the weekly
Standard

DEFENSE UNDER SIEGE
TOM DONNELLY • JAMIE M. FLY
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OCTOBER 10, 2011 $4.95

OVERRATED

NOEMIE EMERY
on Barack Obama, politician nonpareil

Do you long for a new world? A world of no conflict, no jealousy, no unkind words. A world in which people think, say, and do what is rational and honest, resulting in behavior that is caring, trustworthy, and productive.

Enlarge the picture of that ***new world*** whose people hold no grudges nor compete to exert control. Their behavior conforms to a ***natural law,*** causing them to overcome the stress and pressures of their former lives.

Picture other details of a ***new-world*** society. People's activities need no supervision as they are guided by what reality calls for. There are no locks on doors or windows, no legal documents to assure honest compliance, no addictions, no crime, no poverty, and no deprivation of any rightful thing or opportunity.

There are no scoldings or punishments and no stress. There is liberation of men, women, and children of every race from the tyranny of prejudice. There is plentiful food and shelter. There is nonpolluting transportation. In this ***new world*** there is full employment with unique opportunities available to everybody.

More important, there is fellowship among people. There are neither strangers nor anyone to fear. There is stimulating activity as people reason from reality to learn from it and to be guided by it.

Daily life is an exciting adventure. Since there are no conflicting thoughts, there are no confrontations.

As people consult nature's storehouse of knowledge, there are spectacular accomplishments. No prizes are awarded, as everybody is attending the ***university of life*** and learning from its boundless source.

Reality results from whatever the natural laws deliver.

What creates a new world? The answer is found by people that conform to a natural law created by whoever or whatever created natural laws. This law identified by Richard W. Wetherill in 1929 is called the ***law of absolute right: Right action gets right results***.

The law defines right action as thoughts, words, and deeds that are rational and honest—nonconformance prolongs society's ***old-world*** problems, failures, and afflictions.

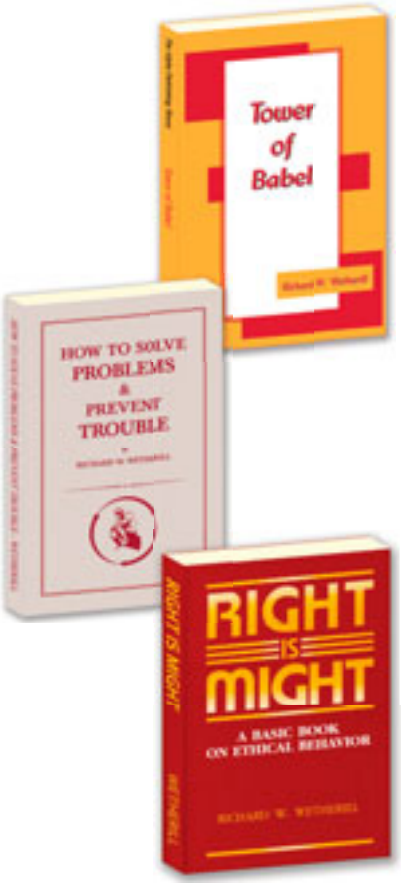
At present writing, billions of people worldwide, trying to satisfy their conflicting motives, are unknowingly causing the societal chaos that is blocking the birth of a ***new world***.

Conforming to the principles of the ***law of right action*** begets a new world for those willing to participate. Unlike mankind's laws, philosophies, and beliefs, the behavioral law is not a product of human intelligence. The ***new world*** comes into being worldwide for people who reason from nature's ***law of absolute right***.

Scientific research and discovery require identifying various aspects of nature to learn their principles and functions. In the process researchers have mapped the body's DNA, planet Earth, large areas of space, tectonic plates, and the ocean floor, showing that to acquire knowledge and dispel beliefs, researchers study nature.

By turning to the creator, Wetherill had insight into a behavioral law, establishing a new world. Whoever or whatever created the universe, its people, and its laws intended a peaceful and productive society.

Becoming rational and honest enables people to function in a world envisioned for the human race by whoever or whatever created that precious law!



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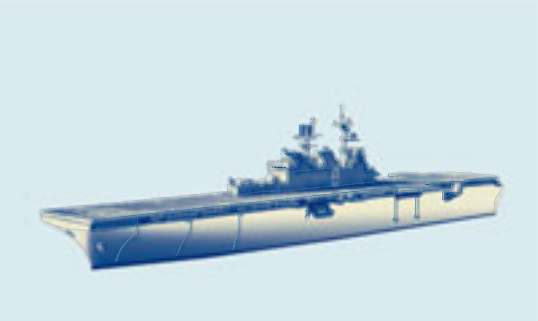

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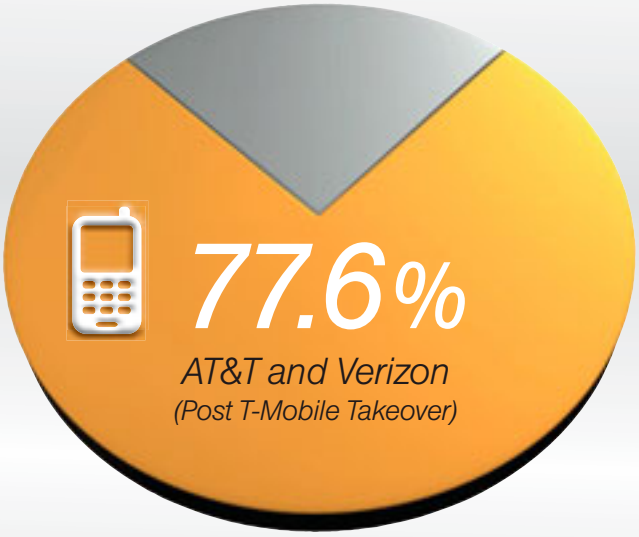
Two companies controlling this much wireless industry revenue creates a one-sided conversation.



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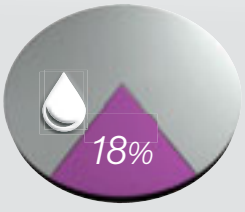

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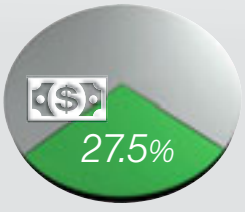

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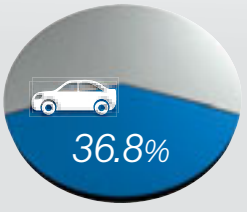

Auto

AT&T's proposed takeover of T-Mobile would result in two companies controlling more than 77% of wireless industry revenues. In other major industries, the two top firms control much less.

Two wireless industry giants would marginalize the ability of other providers to keep prices competitive for consumers and influence the pace of wireless industry innovation.

This is a bad idea for consumers, competition and our country.

Wireless industry source: Individual company annual financial reports for 2010.
Oil source: www.alacra.com/acm/2042_sample.pdf, page 22. Note: data includes oil refining and gas.
Airline source: DOT, form 41, Schedule P-1.2.
Banking source: DATAMONITOR'S "Banks in the United States" and www2.fdic.gov/sdi/main.asp.
Auto source: SEC 10-K filings, (includes cars and trucks and may include other revenue streams).
Foreign currencies converted to dollars using prevailing exchange rates.

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Mock the Vote

The Scrapbook is not superstitious, but there was a curious, and slightly disconcerting, convergence of Deep Think last week that caught our attention. It began with a front-page story in the *New York Times*—"As Scorn for Vote Grows, Protests Surge Around the Globe" by Nicholas Kulish (Sept. 28)—which could be excused as one of the *Times*'s routine efforts (usually confined to the Arts pages) to rekindle the sixties spirit. Or maybe not. The article chronicled a worldwide cycle of mass protests—from India and Israel to Greece and Spain—against elected governments, reflecting "wariness, even contempt, toward traditional politicians and the democratic political process they preside over." One young Spanish woman summed it up this way: "Our parents are grateful because they're voting," Marta Solanas told the *Times*. "We're the first generation to say that voting is worthless."

Well, not quite: Senorita Solanas is just the latest generation of comfortably alienated middle-class youth to find their parents' institutions off-putting, or the trappings of democratic politics and governance hopelessly bourgeois. You expect such parlor nihilism from the young, and you certainly expect the *Times*, now safely in the hands of Baby Boom editors, to print it on Page One.

What you are less likely to expect is a chorus of support from people who, theoretically, should know better. First, there was former OMB director Peter Orszag, an alumnus of President Obama's economic team, who took to the pages of the *New Republic* to deplore America's polarization and lament that Washington seems incapable of getting things done. This is hardly the first time The Scrapbook has heard a politician complain about dissent, or exhort the machinery of government to do his bidding. But it was the first time we had heard an ex-cabinet officer suggest that "we need to minimize the harm from legislative inertia by relying more on automatic policies and depoliticized commissions for certain policy decisions."

Wrote Orszag, "we need to counter the gridlock of our political institutions by making them a bit less democratic."

Once again, The Scrapbook is accustomed to journalists who profess impatience with the machinery of democracy, and look longingly to the rule of the enlightened and anointed. Such distinguished citizens as Thomas L. Friedman and Fareed Zakaria routinely exalt the energetic leadership in the People's Republic of China, where such annoyances as voting, Republicans, public sentiment, and free speech are in short supply. We are less accustomed, however, to hearing such talk from political practitioners such as Orszag, or the elected Democratic governor of North Carolina, Bev Perdue. We can't say whether Perdue shares Orszag's faith in rule by "automatic policies" and "depoliticized commissions," but after listening to her last week, we know what she doesn't like.

> I think we ought to suspend, perhaps, elections for Congress for two years and just tell them we won't hold it against them, whatever decisions they make, to just let them help this country recover.

Now, it is true that Governor Perdue instantly recognized the implications of what she had said, and sent word the next day to the press that she had been "joking . . . sarcastic." But The Scrapbook has listened carefully to what she said, and believes she meant it. And why shouldn't she? Her party lost its momentum in Congress after the 2010 elections, and during the last year has had considerably less success enacting Obama's agenda. There's no undoing the results of the last election; the obvious solution is to abolish the next.

Which, of course, will not happen. But it is surely a measure of the state of mind among Democrats that, having failed to persuade voters in the last round, they daydream about preventing them from voting in the next. Everyone in Washington believes that public opinion is on their side, and that if the other guy would just shut up and act bipartisan, Congress would do what we want them to do. The only difference between Peter Orszag and Bev Perdue is that Perdue wants nothing to be tested at the ballot box, and Orszag wants to write the rules and regulations himself. But both know exactly what Americans need and deserve.

There's a hilarious passage in a memoir (*Crisis*, 1982) by Jimmy Carter's late chief of staff Hamilton Jordan, in which he flies to Panama to plead with the resident dictator to offer safe haven to the ailing ex-shah of Iran. Not only does Gen. Omar Torrijos agree to Jordan's proposal, but he does so (in Jordan's admiring account) almost instantly—and with no recourse to any argumentative legislature! What a contrast, Jordan reflects, with politics in Washington, where an irritating system of checks and balances prevents President Carter from snapping his fingers and demanding obedience.

If this were Europe in, say, 1932, The Scrapbook would be worried about where such sentiments might lead in the wake of an economic and political slump. But since it's America in 2011, these Democratic dreams of authority just sound absurd, and we thank whatever gods may be that we all get to vote again in just 13 months. ♦

Lean Backwards

Last week, Fox News was in the middle of a cross-country tour celebrating the network's 15th anniversary. It seems they have good reason to celebrate. The network remains the undisputed cable news ratings champ, and while it's hard to pin down the exact figures, it's estimated that Fox News made $700 million in profit last year. That's more than "CNN, MSNBC and the evening newscasts of NBC, ABC and CBS combined," reports *Business Insider*.

Given Fox's competition, their continued success is hardly surpris-

ing. "The genius of Rupert Murdoch and Roger Ailes," as Charles Krauthammer once remarked, "was to have discovered a niche market in American broadcasting—half the American people." Krauthammer's observation seems to be reinforced by the fate of the more liberal news network, MSNBC. While Fox was breaking out the party hats last week, the *New York Times* reported, "MSNBC Is Close to Falling to Third Place in Cable News Ratings." Not only that, *TV Newser* reports that CNN's ratings are up double digits this month, mostly at the expense of a slipping MSNBC. CNN now beats MSNBC in just about every hour of the day outside of primetime. And even in primetime, MSNBC's ratings advantage is very narrow.

The *Times* attributes MSNBC's ratings plunge to the departure of the famously difficult-to-work-with Keith Olbermann earlier this year. It's true that Olbermann's replacement on MSNBC, Lawrence O'Donnell, has brought in significantly fewer viewers. But Olbermann has a news show on Al Gore's Current TV channel, and he hasn't exactly taken his audience with him. The number of viewers for Olbermann's new program could probably fit comfortably into the former vice president's Prius. If MSNBC rose to prominence by voicing a fiery liberal opposition to George W. Bush, that era is definitively over. In a center-right country, there's just no demand for a combatively liberal network.

In case anyone thought that Olbermann's departure might cause the network to reevaluate the utility of putting a liberal spin on the news, the answer is "no." MSNBC's big moves this year have been its oft-mocked "Lean Forward" marketing campaign and the hiring of Al Sharpton, a commentator not exactly known for his Murrow-esque commitment to veracity.

Meanwhile, CNN has been courting the center. While those attuned to liberal media bias can still find much at CNN to complain about, the pretense of objectivity at least matters to the network. And it has rounded out its commentariat by employing figures popular among grassroots conservatives, such as Dana Loesch and Erick Erickson. Even a slight attempt to cater to the political perspective of half the American public might be paying some ratings dividends.

Speaking of dividends, we assume that Comcast/General Electric/NBCUniversal shareholders will at some point care whether their cable news network makes money. When that time comes, it won't exactly be a difficult decision to throw in the towel and clean up the hot liberal mess that MSNBC has become. The Scrapbook suspects they'll replace the current lineup with something that's more, well, fair and balanced. ♦

Inspire Editor Expires

Times are indeed tough for the magazine industry—advertising is down, subscribers are aging, young readers prefer the online and the free, and few print organs have made their online versions really work. But none of that is why *Inspire* looks to be joining the likes of *Gourmet*, *George*, *Sassy*, and *Talk* in the dustbin of failed periodicals. *Inspire*'s editor Samir Khan wasn't fired because he spent too lavishly on the publication's Hollywood parties, or because he crossed swords with the wrong Newhouse. Khan was caught in the crosshairs of an unmanned drone last week in North Yemen, alongside his pal Anwar al-Awlaki. *Inspire*, by the way, is the

English language tract sponsored by Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

Dispatching Awlaki, a 40-year-old American-born Yemeni cleric and member of AQAP, was a major achievement for the Obama administration in its campaign to bring AQ officials to justice. In May, Navy SEALs put paid to Osama Bin Laden, and at the end of August AQ's Number Two, Atiyah abd al-Rahman, wound up on the wrong end of a drone in Pakistan. Khan, it seems, was a bonus. The 25-year-old Saudi-born New Yorker was probably just riding in the wrong convoy at the wrong time.

In a sense, you have to hand it to Khan. Most editors never really want to get too close to their subjects. Try to imagine *Vogue*'s Anna Wintour schlepping fabrics across Seventh Avenue. But Khan lived the life. He wasn't afraid to embrace his subject—which of course was jihad.

Khan's audience was English-speaking Westerners disenchanted with the Zionist-imperialist conspiracy to destroy the *umma* and looking for tips on how to bring it down. The purpose of *Inspire* was to guide and encourage these young jihadists.

Some of Khan's editorial choices were derivative, to say the least. Aside from the bad rhyme in the headline, "How to Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom" was little more than a reworked version of Andrew Kopkind's infamous 1967 *New York Review of Books* story with the diagram showing how to make a Molotov cocktail. We wonder what was in the works—a profile of the new al Qaeda emir titled "Ayman al-Zawahiri Has a Cold"?

To be frank, The Scrapbook was never entirely sure who was reading *Inspire*—outside of Western intelligence services. Pretty much anyone who logged on to its website must have had his name filed away in some pretty sensitive places. And that loss to intelligence-gathering is the only reason to miss Khan, whose sad misspent life had only a slightly longer run than his evil publishing empire. ♦

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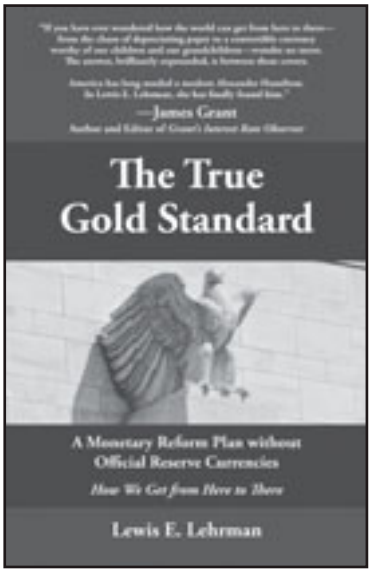

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The Bain of My Existence

Two weeks ago my three-year-old son was supposed to talk about our family at his preschool, so I prepped him: "What if the teacher asks what your daddy does for a living?" After a thoughtful pause, my son replied, "Nothing." At which point I instructed him to tell the class that his father writes. "My dad writes," he dutifully repeated, and then added, "and writing is nothing." On the other hand, his two uncles have easily explainable, "real" jobs. One is a firefighter and the other is in construction. What my brothers-in-law do is tangible to my son, who plays with both a fire truck and an excavator. I guess I could give him Strunk & White.

The truth is, there are a lot of people who do things for a living that are hard to explain—and not just to children. Take presidential candidate Mitt Romney, who recently said, "I have spent most of my life outside of politics, solving real problems in the real economy." What exactly is he talking about? Romney had been involved in private equity. In the 1980s and '90s, he helmed Bain Capital and Bain and Company, where he was tasked with turning around struggling businesses. But as he honestly admits, "Sometimes I was successful and helped create jobs; other times I wasn't."

As it happens, I was one of those "other times." In the spring of 1995, I was a senior at Georgetown University majoring in international relations. Unfortunately, there weren't many job opportunities directly related to the field. You were better off studying international business and finance or accounting—there were at least a dozen major firms that came looking for such students, offering signing bonuses, wardrobe allowances, and business cards. They included Merrill Lynch, CS First Boston, Arthur Andersen, Bear Stearns, and Lehman Brothers (some of which institutions are now famously defunct).

Many of these companies held on-campus job fairs. In desperation—graduation day was fast approaching—I decided to attend one. It was for Bain and Company. The ballroom was packed, mostly with business majors dressed in suits and carrying clipboards. Following a brief presentation, one of the Bain representatives walked through the crowd and, speaking in an authoritative voice, told the students they were about to build a business from scratch. You could see the hungry looks in the students' eyes. Some were leaning forward in their seats, ready to pounce.

