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HORROR IN ROTHERHAM
REUEL MARC GERECHT • SAM SCHULMAN

‘Mere Anarchy Is Loosed Upon the World’

ISIS executions
Iraq, August 2014

THE WAR ON TERROR, THIRTEEN YEARS AFTER 9/11

Stephen F. Hayes • Thomas Joscelyn
William Kristol

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The Audacity of Poplin

President Obama's admission last week that "we don't have a strategy" to contend with the rise of the Islamic State left just about everyone in Washington disturbed and unsettled. Republicans were disturbed because the administration does, in fact, have a strategy for dealing with Islamist terror, and the strategy has been disastrous. Democrats were unsettled because the statement merely deepened the perception that Obama is, well, out of his depth.

The Scrapbook will leave further discussion of this subject to others.

In the meantime, however, we have an admission of our own to make: While we were paying attention to the president's remarks, our attention was diverted by the president's clothes: Specifically, the tan suit and striped tie he wore while standing behind the lectern.

It is worth noting that while the president's detractors had little or nothing to say about his wardrobe, his supporters appeared to have much to say—all of it critical. "Not feelin' the suit," tweeted Jonathan Capeheart of the *Washington Post*, ordinarily a reliable Obama partisan. Matthew Yglesias of *Vox*, another dependable Obama shill, made a labored joke about "Suitghazi." Joe Coscarelli of *New York* complained about the president's "terrible khaki-ish suit." Even Susan Page of *USA Today*, no enemy of the Obama White House, felt compelled to pile on.

At which point The Scrapbook was prompted to intervene. Permit us, please, to say that not only did we find Obama's suit (poplin, by the way, not "khaki-ish") both appealing and appropriate—it was the end of

August in hot, steamy Washington—we welcomed the fact that this particular president, for one brief shining moment, defied the convention in presidential uniforms. You can look at photographs of our chief executives during the past half-century, and you would have to look very hard to find one who isn't encased in a dark-colored, primly buttoned, single-breasted suit, with white shirt and solid (usually red) four-in-hand tie.

There's nothing wrong with always looking like an undertaker, of course; and sometimes it's appropriate. But The Scrapbook likes to think back to the Washington of yesteryear—before air-conditioning, among other things—when presidents such as Franklin Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson wore rumpled seersucker suits in the summertime; or, like Calvin Coolidge and Harry Truman, were occasionally seen in public inside double-breasted jackets. Truman and FDR donned bow ties now and then, as did Coolidge and Warren Harding; and Dwight D. Eisenhower favored three-piece suits. So far as The Scrapbook knows, Gerald Ford was the last president to be seen wearing a vest.

The list goes on. To be sure, most of these earlier presidents didn't contend with daily television coverage—or, for that matter, with snarky bloggers and tweeters proverbially dressed in their pajamas. But The Scrapbook sees no reason why presidents cannot dress appropriately for the season, as Obama did, or undo some of the sartorial damage done by the *Mad Men*-era president, John F. Kennedy, who ended the tradition of hat-wearing as well.

So "we don't have a strategy" aside, The Scrapbook salutes our poplin-clad president, and patiently awaits the return of the striped, buttoned-down shirt. ♦

Vanity Unfair

Back in March, The Scrapbook noted that federal judge Lewis Kaplan had thrown out a $9.2 billion judgment against the oil company Chevron. In his decision, Kaplan documented a staggering amount of corruption by the plaintiff's attorney, Steven Donziger. (Donziger, by the way, frequently played basketball with Barack Obama when the two were Harvard Law classmates.) The case involved the alleged pollution of an oil field in Ecuador by Texaco (later acquired by Chevron), and Donziger's corruption was exposed in part because Chevron subpoenaed the outtakes from Academy Award-winning filmmaker Joe Berlinger's documentary about the case. Robert Redford and other Hollywood types initially protested the order for Berlinger to turn over his film, and it turned out Berlinger had Donziger on film talking openly about intimidating an Ecuadorean judge, among other unsavory things. Chevron is now pursuing a RICO suit against Donziger and others involved in the Ecuador case.

AP PHOTO / CHARLES DHARAPAK

Now we learn that Donziger's collaborators didn't just include a Hollywood luminary but some of the biggest names in journalism as well. *Vanity Fair*, better known for the starlets on its cover than the news in its glossy pages, is often derided as a tabloid for people whose lips don't move when they read. In 2006, however, the magazine hired a celebrated reporter, William Langewiesche, who was known for meticulous and lengthy articles on technical topics. He's won two National Magazine Awards and been nominated for nine more.

Langewiesche happened to write a lengthy article on Donziger's case against Chevron for *Vanity Fair* some years back. For a lawyer leading up such a high-profile case, this kind of publicity can be invaluable, particularly when, as in the case of Langewiesche's article, what the reporter produces is a broadside against a heartless oil company.

Well, the *Miami Herald*'s Glenn Garvin plowed through the voluminous emails that have been introduced in Chevron's countersuit. Garvin zeroed in on the correspondence between Donziger and Langewiesche, which is revealing to say the least. According to Garvin, Langewiesche asked Donziger to prepare dozens of questions that he planned to ask Chevron. He asked Donziger to help him concoct an excuse about his "intense" travel schedule, to get him out of doing in-person interviews with Chevron officials, as they had requested. He ran his emails to Chevron past Donziger for approval before he sent them, which Donziger, by his own admission, aggressively edited. Langewiesche even sent Donziger a copy of the story weeks before it was published, with a note that the piece was "particularly satisfying to the extent that it supports your efforts, and you personally." Aside from being egregiously biased, the article was published with at least one very serious error ("the assertion that it would cost $6 billion to clean up all the pollution around oil-drilling sites in the Amazon").

Garvin "emailed Langewiesche, asking if this is the way he approaches all his stories and if there was some explanation of how his conduct constituted fair journalism that I was failing to understand. He didn't reply." Somehow we don't think that Langewiesche's travel schedule is the reason. ♦

Nuts!

During the siege of Bastogne in December 1944, the German general Heinrich von Lüttwitz sent his American adversaries a note, explaining how "the fortune of war is changing" and that "there is only one possibility to save the encircled U.S.A. troops from total annihilation: that is the honorable surrender of the encircled town."

The note was received by Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe of the U.S. Army, who famously replied: "NUTS!" The siege went on, but the Americans prevailed.

It's fortunate the commander under attack was not from the United Nations. For when a U.N. peacekeeping contingent recently found itself outnumbered and surrounded by Syrian rebels in the Golan Heights, the commander in charge ordered his troops to lay down their arms and surrender.

