the weekly
Standard

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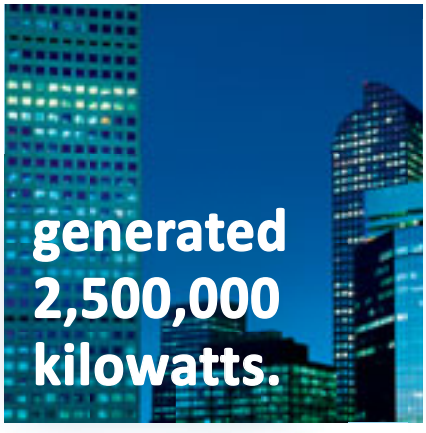

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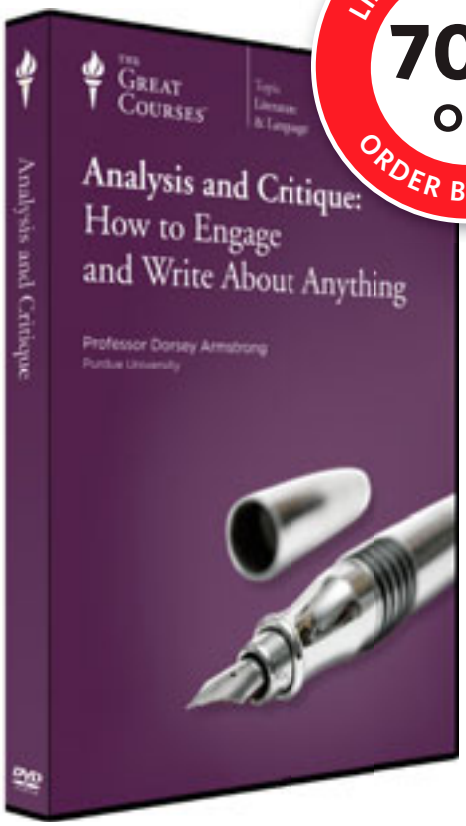

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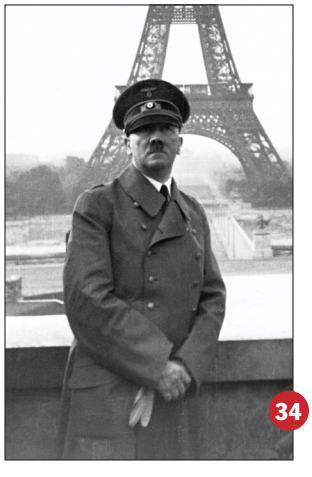

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COVER COMPOSITE: RYAN: NEWSCOM; OBAMA: AP / PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS

Battle of the Bosses

We yield to no one in our admiration for Chris Christie, even though he's from New Jersey. The candor and plain speaking that have made him a YouTube matinee idol have made him a Scrapbook favorite too. So it's only with the greatest reluctance that we draw your attention to an incident in which, perhaps for understandable reasons, his gift for voicing uncomfortable truths failed him.

Christie calls himself Bruce Springsteen's number one fan. Again, we forgive him. But when Diane Sawyer interviewed the governor last week and quoted a letter that Springsteen had published critical of Christie's fiscal policies, the governor put on the kid gloves.

"I mean, you know, Bruce is liberal," the governor said. "Doesn't mean I like him any less. But you know, Bruce believes that we should be raising taxes all the time on everyone to do all the things that he'd like to see government do. That's fine, it's his point of view and he's absolutely welcome to it, and I have great respect for it, because he speaks out."

That's it? This is the response of a number one fan, not of a governor—and certainly not of a governor who has stared down the teachers' union and infuriated liberals by insisting on calling things by their proper names. Why not continue the candor with Bruce? If Springsteen wants to play politics instead of music, we feel free—and so should Christie—to talk music instead of politics, by pointing out (for example) that Bruce Springsteen hasn't had a fresh musical idea since his album *The River*, released 30 years ago, and that his lyrics have become as predictable as the sunrise. You know it, governor, and Bruce knows it. Go ahead: Speak truth to power. ♦

The Perfidious Liquor Lobby?

The Scrapbook is always on the prowl for evidence that newspaper editorial staffs live in a parallel universe, and the sad fact is that it usually doesn't have to prowl very hard.

Last week, for example, a delightfully loony editorial in the *Washington Post* fell in our lap, entitled "Standing up to the Liquor Lobby." Nobody likes lobbyists, of course—and The Scrapbook assumed that "liquor lobby" must have meant hard-faced men in dark suits who travel around carrying armloads of money for politicians to defend drunkenness, or promote those cocktails with the little umbrellas stuck in the glass. But the editorial's subhed tipped us off that this was different: "In Maryland, a higher tax on alcohol—at long last."

It turns out that the terrible thing the "liquor lobby" has been doing in Maryland is keeping taxes low on liquor, which of course is a service—and no doubt a service greatly appreciated by Marylanders—that has prevented the (elected) government of Maryland from spending money that the *Washington Post* thinks it should spend. So, you see, in the *Post*'s view, it is a good thing that the "liquor lobby" has been thwarted and that taxes are going up "at long last."

But proof that you and I don't reside on the same planet as *Post* writers comes in the editorial's opening sentences:

> Four decades is a long time to wait, but at last Marylanders can be hopeful that the state's politicians are prepared to stand up to the alcohol lobby. . . . [L]awmakers in Annapolis seem poised to raise the tax on alcohol specifically, which is so low that Maryland might as well change its official nickname from the Free State to the Cheap Drunk State.

The rest is a Carrie Nation-style jeremiad against the evils of demon rum, combined with a list of dubious causes Maryland taxpayers should be subsidizing. We'll spare you the details. But The Scrapbook has to ask: Does the *Post* genuinely believe that the taxpayers of Maryland—especially those taxpayers who take a drink now and then—are "hopeful"

CHRISTIE: AP / CRAIG RUTTLE; SPRINGSTEEN: NEWSCOM

that their taxes, which are already among the highest in America, will be raised? Or are pleased that their legislators are "standing up" against those who seek to keep their taxes at reasonable levels?

Obviously, Maryland is a resolutely blue state, and the *Washington Post* believes that taxation is next to godliness. But The Scrapbook suspects that even Marylanders groan when their taxes go up—especially when applied to things they enjoy—and that you have to subsist in a really insulated, well-sealed, oblivious community to believe that anyone anywhere would be celebrating higher taxes. ♦

The Guilt of the Rosenbergs (cont.)

Three weeks ago in these pages, historians Ronald Radosh and Steven T. Usdin reported on the surprising confession to Usdin by Morton Sobell, a collaborator with Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in atomic-era espionage for the Soviet Union. Sobell had previously admitted to *New York Times* reporter Sam Roberts in 2008 that he had been a spy, while downplaying the seriousness of the secrets he passed along. To Usdin, he admitted, as the two historians put it, that he was "a key participant in an espionage operation that provided an enormous amount of classified data to the KGB, information that was extremely useful to the Soviet military." He also admitted that he "did it for the Soviet Union," to which he had been ideologically devoted his whole life (his parents were both Communist party members).

Last week, Roberts reported in the *New York Times* on the response to the Sobell story from the Rosenbergs' son, Robert Meeropol, who has spent a lifetime defending his parents. Writes Roberts:

> Responding to recent revelations in The Weekly Standard by Morton Sobell, a co-defendant in the 1951 trial, Mr. Meeropol wrote: "I'd be less than honest if I did not admit that the latest news that Morton Sobell, my father and two others provided aeronautical information to the Soviet Union in 1948 gives me pause. My parents wrote in their last letter to me and my brother: 'Always remember that we were innocent and could not wrong our conscience.' My father, at least, doesn't seem quite so innocent anymore."

In a column for *Pajamas Media*, Radosh parses the significance of Meeropol's concession. Radosh, by the way, with coauthor Joyce Milton, wrote the definitive book on the case, *The Rosenberg File* (1983). Their account of the 1948 espionage case, which has now been confirmed by Morton Sobell, was denounced as an FBI fabrication by Robert Meeropol and his older brother Michael in their 1986 memoir, *We Are Your Sons*. Writes Radosh:

> The significance of the younger Meeropol's admission was well stated by Tablet magazine's Marc Tracy, who writes that this is "perhaps the final wall of denial to fall in a case that has obsessed the American Jewish community for six decades," and, I would add, that has been a linchpin of the American left's argument that the United States government was not only evil during the Cold War years, but was ready to kill regular American citizens because they were against the Truman administration's anti-Soviet policies.
>
> [Nonetheless, Meeropol wants] to still honor his parents while now acknowledging what he calls their "uncritical support for the USSR," which actually was . . . espionage on Stalin's behalf. He still confuses what his parents did with what he calls a "more humane and just society." . . . I now wait for comments from Robert's

older brother Michael. In the past few years, it has become obvious they both look at their parents' espionage somewhat differently, although they have often appeared together on panels. What does Michael Meeropol think, and will he too make his thoughts public? . . .

Time will tell. I never thought that one of the Rosenbergs' children, despite all of his confusion, would ever admit publicly that his father was guilty. It is a good sign that finally, it has become hard for the truth to be ignored after so much evidence has been accumulated about the Rosenbergs' guilt. There is still a long way to go for their many apologists, but at least a first step has been taken. ♦

What's in an Acronym?

They're tough and heroic. They ride around in shiny red trucks. Every little boy dreams of becoming one. They are . . . FEMS.

We refer, of course, to the courageous men and women of the Washington, D.C., Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department. For many years the capital city's firemen wore uniforms emblazoned with the acronym "DCFD"—District of Columbia Fire Department. But that was before Chief Kenneth Ellerbe decided the old uniforms discriminated against ambulance drivers and medical technicians.

Now Ellerbe and new D.C. mayor Vincent "Quid Pro Quo" Gray want to forbid firemen from wearing gear that isn't labeled FEMS. And who would've guessed? The manly firemen strongly object.

Firefighters union president Ed Smith told a local TV news crew, "Citizens I talked to think the insignia means FEMA, which could jeopardize their work." Chief Ellerbe has agreed to a 120-day "cooling off" period so everyone can calm down and work out a solution.

Here's a suggestion: Go back to the old uniforms. Or make a deal—the firefighters will wear FEMS equipment as long as Ellerbe's clothes bear the acronym for Firefighters' Official Office Lackey. ♦

Correction

Joseph A. Bosco, author of an article in last week's issue on the military threat from China ("A Really Inconvenient Truth"), was China desk officer in the office of the secretary of defense from 2005 to 2006, not from 2005 to 2010. We apologize to him for the error. ♦

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Slow Food

The squat old lady standing in the entrance to the café in Saint Petersburg was blowing cigarette smoke out of her nose. She had thick glasses and gave off an air of running the place. In fact, she gave off an air of having run it since the Brezhnev era. I had missed lunch and was starving. I asked her if the restaurant was open. She said, *"Da."* I asked her if she had *solyanka*—a Russian soup that I like to order because . . . em . . . well, because it's about the only thing I know how to order in Russian. When she said, *"Da"* again, I had to go in; I would have been jerking her around otherwise.

She shouted two words at the young man behind the bar. One was *solyanka*. The other must have been the Russian word for lamebrain. He disappeared into the kitchen. She, meanwhile, put a bottle of water on the table where she'd just seated me and stepped behind a door. I heard her mounting a staircase, and I didn't see her again.

Suddenly I was all alone in this overheated, silent café at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, listening to the tap drip. It was an experience I have had dozens of times, but not in many years—that of dashing into a place for a quick bite and realizing that your soup is going to be ready in 45 minutes, not 5. Saint Petersburg has been incompletely globalized. The city is full of matryoshka-doll and lacquer-box shops that serve to separate foreigners from their money, but it doesn't otherwise exist to accommodate their whims.

Thirty years ago, to a degree no contemporary traveler could appreciate, every place in the world was like this. Preoccupation with making things "convenient" for travelers used to be an American peculiarity. Just as there is no such thing as a free lunch, there used to be (outside of the United States) no such thing as a quick one. In almost any country in Europe or Latin America, you could get food that was as cheap as American food. You could most certainly get food that was as *bad* as American food. What you could not get was food that was as fast as American food. Many an afternoon that American tourists had expected to spend looking at the ruins of Paestum was spent instead waiting two hours for

ZACH FRANZEN

a bad bowl of French onion soup at a promising-looking place a block from the railway station. Europeans savor their food. We often forget that this includes their bad food.

Finding convenience where no one saw fit to provide it used to be two-thirds of the trick of traveling. As such, it was a marketable skill. I spent the first couple of years of my career as a travel writer. I traveled to foreign cities, drew up lists of the things a person ought to see there, and recommended a handful of hotels and restaurants that wouldn't waste your time or steal your money.

The job-description "travel writer" makes the work sound more glamorous than it actually was. Prose-writing was involved, but it was of a formulaic kind that I hope has left no trace on my later style. Travel writers of my sort never used the word "have" when they could say *boast* or *sport*. There was nothing so awful that it couldn't be boasted or so unpleasant that it couldn't be sported. Palermo could "boast" a high crime rate, and Leipzig could "sport" some of Eastern Europe's ugliest architecture. Generally all these observations would be bundled together in the "land of contrasts" format. It could be applied to any country or geographical location, no matter how uniform:

> From the [name a natural landmark near the northern border] to the [natural landmark farther south], from the pulsing nightlife of [name a good place to get mugged] to the tranquil pace of [name some backwater], [insert country here] is a land of contrasts.

The "land of contrasts" format bears a certain resemblance to President Obama's "everyone in the world" format, as I was reminded when listening to his energy speech the other night. Never say "High gas prices are bad" when you can say:

> High gas prices are bad, folks—they're bad for folks like our sisters and our mothers, our fathers and our brothers, for folks like our children. They're bad for folks like our children's children and our children's children's folks, our caregivers and our first responders, our doctors and nurses and folks who farm and firemen and policemen and all those folks who have answered the call to . . .

My *solyanka* came in about half an hour. It was not bad. It boasted stewed pork and sported boiled cabbage, and from the bite of pepper to the smoothness of butter, from the delicacy of carrots to the robustness of onions, it was a soup of contrasts. Highly recommended.

Christopher Caldwell

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The 2012 Ticket

Remember Barack Obama? He's the president of the United States. As a candidate he promised hope and change. Now he defends the status quo. The fact that the status quo is clearly unsustainable doesn't deter him. His budget's endless deficits and rising debt takes us down a perfectly obvious road to ruin. But Obama asks us to close our eyes, pretend not to see, and hope against hope that we don't need to change.

Thankfully, the Republican party in 2011, under the leadership of Wisconsin congressman Paul Ryan, has decided to be serious about governing. But to govern America requires the presidency. The late Jack Kemp helped inspire the last sea change in American politics from the halls of Congress in the late 1970s. But real change required the defeat of incumbent president Jimmy Carter and the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. Thus the current interest, and anxiety, among Republicans and conservatives about 2012.

Paul Ryan Marco Rubio Chris Christie

The 2012 election is likely to be decisively important for the future of our country—but worrying about Election Day won't make it arrive any sooner. Nor is it at all clear that narrowing the presidential field early, or coming to agreement on a nominee sooner rather than later, would help Republicans prevail. In 2008, Obama clinched his party's nomination much later than John McCain did, yet Obama's having to endure a long schedule of hard-fought primaries didn't stop him from winning the general election handily.

All we can do is let the candidates run who have decided to run, and urge them to be bold and forthright in laying out their plans for the country. And we can encourage other candidates to consider running, too, in the assumption that there may be individuals who'd be good presidents but haven't chosen to run for the office—perhaps because they're busy with the jobs they have already, or perhaps because they're not as certain they should be president as those now putting themselves forward. This lack of certainty, incidentally, isn't a sign of bad character.

For example, Donald Trump has certainty. He says he's running for president, and an NBC / *Wall Street Journal* poll of Republicans last week had him tied for second in the GOP field with 17 percent of the vote. Trump shouldn't be, and won't be, the GOP nominee. But this degree of support does suggest unhappiness with the established candidates and an openness to someone new. So does the reaction of our readers to a recent blog post on The Weekly Standard website.

Here's some context. On April 3, Paul Ryan and Florida senator Marco Rubio appeared as guests on *Fox News Sunday*. Ryan explained and defended his budget. Rubio called for more decisive action in Libya. Later that day, I wrote a short item half-jokingly suggesting (once again) a Ryan-Rubio ticket in 2012. This is just a small sample of the emails we received:

- I love the two, couldn't be any better or smarter pair for 2012. They have my vote! I could finally sleep at night with those two running the country. Pray they team up and run in 2012.
- Paul Ryan and Marco Rubio are the future of not only the Republican party, but also America. Get rid of the old hacks, it's time for these dynamic American leaders. If they won't run, add Chris Christie to the mix. . . .
- I am a registered Democrat. . . . I agree with you on Ryan-Rubio, and would be willing to work for them in Joe Biden's home state of DE. I don't consider myself a Tea Party guy, although I agree with most of what they stand for. . . . Sign me up.
- Tell Ryan we'll let his kids roller-skate in the W.H. . . . ANYTHING! . . . Seriously, I understand they lack experience in some areas. However, when it comes to fiscal reality Paul Ryan IS the smartest man in the room. And he knows a whole lot about American political history . . . love the guy.

All of this suggests a willingness to consider more and hitherto unexpected options for the GOP nominee. And the following email correctly implies that not Obama but a fatalism about politics and the country may be the greatest obstacle to Republican success in 2012:

RYAN AND RUBIO: NEWSCOM; CHRISTIE: AP PHOTO / MEL EVANS

Mr. Kristol,

While your idea of a Ryan-Rubio 2012 ticket is a worthy one, it just won't work.

Rubio makes much too much sense for such a new senator; and he would have way too much appeal to the fastest growing population segment of our country.

Ryan is:

Much too smart.

Much too sensible.

Much too straightforward.

Much too knowledgeable and specific in his solutions.

Much too knowledgeable in the actual workings of government.

Much too genuine.

And waaaaaaaaaaay too likable.

How can this possibly work?

Make it work.

We at The Weekly Standard can't make it work. But Republican primary voters can. And they can choose a nominee—whoever that is—worthy of the battle ahead.

—*William Kristol*

Stand With Iraq

Defense Secretary Robert Gates was in Baghdad last week on what was probably his last official trip to the country he helped save from devastating sectarian war. His visit was hardly a victory lap. His comments were as demure as they usually have been. That tenor was appropriate, for it is still too early to declare "mission accomplished" in Iraq. Iraqi politics remain unsettled. Tensions along the Kurd-Arab frontier are high. Iranian-supported militant groups continue to attack American and Iraqi forces. Al Qaeda in Iraq is struggling to regain its footing. The Iraqi Security Forces will be unable to manage the many challenges they face at the end of this year.

But the Obama administration appears more than willing to declare "mission accomplished" when the last American soldier leaves Iraq in December, regardless of the situation there. A "senior U.S. defense official" put it this way: "If [the Iraqis] are going to ask for a modification [to current withdrawal schedules] or anything else, it would probably be in their interest to ask for it sooner rather than later because we're starting to run out of months. . . . The ball is in their court." The implication of these comments, and of the administration's Iraq policy to date, is that America has no substantial interest in what happens in Iraq after December. If the Iraqis want to have a relationship, the United States may be willing; if not, not. Either way, the mission Obama gave himself when he took office—"end this war"—will have been accomplished.