DAVID CLARK

And pounce they did. Before the Bain rep even finished asking what sort of company they would create, dozens of hands shot up with a fervor not seen since the 1936 Nuremberg rally. "A restaurant!" someone shouted. "What kind of a restaurant?" Miss Bain shot back. "Barbecue!" volunteered another student. Others in the audience were scribbling wildly on their clipboards. "What about supplies?" came the response. "Silverware! No, plastic! And napkins, lots of napkins!" Miss Bain kept driving them on, demanding to know about costs and capital, location and hours. And the business students kept firing back, each one trying eagerly to outdo the others, as if they were being graded on class participation. (Meanwhile, I was still thinking about what sort of business to run.)

But something was missing, Miss Bain pointed out—something essential to this enterprise. I thought the crowd was finally stumped, but it only took a few seconds before a student yelled out, "Wet-Naps!" And on it went. The pace was frenetic, the atmosphere was cutthroat, and I was sick to my stomach, walking out midway, knowing only one thing: I would never be hired by Bain and Company to do . . . whatever it is they did.

Romney is obviously aware of voters' concerns regarding his private sector experience. "My work led me to become deeply involved in helping other businesses, from innovative start-ups to large companies going through tough times," he now readily explains. He could also say he is sort of like the Richard Gere character in *Pretty Woman*.

Of course, it's not just Romney. For more than a decade my friend Buck has worked in "investor relations" in New York City, and I still haven't a clue what his day is like. Those of us in the D.C. area are inundated with radio commercials for government contractors boasting "mission critical" support for "federal IT" through "cloud-computing solutions" while defending against "malware." Try explaining that to a three-year-old.

My son assured me he was "just being silly" and promised to tell his class that I write for a living. But I still have no idea what he actually said. For all I know, he could have told his classmates his father was in private equity and tried turning around a barbecue restaurant that forgot to purchase Wet-Naps.

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THE LEADING HOTELS OF THE WORLD

the weekly Standard

Bittersoft Liberalism

Life is, undoubtedly, bittersweet. But not America. According to President Obama, America is bittersoft.

In April 2008, candidate Obama told donors in San Francisco that small town Midwesterners "get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations." Last Thursday, President Obama said in a TV interview, "The way I think about it is, you know, this is a great, great country that had gotten a little soft and, you know, we didn't have that same competitive edge that we needed over the last couple of decades."

So, according to Obama, Americans are both bitter and soft. We're a bittersoft nation.

Obama's analysis is, in a way, commendably bipartisan. Liberal commentators like to ascribe Middle America's turn away from liberalism, and its embrace of conservatism, to bitterness over the frustrations of modernity. It's conservatives, on the other hand, who have tended to worry that—what with mass democracy, the triumph of the therapeutic, the nanny state, and much else!—we're going soft. So, in making these twin suggestions in 2008 and 2011, Obama the psycho-sociologist is transcending old ideological divisions.

Obama is right in this respect: Bitterness and softness, though seemingly at odds, can go together. Who hasn't noticed that the soft are sometimes bitter—bitter perhaps at their own softness? And who hasn't observed cases where the bitter are soft—too soft to act to remedy their ills, so they're left only with a feeling of bitterness?

There are surely dissertations waiting to be written on the relationship of bitterness to softness in modern democratic capitalism. But the fact is, our political and civic life is surprisingly un-bitter and un-soft. We've had a massive failure of our financial and governmental elites in the last few years. We're mired in a rough recession. Many of our big institutions—big government, big education, and big media—are manifestly decayed. All of this could have given rise to an overwhelming sense of bitterness. It hasn't.

And God knows our politicians (Bill Clinton: "I feel your pain"; George W. Bush: compassionate conservatism) have tried to stroke the kinder and gentler sides of our natures. This could have given rise to a debilitating softness. It hasn't.

The spirit of today's conservatism in particular is forward-looking and hard-headed. The national debt is unsustainable, our government is broken, our elites are out of touch and self-interested, we're afflicted with crony capitalism and myriad welfare state pathologies—but the dominant conservative reaction is that we need to get to work as self-governing citizens, in order to put ourselves back on the path to solvency, liberty, and greatness.

It's liberalism that's become, unfortunately, bitter and soft. It's bitter about the American people's resistance to doing what their liberal betters tell them to do. It's soft in its understanding of the exigencies and limitations of the real world. Obama is wrong: It's not America that's bittersoft. It's liberalism.

Conservatism teaches us to take the bitter with the sweet. Perhaps the bitter is even a precondition for the sweet. The experience of the Obama administration could prove, in the fullness of time, to have been a necessary step in the liberation of America from the grip, at once bitter and soft, of contemporary liberalism.

—William Kristol

Solyndracracy

In happier times, the firm had been celebrated as a harbinger of the future. The political connections it enjoyed were the fruit not only of well-placed contributions but of a self-imposed ideological mission: It was going to deliver cheap energy in amazing ways. Top executives had dismissed accounting irregularities. The normal rules, it was said, did not apply.

Then came the reckoning. Bankruptcy. Layoffs. An FBI investigation. Subpoenas. And the guard dogs of the press—always ready to sniff out a good scandal—leaped into action. What you read in the news was "not just the story of a company that failed," wrote one major columnist. "It is the story of a system that failed. And the system didn't fail through carelessness or laziness; it was corrupted." A frenzy of speculation surrounded the company's demise: "One wonders if it is the tip of an iceberg," the columnist wrote. "And how many of us have, without knowing it, booked passage on the Titanic?"

The columnist's then-colleague, who has a flair for the dramatic, wasted no time placing this image of corporate greed "against the stark backdrop of those less well-connected Americans who are fighting our war." And the editorial board at their paper let its verdict be known throughout the land: "In order to restore confidence in American capitalism and in the integrity of its financial markets," the editors wrote, "the public needs to understand what brought" the company "down."

Paul Krugman, Frank Rich, and the *New York Times*, in other words, were all bent on uncovering the extent of the executives' crimes and the nature of the White House's involvement. But that must have been only because the company in question was Enron and the administration under attack was George W. Bush's. About the spectacular bankruptcy of the (admittedly smaller) solar-panel manufacturer Solyndra, our most fashionable minds are much less curious.

It's hard to see why. The details of the Solyndra case are a muckraker's dream: Here's a company backed by an Obama donor which received a $535 million loan guarantee from the federal government; that used taxpayer money to build a state-of-the-art plant which became a green-energy mecca for Energy Secretary Steven Chu, Vice President Biden (via satellite), and the president himself; that benefited, after it defaulted on the original terms, from an extraordinary loan modification which kept the business alive for another six months and which (illegally) ensured that private investors would be reimbursed before John Q. Public in bankruptcy court; and that may have lied to the government repeatedly throughout its long and sorry quest for favors. Ida Tarbell would have killed for this story.

And, sure enough, the nation's investigative reporters seem to be diligently following the scandal. Every day brings more sordid details about the favoritism that the Obama administration showered on Solyndra. Every day brings into sharper focus the web of associations through which public largesse is conveyed to patrons of alternative energy. Yet the nation's premier Democratic politicians and liberal columnists seem not to be reading the news sections of their own papers. Or they're just being willfully blind.

What does President Obama have to say about Solyndra, for example? Nothing, actually—as of September 30 he hadn't said a word about the matter. And Solyndra executives Brian Harrison and Bill Stover? They also are silent, having invoked their Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination more than a dozen times at a congressional hearing in late September. Secretary Chu, through a spokesman, admitted last week that he approved the controversial restructuring of the Solyndra loan. But otherwise he too has been uncharacteristically tight-lipped.

The same cannot be said for the administration's allies in the media. Never at a loss for words, they have an altogether novel take: Dismiss the story and defend the cause. So a blogger for the famously "contrarian" *New Republic* writes an item with the headline "The Case for Solyndra." In a column proclaiming the matter a "phony scandal" and defending Solyndra executives, the *New York Times*'s Joe Nocera, somehow magically endowed with omniscience, proclaims, "Neither they, nor anyone else connected with Solyndra, have done anything remotely criminal."

On his blog, Professor Krugman posts the logo for the defunct Internet bubble company Pets.com and sneers, "The private sector never ever puts money into ventures that end up failing." And the editorialists at the *Times* caution that Solyndra's "demise should not spell the end of federal investment in the alternative fuels and energy sources that are critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, easing this country's dependence on fossil fuels and keeping it competitive in the race for clean-energy jobs."

No, of course it shouldn't—unless you believe, as we do, that the "clean-energy jobs" canard is more a euphemism for handouts to the green lobby and politically connected business elites than a serious approach to environmental stewardship and economic growth. If private investors risk capital in an enterprise that fails, they are the only ones who lose; if government risks the public's money in a company that flops, we all lose.

Contrary to the collective wisdom of the Democratic party and many in the GOP, the law of comparative advantage still applies: If China produces solar panels more cheaply than America, all the better; China benefits from our dollars, we benefit from the lower price. That's how markets work. Talk of international "competition" and soon professional politicians will be using the law to reward friends and punish enemies.

All this cronyism says nothing good about the state of American politics, either. Nor does the fact that, if you went through every paper published in the last month and replaced "Solyndra" with "Enron" and "Obama" with "Bush," the media would be howling like a pack of rabid wolves. "The truth," Paul Krugman wrote in January 2002, "is that key institutions that underpin our economic system have been corrupted. The only question that remains is how far and how high the corruption extends." Right you are, professor. Right you are.

—Matthew Continetti

Frenemies in Pakistan

The Inter-Continental Hotel under attack in Kabul

The fact remains that the Quetta Shura and the Haqqani Network operate from Pakistan with impunity. Extremist organizations serving as proxies of the government of Pakistan are attacking Afghan troops and civilians as well as U.S. soldiers. For example, we believe the Haqqani Network—which has long enjoyed the support and protection of the Pakistani government and is, in many ways, a strategic arm of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency—is responsible for the September 13th attacks against the U.S. embassy in Kabul. There is ample evidence confirming that the Haqqanis were behind the June 28th attack against the Inter-Continental Hotel in Kabul and the September 10th truck bomb attack that killed five Afghans and injured another 96 individuals, 77 of whom were U.S. soldiers.

—Admiral Michael Mullen,
Senate Armed Services Committee, September 22, 2011

With those carefully chosen words, the outgoing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff blew away the increasingly shaky pretense that Pakistan is our ally, not our enemy. The statement carried all the more weight because Admiral Mullen, more than any other senior official in Washington, has been so heavily invested in cultivating relations with Pakistan. He has visited Islamabad 27 times since 2008 and worked hard to establish bonds of trust with General Ashfaq Kayani, his Pakistani counterpart. As he told the *Wall Street Journal*: "I have been Pakistan's best friend. What does it say when I am at that point?"

It says that Washington is finally facing the fact that its policy of engagement has failed. Not all of Washington, to be sure: Some anonymous administration officials leaked word to the *Washington Post* last week that Mullen's assertions were "overstated." But their defense of Pakistan, if that's what it was, can hardly mollify Islamabad. One of the officials quoted in the *Post* said of the Haqqani Network: "Can they control them like a military unit? We don't think so. Do they encourage them? Yes. Do they provide some finance for them? Yes. Do they provide safe havens? Yes."

Those "yeses" are an indication that Mullen was right: The Haqqani Network is a "strategic arm" of Pakistan's intelligence service, the ISI, even if ISI generals can't order them around like a platoon on the battlefield. The same might be said of the Quetta Shura Taliban, and for that matter Lashkar-e-Taiba and other Pakistan-based terrorist groups: All are ISI proxies, and, like the Haqqanis, they are killing Americans and U.S. allies.

Simply to acknowledge the point in public, as Mullen has done, is a major step forward—a welcome willingness to face difficult truths. The question now becomes what do we do about it. This is where all previous attempts to deal with the Pakistani menace have foundered because of the risk of retaliation. The Pakistanis have real leverage they can use against us. Half of all nonlethal supplies delivered by ground to Afghanistan—everything from diesel fuel to ice cream—comes on trucks from the Pakistani port of Karachi. Interrupt those supply lines, as the Pakistanis occasionally do to send a message, and the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan will suffer.

Moreover, even while aiding some terrorist groups, Pakistan has provided valuable cooperation against others, allowing U.S. armed drones, for example, to operate out of a Pakistani airfield to kill al Qaeda operatives. The Pakistanis have even mounted offensives into some tribal territories against groups such as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (the Pakistani Taliban) which, unlike the Haqqanis or the Afghan Taliban, are seen as a threat to the Pakistani state. Presumably, if Washington were to come down hard on Pakistan, we could see a halt to the limited, yet still significant, antiterrorist cooperation we have been receiving.

In the past, Pakistani threats of retaliation were enough to convince U.S. officials to ignore Pakistani misbehavior—even incidents such as one in 2007, reported last week in the *New York Times*, where Pakistani troops fired on an American military delegation, killing one officer and wounding others. But Pakistan's leverage is not as great as it once was. The death of Osama bin Laden and most of his senior lieutenants has badly hurt the capabilities of al Qaeda central, putting "the defeat of al Qaeda's leadership and dismantlement of its operational capabilities in the region . . . within reach," as Mullen told the Senate.

Nor is the Pakistani supply route as important as it once was for operations in Afghanistan. In recent years NATO has made a concerted effort to redirect supplies via the Northern Distribution Network running through Russia and Central Asia. This forces us to rely on some

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morally dubious regimes, but, bad as Vladimir Putin and the rest are, at least they're not actively killing Americans, as Pakistan's proxies are. There is also the possibility of a massive airlift to get needed supplies into Afghanistan. A shutdown of Pakistan's supply line would still sting, to be sure, but it need not cripple combat operations in Afghanistan, and we can continue to reduce our logistical vulnerabilities. In any case, cutting NATO's supply line would also kill a cash cow for Pakistan and inflict damage on its already battered economy.

So we should not let fear of reaction deter us from dealing with the menace Pakistan poses. The administration quietly decided this summer to withhold $800 million out of the $2 billion in U.S. security assistance to Pakistan. There is also talk that at long last the United States will formally designate the Haqqani Network a terrorist organization, opening up a variety of financial and diplomatic sanctions. These are welcome steps, but they do not go far enough.

What more could be done? For one thing, we could mount more unilateral strikes, using drones or Special Operations Forces against Afghan Taliban and Haqqani targets within Pakistan. The towns of Quetta and Miram Shah—headquarters, respectively, of the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqanis—have been off-limits to our Predators because we didn't want to offend the Pakistanis. That could now change.

But while drone strikes could disrupt Taliban and Haqqani operations, they cannot defeat these groups, which are far bigger, better funded, and more entrenched than al Qaeda. To defeat them will require a rethink of Pakistan's policy of supporting them, and while we cannot force Pakistan to change its strategic calculus, we can at least prod it in that direction by making clear that ISI's murderous misbehavior will no longer be tolerated.

We should start treating ISI the way we treated the Iranian Quds Force in Iraq. To stop the Quds Force from targeting our troops via local proxies, we mounted a multipronged campaign that included everything from the arrest of Quds Force operatives, to diplomatic pressure, to economic sanctions. The same model should be employed against the ISI. Apply economic sanctions against its vast range of business interests. Limit the travel and freeze the assets of its leaders, starting with its current head, Lieutenant General Ahmed Shuja Pasha. A designation of the ISI as a formal state sponsor of terrorism might also be in order. No doubt the Pakistani military would react angrily to such steps, but many civilians in Pakistan—including President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani—who chafe under heavy-handed military dominance might quietly welcome them.

We do not pretend that such steps would be cost free. But neither is the current policy of letting Pakistani proxies kill our troops and their allies with impunity.

—Max Boot

No More Cuts

Marines in Afghanistan: stretched already

U.S.M.C. PHOTO / CPL. ARTUR SHVARTSBERG

Among the many shortcomings of the Budget Control Act and its spawn, the "Super Committee," is that the threat of a sequestration "nuclear option"—in which some $600 billion would be cut automatically from national security accounts if congressmen do not find savings elsewhere—diverts attention from the damage the law has done *already* to America's military.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey have been quick off the mark in pointing out that sequestration would be "unacceptable" and "very high risk." Various military service leaders have said that, if sequestration does come to pass, the country would have to "rethink" its entire military strategy. But the corollary to such criticism has been that the cuts already in law, though painful, can be "managed." The Air Force's second-ranking general told the House Armed Services Committee that "we will not go hollow" despite the $400 billion cut provided in the Budget Control Act.

But there's good reason to wonder whether this is right. To begin with, the size of the current cut has grown. Last

week Reuters reported that the level of defense reductions has increased to $489 billion, after the Obama administration decided to exempt veterans' benefits from any cuts whatsoever. The White House is making a rather predictable political judgment that cutting Veterans budgets would cause them more pain than gutting defense budgets.

A better understanding of how the military is already being weakened can be found in a memo prepared for House Armed Services Committee chairman Buck McKeon. Although most news reports about the memo focused on the deep, indeed shocking, cuts in force structure that may result from sequestration, no less important was the memo's accounting of the long-term effect on the military of current funding under the Budget Control Act.

Consider the personnel strength of the Army and Marine Corps. Even with 771,400 soldiers and Marines on active duty, both services remain stretched well beyond their limits. Based on current funding, the committee estimates that end-strength will fall to 654,000—smaller than pre-9/11 levels. Similarly, the Navy could slip to something on the order of 260 vessels—more than 50 ships below what the Navy consistently has argued it needs to carry out the country's national security strategy. As for the Air Force, in 2000, it was flying more than 3,600 fighters; with cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act, that number may drop to less than 1,740.

The McKeon memo does not specify with equal precision the budget's effects on future weapons programs, but there's no reason to think such effects won't be commensurate to the service cuts. The committee is correct to point out that every modernization program is "at risk"; the only real question is the level of risk. We are told that sequestration will create "unacceptable" risk, but because the Pentagon has yet to fully reckon the consequences of the current cuts, or even to reckon their overall size, there's no way of knowing how much damage has already been done. So the service chiefs' assurances that all is well should be treated with a heavy dose of skepticism.

The real problem is not the mechanism of sequestration, brutal though it may be. The fact is that the United States has been in an extended "defense drawdown" since the end of the Cold War, reaping substantial "peace dividends" throughout the Clinton years, during the Obama years, and now under the Budget Control Act. Indeed, more than $800 billion has been cut from planned spending in just the past three years. It's time to say "enough" and to refuse not only sequestration but also a deal that avoids automatic reductions by substituting "just" a couple of hundred billion more in defense cuts. These are "savings" the nation cannot afford.

—Thomas Donnelly and Gary Schmitt

Steps Toward a Secure Energy Future

By Thomas J. Donohue
President and CEO
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

I recently visited Banff, Canada to speak about energy policy at the Global Business Forum, and I was reminded of an arresting statistic. In June, more jobs were created in the province of Alberta than in the entire United States. How? Canada is embracing its vast natural resources and expanding its role as an energy super power.

America needs to take some decisive steps of its own.

Like our neighbor to the north, America has abundant energy supplies. Onshore federal lands contain 24 billion barrels of oil, another 2 trillion barrels worth of oil shale and oil sands resources sit beneath U.S. soil, and we have untold billions of barrels off our shores. At current usage rates, we have more than a 100-year supply of natural gas and at lease a 200-year supply of coal. We need to develop it!