But the peacekeepers, who are all part of the Philippine military, had

other thoughts. As General Gregorio Pio Catapang explained to the Associated Press, "I told them not to follow the order because that is a violation of our regulation, that we do not surrender our firearms, and, at the same time, there is no assurance that you will be safe after you give your firearms." (The unit was able to escape, although fighting between the rebels and U.N. peacekeepers is ongoing.)

The head of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force had his reasons: Syrian rebels were already holding 45 other peacekeepers from Fiji. But delivering one group of hostages in hopes that the terrorists would release the others simply didn't make any sense to Catapang (or to The Scrapbook, for that matter). And considering the vast majority of Filipinos are Roman Catholic (more than 80 percent of the country's population), there's a good chance the terrorists would not have taken kindly to this fresh batch of prisoners.

The Philippine armed forces have faced such perils in the past—and much worse. It is estimated that 5,000 Filipinos perished during the Bataan Death March in 1942 (along with 750 Americans). In *Ghost Soldiers*, author Hampton Sides mentions "one notable mass execution in which 350 members of the Philippine 91st Army Division were herded up, tied with telephone wire, and systematically beheaded by sword."

Clearly General Catapang was not about to let that happen again. ♦

Sentences We Didn't Finish

'Let's stipulate that comparisons between our time and the World War II era are inherently vexed. Still, it's difficult to miss the parallel between the statements of uncertainty from two presidents struggling with a world flying out of control in a domestic political environment . . ." (E.J. Dionne, *Washington Post*, September 3). ♦

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It Ain't My Nature

This morning I was reading along in Vladimir Jabotinsky's remarkable novel *The Five*, when I came to a chapter titled "Inserted Chapter, Not Intended for the Reader." The chapter, it turns out, is about nature writing. Jabotinsky's narrator, a writer, notes that a critic remarked on the absence of descriptions of nature in his work. He, the narrator, goes on to say the reader "doesn't read descriptions of nature; I at least always skip over them mercilessly." He goes on to mention that he doesn't understand why God, among his other mistakes, created winter. He adds that he can see nothing beautiful in snow; today's snow, to him, "is simply tomorrow's slush."

I can, as they say, identify. Every writer—with the exceptions of Shakespeare and Tolstoy—has his shortcomings, and not least among mine is an inability to describe nature. Nature itself doesn't bore me, though reading about it does. The one dispensable American classic that I would be willing—secretly delighted, actually—to see jettisoned is *Walden*. Among the Russians, Turgenev sometimes took excessive time out to do landscapes. Among Americans, Southern writers—Faulkner, William Styron—tend to spend rather too much ink describing nature, and when they do, I depart, mentally, for a tangerine.

In the 50 or so short stories that I have published, nature figures scarcely at all. Rain might turn up, or a wintry day. An apartment lived in by one of my characters might have a swell view of Lake Michigan, but the lake itself goes undescribed. Sad truth to tell, I do not have the language to describe nature. I do not know what an escarpment is, or a gully, or a massif, or a tussock. I once read that women know 279 colors, men know 8. I can name perhaps six different kinds of tree and 10 flowers. I know two kinds of grass, creeping bent and crab; two different clouds, cumulus and dark.

I once took an adult education course in astronomy at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago. My friend Hilton Kramer, who sometimes lectured on visual art, which required showing slides, once told me that it is always a big mistake to turn off the lights on a lecture audience. He was right. Most of the astronomy course I took was taught in the dark, the better to illuminate the various aspects of the universe. All I can remember of it now, 20 or so years later, is Orion's Belt. In Jabotinsky's novel a gibbous moon turns up. I had to look up the word gibbous. I would as soon put a baboon as the moon in one of my stories. Were I to do either, alert readers would quickly accuse me of using fake scenery.

DAVE CLARK

As for the weather, I'm not much at describing it, either. When people from warmer climes asked me this past winter how cold it was in Chicago, I would answer colder than a Joan Crawford kiss. If they were Republicans, I would say colder than a Nancy Pelosi kiss; if Democrats, I would say colder than a Mitch McConnell smile. My repertoire for describing summer weather is slighter; at the moment all I have to offer is, Hotter here than Bill Clinton's trousers.

I'm not much on animals, either, and the advent of fashionably hybrid dogs hasn't helped. I cannot tell a mookie from a yookie from a cockapoodle. I can spot a pit-bull, which I see in depressingly increased numbers and which cause me, instanter, to cross to the other side of the street. Apart from my cat, the charming and resourceful Hermione, the only animals I would care to spend any time with are giraffes, said to be the angels of animals because of their elevation and serenity.

Driving through the northwest five or six years ago, coming upon what for most people would have been scene after dazzling scene of redwoods, evergreens, and other mammoth trees against a background of glittering lakes, all I could think was how I longed instead to see a few neurotic Jews. Evelyn Waugh, during a bombing attack in Yugoslavia in World War II, is said to have come out of his bunker, looked up at the sky raining down bombs, and declared, "Like all things German, this is vastly overdone." I thought the same of nature in the northwest, vastly—without the German part—overdone.

My great ignorance of nature isn't due to any hatred or even antipathy toward it. The problem is that I am altogether too urban, in upbringing, in taste, in temperament, in character, to derive much pleasure from nature. A case, mine, clearly, I'm rather smugly pleased to report, of nurture over nature.

Joseph Epstein

the weekly Standard

'The Blood-Dimmed Tide'

Barack Obama's foreign policy is in shambles. He had a dream, expressed in Cairo, of "a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world," of "a world where extremists no longer threaten our people." So he got out of Iraq and failed to follow through in Libya, seeing no need for American boots on the ground in such a brave new world. He wanted to reset relations with Russia, expecting reciprocal behavior from Vladimir Putin. He indulged the hope that talking about a pivot to Asia would make it so. He cut defense, believing that we could afford to have less because we would need to do less in a world in which "the tide of war is receding."

It seemed for a while it might work. His mantra, "Don't do stupid stuff," got him through his first term. But ultimately, "Don't do stupid stuff" wasn't enough in the face of Assad, and ISIL, and Putin. It turned out that "Don't do stupid stuff" was in fact kind of stupid, because in the real world it meant a foreign policy of weakness and passivity.

On the occasion of his second inauguration a year and a half ago, next to a photo of a visionary Barack Obama gazing into the future, *Newsweek* heralded "The Second Coming." Obama's second term has instead resembled Yeats's "Second Coming":

> *Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;*
> *Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,*
> *The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere*
> *The ceremony of innocence is drowned.*

The tide of war isn't receding. Instead, the "blood-dimmed tide" has been rising. Innocents are drowning. The dream has died.

