and reminding us of how many different kinds of quiet people there are. "So if you're an artistic American guy whose father wished you'd try out for the football team like your rough-and-tumble brothers, you'll be a very different kind of introvert from, say, a Finnish businesswoman whose parents were lighthouse keepers." As I said, she really forces us to think.

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

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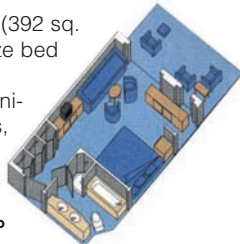
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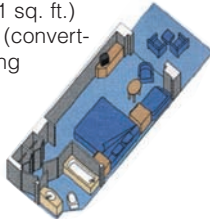
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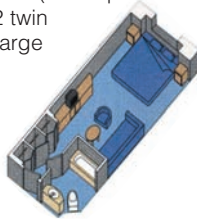
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All rates are per person, double occupancy, and include all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and National Review activities. Cruise-only rates include all of above except airfare and transfers. Failure to appear for embarkation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

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 First cabin category choice: _____ Second cabin category choice: _____
 Bedding: Beds made up as Twin King/Queen
 BOOKING SINGLE? Please try to match me with a roommate. (My age: _____)

II. DINING w/ FRIENDS/FAMILY: I wish to dine with _____
 Every Night 3-4 times 2 times Once

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

Payment, Cancellation, & Insurance

Deposit of \$600 per person is due with this application. If paid by credit card, the balance will be charged to the same card on 8/10/12 unless otherwise directed. If application is received after 8/10/12, the full amount of the cruise will be charged.

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

Charge my deposit to: AmEx Visa MasterCard Discover

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Month Year Amex 4 digits on front, others 3 digits on back

 Authorized Signature of Cardholder Name of Cardholder (please print)

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We will provide our own roundtrip air and transfers to and from Ft. Lauderdale (arriving there on 11/11/12 by 1:30PM EST and departing 11/18/12 after 11:30a.m.).

We would like The Cruise Authority to customize roundtrip air from _____ Coach First Class Air

Arrival date: _____
 Departure date: _____
 Preferred carrier: _____
 (Customized air will incur a fee of \$50 per person. Prior to air reservations being made you will be contacted with flight options for approval.)

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

The card's billing address is indicated above. The card's billing address is: _____

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

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

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 SIGNATURE OF GUEST #1

 DATE

In one sense this is a “fun” book, ideal for promoting on weekend cable shows hosted by those girls who keep flinging their hair. It has a true/false test to find out if you are an introvert (“People tell me that I’m a good listener,” “I’m not a big risk-taker”), lots of case histories (“Esther, a tiny brunette with a springy step and blue eyes as bright as headlamps”), an author who confesses to a secret fear (public speaking, in Cain’s case), and an unchallengeable list of Introverts Who Made Our World a Better Place: Mother Teresa, Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Mahatma Gandhi. All were quiet, even recessive personalities, yet they had such huge followings they could easily pass for extroverts.

The author herself, though claiming to be an introvert, admits to being a “pseudo-extrovert.” Many Americans take this tack, because it makes life easier to pretend to be open and friendly in a society that virtually demands it. Cain knows this because they opened up to her in a big way, or, as she puts it in one of her double-take sentences: “I interviewed hundreds of introverts from all walks of life.” They would rather go off by themselves and work alone but they have been lifelong prisoners of “pods,” from elementary-school seating designed to promote teamwork to today’s open-ended “offices” containing only enough walls to hold up the building. “Group-think” has ever been their enemy, but now they have found a version they like: social media. They would shrink from addressing a dozen people at a seminar but readily open up to thousands on Facebook and Twitter. Ours is thus, in one sense, the Age of the Introvert, and Cain is upbeat about its possibilities, seeing social media as a way to “extend relationships in the real world” by exposing extroverts to the “contributions” of their opposite numbers; but judging from the vicious and repulsive sentiments that strew these venues, many of these “quiet” keyboard junkies are ready to explode from long-bottled rage.