By leveraging those resources we could create hundreds of thousands of U.S. jobs, generate hundreds of billions in government revenue, and lessen our reliance on energy from nations that don't share our values or interests. And given today's faltering economy, we should be embracing affordable, plentiful American energy sources, rather than demonizing them.

We must end shortsighted government policies, a broken permitting process, and regulatory burdens that threaten energy production.

We must strengthen strategic partnerships with friendly allies with shared interests, such as Canada. America imports more energy from Canada than from any other nation—22% of our oil imports and 95% of our natural gas imports. As Canada ramps up investment in oil sands development, America will also benefit through access to a stable supply of fuel. And for every two oil sands jobs created in Canada, one job will be created in the United States.

We must also invest in the infrastructure to support a growing energy supply. The planned Keystone XL pipeline would safely transport 700,000 barrels per day of crude oil from Canada, Montana, the Dakotas, and Oklahoma to U.S. refiners in Texas. The project alone would create 250,000 jobs and inject $20 billion into the U.S. economy.

Finally, we need everything. We must embrace conventional sources of energy like oil, clean coal, natural gas, and nuclear while *also* fostering the energy innovations of tomorrow.

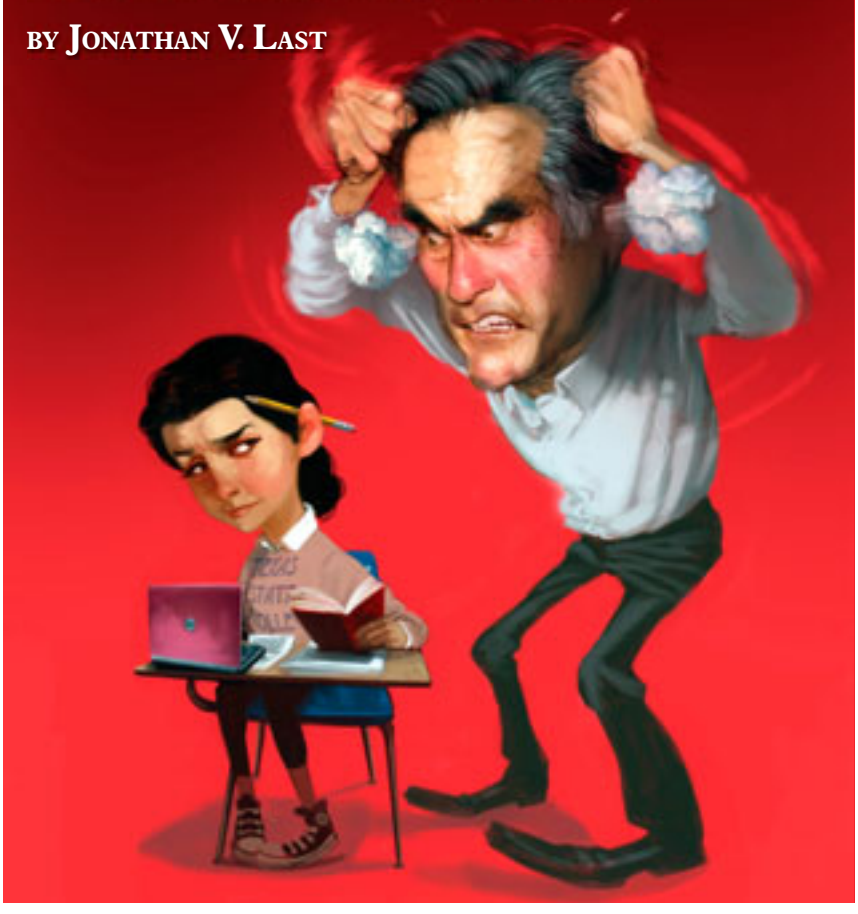
America has a choice. We can take steps to secure an affordable, abundant energy supply, spur growth, create jobs, and strengthen our competitiveness. Or we can sit on our hands and watch our economy grind to a halt and our jobless rate climb as other nations, and their economies, surge ahead.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Comment at
www.chamberpost.com.

Defending the Defensible

Texas's college tuition policy is not the abomination Mitt Romney claims.

BY JONATHAN V. LAST



Rick Perry is not always his best defender. For the last two weeks, Mitt Romney has hammered Perry over a Texas law the governor signed which allows children of illegal immigrants to pay in-state college tuition. At the Orlando debate, for instance, Romney said sardonically, "To go to the University of Texas, if you're an illegal alien, you get an in-state tuition discount. You know how much that is? That's $22,000 a year. Four years of college, almost $100,000 discount if you are an illegal alien, go to the University of Texas. If you are a United States citizen from any one of the other 49 states, you have to pay $100,000 more. That doesn't make sense to me."

In his defense Perry dolefully concluded, "if you say that we should not educate children who have come into our state for no other reason than they've been brought there by no fault of their own, I don't think you have a heart."

Well then. Perry would have done better to describe the program, explain its legislative history, how it works, and its effects. Because the Texas law is more complicated than Romney suggests and more interesting than you might think.

To understand Perry's law, you have to go back to the 1982 case *Plyler* v. *Doe*. In it the Supreme Court struck down a 1975 Texas statute which prohibited local school districts from spending money on the children of illegal residents. The effect of the verdict was to create a national mandate entitling all children in America, regardless of their immigration status, to a K-12 public education.

As *Plyler* was being contested, the inflow of illegal immigrants to the United States was ramping up, eventually leading to the 1986 amnesty signed by President Reagan that legalized 2.7 million of them. After the amnesty, illegal immigration from Mexico and South America surged to even higher levels. By 2004, more than 10 million people—nearly a third of America's entire foreign-born populace—were in the country illegally. Of this shadow population, 57 percent hailed from Mexico and 24 percent from elsewhere in Latin America.

This group included well over a million children and, because of *Plyler*, they were now going to primary and secondary schools. Which meant that by the mid-'90s there was, for the first time in American history, a large pool of illegal residents who had been educated from the start in American schools and were, at least theoretically, eligible to attend college.

The push to help illegals go to college began at the grassroots level. In 1998 the Dallas County Community College District unilaterally decided to charge illegal residents who had graduated from local high schools the in-state tuition rate. Community college districts in Houston and other locales quickly followed suit. Three years later, the state legislature took up a bill (H.B. 1403) which extended the same benefit to all undocumented Texas children, provided they pass four requirements: (1) They must have resided with a parent or guardian

THOMAS FLUHARTY

Jonathan V. Last is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

while attending high school in Texas; (2) they must have graduated from a Texas high school or have a GED; (3) they must have gone to high school in Texas for at least the three previous years; and (4) they must file an affidavit testifying that they would apply for permanent residency as soon as possible. The Texas House passed the bill 142-1; the Senate passed it 30-0. Perry signed it into law in June 2001.

As the roll call demonstrates, the law wasn't particularly controversial. Texas Democrats loved it, because it hit a liberal trifecta: identity politics, government subsidies, and the institutionalization of higher education. Texas Republicans had slightly more nuanced reasons for supporting it, none of which would be immediately apparent to Republican observers from, say, Massachusetts.

For starters, Texas Republicans understood that tuition isn't all that important to the state university system. Texas schools are funded largely by the state sales tax, which everyone —both legal and illegal residents— pays. (Texas has no state income tax; most revenues come from consumption taxes.) Republicans argued that, as a matter of fairness, illegal immigrants had been funding the colleges just like everybody else. (This relative unimportance of tuition as a funding source is why both in-state and out-of-state tuition rates at Texas schools are far below the national average.)

Another reason was Texas's Permanent University Fund, which *National Review*'s Kevin Williamson charmingly explains: "Early in the 20th century, the state of Texas gave the universities a whole bunch of land, which turned out to have a whole bunch of oil on it, and West Texas is full of wells bobbing up and down and pumping grade-A education out of the ground." In other words, tuition at most Texas schools is used more to control enrollment than to raise funds.

Texas also has a history of going its own way with regard to immigration and Mexico. For instance, in 1942 the United States began the "Bracero Program," which allowed Mexican contract workers to come, on a temporary basis, to the United States to help with the wartime labor shortage. Texas opted out of the program—not because they objected to Mexican guest workers, but because they wanted their border with Mexico to be *completely* open, in order to facilitate migration. So even though Texas is home to 14 percent of the illegal aliens in America, both Democrats and Republicans there have a different historical perspective on border issues from people in other states.

All of which made the bill an easy sell. Shortly after Perry signed his in-state tuition law, California passed a similar measure. And since then, 11 other states have done the same. Some of these states are liberal bulwarks with large illegal populations (New York, which has 7 percent of the country's illegal population) and some are deeply conservative states with a very small proportion of illegals (Nebraska, which has 0.5 percent).

To hear Mitt Romney tell it, you'd think the University of Texas at Austin was overrun with the children of illegals, taking slots and taxpayer money from smart kids in New Jersey who've dreamt about being Longhorns their whole lives—and would have gone to UT if only they could have afforded the out-of-state rate. But the reality is very different. It turns out that of the 1.8 *million* students enrolled in Texas higher-ed, only 16,476 students are illegals (the state refers to these kids as "affidavit students"). Of those, 12,028 go to two-year community colleges. For the most part these schools have noncompetitive admissions and hardly any out-of-state students. A vanishingly small number go to the state's competitive flagship schools: The University of Texas has 612 of them; A&M has 362. Romney's fretting about a "$100,000 discount" being given to illegal immigrants is something like an argument for abortion rights centered around rape and incest.

Mind you, if the people of Texas decided to use their tax dollars to subsidize kids who grew up illegally in Texas rather than kids who grew up legally in New Jersey, that's their right. After all, it's their money and the entire *raison d'être* for in-state tuition is to discriminate in favor of one group and against others.

The real question—the one we would be asking if we weren't in the middle of a primary fight—is whether this decision by the people of Texas has had good outcomes, for either the intended beneficiaries or the state. And on that score, the evidence is mixed.

The underlying economic assumptions behind the in-state tuition scheme for illegals are the following: (1) College coursework adds value in the labor market; (2) illegals can be lured into college coursework by financial discounts; and (3) since the marginal benefit to the school of in-state versus out-of-state tuition is relatively small, the state will reap benefits by having better-educated illegal immigrants—because these people will earn more and inevitably pay more in the consumption taxes that drive the Texas tax base.

A few studies have been done on the subject; their conclusions vary. The first was undertaken by Columbia's Neeraj Kaushal in 2008. Looking at enrollments of illegal immigrants at state schools before and after the tuition law passed, Kaushal calculated that the subsidy had a noticeable effect —that for every $6,900 in difference between the in-state and out-of-state rates, undocumented Mexican enrollment increased by 2.8 percent. Further, she found that the lure of in-state tuition actually helped keep undocumented teenagers from dropping out of high school.

However, Kaushal's tidy equations don't inspire an overwhelming degree of confidence. For one thing, while the outputs of her models are deceptively precise, the inputs are not. Always remember that data on the universe of illegal aliens is like smoke. We have good educated guesses about how many illegals are here, what ages they are, and how long they've been here. But this isn't the Census: These are *guesses*, and the numbers are always shifting. The greater concern about Kaushal's study was that it didn't take into account larger trends. In other words, could the rising number of illegals at college be the result of a bigger

pool of college-eligible illegals, rising income amongst them, etc.?

In 2010, two researchers at the University of Houston, Aimee Chin and Chinhui Juhn, tried to dig deeper. They didn't compare straight before-and-after outcomes. Instead, they used a difference-in-differences-type regression, looking at the change in illegal students over time in states which passed in-state tuition laws, compared with the changes over time in states that passed similar laws later (or not at all).

Their results suggested that the in-state tuition laws have very little overall effect—approaching zero, actually—on the number of illegal immigrants who enroll in college. The only subgroup which showed any increase in attendance as a result was older Mexican men (aged 22 to 24). And even in that case, the enrollment effect was quite small. Similarly, Chin and Juhn found no dampening effect of the program on the high-school dropout rate of illegals.

Chin and Juhn were only providing a first look at the data, not the final word. They suggest that, just 10 years in, it may be a while before we are able to discern what effects there are (or aren't). Others have not been so cautious. Earlier this year the Latino Policy Institute at Roger Williams University released a big report on the subject. You'll never believe it, but they found absolutely conclusive evidence that the in-state subsidy has an enormous impact. Giving illegals in-state tuition increases their college enrollment by 31 percent! It pushes the high-school dropout rate down by 14 percent! The long-run increase in tax revenue dwarfs the state tuition subsidy!

Unfortunately, the Roger Williams study is magical thinking, the mirror image of Romney's critique. Where Romney can find nothing but abomination in subsidizing state-school tuition for illegals, the Latino Policy Institute finds nothing but rainbows and free lunches. The truth is that the policy is an experiment—and one that may produce results that are good, or bad, or indifferent.

The only definitive conclusions the Texas experiment offers are about Mitt Romney. ♦

The Law of the Sea

The U.S. Navy trumps a U.N. treaty.

BY MICHAEL GOLDFARB & STEVEN GROVES

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, also known as the Law of the Sea Treaty (or LOST), presents a dilemma for some national security conservatives.

On one hand, LOST "codifies" key navigational rights and freedoms that are important to the U.S. Navy—and the Navy brass actively supports ratification of the treaty on those grounds. On the other hand, one could be forgiven for thinking the U.S. Navy's 11 supercarriers, 75 nuclear submarines, and 200 other vessels, along with nearly 4,000 aircraft and 340,000 active duty personnel, obviate the need for a document that would merely allow us to do what we already do, and what we are entitled to do, with or without codification by the international community, such as it is. Still, when the U.S. Navy and the Joint Chiefs of Staff repeatedly and forcefully argue that something is crucial to the success of U.S. military operations—as they have in the case of LOST—conservatives usually salute.

So why has U.S. membership in the treaty proven so elusive to the Navy? Why have national security hawks in the Senate refused to fall in line? One reason may be that the Navy has been warning for nearly two decades of imminent and dire consequences that would stem from a failure to ratify the treaty (which took effect for signatories in 1994), and those fears have yet to be realized.

Over the years a procession of admirals has warned that the United States cannot guarantee its navigational rights unless it ratifies the treaty. "This may be our last opportunity to 'lock in' those critical navigational and overflight rights," wrote one admiral—in 1995. More than a dozen years later, in 2007, the vice chief of naval operations repeated the same warning to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: "We need to lock in the navigation and overflight rights and high seas freedoms contained in the Convention while we can." With a possible Republican majority returning to the Senate in 2013, LOST is back on the front burner. Senator John Kerry is quietly working to recruit the necessary Republican votes to ratify the treaty and seize the "last chance to lock in" our rights under the authority of the United Nations.

The fact of the matter is that the Navy has not only survived but thrived without the supposed benefits of LOST membership. The Continental Congress established the Navy in 1775, and over the ensuing 236 years it has become the greatest maritime force in history. LOST was first adopted at the United Nations in 1982, yet somehow the Navy has managed to protect U.S. maritime interests down to the present day.

On the high seas, the U.S. Navy "locks in" its rights and freedoms—and the rights and freedoms of every other peace-loving, seafaring nation—not by membership in LOST, but by its capacity to sink any ship that would try to deny those rights. When a foreign country makes an excessive jurisdictional claim that interferes with navigation of the seas by military or commercial ships, the United States disputes it through the Freedom of Navigation Program—a combination of diplomatic protest by the

Michael Goldfarb is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard. *Steven Groves is a fellow at the Heritage Foundation.*

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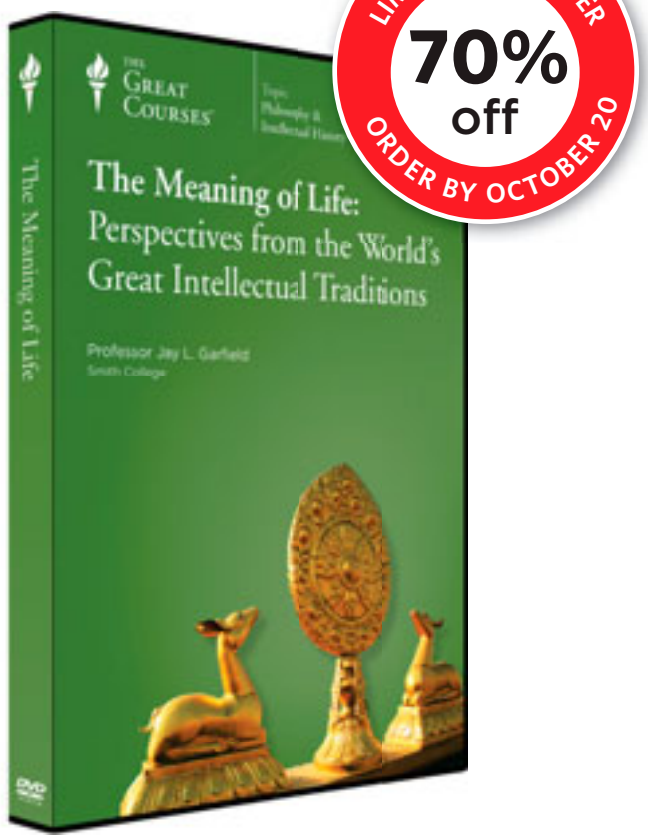

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State Department and operational assertiveness by the Navy. For example, in 1993 Iran passed a law prohibiting warships from passing through waters it claimed in the Strait of Hormuz without prior authorization. The United States diplomatically protested the law, and our warships transit through Hormuz several times a year without permission from Tehran.

Other nations—including many that are party to the treaty—regularly violate customary international maritime law (and the provisions of LOST) by making excessive claims about the extent of their territorial waters. The Navy just as regularly counters those claims. It operates in the South China Sea, steams through the Straits of Hormuz and Malacca, and transits key archipelagic waters, all contrary to excessive claims made by China, Oman, Indonesia, and the Philippines (all of which, by the way, are signatories of LOST). From 1993 to 2010, the Navy conducted hundreds of Freedom of Navigation operations to challenge excessive maritime claims made by 47 different nations.

When push comes to shove, literally and figuratively, reliance on the good faith of other maritime nations to live up to their commitments under LOST is not the optimal way to secure the Navy's navigational rights. This was best illustrated in 2009 when China confronted and harassed the USNS *Impeccable* and *Victorious*, two Navy support ships with civilian crews operating in international waters, but within China's exclusive economic zone.

In March 2009 the *Impeccable* was engaging in lawful surveillance activities in the South China Sea fully 75 miles from Chinese territory when it was confronted repeatedly by the Chinese Navy and various "fishing vessels." The vessels threatened to collide with the unarmed *Impeccable* on several occasions and attempted to destroy its towed sonar array. In response, the Obama administration protested to Beijing and sent the USS *Chung-Hoon*, a destroyer, to escort the *Impeccable* on its next mission. That is how maritime rights are "locked in."