And so Barack Obama is going through the stages of grief. He's been in denial: There's nothing we could have done about the slaughter in Syria, and ISIL is just the junior varsity of terrorists. He's indulged in anger: If you suggest that we might take action against thugs, terrorists, or tyrants, you're a warmonger. He's tried bargaining: Perhaps the gods will accept a few airstrikes as sufficient to stem the tide of chaos. He's sunk into depression: What else accounts for the manic desire to get out to the golf course and away from the course of events in the real world?

But isn't it time for Obama to get beyond denial, and anger, and bargaining, and depression? Isn't it time for acceptance, and then action? Barack Obama is president. He'll be president for the next two and a half years. He needs to come to grips with reality.

No, he can't.

The country is coming to grips with reality. The *Los Angeles Times* reported on a recent survey by the Pew Research Center: "Public support for a more active U.S. foreign policy has grown sharply since last year as Americans see the world becoming more dangerous." In November, Pew had found that those who wanted the United States to be less involved in the world outnumbered those who wanted the United States to do more by a lopsided margin of 51-17 percent. Over the past six months, the movement has been dramatic: Now the two groups are about evenly divided. And two-thirds of Americans now say the world has grown more dangerous in the last several years.

The Republican party is coming to grips with reality. The differences among serious Republicans are differences in kinds and degrees of hawkishness. Rand Paul is floundering. The "libertarian moment" in foreign policy ended just as the mainstream media were proclaiming it—though, as Richard Epstein has pointed out, it's unfair to call Rand Paul's isolationism libertarian, since serious libertarians believe in the vigorous defense of liberty.

And some in the president's own administration seem to be coming to grips with reality. Watching Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Secretary of State John Kerry this past week, we had two thoughts: First, what a pathetic team the president has surrounded himself with for his second term. But also, even this team is finally getting to acceptance, finally recognizing the perils of the world they now face. The world we now face.

The one person who now stands in the way of beginning

to move towards a reality-based foreign policy is the man responsible for American foreign policy, the president of the United States. He's the one we're waiting for.

—William Kristol

Don't Take a Knee, GOP

Confident about the upcoming election, and afraid they'd fumble a handoff, House Republicans have apparently decided to take a knee until voters cast their ballots. But this timid run-out-the-clock mentality has the potential to hurt the party in both the short term and the long run.

In the short term—as any football fan can attest—prematurely abandoning the offense surely increases the chance of one's opponent getting back into the game. In the long run, the House's refusal to do much of anything adds to the perception of the GOP as the "party of no."

There's an alternative: Run some plays. Be the party of action, the party of a reform-minded conservatism that works to set limits on government again, the party of everyday Americans who are the ongoing victims of the Big Government-Big Business alliance, the party that stands up for Main Street, the rule of law, and the Constitution.

Here's one play that should be pretty simple to execute: Stop Obamacare's imminent bailout of the president's insurance-company allies. Rather than doing everything they can to keep taxpayers from being forced to cover insurance companies who lose money under Obamacare, and then shouting about it from the rooftops, House Republicans have chosen a different path. At least so far, they have not taken—or even scheduled—a vote on the issue.

And Republicans wonder why everyday Americans question whether the GOP really cares about people like them.

Targeting the bailout would be hugely popular. McLaughlin & Associates, in polling commissioned by the 2017 Project, asked likely voters, "If private insurance companies lose money selling health insurance under Obamacare, should taxpayers help cover their losses?" Respondents said no—by the overwhelming tally of 81 to 10 percent.

A vote on the bailout would also help keep the spotlight on Obamacare and hurt its chances of survival. Insurers have been willing to play ball with Obama, pricing their Obamacare exchange policies at lower levels than they otherwise would have, thereby boosting enrollment. The House Oversight Committee recently surveyed insurers and found that 12 of 15 expect to get bailed out this year, to the tune of about $1 billion. Without that safety net, woven and hung at taxpayer expense, insurers would have to price their exchange policies more honestly, as they readily admit. This would hurt Obamacare exchange enrollment and make it easier to repeal the disastrous overhaul and replace it with a genuine alternative.

Blocking the bailout would strike a blow against cronyism and corporate welfare. The House Oversight Committee has obtained emails revealing the cozy alliance between the Obama White House and insurance companies. Chris Jennings, Obama's deputy assistant for health policy, coached Florida Blue Cross and Blue Shield CEO Patrick Geraghty in advance of his appearances on the *CBS Evening News* and *Meet the Press* last fall, and then emailed Geraghty afterward to exclaim, "Pat: You were extraordinary. . . . We were all impressed. Thank you so much! Would like to talk soon."

When Obama put himself above the law and decreed that insurance policies Obamacare had banned were hereby un-banned, his insurance allies weren't happy. Their main lobbying group—America's Health Insurance Plans—wrote to the administration, "Risk corridors should be operated without the constraint of budget neutrality." The risk corridors are the part of Obamacare that will provide the bailout, and operating them "without the constraint of budget neutrality" means using them to funnel taxpayer money to insurers.

Around that same time, Valerie Jarrett emailed CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield CEO Chet Burrell, reassuring him that "the policy team is aggressively pursuing options" to address insurers' concerns. Soon after, the Obama administration announced, in regulations issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, that the risk corridors would indeed provide a bailout as necessary: "In the unlikely event of a shortfall for the 2015 program year, HHS recognizes that the Affordable Care Act requires the Secretary to make full payments to issuers." In other words, Obama is using the risk corridors as a slush fund to pay off his insurance allies at taxpayer expense, and House Republicans have yet to vote to stop him.

Fighting the bailout—whether by repealing the risk corridors or requiring them to be budget-neutral—would help rebut one of the few remaining weapons in the Democrats' arsenal as they try to defend Obamacare. When Republicans attack Obama's wildly unpopular overhaul of American medicine, a favorite Democratic counterattack is to say that the GOP just wants to put insurers back in charge of health care. It would be hard for that accusation to stick if Republicans made it clear that they stand on the side of John Q. Taxpayer against the Big Insurance lobby. Republicans' failure to vote

against the bailout makes the Democrats' charge seem more plausible.

And going after the bailout would strike a blow for the rule of law—not only because Obama has used the bailout program as a slush fund to keep his insurance allies quiet when his lawlessness has hurt them, but also because Obama has decided he can appropriate money for the bailout without the aid of Congress. A vote to stop the bailout would be a vote to stop Obama's unconstitutional power grab.