Defenders of administration policy say it is a mistake to conflate a continued American military presence with the overall Iraqi-American relationship. The Strategic Framework Agreement negotiated by the Bush administration in 2008, they say, was not predicated on American troops in Iraq. It was intended, instead, to foster a series of nonmilitary exchanges, programs, and relationships designed to bind Iraq and America together. The U.S.-Iraqi alliance, these defenders might say, is merely entering a new phase that is appropriate to conditions in which U.S. military forces in Iraq are neither needed nor desired.

Such arguments are alarmingly naïve, however. There has been no meaningful development of Iraqi-American nonmilitary ties, although the State Department surely can produce a laundry list of initiatives along those lines. The current administration plan, for instance, envisages thousands of American civilians going into Iraq in 2012, expanding the embassy in Baghdad and several large civilian bases around the country. A military officer would head up an Office of Security Cooperation (OSC) of the sort that oversees American military assistance to many countries around the world.

Of the many problems with this plan, a few stand out. We have been hearing about "civilian surges" into Iraq and Afghanistan for years, yet the nondefense contributions to such surges have been limited, slow to arrive, and painful to maintain. Nor is even an expanded OSC of the kind the administration proposes appropriate for a country that requires a large and diverse set of peacekeeping, training, equipment, and support missions. For example, the thousands of civilians contemplated in the administration's plan include a mini-army controlled by the embassy just to provide security for U.S. officials after the actual military has left. Wouldn't it be more sensible to allow the U.S. military to perform such functions with troops and equipment already maintained for that purpose?

America has done virtually nothing on the nonmilitary side to bind Iraq to the West. On the contrary, Iran has done everything in its power to drive a wedge between Iraq and the United States. Not only do Iranian weapons and Iranian-trained fighters continue to flow into Iraq, but Iranian businesses (many tied to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps), money, officials, clerics, and propaganda pour into the country. America has made no attempt to counter this Iranian offensive. We have not encouraged Western companies to compete with Iranian investment. We have conducted no public relations efforts in Iraq to counter the Iranian narrative. As Iran's leaders have aggressively courted, cajoled, threatened, and promised Iraq's political elites, the United States has almost entirely ignored them. If the future of the U.S.-Iraq relationship depends on soft power alone, then there is no

future. The Obama administration has forfeited that game.

The notion that soft power can replace American military forces in Iraq on January 1, 2012, fundamentally misjudges the situation on the ground. The tenuous peace along the northern Arab-Kurd seam is maintained by the presence of tripartite peacekeeping forces in which American ground troops play a decisive role. The withdrawal of those forces would almost certainly lead to the collapse of the peacekeeping agreement and might lead to the collapse of the peace itself. Without the continued presence of American military advisers, Iraq's security forces will be inadequate to meet the challenges from Iranian-backed militias and Sunni revanchist groups including Al Qaeda in Iraq. Iraqi Security Forces are not even up to the basic requirements of defending Iraq's sovereignty. Iraq has no capability to police or control its own airspace and an extremely limited ability to defend its coast and the vital offshore oil platforms through which most of its oil flows. Nor will such a capacity be in place by 2012.

Critics of the war in Iraq have long argued that the 2003 invasion did nothing but give Iraq to the Iranians. Tehran certainly leapt to take advantage of Saddam Hussein's fall, and some U.S. policies were remarkably complacent about dealing with Iranian-backed political figures. But, from 2004 until today, American forces have continuously resisted Iranian military operations in Iraq and, until 2009, attempted to support and encourage Iraqi leaders willing to stand up to the threat from the east. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki did so on many occasions, most notably in 2008 when he ordered the Iraqi Army to clear Iranian-backed militias out of Basra. The United States supported him with everything we had.

The contrast between that support and the near-total disregard of Iraqi requests for help in resisting Iranian pressures during the formation of the current government could not have been starker. If Maliki now feels the need to bow to Iranian pressure, it is not because he is Tehran's man. Quite the opposite: Tehran's agents spent most of 2006-2009 trying to kill him. But why would anyone expect Maliki or Iraq's other leaders to continue risking their lives to oppose Iran when there is no support forthcoming from Washington? Iraq's Shiites have demonstrated repeatedly since 2003 that they do not wish to be ruled by Iranian mullahs. They have said publicly and privately that they need help to remain independent. Will America really not provide that help?

Nothing requires us to keep massive numbers of American troops in Iraq. Twenty thousand soldiers would be enough for the next several years. That number is smaller than the American military presence in Korea, Japan, and Germany. Nor would those forces be engaged in combat. The 50,000-odd U.S. troops in Iraq today are occupied primarily with peacekeeping, training, supporting the Iraqi Security Forces, and counterterrorism. These are missions Americans would continue to undertake in 2012 and beyond. Nor is there any need to pour money into Iraq to support the modernization and development of the Iraqi Security Forces—Iraq has more than enough money to pay for itself. What Iraq requires are trainers, foreign suppliers, and, above all, supporters. To extend the American military presence in Iraq would not be a commitment to endless war or large expenditures. It would reap the benefit of the cost in blood and treasure that the United States has already paid.

AP PHOTO / KHALID MOHAMMED

Children wave Iraqi flags in Baghdad.

The ball is not in Maliki's court. It is in Obama's court. If the administration understands that American interests in Iraq and throughout the Middle East are best served by supporting an independent Iraq and cementing a long-term U.S.-Iraqi relationship, then the White House must take the initiative. The administration must stop signaling that it can take Iraq or leave it and instead signal a determination to stand by Iraq's leaders as long as those leaders stand by the democratic processes now tenuously in place and commit to the ethno-sectarian peace achieved at such a high price. The administration must make clear to the Kurds that there will be no American support for them now or in the future unless they throw their weight behind a new agreement between Washington and Baghdad. The administration must call on the Turks and the Saudis to help counterbalance Iranian pressures on Iraq's leaders. Above all, the administration must stop using Iraqi missteps in forming their current government as an excuse to put off discussion of the U.S.-Iraq security partnership. Iraq has a prime minister and a parliament. That is enough to start negotiations.

American policy can no longer be to "end this war." "This war" was over long ago. But the fight for Iraq and for America's place in a critical part of the Greater Middle East continues. It is a fight the Obama administration must win.

—Frederick W. Kagan and Kimberly Kagan

Case Dismissed!

In a week when the news concerned taxes and spending, the Supreme Court happened to decide a case dealing with . . . taxes and spending. This was not a federal but a state case, from Arizona, and the good news is that in a 5-to-4 ruling the Court recognized its proper, limited role in our system of constitutional self-government.

Since 1998 Arizona has given tax credits for contributions made to "school tuition organizations" (STOs), which fund scholarships for students going to private schools, some of them church-related. Inevitably, some Arizona taxpayers challenged the STO tax credit as an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

The justices could have decided *Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization* v. *Winn* on the merits. The Court could have said the tax credit was constitutional, or it could have said it was not. But Justice Kennedy, writing for the majority, instead held—on an issue also briefed in the case—that the objecting taxpayers lacked "standing" to bring their complaint in the first place.

Justice Anthony Kennedy

AP PHOTO / DAMIAN DOVARGANES

Standing concerns who properly may bring a claim that a government action violates the Constitution. The Court has developed the doctrine over the years to ensure that it is resolving actual cases and controversies and not, as Justice Kennedy observed, mere "questions and issues." For the federal courts to decide questions of law outside of cases and controversies, Kennedy continued, "would be inimical to the Constitution's democratic character."

Standing requires, among other things, that the complaining party suffer an injury that is concrete, particularized, actual, or imminent, not conjectural or hypothetical. Necessarily, as Justice Kennedy wrote, "a plaintiff who seeks to invoke the federal judicial power must assert more than just the 'generalized interest of all citizens in constitutional governance.'"

Such an understanding is reflected in a long-standing rule forbidding so-called "taxpayer lawsuits." Justice Kennedy applied this rule to the Arizonans who challenged the tuition tax credit. The four dissenting justices agreed with Kennedy's application. The disagreement among the justices lay in whether the objecting Arizonans might have standing under an exception to the rule carved out in 1968, in *Flast* v. *Cohen*.

In *Flast* a group of taxpayers challenged as unconstitutional an act of Congress authorizing expenditures of federal funds to underwrite teaching of secular subjects in church-related schools. To the question of whether they had standing, the Court said they did. Chief Justice Warren explained that standing was available to a taxpayer so long as his objection was to an expenditure made under the congressional power to tax and spend, and so long as he made that objection on the basis of a specific constitutional limitation on that power—such as the First Amendment's ban on establishment of religion.

Addressing whether the Arizona taxpayers had standing under *Flast*, Justice Kennedy rejected the argument that the STO tax credit case should be seen in the same light as a congressional expenditure. Kennedy explained that when government collects and spends taxpayer money, as in *Flast*, the government is making choices that could result in a subsidy of religious activity. But in *Winn*, while Arizona "affords the opportunity to create and contribute to an STO, the tax credit system is implemented by private action and with no state intervention."

Writing for the four dissenters, Justice Kagan said the majority's distinction between a tax credit and a tax expenditure was one without a difference. She charged that the decision "devastates taxpayer standing in Establishment Clause cases."

Yet it is only in such cases that taxpayer standing has been permitted. For some reason—perhaps the hostility toward religion held by some justices in the middle decades of the twentieth century—only the establishment clause has been regarded by the Court as a specific limitation on the taxing and spending power. *Flast* is the anomaly: The case might not have been decided as it was but for the liberal composition of the Court at the time. The entry for *Flast* v. *Cohen* in the by no means right-leaning *Oxford Guide to United States Supreme Court Decisions* observes that *Flast* "was central to the Warren Court's liberal activist philosophy of increasing public access to federal courts and making them more receptive to public law litigation."

We have reaped the whirlwind, Justice Kennedy seemed to say in his opinion, for ours is "an era of frequent litigation, class actions, sweeping injunctions with prospective effect, and continuing jurisdiction to enforce judicial remedies." Given those realities, "courts must be more careful to insist on the formal rules of standing, not less so." Judicial self-restraint is the message here. It's the right message, too.

—Terry Eastland

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The Great Debate

Ryan vs. Obama will be this year's main event, if the president is up for it. BY FRED BARNES

Paul Ryan's dissection of Obamacare at the White House health care summit on February 25, 2010, elevated him to a stature in Washington rare for a House member. The summit dawdled along for seven hours. Six riveting minutes of analysis delivered by Ryan, as President Obama listened a few seats away, broke the tedium.

Obama's reply is largely forgotten. Rather than responsive, he was evasive. He ignored Ryan's sweeping critique and said he wanted to "follow up on a couple points." He picked one that Ryan hadn't mentioned. He asked if Ryan thought Medicare Advantage was "working well," then didn't give Ryan a chance to answer.

Given this encounter, you can imagine Obama's wariness of debating Ryan on the 2012 budget and everything that goes with it, from spending and debt to tax reform and Medicaid. And there's the larger issue, the future of the country. Obama says he wants to "win" it. Ryan believes we're "on the brink of national bankruptcy."

Obama and Ryan haven't talked since the summit, except for the president's brief call to Ryan after Republicans captured the House in last November's election. Yet Obama and Ryan are the only worthy and appropriate debaters. Both are leaders of their party, Obama as the Democratic president, Ryan because he's been designated by Republicans as the architect of their budget and its plan for restraining the growth of government.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

They are cool and likable rivals from the same generation. Obama is 49, Ryan 41. Both have visions of what constitutes a successful America. Obama wants government to play a dominant role in American life, redistributing wealth by heavily taxing the well-to-do. Ryan would shrink government, cut taxes, and incentivize individuals to create a more dynamic country. Obama's model is Western Europe. Ryan's is America over most of the 20th century.

THOMAS FLUHARTY

An Obama-Ryan debate wouldn't be a one-on-one, televised sit-down. That's inconceivable under current political circumstances. Instead, they'd debate in speeches, interviews, and press conferences over the spring and summer, defending their ideas and criticizing their opponent's views. The media would cover them lavishly.

Ryan will do this, regardless of what the president does. Is it too much to ask of Obama that he engage directly? It may be. He would be well outside his comfort zone. He is a world-class delegator. He turned over the drafting of his biggest initiatives—economic stimulus, health care, and energy/climate change—to Democratic functionaries in Congress.

For Obama to debate Ryan, even from a distance, he would have to defy conventional wisdom. Presidents try to rise above squabbling in Congress, posturing as adults confronted with unruly children. After being overexposed in his first two years in the White House, Obama may conclude this strategy makes sense.

But Obama is already 0-for-2 in 2011, a very bad start in his struggle with Republicans and bid for reelection.

He has talked often about coming to grips with the soaring cost of entitlements. In February, he said financing Medicare and Medicaid creates "huge problems" that must be dealt with in "a serious way."

His budget for 2012 failed the seriousness test. It must have shocked the president and his advisers when his budget and Obama himself were panned by the media, including the liberal press. He's not used to this. That was loss number one for Obama this year.

The second was the successful rollout of the Ryan budget. In contrast, the media praised Ryan while goading Obama. "The Wisconsin Republican has produced a plan to deal with the debt, which is more

than his Democratic colleagues or President Obama can say," the *Washington Post* editorialized. "Now it's Obama's turn," the *Boston Globe* said.

It was no accident that Ryan fared so well. His budget, with its deep cuts and revolutionary reforms, might have frightened many House Republicans. But Ryan got critical help from House majority whip Kevin McCarthy, who turned over his conference room in the Capitol for a series of lectures to the entire Republican caucus on the looming debt crisis and Ryan's answer in his budget. (Some members returned to hear the lecture a second time.) When the budget committee approved the Ryan document, all 22 Republicans voted for it.

Ryan and McCarthy also summoned business and conservative advocacy groups to briefings. Among them: the International Franchise Association, the National Restaurant Association, the Chamber of Commerce, and Heritage Action for America. Their response was favorable.

Ryan personally lobbied conservative talkers, including Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity, columnists such as David Brooks of the *New York Times*, think tanks, reporters, policy experts, and anyone else Ryan could get to sit down with him. The House Republican Study Committee produced its own budget with deeper cuts than Ryan's, but RSC members are overwhelmingly supporting Ryan too.

The biggest coup for Ryan was Democrat Erskine Bowles, the Obama-appointed co-chairman of Obama's debt commission. Bowles and his co-chairman, Republican Alan Simpson, lauded the Ryan budget as "a serious, honest, straightforward approach." Compare this with their take on the Obama budget. "The president's budget doesn't go nearly far enough in addressing the nation's fiscal challenges," they said. "In fact, it goes nowhere close."

While that was a blow to Obama, he would still have the commanding position in a debate with Ryan. He's president and commander in chief. Ryan is a House committee chairman. There's a difference. Obama has the biggest megaphone and gets the most attention. The media, while critical of Obama's budget, are largely on his side ideologically. Press attacks on Ryan are inevitable. Indeed, they've begun. Obama can change the subject and drag the media off with him.

But Ryan has significant advantages in a clash over spending, the deficit, debt, health care, taxes, economic growth, and America's future. His biggest asset is his vastly superior knowledge of most of these subjects. I suspect he knows more about Obama's budget and health care plan than the president does. He's an expert. Obama isn't.

Ryan has the credibility that comes from meeting head-on the fiscal challenge to which Obama responds with lip service. In one sense, Ryan is less politically motivated than the president. He's not running for president and has said so repeatedly and convincingly. He doesn't have to answer to interest groups.

And he's steering the country in the direction it wants to go, though he's probably doing so faster and more aggressively than most Americans expected. Ryan is a risk-taker with an instinct for leadership. Obama is a leader with an instinct for avoidance.

"If there's anyone made for this moment," says McCarthy, "it's Ryan." If anyone has said that about Obama, I missed it. Now he has an opportunity. He can meet the challenge of Paul Ryan and the fiscal issues he's been inclined to dodge. He can debate Ryan. Or leave it to others. The country is waiting. ♦

Upon Further Review . . .

Judge Goldstone withdraws his charge of Israeli war crimes. BY PETER BERKOWITZ

To the astonishment of friends and foes of Israel alike, on April 1 in the *Washington Post*, Justice Richard Goldstone reversed himself. Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu promptly demanded that the United Nations retract the Goldstone Report, which, following its publication in September 2009, quickly became the proof text for progressives determined to denounce Israel as an outlaw nation. Meanwhile, Goldstone's colleagues on the U.N. Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict—London School of Economics professor Christine Chinkin; Colonel Desmond Travers, a former officer in Ireland's Defence Forces; and Hina Jilani, advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan—have shown no sign of changing their minds. Indeed, on April 4, Jilani declared that "no process or acceptable procedure would invalidate the U.N. Report."

Yet whatever unfolds at the U.N. and however determined his colleagues are to stick to their story, Goldstone's dramatic reversal has great significance. Under the understated title "Reconsidering the Goldstone Report on Israel and War Crimes," Goldstone withdrew the gravest charge that he and his colleagues had leveled against Israel and its Gaza operation of December 2008-January 2009, which aimed at stopping Hamas's firing of thousands

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of mortar shells, rockets, and missiles at civilian populations in southern Israel.

According to Goldstone, a former justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, it is now established both by Israeli military investigations and by "the final report by the U.N. committee of independent experts" (chaired by former New York judge Mary McGowan Davis) that "civilians were not intentionally targeted as a matter of policy" by Israel. Coming from Goldstone—chosen to head the Human Rights Council's investigation in part because of the prestige he brought as former prosecutor of the international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda—this exoneration was as welcome as it was unexpected. But, like much else in his *Post* piece, it is partial and misleading.

Goldstone wrote as if he were confronting a lingering suspicion that finally can be laid to rest. He failed to acknowledge that nothing had done more than the Goldstone Report—endorsed by the U.N. General Assembly in November 2009 by a vote of 114-18, with 44 countries abstaining—to promulgate the slander that Israel had adopted an essentially criminal strategy in Operation Cast Lead.

In fact, the Goldstone Report culminates with the conclusion—not a factual finding or suspicion but a legal conclusion—that in the Gaza conflict Israel undertook

> a deliberately disproportionate attack designed to punish, humiliate and terrorize a civilian population, radically diminish its local economic capacity both to work and to provide for itself, and to force upon it an ever increasing sense of dependency and vulnerability. (Part V, par. 1690)

With this calumny, the Goldstone Report went beyond asserting a moral equivalence between Israel and the terrorists it was fighting. It affirmed that Israel was worse than Hamas, since Israel was a state, since Israel used state-of-the-art weaponry, and since the death and destruction it supposedly deliberately inflicted on civilians in Gaza was much greater than the harm to civilians in southern Israel caused by eight years of Hamas bombardment.

In the *Post*, Goldstone blamed his report's most egregious error on Israel's refusal to cooperate: "The allegations of intentionality by Israel were based on the deaths of and injuries to civilians in situations where our fact-finding mission had no evidence on which to draw any other reasonable conclusion." This is incorrect. For one thing, Goldstone and his colleagues did not leave matters at "allegations"; they made numerous legal findings that Israel, as a matter of strategy and policy, targeted civilians. For another, it was not as Goldstone now contends that he lacked evidence to avoid the conclusion of intentionality. Rather, the evidence he and his team collected and on which they based their legal findings was *always* insufficient to reasonably conclude that the Israel Defense Forces had committed war crimes and crimes against humanity.