What would have happened differently if the United States had been a party to the Law of the Sea Treaty in March 2009? Is it possible that the *Impeccable*'s skipper could have shooed off the Chinese assault by running to the ship's gunwale waving a copy of the treaty over his head? If the Senate finally ratifies the treaty, will China actually live up to its LOST commitments and respect the right of our surveillance ships to track Chinese submarines out of their new base on Hainan Island? These questions answer themselves.

Instead of debating a flawed treaty that was rejected by President Reagan almost 30 years ago, the Senate should endeavor to provide the Navy with the resources it needs to preserve its preeminent position on the world's oceans. That is the only way to ensure that the Navy can successfully prosecute its mission of protecting navigational rights and freedoms on a global basis.

What is ultimately required to secure customary rights on the high seas are the ships, aircraft, missiles, and sailors of the U.S. Navy. Unfortunately, they face ever more cuts by the Obama administration and its allies in Congress.

Ratifying the Law of the Sea Treaty would force the United States to submit to U.N.-administered international tribunals that are as capricious as the U.N. itself. Meanwhile, the real law of the sea is going to be administered as it always has been, by hundreds of thousands of tons of hardened steel. Congress needs to make sure it is U.S.-flagged steel that's doing the administering. ♦

NATO in Libya

A one-of-a-kind intervention.

BY GARY SCHMITT & JAMIE M. FLY

The scene was one of jubilation, as British prime minister David Cameron and French president Nicolas Sarkozy arrived in Libya's capital on September 15 to cheering throngs waving British and French flags. The two men basked in the glow of victory, as well they should. Both had advocated armed intervention after the Libyan people rose up in February against dictator Muammar Qaddafi, and they had done so well before other international leaders—including President Barack Obama.

Even though Qaddafi loyalists still control several towns and their toppled leader is on the run, talk has turned to the implications of NATO's intervention in Libya for the broader Arab Spring and for future responses to situations in which rebellious populations are threatened by thuggish and murderous rulers.

In Tripoli, Cameron spoke of Libya's relevance. "This does go beyond Libya. This is a moment when the Arab Spring could become an Arab Summer and we see democracy advance in other countries, too. I believe you have the opportunity to give an example to others about what taking back your country can mean." Sarkozy made a direct connection to Syrians facing down Bashar al-Assad's snipers. "The best thing I can do," he said, "is dedicate our visit to Tripoli to those who hope that Syria can one day also be a free country." Similarly, the

Gary Schmitt is director of the Program on Advanced Strategic Studies at the American Enterprise Institute. Jamie M. Fly is executive director of the Foreign Policy Initiative.

Obama administration—which took considerable flak for an anonymous official's characterization to Ryan Lizza of the *New Yorker* of its policy in Libya as "leading from behind"—began to tout the applicability of Libya to future interventions.

Deputy National Security Adviser for Communications Ben Rhodes told *Foreign Policy*'s Josh Rogin that a Libya-style approach would form the basis for future Obama administration interventions. "It's far more legitimate and effective for regime change to be pursued by an indigenous political movement than by the United States or foreign powers," said Rhodes. "Secondly, we put an emphasis on burden sharing, so that the United States wasn't bearing the brunt of the burden and so that you had not just international support for the effort, but also meaningful international contributions."

But how applicable is this model of indigenous regime change supported by an international coalition with the United States in a supporting role to future efforts to prevent atrocities?

The reality, gleaned from meetings we recently held in London and Paris, the capitals that took the lead, is quite different. In fact, some wonder whether the example of Libya will hinder, not assist, Western responses to similar contingencies.

First, there is the matter of military capabilities. While the French and British, along with the Danes and Norwegians in particular, carried out the bulk of the airstrikes, and European navies provided the vast majority of vessels involved in the blockade, it was American air and sea forces that opened the campaign with critical attacks on Libyan air defenses, allowing other forces to operate in and over Libya with the impunity they enjoyed. And, even after this initial stage, American niche capabilities, such as air-to-air refueling, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, including the use of unmanned aerial vehicles—along with an ability to keep Europeans supplied with precision munitions—were key to the success of the operation, as French and British officials readily admit.

So while it's certainly true that the United States was not at the forefront of the day-to-day effort, it would be misleading to suggest that the American role was secondary. And given the general reluctance of the president to involve the United States in the Libyan campaign at all and his pledge of no American "boots on the ground," European strategists are fully aware that the campaign may be a one-off rather than a game plan for the future.

Moreover, although the relative ease with which opposition forces eventually pushed to the capital and the scenes of jubilation in Tripoli are fresh in people's minds, the reality is that the operation created significant strains within NATO.

Germany abstained from the vote on Security Council Resolution 1973, its foreign minister going so far as to imply at one point that Germany would refrain from choosing sides, even after NATO intervened. Of those NATO members that participated, many did not have the military capabilities to make a significant contribution, and NATO's "in-house" capabilities for running the war were soon found to be inadequate. Given who fought and who didn't, talk of a north/south divide within the alliance is rampant in Europe and has reinforced French notions that significant reform of NATO is necessary. In short, whether the alliance would soon be up to another campaign of this sort is anybody's guess.

Oddly, given the key roles of London and Paris in the intervention, both countries seem wary of a military role in postwar Libya. The new Libyan government's opposition to an international force is just fine with British and French officials. Although some Europeans talk of learning the "lessons of Iraq" and trying to forestall an insurgency, few, even with reports of infighting among the opposition, seem to have taken to heart Colin Powell's famous Pottery Barn rule: "You break it, you own it."

So how likely is the Libyan intervention to be replicated in response to atrocities elsewhere, like Assad's continued crackdown in Syria?

Perhaps most important, many French and British officials seem to think that Libya was an anomaly. On Europe's doorstep, militarily weak, with a population under seven million, with neighbors who were not likely to support Qaddafi and other regional actors who were willing to contribute personnel and resources to assist the opposition, Libya was, to their mind, the easy case.

Add to this the allies' insistence on Arab League and Security Council approval before intervening, and the Libyan case is unlikely to be replicated elsewhere in the near future. Russia has blocked any effort in New York to pass a resolution on Syria, in part because of its chagrin about how the protection of Libyan civilians authorized in Security Council Resolution 1973 morphed into regime change. Other critics of the Libya intervention such as China, Brazil, South Africa, and India have also been emboldened by the allies' simultaneous elevation of the Security Council's role and their hypocrisy in the implementation of the mandate to protect civilians.

The Obama administration's message on Syria is also telling. Several weeks before Tripoli fell to the rebels, the White House released a "Presidential Directive on Mass Atrocities." The White House touted the fact that the United States and its allies had mobilized "with unprecedented speed" in Libya to protect civilians. Yet, even as that document was being released, the people of Syria were being gunned down in the streets. And neither the administration nor our allies was showing any sign that the Libyan intervention was a model for responding to Syria.

That said, with reports that the Syrian opposition is turning to an armed response, that soldiers are

defecting from the army, and more and more Syrians are calling for "international intervention," it is far from clear that the liberators of Tripoli will escape the precedent they have set. The irony, of course, is that toppling the Assad regime—which governs a country of 22 million in the heart of the Middle East—would be even more significant strategically than removing Qaddafi from power.

But it is unimaginable that America's allies would be ready or willing to undertake such a campaign without Washington in the lead. In that respect, again, Libya is no model. Either the president is leading—or he is just behind. ♦

Nuclear Modernization

The Obama administration's fading commitment.

BY MARK SCHNEIDER

The Obama administration's 2010 Nuclear Posture Review adopted the goals of reduced reliance on nuclear weapons, continued nuclear weapons reductions, and the ultimate, if controversial, goal of "nuclear zero"—the elimination of those weapons altogether. At the same time, it pledged to maintain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent as long as other nations have nuclear arms. These goals are difficult to achieve simultaneously, and the Obama administration has stated explicitly that its priority "atop the U.S. nuclear agenda" is movement toward nuclear zero.

The commitment of the administration to sustaining an effective nuclear deterrent force became a contentious issue in 2010 during Senate debate on ratification of the New START Treaty. Senate critics of the treaty were concerned that it effectively demanded only U.S. force reductions and that the Obama administration lacked commitment to maintaining the U.S. nuclear triad (bombers, ICBMs, and missile submarines). Each element of the triad has attributes that support deterrence: ICBMs are the most secure, alert, and responsive, bombers the most flexible, and missile submarines the most likely to survive an attack.

The Obama administration argued that it would maintain a "robust" deterrent, claiming that it planned to "invest well over $100 billion to sustain existing strategic delivery systems capabilities," modernize these aging U.S. systems, and replace decrepit facilities to fabricate uranium and plutonium parts with modern plants.

Under congressional pressure, in May 2010, the administration outlined its modernization plans in a report to Congress, the so-called Section 1251 report. In November 2010, an update to the report provided additional detail, presumably to calm critics of the administration's New START Treaty. The November 2010 report promised "modernization" of "America's nuclear arsenal," but options were constrained by the administration's simultaneous policy of no "new" U.S. nuclear weapons or weapon capabilities. The November report promised pursuit of a new heavy bomber and a new cruise missile to assure the continued effectiveness of the bomber part of the triad. The report also pointed towards a replacement ICBM by 2030.

These administration commitments succeeded in gaining Senate approval of the New START Treaty. Skeptics warned, however, that this commitment to modernizing the U.S. nuclear deterrent would prove temporary, given the Obama administration's higher priority of movement toward nuclear zero. Unfortunately, the skeptics appear to have been correct.

The administration's pledges to sustain and modernize U.S. nuclear forces now look short on substance and long on rhetoric. There has been minimal progress on the commitments to a new bomber, a replacement air-launched nuclear cruise missile, and possibly a new ICBM. Instead, budgetary pressures and further U.S. force reductions appear to threaten one or more of these programs.

The Obama administration has funded a replacement for the Trident missile submarine in 2029. But the number of submarines will be reduced as will the number of missiles per submarine, and a replacement for the Trident II missile is not scheduled until 2042. And judging by recent administration statements, the capabilities of the replacement submarine may be downgraded to reduce costs.

The administration's approach to fixing problems with nuclear warheads and facilities for nuclear materials, which initially appeared to be robust, also may be flagging. The administration did submit the promised funding request for FY2012 to fix parts of our broken nuclear weapons complex. However, to date it has made no effort to sustain that funding in Congress. Both House and Senate appropriations committees have made cuts that will delay critical nuclear weapons life extension programs. The House Appropriations Energy and Water Development Subcommittee has cut $500 million from the $7.1 billion

Mark Schneider was special assistant in the Office of the Secretary of Defense during the New START Treaty negotiations. He now serves as a senior analyst at the National Institute for Public Policy.

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budget request for nuclear weapon activities. The comparable Senate committee has cut $440 million. These cuts, if they stand, will put in jeopardy life extension programs for W78 warheads for ICBMs, B61 nuclear bombs deployed to Europe in support of NATO, and for completing the life extension of W76 warheads on our ballistic missile submarines.

In addition, cuts eliminate over $200 million for nuclear warhead infrastructure and over $130 million from science and technology at our national labs. Of specific concern is a cut of $100 million from funds to build the Chemistry and Metallurgy Replacement Facility, the nation's only plutonium research and engineering facility, to support the nuclear stockpile and nonproliferation programs.

One reason the Obama administration came under pressure to modernize U.S. nuclear deterrent capabilities for the long term is the obvious fact that Russia, China, and others are engaged in extensive nuclear modernization programs. For example, Russian press reports state that Russia will triple its strategic missile production over the period 2011-2015. Russia is deploying new silo-based and mobile ICBMs and new ballistic missile submarines, which will carry a new type of ballistic missile. By 2018, Russia plans to deploy a new "heavy" ICBM, which reportedly can carry 10-15 nuclear warheads. Russian plans call for developing a stealthy bomber and deploying a new nuclear cruise missile. New advanced nuclear warheads are being deployed, including low-yield warheads to make nuclear threats more credible. Additionally, Russia enjoys a 10-to-1 advantage over the United States in tactical nuclear weapons.

The Chinese nuclear buildup is slower but steady. China is deploying two new mobile ICBMs. Reportedly, China is developing multiple warhead ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. It is also building new missile submarines to carry these latter missiles. North Korea, Iran, and possibly India are also developing ICBMs. Apparently these nations have not been inspired by the "nuclear zero" slogan.

Recently, administration officials have made explicit statements revealing lukewarm support for their earlier commitment to nuclear modernization. For example, in early 2011, White House arms control coordinator Gary Samore said the U.S. government was considering further unilateral nuclear weapons cuts and eliminating a leg of the nuclear triad. When asked about this, then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates would not rule it out. In September, Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that "a decision will have to be made" in the future "of whether we keep the triad or drop it down to a dyad." Reporting in the *Washington Times*, Bill Gertz wrote that the Obama White House is determined to "make deeper cuts on strategic nuclear forces." In July 2011, according to AOL Defense, General James Cartwright, then-vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, opined that "America does not need a stealthy long-range bomber able to penetrate deep into remote, well-defended places."

The $400 billion cut in defense spending announced by President Obama in April 2011 probably means that the prospect for the new bomber or a replacement ICBM is poor unless Congress takes the initiative. As the Pentagon is forced to consider huge budget cuts, the ICBM force may be on the chopping block or subject to large unilateral reductions. Either move would be a mistake. So much for the Obama administration's expressed resolve to modernize the U.S. nuclear deterrent.

In 2009, the bipartisan U.S. Strategic Commission recommended "retention of the current Triad." The large defense budget cuts being considered today are very risky. At a minimum, the long-term commitment to the U.S. nuclear deterrent as outlined in the administration's November 2010 report needs to be protected. If the Obama administration does not give sustained attention to these issues, further erosion and atrophy of U.S. capabilities are inevitable along with serious risks of a weakened U.S. nuclear deterrent. ♦

Raising Cain

The very different life lessons of the president and his challenger. BY FRED BARNES

Both President Obama and Republican presidential candidate Herman Cain went to graduate school. Obama got a degree at Harvard Law School. Cain did his graduate work at Purdue and Burger King University. That doesn't tell you all you need to know about the difference between Obama and Cain, but it explains a lot.

Obama and Cain are African Americans, but there the likeness ends. Obama is a liberal, Cain a conservative. Their parents, their upbringing, their education, their careers, the lessons they learned from life—these are as dissimilar as where they've wound up, Obama in the White House and Cain as a successful corporate executive.

Until recent months, there was no reason to consider the contrast between the two. But now Obama's presidency is crumbling. His reelection in 2012 is in jeopardy. The economy is weak, and Americans disapprove of his handling of it by a two-to-one margin. Even in the Democrat-controlled Senate, there aren't enough votes to pass his new jobs bill.

Cain's campaign is surging. After strong performances in four

Fred Barnes is executive editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

nationally televised Republican debates last month, he jumped into third place in the GOP race in a Fox News poll at 17 percent, close behind Rick Perry (19 percent) and Mitt Romney (23 percent). A Rasmussen poll of likely voters in late September found Cain trailing Obama, 39 percent to 34 percent.

Thus the interest in the backgrounds of Cain and Obama. Much of Obama's is known. His mother was an academic with a Ph.D. in anthropology. She had two failed marriages to foreigners. Obama's father, a Kenyan student, left the family when Obama was a toddler. From ages 6 to 10, Barack lived with his mother and his Indonesian stepfather and half-sister in Jakarta, then went back to Hawaii to live with his grandparents.

Cain's early life was far more stable. He grew up in a black section of Atlanta. His mother worked as a maid, his father as a barber, janitor, and chauffeur. "Dad worked all three jobs until he could make it off two jobs," Cain writes in *This Is Herman Cain! My Journey to the White House*, his fifth book. "Then he worked those two jobs until he could make it off of one job. That's the experience shared by many Americans." Not Obama's parents.

In Atlanta, Cain went to segregated Archer High School. In 1967, he graduated from Morehouse College, a bus ride away from his home. He majored in math. In Honolulu, starting in fifth grade, Obama went to Punahou, one of the most prestigious private schools in the country. He spent two years at Occidental College in Los Angeles before transferring to Columbia, where he majored in political science, followed by Harvard Law, where he was editor of the law review.

Neither Cain nor Obama took part in the civil rights movement in the early 1960s. Cain, now 65 years old, was in school, and Obama, 50, was a child. But Cain experienced segregation more than Obama did. In 1963, his applications were turned down at the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech. "Having been desegregated for only two years, they chose to keep black students at a minimum," Cain writes.

Cain says he benefited from the civil rights movement when he graduated from all-black Morehouse. "I received 25 job offers, and they came from some of America's most respected and successful corporations," he says.

One more contrast. Church attendance was a staple of Cain's rearing, and today he's an evangelical Christian. His faith helped him through stage 4 cancer when 70 percent of his liver and 30 percent of his colon were removed. Having survived, he says, "My journey is God's plan." That includes his "journey to the White House." Obama embraced Christianity as an adult in Chicago. Unlike Cain's faith, Obama's stresses the social gospel rather than salvation through belief in Christ as his savior.

'One of the most important lessons Dad taught us was not to feel like victims,' Cain writes. 'Both our parents taught us not to think that the government owed us something. They didn't teach us to be mad at this country.'

What did Cain and Obama learn from their families and education? "One of the most important lessons Dad taught us was not to feel like victims," Cain writes. "He never felt like a victim. He never talked like a victim. And both our parents taught us not to think that the government owed us something. They didn't teach us to be mad at this country."

Based on his career, Obama didn't draw the same lessons. He concluded America is an unjust country. He became a community organizer, a civil rights lawyer, a state senator, a U.S. senator, and president—all the while pursuing liberal efforts to aid perceived victims of the free-market economy through strong government intervention.

Cain entered the market economy, succeeding at Pillsbury, Godfather's Pizza, and Burger King. He writes about going to Burger King U., where new managers are taught the hamburger business. He learned "the broiler, steamer, burger board, Whopper board, specialty sandwich board, and fry station."

While still in school, Cain writes, "I began to develop my concept of being responsible for one's success or failure in life—a concept I would later come to define as being a 'CEO of Self'—a time when many of the qualities of determination and leadership that I inherited from my dad began to show up." Obama stresses collective action.

Yet it's his faith in himself, along with God's calling, that has led Cain to believe he can capture the presidency. He wasn't deterred by losing a Senate bid in Georgia in 2004. When he took over Godfather's Pizza, it was on the brink of bankruptcy. He mastered "pizzaology," introduced the "Big Value" of two large pizzas for $12, and turned the company around.

"I see parallels between the situation that existed at Godfather's when I came on board and the state of our Union today," he writes. Obama is "in denial," Cain says. "He's a weak leader, his economic policies have failed, and he's been inconsistent on foreign policy." Cain "will do what I did when I helped restore Godfather's Pizza." That means conservative policies and the tenacity to see them through.

His upbringing may explain his gift for delivering a conservative message with a friendly face, as Ronald Reagan did. "I also like to smile, laugh, and have fun with people," he says. Obama is lugubrious. He lectures. He gives excuses. His speeches are anything but fun.