Doing something that's anti-Obamacare, anti-cronyism, pro-rule-of-law, politically savvy, and inordinately popular should appeal to Republicans. But in lieu of voting to block the bailout, they've offered up various unconvincing excuses for their failure to do so.

Republicans worry that stopping the bailout would raise premiums in the Obamacare exchanges. If so, that would merely prove that insurers were pricing their exchange policies at artificially low levels, counting on a bailout at taxpayer expense. Are Republicans really afraid of being accused of saving taxpayers money in this way? Republicans worry they'll be accused of hypocrisy for supporting the Medicare Part D risk corridors and opposing Obamacare's. But Part D's risk corridors didn't function as a bailout—they didn't cost taxpayers a dime. Republicans worry that insurers won't like them if they block the bailout. But are Republicans really more concerned about protecting corporate welfare for insurers than the hard-earned money of taxpayers?

Finally, Republicans worry that Obamacare-supporting Democrats might also vote to end the bailout and thereby give themselves a political edge. But this has the political calculation almost exactly backward. Casting one anti-Obamacare vote isn't about to save Democrats from a prior vote for Obamacare itself, or from their ongoing support of their party's signature legislation. For Obamacare-supporting Senate candidates, this issue is particularly toxic. Even if they're willing to break with the administration and denounce the bailout, they would be wide open to GOP counterattacks: *Hey, you finally admitted there are problems with the health care overhaul you helped pass. But the bailout—and the rest of Obamacare—won't be stopped so long as Harry Reid controls the Senate, and a vote for you is a vote for Reid.*

Instead of needlessly worrying, Republicans should confidently vote to end Obamacare's taxpayer-funded bailout of insurance companies and thereby give Americans a clearer sense of what GOP members stand for. It's fine—classy even—to take a knee with 30 seconds left and the game well in hand. But when there's still plenty of time left to play, sometimes it's better to stop overthinking, run the ball off-tackle, and gain all the yardage you can. Doing so might make it look like you really want—and deserve—to win.

—Jeffrey H. Anderson

One China, One System

Li Fei: no democracy for Hong Kong

Beijing has dealt another setback to democracy in Hong Kong. On Sunday, August 31, China's central government dashed hopes that the chief executive, the top official responsible for the city of 7.2 million people, would be democratically elected in 2017. Rather than open nominations to anyone, including pro-democracy candidates, Li Fei, an official of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, announced that candidates for the top job will need the support of at least 600 members of a 1,200-person committee composed largely of pro-Beijing businesspeople and other allies. Echoing China's former leader Deng Xiaoping, Li signaled that democrats would not have a chance because only those who "love the country, and love Hong Kong" would be allowed to run, a phrase understood in Hong Kong to mean those loyal to the Communist party.

The desire of the people of Hong Kong to elect their own leaders is clear. This was the message of stunning demonstrations on July 1, and an earlier unofficial referendum in which nearly 800,000 cast ballots in favor of a competitive election for the chief executive. Although Beijing will allow all eligible Hong Kong citizens to vote in the election for chief executive, they will be able to choose only from among candidates handpicked by party officials. It will be a massive exercise in cooptation. Rather than Hong Kong leading political reform throughout China, as many hoped, Beijing will impose its version of "democracy" on Hong Kong.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. When Great Britain departed from its former colony, it signed an agreement with Beijing guaranteeing Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy in all but defense and foreign affairs. Under the treaty signed

NEWSCOM

by Zhao Ziyang and Margaret Thatcher, Hong Kong was to be invested with executive, legislative, and independent judicial authority.

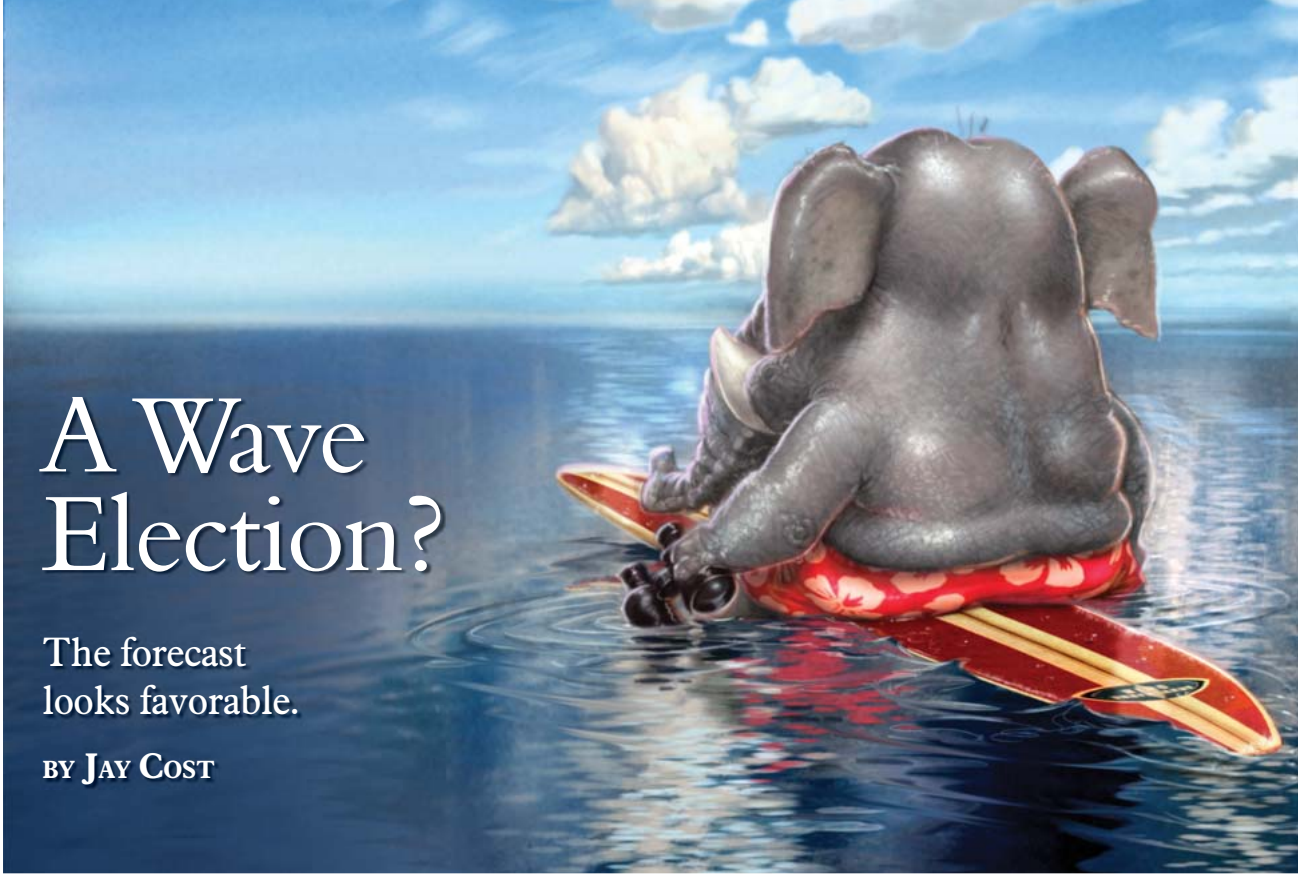
It's no surprise that the Chinese Communist party isn't living up to those terms. Nor are elections the only area where Beijing is interfering. The judicial system is another—Beijing has overruled Hong Kong's highest court—and law enforcement and the media are two more. In the days before Beijing's announcement, the heretofore-respected Independent Commission Against Corruption raided the home of businessman and media mogul Jimmy Lai. He supports democracy and the Occupy Central movement, which plans civil disobedience in response to Beijing's ruling. In retaliation, Lai has been targeted with death threats and a macabre fake obituary. Last year, British banks HSBC and Standard Chartered withdrew advertising from Lai's *Apple Daily* newspaper, reportedly under pressure from Beijing.