What's that? We were completely wrong? Judge Richard Goldstone.

To find that a military has used disproportionate force, international humanitarian law, also known as the law of armed conflict, requires an analysis of the understandings and intentions of commanders and soldiers and a determination of whether their decisions and conduct were reasonable in the circumstances. The Goldstone Report contains no such analysis. True, Israel declined to cooperate, but it was under no legal obligation to do so. The Goldstone Report, moreover, was precluded from inferring criminal intent either from Israel's decision not to cooperate or from the absence of information about Israeli understandings and intentions. Yet the Goldstone Report leapt to grim legal conclusions about the use of disproportionate force without such elementary information as the rules of engagement under which IDF commanders and soldiers operated against terrorists who relentlessly sought to blur the distinction—fundamental in the law of armed conflict—between civilians and combatants by unlawfully positioning themselves in densely populated areas and unlawfully fighting without uniforms. In short, the Goldstone Report's legal finding that Israel sought to "terrorize a civilian population" was based on inadequate factual findings and so was inherently invalid.

Goldstone's Reconsideration also withdraws—without making clear it is doing so—a scurrilous charge against the Israeli legal system. It cites approvingly the McGowan Davis report, which notes that "'Israel has dedicated significant resources to investigate over 400 allegations of operational misconduct in Gaza' while 'the de facto authorities (i.e., Hamas) have not conducted any investigations into the launching of rocket and mortar attacks against Israel.'"

In rightly crediting Israel's investigations, however, Goldstone does not mention his report's baseless finding that Israel's system of civilian and military justice "does not comply with" the principles of international law (Part IV, par. 1612). The Goldstone Report reached this damning conclusion even though Israel's procedures for investigating war crimes allegations compare favorably with, and in some important respects are more exacting than,

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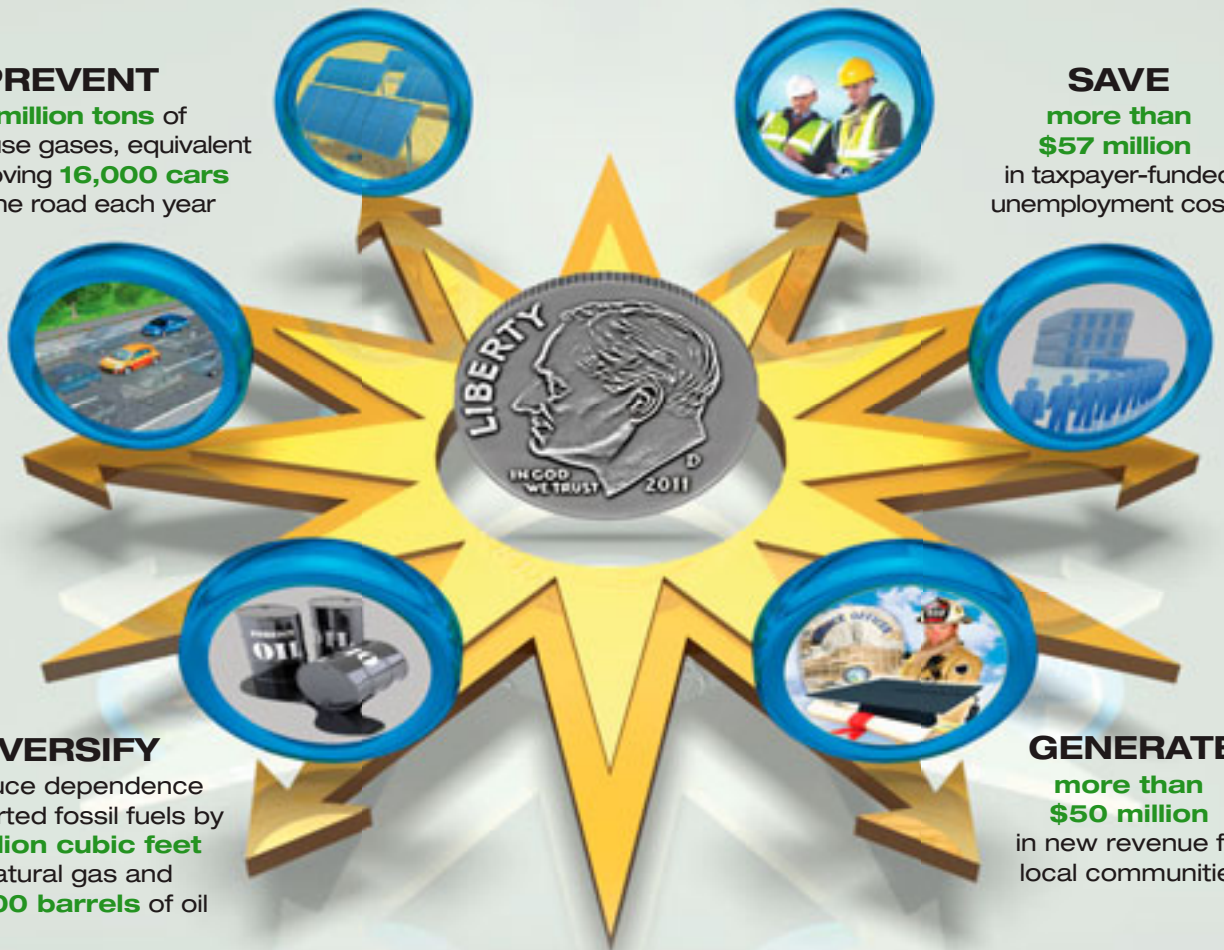

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Some distinguished Israelis, including *Haaretz*'s Aluf Benn and Hebrew University's Shlomo Avineri, have argued that an important lesson to be learned from Goldstone's reconsideration is that Israel ought to have cooperated with the Goldstone mission and should cooperate with similar international investigations in the future. Even if the investigators are biased, better for Israel to make its case and get it on record before official conclusions are published and ratified by the U.N.

That is the wrong lesson. Israel should not acquiesce to one set of rules and standards for itself and another for all other states. Under international humanitarian law, the obligation to investigate and prosecute war crimes falls in the first place on nations accused. Only when a country has shown itself to be unwilling or unable to discharge its obligation are international bodies authorized to pursue war crimes investigations. Israel, whose devotion to the law of armed conflict is something of which its soldiers and citizens can be proud, should not cooperate in the abrogation of its rights and responsibilities as a sovereign nation.

The Goldstone Report inflicted grave damage on Israel. But the Goldstone Reconsideration provides an excellent opportunity to reorient public discussion about international humanitarian law, not only for Israel but also for the United States, which, like its only liberal and democratic ally in the Middle East, is locked in a long war against transnational terrorists.

As Goldstone rightly observes at the end of his reconsideration, "the laws of armed conflict apply no less to nonstate actors such as Hamas than they do to national armies." It's high time to recognize that the chief threat to international law and order comes not, as so many Western intellectuals and international human rights lawyers are inclined to believe, from Israel and the United States, whose militaries devote untold and unprecedented hours to studying and enforcing the law of armed conflict, but from the terrorists, who utterly reject it. ♦

A Finn Man Trying to Get Out

The EU's bailouts spark an uprising.

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

True Finns party leader Timo Soini

Helsinki

If you believe the members of the fastest growing political party in Finland, their country is the sucker, the sap, the patsy among the Nordic nations. Norway never joined the European Union. Sweden and Denmark opted out of using its currency, the euro. Finland, however, is a full member in every respect, and as such has seen its AAA-rated bonds used to guarantee the bailouts of profligate elites in Greece, Ireland, and Portugal.

Elections scheduled for April 17 in Finland have put the eurozone rescue plan (as they call it in Greek) or bailout (as they call it in German) on a collision course with a populist uprising. "It is not possible to pull out by ourselves," says Timo Soini, the man who is leading that uprising. "But it was a mistake to join." In the not inconceivable event that Soini becomes prime minister, Europe's mechanism for paying off government creditors is going to get much trickier.

The European Council made a big accounting mistake last May. With the help of the IMF, it set up the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), a 750-billion-euro fund to tide over Greece and any other member states that ran into financial trouble. The EFSF was supposed to be a safe, triple-A fund with a big cushion of equity. This meant that it could not lend all its money—only about 440 billion euros of it. But there are just six triple-A countries in the EU, including Finland. (The others are Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria, and Luxembourg.) The

AP / LEHTIKUVA, HEIKKI SAUKKOMAA

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equity that member states put up was more wobbly than assumed. The fund's real bailout power was only half of what Europeans claimed it was. So a month ago, at a meeting in Brussels, the European Council told member states that they would have to roughly double their contributions.

That is where Finland comes in. Key EU votes require unanimity, and Finns are not happy being told that they need to guarantee 16 billion euros of a dangerous bailout fund rather than the 7.9 billion they were first asked for. Already Europe's self-styled financial rescuers find themselves warming their hands over the pressure-cooker that is the German electorate. German voters, who are paying more than a quarter of the tab for the bailouts, are convinced that all the money they've saved by cutting and scrimping over the past decade is now being commandeered to pay off the debts of a bunch of Mediterranean freeloaders. An increasing number of Finns feel the same way, although their tiny country covers only 2 percent of the bailouts. In Finland as in Germany, there is suspicion that the EU is turning into a "transfer union," i.e., an arrangement by which high-earning countries transfer income and resources to low-earning ones.

Finland requires a parliamentary vote before assenting to the hike in its EFSF contribution. But no vote can be taken, because the parliament has been dissolved for elections, and every mention of the bailout seems to drive voters into the arms of Soini's Perussuomalaiset ("True Finns") party. Soini founded it in 1995 as a successor to the country's Rural party, and his personal popularity is immense. In elections for the European parliament in 2009, he ran on an anti-EU platform and got more votes than any other candidate in the country. But until recently the True Finns were a splinter party in Helsinki, with only half a dozen seats in parliament and a reputation as populist and therefore beyond the pale. Real power is swapped back and forth between three parties that command about a fifth of the vote apiece: the conservative National Coalition, the Center, and the Social Democrats.

"Populist" is an unambiguous slur in Western Europe. The word is used to tar movements as vaguely fascistic when proving them so is difficult. Something has happened in the past year, though, that has allowed the True Finns to vault into a tie with the other parties in the big three. What is it?

According to Soini, the most important issue to his voters, from the beginning, has been skepticism about Europe and the euro. The True Finns see their sovereignty imperiled by the EU in much the way their independence once was menaced by their neighbor the Soviet Union. "When they had problems in the USSR, everyone went to Moscow and said the answer was 'More socialism,'" he says. "Today, every time a problem comes up in the EU, the answer is 'More Europe.'" Asked to liken his party to another in Europe, he chooses the madcap constitutionalists of the U.K. Independence party, rather than any of the groups upset about real populist issues—such as immigration, multiculturalism, and Islam.

Certainly, the True Finns are skeptical about immigration. One party member, a Helsinki city councilman, was convicted in 2009 for writing nasty things about immigrants on his website. But the party as a whole is not rabid on the matter. Its preoccupations concern failures of immigration policy. Soini himself has spoken in favor of labor immigration, but points to abuses of the welfare state and ghettoization as the main problems. The spectacular failure to assimilate a large group of Somalis who arrived in Helsinki roughly a decade ago has left the general public strongly disinclined to encourage more newcomers. All three mainstream parties have hardened their policies on immigration.

After 2005, according to public opinion surveys taken by the businessmen's think tank EVA, public opinion on immigration turned sharply negative. Still, Soini thinks Finland has been so relatively untouched by immigration that only a foolish politician would build his career on outrage over the issue. As a way of conveying his comfort with foreigners, Soini notes, a bit quaintly, that he is a Catholic. Impressed by John Paul II, he converted while living in Ireland in the 1980s. There are only 11,000 Catholics in Finland, and most of them are foreign born.

Soini's party puts forward a grab bag of conservative policies that sound a bit strange in Scandinavia. They would be a better fit for a pre-Tea Party American conservative. Soini likes monuments and statues, but has thrown down the gauntlet against government-funded modern art. He is one of the rare European politicians to assert that climate change is a scam, a ruse for raising taxes. Thanks to a recent "green" tax reform that dramatically raised the price of both gasoline and heating oil, Finns have been receptive to this message. Five years ago, 7 in 10 were ready to pay to fight climate change, according to Ilkka Haavisto of EVA; today the figure has fallen to 5 in 10.

Soini is a social conservative. He opposes abortion categorically. Finland does not have full same-sex marriage, at least not in churches, and Soini, like the Finnish Lutheran church and probably a majority of Finns, does not think it should. The three main parties, meanwhile, will not touch the issue with a stick, so Finland is drifting towards same-sex marriage just as the rest of the world is—out of a vague sense, cultivated by lobbyists and activists, that "history" somehow compels it.

On many political issues, this uncomfortable sense of drift is the real source of Soini's rise. The Finnish culture of government is reminiscent of the one prevalent in the Netherlands in the late 1990s before the rise of Pim Fortuyn. Then a series of "purple" governments, yoking the left (red) and the right (blue), delivered the country over to rule by experts. Today Finnish voters complain that, while ruling coalitions change, policies never do. And even

ruling coalitions don't change that often. Over the past half-decade, Finland has undergone a nationwide scandal surrounding the financing of the major parties. It culminated last year with the resignation of Center party prime minister Matti Vanhanen, who was succeeded unproblematically by his Center party colleague Mari Kiviniemi. Fewer than a third of Finns can name the parties that make up the government. Says Haavisto: "The only guy in Finnish politics who says we have options is Timo Soini."

In every European country there exists a party or movement that bundles together the losers of globalization. These parties vary a lot more than is commonly appreciated. Some are buttoned down (like Soini's party) and some are libertine (like Fortuyn's). Some are religious (like the Danish People's party) and some are secular (like Geert Wilders's Freedom party in the Netherlands). But the one position they all defend is a strong welfare state—a curious thing, because these populist parties tend to be lumped together as "right-wing" by their detractors.

This, it turns out, is an oversimplification. What these parties ultimately care about is national sovereignty—which might indeed be called a right-wing cause. But politicians selling its virtues to a democratic electorate will not hesitate to lay out the "left wing" benefits that citizens used to enjoy before national sovereignty was called into question, whether in the name of human rights or free markets or "building Europe." Of the three main parties, it is the Social Democrats who have lost biggest from the True Finns' rise. Soini describes his movement as a "labor party without socialism."

"I'm being stoned in Finland for saying this," Soini says of his opposition to the EU's bank bailouts and to Finland's membership in the EU more generally. "I'm not a bad man. I'm just saying that, in economic terms, this won't work." ♦

Another Hopeless EU Bureaucracy

Europe's common foreign policy is dead on arrival.

BY JAMES KIRCHICK

Brussels

It's supposed to be the crowning achievement of the decades-long dream that is European integration: Last December, the European Union inaugurated its European External Action Service (EEAS). Intended to implement the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European suprastate, the EEAS hopes to recruit some 5,400 civil servants and operate with an annual budget of over $4 billion. With a secretariat in Brussels and EU embassies around the world, the EEAS would resemble the foreign ministry of a sovereign state and allow for "the progressive framing of a common defense policy that might lead to a common defense."

That's the theory anyway. Given all of the internal strife the EU is facing (namely, a debt crisis that has thrown the very future of the eurozone in doubt), the notion that these squabbling 27 nations can come together to implement policies outside the EU's borders seems more than a bit premature. Nothing better demonstrates this than the continent's fractious response to the crisis in Libya.

Muammar Qaddafi's war against his own people has presented the EU foreign policy apparatus with its first major test, a test it has failed. No sooner had Qaddafi opened fire than a rift emerged between two of the EU's most important members. On one side stood Germany, which opposes Western military intervention. Berlin abstained from the United Nations Security Council resolution authorizing the enforcement of a no-fly zone, withdrew four ships in the Mediterranean from NATO command, and has publicly criticized the ongoing military campaign. The German development minister went so far as to accuse its traditional Western allies of hypocrisy, stating, "It is notable that exactly those countries which are blithely dropping bombs in Libya are still drawing oil from Libya."

On the other side of the ledger is France, for whom the war seems to have as much to do with President Nicolas Sarkozy's election prospects as it does with French national interests. Sarkozy felt the need to save face after his country's disastrous reaction to the uprising in Tunisia, when he was forced to fire his foreign minister, who had taken a holiday there in the midst of revolutionary unrest and flown on the private jet of a businessman close to the deposed dictator, Zine Ben Ali. Germany's refusal to join the coalition against Qaddafi has led to intra-European sniping; a French diplomat recently told *Le Parisien* newspaper that "[Chancellor] Angela Merkel will have to pay for this for a very long time."

Of course, there are practical reasons why France supported intervention in Libya while Germany demurred. France has a Mediterranean coast and would have borne the brunt of a massive influx of refugees. It's also a major market for Libyan oil and gas. Germany, on the other hand, does not abut the Mediterranean and receives a substantial amount of its energy supply from Russia (it's for this reason that Germany has taken a much softer line on Moscow than the EU's eastern

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members, which suffered for decades under brutal Soviet occupation).

Such divergences are in fact to be expected and can be found on practically every important foreign policy issue, illustrating why the Common Foreign and Security Policy is inherently flawed. Despite the EU's pretensions to articulating a foreign policy that rises above the interests of individual states, realpolitik is still very much *en vogue* on the continent. No less a figure than Catherine Ashton, the EU high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, recently allowed that implementing a common foreign policy is akin to "flying an airplane while we are still building the wings and somebody is trying to take the tailfin off at the same time."

Though a far cry from the destructive wars of old, present-day European bickering over foreign policy is nothing new. It took years of pressure from British prime minister Tony Blair to rise above the objections of his continental counterparts and get NATO intervention in the Balkans; ultimately it was the belated involvement of President Bill Clinton that convinced Europeans they had a responsibility to stop the genocide occurring on their doorstep. The Iraq war brought the contradictions of a common European foreign policy once again to the fore. The United Kingdom, where there has long been a debate about whether London should privilege its "special relationship" with the United States over its ties to the EU, chose to join the United States, while France and Germany led vociferous European opposition to the war. Meanwhile, Eastern European countries, fresh from the bonds of Soviet control, joined the coalition of the willing. Donald Rumsfeld's use of the term "Old Europe" to distinguish Germany and France from the newly independent states, while perhaps undiplomatic, was not inaccurate.

Anti-Qaddafi demonstrators in Madrid

AP

The foreign policy disagreements among European countries stem from the grim particularities of the continent's history as well as present-day national interests. In other words, they're deeply rooted and are hardly diminishing. For obvious historical reasons, Germans are averse to the use of force to settle international disputes, and not just when it's the United States taking up arms (the Iraq war was nowhere more unpopular in Europe than in Germany). According to Jeffrey Herf, a professor of German history at the University of Maryland, a new "mood" has emerged in German foreign policy circles seeking "the replacement of the primitive nationalisms of the past with multilateral principles of an integrated Europe," which "assumes that webs of interdependence created by the global economy will make problems solvable through negotiations and dialogue."