But Obama has the White House, a bulging war chest, a vast campaign staff, powerful interest groups, and the media. Three or four Republican candidates have resources Cain cannot match. He has himself. But if all continues to go well for him, help may be on the way. ♦

OVERRATED

Rumors of Barack Obama's political skill have been greatly exaggerated

2004: U.S. Senate candidate from Illinois Barack Obama tries out the stage of the Democratic National Convention where he will become a star.

AP / KEVORK DJANSEZIAN

By Noemie Emery

For a success, Barack Obama is a very bad politician, the worst politician to win the presidency by an electoral landslide, to never lose a major election, or to rise to the presidency from a state legislature in little more than four years. He has gone from sterling campaigner to put-upon leader; from the new FDR to the next Jimmy Carter; from being the orator who could hold millions spellbound to the man who moves no one at all. The man who promised everything is delivering nothing. Journalists who wept when he won the election now grind their teeth in despair. Maureen Dowd admits he isn't the one for whom even he had been waiting. The gap between sizzle and steak never seemed so large or alarming, and inquiring minds want to know what went wrong.

Did the prince (assuming he was one) turn into a frog? Did he use all his luck up in winning his office? Did he, once in power, see his governing skills fade away? The answers to these things are no, yes, and no. The record suggests that he was never a prince (merely a fantasy); that his luck went away once his free ride had ended; and that he had few political, that is, governing, skills to begin with, a fact that is now more than clear. In

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard, *a columnist for the* Washington Examiner, *and the author of* Great Expectations: The Troubled Lives of Political Families.

three areas at least, he appears to be lacking. Let us walk back and see what they are.

Good politicians create coalitions and then tend them carefully, draw people in from the opposite party, and make their own party (like Reagan and Roosevelt) both bigger and different than it was before. Obama inherited a coalition by chance and dismantled it during his first years in office, having never understood what it was made of, how it developed, how fragile it was, and what it would take to maintain. This coalition had formed by itself shortly after the Lehman Brothers collapse tipped the financial world into chaos in September 2008, and the election, without his having even to wiggle his fingers, fell into his open and welcoming lap. Aside from taking the rap for what was a crisis cooked up by both parties, the GOP was hit by two other strokes of bad fortune: Its nominee, John McCain, was a war hero and foreign policy maven, whose financial credentials were minimal. And the widely despised TARP bailout measure could have been fashioned on purpose to split the Republican party, which took two weeks off from the campaign against Democrats to open fire within its own ranks, laying waste to the sense that the party could govern and sending swing voters fleeing in droves.

Many people who voted for Obama were not in fact liberal, but centrist or center-right voters unnerved by the crash and the chaos in the Republican party, and drawn to Obama's misleading aura of calm.

The numbers for those days tell the whole story: Before September 15, the McCain/Palin ticket was leading Obama and Biden by two to three points in most national polls; within days, it was trailing by five, and then six. Before September 15, states like Ohio and Florida had been trending in McCain's direction; after it, they swung back to the Democrats' side. Weeks later, Obama beat John McCain by a spread of 53-46 percent, the widest popular-vote margin for a Democrat since Lyndon B. Johnson crushed Barry Goldwater in 1964.

Obama captured the classic swing states of Ohio and Florida, but he also carried states, regions, and voting groups Republicans had seen for decades as their property. He won the purple/red states of Virginia, Indiana, and North Carolina; he did better with whites, and white males, than Al Gore or John Kerry; and he swept Hispanics, whose losses George W. Bush had kept to a minimum. He exploded the red and blue map of the previous decade and expanded the Democrats' reach into unexplored country, painting large swaths of the continent blue.

Pundits predicted a decades-long liberal dominance. *Newsweek* proclaimed us all socialists. John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira, who had predicted an *Emerging Democratic Majority* almost a decade before, said it had emerged, albeit belatedly, and would be around a long while. "This realignment is predicated on a change in political demography and geography," Judis said. "Groups that had been disproportionately Republican have become disproportionately Democratic, and red states like Virginia have turned blue."

Or had they? If Obama had been a good politician, he would have realized that he had been elected not by a broad and deep swath of newly minted liberal voters, but by a temporary alliance of faithful progressives (numerous, but not enough to win elections) and centrist swing voters scared out of their wits by the crash. Before the crash, as David Paul Kuhn wrote on RealClearPolitics later, McCain led Obama in the Gallup polls for nine days in succession; after, he never led again. Before, Obama cracked the 50 percent mark only once, and that was at the peak of his convention; after, he passed it 33 times. He won nine states Bush had carried four years earlier, but in six of these (including Ohio and Florida) McCain tied or led him before September 15. Why? Most of these states had large, wealthy suburbs around their big cities, where stockholders and homeowners saw huge paper losses. It was during this period that Democrats made their gains among whites, and white males.

At the same time as this massive swing towards the Democratic ticket, polls showed that the ideological split remained where it had been in the Clinton/Bush era: self-identified conservatives around 41 percent, moderates around 37 percent, liberals around 21 percent. Many people who voted for Obama were not in fact liberal, but centrist or center-right voters unnerved by the crash and the chaos in the Republican party, and drawn to Obama's misleading aura of calm. This meant there was also a split in Obama's electorate: The progressives liked his liberal ideas, the centrists his so-called "conservative" temperament; the progressives wanted transformation, the centrists stability; the progressives wanted the government grown, the centrists wanted the economy stabilized; the centrists were prepared for the small shift to the left that comes with the usual change from a center-right to a left-center government, the progressives were bent on sweeping and radical change.

An adept politician would have looked at the polls and realized he had a frail coalition that had to be nudged along carefully, knowing schism would destroy his

majority. Obama's mistake was to assume that the shock of the crash had turned the center hard left and to govern accordingly. "The coalition that carried Obama to victory is every bit as sturdy as America's last two dominant political coalitions: the ones that elected Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan," wrote Peter Beinart, reflecting the view of the press and the president. As it happened, "the coalition that carried Obama to victory" would shatter in less than nine months.

The coalition Obama never realized existed took its first hit in his first month, with his $800 billion stimulus package, which would fail to address the problem of job loss and fail in its long-run ambition to hold unemployment under 8 percent. It took its second hit just a month later, with a bailout for homeowners behind in their payments, prompting CNBC's Rick Santelli to suggest dumping worthless derivatives into Lake Michigan, thus launching the Tea Party movement, which Obama and allies, with typical brilliance, dismissed.

The third hit, and the one that proved fatal, was the launching of national health care, a sacred cause to the left but to no one else in the country, a massive restructuring of one-sixth of the country's economy, which would prove a mistake in its timing (FDR had waited two years to introduce Social Security), a mistake in its structure, and a mistake in the way it was framed. To keep his coalition intact, it should have been incremental, built out from the center, and addressed to the main concern of the public, which was affordability. Instead, the plan that emerged from Congress was comprehensive, built out from the left, geared to help the uninsured (one-sixth of the country) at the expense of everything else in the system, and based on the premise, which no one believed, that it could expand subsidized coverage to millions of people while at the same time keeping costs down.

This was not what the centrists had signed on for, and in the course of the summer, they started to flee. Obama's numbers began drifting down from their astronomical highs to more human levels, and support for his bill into negative country. Democrats from purple and red states found themselves besieged by angry constituents, whose concerns Obama did nothing to appease or acknowledge. They then flung themselves into the arms of Republicans, who, dazed and despondent after Obama's election, could scarcely believe their own luck.

In October, Democrats rammed the bill through the House, winning by 7 votes out of a 79-seat majority, with no Republicans voting in favor, and 34 Democrats voting against. In November came the off-year elections for governor, in New Jersey, a blue state which Obama had won a year earlier by a 15-point margin, and Virginia, a purple/red state which Obama had carried by 7. Obama wrapped his arms around Democrats Creigh Deeds and Jon Corzine. Independents, who had rallied for him a year earlier, looked, and ran hard in the other direction. Deeds lost by 18 points to Bob McDonnell. Corzine lost to Chris Christie by 3.

In December, Democrats pushed the bill through the Senate, by means of hundreds of millions in bribes and kickbacks to wavering members of their own party. House speaker Nancy Pelosi called it a "gift for the American people." The people thought differently. In January, Scott Brown won a Senate race in Massachusetts, taking the seat vacated by the death of Ted Kennedy, and becoming the first member of his party to represent his state in that body in 30 years. The bill was thought dead, and most Democrats breathed sighs of relief and exhaustion. But their perils were not over yet.

Proving there was no pain he would not inflict on his party, Obama seized on a loophole to push it back through the House, a Pickett's charge of a mission which would prove a death sentence for many congressional Democrats. "The legislation has become a disaster," wrote Howard Fineman in what used to be *Newsweek*. "The leaders of Troy knew they were making a mistake when they wheeled that horse into their besieged city, but they did it anyway. We'll see what happens this fall."

Obamacare passed the Senate 60-39, and they saw. "The Democrats' hope with health care was that 'people will like it after we pass it.' Well, they hate it," wrote pollster Pat Caddell in September. *Time* magazine found "a sense of disappointment, bordering on betrayal" among many voters. "In Nevada, a state Obama won with 55 percent, . . . only 29 percent of likely voters . . . think the president's actions have helped the economy." In Indiana, a state legislator said she was often approached by former Obama supporters who wanted to "vent" their frustrations: "Betrayed by the health care vote," "He's not what I voted for," "What are they thinking when it comes to spending?" were the most common themes.

In one go, the 2010 midterms wiped out the combined Democratic gains in the House of the previous two "wave" elections, took from them 6 seats in the Senate and 10 governorships, along with control of state houses, in swing states such as Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan. An army of rising young GOP stars vowed to work for health care repeal in the House and the Senate; governors vowed to work for repeal and resist implementation; and state attorneys general wasted no time in filing suits in federal courts to have the law declared unconstitutional. The use of wedge issues is common in politics—issues carefully selected to unite one party while dividing the

other—but it is rare to use them against one's own party. It takes an unusual politician to achieve this objective. One who's not very good at his craft.

Good politicians are in sync with their times, understand them, and deal with their challenges. But Obama is at odds, and often at war, with his own. In an age when debt is a problem, he is a big spender; when government has to cut back, he wants to expand both its expense and its reach. Nothing that happens appears to deter him, not the massive pushback from the American people in the 2009 and 2010 elections; not the crisis in Europe, kicked off by the collapse of Greece's finances in April 2010, which caused an austerity panic all over Europe, and should have driven home the most cogent of lessons: that exactly as he was trying to turn his country into a social democracy like those of old Europe, which the American left had long admired, the European social democracies had been forced to admit that their model could not be sustained.

AP / MICHAEL DWYER

2010: Where's the love?

The result is that Obama is now an outlier among the world's leaders: the one head of a first world industrial nation who is *not* calling for cutbacks and thrift. In Britain, David Cameron plans cuts of $130 billion; in France, Nicolas Sarkozy raised the retirement age and has limited pensions. "We can't finance our social model," said the president of the European Council, facing the reality that longer life expectancy, a smaller work force, and regulations and policies that inhibit productivity have called a halt to an era of generous benefits. Obama alone is hopelessly enamored of the past.

Perhaps it was all those Photoshopped pictures of Obama as Franklin D. Roosevelt that made him seem caught in a time warp—in 1933, when FDR met the Great Depression with a massive expansion of government (which was at the time perhaps too small for its purpose), or in 1964, when Lyndon Johnson leveraged the death of John Kennedy to pass the civil rights bills (as JFK would have wanted) and the Great Society programs (about which Kennedy might well have had second thoughts). It was the overreach and subsequent failure of those Great Society programs that led to the backlash against the liberal project, and the skepticism about the expansion of government that persists to this day. A good politician would have understood this, and known that, while there was plenty of room for tinkering with the basic functions of government, there was no going back to those innocent days. This was not 1933, or 1964, for that matter, and Obama had no Dust Bowl or tragic, dead president to stir people's hearts. What he had was an unpopular deficit he proceeded to triple. And then he wanted to spend even more.

Faced with a public revolt, he went on to ignore it. At the State of the Union in 2011, he spoke for 40 minutes before mentioning deficits, and then did so fleetingly. In February, he sent the Senate a budget so bad that the senators of both parties unanimously rejected it. In April, he made another speech on the budget in which he talked about spending additional millions on such boutique liberal projects as green jobs and light rail.

There *is* a great role for a liberal president—saving the safety net by making it viable—but it's not a role he wants to play. Great presidents (Roosevelt and Reagan) transform their times; good presidents (Eisenhower and Kennedy) understand them almost without trying; bad presidents (Buchanan and Carter) are overwhelmed by them. Obama is the first who has tried to defy them. This cannot, and will not, end well.

Obama's third flaw is his failure to sense the importance of moral legitimacy, to which his failure to understand coalitions is linked. Moral legitimacy is what presidents gain when they champion reforms with a broad base of support from the public. Moral legitimacy is what the Electoral College ensures when it operates so that presidents are elected not just by bloc votes in safe states, but by groups of states representing different collections of citizens, and from different parts of the whole. Moral legitimacy is what Barack Obama threw away after Scott Brown's election, when he made the choice to pass his health care bill on votes bribed

or wrested from members of Congress, with no support outside Congress at all.

"Great measures should not be passed on narrow majorities" is an unwritten precept all leaders should heed. Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson spent months building broad coalitions before passing their bills on Social Security and civil rights. Lesser politicians have tried this, and sometimes been less than successful, but until Obama, no one imagined that a president should try to pass a huge, complex, costly bill that affected everyone in the country not only without enjoying broad support, but while facing an enraged, energized, and broad coalition *against* it. The reasons Democrats gave were all unconvincing, and they would all prove mistaken: They had to pass something "to prove they could govern." They had to have something to take to the voters. No one would care how the bill passed, as long as it did pass. They would look weak if they dropped it. Obama would prove himself a strong leader, and his stock with the public would rise. Alas. How were they to know that "governing" didn't mean stiffing the public; that they would be giving Republicans an issue to take to the voters; that it was their party that would be terribly weakened by passage; and that public esteem for Obama as leader would not only not rise, but would stall, and then slowly drift down?

"Health reform has been a political dud for the Dems," Mike Allen wrote in *Politico* a week after passage. Gallup found that Obama's standing "on four key personal qualities," including strong leadership, slipped below a majority for the first time in his presidency. And as for people not caring about the mechanics of passage, it turned out people cared. A Gallup poll showed that all adults, Republicans, and—crucially—independent voters considered the passage of the bill an "abuse of power" by margins of 53-40, 86-11, and 53-36. As Pat Caddell would say later, "Because of the *way* it was passed, as a crime against democracy, the country has simply not accepted it." The *Wall Street Journal*'s James Taranto added, "There is no precedent for a massive, unpopular expansion of the welfare state that has support only within one party. It's possible that Americans would grudgingly come to accept it. . . . It's also possible that they would hate it even more. . . . Obama and Pelosi not only are trifling with their party's short-term prospects, but are putting at risk its long term viability."

And so they did. By passing this bill against the will of the public, they brought on themselves a "long, twilight struggle," in which the people, using all the legal, political, and tactical tools at their disposal, are endeavoring to take it apart. The fragile economic recovery, which had struggled upwards for months, stopped in its tracks after Obamacare's passage and has yet to revive. Blame was placed on the burden in new taxes and regulations the bill would impose on businesses, along with uncertainty as to the effect the bill would have and even whether it would survive. Together, the stalled economy and Obamacare itself have already caused catastrophic losses for Democrats, and may do the same in the 2012 elections, when the Supreme Court case on the law's constitutionality is set to go off like a bomb midcampaign.

Other presidents have failed by doing too little or nothing; Obama is the first to do himself in through hyperactivity. For a success, he is surely a failed politician. But then, what made him a success?

Obama won a race like none other, run by a candidate such as no one had seen. When he was six years old, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* showed a darkly handsome Sidney Poitier wooing the white niece of Katharine Hepburn, telling her father he hoped a child of theirs could one day be president—or secretary of state, as a concession, if the White House proved too far a reach. By the time that this fictional child would have been old enough to be either, the country had seen two black secretaries of state in succession, both popular and both boomed for president, and was palpably eager to break the highest glass ceiling of all. Of all possible candidates for the historic breakthrough, none fit the role better than Obama, "clean" and "articulate" (in the words of Joe Biden), cerebral, with elite credentials from humble beginnings, the son of an African student and a white woman from Kansas, a man who had brothers and cousins in Kenya, but could travel to Ireland (as had John Kennedy) and knock back a beer in a pub there with friends of his kin. He spanned races and continents, high and low culture, the trivial along with the sublime. He did not, as he said, look like the men on Mount Rushmore, but he looked like something perhaps more resonant: If not film-star handsome like Reagan and Kennedy, he was to an extreme degree our first Model President, the image of the cool, slim, and young seen in catalogues, the ideal of the with-it and of the postracial, living the good life as embodied by the trendy and slender in every upscale venue in the land. He never actually posed for a magazine layout, but this hardly mattered: Every picture he took looked like an ad for something expensive, and the fashion world loved him en masse.

Vogue editor Anna Wintour held a fundraiser for him. Diane von Furstenberg designed a tote in his honor. Models endorsed him. Donatella Versace dedicated a collection to him at Fashion Week in Milan. This was one side of an aspirational appeal that had numerous facets, and in which politics barely figured. He was a brand, but his appeal had a mythic dimension: He was The One,

the magical Son who could heal the Original Sin of the Founding, and make the dream of equality flesh. Shelby Steele said he "flatters" America. People too young to remember the civil rights movement could pull a lever for him and feel themselves one with the freedom riders, who had risked all and bled for the cause. He was a blank slate on which people wrote their ambitions and longings. Allusions to him reached dimensions best seen as surreal: He was Reagan and Roosevelt; Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass; Martin Luther King and John Kennedy, and Moses and Jesus, as well as a feature in *Gentleman's Quarterly*. His record was thin—all he had done well was speak and write (about himself, as it happened)—but that hardly mattered in the light of emotional resonance. He was a moral ideal, a fashion accessory, a note of good will to the rest of the universe. What could go wrong?

He was a brand, but his appeal had a mythic dimension: He was The One, the magical Son who could heal the Original Sin of the Founding, and make the dream of equality flesh. Shelby Steele said he 'flatters' America.

What went wrong in the first place was that too much went right. He never was able to learn from adversity, as he never saw any. He never learned to build and maintain coalitions; they simply assembled around him. He never argued people around from different positions, he simply inspired them to vague aspirations. He never passed laws, much less tried to enforce them. His idea of leading was making a speech. Miraculous things seemed to happen around him: In his breakout run that made him a national figure, he faced opposition from candidates who were sidelined by scandals before he could face them. In the Democrats' primaries, he emerged as the candidate from academia and of the liberal white upper classes, a tranche often doomed by its want of appeal to minorities. As a black academic, he won nonwhites over, and his coalition formed by itself. His governing theory was that he would make speeches and win people over; then Nancy Pelosi would twist arms, or break them. That worked for a while, until Pelosi lost power, and so did his speeches. As a result he now seems to have run out of options, and strategies. There was, it appears, no plan B.