These days, London toes the same line as British banks. Prime Minister David Cameron has made commercial relations with Beijing a top priority, downgrading support for Tibet and the Dalai Lama before embarking on a trade delegation to China in late 2013. In July, he failed to meet Hong Kong Democratic party founder Martin Lee and Anson Chan, a former chief secretary in the Hong Kong government, in London. His coalition partner, Nick Clegg, head of the Liberal Democrats, met them anyway. Good for Clegg. And Lord Patten, the last British governor of Hong Kong, is taking his government to task, questioning Britain's "sense of honour" over Hong Kong in a blistering column in the *Financial Times*.

The United States too has obligations, both moral and statutory. Congress should urgently update the United States-Hong Kong Policy Act, the thrust of which is to end separate, favorable treatment for Hong Kong if Beijing undermines Hong Kong's autonomy. That's punishing the victim. Instead, Beijing should be made to bear the consequences of its actions. Visa bans and financial sanctions on officials responsible for undermining Hong Kong's democracy, like Li Fei, would be a start.

Above all, the United States must place Hong Kong in a broader context. Beijing's actions there are an extension of the political crackdown General Secretary Xi Jinping is carrying out on the mainland while consolidating his power. Announcing the U.S. "pivot to Asia" before the Australian parliament in 2011, President Obama linked America's strategic interests to the success of democracy in the region, committing "every element of American power" to achieving "security, prosperity, and dignity for all." It is not likely that Beijing will curb its aggression in the South China Sea if Washington reacts passively to this latest blow to Hong Kong.

—Ellen Bork



A Wave Election?

The forecast looks favorable.

BY JAY COST

Labor Day marks the traditional start of the fall campaign season, and Republicans appear to be in a good position for the upcoming midterm elections. No serious political analyst believes that the House of Representatives is in danger of falling to the Democrats; more likely, Republicans will pick up a handful of seats. As for the upper chamber, Republicans are primed for gains, thanks to strong candidate recruitment, Democratic-held seats in Republican-voting states, and the persistent unpopularity of President Obama.

But the question on just about everybody's mind is, will an electoral "wave" wipe out Democrats and sweep Republicans to large gains? Of late, the answer has tended to be: maybe not. After all, Republicans have not yet opened up outsized leads in any of the must-win states. So the Democrats may be able hold the line.

It is certainly true that a wave that has not yet appeared might never come. Still, historically speaking, it is a bit early to see one party open up a decisive lead, at least on the Senate side of the ledger. Compare this cycle with the same point in 2010, a wave year in which Republicans gained six Senate seats. At this point in the cycle, Republicans had effectively sewn up three pick-ups—in Arkansas, Indiana, and North Dakota. Today, Republicans have similarly locked up three gains—in Montana, South Dakota, and West Virginia. In 2010, the Republican position was still uncertain in three GOP-held seats—in Florida, Kentucky, and Ohio. Today, there are two uncertain holds—in Georgia and Kentucky. In 2010, there were eight Democratic-held seats where neither party had yet demonstrated a decisive edge—in California, Colorado, Illinois, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Washington, and West Virginia. Today, seven Democratic seats are truly uncertain—in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, and North Carolina.

So the two years are similar. Republicans had one more potential pickup opportunity in 2010, and one more potential vulnerability. But if we dig a little deeper, what we see is a notable improvement in quality from 2010 to 2014.

First, candidate recruitment favors the Republicans this time around. Four years ago, in the Democratic-held seats that were in jeopardy as of Labor Day, the Democratic candidates turned out to have the decisive advantage over weak Republican challengers in Colorado, Nevada, and West Virginia; the GOP had a clear edge only in Illinois. This year, there is no such imbalance in candidate recruitment. With the exception of Terri Lynn Land in Michigan, who has been criticized for running a lackluster campaign, the Republicans probably landed the best recruits they could have gotten, while the Democrats are stuck with at least one gaffe-prone candidate, in Iowa.

Second, the playing field is much more favorable to Republicans this year than in 2010. Look first at the Republican seats in jeopardy this time: Georgia and Kentucky as compared with Florida, Kentucky, and Ohio in 2010. That year, two purple states were up for grabs, and the outcome was in the hands of voters who had backed Barack Obama in 2008. This time, Republicans are fighting to hold states that have gone for them in presidential elections since at least 2000, and Democratic challengers will have to

GARY LOCKE

Jay Cost is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

appeal to Republican voters to win.

Moreover, look at the Democratic-held seats on the knife's edge on Labor Day 2010. Just one of them was in a red state, West Virginia (and it turned out to be one of several the GOP lost that cycle because the Democratic nominee was substantially better than his Republican opponent); two were in purple states that both parties have won since 2000; and five, a majority, were in blue states, which the GOP has not won since at least 1988. This year, three Democratic-held seats are in red states that the GOP has consistently won since 2000; three are in purple states; and just one is in a blue state. That is much more favorable ground on which to challenge Democrats.

The 2010 elections saw a fairly uniform pattern across the country. In states where Republicans or independents constituted a fair majority, the GOP tended to win unless its candidate was clearly the weaker. This explains why it lost where it did. California and Washington were just too Democratic in their partisan orientation; and relatively strong Democratic candidates defied the national trend in Colorado, Nevada, and West Virginia. But there were six Democratic-held seats where either the GOP clearly had the better candidate or evenly balanced candidates squared off in territory favorable to Republicans. The GOP won all six seats.