The existence of these formidable obstacles to forging a European consensus have not dissuaded Ashton from pressing forward with the dream of an integrated EU foreign policy. Last month at the Brussels Forum, an annual conference organized by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, I asked her if the dissension within the ranks over Libya threatened the prospects of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Befitting a woman whose job it is to express the "view" of a 27-member bloc that can barely agree upon tariffs, let alone a war policy, she offered little more than diplomatic mush. "I don't think you should see [this disagreement] as a negative; I think you should see it as really a positive. That Europe debates, decides, and moves forward together, and that's what it's doing."

At best, what this approach amounts to is a lowest common denominator foreign policy. As long as individual EU members can veto action, the body's decisions will always be determined by its most hesitant members. In the case of Libya, the EU was left to coordinate the evacuation of its citizens from that country, and little more. Not for nothing did France's *Le Monde* editorialize that the body's reaction to the Libyan crisis "demonstrates the immaturity of European security and defense policy, the poverty of the political debate, and the inadequacy of personnel." A European diplomat echoed that pessimism, telling the German news agency Deutsche Presse-Agentur that "the Common Foreign and Security Policy died in Libya—we just have to pick a sand dune under which we can bury it."

None of this is to say that the idea of European integration is a bad thing. At the very least, it has had a damper effect on the more malevolent aspects of European nationalism; the notion of Europeans once again taking up arms against each other is a thankfully unimaginable prospect. And the EU has had an undeniably positive effect in its eastern "neighborhood," encouraging candidate countries to develop liberal economic reforms, tackle corruption, and work harder to incorporate ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities. But the dream of subsuming the discordant national interests of 27 countries so that a coherent foreign policy can be erected in their place appears to have died in the bloody sands of North Africa. ♦

BP One Year Later

Lessons of the Gulf oil spill.

BY ANDREW B. WILSON

Just before 10 P.M. on April 20, 2010, disaster struck the giant *Deepwater Horizon* oil rig. Crew members aboard the rig were in the final hours of attempting to secure a "nightmare well" about a mile deep in the Gulf of Mexico for temporary closure and later production. Undetected, a large quantity of gas and oil entered the well and surged upward through the drilling riser. Upon reaching the surface, the hydrocarbons ignited and engulfed the rig in flames—killing 11 of the 126 people aboard the vessel.

Over the next several months, the Gulf oil spill dominated the news. People were appalled by the sight (captured on camera) of thousands of gallons of oil pouring into the Gulf of Mexico from a gaping hole in the ocean floor. Many called it the worst environmental disaster of all time.

After a series of failed attempts to plug the hole, BP—the well's operator—succeeded in capping the gushing wellhead on July 15, 83 days after the blowout.

Experience is a hard teacher, and catastrophe is an especially demanding one. Over the past year, what has the Gulf oil spill taught us? Here is a list of lessons learned (drawing partly on other recent disasters):

(1) Politicians may demand that oil rigs, artificial heart valves, airplanes, and other useful devices be made absolutely safe, but in the real world that engineers deal with, there is no such thing as 100 percent safety. Owing to human error in operating a system, or to some flaw in the original design, accidents are going to happen.

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Energy Policy IN 2011

(2) Experts agree that the Gulf oil spill was a preventable disaster. It illustrates the first kind of risk—coming from human error and mismanagement. There were several points at which people on the spot ignored danger signals—including evidence of a torn gasket and other problems in the blowout preventer, which is the last line of defense—that should (in one investigator's words) have prompted the reaction: "Stop, think, don't do something stupid."

Beyond that, as I documented last year in these pages ("Beyond Pathetic: BP's Gulf disaster was no surprise to those who understood the corporate culture," June 28, 2010), BP's top management had a history of "greenwashing," or playing up to environmental activists, while taking a cavalier attitude toward risk management in the operation of oil rigs, refineries, and other facilities.

(3) By contrast, the Fukushima disaster that has been so much in the news recently points more to a basic flaw in the original design of the nuclear complex. Measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale, the earthquake that hit Japan on March 11 was the strongest in the country's history. Even so, the aging nuclear facilities were equal to the task of withstanding the earthquake. Unfortunately, the design of the complex did not anticipate the possibility of a giant tsunami that may have reached 14 meters, much higher than the 5.7 meter wall erected as protection from the sea.

(4) Glib, politically correct PR can create a false sense of security. As I found in talking to former executives and others, BP's senior management paid more attention to form than substance. It made a great show of supporting trivial matters relating to safety—such as urging people working in hazardous environments to keep the lids on their coffee cups and to hold onto hand rails—while taking a don't-sweat-the-big-stuff attitude toward much larger safety issues.

(5) If there was an unexpected hero to the story, it was Mother Nature. In the first few weeks after the blowout, BP CEO Tony Hayward was excoriated in the news media for stating that the "Gulf of Mexico is a very big ocean" and "the environmental impact of this disaster is likely to be very, very modest." It now appears that he was right. The Gulf oil spill is, indeed, much less of a calamity than most people expected. Said one environmental scientist in late July: "Mother Nature is doing what she is supposed to be doing and we're losing most of [the spilled oil] to microbial degradation in the open ocean." By early August, an oil slick that had been the size of Kansas had all but disappeared, idling hundreds of skimmers.

Deep water drilling: It's a question of where—not if

AP PHOTO / MARY ALTAFFER

(6) Drilling will continue—the only question is where. The search for oil in deep water is ongoing. Most or all of the drilling rigs that were

affected by the moratorium imposed by the Obama administration simply moved to projects in other parts of the world—mostly in Brazil and West Africa. As the price of oil has continued to rise, the pace of global exploration seems likely only to intensify.

(7) Even BP will survive. Though BP was browbeaten by the Obama administration into setting up a $20 billion fund to compensate victims of the oil spill, the company no longer appears to be in any danger of bankruptcy. The company's stock lost more than half its value, plunging from $60 just prior to the disaster down to the high $20s in June, but has been trading in the mid-$40s so far this year.

(8) Whatever happens—and despite the absence of practical alternatives—leading environmentalists will continue to oppose oil and nuclear as the two great evils of the energy world. In the April 11 issue of *Fortune*, Michael Brune, the executive director of the Sierra Club, states: "We've had the BP gulf spill, increased concerns about the environmental impact of drilling for natural gas, and now the nuclear crisis in Japan. They're all perfect examples of the costs of our dependence on dirty energy. . . . What are we waiting for? Why not go all in now and make that transition [to cleaner energy resources, like solar and wind] happen as quickly and smoothly as possible?"

(9) Based on the Gulf oil spill, we also learned that the Obama administration is prone to empty gestures and political grandstanding in the midst of what is perceived to be a national emergency.

President Obama made the spurious claim: "Make no mistake: BP is operating at our direction. Every key decision and action they take must be approved by us in advance." Ken Salazar, the secretary of the interior, even threatened to push BP "out of the way" if it didn't move faster. That caused Coast Guard commandant Admiral Thad Allen, overseeing the federal response, to gasp: "Replace them with what?" ♦

Boom Times on Hold

The leaseholders, the gas drillers, and the regulators.

BY ABBY WISSE SCHACHTER

Wayne County, Pa.

The landmen who came here three years ago weren't counting on Betty Sutliff. Representatives of energy heavy-hitters like Chesapeake, Hess, Newfield, and XTO came to northeastern Pennsylvania to get property owners to sign leases to allow gas exploration and drilling on their land. Specifically, the companies wanted to extract natural gas using a technique called fracking, where treated water is pumped at very high pressure through a pipe thousands of feet underground to "fracture" the rock formation called the Marcellus Shale and loosen the natural gas trapped inside.

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The landmen wanted the leases signed quickly and cheaply. But they weren't expecting a retired fourth-grade math teacher to get educated, get tough, and get together with her neighbors to protect their interests. This isn't the usual story of small farmers and property owners being exploited by big corporations. This is a story, rather, of successful collective bargaining. Longtime neighbors in a quiet corner of Pennsylvania saw an opportunity before them and grabbed it with both hands. This is also a story, alas, of how their big opportunity may yet be wrecked by overzealous environmentalists and regulators.

Sutliff says the landmen looked like stereotypical used car salesmen when they first approached her and her husband in November 2007. The consultants started with high-pressure sales tactics to try to get property-owners to sign renewable leases quickly. The landmen operating next door in Susquehanna County got leases signed for Cabot Oil & Gas for as little as $25 an acre. So the guys working in Wayne County thought they could pull off similar deals.

Sutliff and her husband own 80 acres. While they both had day jobs (Sutliff's husband used to work for the state Department of Transportation), they raised beef cattle on their land and they hayed. She says that when the landmen first approached them the offer was $300 an acre. "It was pitched as 'if you don't take this you'll miss the opportunity,'" Sutliff explains. The couple already knew that those with large acreage had been approached first, and Sutliff was trying to learn "from those north of us" who had been offered as little as $25 an acre.

Sutliff started making trips to the county courthouse to see if the consultants were telling the truth about who had signed and for what price. And she used a website called PA Gas Lease where some of the area's latest lease offers were posted. "Electronic communication was the [energy companies'] undoing," she explains. The Sutliffs and their neighbors learned, for example, that the boilerplate lease was for 10 years but would have tied up their land indefinitely because of its automatic renewal clause.

This process of collecting information, building a database, and disseminating information among a larger and larger group of local landowners led to the birth of the Northern Wayne Property Owners Alliance in late 2007. "We wanted a group of

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10,000 acres" with which to negotiate collectively, Sutliff says.

Over the course of a year, the NWPOA got commitments to negotiate with more and more acreage controlled by property owners, all of whom had been approached to lease their land. Sutliff says some people dropped out and signed independent leases "because they needed the money." The final tally for the group was more than 80,000 acres made up of approximately 1,500 families who negotiated a deal for, on average, $3,000 an acre, with more royalties to follow if wells are drilled and gas produced. The payments are split in half, with the first payment covering a two-and-a-half year period of exploration and the second a subsequent five years of production.

Other groups of landowners formed to do exactly what the NWPOA did. Ex-military man Bob Suhosky was part of a separate group that negotiated with a different company but says his experience was similar. "They know a lot about drilling and leases," Suhosky says of the energy companies, "but not a lot about public relations."

Once leases were signed, the companies tried to make nice with the locals by answering questions at town hall-style meetings and hosting a picnic for new leaseholders. The energy companies have also created jobs, hiring locals for office work, construction, and security. What bothers the owners I spoke with, however, is how ineffective they think the companies have been at fighting back against the campaign by environmentalists to stop the drilling. "The industry is not skilled at land-use battles," Suhosky says. And while the science may be on their side, as Suhosky puts it, "science isn't the only important thing."

Count some residents of Wayne County as ungrateful for the regulators' concern. Delaying the drilling is 'extremely painful,' says Marian Schweighofer. 'I want my kids to live here,' and the economic opportunities just haven't been available for a long time.

Five to seven test wells have been dug in Wayne County. Beyond that, not much is happening. The delay is due to a federal-interstate compact called the Delaware River Basin Commission, which has taken it upon itself to stop any drilling unless first approved by the DRBC, thus jeopardizing the second half of the payments landowners are expecting from their lease. According to the commission's website, "DRBC Executive Director Carol R. Collier on May 19, 2009, announced a determination notifying natural gas extraction project sponsors that they may not commence any natural gas extraction project located in shale formations within the drainage area of the basin's Special Protection Waters without first applying for and obtaining commission approval."

The fact that Pennsylvania has developed safety standards and regulations for safe drilling means absolutely nothing. (New York is working on its own regulations, which should be finalized this summer.) And the fact that the DRBC is unaccountable to those who live within its wide purview means even less. Indeed, Collier had the gall to declare that her commission was instituting the moratorium for the residents' own good. "The bottom line for the DRBC is to ensure that proper environmental controls are provided to safeguard our basin's water resources that are used by 15 million people," Collier stated.

Count some residents of Wayne County as ungrateful for Collier's protection. Delaying the drilling is "extremely painful," says NWPOA executive director Marian Schweighofer. "I want my kids to live here," and the economic opportunities just haven't been available for a long time. According to Schweighofer, there used to be 600 dairy farms in the area; now there are 82. Local farmers, moreover, have no pensions to fall back on, and manufacturing and other jobs left long ago.

Schweighofer also resents the suggestion that landowners who want the drilling are trying to hurt the environment. "We are the ones who have cared for the land," Schweighofer declares. "We are the true environmentalists and none of us are for the drilling without regulation." But, she explains, the state already has regulations in place specifying layers of casing around wells and what sort of recycling and wastewater disposal must accompany the drilling.

DRBC has published its own proposed regulations and opened up a comment period to get responses. Hearings were held in Honesdale, Pa., and Liberty, N.Y., in February at which pro-drilling witnesses heavily outnumbered those in opposition. According to one report, "of the first 45 or so people to speak, only 5 opposed drilling." But that didn't stop the DRBC from claiming that further comment was needed and extending the comment period by another month to April 15. The residents of Wayne County are waiting to see whether Collier and company will come up with rules to impede drilling or rather allow it to proceed with proper safety controls. ♦

The Radical Gradualism of Paul Ryan

The status quo is far more 'extreme' than the Republican budget

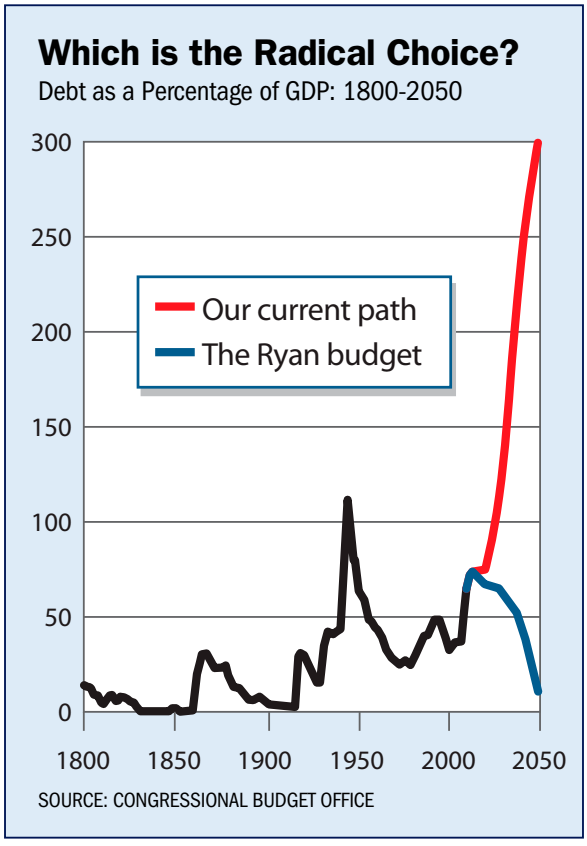
By Yuval Levin

Late last month, Senator Charles Schumer of New York led a conference call in which Senate Democrats briefed reporters about the ongoing budget battle. At the outset, unaware that his comments were already audible to reporters on the line, Schumer provided some marching orders, advising his colleagues to describe Republican proposals as radical. "I always use the word *extreme*," he said. "That's what the caucus instructed me to use this week."

It was no surprise, therefore, that when House Budget Committee chairman Paul Ryan released the Republican budget proposal for 2012 last week, Democrats in Washington called it radical and extreme. The White House labeled the plan unbalanced. Representative Chris Van Hollen, the senior Democrat on the House Budget Committee, called it "ideology on steroids." Iowa senator Tom Harkin said the Ryan plan "gives new meaning to the term extreme."

But it wasn't only Democrats who seemed struck by the radical character of Ryan's proposal. Many supporters of his budget, too, noted above all its boldness, or its wholehearted fiscal conservatism, which is just another way to say that he proposes a dramatic change.

And it is true, of course, that Ryan's budget offers an unflinching conservative program. He proposes to have the federal government spend $5.8 trillion less over the next decade than it would under current law. He would reduce the accumulated deficits by more than $4 trillion over that period, and continue such reductions in the years that follow. He would thereby quickly begin to reduce the size of the federal debt relative to the economy, and over the coming decades would not only balance the budget but actually begin to pay off the principal of the debt. He would do that by reducing domestic discretionary spending, reforming the tax code to broaden the base and lower rates, block-granting some federal welfare programs (including Medicaid) to the states, repealing Obamacare, privatizing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, cutting back farm subsidies and corporate welfare, and (most significant in the long run) reforming Medicare for those now younger than 55 from an open-ended entitlement into a system of premium supports to subsidize the purchase of private insurance.



This adds up to an extraordinarily comprehensive and ambitious conservative policy agenda—more so than any Republican budget we have seen before, including those proposed by the Gingrich Congress in the '90s and by Ronald Reagan in the '80s. And yet, to call it "extreme" misses a crucial point. Ryan's plan is above all a gradual and measured solution to our fiscal problems—one that offers continuity and security to help us avoid a truly extreme crisis.

This becomes especially clear when Ryan's approach is contrasted with the alternative offered by the Democrats.

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Ryan talks about this moment as a choice between two visions. But in fact, it is a choice between a vision and a nonvision. Opposed to the House Republicans' agenda is not a different set of solutions to our deepening fiscal problems proposed by the left, or even a defense of our existing welfare state. What the Democrats offer instead is complaisance that amounts to a knowing acquiescence in a preventable disaster. The Democratic party now has no discernible policy agenda whatsoever. It offers only a reflexive defense of an indefensible status quo.

In his own 2012 budget, released in February, President Obama proposed to do essentially nothing in response to the coming fiscal calamity—indeed, his budget would *increase* the deficit. Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid told MSNBC last month that we should not consider any changes to Social Security until we actually confront a catastrophic failure of the program in the 2030s, saying "Two decades from now, I'm willing to take a look at it. But I'm not willing to take a look at it right now." In a conference call with liberal bloggers about Ryan's budget last week, House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi warned against proposing a Democratic counteroffer for entitlement reform. "Once you put another proposal on the table you're conceding that there must be some big problem," she said.

In his own 2012 budget, President Obama proposed to do essentially nothing in response to the coming fiscal calamity—indeed, his budget would increase the deficit.

But of course, there is "some big problem." The Democrats argue that America should stay the course, but there is little question now that the course we are on leads to a disastrous fiscal crisis. The explosion in domestic spending in recent years, the looming collapse of our health care entitlements, and the resulting crushing burden of debt have joined into a perfect storm. The national debt has doubled in the past decade, and the Congressional Budget Office projects it will double again in this decade and continue to balloon to unprecedented levels. Our creditors are looking at the same projections, so America will likely find it difficult to borrow money at affordable rates before long. Bill Gross, founder of the world's largest mutual fund, recently warned that we have just a few years to show the markets that we intend to change course before the country faces a serious debt crisis.

Such a crisis would do grave harm to our economy, as rising interest rates would undermine consumer purchasing power and (by raising the cost of government borrowing) accelerate the very fiscal problems underlying our exploding debt. Meanwhile, our entitlement obligations would grow out of control even more quickly, forcing harsh austerity measures. Under current law, even without a debt crisis, Social Security benefits would suddenly be cut by more than 20 percent in the mid-2030s when the program's trust fund runs out. Medicare benefits would be similarly imperiled, and taxes simply could not be raised high enough to fill the gap without crushing the economy. All of this will come at us much sooner if we lose the confidence of our lenders.

In other words, our current course points to a radically disruptive shock to the system, and Democrats seem intent on taking no action to prevent it. What the Ryan budget offers instead is a gradual, manageable change of course that might allow us to continue to experience the kind of growth and stability we have seen since the Second World War.