But what would have happened if Obama had had one, and followed it, when Scott Brown won the special election, and push came up hard against shove? Suppose he had pulled back, designed a small health care plan aimed at cost control, and forged a coalition of sorts around that. Suppose he had made it so attractive that it served as a bridge between the two halves of his coalition. Suppose it had won over a few GOP members—Scott Brown among them—the same ones who supported a few of his initiatives that appealed to their voters a little later on that year. He'd have had a win, if a small one, and would have taken a step toward repairing the split among his voters.

But what he'd have won would have been as nothing compared with what he'd have contrived to avoid. Think of the burdens he would not be bearing at present if he had been clever enough to step back: no bad blood and no bloodbath within his own party, no Bart Stupak and Evan Bayh resignations and drama; no rancid Obamacare as a vast open sore on his party, no Supreme Court case waiting to come up midcampaign; no unified, furious Republican party, no enraged independents lining up behind it, no Nancy Pelosi striding across the Capitol grounds with a grin on her face and an oversized gavel, an image that will live in the annals of political idiocy, a symbol of everything about the bill and its passage that people have come to despise.

If you want an explanation for the wave that drowned the House Democrats in 2010, you can do no better than return to that moment. Any good politician would have acted then to forestall at all costs the charade Pelosi and the Black Caucus staged, linking arms to evoke the bridge scene at Selma, then accusing the Tea Party of hurling racist insults, which were never proven or verified, and now appear not to be true.

A good politician would have heeded the words of John Kennedy, another fairly good politician, who made a practice when winning of giving the other side something to go home with, and of never making an opponent so angry he would do anything to secure one's defeat. If Obama had gone with a small bill after Scott Brown's election, he would have drained some of the rage out of the Tea Party, weakened the link between the GOP and the independents, removed a focal point for the anger of much of the country, and stopped the momentum of the wave of resentment and fury that rolled on, gathering steam every moment, to shatter his party in 2010. He lacked the sense common to all good politicians—shared by Ike, Kennedy, Bill Clinton, and others—that tells you that if A does X, it will cause B to do Y, whereas if A had done Z, B would have acted quite differently. A politician cannot survive lacking this instinct. But Obama is not a good politician, merely a good candidate, with no talent for governing. Thanks to a remarkable convergence of historical events, he was able to rise without that talent. And now he is paying the price. ♦

From Hero-Worship to Celebrity-Adulation

The problem of greatness in an age of equality

By Tod Lindberg

In the mid-19th century, the Scottish man of letters Thomas Carlyle coined the term "Hero-worship," by which he meant the high regard, entirely proper in his view, that ordinary people have for the great figures of their history. His project in *Lectures on Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841) was to restore greatness to dignity in an age he believed had come to belittle the very possibility of exceptional human achievement. Carlyle claimed, on the contrary, "Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here. . . . All things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realization and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world."

Each of the *Lectures* takes up one of the "six classes of heroes" Carlyle identifies: the hero as divinity, prophet, poet, priest, man of letters, and king. He suggests that the times in which one lives have some bearing on the type of hero who steps forward: the hero-divinity seems to be a figure belonging to the pagan past and is unlikely to resurface. Nevertheless, Carlyle argues vehemently against the proposition that the times make the man. He asks: What about the numerous manifest historical instances in which a people were in desperate need of a hero and didn't get one—to their ruin? Heroes appear on their own schedule.

Carlyle seems to regard heroism as an essential property: The greatness of the heroic type will always express itself, but it manifests itself in a form appropriate to its times. One age's prophet is another age's playwright is another's king. A young person destined for greatness will find a proper avenue for its expression and travel down it. What distinguished Muhammad and Samuel Johnson from their respective contemporaries was greatness or heroism. What distinguished them from each other was that the 7th century was ripe for a prophet, the 18th for a literary lion.

Carlyle professed himself to be certain of the ultimate success of his project to rehabilitate greatness, veneration of which he considered innate to mankind. He refers to the "indestructibility of Hero-worship":

> We all love great men; love, venerate, and bow down submissive before great men: nay can we honestly bow down to anything else? Ah, does not every true man feel that he is himself made higher by doing reverence to what is really above him? . . . And to me it is very cheering to consider that no sceptical logic, or general triviality, insincerity and aridity of any Time and its influences can destroy this noble inborn loyalty and worship that is in man. In times of unbelief, which soon have to become times of revolution, much down-rushing, sorrowful decay and ruin is visible to everybody. For myself in these days, I seem to see in this indestructibility of Hero-worship the everlasting adamant lower than which the confused wreck of revolutionary things cannot fall.

Is the modern world really worse off for its unwillingness to worship heroes—or even to acknowledge that some individuals have a superior claim on our respect and admiration?

Carlyle was a romantic; he was not a systematic thinker, and in keeping with both his romanticism and his theme, praise for hero worship, he had a tendency to gush. But he had genuine hold of a serious problem of his time and ours—the modern world's egalitarian distrust of claims of greatness and heroism.

Carlyle was not antimodern. There is certainly a large helping of Enlightenment modernity in his proposition

Weekly Standard *contributing editor Tod Lindberg is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and a member of its task force on the Virtues of a Free Society. This essay is one in its series on* Endangered Virtues*, available at www.hoover.org.*

that the figure "we all" properly "love, venerate, and bow down submissive before" is not God or the king, but a certain type of human being. Yet Carlyle clearly has a foot in both the piety of the ancient world and the humanism of the modern. He wants to retain the qualities of reverence ("love, venerate, and bow down") historically associated with belief in God. But he seeks to abstract them into a generic "Hero-worship" characteristic of all times and places. He does so in an effort to counter the ascendant "sceptical logic," "unbelief," and decadent "revolution" swirling all around him. He wants to save the modern world from its leveling tendencies, to keep a place in it for due regard for greatness, or the heroic. Clearly, he refers to "every *true* man" (emphasis added) feeling himself "made higher by doing reverence to what is really above him" in order to evade the manifest fact that many of his contemporaries and ours, in the egalitarian spirit of the age, flatly rejected the proposition that there was or is anyone (or anything) "above" them before whom they should "bow down submissive."

Notwithstanding the bravado of its author, Carlyle's project was a failure. He recurs to the abstract coinage "Hero-worship" at the historical moment when "bow[ing] down submissive" is finished. An indication of the extent to which the man was overmatched by his times comes in ironic form from the resilience of his term "Hero-worship," which remains common in discourse nearly 200 years later. Carlyle wrote in praise of "Hero-worship." Today, hero worship is something parents tell children, teachers tell students, and friends admonish each other not to engage in.

John Paul II, Frank Sinatra, Osama bin Laden, Vladimir Lenin

Is the modern world really worse off for its unwillingness to worship heroes—or leaving worship aside, at least to acknowledge that some individuals, by dint of superior achievement, have a superior claim on our respect and admiration?

There is, of course, the counterclaim that the modern world is awash in heroes. Movie stars, athletes, and pop singers command attention and affection as never before. In the recently concluded age of mass culture, Frank Sinatra, Joe DiMaggio, Elvis, the Beatles—they were like unto gods in terms of capturing the fancy of an adoring public. Of course humans being prone to disagreement—a fact Carlyle conveniently overlooked—many people hated one or all of them. But even the hatred was an artifact of their ability to compel attention. Mass-scale phenomena they remained.

In our age of wiki-culture, the difference is specialization: One need not be a hero to all to be a hero to some. The Internet allows fanciers of almost any specialty to aggregate and to sort themselves, and by a voluntary process to crown champions. Dissenters are no longer out of luck: They have ample opportunity to try banding together to elevate a rival.

Nor is it the case that all of those celebrated are merely celebrities, famous for their success at the intersection of commerce and culture. Many retain a connection to heroism of a Carlylian sort—the originators of the "things that we see standing accomplished" in the political and social world. Barack Obama was certainly a hero to millions. So was Sarah Palin. So was John Paul II. Teddy Kennedy. George W. Bush. Osama bin Laden (though that's a more complicated story).

Yet there is also something distinctly unheroic about most modern-world heroes. The desire people feel to lift them up seems often to be accompanied by an equal and opposite desire to bring them down. Sinatra had quite a set of pipes, but his appetite for an expensive sort of low-life behavior—eating steak and eggs off the chest of a Las Vegas prostitute, for example—while distinctive, was not admirable. Tiger Woods had an equivalent talent and, it turned out, a similar propensity.

As for political figures, the partisan character of politics ensures that at least 25 percent of the population will be willing to believe and repeat the worst about a politician from the opposing camp: Bush knew about the 9/11 attacks in advance; Obama was covering up his foreign birth. After the party nominating conventions in 2008, one could plausibly see both Barack Obama and John McCain as heroic figures: Obama as the first black man to be nominated for president, McCain for his years enduring torture in a North Vietnamese POW camp. Yet a Venn diagram mapping those who regarded Obama as a hero and those regarding McCain as a hero would surely have shown very little overlap. Partisan sentiment more often than not dictates or at least temporarily overrides judgments of character.

Many are the venues today where people gush over the famous. Equally important, however, are the venues

devoted to proving that idols have feet of clay. Often, they are the same venues. "You're ridin' high in April / shot down in May," as Ol' Blue Eyes sang. That's life. No longer is there a heroic *status* that attaches itself to a person, in the light of which all the person's actions, great and terrible alike, count as fundamentally superior to those of lesser mortals. Heroes are a mixture of some form of greatness and an all-too-human baseness, about which people are equally if not more curious. Osama bin Laden was a figure of great evil to most Americans, and, let us be frank, a hero to many Salafist Muslims. How fascinatingly subversive of both views was the screaming headline (it's called the "wood") on the front page of the *New York Post* the day after the revelation that the Navy SEAL team that killed bin Laden found a cache of pornographic DVDs in the compound in Abbottabad: OSAMA BIN WANKIN'. Now, *that* is cutting someone down to size.

It's important to note that for most of the thousands of years of hero worship leading up to Carlyle's coining the term, and in many places thereafter down to the present, the veneration in question was not voluntary but mandatory, and there could be grave repercussions for a failure to fulfill one's duties. An "official" opinion on the subject of who counted as great or heroic prevailed, often under penalty of death or exile. Socrates had to drink the hemlock after being convicted on a two-count indictment: corrupting Athenian youth and refusing to believe in the gods of the city. Alcibiades was convicted in absentia and sentenced to death for mutilating statues of Hermes. And this was all in freewheeling, democratic Athens. Imagine Sparta.

If the king ruled by divine right, then his person was due something akin to worship or veneration. Woe betide the commoner arrogating to himself the right of dissent. Carlyle seems to see historically—and seek contemporaneously—a consensus judgment within a people about who their heroes are. If there have been such collective judgments (which does not go without saying), the consensus was not entirely voluntary but enforced.

What's striking, then, is how intimately tied the question of heroism turns out to be to the condition of freedom. In unfree conditions, the heroes are exactly those whom the authorities decree them to be. In conditions of freedom, the human tendency to disagree quickly breaks up such artificial uniformity. If there is an established church, no one may go elsewhere, and God is Who the ecclesiastical authorities say He is, with the properties they deem Him to have. If the church is disestablished or the custodians of its doctrine become irresolute, all of a sudden there is a competing religion or two.

A doctrine of equality rebels against claims of a *status* of superiority. Freedom dethrones claims of superiority that hold sway by force. Both to the good. The problem is that Carlyle is right to note that in his time and in our own, these leveling tendencies leave us at some risk of concluding that no deed can be especially heroic and no achievement especially great.

These themes emerge from myriad currents of modern political, intellectual, and cultural opinion. Its most radical form, an abandoned Marxist position deemed extreme by most Marxists themselves, is the view that the individual simply doesn't matter to the progress of history. The view is precisely the opposite of Carlyle's: What he attributes solely to the influence of "Great Men"—namely, the shape of the world and history itself—here is the result of the vast, impersonal work of dialectical materialism. During World War II, the philosopher and social critic Sidney Hook wrote a book called *The Hero in History* whose project was to refute this radical Marxist view by demonstrating the importance of individuals in shaping events. His prime example (the irony was intentional) was V.I. Lenin: Hook shows convincingly that in the absence of Lenin's personal leadership and the decisions he made, there would have been no October Revolution in Russia.

Sidney Hook wrote a book called 'The Hero in History' whose project was to refute the radical Marxist view by demonstrating the importance of individuals in shaping events. His prime example (the irony was intentional) was Lenin.

A much attenuated form of the view that the individual matters not at all is the view that most of what an individual does is never properly the subject of praise or blame—because behavior is much less the product of individual initiative than of genetic and environmental influences. Often, this point of view travels under a banner of compassion or empathy: "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford," said the 16th-century clergyman John Bradford on seeing condemned men en route to the gallows. The compassionate perspective sits easily with modern egalitarianism. And it is no more false than the opposite perspective, namely, that those who succeed do so solely by dint of hard work and personal strength—their heroic qualities, as Carlyle might argue.

To the extent the compassionate perspective fosters regard for others and a sense of obligation toward those less advantaged, it is certainly valuable. But it does not offer especially good guidance on how to live one's own life. Few are those whose circumstances are such that their personal choices account for nothing. Luck is a factor for good or for ill or for both. But it is not the only factor that determines life outcomes. Potentially, at least, an unbalanced perspective of compassion can be corrosive, not least among young people thinking about how they will try to live their lives. If they come to believe that making something of themselves is entirely beyond their power, their personal prophecy may end up self-fulfilling. Worse, they may be highly vulnerable to social and cultural signals emphasizing the powerlessness of the individual and the overriding weight of social forces in how people's lives turn out. The result might be unnecessary paralysis, alienation, even rage.

Thomas Carlyle

While it seems impossible to deny that Carlyle lost the fight he picked—to persuade people to bow down before "Great Men"—it is nevertheless possible to find some vindication for him in contemporary social practice and cultural norms. Notwithstanding the leveling tendency of modern, egalitarian societies, we have not lost our regard for achievement, even if we occasionally disguise it.

The fact that the modern world has concluded that officially enforced claims of superiority must not stand, and that wherever a claim of "superiority" of one kind or another erupts, it must be interrogated for the human foibles that go along with it, does not mean that a voluntarily accepted claim to greatness or superiority or heroism is impossible. Tiger Woods is a great golfer. Sinatra could really sing. Elvis does nothing for me, but, hey—it's a free country. George W. Bush and Barack Obama are two of only 43 people to have been elected president of the United States. Professional baseball players are better at the game than anybody else.

As we were discussing our kids' respective high school graduations, a friend and colleague noted that his daughter's school conferred its diplomas with no awards of honors or special prizes for achievement. It's perhaps a somewhat extreme egalitarianism by the standards of most high schools, but it reflects the school's commitment to a cherished principle. It also in no way suggests that the achievements of all of the students are equal. They were not all admitted to Harvard. Nor were the Ivy League-bound among them chosen from the ranks of the graduating class by lot. Our egalitarianism is not incompatible with sorting on the basis of various kinds of achievement, even if we remain zealous about the promotion of equality.

Moreover, there is a certain type of character in a democratic society whose heroism is, in fact, a matter of consensus. It's the firefighter rushing into the Twin Towers on 9/11. It's Lenny Skutnik, who in 1982 leapt out of his car and jumped into the Potomac River to pull a woman to safety after a plane crash. It's the two young Marines in Iraq who made a split-second decision in the last moments of their lives to open fire on a truck hurtling toward the compound where they were standing guard, thereby preventing the bomb-laden vehicle from entering before it blew up and so saving the lives of their sleeping comrades. It's all those willing to risk their lives to save the lives of others.

Celebrities may think adulation is their due and that special rules apply to them. On the latter point, they may be right. But real heroes of the kind who risk their lives for others do not demand adulation. On the contrary, they more often than not rush to deny that there is anything special about who they are. They specifically disavow any status of superiority as a result of their heroic deeds.

Their reticence in relation to their own exploits is itself a tacit acknowledgment that they understand the greatness of their particular achievement; otherwise, they could talk matter-of-factly about what they had done. But this taciturn self-consciousness is a long way from the towering ambition that gave rise to the tragic hero of the classical age—the ultimately unsatisfiable desire to rise above the human.

No, we don't bow down to our heroes. But in our egalitarian way, we can and do recognize them in a fashion that actually does evoke Carlyle's "everlasting adamant" to honor achievement: We award them medals and keys to the city. We give them a round of applause. We buy them a beer. ♦

Eleanor 'Cissy' Patterson, 1930

Paper Tigress

When owning a newspaper was profitable—and fun. **BY RICHARD NORTON SMITH**

I said a lot of things, but Cissy did *them.*
—Alice Roosevelt Longworth

Long before Marilyn, Jackie, or Liz, there was Cissy—more precisely, Eleanor Medill "Cissy" Patterson—the imperious, principled, dissolute, cheerfully malevolent dynamo behind "the damndest newspaper ever to hit the streets." From 1930, when she signed on to edit William Randolph Hearst's failing *Washington Herald*, until her death in 1948 amid suitably melodramatic circumstances, Washingtonians grew accustomed to the newsboy's cry: "Have You Heard What Mrs. Patterson Says Today?" Whether goading the reptilian Walter Winchell as a "middle-aged ex-chorus boy" ashamed of his Jewish heritage, Vice President Henry Wallace ("a crystal-gazing crackpot"), or "that lovely asp" Clare Boothe Luce, Cissy made no pretense to objectivity. "I'd rather raise Hell than raise vegetables," she boasted.

It was a family tradition, as Amanda Smith makes clear in this vast, hugely readable saga of five generations with printer's ink in their veins and a sixth sense for what sells newspapers. "When your grandmother gets raped," advised Cissy, "put it on the front page." This formula alone makes her at once a flamboyant anachronism and depressingly relevant. Forget the Murdoch press;

Newspaper Titan
The Infamous Life and Monumental Times of Cissy Patterson
by Amanda Smith
Knopf, 720 pp., $37.50

Richard Norton Smith is a scholar in residence at George Mason University and the author, most recently, of The Colonel: The Life and Legend of Robert R. McCormick, 1880-1955.

BETTMANN / CORBIS

with its multiple, round-the-clock editions, highly spiced features, and blatant partisanship, Mrs. Patterson's rechristened *Times-Herald* supplied a bridge between the score-settling personal journalism of her legendary grandfather, Joseph Medill, and the shrill editorializing of today's cable gabfests and much of the blogosphere.

More than a serial character assassin, Cissy was a sometime actress, best-selling novelist, erratic hostess, superb horsewoman, big game hunter turned antivivisectionist—one suspects she loved animals in part because they didn't talk back—treacherous friend, shrewd businesswoman, and tireless self-promoter. Spectacularly unsuccessful in marriage, she also happened to be one of the least maternal women who ever lived. Victimized by a distant, self-regarding mother (I must "associate with swells or nobody," brayed Nellie Patterson), Cissy herself elevated child neglect to an art form. Drawing on unpublished memoirs and other archival treasures, Smith re-creates a harrowing late-night reunion, as two inebriated, emotionally damaged women confront each other across the dining room table of Cissy's lavish Maryland country house. Neither can go to bed without rehashing old hurts and inflicting as many new ones as rancid memory and a venomous tongue can generate.