So in 2014, Republicans could well do better than six seats. In fact, they could easily take nine seats from the Democrats—in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Louisiana, Montana, North Carolina, South Dakota, and West Virginia. In each of these states, Republicans plus independents constitute a majority, and there is no clear Democratic candidate edge. A true repeat of the 2010 wave should therefore give the Republicans 54 seats—give or take—in the Senate.

The big question is whether a coalition of Republicans and independents will actually gel. The fact that it has not yet done so leaves open the possibility that it may never come together, but historically speaking there is no reason to expect it to have formed over the summer months. September will be highly informative: If we are in for a 2010-type wave, we should begin to see a break over the next few weeks.

Weighing in favor of a 2010 repeat is the relative weakness of President Obama. At this point in 2010, his job approval rating in the *Real Clear Politics* polling average was 46 percent; today, it is 42 percent. That decline in approval is matched by an increase in disapproval, from 47 percent to 52 percent. On the other hand, the Republican party's reputation has seen a similar decline. Polls conducted over the spring and summer by CBS News, ABC News/*Washington Post*, and Gallup suggest a 1- or 2-point decline in the party's favorable rating since 2010, and a 4-point hike in its unfavorable rating. On top of that, the consensus among nonpartisan pundits at this point is for something less than a pick-up of nine seats, in large measure because of persistent weakness in the GOP's brand.

In 2014, Republicans could well do better than six Senate seats. In fact, they could easily take nine seats from the Democrats—in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Louisiana, Montana, North Carolina, South Dakota, and West Virginia. In each of these states, Republicans plus independents constitute a majority, and there is no clear Democratic candidate edge.

While it is far too soon to say what will happen in November, we can already lay down a clear marker for evaluating the results. The Democrats' position has unmistakably declined relative to this point in 2010. If Republicans cannot capitalize on that weakness, then they will have some serious soul-searching to do. If strong candidates like Joni Ernst and Cory Gardner cannot capture seats in purple states like Colorado and Iowa this year, how can the party hope to win the purple states in the presidential election of 2016? Moreover, if it cannot produce clear Republican majorities in states like Alaska and Louisiana, what will that say about the enthusiasm of conservative voters ahead of the showdown with Hillary Clinton?

The Republican party's reputation has been dreadful for nearly a decade. No party can succeed for very long if three-fifths of the people dislike it. The GOP has been struggling for nearly a decade to hold together its historic alliance between business interests and grassroots conservatives, and to appeal to the swing voters who hold the balance of power. If it fails to win a strong victory this November, Republicans should take this as a sign that the health of the party is in critical condition.

This year, Republicans should do not only well, but very well. If they don't, it will be the surest sign yet that something is very wrong with the Grand Old Party. ♦

Pushing Back Against Putin

No U.S. leadership, no NATO.

BY JOHN R. BOLTON

Pro-Russian separatists parade prisoners from the Ukrainian army in Donetsk, Ukraine, August 24.

Vladimir Putin's efforts to establish hegemony over Ukraine may now have reached a decisive point both for the balance of power in Central and Eastern Europe and for the NATO alliance. Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko warned on August 30 that Russia's invasion of his country and extensive aid to pro-Moscow separatists could soon "reach the point of no return," becoming a generalized conflict. German foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that "the situation is increasingly getting out of control."

Nonetheless, from the outset, the West and its nominal leader, Barack Obama, have failed to prevent Kiev from being re-subordinated to Moscow. Ukraine is in jeopardy, as is the very viability of NATO, an outcome even Putin most likely did not initially foresee. Under Obama, however, especially because of his flaccid response to Russia's slow-motion invasion of Ukraine, NATO has begun to disappear like a sugar cube dissolving in hot tea.

The European Union met over Labor Day weekend to consider new economic sanctions against Russia, measures which to date the Kremlin has brushed aside. The unspoken truth is that Western leaders all know that sanctions, whatever their arguable economic effect, have not achieved their intended result. Alexander Stubb, Finland's prime minister, for example, would say only that the "jury is still out" on sanctions, and reflected Europe's general malaise by adding that "we need to find a cease-fire, a peace plan."

No wonder Putin is undeterred. However much fear and loathing Western consumer societies suffer when they contemplate a somewhat-diminished living standard, the hard men leading hard regimes in Moscow, Tehran, and elsewhere in the real world could not care less. Despite NATO members' bluster in March (as Russia annexed Crimea) that impending travel sanctions would mercilessly pressure Russia's oligarchs by barring their wives from shopping abroad, Putin marches on.

The continuing resort to marginal increases in sanctions will inevitably produce the same results, especially "targeted" sanctions (naming specific individuals or companies), the most easily evaded. When sanctions were first imposed, Russian stock markets and currency-exchange values dropped sharply. These declines, however, did not signal sanctions' effectiveness, but rather the broad (and correct) international perception that the political risks of the crisis had risen. When the risks seemed to abate, Russia's exchanges and currency rose, although not yet back to late-2013 levels.

In the latest round of fighting, Russia's currency has dropped only from 33 rubles per dollar pre-Crimea to slightly over 37 rubles per dollar today. This is hardly catastrophic, particularly since oil and gas sales, Russia's chief foreign-exchange earner, are transacted in dollars, unaffected by the ruble-dollar exchange rate. Moreover, at August's end, Russia's MICEX composite index registered just over 1,400. This was slightly above the midpoint of its 52-week range, between October 2013's high of approximately 1,540 and the March 2014 low of approximately 1,250 at the height of the Crimea crisis. Putin believes these and similar costs to Russia are acceptable, and will tend to diminish over time.

More important, whatever the damage to Russia's ruble, the financial press describes the hyrvnia, Ukraine's currency, as being "in free fall." In late August, the hyrvnia reached its all-time low against the dollar. One might well ask how many more "successful" anti-Moscow sanctions Kiev can withstand. It is hardly surprising that Western sanctions adversely affect Ukraine's economy, which remains

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John R. Bolton, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, served as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in 2005-06.

closely linked to Russia despite the USSR's collapse, especially given Moscow's control of critical oil and gas supplies for Ukraine's industries.

In short, sanctions have been haphazard and ineffective, failing to materially damage Russia's economy. Moscow has had ample time to mitigate or evade their effects, such as inefficiencies and higher transaction costs. And in any case, as noted above, the Kremlin's sensitivities do not quite match those of the Georgetown *haute bourgeoisie* or the refined salons of Europe's great capitals.