The plan is surely a departure from the status quo, but that status quo is itself a radical departure from the American experience. For all his budget cutting, Ryan proposes to bring federal spending and taxes down to about 19 percent of GDP—the average level in the postwar years, not some radical fantasy. A plan that sought to address our fiscal problems by raising taxes far higher than this historical norm—as Ryan's detractors on the left would have to do, though they are loath to say so—would almost certainly yield weaker growth, and therefore have a harder time restraining the growth of the debt.

Spending on welfare and entitlement programs, too, would continue to increase each year under Ryan's plan, but at a far more manageable rate in line with postwar spending levels. Block granting and capping costs would allow for more flexibility in the design of welfare programs and some cost control, but it would hardly shred the social contract, or bring about the kinds of austerity cuts that a real fiscal crisis would require.

On the contrary, underlying the Ryan budget is a vision of security and stability, of gradual reform of the welfare state in the face of changing circumstances. The document is full of calls to save the social safety net and "[fulfill] the mission of health and retirement security for all Americans." Its basic aim is to avoid sudden or radical breaks, because predictability and security are essential both for enabling growth and for instilling confidence in consumers, producers, investors, and creditors.

This explains, for instance, why this supposed embodiment of conservative extremism doesn't fully balance the budget for two decades. The Ryan budget begins to turn things around quickly—reaching primary balance (that is, a balance between taxing and spending excluding interest payments) and beginning to reduce the relative size of the debt by 2015—but it doesn't reach a truly balanced budget until the 2030s. To get to such balance right away would

require enormous immediate cuts in entitlement benefits or massive tax hikes, either of which would be highly disruptive both to people's lives and to the performance of the economy.

This also helps explain why the budget's most ambitious reform—the transformation of Medicare—doesn't begin for 10 years. If you believe we confront an urgent crisis, why would your most significant proposal be put on hold for a decade, and exclude today's retirees and near-retirees? Because Ryan's basic goal is to avoid a disruptive shock in American life. His transformation of Medicare aims to allow those who have made long-term plans around certain expectations to keep those plans, and to allow others to make their own plans around the new arrangement. The 10-year lag is thus a crucial part of the reform, and the clock must start soon because waiting would mean that when the programs are forced to change, the change would have to be sudden and harsh.

Leaving the benefits of current seniors untouched is, of course, also good politics, as it neutralizes the most powerful source of opposition to entitlement reform. Indeed, for all the political risk that entitlement reform no doubt involves, the gradualism of the Ryan budget gives Republicans an important advantage. It allows them to present themselves as the party that offers protection from sudden shocks—both those of a debt crisis and those of the harsh austerity that the response to such a crisis would require if we don't act now. Stuck with Senator Schumer's talking points about extremism, the Democrats have failed to realize that, as they once more surrender the mantle of the party of ideas to the Republicans, they now also risk losing the mantle of economic security, and all without gaining the mantle of economic growth.

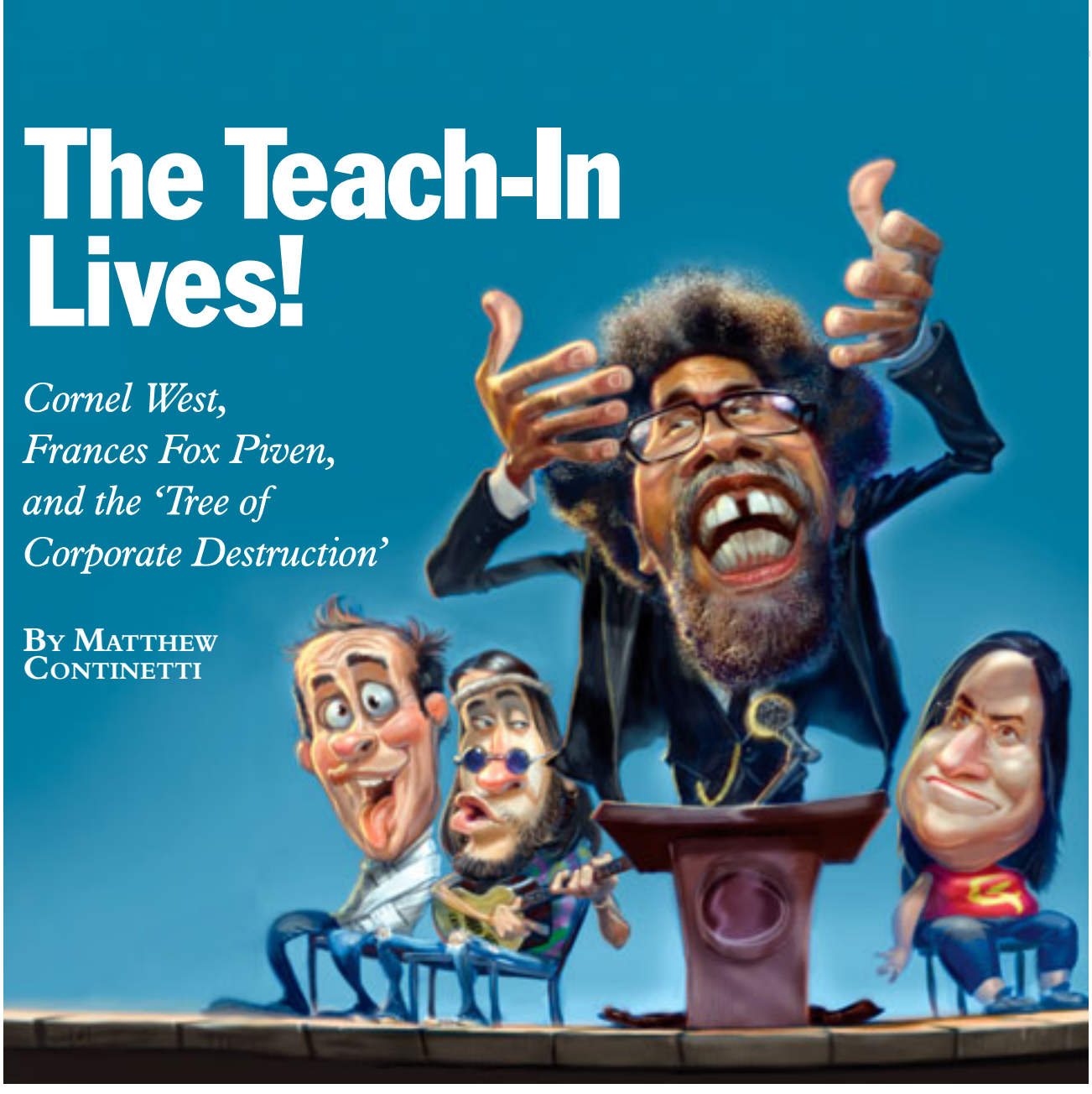
This is the political promise of the Ryan revolution for Republicans. It is also why we should expect a substantive Democratic response fairly soon. As he casts his eye toward reelection, President Obama will surely conclude that he cannot appear to abide the coming fiscal disaster while Republicans offer plausible solutions. The Democrats will be compelled to counteroffer, and therefore perhaps slowly to abandon the idea that the dream of the social-democratic welfare state can still be salvaged, and to pursue instead a vision of American life more compatible with democratic capitalism in the 21st century.

Such an awakening among liberals would be good for both parties and is essential to America's future. It may even turn out to be the most important, and most radical, implication of Paul Ryan's audaciously gradualist budget. ♦

The Teach-In Lives!

Cornel West, Frances Fox Piven, and the 'Tree of Corporate Destruction'

By Matthew Continetti



On the day Paul Ryan released his budget proposal, I went to Judson Memorial Church in New York City to gauge the left's reaction. Judson Memorial was hosting "Fight Back USA," where one could get tips on "fighting austerity, debt, and corporate greed" and listen to progressive superstars Frances Fox Piven, Cornel West, and Jeffrey Sachs. "'60s-style Teach-In Meets the Digital Age in Live Stream Webcast," said the press release. A friendly aide told me that students at more than 200 schools were watching online.

The day was overcast and rainy. The beautiful Gilded Age church, designed by acclaimed American architect Stanford White, was built in the 1890s with Rockefeller money. The interior is blue with yellow molding and contains 15 stained glass windows by John LaFarge, who decorated the homes of robber barons like Cornelius Vanderbilt. The irony of denouncing capitalism inside a building that owes its existence to obscenely rich industrialists seemed to be lost on the crowd. Then again it was hard to judge the emotions of the audience from the balcony, where the organizers had exiled the press.

The helpful aide said there were 300 people in attendance. My bird's-eye view of the seating area suggested she was being generous. Another reporter approached me with a friendly expression and introduced herself as a writer for the liberal *American Prospect*. A grimace of horror flashed across her face when I told her I worked for The Weekly Standard, as if I'd said I'd just killed her

GARY LOCKE

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dog. She scurried back to her seat at the far end of the row and pretended to check emails on her cell phone. A few moments later she asked, "So how *is* Bill Kristol doing?" in the same tone you'd use to refer to Carlos the Jackal. I said he was doing fine.

A lady who seemed to be stage-managing the event delivered some nonprogressive instructions. "Keep your voices down," she told the students and senior citizens who made up the audience. "If you don't agree with something, keep it to yourself." Clearly this was not going to be Grant Park, 1968. The panelists walked on stage and took their seats. A thin woman with brown-gray hair and dangling gold earrings approached the lectern. "My name is Frances Fox Piven," she said. "I want to welcome you to the first national teach-in on corporate greed and false austerity, debt, and how we're going to fight back."

From time immemorial Fox Piven has toiled in the dank and crowded back alley where academia and radical politics meet. She and her late husband Richard Cloward became famous in the '60s and '70s for urging poor people to mau-mau the government. But it wasn't until 2009, when a researcher for right-wing media personality Glenn Beck found an article the couple had written for the *Nation* 40 years earlier, that Piven became a fixation of the right and martyr for the left. (Cloward died in 2001.) The piece in question was titled "The Weight of the Poor: A Strategy to End Poverty."

The way to end poverty, Piven and Cloward argued, was to increase local and state welfare rolls to the point where the federal government had no option but to step in and institute a guaranteed annual income. Obviously the idea was a dud that went nowhere. But one can see how it appealed to Beck, who dubbed it the "Cloward-Piven strategy" and used it to suggest that Americans were unwitting actors in a sinister socialist drama scripted long ago.

Beck was wrong in thinking Piven and Cloward ought to be feared. To the contrary: Decades of academic research, countless books and articles and lectures, more than 25 years teaching at the City University of New York, and what has Frances Fox Piven come up with?

"Do we have the Tree of Corporate Destruction?" she asked the audiovisual crew. On the wall behind Piven there appeared a frightening black and white image of a tree whose branches bore the logos of major corporations. On the ground beneath the tree were two fallen limbs, with branches labeled "schools," "civil servants," "higher education," "retirement," "the safety net," and so on. The trunk bore the name Glenn Beck, in large block letters. Below that an image of Ronald Reagan. And below *that* were the words "Corporate Personhood": a legal principle that, according to the Tree of Corporate Destruction, has given rise to huge conglomerates that sever the American social contract in pursuit of profit.

"This tree's really the tree of American life," Piven explained. "And you can see it's been poisoned, it's been polluted by corporate interests. Corporate influence has grown over the last 30 years especially." In their rapacious exploitation of labor and the environment, the corporations had starved the public sector through austerity and drowned the American consumer in debt. "The tree of corporate destruction is endangering our future," Piven said. "The future of young people, the future of our society, and the future of our planet."

Piven handed the mike to New York state senator Gustavo Rivera of the Bronx, a charming 35-year-old whose day job is teaching political science at Pace University. Rivera, who did graduate work at CUNY under Piven, was the emcee for Fight Back USA. He introduced Judson Memorial's minister, Reverend Michael Ellick.

Ellick's biography on the church website says he became a man of the cloth after trying his hand "as a courier, a fast-food cook, a fact-checker, a fresh juice delivery person, a copy editor, an event planner, a barista, a financial analyst, an Internet help desk, and even an assistant at a Marine Biology lab." Finally, after earning an M.Div. at Union Theological Seminary, then studying for seven years with a Tibetan Buddhist teacher, Ellick discovered his calling as a William Sloane Coffin wannabe. "The question that is in front of us," Ellick said, "is whether or not we will remain a democracy, or will the growing trend toward plutocracy—a government run by the rich—continue to become entirely official."

"As a Christian minister here," Ellick went on, "I know my political tradition gives an unambiguous mandate to serve the poor in all capacities. Because we are gathered here in this space, I wanted us to start with a brief moment of prayer. Let us pray: O God of many names, instill in us the skillful means and steady heart to believe in the days, the weeks, and years ahead." Amen.

Next up was African-American studies professor Cornel West, who's been a leftwing fixture since the publication of *Race Matters* in 1993. He became an icon in 2002 when a new president of Harvard, Lawrence Summers, fired him for neglecting scholarship in favor of making hip-hop albums. West landed on his feet at Princeton, where he's written a memoir, *Brother West: Living and Loving Out Loud*, assembled an anthology, *Hope on a Tightrope: Words and Wisdom*, and appeared alongside Keanu Reeves in *The Matrix Reloaded*, *The Matrix Revolutions*, and the videogame *Enter the Matrix*. In the science-fiction series West portrays an elder statesman who serves on the governing

council of the underground city of Zion. "Councillor West" dispenses advice to the weary band of humans fighting the robot armies. He delivers faux-philosophical lines like "comprehension is not a requisite of cooperation." He's hilarious.

In his greatest role, however, West portrays Dr. Cornel West, renowned public intellectual, racial oracle, and philosophical expositor of the American pragmatist and Marxist traditions. West has been doing this shtick around the country and in various media for decades, but this was the first time I'd caught a live performance. The experience was captivating.

The Tree of Corporate Destruction

West approached the lectern wearing his trademark three-piece suit. A gold chain hung from his vest. His afro was teased to dizzying heights. The strands of his scraggly beard pointed in every direction. He gave Gustavo Rivera a bear hug and moved toward the microphone. Then he gripped the lectern with both hands, hunched his back like a feline's, and launched into a dizzying, ecstatic, boisterous, compelling, totally incomprehensible monologue.

West's voice is a remarkable instrument. He whispers, speaks, bellows, screams, and hisses in volumes ranging from barely audible to jackhammer loud. Unfortunately the church's poor acoustics and West's erratic delivery combined to make his lecture unintelligible. He unleashed a torrent of words from the stage. Picking out a few phrases from the din required total concentration. "I am here because I believe like *you* that many of our brothers and sisters of all colors are *suffering* and in misery that's . . . not . . . *necessary* . . . and we plan to do something about it," West said. "We approach this day fundamentally committed to what brother Martin Luther King was committed to: unarmed truth."

West hit all the leftwing hot spots: "Prison industrial complex . . . unavailable child care—*still* unavailable health care *after* Obamacare . . . military industrial complex . . . imperial presence in Afghanistan and Iraq . . . levels of greed that even Charles Dickens would have problems with. . . . The entertainment complex, who bombard our young people with weapons of mass distraction to keep them titillated and stimulated and infuriated that they are no longer part of or fundamentally focused on the [word indecipherable on my recording] decency, courage, and compassion manifest in the short movement from womb to tomb."

The program said West's topic was the "crisis facing youth." But the speech really consisted of track numbers one through seven on *Cornel West's Greatest Hits* (not a real album). There were plenty of racial politics: "In this age of Obama let us be very *clear*," West said. "Even as we celebrate his symbolic cosmetic and cathartic victory and presence, we all want to be sure, and we're going to do all that we can, so he doesn't become just another black mascot of Wall Street oligarchs!" He implored somebody—it wasn't clear who—to "Tell us the truth." His vision was global in scope: "We learned in Madison, we learned in Indiana, we learned in Ohio, and we learned in northern Africa, Tunisia, and Egypt, just like we learned in the early nineties with Nelson Mandela and others . . ." What we learned I can't say, because at that point West reverted to gibberish. By the time he'd ended by screaming the word "SWINGING!" the house was on its feet.

According to his website, you can catch Dr. West live at the Texas Tech University auditorium at 7 P.M. on April 15. Don't wait: Book your tickets today.

Cornel West is a tough act to follow. The schedule called for Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, the noted Columbia University economist, to address the teach-in via webcam. Sach's image was to be projected on the back wall, where the Tree of Corporate Destruction had been. "And now," said Gustavo Rivera, "live from Boston—this is the wonder of technology, ladies and gentlemen—live from Boston, we are joined by Dr. Jeffrey Sachs."

Nothing showed up on the wall.

"It's possible that this is showing up online," Rivera said.

Still no Sachs.

"Now we know how the folks at *Saturday Night Live* feel like," Rivera said.

The audience chuckled nervously.

"Should we move on to our next guest?" Rivera asked his overseers.

Their answer was yes. Rivera introduced Heather McGhee, a young analyst at the leftwing think tank Demos, who delivered the standard progressive critique of American politics: Everything was fabulous in this country until Ronald Reagan's election, when the rich took over the government and destroyed unions and immiserated the middle class through tax and trade policy. Don't believe your lying eyes: The last 30 years have been an absolute nightmare. It's a wonder Americans haven't turned to cannibalism to survive. The benighted populace, McGhee said, has "scapegoated the poorest among us, blaming immigrants brought here by the exact trade deals being cut in that other room, and now even attacking the last middle class workers standing among us," i.e., public sector unions.

Then there's Paul Ryan and his budget, a "desperate Hail Mary" that "doubles down on every single bad economic decision of the past 30 years." If Ryan had his way, well, that would be "truly the end of America as we know it, the end of the middle class." The "hysteria over the deficit" has been manufactured "by Wall Street billionaire Pete Peterson" and "oil billionaires such as the Koch brothers, among others." But there's good news: "We're going to take our country back." Before we do that, however, we have to sit through the rest of this teach-in.

As McGhee was speaking it occurred to me that conservatives have the left all wrong when they argue liberals have no solution to the fiscal crisis. Liberals do have a solution—it's just that few of them say it out loud. The liberal solution to American insolvency is to soak the rich. The liberal way to curb inequality, close the deficit, and pay for all those electric cars is to take money from the greedy and give it to the U.S. Treasury. Of course, taxing Sam Walton's family will only get you so far. To come anywhere near paying for the society Frances Fox Piven, Gustavo Rivera, and Heather McGhee want, you'd have to gouge the middle class once you'd finished off the wealthy, and in the process collapse the economy. But at least the lefties on stage at Judson Memorial Church are honest enough to admit it.

The techies figured out how to project Jeffrey Sachs onto the wall. In the 1990s Sachs was known for administering "shock therapy" to post-Communist regimes willing to listen to him. He urged a rapid transition from public to private ownership in places like Russia and Poland. As the name implied, shock therapy did not come without social, economic, and reputational costs. So Sachs has spent the last decade reinventing himself as a champion of foreign aid, adviser to U.N. secretary generals, critic of American foreign policy, and president of Columbia's Earth Institute.

"It's a memorable day," he said. "It's the day that the Republican party showed us what they really have in mind." Professor Sachs has run the numbers on Representative Ryan's budget. If the Ryan budget became law, Dr. Sachs has concluded, "We would cease to be, to be blunt, a modern country. We would end up with no policies for energy, no policies for infrastructure, no policies for job training, no policies for education, no policies for child care, for early child development, for all the things that make a decent society."