"I think I'll leave Dower House to Luvie," Mrs. Patterson asserts with casual malice. The identity of her proposed beneficiary, the second wife of the publisher's detested son-in-law Drew Pearson, is particularly wounding to Cissy's intended target: her only child, Felicia, who also happens to be Pearson's first wife. Retorts Felicia:

> God damn you and may you roast in Hell. You've already made my life one long Hell from the time I was a baby, you stupid bitch! You stupid, stupid bitch, with your aging body, and not having learned one Goddamned thing on this earth. Nothing. You can't even run a decent newspaper. You're the joke of this town. You're the joke of this whole country—with your petty feuds superseding front page news.

"You're *much* too fat," Cissy tells her daughter, a failure in love and literature alike. Twice Felicia has palmed off on readers transparently autobiographical novels showing "how awful I am and how awful the family is, and what a poor little *abused* girl you are." Left out of her boozy tirade is the fact that Cissy had done the same thing when cashing in on the notoriety surrounding her disastrous marriage to a drunken Polish nobleman and fortune hunter, Count Josef Gizycki. The count's subsequent kidnapping of the toddler Felicia had touched off an international manhunt involving President William Howard Taft and Czar Nicholas II. Ironically, her soiled Old World title was one of the few things Cissy bequeathed her estranged daughter—that, and the seemingly genetic incapacity of Patterson women to avoid repeating the mistakes of their turbulent ancestors.

Col. Robert McCormick, 1947

TIME & LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES

In any event, Felicia was only half right in summarily dismissing the woman she loved to hate. Cissy might be a joke to many, a scandal to even more. Yet her feuds *were* the news in gossipy Washington, the lifeblood of a newspaper designed, like its proprietress, to call attention to itself. "A steady middle-of-the-road policy is the way to be popular and prosperous," Mrs. Patterson once acknowledged. "But what fun is there in that?" Telling the powerful where to get off was part of her singular inheritance. Cissy's grandfather Medill helped nominate Abraham Lincoln for president, then served as Chicago's first mayor after the devastating fire of 1871.

Ten years later Cissy appeared, the red-haired, pug-nosed offspring of a crumbling alliance between the *Tribune*'s book critic *cum* Washington correspondent, Robert Patterson, and his fluttery, neurasthenic wife. Eventually Bob Patterson took his own life; suicide, real and rumored, would become practically a Patterson family value. Thanks to her Chicago relations, and the *Tribune*'s clout with Republican presidents, young Cissy felt very much at home in the gilded courts of Edwardian Europe. Amid the plainer surroundings of the White House, she mesmerized Theodore Roosevelt.

"Watch the way that girl moves," TR remarked of his daughter Alice's feline friend. "She moves like no one has ever moved before."

Years later Cissy would lend her Dupont Circle mansion to President and Mrs. Coolidge during White House renovations in 1927. From its balcony Charles Lindbergh addressed an adoring throng after his historic New York-to-Paris flight. As a latter-day Nellie Bly, Cissy persuaded Al Capone to give her an on-the-record tour of his Miami mansion. Another scoop went glimmering after she caught sight of a sunbathing Albert Einstein in the nude, only to reproach herself bitterly for leaving the celebrated scientist undisturbed. Practicing such discretion was a mistake she rarely repeated.

The list of her lovers—among them Walter Howey, a Hearst editor who inspired the blustery Walter Burns in *The Front Page*, and Germany's World War I ambassador to the United States, Count Johann Heinrich von Bernstorff—was exceeded only by the litany of her enemies. In a stunt that was over the top even by her standards, Cissy had a festively wrapped slab of raw meat—Shylock's "pound of flesh"—hand delivered to rival publisher Eugene Meyer of the *Washington Post* after he denied

her rights to such profitable cartoons as *Gasoline Alley* and *Dick Tracy*. That Cissy was a Great Character, her life unfurled in 96-point type, is beyond question. If presented on stage, her story would be a Jerry Herman musical, with a malignant Mame opening new windows while burning every bridge in sight. Were it a film, it would be a cross between *Zelig* and *Groundhog Day*.

Until now, Cissy's notoriety has obscured her journalistic significance. What began as a publicity stunt by a flailing Hearst in the depths of the Depression quickly blossomed into the talk of the town, as Cissy's unprovoked front-page attack on Alice Longworth set tongues wagging. It also set the tone for a journal that rarely saw a belt it wouldn't hit below. Borrowing talent where available, poaching it where necessary, Editor Patterson built a formidable organization, mindful of what she claimed to be the first two long words she had lisped on her grandfather's knee: Circulation and Advertising. In between craps games on the loading dock with her burly circulation crew, the wealthy socialite employed her own celebrity, and fortune, to cultivate upscale advertisers who had shunned Hearst.

As a proto-feminist, Cissy assembled a slate of female journalists such as the gifted art director-photographer Jackie Martin, with whom she collaborated on a series, inspired by Walker Evans's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, calling attention to the plight of Southern sharecroppers. Henry Luce might sneer at "Cissy's Henhouse" but *Herald* circulation rose with the number of food and women's pages added to the paper. One of Cissy's crusades ("Suffer the Little Children") led to a hot lunch program in Washington schools. She was less successful in fomenting a Cherry Tree Rebellion to save the capital's signature trees at the expense of the unbuilt Jefferson Memorial.

Discovering that N'Gi, a six-year-old African gorilla, "was languishing near death" at the National Zoo, Cissy purchased an oxygen tent for the creature. Unfortunately, the device proved no more effective than the one she had dispatched a year earlier to the bedside of her sometime lover, House speaker Nicholas Longworth. In her most celebrated gambit, Cissy posed as Maude Martin, a homeless woman with a toothbrush and 11 cents in her pocket, abandoning the comforts of Lord Baltimore's 17th-century hunting lodge for a Salvation Army shelter.

By 1936 *Herald* circulation had more than doubled. Three years later the paper was sold and profitably merged with the evening *Washington Times*. Liberated from Hearstian oversight, Mrs. Patterson indulged her sharp tongue and increasingly capricious habits of management. Rumors of drug use, in addition to the Patterson family curse of alcohol, scarcely justified the volatility with which Cissy fired, rehired, and fired again employees she deemed to have body odor, or who preceded the publisher out of an elevator. One young woman reporter was discharged because the publisher thought her eyes too close together.

Her furious isolationism ("Thank God For Munich" she trumpeted in an editorial following the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1938) was the most obvious of Cissy's bonds to her brother Joe, protean publisher of the *New York Daily News*, and their Chicago cousin, Robert McCormick, whose *Tribune* splashed across its front page a purloined copy of the administration's war plan with Nazi Germany three days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. On the night of December 7, 1941, an unrepentant Cissy Patterson pointed to the Roosevelt White House and hissed, "Do you think *he* arranged this?" Roosevelt was hardly alone in decrying "the Patterson-McCormick Axis," but he was in a better position than most to do something about it. At his personal direction FBI director J. Edgar Hoover wiretapped *Times-Herald* columnist (and purported Nazi sympathizer) Inga Arvad in the throes of passion with a young naval officer, John F. Kennedy.

As her health deteriorated, and her charm curdled, an aging Cissy began carrying a revolver in her purse. She took grim satisfaction in writing and rewriting her will. The celebrated and the self-important still beat a path to her door. Doris Duke danced in her ballroom, far from the dismal corner to which Mrs. P. relegated the social-climbing Perle Mesta (whose characteristic response was to offer cash bribes to *Times-Herald* society writers for mentioning her in their party favors). Telling friends, "I don't want to die alone," Cissy made certain that night watchmen sat outside her bedroom door. Having excommunicated or outlived her small circle of loved ones, in the end Cissy willed the *Times-Herald* to its top executives, instantly dubbed the Seven Dwarves. Felicia contested the will, assisted by the opportunistic Drew Pearson.

Washingtonians sat back in anticipation of Cissy's final and gaudiest show. Then, as abruptly as she had challenged her mother's sanity, Felicia dropped her suit. Before her death at 93, in 1999, Felicia found sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous and a perspective that had eluded her tormented mother. By the time she made peace with Cissy's ghost, the *Times-Herald* was long gone, its 1954 sale to Eugene Meyer the making of its despised rival, the *Washington Post*, and a very different kind of journalistic fame in Katherine Graham.

Aside from its curiously bland title, Amanda Smith's unblinking group portrait of a dynasty unraveling is a model of its kind. Combining her subject's vitality with an accuracy and restraint wholly absent in the mercurial publisher, Smith pays Cissy the ultimate compliment of taking her seriously. Widely praised for her skillful editing of the correspondence of her grandfather, Joseph P. Kennedy, here Smith gives us the fullest, fairest portrait we are ever likely to have of Cissy Patterson, her extended family, and their colorful, contentious approach to the news. Granted, Cissy's descendants and in-laws are less interesting than the force of nature that haunts them still. And entertaining as it is, this volume should dispel any misplaced nostalgia for city room hijinks, even as it raises fresh doubts about a journalism that seeks the highest profit through the lowest common denominator. ♦

B&A

Dance Master

The extraordinary career that ended at Auschwitz.

BY JOEL LOBENTHAL

René Blum, ca. 1930

Hamlet without one of the principal players. That is the way that accounts of European culture between the two World Wars now begin to look after *René Blum & The Ballets Russes: In Search of a Lost Life*. For Blum was a distinguished playwright, editor, critic, impresario, and curator, but above all artistic director of the Monte Carlo opera house from 1924 until 1939. During the 1930s he was crucial in a revival of the Euro-Russian ballet culture that had been forged by Sergei Diaghilev's ballet troupe but thrown into disarray when Diaghilev died in 1929.

René Blum & the Ballets Russes
In Search of a Lost Life
by Judith Chazin-Bennahum
Oxford, 304 pp., $29.95

Blum was born into a French mercantile family in 1878. A Jew whose brother Léon became the first Jewish (as well as Socialist) prime minister of France in 1936, René Blum was killed by the Nazis in 1942. Praised by colleagues in print, and in personal recollection during his lifetime as well as in ensuing decades, his story has, however, remained largely untold. It is with manifest satisfaction that Judith Chazin-Bennahum works her restitution. She has succeeded in producing a biography that is an important, even essential, contribution.

Chazin-Bennahum is an academic and former dancer. She undertook this project at the urging of dance historian Janet Rowson Davis. Rowson Davis acquired a voluminous archive of material about Blum but was unable to devote herself to completing the book she had originally envisioned. Despite being privy to Rowson Davis's material, major gaps in the historical record remain, as Chazin-Bennahum makes a point of reminding us from time to time. In 1939, a publisher advertised that Blum's autobiography was going to appear imminently; in fact, it was never published, and his manuscript has never been found.

Nevertheless, there is more than enough paper trail to establish Blum's extraordinarily diverse and productive pursuits. Chazin-Bennahum chooses a vertical rather than strictly linear integration for her earlier chapters. Here Blum's journalistic and belle-lettrist activity is discussed, including his promotion of, and friendship with, Marcel Proust. There are also chapters on his long liaison with the much-younger actress Josette France, and his service in World War I. Once Blum's theatrical career moves into full swing in Monte Carlo, calendar chronology and the book's evolution go hand in hand.

It's surprising how many recent West End dramatic successes Blum programmed in Monte Carlo especially to please the vacationing British. We also learn about a number of now largely forgotten but highly popular theatrical attractions he booked. During the mid-to-late 1920s, Sergei Diaghilev's epochal troupe touched down for annual seasons in Monte Carlo as it had in the years before World War I. Blum's friendship with and admiration for Diaghilev inspired him to continue to present such ballet as he could after Diaghilev died. In 1932 Blum began a partnership with the ex-Cossack Colonel Wassily de Basil. Their Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo featured Diaghilev alumni George Balanchine and then Léonide Massine

Joel Lobenthal, senior dance critic for City Arts *and associate editor of* Ballet Review, *is the author, most recently, of* Tallulah!: The Life and Times of a Leading Lady.

as chief choreographers and reaped success throughout America and Europe. But Blum's frequent claims to have been marginalized and exploited by de Basil seem to have been true. In 1936, having extricated himself from de Basil, Blum created his own Ballets de Monte-Carlo. It boasted among its signal achievements the artistic rejuvenation of the great choreographer Mikhail Fokine, who had created many of Diaghilev's early successes. Chazin-Bennahum's coverage of Fokine's work is welcome; too little attention has been paid to this chapter in Fokine's career. (In 1937 he decamped to de Basil, and then in 1941 to the newly founded [now "American"] Ballet Theatre, where he died in harness in 1942.)

Producing repertory seasons of ballet was then and forever a matter of perpetual financial shortfall, exacerbated in Blum's case by increasing tension between the French government and the principality of Monaco. Much correspondence survives detailing Blum's sale of his ballet company in 1938 to American financiers. Revealed in perceptive detail by Chazin-Bennahum is Blum's guilt and anxiety about divesting himself of leadership responsibility as well as his determination to strike a deal that did not exclude him entirely from the artistic process.

Chazin-Bennahum's writing adheres to a straightforward but, at times, somewhat clunky template of much respectable academic writing. Perhaps because of her earlier career, there are also welcome episodes of idiosyncrasy in her conception. These include thumbnail portraits of Blum's surviving descendants whom she interviewed, encompassed within her acknowledgments. There is also a "whatever became of—" epilogue that concerns these and others, including Blum's troubled son by France.

I'm afraid that publishing cutbacks have made it almost a given that manuscripts are not combed through as meticulously as they should be: Some of the flubs here are almost amusing. For example, the author quotes ex-ballet star Frederick Franklin citing in an interview with her "Massine's *Coq d'Or*, which was a terrible flop." Actually it was not Massine but Fokine who re-choreographed his 1914 *Le Coq d'Or* in 1937 for de Basil. In the footnotes, Chazin-Bennahum references dance historian Lynn Garafola's partial correction of Franklin, which only serves to compound the dancer's and the author's original error of attribution. "Garafola noted that Franklin may not have remembered correctly, as it was well known that Massine's *Coq d'Or* was a huge success." To which one can only respond with a resounding *Huh?!*

The scourge of anti-Semitism both opens and closes the book. Blum's young adulthood unfolded amid the scapegoating of Jews in France that incited the Dreyfus affair, and it was the Holocaust that ultimately claimed his life. Chazin-Bennahum describes the way that ballets of the late 1930s produced under Blum's aegis projected a foreboding that seemed then, and even more so in retrospect, to parallel world events. But artistic catharsis is another thing entirely than real-life atrocity; no story bridges the gap and defines the distinction more than Blum's.

Early in 1940 he was in America touring with the latest, and now-American-controlled, permutation of his troupe. He was warned by associates not to go back to France, which fell to the Nazis in June; but he went. In December 1941 he was arrested. His relation to Léon Blum naturally aroused the particular enmity of the Nazis and their French collaborators. Blum spent the following year in increasingly miserable health at detention camps in France, from which he was deported to—somewhere. It has long been listed in reference books that Blum died at Auschwitz; Chazin-Bennahum does not establish this conclusively but does report the horrific findings of a biographer of Léon Blum, Ilan Greilsammer. Greilsammer printed the recollections of a prisoner at Auschwitz, who worked in the crematorium. He claimed that Blum had, in fact, been stripped naked and tossed alive into an oven.

Here the author departs from any pretext of authorial detachment. Whatever the specific cause, Blum's death, she confesses, "has colored all" that she "learned and knows" about him: "It is more than we can bear that such a marvelous person could be killed . . . and begs us to question the human capacity for cowardice and cruelty." ♦

B&A

Getting Beaned

How much does 'Moneyball' resemble the game?

BY LEE SMITH

If there's no crying in baseball, as Tom Hanks explained in *A League of Their Own*, there is plenty of weeping in baseball movies—from *Bang the Drum Slowly* and *The Natural* to the newest offering, *Moneyball*. I'd extend a spoiler alert at this point, but the tears that Brad Pitt, playing Oakland A's general manager Billy Beane, sheds at the conclusion of the movie are unrelated to anything in the plot that precedes them. Is it the very sweet song of his daughter that moves him? Or that his A's lost their first-round playoff series? Or the fact that he has just turned down a $12.5 million contract from the Red Sox?

Moneyball is a strange sort of baseball movie, based on a book by Michael Lewis that intended to eviscerate the game's pieties and wrangle the business of the game into some sort of rational model. The movie is

Lee Smith is a senior editor at The Weekly Standard.

ambivalent about the romance and mythology of baseball—which is, of course, the premise of any baseball movie that has ever been made without Charlie Sheen in the cast. *Moneyball*'s climactic scene features a player, Scott Hatteberg, signed not for his power but for the mundane ability (albeit one highly prized by Beane) to get on base. When Hatteberg hits a game-winning homer to prolong the team's 20-game winning streak, the film cannot help but celebrate the romance, and even Beane himself struggles with it. But the home run is not enough for Beane, and neither is the streak: If the A's don't win the World Series, his idea will not have changed the game itself.

Beane's big idea is that baseball had overpriced less efficient aspects of player performance, leaving opportunities to those who know where to find value. According to Lewis, Beane and his former boss, current Mets general manager Sandy Alderson, found a new approach by building their small-market/low-budget A's teams using the kind of mathematical analysis pioneered by Bill James that prizes statistics such as on-base percentage.

Lewis's critics have pointed out that other clubs were using the same methods before the A's, including the New York Yankees, whose 1990s dynasty was determined not by the payroll but by a management style that required hitters to take lots of pitches, draw walks, and force pitchers deep into the count. That team was assembled not by a renegade but by Gene Michael, a genuine baseball insider—and old-time baseball men are the *de facto* villains of *Moneyball*, book and film, obscurantists fighting a rearguard action against the age of enlightenment, led by men like Beane.

If Lewis overstated his case, the essential insight was correct: Baseball is a badly run business, where even most of the shrewdest owners are satisfied with a profit no matter how poorly their teams fare on the field. A more clear-eyed approach to management and player selection, a baseball demystified, could field winning teams on a tight budget; but to tell a story about ideas, you need to hang abstractions on the shoulders of real people, and Billy Beane, whether he really changed the nature of the game or not, is a good character from whom to draw a larger lesson.

WIREIMAGE

Billy Beane, Brad Pitt

One way to understand Beane's career is as an alternative ending to *The Natural*, the 1984 adaptation of Bernard Malamud's 1952 novel, starring Robert Redford as Roy Hobbs. Like Hobbs, Beane was a can't-miss prospect destined for an All-Star career, except that his nemesis wasn't a mysterious woman with a gun, but despair. Beane's ego was unprepared for the demands of a sport in which failure is the norm: Even a .300 hitter fails 7 out of every 10 official at-bats. It is not that Beane was an arrogant player who overvalued his talents but, rather, that he overanalyzed the game of baseball. So miserable was Beane after one or two bad at-bats that (according to Lewis) he was hopeless for the rest of the game. And so, instead of Hobbs's glorious comeback season capped off by a pennant-winning homer, Beane retired at 27 and took a job in the A's front office.