Accordingly, the West urgently needs a major rethinking of its strategy. On August 30, Ukrainian prime minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk opened the door, telling his cabinet that Kiev should apply for NATO membership, reviving an idea widely discussed a decade ago. Former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko said her party will press for legislation authorizing a nationwide referendum, perhaps in October, on joining NATO.

While Obama is most unlikely to champion a Ukrainian path to NATO membership, this course remains a necessary precondition for any acceptable, long-term solution for Kiev and the West's most important alliance. We cannot forget, if Obama ever understood, that NATO is America's project. We created it, we sustain it, we lead it, and if we let it slip between our fingers, we have only ourselves to blame. Europe's record in meeting its NATO obligations over the decades has been subpar, but the alliance is to protect our interests at least as much as theirs.

Opponents of Ukrainian NATO membership typically raise two objections. First, they say, NATO's European members will never agree, having already rejected it in April 2008; given the EU's recent pusillanimous response to Moscow's aggression, agreement is even less likely today. Certainly, both Europe's 2008 veto and its current behavior are discouraging and embarrassing. But not fatal. Had Bush moved earlier and more vigorously on Ukrainian and Georgian NATO membership, rather than in his last year in office with lame-duck status already apparent and evidence of a possible financial crisis growing, the result might well have been different. During the Clinton administration would have been an even better time to act.

Europe's behavior today reflects the vacuum created by missing U.S. leadership. NATO doesn't work through spontaneous unanimity, but only after considerable heavy lifting by Washington. That has not happened under Obama. NATO's Eastern and Central European members see all too clearly the direction Moscow will follow if Western resolve regarding Ukraine collapses. Accordingly, "New Europe" must be energized, along with others we can muster to overcome the real problem: German and French hesitancy. This will not be easy, but Chancellor Angela Merkel's recent actions are largely because she discerns no hope of Obama responding resolutely. If Obama behaved differently, Merkel would behave differently. That is at least the premise we must test before today's policy of appeasement does irreparable injury to NATO.

Second, opponents contend that Ukrainian membership is too risky, provoking Russia, turning its ongoing military incursions into "acts of war" against all of NATO. This is certainly an interesting perspective. What exactly did Ukraine do to "provoke" Russia in today's context? Are events in eastern Ukraine not already "acts of war"? Putin never needed a provocation. In his view, Ukraine's mere independence is a provocation; why should he hesitate further when NATO's response to date has been so weak?

NATO must act tactically now by providing Ukraine more advanced weapons and redeploying NATO forces into members proximate to Russia. These and similar steps threaten to raise Putin's costs in invading Ukraine or menacing other neighbors. Although Obama has emphasized that Ukraine could not defeat Russia one-on-one, that is beside the point. Putin faces one very real constraint (not the chimera of economic sanctions): So far, he has avoided substantial Russian casualties in the Ukraine fighting. High casualties could destroy his domestic support, as happened during Moscow's debacle in Afghanistan. Mantra-like repetition by Western leaders that "there is no military solution" only reassures Putin that he can minimize his human costs in Ukraine.

Longer term, at the strategic level, we must begin resurrecting the structures of NATO deterrence that have fallen into disarray. This is ultimately what dissuades Moscow from acting: the palpable fear that replicating its Ukraine gambit will risk unacceptably high casualty levels. NATO's military strength deterred Russia from conventional military attacks against NATO members for 60 years, and it can still do so. But countries outside NATO, like Georgia and Ukraine, and other former Soviet republics, thereby become more attractive targets. Europeans grasped long ago that without major, visible U.S. participation, no structures they can erect will deter Moscow. That is why U.S. leadership is critical to creating deterrence that prevents "acts of war" by Russia to begin with.

If NATO's political (not to mention military) deterrence capabilities are not rebuilt, the Europe-wide consequences will be grave. NATO members like Poland and the Baltics, which actually border Russia, may be Putin's next targets within the two years remaining in Obama's term. And NATO's credibility, central to its ability to deter conflict, will suffer such damage that the alliance may be permanently eviscerated. None of this is inevitable, but the time available to prevent it is not infinite.

Undeniably, since we are now acting in the midst of deterrence failure, we face a complex problem of dealing with the ongoing Russian aggression while simultaneously reestablishing an enduring NATO position of strength. That too requires American leadership, and a real commitment by the White House and the national-security bureaucracy. It is hard, time-consuming work, often dirty, unpleasant, and seemingly endless. A real president would not hesitate to get his hands dirty, starting yesterday. ♦

Fossil Fuels Are the Future

A climate agenda for the president.

BY IRWIN M. STELZER

On September 23 in New York, the president will have an opportunity to score a political victory and advance an important part of his agenda. No, not at some Park Avenue fundraiser, although he might squeeze one in, but at Climate Summit 2014, a meeting of heads of state convened by U.N. secretary general Ban Ki-moon "to galvanize momentum toward a new global agreement on climate change," to be finalized at a 2015 summit meeting in Paris. This is an opportunity for President Obama to lead from the front, and in the process lay out a program that might, just might, break the partisan deadlock in Washington.

The president likes to refer to the arc of history, to criticize those who are on the wrong side of history. Well, when it comes to energy and environmental policy it is the president who is on the wrong side of history, in two respects: He wants to end the use of fossil fuels, and use command-and-control regulatory techniques to do so. All of this just when fossil fuels are becoming cheaper and more abundant domestically, their use less threatening to the environment, the need for their contribution to economic growth more compelling, and when evidence is mounting that central direction produces unnecessary costs in lost growth and higher levels of unemployment.

Irwin M. Stelzer is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard*, director of economic policy studies at the Hudson Institute, and a columnist for the* Sunday Times *(London).*

Start with fossil fuels. It was once considered good policy to reduce the consumption of oil, for three reasons. First, it was believed we are running out of oil. Along came fracking and with it the ability to tap reserves that had been economically unreachable. Domestic oil production has risen by 65 percent in the past six years. Second, we feared excessive dependence on unstable and unfriendly foreign suppliers. No longer. We are now the world's largest oil producer, and if policy permits will become a major exporter of petroleum products. Not that we are "energy independent," as promised by Richard Nixon and every president since. We are not and probably never can be independent of developments in a key, globally traded commodity market. But any need to curtail oil use merely to insure against cutoffs of foreign supplies is not one that should any longer dominate energy policy.