Sachs's rant grew in intensity. "There's nothing bold about this," he said. "There's nothing clever about it, there's nothing thoughtful about it, there's nothing innovative about it, it's just one bald assault by the rich on the poor. And that's the spirit of the times right now." The audience hung on Sachs's every word.

He impugned both parties for turning America into a "corporatocracy" where the "corporate sector has taken hold of government." He seemed physically ill while describing the world's corporate masters. He sarcastically parroted the corporatocracy's lies: "We have to sacrifice community development, we have to sacrifice job training, we have to sacrifice education, we have to sacrifice an energy system, we can't afford new infrastructure. It's a shocking, shocking abuse of power."

The crowd was getting really stoked. The temperature in the church kept rising. The students seemed ready to seize some pitchforks, torches, tar, and feathers.

"It's shocking irresponsibility," Sachs said. "And the saddest part—"

The room vibrated with the echoes of long-ago battle cries: Storm the Bastille! *Vive la révolution!*

"And the saddest part—"

Everyone leaned forward to hear what came next.

"The saddest part of all is that—"

The video connection blanked out. Sachs disappeared.

The deflated crowd let out a frustrated moan. The tree of corporate destruction—it had struck again! And somewhere up above, the plutocrats who'd built Judson Memorial Church were smiling. ♦

The Gas Revolution

Amazingly, an era of energy abundance is upon us, unless politicians and environmentalists get their way.

By Steven F. Hayward

When Andrew Liveris took over as CEO of Dow Chemical at the end of 2004, the company was in the midst of a wrenching reorganization that saw it shed 7,000 jobs—14 percent of its workforce—and close 23 older chemical plants in this country. Looking ahead to a new product cycle in a fast-growing global marketplace, Liveris faced a stark choice: Should Dow invest in new capacity in the United States, or should he locate more facilities in emerging markets? One factor made expanding overseas much more attractive—not labor costs but the price of natural gas.

Dow and several other industrial manufacturing sectors use natural gas as a basic feedstock for much of their product line, not primarily as an energy source. As such there are few substitutes or efficiency strategies the company could use. As Liveris told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the fall of 2005, "This [natural gas] price of $14, simply put, renders the entire U.S. chemical industry uncompetitive. . . . We simply cannot compete with the rest of the world at these prices. . . . When faced with a choice of investing in the United States at $14 gas versus $2 to $3 elsewhere, how can I recommend investing here?" Not long after, Dow Chemical announced plans for a major expansion in Kuwait and Oman, both of which were able to guarantee long-term rock-bottom natural gas prices. Other chemical companies followed suit, and a sector that was once among the nation's strongest export industries became a net importer. Between 1997 and 2005, overall industrial consumption of natural gas in the United States fell 22.4 percent.

One of the less appreciated facts of the U.S. energy marketplace is that the price of natural gas has been much more volatile than the price of oil over the last 15 years. Unlike oil, which trades at globally uniform prices, natural gas has always been a more locally traded commodity, with wide price differences from region to region. And in the middle years of the last decade, when the U.S. natural gas price spiked to $14 per thousand cubic feet, up from $2 or less for most of the 1990s, both Middle Eastern and Russian gas could be had much more cheaply—if you were located in their neighborhood.

Like domestic production of oil, U.S. production of natural gas had been relatively flat for years. All of the official public and private forecasts expected domestic gas production to decline, with the result that the United States, hitherto nearly self-sufficient in natural gas (we have been importing about 10 percent of our gas from Canada and Mexico), would have to import as much as 20 percent of our needs by the year 2020. Most of the new gas imports were expected to come from the Persian Gulf, extending American dependency on that politically sketchy region. The oil and gas industry argued that the only way to turn around our gas fortunes was to open up more areas for exploration and production, especially offshore on the continental shelf, but this ran into the same buzzsaw of political opposition that has hobbled domestic oil production.

Now, within an astonishingly short time, the entire picture has changed. In mid-December the Energy Information Administration released new estimates of U.S. natural gas showing proved reserves at their highest level since 1967, up 33 percent in the last three years and 62 percent over the last 10 years. Natural gas production in the United States in 2009 (21.6 trillion cubic feet) was the highest since 1973, even though demand was down on account of the recession. The Department of Energy now predicts gas reserves will grow by at least another 20 percent over the next decade, though a number of energy forecasters think reserves will grow by much more, securing a 100-year supply for our needs. Even as oil and gasoline prices rise again to uncomfortable levels, the price of natural gas has declined 80 percent from its mid-recession level in the summer of 2008, to about $4 per thousand cubic feet, and it is likely to stay at this level or perhaps fall further. Although price volatility may not be a thing of the past, it is unlikely

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A Chesapeake Energy natural gas well near Burlington, Pennsylvania, April 23, 2010

AP PHOTO / RALPH WILSON

we'll see spikes to $14 again for a very, very long time.

How did this startling turnabout occur? The phrase suddenly in every newsroom copybook (the cover of *Time* magazine last week, a series in the *New York Times* last month) is "unconventional gas," chiefly shale gas and coal-bed methane, produced through a technique known as hydraulic fracturing or "fracking." Fracking involves sending high pressure fluid deep into wells to force cracks in the surrounding rock formations, which releases gas (and also oil where oil deposits are mixed in rock).

From the recent news reports you'd think shale gas and fracking had just been discovered, but neither is brand new. It has been known for decades that deep shale rock formations contain lots of natural gas, and oil drillers have employed fracking for years to enhance oil recovery. But fracking for shale gas was not economical until a second technology achieved major breakthroughs in the last decade and a half: directional drilling. It is possible today to drill several wells from a single platform in many different directions, often for several miles laterally, and navigational advances enable drillers to know their exact position down to a few inches from thousands of feet away. Combined with advances in underground geological surveying, directional drilling and fracking over the last decade have allowed us to tap into previously uneconomic shale gas deposits. At the present time shale gas accounts for about 20 percent of total U.S. gas production (up from 1 percent in 2000), but it is projected to account for nearly half of U.S. gas production by the year 2035.

One remarkable aspect of the shale gas revolution is that it was not the product of an energy policy edict from Washington, or the result of a bruising political battle to open up public lands and offshore waters for new exploration. Although the Halliburtons of the world are now big in the field, its pioneers were mostly smaller risk-taking entrepreneurs and technological innovators. George P. Mitchell, an independent producer based in Houston, is widely credited as being the prime mover in shale gas, pushing the idea against skeptics. The technology was mainly deployed on existing oil and gas leaseholds or on private land beyond the reach of bureaucrats (for the time being, anyway). That is why shale gas seemed to sneak up unannounced to the media and Beltway elites, even though people inside the gas industry realized several years ago what was rapidly taking place. Mitchell worked the Barnett shale formation

near Dallas, but the biggest shale gas "play" is the Marcellus—a massive deep shale formation stretching from West Virginia through upstate New York.

Now that shale gas is front-page news, everyone wants a piece of the action. Environmentalists, who have supported natural gas as a "bridge fuel" to kill coal, are starting to turn against gas now that it looks more abundant. Regulators want to regulate it; state legislators want to tax it more. And politicians are eager to "help" the market decide how best to use this newfound bounty, which is music to the gas industry's ears, as they fear a glut might collapse prices and do to their industry what the collapse in oil prices in 1986 did to the small producers in the oil patch. In other words, the one thing that might disrupt this amazing success story has arrived on the scene: politics.

The shale gas revolution presents two main issues. The first concerns fracking, which is currently unregulated or lightly regulated by state and local governments. Fracking is currently exempt from some sections of the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, though it is subject to all of the wastewater and hazardous material rules and regulations. Fracking fluids, once they have done their work loosening the gas, contain some toxic chemicals (and can pick up low levels of radiation from deep underground). Environmentalists are raising a predictable hue and cry about threats to groundwater from well casing leaks or from water that returns to the surface. The environmental crusade against fracking has its own *Inconvenient Truth*-style documentary, *Gasland*, by Pennsylvania filmmaker Josh Fox, which was nominated for best documentary at the Academy Awards and aired on HBO.

Gasland features dramatic footage of gas-infused well water that can be ignited at a kitchen tap, though it is not established that this is the result of nearby shale gas drilling. Hitting pockets of gas has been a well-known phenomena in shallow water wells in parts of Pennsylvania for decades. Most shale gas fracking is conducted as far as 5,000 feet underground, thousands of feet below the aquifer and beneath impermeable rock layers that separate it from drinking water. Still, spills and leaking well casings near the surface have caused some localized water pollution problems, providing just enough traction for environmentalist complaints. The EPA has launched a major study of fracking that is expected to report findings in 2014, and New York's outgoing governor David Paterson imposed a moratorium on new gas drilling last year in response to claims that fracking threatened groundwater, even though New York's state geologist concluded fracking presented a low risk to the state's groundwater.

The second issue is what to do with this unexpected bounty. The suddenly low cost of gas, combined with high-efficiency gas power plant designs, now make new gas-fired power plants cheaper than coal-fired power plants according to the Department of Energy's latest analysis. Natural gas has been the largest growth sector in American power generation over the last two decades, though because of its price volatility much of the new gas capacity was employed in "peaker" power plants that were turned on and off during periods of high demand such as the summer months. Now it appears gas could be used more for baseload generation, replacing aging coal plants that are under pressure from costly new EPA clean air regulations and the environmentalist crusade to do to coal-fired electricity what it did to nuclear power 30 years ago.

For the time being natural gas producers and utilities are joining with environmentalists to tilt the playing field in favor of forcing gas as a replacement for coal, by offering incentives and subsidies for fuel switching. Colorado enacted sweetheart legislation last year to prod its utilities to convert from coal to gas, and Texas—which uses the most coal-fired electricity of any state by a large margin—is considering the same market-bending mischief. This coalition won't long endure, however, because the other edge of the cheap gas sword is coming into play already: Cheap gas makes expensive wind and solar power even less cost competitive than they already are.

Environmentalists used to love natural gas—so long as it was expensive and used in part as a backstop for intermittent wind and solar power. Now that it is suddenly cheap and practical for baseload generation, environmentalists are changing their minds. *Politico*'s Bob King noted this about-face in a mid-February story, "Greens Sour on Natural Gas." The Environmental Defense Fund, ProPublica, and the Sierra Club are suddenly voicing opposition to the expansion of natural gas use. King quoted Sierra Club chairman Carl Pope calling for phasing out natural gas use in the United States entirely by the year 2050, and Sierra's deputy executive director Bruce Hamilton said, "We want people to know that natural gas is not a clean fuel." As recently as a December appearance with me on CNBC, Hamilton endorsed using "clean" natural gas "for a very long time." You might call this the theorem of environmental duplicity: namely, there is no form of "clean" or "alternative" energy that environmentalists won't decide to oppose if it becomes practical and affordable on a large scale.

From the standpoint of the increasingly desperate and forlorn climate campaign, environmentalists have a point. Natural gas has long been regarded as the cleanest of the fossil fuels because it is much lower in conventional air pollutants (that is, the emissions that cause ozone, particulates, and carbon monoxide) than coal or oil. But it is still a prodigious producer of carbon dioxide; climate change orthodoxy calls for reducing CO_2 emissions to almost

1 billion tons by the year 2050, yet carbon dioxide emissions from current levels of natural gas use are 1.2 billion tons a year. There is no way to reach the targets of climate orthodoxy if we expand our use of natural gas.

Still, it may be a mistake to adopt a *dirigiste* policy of pushing natural gas use in the electric power sector, because coal remains abundant and cheap, and neither climate hysteria nor conventional air pollution concerns are compelling enough reasons to suppress coal power deliberately. (Conventional air pollutants and mercury emissions from coal plants are falling steadily, and will continue to do so even without a new suite of EPA regulations.) Substituting natural gas for coal power plants would not reduce our imports of foreign oil by a single barrel. But adopting natural gas as a transportation fuel in our car and truck fleet would, if done on a large scale, and this is the most tantalizing prospect.

T. Boone Pickens has been pushing this idea for the last two years, arguing that we should start with the trucking fleet. But the conversion costs are high. It costs about $50,000 or more to convert a diesel truck to run on compressed natural gas, and natural gas-powered autos would be considerably more expensive than gasoline-powered autos. The one commercial natural gas car currently available, a Honda Civic, costs about $10,000 more than a gasoline engine Civic. Natural gas vehicles would require a large compressed gas infrastructure that does not currently exist. Pickens and other natural gas transportation enthusiasts are lobbying for tax credits for truck fleet conversions and filling station gas compression upgrades —another subsidy the federal budget doesn't need right now. But federal subsidies may not be necessary. If diesel reaches $5 a gallon, the unsubsidized payback period for converting a high-mileage long-haul truck would be two years or less at current natural gas prices. That's why UPS is starting to expand its fleet of natural gas trucks. For comparatively low-mileage passenger cars, the price of gasoline would have to be much higher than it is today for gas conversion to look attractive, somewhere in the neighborhood of $8 or $9 a gallon.

With all of the emphasis—and confusion—in the automotive industry about whether to develop hybrid-electric cars or other power sources, policymakers ought to tread carefully before piling on a new market-distorting tax credit or subsidy. Furthermore, natural gas can be converted to liquid fuels, especially methanol, that can be used in current gasoline-powered cars for a minimal extra conversion cost. At current natural gas prices, methanol can be produced at a cost of about $1.30 a gallon, though methanol has a lower energy content than gasoline, so the equivalent gasoline price would be closer to about $1.60 a gallon—attractive at current oil prices, but not if oil drops again to 2009 levels.

Finally, it is not a slam dunk that newly abundant natural gas supplies should be used primarily for new energy production. Current low prices are inducing the chemical industry to begin looking to our shores again for expansion. Two weeks ago CP Chem, a joint venture of Chevron and ConocoPhillips, announced that it is considering a major expansion at a Gulf Coast facility that would utilize shale gas, a development *Chemical Week* called "the most significant yet related to the improved cost position of U.S. petrochemicals." The chief fear of the chemical industry is that the price volatility that drove them overseas in the last decade might not be over. The chemical industry, like electric utilities, has been bit before by confident assurances that cheap gas was here to stay.

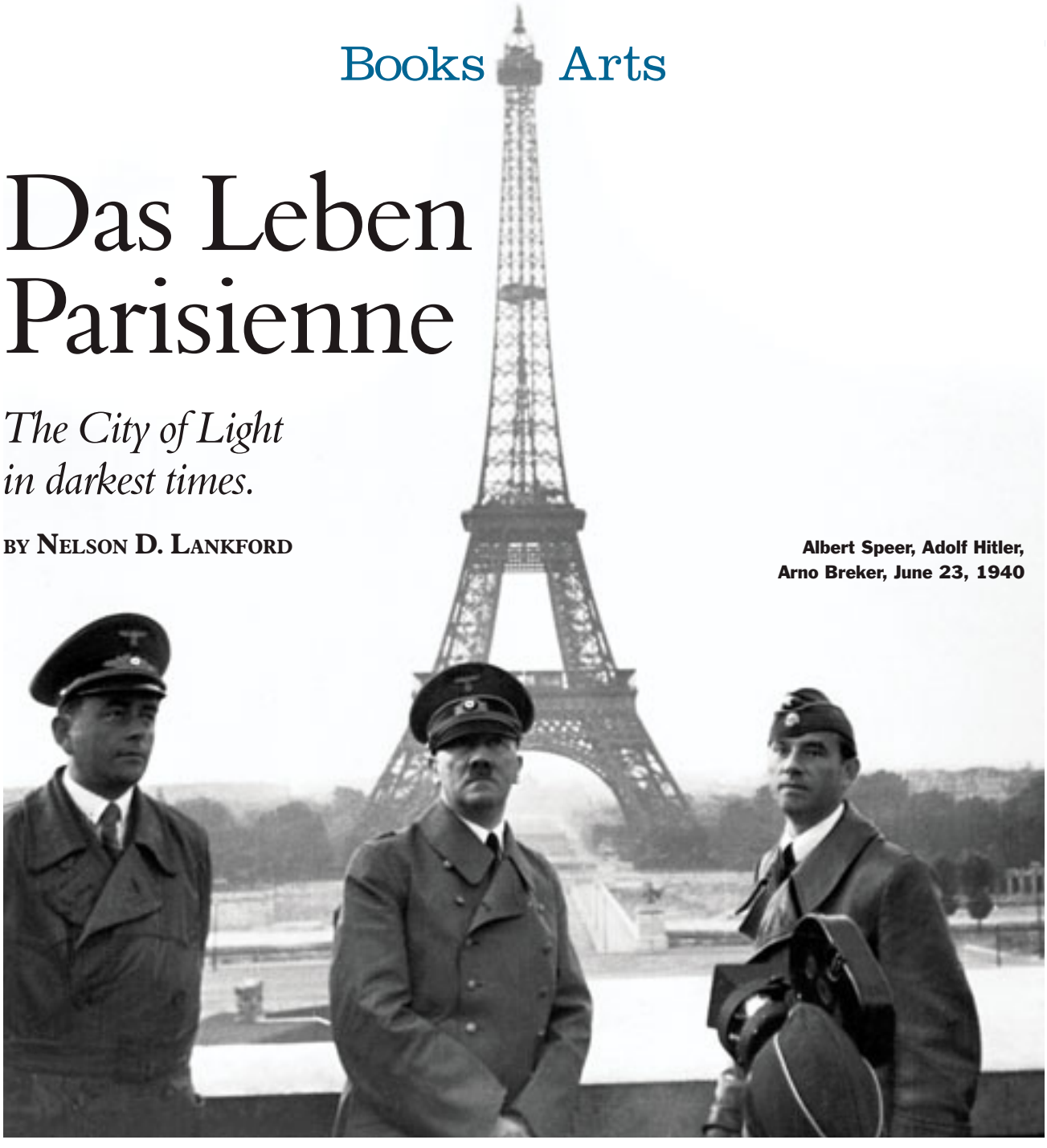
There is good reason for that concern. The urge for politicians and collaborating interest groups to meddle in the natural gas success story is irresistible, but all options for gas share one key assumption that should not go unchallenged: that the shale gas revolution will continue uninterrupted, thereby guaranteeing stable low prices. Although this appears probable at the moment, two aspects of shale gas production have escaped notice in the recent lavish media attention. First, its production costs—the "hurdle rate" as it is called in the trade—can be highly variable and site specific. Although hurdle rates are proprietary information from site to site and company to company, some shale gas plays such as the Haynesville-Bossier that straddles the Texas-Louisiana border are said to have production costs as high as $4 per thousand cubic feet, which is only slightly above the current market price. Hence in recent months, many drilling rigs have been pulling out of the Haynesville-Bossier and moving back to straight oil exploration in other parts of Texas. By contrast, the hurdle rate for Marcellus gas wells is said to be as low as 60 cents per thousand cubic feet in some cases, making the Marcellus play very profitable even if prices fall substantially below current levels.

The second factor is that shale gas wells have a much faster production decline curve than conventional gas wells; in other words, shale wells run out of gas sooner, requiring new wells to be drilled on a constant basis. New regulations that slow or make more expensive the replenishment of depleting wells, or a gas glut that collapses prices and idles drilling capacity, could set off a fresh round of price volatility and scramble everyone's calculations. It would be best if politicians left well enough alone and allowed the marketplace to compete over the uses of natural gas, but politics and energy have always mixed like gin-ethanol and tonic, so don't count on it. ♦

Das Leben Parisienne

The City of Light in darkest times.