Cain can blame anything on a shortage of introverts, even the stock-market crash of ’08, which was ostensibly caused by too many extroverts doing what comes naturally: taking risks and thinking positively. She got this from Dr. Janice Dorn, a “financial psychiatrist” who has counseled an estimated six hundred traders.”

Cain gets off another double-take sentence with her description of Dr. Dorn, “who, with her flowing red hair, ivory skin, and trim frame, looks like a mature version of Lady Godiva.” How did *she* get in here? If Lady Godiva was an introvert it must have caused her more pain than her saddle sores. But if we think about this for a minute, we can poke our way through Cain’s tumultuous prose long enough to remember her mantra that introverts are *not* shy, so we finally get it. One wonders if Dr. Dorn did.

Dr. Dorn is only one of a thundering herd of experts whom Cain quotes incessantly. Nearly every page is littered with groaning lead-ins—“research shows . . . evidence suggests . . . this is not to say . . . according to groundbreaking new . . . in the following experiment performed by the developmental psychologist Grazyna Kochanska . . .”

She ventures into brain chemistry to explain the physiological influences on personality types, holding forth on the neocortex, the amygdala, the serotonin-transporter gene in monkeys, and the latest findings on “sensitivity.” This last doesn’t refer to the difference between dreamy artistic types and frat rats who think flatulence contests are fun: It has to do with skin conductance tests—measures of *literal* sensitivity—that can distinguish between extroverts and introverts. Say an introvert came into your home and broke something. His high-reactive sensitive nature would respond with immediate guilt and give rise to a gnawing conscience. But an extrovert who came into your home and broke something would say “Oops, sorry” and be done with it. In other words, he wouldn’t “sweat it.” His low-reactive nature is literally “cool,” as opposed to that of the heavily perspiring introvert. Hence the colloquial expressions “thick-skinned” and “thin-skinned.”

That bit is mildly interesting, but there really are only two good chapters in the entire book. One is an excellent overview of how America came to be the land of the Extrovert Ideal. The 19th century was the Age of Character, when what mattered was what you were like when no one was looking. Starting in the early 20th century we entered the Age of Personality, when what mattered was what you were like when everyone was looking. The change came about with the growth of cities, when young men from

trustworthy rural communities found themselves living among strangers who had to be placated and won over, and the growth of big business, with its need for high-powered salesmen.

The “mighty likeable fellow” was born, and nursed through his growing pains by Dale Carnegie, whose first book, *Public Speaking and Influencing Men in Business* (1913), enshrined the jovial, bloviating toastmaster. The need to make a “good first impression” triggered heretofore-unknown psychological problems such as anxiety, which increased after Viennese psychologist Alfred Adler published his theory of the “inferiority complex” in 1921. The inferiority complex became such a widespread cause of more anxiety that it was written about constantly in the American popular press, where the name was conveniently abbreviated to “I.C.”

In 1936, Carnegie published his best-seller *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, which is still popular. By 1956, William Whyte’s *The Organization Man* related horror stories about our desperate striving to be “well-rounded,” but it was too late. Today, says Cain, “our ever-higher standards of fearless self-presentation” have produced “social anxiety disorder—which essentially means pathological shyness—now thought to afflict nearly one in five of us.”

Her other good chapter addresses the clash of American extroversion with the Asian cultural ideal of self-contained formality. She centers her interviews in Cupertino, Calif., a majority-Asian community where the sky-high test scores in the local high school have caused “white flight” by parents afraid that their children cannot compete with the Asian penchant for introspection and seemingly endless studying. Cain apologizes for reviving the “model minority” theme, but she does it anyway and deserves credit for it.

She could take it a bit farther, however. It is obvious that the demands of political correctness have made extroverts of us all, i.e., if you are sufficiently outgoing and friendly you make it harder for someone to accuse you of being an -ist, an -ite, or a -phobe. Extroversion for Americans has come to resemble Pascal’s just-in-case argument against atheism. If there really is no God, then you have lost nothing, but just in case there is, you’re covered.