In the book and the movie, baseball for Beane is the embodiment of his own demons, which he must wrestle in order to yank the game into the sunlight. Standing in his way are baseball's jailers, the scouts, all the more dangerous because they believe themselves to be its guardians. Of course, this is the same middle-aged chorus that misconstrued young Billy's talents, projecting him to be a future genius of the diamond and setting him up for failure. Now that Beane has seen the truth about himself, he also sees the truth about the scouts, and must rout them to save baseball and earn salvation.

But there's another, less epic, trajectory explaining Beane's career. In the summer of 1980, when he was drafted in the first round by the New York Mets, I had just graduated from high school (like Beane) with no hope but many dreams of playing professional baseball, and had taken a job as a counselor at the Whitey Ford baseball camp on Long Island. I worked for Whitey's shortstop son Eddie, another can't-miss prospect who washed out in Pawtucket, the Red Sox triple-A affiliate. The camp director was a scout from the California Angels who explained to the assembled campers and staffers that even had Darryl Strawberry been available

when the Angels picked third in the annual amateur draft—Strawberry was the first overall selection, and chosen, like Beane, by the Mets—they would have passed on the lefty slugger since he had many unseemly character traits.

As it turned out, that was true: Darryl Strawberry had drug problems and frequently ran afoul of the law. But he also played on four World Series champion teams, was an eight-time All-Star, and finished his 17-year career with 335 home runs and a thousand RBIs. Strawberry, whose success Lewis renders as a counterpoint to Beane's failure, was one of the top players of his generation, and Billy Beane was not. To ask why Beane, who still made it to the major leagues, did not become the All-Star the scouts anticipated is a little like wondering why the debate club president didn't become president of the United States.

I will accept *Moneyball*'s assessment that Billy Beane's is a richly complex psychological profile: For some reason, baseball players are stranger, funnier, and more capable of telling stories than other athletes. But it is hard to imagine that a man who has been in professional baseball for 30 years is motivated by an ambivalence to the game.

In fact, what drives Beane is competition, beating everyone and rubbing their noses in it. The competitive edge of professional athletes is not easy to represent in film, and the filmmakers don't succeed here: Brad Pitt hits the weight room and sweats *hard*. In reality, post-retirement competition among professional athletes is petty and often vicious. But while Beane may have been a head case as a teenager, he also had the presence of mind to use his playing career as a vehicle to become a top administrator, who owns a minority share of the A's and has shaped the way the game is played and understood. ♦

B&A

Fighting Chance

World War II was a close-run thing.

BY AARON MACLEAN

Harry Butcher, an aide to General Eisenhower throughout his time as supreme commander in Europe, and gossipy diarist *par excellence*, reports the following remarks made by the mild-mannered Kansan on July 10, 1944:

> Ike repeated his views that the German General Staff regards this war and the preceding one as merely campaigns in their dogged determination first to dominate Europe and eventually the world. He would exterminate all of the General Staff. . . . Ike guessed about 3,500 [men made up the General Staff]. He added he would include for liquidation leaders of the Nazi Party from mayors on up and all members of the Gestapo.

The Storm of War
A New History of the Second World War
by Andrew Roberts
Harper, 768 pp., $29.99

These words were directed to Lord Halifax, the British ambassador to Washington, over lunch in Portsmouth. (Deporting the General Staff to an appropriate St. Helena was mooted as well.) Note the date: July 1944 is well before evidence of Nazi atrocities had become common knowledge in the West. Though Eisenhower certainly had some advance knowledge of all that, what is remarkable here is the grim, unsentimental preference of a man not known for his weakness for hyperbole to wipe out the class of men he held responsible for the conflict. It appears Ike did not get the memo about World War II being the "Good War."

Neither, it should be pointed out, did the millions of fighting men and women struggling in various theaters around the world, including those theaters, such as North Africa and Europe, which came to be popularly imagined in the decades following the war as somehow hosting a more gentlemanly sort of fight. To believe a lot of postwar cinema, for example, if in a given region not *every* prisoner of the Axis was systematically murdered, then things couldn't have been all bad. This sentiment would have been preposterous at the time to infantrymen witnessing units suffering 90 percent casualties in hellish killing grounds like El Alamein or Monte Cassino, and it has done them no credit to pretend that their world was more noble than, in fact, it was. The best of the war correspondents and memoirists—A.J. Liebling and Paul Fussell spring to mind—were certainly under no illusions and portrayed a confusing, brutal, and utterly unfair clash of violent wills, with no shortage of folly and human failure on all sides. They portrayed, in other words, a war.

Historians, especially of a popular sort, have not always been so reliable. And even when historians avoid the Churchillian temptation to portray the West's victory as one generally decent and basically inevitable march of a great generation to triumph, they often err in the other direction, minimizing the contribution of the Western democracies to the Axis defeat and proposing a variety of dubious moral equivalencies. It is well and good to realistically depict the suffering of Japanese civilians in the firebombing of Tokyo; but morally equating the Allied decision to conduct strategic air raids with the Reich's policy to render Europe *Judenrein* leaves one open to charges of putting history-writing

Aaron MacLean is a writer in Annapolis.

second to an ideological opposition to the United States and the United Kingdom.

So we can be grateful for Andrew Roberts's new one-volume history of this period. His broader historiographical project, considering the contribution of his earlier book, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples Since 1900*, appears to involve the favorable restatement of an Anglo-American view of the 20th century, long under energetic assault in certain quarters. As a result, the reader begins his history of 1939-45 on high alert for bouts of GoodWaritis, and it is a pleasure to report that Roberts manages the delicate task of avoiding this pitfall and living up to the standard described by John Keegan that good writing about the Second World War needs to be done "vigorously but rigorously, with emotional passion but intellectual dispassion."

There are some flaws. Roberts's editors have failed to give this work an apparatus worthy of the engaging and necessarily fast-paced narrative. Thus, readers without detailed knowledge of Russian geography will be somewhat hard pressed to picture what is meant on page 528 when the Red Army is described as having "reached a line from Narva to Pskov to Polotsk." Beyond the alarming lack of vowels—which in fairness neither author nor editor can help—even more concerning is that the map treating this subject is 500 pages away, with no cross-referencing provided at all, and with no troop movements or dispositions depicted on the map.

Roberts provides detailed numerical evidence to support the concise and usually persuasive judgments he renders on the various controversies of the war. But only rarely do these data make their way into any sort of useful graphic representation. Perhaps the editors felt that *The Storm of War*—straddling, as it does, the line between popular and scholarly history—would be less appealing to the common reader with such extras. If so, they were wrong.

Roberts has a gift for the swift verdict. One imagines him as a sort of provincial circuit judge, dispatching one confusing controversy after the next, all in time for supper. With that said, he does not always persuade: There is, perhaps, the faintest hint of sentimentality in his conviction that the U.S. Army developed to the point where it was operationally superior to the German military by late 1944. He repeatedly suggests this despite the conviction of many of the men who fought in that army that the Wehrmacht was, at the tactical and operational level, superior until the very end. It is not for nothing that the principles of *Blitzkrieg* live on today as the doctrine of "maneuver warfare," which dominates American military thinking. The capture of Baghdad in 2003 owed much to the German General Staff. And while both Eisenhower's broad-front approach to winning in Europe and the Navy's island-hopping campaign in the Pacific may have been ultimately successful, they were far from being rapidly decisive, and generated a shocking bill in lives and equipment which the Allies could afford to pay and the Axis, strategically, could not.

What is most distressing is how close-run a thing victory actually was. Roberts is particularly strong here and describes how, if a few strategic decisions had gone the other way—if Roosevelt had not backed Churchill with a Germany First strategy, or if Hitler had prioritized U-Boat production from the start, to choose from a long list of possible examples—the war could easily have been lost. He is also fluent in describing the great human carnage in the Pacific, and especially in Russia, making good use of recent research by Mark Mazower and others describing how Nazi ideology drove Hitler and his subordinates to consistently make strategic mistakes in pursuit of their mad commitment to subdue the *Untermenschen* of the Steppe.

He is also strong with primary sources, using the secret recordings of captured non-SS commanders held at Trent Park to show just how implicated the regular German Army was in the worst crimes of the Nazi regime. And if humanity should be limited to only 30 pages written on the Holocaust, I would keep Roberts's outraged, yet intellectually clear-eyed, chapter on the subject. ♦

B&A

'Prophet' With Honor

The enigmatic man behind the perennial bestseller.

BY ALASDAIR SOUSSI

In 1941, a decade after the death of Kahlil Gibran, his good friend Witter Bynner responded to a query from a student asking about the Lebanese-born poet, artist, and philosopher. "Perhaps the best illustration I can give you of the man's personal quality," replied Bynner, "is an episode which took place at the house of Mrs. Simeon Ford (Julia Ellsworth Ford) through whom I met him."

> One night at dinner there the maids failed to bring on one of the courses, and after a considerable wait and several bell ringings, Mrs. Ford rose and went to the pantry. There, behind a screen, stood two maids. When reprimanded, one of them explained, "But Mrs. Ford, how can we go about our business when Mr. Gibran is talking? He sounds like Jesus." And he did.

The life and times of this American

Alasdair Soussi lives in Glasgow, Cairo, and Beirut, and writes about the Middle East.

success story are full of such references to Gibran's apparent messiah-like qualities, and the ease with which, like a king over his subjects, he held court. An enigmatic man from an equally enigmatic land, Gibran was no slouch on matters profound, and his ability to arouse the curiosity of American High Society was an art form he exploited with consummate ease for much of his short life.

Here in America we know him principally as the author of *The Prophet*, the perennial bestseller which (along with millions of others) was my first foray into the world of Gibran. At first, and after being given it by my Lebanese-born father, I was not so enamored of this short mystical work with margins you could drive a herd of cattle through. At the time, I was too struck with the brutal prose of Ernest Hemingway to give way to a book of prose poems. Yet some years later I dipped into *The Prophet* once again, and began a literary fascination which has gripped me ever since.

Gibran Khalil Gibran was born in the picturesque village of Bsharri, in northern Lebanon, in 1883. Twelve years later, joining the waves of immigrants who sought a better life in America, he left Lebanon for Boston with his mother and three siblings. Here, the adolescent Gibran caught the attention of Fred Holland Day, a central figure in a group of Decadent poets and artists—and a man with a fondness for photographing picturesque young boys of exotic origin. Handsome and mysterious, Gibran fit the bill, and Day became his mentor, introducing the young Lebanese immigrant to the world of Romantic literature, first by reading to him aloud and then, as Gibran's English improved, lending him books and generally treating the boy as "an unspoiled genius—a type of the noble savage with which Romantic America was obsessed," as biographer Robin Waterfield wrote. By the time Gibran removed to New York in 1911, having spent his formative years as a wounded Romantic in Boston, he had already become well known in Arab-American literary circles and, before his death at 48, had largely forsaken Arabic for English.

Kahlil Gibran, 1898

The difference between his legacy in the Arab world and in the West is marked. In the Arab world Gibran is known as a poet at the forefront of the Romantic revolution in Arabic literature. In his early Arabic works, such as the short-story collections *Nymphs of the Valley* (1906) and *Spirits Rebellious* (1908), and his 1912 novella, *The Broken Wings*, and in his reams of poetry, Gibran scorned convention and raged against laws that oppressed the individual. These themes and ideas influenced the small circle of Arab romantic/revolutionary writers and poets in 1920s New York known as the Mahjar school, who used Gibran's imagination as a galvanizing force and changed the course of Arabic poetry, rejecting the scholasticism in which Arab letters had been bogged down and, under the influence of Western literature, introduced an experimental, inspirational voice into Arabic poetry, which swiftly filtered back to their native Arab lands.

In the West, of course, Gibran is known less as poet and more as prophet. He wrote a number of works in English, but it was *The Prophet* (1923), and little else, which captured the imagination of Western readers—and the ire of many detractors. Based on the 26 counsels of Almustafa, who dispenses his wisdom on love, marriage, and children to the grateful people of a fictitious land as he prepares to return to the island of his birth, *The Prophet* is vague, sentimental, and platitudinous to its critics. But while I share a certain sympathy with such views, it is also a sublime tonic. It is, indeed, vague and sentimental in ways; but its persistent sales would suggest it stirs something within the soul of the common reader.

Gibran's other English publications, such as *Sand and Foam* (1926), a collection of sayings, are similarly dismissed by those, especially in the West, for whom such aphoristic works grate on their sensibilities. And it is easy to see Gibran's romantic idealism wilt in the heat of the modern world. But as Gibran said, in summing up *The Prophet* before it was published, "You are far greater than you know, and all is well." A simplistic message, perhaps, but one that satisfies the soul. ♦

SSPL / GETTY IMAGES

Happy Days

It's always Morning in America in Obama's Hollywood.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

We are either in the third or fourth year of the great economic crisis, and Hollywood's response has been, quite simply, to act as if there isn't one. To date, there has been one movie—let me repeat that, *one movie*—that has made the effect of the crisis its central subject. And that film, *The Company Men*, starring Ben Affleck and written and directed by the television veteran John Wells, came and went early this year with barely a whisper of attention.

Indeed, to judge by Hollywood's output over the past few years, you might think we were living in a time so untroubled that our primary national concern has to do with the difficulties that might come with living life as a superhero. There is nothing wrong with escapism, to be sure, especially at these prices. But Hollywood might wonder, as I pointed out a few weeks ago in this space, to what extent its obsessive focus on the unreal and fantastic as opposed to the kinds of problems experienced by ordinary people has caused the number of tickets it sells to fall to a lower level relative to the overall population of the United States than at any time since the medium reached its maturity in the second decade of the 20th century.

And while the multiplex might not be reflecting the national mood, as the movies released by Hollywood in the 1930s certainly did, it is no longer the only audiovisual game in town, as it was back then. Cable television is awash in present-day lower-middle-class anxiety. Series like *Breaking Bad* on AMC and *Justified* and *Sons of Anarchy* on FX certainly capture the frame of mind even when they don't go at the subject directly; and supernatural fare like *True Blood* on HBO and *The Walking Dead* on AMC seems to get at it symbolically as well.

Even so, the unwillingness of Hollywood to engage with the disposition of the country stands in stark contrast to the last time America was in dire economic straits—the years between 1973 and 1983. America was in a very bad mood in those years, and Hollywood reflected that bad mood. It was commonplace for bad guys to prevail over good guys, for evil to win out over innocence, for crooks to get away with the crimes they committed. They gave people a vivid sense of decaying cities and fraying small towns and the fracturing social order.

President John Ritter (left)

This was so much the case that it became fodder for one of the most fascinating misfires ever made—a wild black comedy called *Americathon* recently released for the first time on DVD by Warner Archive (an interesting make-a-copy-on-demand service that sells its wares only over the Internet). *Americathon*, made in the midst of the stagflation of 1979 and released only months after the oil panic created by the fall of the shah in Iran, is set in 1998. Bicycles and joggers fill the freeways of Los Angeles; people, even the wealthier, live in their cars; and the executive branch has relocated to a condominium in Laguna Beach formerly owned by a Mr. and Mrs. I. Siegelstein of Long Island.

"Good morning, White House, this is Lucy, can I help you?" says the airheaded girlfriend of the airheaded president, Chet Roosevelt.

Chet Roosevelt, played by a very funny and very young John Ritter, is intended to evoke Jerry Brown, then the governor of California—and of course, once again the governor of California now. This is not the only strange bit of prophecy to emerge from the imaginations of screenwriters Michael Mislove, Monica Johnson, and Neal Israel (working from a sketch by Phil Proctor and Peter Bergman, two of the founders of the drug-hippie comedy troupe called the Firesign Theatre). Another is that China has become the world's foremost economic power (though in this movie through its takeover of the fast-food business selling the "Mao Tse-Tongue Sandwich").

Most prescient, the plot of *Americathon* is about the country going broke. Indeed, as it begins, America will cease to exist because it will be foreclosed upon by a billionaire Indian-casino owner named Sam Birdwater who loaned the Treasury $400 billion it can't pay back. Twenty years earlier, when all the trouble started, the narrator tells us, our leaders were "no brains and all teeth, which brings us to this guy"—and we see a picture of Jimmy Carter delivering the "malaise" speech. He was, we are told, lynched in its wake.

Carter was, of course, the president at the time, and he had generated no enthusiasm whatever in Hollywood. Popular culture had no difficulty turning on Carter or portraying the America he was leading as a country in decline—even in a bit of misfired fluff like *Americathon*. That is not the case with Barack Obama's Hollywood, where it will evidently be Recovery Summer all decade long until the president no longer deems it so. ♦

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

"Diane Sawyer told us [on World News Tonight, September 13, 2011] the proper pronunciation of Mrs. Kennedy's first name is 'Zsock-leen,' though everybody called her Jackie. . . ."
***—Andrew Ferguson,* THE WEEKLY STANDARD**

abc NEWS

WORLD abc NEWS TONIGHT

7 West 66th Street
New York NY 10023

MEMORANDUM

From: Diane Sawyer
To: All correspondents

Since we're observing the 50th anniversary of President Kennedy's inauguration this year, I think it would be appropriate to remind everyone of the correct pronunciation of the names of some of the prominent members of the Kennedy family, a few of whom have complained (privately) to me about the way some of the ABC talent renders their names on-air, and all of whom deserve this basic consideration from a grateful nation.

First, the family name is prorounced phonetically, but emphasis should be placed on the third and last syllable *(Ken-ne-DEE),* not the first syllable *(KEN-edee)*. I cringe when I hear this, especially from local anchors and reporters at our ABC affiliates. World News Tonight personnel should know better.

Here is a short list of some of the better known members of this amazing clan, with the correct pronunciations in italics. Please commit these to memory.

Sargent Shriver	*Sarzh Shree-vay*
Joseph Kennedy	*Zho-seff Ken-ne-DEE*
Jean Kennedy Smith	*Zhahn Ken-ne-DEE Smeet*
Patrick Kennedy	*Pa-trique Ken-ne-DEE*
William Kennedy Smith	*Gui-yome Ken-ne-DEE Smeet*
Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg	*Carro-LEEN Ken-ne-DEE Schloce-bairg*
Arnold Schwarzenegger	*Arno Shwarrz-anna-zhay*
Patricia Kennedy Lawford	*Pott-reese-ya Ken-ne-DEE Low-for*
John F. Kennedy Jr.	*Zhawn-Zhawn Ken-ne-DEE*
Victoria Reggie Kennedy	*Veek-twarr Rezhee Ken-ne-DEE*
Robert F. Kennedy Jr.	*Roe-bare-eff Ken-ne-DEE Zhoon-yore*
Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis	*Zsock-leen Boov-yay Ken-ne-DEE Ohna-see*