BY NELSON D. LANKFORD



Albert Speer, Adolf Hitler, Arno Breker, June 23, 1940

May 1940 stunned the world. In a matter of days, Hitler's panzers scythed across France to the channel and clogged provincial roads with columns of refugees. As the vaunted French Army collapsed, the government abandoned a half-empty Paris to the conquerors. When the army chief of staff rejected a plan to continue fighting from French North Africa, Premier Paul Reynaud stepped down. The aging deus ex machina who replaced him engraved his name on the most ignoble period of modern French history: Marshal Philippe Pétain, the hero of Verdun, immediately sought an armistice with Germany. Rather than outrage, however, his announcement triggered heartfelt rejoicing throughout a demoralized, defeated nation. In the opinion of most French people, the ignominy came only in retrospect.

And the Show Went On
Cultural Life in Nazi-Occupied Paris
by Alan Riding
Knopf, 416 pp., $28.95

All this, in the second decade of the 21st century, begins to sound like ancient history. Perhaps it is. Even so, it still offers enduring object lessons about human frailties, for life went on. In the realm of art, music, the theater, the cinema, and letters, French men

BETTMANN / CORBIS

Nelson D. Lankford, editor of the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, *the quarterly journal of the Virginia Historical Society, is the author, most recently, of* Cry Havoc! The Crooked Road to Civil War, 1861.

and women had to address a new reality. Before populating his glittering cultural stage, Alan Riding limns the broader prewar political context, from the fascist *Croix-de-Feu* on the far right to obdurate Stalinists on the far left. Then he tells a multitude of stories about artists, writers, and performers across the sweep of French experience during the war, from armistice to liberation, not excluding the shameful expropriation of Jewish art and a worse fate accorded its owners. His is a tale of betrayal and resistance, patriotism, and bold opportunism—and in the end, vengeance and forgetfulness.

A British journalist, Riding most recently served as European cultural correspondent for the *New York Times*, based in Paris, where he still lives. French friends warned him that talking about the occupation was still taboo, but he did not find that true of those aged eyewitnesses to a troubled era he interviewed. He cites with approval the seminal work by Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order* (1972), which first dramatically questioned the myths of resistance. Since then, he writes, "the French public also learned that collaboration and self-preservation were stronger instincts than resistance." Much of France was relieved that Pétain had stopped the fighting and accepted his accommodation with Hitler. The Germans occupied the north and Atlantic coast; Pétain's regime, based at the spa town of Vichy, governed the unoccupied southern zone. In its early months, Vichy enjoyed widespread public support and foreign recognition. Forty nations, including the United States, sent diplomatic missions there, in effect acknowledging that Pétain represented the whole of France. Vichy derived legitimacy, in part, because ordinary French citizens (and a large swath of the intelligentsia, too) believed the society's decadence had caused their defeat. To them, Pétain's vision of a Roman Catholic, rural, and reactionary France promised to regenerate the nation.

The Paris Opera House resumed in August 1940 with the same production being staged when it closed during the war: Berlioz's *La damnation de Faust*. Cinemas reopened even more swiftly, with more than a hundred running by July. Nightclubs would enjoy a thriving business throughout the occupation. But the French and the Germans wanted Edith Piaf and Maurice Chevalier to continue singing for different reasons. The conquerors wanted the French to accept their fate and believe life had returned to its familiar rhythm. For the Germans, "since music halls, cabarets, brothels and restaurants were closely monitored, Paris by night posed neither a political nor a security threat." The French also desired a return to normal, but it was also a pragmatic matter: The entertainment industry employed thousands of people.

The scope of Nazi art looting depended as much on French informers as on Teutonic efficiency. When the bureau tasked with the job discovered a Jewish collection, "its agents, many of them art historians and young curators," lovingly inventoried the art objects, which went to the Jeu de Paume, a "museum-turned-depot," before being shipped to the Reich. Another fate awaited art the Germans rejected. On a summer day in 1943, in the garden of the Jeu de Paume, they burned a host of canvases deemed "degenerate"—as many as 600 paintings by Miró, Picasso, and others. Picasso could easily have fled abroad but remained in France and continued to work, keeping a low profile. His fame, however, brought an unwelcome stream of cultured Germans to his studio. After the war, he liked to embellish the story of one such visitor who raised the issue of the artist's most famous painting, his celebrated protest of the Luftwaffe's bombing of civilians during the Spanish Civil War.

Shown a postcard of *Guernica*, the officer asked the artist, "Did you do this?"

"No," Picasso retorted, "you did!"

The movie industry flourished. With English and American films banned, French-made movies enjoyed a captive audience eager to escape into the fantasy of cinema. The theater, too, experienced a golden age. For Parisians, watching a play was hardly a sign of collaboration, even if they had to share seats with Germans. Nazi censors routinely approved nonpolitical plays, but more surprising was their occasional toleration of new works, even Sartre's *Huis clos* and Anouilh's *Antigone*. Actors, painters, and composers could continue to work without commenting on politics. Writers, on the other hand, put their opinions down on paper for all to see. Strident anti-Semitic authors crowed with vindication. For the most extreme, however, "Vichy's lessons of Catholic piety seemed irrelevant, its aged leader and his mediocre government were clearly incapable of saving the country." For such writers, it was not Pétain but Hitler's new order for Europe that promised to realize their particular utopia. They rejoiced in the looming defeat of Britain and envisioned a vibrant, virile fascist France striding alongside the Third Reich. The talented young writer Robert Brasillach had championed this view before the war in a pro-Nazi weekly, *Je suis partout* ("I am everywhere"). After the fall of France, Brasillach stood out as the most vociferous exponent of these noxious ideas. Though it may seem implausible in retrospect, to many in the summer of 1940, the future—modernity itself—seemed to belong to the Nazis.

Riding's most interesting chapter, "Vengeance and Amnesia," chronicles the settling of accounts that accompanied liberation in 1944. Even before a restored provisional government under Gen. Charles de Gaulle could pass judgment, a wave of spontaneous killings slew 9,000 French citizens accused of collaboration. Gradually the government ended this *épuration sauvage* ("savage purge") by creating a mechanism for legal sanction. De Gaulle sought to reunify the nation through the fiction that all had been patriotic resisters, save only a few senior Vichy miscreants. Of these, the French condemned at least 16 to death but carried out only two sentences. The others, including Marshal Pétain, lived out their days in prison. In the end, Riding concludes, "de Gaulle favored punishment but not deep soul-searching."

The cultural world set up its own *comités d'épuration* to investigate the sins of each discipline's members. These tribunals recommended

court trials or a ban on the accused's publishing or performing. Caprice in the outcomes was unavoidable: The judges and the defendants, after all, often knew one another. In the cinema and the theater, purges were comparatively mild. Those who had openly consorted with the occupiers received special scorn, none more so than the glamorous actress Arletty, who frequented receptions at the German embassy on the arm of her Luftwaffe lover. But after only six weeks in jail, she resumed her acting career. She dismissed the accusation of sleeping with the enemy with the famous retort, "My heart is French, but my ass is international."

Arletty's friend, the playwright Sacha Guitry, typified the sort of intellectual who could not resist being part of *le tout Paris*, even under foreign rule. He stood accused of "intelligence with the enemy," the umbrella charge made against collaborators. In the end, the indictment was dropped, but not without the sting of a moral condemnation that applied to so many like him who needed publicity "like oxygen" and craved "the adulation and favors of the world." At first, Albert Camus believed France needed to expunge those intellectuals tainted by the occupation. He acknowledged the purges were chaotic, but he nevertheless argued for them against the plea of Francois Mauriac, a Catholic writer who initially accepted Pétain but later joined the Resistance. Mauriac appealed for mercy in the cause of national reunification. Camus later conceded that Mauriac had been right. Others, noting the fickle range of punishments, wondered whether any writer should be censured for the "crime of opinion."

Riding argues that it had been easier for visual artists to work without the taint of association with the occupiers. Picasso's fame drew German officers to his studio, but he did not endorse Vichy. He never claimed to have joined the Resistance, but neither did he support the occupation. Even so, it smelled of opportunism when he joined the Communist party and presided over the committee responsible for "naming and shaming of artists under investigation" for consorting with the Germans. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote that, in 1939, he had not wanted to fight because the nation was "a disgusting France, corrupt, inefficient, racist, anti-Semite, run by the rich for the rich—no one wanted to die for that, until, well, we understood that the Nazis were worse." Sartre could fairly argue that it was no reflection on him that German censors had vetted his plays. Indeed, he could point to the subversive content of his work. Still, when he arrogated to himself the role of postwar chronicler of France's ordeal, he gave himself a prominence in the literary resistance he did not merit. His main essay in this effort was translated and reprinted in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and with it, Riding slyly notes, "the construction of Sartre's American image was well under way."

In assessing the cultural legacy of occupation, Riding names some works of lasting value created during those four years, despite the adversity: a few enduring plays, such as Sartre's *Huis clos*, a few musical compositions, particularly by Olivier Messiaen, some sculpture and painting, and "one great work of fiction," Camus's *L'Étranger*. More popular and ephemeral culture diverted the public during the occupation, and art construed broadly, both high and low, demonstrated to the French the resilience of their society. After the war, France's cultural life revived, but in art, the center of gravity was shifting to New York. Once the most notorious traitors received their due, the French were content to forget Vichy and glorify the Resistance. Artists and writers benefited from this collective amnesia and returned to their work much as before.

Riding describes life for artists and writers during the occupation as

> a constantly evolving drama, a teeming stage where loyalty and betrayal, food and hunger, love and death found room to coexist, where even the line separating good and bad, *résistants* and *collaborateurs*, seemed to move with events.

He is, perhaps, too forgiving, too sympathetic to some of those leaders of French culture who trimmed their sails. And his ending is a surprise. France's main postwar contribution to culture lay in the realm of thought, but because the nation gave an exalted role to theory after the war, just as before, it became "fertile ground for extremism." In place of the utopianism of the radical right during the early 1940s, there emerged the baleful postwar utopianism of the radical left. The failure of these theories is a good thing, Riding concludes, because "politically speaking, artists and writers may now be less prominent, but they are also less dangerous." ♦

B&A

Bohemian Rhapsody

A backward look at the Manhattan hipster life.

BY ANN MARLOWE

Seventy-five-year-old Anne Roiphe's short, incandescent fourth memoir doesn't read like an older writer's book, but it explores obsessively an archaic constellation of ideas: that there's something special about artists and writers that excuses their moral lapses, especially in the arenas of alcoholism and adultery.

Art and Madness
A Memoir of Lust Without Reason
by Anne Roiphe
Nan A. Talese, 240 pp., $24.95

"I believed that I was going to be a muse to a man of great talent," she intones, and she might as well be saying she dreamt of being a lady in wait-

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ing at the court of Louis XIV, it is so remote to the present day. "Alcohol was the lubricant of genius . . . the men needed to drink." In sentences that alternate between Hemingwayesque brusqueness and Woolfian rhapsodies, Roiphe offers short set pieces anchored mainly in New York and the Hamptons from the mid-fifties to the early sixties. At the time, the United States still had a nearly official culture, with a hierarchy of writers (almost all white and male) whose relative rank order everyone knew. In Roiphe's account, they partied furiously, often at the Sutton Place apartment of the *Paris Review* cofounder George Plimpton.

Maybe the nonstop drinking and adultery she participated in was possible because writing was a reasonably paid enterprise, or because many of the *Paris Review* crowd—Peter Matthiessen, Doc Humes, Plimpton himself—were trustafarians. Some were also highly productive; Roiphe has bested most by publishing three earlier memoirs as well as nine novels and six works of nonfiction, while raising three daughters.

I caught the end of the *Paris Review* parties in George Plimpton's place in the late nineties. Coming from the indie rock scene, as I did, the substance abuse and sexual charge seemed mild. So did the intellectual stimulation and literacy level. But Roiphe has a skilled eye in evoking what were obviously the times of her young life, and whether or not it was any more exciting than literary life today, she makes it seem that way.

Art and Madness—a terrible title, at once pretentious and sententious—is also, more sadly, the story of Roiphe's doomed starter marriage (1958-63) to a delusional alcoholic, Jack Richardson. Roiphe met Richardson at a Brearley dance at 15, re-met him at the West End Bar at 21 (she says she was 19 in the text, but it's a mistake), and married him at 22. The second time they saw each other, Richardson asked her to buy a drink for him. While they were living together in Paris, he went out alone most nights, drinking and picking up hookers while she typed his manuscripts. And then, finally, he asked her to marry him. The reader can guess which way this is going, but Roiphe couldn't:

BETTMANN / CORBIS

Leonard Bernstein, George Plimpton, 1968

> My father gives Jack a few hundred dollars for a honeymoon. . . . But after lunch . . . Jack says he needs the money for a few nights on the town by himself. He needs to drink. I understand. He goes off alone on our honeymoon and I wait at the apartment. He comes back four days later.

Roiphe worked as a typist in the day to support Jack writing his first play, then typed it in the evening while he went out drinking. Roiphe, whose second husband was a psychoanalyst, is aware enough to say of her choices, "It has a name in the psychiatric manuals: masochism." But she insists that was not all: "A passion that even as I know better, even as I now regret it, was not without its own grandeur." We have only Roiphe's word to take for Richardson being a brilliant writer, since no one today has heard of him. Roiphe doesn't mention the irony, but the best way to turn up the right Jack Richardson on a search engine today is to couple his name with hers. And this is a man who vowed that, if he were not as famous as Keats by Keats's age at death (25), he would kill himself.

Speaking of which, there is no bohemian poverty in this tale. Roiphe and Richardson were living on Park Avenue when she was 27, in an apartment bought by her rich mother. When Richardson needed more money for drinking than Roiphe's meager salary as a receptionist allowed, he pawned her jewelry or she borrowed from her mother. The *folie à deux* that constituted this marriage might have ended even sooner without Roiphe's family money, which she wrote about in her second memoir, the excellent *1185 Park Avenue*. Roiphe is unflinching about her limitations: "I want a better world. I just want someone else to create it. . . . I had the morals of a four year old. . . . The man was a snake charmer and I was a snake." She rationalized her many affairs with married men in the desperate interval between Richardson's departure and her second marriage. Because her husband was compulsively unfaithful, she was freed not only from her marriage vows but from her obligation to respect others' vows:

> If other women had my husband, I too could do as I pleased. . . . In other words I was unmoored, uncertain and violated the only religious precept I really believed: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

She attributes her bad behavior to not knowing "whether it was better to snatch what sex one could from passersby or to remain faithful to a love and miss the party." She never attributes it to the sense of artistic entitlement that the male writers she knew used to excuse their lapses—though she believed in this justification, too.

Roiphe found happiness with husband number two, Dr. Herman Roiphe, a much steadier model, who was 43 to her 31 when they wed and stayed married to her until he died 38 years later. (She wrote a memoir about that, too.) In the end, though, what haunts this book are not the wild parties and furtive adulteries but the unconsoled screams of the very young Emily Carter, Roiphe's daughter by Richardson, wailing as her beautiful mother walks out the door, often on a foolish mission: "How hard it must be to be this child, whose mother is about to put her, still in her pajamas, in the car and race to the bus stop for a last goodbye." Roiphe was going to say farewell to a visiting lover, the late Doc Humes, possibly as alcoholic and mentally ill as Richardson, and today nearly as obscure.

Roiphe's first daughter is referred to only as "the baby" or "the child." At the end, Roiphe mentions Carter's struggles with drugs, her HIV-positive status, and her having become a writer, but still without naming her. Of course, Carter, a fixture of the East Village literary scene, may have requested this anonymity. (The other daughters are Katie, who wrote this book's forward, and Becky, both from their mother's second marriage.) And maybe the best commentary on the harrowing marriage that produced her comes from a 1998 interview with Carter. She is reflecting on her years as a stripper, but her words apply to the repetitions of her parents' union, and her father's alcoholism, as well:

> If I were ruler of this, our darkly gleaming universe . . . I'd make it a felony to change any human interaction into something reeking of power and degradation. I'd make it illegal to turn your life into an endless behavioral reply, like a skipping record, of something that happened to you as a child. ♦

B&A

Nature's Noblemen

A paean to the prophets of beauty and culture.

BY J.E. LENDON

Kenneth Clark, 1966

The play of light through a glass of Château d'Yquem; the soaring *terribilità* of a nuclear aircraft carrier; the gleam in the eye of a John Singer Sargent beauty; the crunch of Charun's fatal mallet, expunging a wounded gladiator in the Roman Coliseum to the cheerful airs of the water-calliope—all these are confounded within the generous realm we call "civilization."

In Search of Civilization
Remaking a Tarnished Idea
by John Armstrong
Graywolf, 208 pp., $24

Professors do not like the word: The minority of clear thinkers complain that it admits of no definition that takes in all of its meanings, and the moral tongue-clickers (much the majority) think the term sullied by those generations when the West, or so they are assured, sought to impose its "civilization" upon others with the Maxim gun.

"Stuff!" cries John Armstrong. He will raise the principle of civilization up again to glory, and guide us to felicity in so doing. To Armstrong, civilization is necessary for the good life, and the good life consists of the elegant enjoyment of life's good things, while the good society is produced by wealth and taste. Armstrong's, then, is a philosophical Gospel of Wealth, and so a rather surprising irruption into common sense by a contemporary professor of philosophy—even one who has dealt in classic Italian automobiles.

Armstrong's teachings are refreshing because high thinking has traditionally been hostile to money. Following Socrates, the philosophers of ancient

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POPPERFOTO / GETTY IMAGES

Greece resolutely separated the things of this world from the welfare of the soul. The Stoics considered material goods irrelevant to the good life, while the Epicureans (despite their reputation) regarded piled possessions as a positive hindrance to the *ataraxia*, life without disagreeable sensation, which they sought. Cynic—"Dog"—philosophers sometimes pursued a pure asceticism: Diogenes the Cynic lived on the street in a giant pot, and (the story goes), when asked by the stooping Alexander the Great what gift he would like to receive, retorted, "Just stop blocking the sun!"

Come Christianity, the narrow eye of heaven's needle always threatened the camel of wealth. As the new religion spread in the Roman world and had in practice to accommodate wealthy parishioners and plump prelates, nevertheless its theology shifted little in favor of Mammon. Even the globular Christian grandees of late Rome and Constantinople, whose shining silks hurt the eye and whose countless rings bent the hands that bore them—even they idolized filthy hermits babbling in the desert, and flocked to soiled saints perched high on poles, whose meager sustenance was hauled up to them in baskets, and whose discharges, conveyed down in those same baskets, were revered as relics by the prosperous pious below.

Greeks' and theologians' dour double disapproval of money has been the hideous inheritance of the West. Reinforced by aristocratic and would-be aristocratic disdain for work, hostility to wealth had, by the mid-19th century, torn free of its intellectual roots and become one of those ideas accepted without thought by a certain kind of intellectual, whatever his relationship to Greeks or theologians. Marx was heir to this prejudice, and the millions killed by Marx's followers its victims. So pervasive was this idea that even 19th-century Utilitarianism, whose principle of "the greatest happiness for the greatest number" should have made its followers leading advocates of economic liberty (as, indeed, they began), evolved over time a hostility to getting and spending; John Stuart Mill ended his life a socialist.