NR

Film

Tame Tyrant

ROSS DOUTHAT

DURING the spring television season, my wife and I became strangely fascinated by the Manhattan real-estate agent Fredrik Eklund, who is featured prominently in *Million Dollar Listing: New York*, one of Bravo's many reality-TV forays into the lifestyles of the rich and totally ridiculous. Eklund is long-faced and loose-limbed, with a strong Swedish accent, a permanent tan, and an implausible biography: The son of a prominent Swedish economist and civil servant ("the Alan Greenspan of Sweden," Eklund dubs his dad), he spent his 20s founding tech startups while moonlighting as a gay porn star (under the pseudonym "Tag

put his own style of reality programming out of business: His face is too famous, his tactics too well-known, the ripest targets too savvy to be ambushed. As Ali G, the faux-gangsta youth broadcaster from Staines-Upon-Thames, he conned major politicians, genuine celebrities, and even United Nations secretaries general into sitting for his interviews. ("We want to say big-up yourself, Boutros-Boutros-Boutros-Boutros Ghali.") By the time his screamingly gay Austrian fashionista Bruno earned the big-screen treatment, in 2009, he was reduced to tricking redneck hunters and gay-conversion therapists (along with, yes, Congressman Ron Paul) into taking his persona at face value. And now he's been reduced further still, since his new film, *The Dictator*, is just a straightforward fish-out-of-water comedy with no documentary elements at all.

Well, tyrant-out-of-water comedy, at least. Cohen plays Admiral General Aladeen, the dictator of Wadiya, a North African autocracy located along the Red

himself. On the trip to New York, though, his ambitious uncle Tamir (Ben Kingsley) executes a Ruritanian maneuver, kidnapping the dictator and replacing him with his double, a cretinous shepherd from the Wadiyan hinterland, who is induced to promise democratic elections to a relieved international community, and the rights to the Wadiyan oil fields to Tamir's Russian, American, and Chinese business partners.

The real dictator, meanwhile, slips his uncle's net and ends up wandering in New York City, where he finds shelter in a Brooklyn organic co-op run by Zoey (Anna Faris), a wide-eyed peacenik who assumes that Aladeen is a Wadiyan dissident. What follows will be predictable to fans of Ali G, Borat, and Bruno. The foreigner behaves outrageously, spewing forth a stream of racist, sexist, and anti-Semitic provocations: Zoey is a "lesbian hobbit," blacks are "sub-Saharan," a baby born unexpectedly in the store is greeted with "Bad news, it's a girl—where's the trash can?" And the Americans react with an extraordinary amount of tolerance and forbearance—which, in turn, only encourages his provocations further.

The difference, though, is that this time the Americans, too, are actors following a script. Cohen's earlier films were often quease-inducing because of the lose-lose choice they offered the people caught up in them (too much rudeness made them look like creeps, but too much politeness or enthusiasm implicated them in his characters' bigotry). But they also carried an anything-can-happen frisson that kept you watching, even against your better judgment. Whereas in *The Dictator*, you know that anything can't happen, because the actors are all following a script. Zoey and her friends have to tolerate Aladeen, and then she eventually has to develop feelings for him, because that's what the story says she has to do.

And while Cohen himself is still very funny, that story—the inevitable romance, the inevitable counter-coup against Amir—is deadly dull. You don't watch a Sacha Baron Cohen film for the plot, and *The Dictator* has far too much of it: It ends up part caper movie, part political satire, and the capering is pointless and the satire less than biting. Cohen had a good run with this approach to comedy, but he needs to reinvent himself, and just taking his existing shock-the-bourgeoisie shtick into scripted films is not the reinvention that he needs. **NR**



Sacha Baron Cohen in *The Dictator*

Eriksson"), and now has crossed the Atlantic and conquered Manhattan real estate to the tune of millions of dollars in commission fees each year.