The two imps of the ancient mind, that wealth is either irrelevant to the good life or its bane, still rule the world of higher thought today. And the second, grimmer goblin has given birth to monstrous modern offspring: first, the notion that others should be deprived of their wealth for the good of their souls; and second, that the height of human aspiration—the very perfection of the soul—consists exactly of high-mindedly depriving others of their means. We see this all around us. But although self-realization through smug confiscation is the

Matthew Arnold, 1880

secret ambition of most of the contemporary left, it is especially among today's environmentalists that one gets the strongest sense that their own happiness is rooted, not in gamboling among the trees and dancing with the squirrels, but in contriving the impoverishment of their less morally elevated countrymen.

A Glaswegian contrarian in the tradition of Adam Smith, Armstrong scorns this deep-rooted suspicion of money. Civilization, says he, is essential for humans to flourish, and civilization consists of mutually vivifying material and spiritual prosperity. Beautiful things are essential to the good life, and so also the means to get them: There is nothing morally corrosive in comfort. We are not to be ashamed of our fat bank accounts, of our books and sculptures—or of our classic Italian automobiles. Freedom is necessary and capitalism good because they allow us these things; and the left's aversion to capitalism is driven chiefly by snobbery. Still, consumption without taste is careless of beauty (witness the contemporary art market) or even destructive of beauty (witness modernist architecture). The past, the arts and humanities, should be our guides to the right use of our wealth, to what we should and should not desire. Shame, then, on the professors, who have confined the arts and humanities to the *oubliettes* of academic departments and who, by teaching their students only their own brand of micro-scholarship, have sundered the bond that properly exists between great art and books and public taste.

Armstrong paints a magically acidulous picture of today's Florence, where ignorant prosperity in fanny packs heaves in its multitudes past masterpieces it is too ill-taught to appreciate, while the academicians of Harvard's nearby Villa I Tatti (once the home of Bernard Berenson, perhaps the most civilized American that ever lived), who should be able to appreciate the glories of the Renaissance city, scribble their arid abstractions in indifference. And a special corner of Armstrong's Hades is reserved for contemporary artists and writers who have accepted the professors' dictum that the main purpose of their art is to be "interesting" or "provocative," rather than beautiful and uplifting.

Matthew Arnold is Armstrong's inspiration, and John Ruskin and Kenneth Clark and, I suspect, the contemporary conservative philosopher of aesthetics Roger Scruton: Armstrong's book is wonderfully old-fashioned, avowedly and proudly conservative, an admirable excavation of good old ideas from admirable old authors. But what separates Armstrong's book from today's myriad moans about the decline of taste and rise of barbarism is its optimism: For in its unlimited, cheerful confidence in high culture's power to elevate and ennoble, in the power of great art widely known to make lives better, *In Search of Civilization* reminds the reader ever so slightly of Walt Disney's *Fantasia*. ♦

B&A

Play Ball

That's what they did, and that's all that matters.

BY ZACHARY MUNSON

Why is there often so much conflict between the enduring images of great athletes and their actual personalities and lives? These two biographies go a long way toward answering this question.

Mark Kurlansky's *Hank Greenberg* addresses it directly, with a focus on the slugger's own conflict about his status as a Jewish sports icon. The book is a somewhat dry account of Greenberg's somewhat dry life: It is well-written, clear and concise, and offers fairly thorough background on both the history of Jewish involvement in baseball and the swell of American anti-Semitism in the 1930s, as Greenberg was breaking into the major leagues. Greenberg, a hulking 6-foot-3 first baseman, became the first Jewish baseball superstar. He faced down anti-Semites on the field and was celebrated by American Jews for refusing to play on Yom Kippur (although he had just played on Rosh Hashanah and was a totally secular Jew). In fact, as Kurlansky points out, Greenberg's hatred of anti-Semitism had more to do with his desire to be considered a fully assimilated American than with an inclination to assert loyalty to his religious and cultural heritage. For him, Judaism was "an accident of birth," not a cause—and certainly not the religious or moral foundation of his life.

But for some reason, despite this irony and Greenberg's celebrity, his symbolic importance, and his on-field accomplishments, Kurlansky's account just isn't all that interesting. Perhaps it's because the story has already been told so many times before,

Hank Greenberg
The Hero Who Didn't Want to Be One
by Mark Kurlansky
Yale, 192 pp., $25

Joe DiMaggio
The Long Vigil
by Jerome Charyn
Yale, 192 pp., $24

or because American anti-Semitism is largely dormant, or because the idea of a Jewish sports star is totally remote, unlike in the 1930s when Greenberg was in his prime and Jews were a force in boxing and absolutely dominant on the basketball court (what a world!).

Whatever the cause of its overall dullness, *Hank Greenberg* is thankfully free of the babble that makes up a good deal of sportswriting these days, including Jerome Charyn's *Joe DiMaggio: The Long Vigil*, an overwrought, incoherent biographical ramble that focuses on DiMaggio's fractured relationship with Marilyn Monroe. Here is a cringe-inducing exercise in Epic Baseball Poetry, that brand of sportswriting that makes anyone who has an interest in sports and writing wish the two had never been combined.

From its inauspicious beginning—*The Long Vigil* opens with this comically grandiose phrase: "He was the nonpareil"—to its nonsensical conclusion ("DiMaggio takes us [into] an incredible chasm where no one else has ever dared to go"), this is a good example of why sportswriters often give sports and writing a bad name. First, no book about baseball should use the word "suzerainty," which is done repeatedly here in reference to DiMaggio's post in center field. *The Long Vigil* is so muddled, so full of mixed metaphors and non sequiturs and inexplicable changes of tense, that I wondered if it was meant to be satirical. For who could write something like this, about DiMaggio's retirement, without a shred of irony?

> [DiMaggio] wasn't really suited to become a relic. He didn't have the temperament. He couldn't pretend to be a clown, as the Babe had done. But he would be demoted to the very same scrapheap. . . . The Yankee management was as nervous about him as it had been about the Babe—their sway was much too large for the hucksters and showmen who had to run a club. But the Jolter had an additional burden, that blazing sensibility of his. He was so quick to wound. And without his suzerainty in center field, the Jolter would leap from wound to wound for the rest of his life, trapped by the very skills that had once sustained him. There wasn't much place for an ex-gazelle.

Charyn refers to DiMaggio as The Jolter, The Clipper, The Dago, the Daig, DiMaggio, DiMag, The Big Guy, and Marilyn's Slugger. At one point, he concludes that DiMaggio, who had taken to signing autographs at memorabilia shows, was a "moody cash cow." Then he asserts, in apparent seriousness, that "Gay Talese wasn't wrong to compare him to a matador. There are no bulls on a baseball diamond, yet there might as well have been. DiMaggio lived in that constant danger zone where a bull might gore a man."

So The Dago's suzerainty was a danger zone full of man-goring bulls. No wonder he was such a moody cash cow. He was also, apparently, no intellectual. After he returned from Moscow, DiMaggio's main observation about the capital city of the Soviet Union was that "you can't get a corned beef sandwich there." Charyn laments: "The man who had the eyesight of a hawk, who could spot Bob Feller's best curve by the way the stitches spun around on the ball, could not lend us one syllable about the particular fall of sunlight on the Kremlin's spires or describe the crowds in Red Square."

Zachary Munson is a writer in Washington.

Here is some insight into the main problem for people who write "seriously" about sports: Hitting and catching a baseball have nothing to do with intellectual curiosity or philosophical acumen or artistic ability. Professional athletes are, from a very young age, of a completely one-track mind: They play sports, all the time. What is most interesting about any athlete is what he (or she) does on the field, and problems arise when writers begin imputing implications to hitting or throwing a ball. In the old days, people were amazed that Joe DiMaggio could spot Bob Feller's best curveball and smack the daylights out of it, and that was enough. But then writers got it into their heads that sports had to *mean* something, there had to be something *deeper* going on: It couldn't all just be for fun. Unfortunately, those same people have made careers writing about sports, inflating their importance and seriousness and creating expectations of what athletes should be as humans. And it's unavoidable that great athletes fail to live up to those expectations, especially with writers like Jerome Charyn behind the typewriter. ♦

B&A

The Flip Side

Ilana Lewitan, artist of hidden truth and double meaning.

BY DAVID GELERNTER

Ilana Lewitan is a painter of questions too wide or deep for words, whose originality, intelligence, and painterly virtuosity make her one of the most significant surrealists in decades. Her work is now on show at the prestigious Galerie Noah in Augsburg. Possibly you weren't planning to stop by Augsburg in the next few weeks, but Mrs. Lewitan's work is bound to appear in America before long. Later this spring she will have a show in Shanghai; she's had exhibits in Israel and many in her native Germany. The art world is coming to know her.

Her paintings are too diffuse for language, like the oppressive feel of a thunderstorm coming on. One recent painting is called simply *Nu?*—Yiddish for (approximately) *Well . . . ?*—a way to demand an answer without asking a question. Along with all good surrealists, Lewitan paints dream-imagery. Many of her paintings are tense with uneasiness, wariness, watchfulness, like a charged copper sphere that will strike sparks across a gap if you come close. But they are effective because of her fine drawing, structural sense, technique with the brush, and her striking sense of color. She extends (proudly and boldly) the line of distinguished contemporary painting in Germany. Her work resonates with earlier voices, but her own is wholly original—and so is she.

She is a Jew who was born in Munich a generation after the collapse of Nazidom. She and her husband, the psychologist and *Die Zeit* columnist Louis Lewitan (who was born in France), came to New York to spend their young adulthood in the late 1980s and early '90s. But they decided to return to Munich to rear their children. Lewitan is trained as an architect and worked for Richard Meier in New York. In 1994, back in Munich, she won first prize in a major competition and was set to move into the frenzied strobe-lit razzle-dazzle of international celebrity architecture. But she decided to be a mother, wife, and painter instead. Her first solo exhibit was in 2002; between 2003 and 2009 she was a student of the eminent painter, sculptor, and intellectual Markus Lüpertz at the Bad Reichenhaller Academy near Salzburg. Today, she and her husband are important actors in the small but astonishingly alive Munich Jewish community. They believe in modern Germany—cautiously.

Her paintings in the Augsburg show tend to be wide, low rectangles, some as much as nine feet across. Most show a group of fragmented figures (humans, dogs, masks, skulls) sketched or drawn in loose, sure strokes and surrounded or filled up by colors that are laid in as carefully as masonry webbing in a gothic vault. They are acrylics with collaged elements, charcoal, and other media. They make a coherent group in mood, shape, and relatively soft-spoken color, but she has recent paintings that are even stronger back at her studio and on her website.

In Expectation (2008), which is in the show, is one meter square and centers on two human-like shapes and a third that suggests a sphinx. Several lines of neat, cursive German script snake backwards across the image like a message in a dream that you can't quite understand. In the background, warm gray turns gradually to blue; the figures are ochre, pale purple, and rusty pink. *"What's up?"* (2007, and not in the show) is a large, upright canvas centering on a doll-like figure that is mainly head and hands. Hands are a Lewitan leitmotif. These hands, and an open mouth, seem (again) to be telling us something ominous that we can't quite hear. The colors include the triad of bright sky-blue, purple, and rusty orange, which recurs in her paintings. The passage from violet to rust is arresting.

In other recent paintings there are dogs, a scowling skull, an elegantly painted zebra head (above a wonderful passage of murmuring greens and then purples and then whispering,

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'Altlasten' (2006)

tiptoeing light blues), figures gripped and crushed by interlaced fingers, several brutally sketched, radically exposed female nudes gripped or pinned by unseen forces, and fragmented feet, hands, and masklike faces. The brush strokes are quick and confident, the effect memorable and troubling.

The complex bouquet of Lewitan's work includes overtones of de Chirico (in its stubborn, ominous, questioning mood), of Dubuffet, of early Chagall hand-colored lithographs, and of George Grosz, among others. Some of her pieces, with strips of color behind figures sketched in black, suggest not only Chagall but the grossly neglected fauve Raoul Dufy. A few of these paintings include flip-panels: Using a knob mounted on a shaft that penetrates the canvas's wood frame, you can flip over an inner segment that is painted on both sides, like removing a centrally located jigsaw puzzle piece and replacing it upside down. The flipped-over panel blends quietly into the painting, like an orchestra member showing up late for rehearsal—and changes it. Instead of a thumb, for example, you get a face.

In many of her early flipper-works, not only the flip-panel but the entire painting is double-sided, making four possible surfaces in all. (One thinks of late medieval altarpieces that show one image on the closed door-flaps and another with the flaps open, sometimes with subtle pictorial interactions between inner and outer images.) Lewitan's flipper-paintings are the ideal medium for ominous ambiguity or, equally, for bridging two images in distant keys.

Her best-known piece—the one that seems to be reproduced most often—is *Spuren aus der Zukunft* (Traces of the Future), from 2006. This double-sided flipper-painting shows, on one side, a digitally printed photograph of a Nazi crowd in Munich, transformed by overpainting but clearly legible; the center flip-panel has a hand raised in the Hitler salute, answering the thousand saluting arms in the photo below. When you flip the inner panel, it passes through a tilted-forward attitude that echoes the raised arm of Nazidom. But when it's flipped over completely, the Nazi salute is gone and a child's cupped hands have taken its place. On the other side, a group of children's hands raised playfully takes the place of the heiling crowd. But flip the inner panel and the Nazi salute reappears among the children. In the upper band are photographs of Munich's Jews in the 1930s, some of them family photos, some hanging upside down. The result has the richness of Robert Rauschenberg but with colors that are vivid and mellifluous and a narrative flowing up one side and down the other.

The Lewitan flip-panel is not merely an ideal ambiguity machine: It captures the double-sidedness of Lewitan's life. She used the flipper in a striking series of square pieces finished in 2003 in an exhibition called *Doppelleben* (Double Life) and described as "soul portraits." In these paintings a svelte and lovely girl is transformed (flip the panel) into a ferocious fish-headed mermaid; a frog-like creature grips a sort of woman—and then (flip the panel) consumes her. These paintings are more densely worked than the later ones, and their cool, aquatic colors are, as usual in her work, striking and beautiful.

There is tension of sorts between the sheer confidence and panache with which Lewitan draws and colors and paints, and the ominous, interrogative mood of her pictures. She does her high-wire act on a tightrope stretched hard between these two points. Inevitably, one wonders if and when she will allow the pent-up beauty of her work to explode into an optimistic *allegro con brio* group of paintings. In real life she seems to be an *allegro con brio* sort of person. But restless, impatient questioning, with violence rolling just beneath the surface, might be the only possible mood for a German Jew in modern Munich—or, possibly, for any Jewish artist anywhere in 2011. ♦

Dead Reckoning

'Strangers on a Train' meets 'Donovan's Brain.'

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Last week I wrote about *Limitless*, a present-day science-fiction movie with a thrilling premise incompetently executed. A few weeks before, I wrote about *The Adjustment Bureau*, a present-day science-fiction movie with a haunting premise intriguingly executed. Now we have *Source Code*, a present-day science-fiction movie with an incomprehensible premise brilliantly executed.

You're not going to find a more entertaining movie these days than *Source Code*, despite the fact that you are unlikely to make much sense of its central conceit. Lord knows I couldn't, but it's my job to try, so here goes. When a person dies, his brain activity continues for eight minutes (or so the movie says). Theoretically, another person's consciousness could somehow be downloaded into, and take the place of, the dead person's consciousness for those eight minutes.

But what the downloaded person will experience is not the eight minutes *after* death but rather the final eight minutes of the dead person's life. In the course of that eight-minute span, the downloaded person will be able to move and talk and think and interact with others. But since all he's experiencing is the dead person's memory, the downloaded person can't actually change the past. But he might be able to *learn* something about what happened to the dead person during those eight minutes.

I'm not making *Source Code* sound like anything you might want to see, am I? But you really do, because what

Source Code
Directed by Duncan Jones

screenwriter Ben Ripley and director Duncan Jones (who was born to a glitter-rock-star father in 1971 and given the once-infamous birth name of Zowie Bowie) pull off here is actually quite wonderful.

The beauty of *Source Code* is all in the telling. The movie takes place in three settings. There is a commuter train chugging from the suburbs into Chicago, which will blow up in eight minutes. There is a makeshift military command center at Nellis AFB in Nevada manned by Capt. Colleen Goodwin (Vera Farmiga, in an amazingly layered performance). And there is a flight-simulation capsule in which Air Force Captain Colter Stevens (Jake Gyllenhaal) finds himself after spending eight minutes on the train inside the body and brain of one of the passengers before experiencing the train's destruction.

The explosion is the work of a terrorist on board the train. Goodwin tells Stevens that his job is to find out the identity of the bomber because they know somehow that if he is not stopped the bomber is going to detonate a dirty bomb in the center of Chicago a few hours later.

She keeps sending Stevens back to relive those final eight minutes through the eyes of the dead passenger, and each time he comes to see and learn a bit more about the other passengers—one in particular, a luminous seatmate named Christina (Michelle Monaghan).

He becomes convinced he can save her, even though Goodwin's boss—a fascinatingly ambiguous scientific genius played marvelously by Jeffrey Wright—explains to Stevens that he is only living through a memory. The past is fixed. He cannot change it.

The interactions inside the train car, and between the encapsuled Stevens and Goodwin, and between Goodwin and her boss, are what give the movie its remarkable heart. In quick, bold strokes, *Source Code* makes all these people seem very vivid and real and the dynamics between them believable and honest.

Most impressively (this was true of *The Adjustment Bureau* as well) *Source Code* succeeds in offering an enchanting portrait of two people falling in love in about a minute's time. We know they are doomed to be separated forever by fate, and we are eager to see them cheat it. But what really makes *Source Code* work is the soulful performance of Jake Gyllenhaal, a pretty-boy actor who has never done much for me. Gyllenhaal must play clever, confused, angry, and aware that something terrible is going on he can't make sense of all at once, and proves masterly at it.

So go see *Source Code*. But please note how odd it is that three similar "what-if" movies have been released on successive weekends—a "what if you could use all of your brain" story in *Limitless*, a "what if God didn't want you to marry your beloved" story in *The Adjustment Bureau*, and this "what if you had eight minutes to occupy someone else's body and stop a terrorist attack."

Or is it odd? Perhaps it is, dare I say it, a conspiracy—a conspiracy of Hollywood moviemakers and financiers and theater owners designed to convince all of us that the reality around us is an illusion! Why would they go to such lengths? Perhaps because they need to keep us from questioning their continuing insistence on charging us $6.95 for 18 cents' worth of popcorn at the concession stand—and our willingness to pay it.

I think I need to go see some Icelandic art films for awhile. ♦

John Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, *is* The Weekly Standard*'s movie critic.*

Glenn Beck to leave Fox News

In a press release, the two sides commented:

Roger Ailes: *"Glenn Beck is a powerful communicator, a creative entrepreneur and a true success by anybody's standards. I look forward to continuing to work with him."*

Glenn Beck: *"I truly believe that America owes a lot to Roger Ailes and Fox News. I cannot repay Roger for the lessons I've learned and will continue to learn from him and I look forward to starting this new phase of our partnership."*

—News item

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