To watch him in action—brezing from one startling stateside encounter to the next, the alarming foreigner let loose among the baffled natives—is to encounter something at once exotic and strangely familiar. Midway through the season, the source of the familiarity finally came to me: In his mix of shamelessness, foreignness, and winking mischievousness, Eklund is the closest the real world comes to producing a Sacha Baron Cohen character.

Alas for Cohen himself, those characters have been so successful that they've

Sea somewhere between Egypt and Sudan. Part Qaddafi, part Ahmadinejad, Aladeen has a vast beard and a vaster ego: When he isn't paying celebrities a fortune to fly in and sleep with him (Megan Fox makes a cameo appearance in what I hope is a more mercenary version of herself), he's plotting to build a nuclear program capable of delivering energy and prosperity to his peo . . . okay, fine, capable of wiping Israel off the map. (In a speech to his nation, he tries to promise that the nukes will be used for peaceful purposes, only to dissolve into giggles halfway through.)

Faced with this clear and present danger, the Western powers threaten sanctions and airstrikes unless Aladeen agrees to address the United Nations and explain

In the Know



RICHARD BROOKHISER

“YOU are in the seat the cardinal sat in when we had dinner here.” We were three, expecting a fourth. The fourth would be a lady, so we had already started drinking. We were perched on a little mezzanine, almost a balcony, of a dark midtown restaurant, composed of descending levels. Our host sat in the corner against the wall: banker’s suit, crisply parted hair, sharp features, sharp voice. He looked to the friend seated at his left and said, “You are in the seat the cardinal sat in when we had dinner here.”

What could be a better opening? We already knew several things without being told: Any cleric our host knew would be of this city, hence a figure in the church nationwide, first, because the city is a media echo chamber and bandstand, second because its archdiocese is the historic preserve, no, property, of Irish-Americans (the ethnicity of our host), who know how to keep things humming. Franciscans might have been baptizing Indians under the cacti centuries ago, but ever since the Irish met the city, this is where it’s been at, church-wise. But this was all background, set-up: We were to be told something new, a story, not secret exactly, but special. A story about what? Religion? Politics? Political religion? Religious politics? Gossip (least likely, but possible)? Either the story was something the cardinal had told our host, or something our host had told the cardinal (seeking confirmation), or something the two of them were somehow involved in in some other way. We would learn. Our

host offered me some red wine, then turned to his friend. “You are in the seat the cardinal sat in when we had dinner here.”

One of the things we cherish about the city is the opportunity of being in the know. Everyone knows his own life, more or less (usually less). What else can we know? We can know what we read in the papers or on the start-up menu, or what we hear on Jon Stewart. But can you be satisfied with that dirty dishwasher? Assuming the answer is no, we can inquire of the Internet, the great brain that contains everything. There we will find tiny, brightly lit chambers, buzzing with relevant information, but also bias, attitude, and lies. The exasperated spirit spends hours, evenings, lifetimes linking from prison to prison, trying to pull it all together. There is an alternative to ignorance and futility: the conversation, face to face, *tête-à-tête* (or at most *aux-trois-têtes*) with the one who says what he says because he himself knows it, and now wants you to know it too. “You are in the seat the cardinal sat in . . .”

Being in the know is not the same as being in with the in-crowd. The in-crowd is defined by fashion or taste: by being a step ahead (if you are a time snob) or a step up (if you are a quality snob). In-crowds congeal around shared appreciations: I have seen the YouTube diva, I worship the great artist. Screw that, say the knowledgeable. Those who are in the know are joined by the currency of information they pass from one to the other. Sometimes only a dime, a farthing, a mite changes hands. But every bit however small is real, and handling it makes you richer than those who are outside the know.

Organizations are mines of knowledge/money. Washington, D.C., is the Comstock lode, but its riches are all extracted and circulated by politicians. The city, because it is a real city, offers more variety. Politicians exchange knowledge here too, often of far-flung places



“This planet is great!—He says we qualify for affirmative action!”

(since politicians from the outlands so often come here to raise money). The Catholic Church looks at these transactions as at Tom Sawyer and his friends whitewashing the fence; it has been an organization for two thousand years (beat that for patina). Judaism is not an organization exactly, but it is a big family, riven into dozens of clans, many of which can’t stand each other, yet all of which seem to be aware of each other, from atheist anti-Zionists to bearded rebbes, and word gets around. Media, entertainment, sports, law, Wall Street, gaylandia—the options wink off into the distance, like stops on the A train.

Historically one of the subjects most worth knowing was gossip—the personal business, erotic or financial, of someone behind whose back the knowledge was imparted. We live in inflationary times, however, when people who would once have been the victims of gossip have become the stars (and producers) of their own dramas of exposure. John Edwards is perhaps the last American who did not want something about himself to be known; anyone else would have filmed the whole saga on his iPhone and sent it straight to Facebook. The moment knowledge is common, it stops being of interest to those who are in the know.

The most knowing writer in history was probably Saint-Simon, the meticulous duke who recorded everything he saw and heard in the reign of Louis XIV and the regency of Louis XV, from the War of the Spanish Succession to the bowel movements of a fellow duke (it takes too long to explain, but you can find the episode early in the *Memoirs*). Next to Saint-Simon, Proust seems lazy and wordy—and he had the advantage of making it all up. Saint-Simon’s great predecessor in the ancient world was Plutarch. Herodotus and Thucydides, Livy and Tacitus feel obliged to hammer what they know into narratives; *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* just gives us the goods.

We believe what the knowers tell us because that is how we first learned anything: Mom put us on her lap, Dad sat beside the bed, and said: “In the High and Far-Off Times the Elephant, O Best Beloved, had no trunk . . .”

Our host and the cardinal? I could tell you what they said to each other, but I am not sure they would want you to know. **NR**

Eutopia, Limited

As the advanced social-democratic Big Government state sinks under a multi-trillion-dollar debt avalanche, the conventional wisdom remains all too conventional, and disinclined even to mount an argument. So much “progressive” debate boils down to Ring Lardner’s great line:

“Shut up,” he explained.

It’s an oft-retailed quote. But fewer people know the line that precedes it (in Lardner’s novel *The Young Immigrants*): a kid asking, “Are you lost, Daddy?”

As any motoring pater knows, it’s not easy to give an honest answer to that question. And the hardest thing of all is to turn around and go back, retracing your steps to the point where you made the wrong turn. If you’re a politician, it’s even harder. Leviathan has no reverse gear: “Forward!” as the Obama campaign’s 2012 slogan puts it. Yet in the end, if any of the Western world is to survive, it has to find a way to turn around, to go back.

Take the euro. It should not exist. It should never have been invented. And, ultimately, it is necessary to find a way to disinvent it. Yet even one of the least deluded of Continental leaders cannot acknowledge the need to turn around: To Angela Merkel, the euro is not a mere currency but what she calls a “Schicksalsgemeinschaft”—or “community of destiny.” Forward—to—destiny! Frau Merkel, like M. Hollande in Paris, has determined that what the Greeks and the Portuguese and the Spanish need is “more Europe.” Onward!

A decade ago, just before the euro was introduced, I noted in Britain’s *Sunday Telegraph* that, whereas the currencies of real nations display images of real buildings (the White House on the \$20 bill, for example), the handsome edifices on the new euro notes do not, in fact, exist. Europe is full of impressive buildings—Versailles, the Parthenon—but they are unfortunately located in actual countries, and so the designers of the euro notes preferred to use composite, fantasy, pan-European architectural marvels prefiguring the Eutopia that the new currency would will into being. “In the normal course of events,” I wrote, “monetary union follows political union, as it did in the U.S., Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, and so on. In this instance, uniquely, monetary union is in itself an act of political binding. What’s important on Tuesday is not the introduction of the new currency but the abolition of the old ones—not the symbolic bridges on the back of the new notes, but the burning of the bridges represented by the discarded currencies.” In a “community of destiny,” there is no road back.

Mr. Steyn blogs at SteynOnline (www.steynonline.com).

Continental talk in these Eutopian terms because of their recent history. The European Union is, philosophically, a 1970s solution to a 1940s problem. Except that, in one of those jests the gods are fond of, it seems to be delivering the Continent into the very situation it was explicitly designed to prevent. The ’tween-wars fascists sold themselves to their peoples by telling them that the world was run by a cabal of sinister foreign bankers. When the neo-nationalist Golden Dawn and the hard-left Syriza parties both reprised this line to such great effect in the recent Greek election, it had the additional merit, as Nixon liked to say, of being true. The euro has made the age-old conspiracy theories real: If you’re a Greek, your world *is* run by a cabal of sinister foreign bankers—the Germans and the other “northern Europeans” who control the European Central Bank, plus their chums at the IMF.

It requires a perverse genius to invent a mechanism designed to consign the horrors of the mid-20th century to the trash can of history that winds up delivering you to Mitteleuropa circa 1934. Sometimes the road forward leads you right back where you started. While Eurocrats still peddle the standard line about the EU acting as a restraint on the Teutonic urge to regional domination, the British defense secretary recently demanded that it was time for Germany, as the wealthiest nation on the Continent, to step up to its responsibilities and increase military spending. I would doubt Frau Merkel would take his advice, if only because the euro seems to be doing for Berlin’s control-freak complex what neither the Kaiser nor Hitler could pull off.

Back in 2002, the BBC’s Evan Davis assured us that the euro would make Greece financially “stable.” All the smart guys agreed: It would bring “long-term economic stability,” declared the *Financial Times*. By contrast, I wrote that “the euro is an exercise in vanity printing that will place massive social pressures on member states whose democratic roots go no deeper than the mid-Seventies.” That would be Greece, Spain, and Portugal, if you’re keeping track. But still the Eutopians push on to the sunlit uplands of the “community of destiny.” The euro zone’s architects now say that what’s needed is full fiscal union—or “F U,” as my old boss Boris Johnson, mayor of London, likes to call it. More Europe, more debt, more taxes, more regulation, more foreign bankers—and fewer jobs, lower growth, less democratic accountability. A decade ago I said that one advantage of those fantasy buildings and bridges on the banknotes is that being nonexistent makes them much harder to blow up. But in an ever more insolvent Europe there are plenty of real buildings to hand.

“Are you lost, Eurodaddy?”

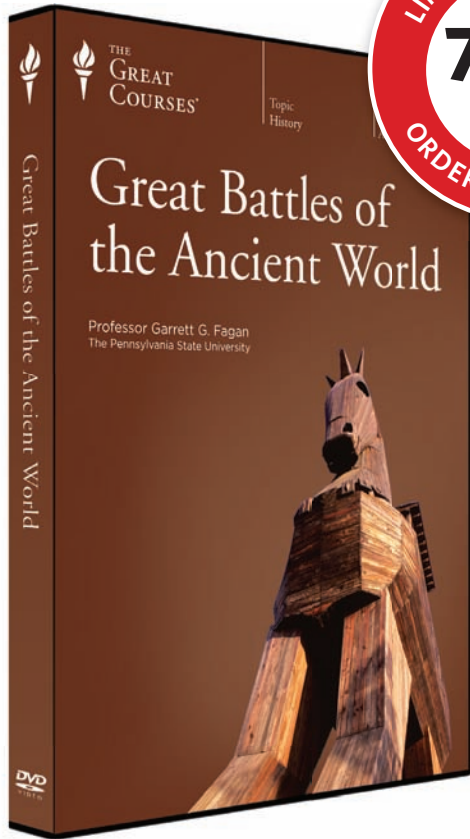
“Shut up,” he explained.

NR





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