Ah, if only: anti-oil protest at the White House, 2010

Nor is the third reason we once had for seeking to wean ourselves off oil any longer sufficiently worrisome to drive policy: the fear of price spikes induced by some upset in the flow of oil from volatile regions. In recent months we have seen interruptions in the smooth flow of crude to market in Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, and threats from Venezuela. Yet the price of crude has not spiked; indeed, at this writing the price of benchmark Brent crude is lower than it was at the beginning of the year.

Compare that with pre-fracking 2008, when disturbances in Nigeria and Venezuela drove prices up to almost $150 per barrel, and gasoline prices in some markets above $5 per gallon. Because supplies are more ample, Americans saved $700 million per week this past August compared with last year, estimates oil analyst Tom Kloza at GasBuddy.com —despite upheavals in major oil producing regions around the world.

It is not only domestic oil that is more readily at hand. No longer is there a reason to ration natural gas, as was the case years ago when regulators tried to force an end to its use for decorative outdoor lighting and boiler fuel. Natural gas is available in such abundance that the important policy question has become how to ease restrictions on its export without damaging domestic industries that consume it in great quantities. Its abundance results in prices so low that natural gas is displacing coal in power generation. And if the EPA is right that clean coal technology is economically attractive, at least for any new coal-burning plants that might be built (and would be built if the fear of draconian restrictions were replaced by an energy market dominated by price), the usable supply of coal has increased.

In sum, we are sitting on one of the world's largest supplies of fossil fuel, and need only figure out how to use it without causing some of the nasty climate effects that so worry environmentalists—environmentalists to whose views partial deference should be paid even by climate-change skeptics, if for no other reason than the weight given their views in policy-making circles. Meanwhile, environmentalists would be well advised to tackle the difficult question of how to balance environmental

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considerations and the need for growth, in the knowledge that the age of fossil fuels is not coming to an end, and that it is highly unlikely that the political facts of life will allow them to set targets that involve leaving three-fourths of existing world reserves of fossil fuels in the ground, untapped.

The president is not only engaged in a futile exercise when he tries to bend the arc of history to produce a world free of fossil fuels. He is on the wrong side of history, too, when he tries to use command-and-control regulations to achieve his goal of reducing carbon emissions. Not that regulations do not have their uses. But history tells that although regulations can help in some circumstances to reduce certain pollutants, especially those produced locally and with local effects, those regulations generally need market-oriented implementation to make them passably efficient, an exception being the effectiveness of CAFE standards for autos in cleaning the air. But that set of regulations did not entail a massive reorganization of the energy sector, as would be required by the Obama plan for reducing carbon emissions, a plan of the sort recently inflicted on the health care industries, and one that is not within the reach of ordinary mortals. Doubt that and look no further than Germany, once the growth locomotive of Europe, now struggling to keep its economy chugging along after deciding to recast its energy sector with no attention to cost, in pursuit of forestalling climate change.

Germany's planners had reason for, shall we call it, self-assurance. Their economy has been the strongman of Europe. But that was before the *Energiewende*, or energy revolution, described by the *Wall Street Journal* as "a mammoth, trillion-euro plan to wean the country off nuclear and fossil fuels by midcentury and top domestic priority of Chancellor Angela Merkel." One data point does not a trend make, but there is foreboding in Germany's boardrooms after the economy contracted by an annualized 0.6 percent in the second quarter of this year. German businessmen believe that implementation of the planners' goal to get at least 80 percent of the energy they need to run their factories from renewables by 2050—a more ambitious goal than that of the EU's central planners—will shrivel the industrial base, hitting small and medium-size firms the hardest. The projected cost of $1.4 trillion is about what the country spent on the reunification of western and eastern Germany, reckon the *Wall Street Journal*'s economists. Noted energy economist Daniel Yergin, who rarely permits himself apocalyptic statements, says, "Germany's current path of increasingly high-cost energy will make the country less competitive . . . , penalize Germany in terms of jobs and industrial investment, and impose a significant cost on the overall economy and household incomes." And benefit America, as German firms take their next rounds of expansion here in order to benefit from low-cost fossil fuels, the ones Obama wants to eliminate.

Fast-forward from the grumpy boardrooms of Berlin to the summit meeting of world leaders in New York City later this month. President Obama wants to set the stage for an agreement next year that would compel other nations to pass legislation that would set limits on their carbon emissions, and require the wealthier among them to cough up enough money to induce poorer nations to set their own emissions limits. But he has a problem—two, in fact. To accomplish his goals within the bounds of the Constitution he will need Senate ratification of a treaty, and to pass money from American taxpayers to developing countries he will need House appropriation of such funds. Neither the Senate, no matter which party controls it next year, nor the House will give him what he needs. So the White House is trying to figure out a way around the inconvenient Constitution and is planning to disguise the agreement as a mere updating of earlier treaties.

If the president succeeds, environmental activists will be delighted—and will lose. For one thing, if leaders of other countries agree to pass legislation placing binding limits on their industries' carbon emissions, while the American president and leading advocate of such legislation does not and cannot, they will have a lot of explaining to do to their own parliaments or governing institutions, especially since Obama will be pursuing a new career while they will be left with legislation and commitments that he could not persuade America to adopt. For another, experience in Britain, Germany, Spain, and other countries suggests that there is a point at which rising energy costs sap support for environmental protection measures. By going too far, driving household energy bills up, encouraging industries to relocate to lower-cost nations such as ours, environmentalists are causing subsidies for renewables to be brought into question, and green goals to be subordinated to job-creating growth.

That is a pity, because even those who are skeptical of the claims made about the causes and effects of climate change should prepare for the contingency that they (we) just might be wrong. Here is where the president has an opportunity to lead, if he is willing to lead down a different path: that of tax reform and a carbon tax, both of which measures he supported before dropping them in the face of congressional opposition.

Obama would have to be willing to concede that such a tax would be revenue-neutral, rather than revenue-enhancing if it is to have any chance of succeeding. But politics is, after all, the art of the possible, and if he really believes that climate change is the burning issue of our time he should give up a few bucks to prevent its worst effects. Besides, if the taxes to be offset are inhibiting growth, he would have a nice bonus.

Instead of trying to get other nations to go along with emissions restrictions that he cannot sell to either party in Congress, the president can use the podium in New York to announce that legislation establishing a carbon tax will be introduced.

Rather than rely on his powers of persuasion to get his fellow leaders to go along, he can announce that the legislation will include border tax adjustments that impose an equivalent burden on goods imported from countries that choose not to follow his leadership in fighting global warming. Finally, to make certain that the applause is accompanied by a standing ovation from economists of all persuasions and, I am told, from many environmentalists, he can announce the repeal of government-inflating, costly regulations made unnecessary by a market-based carbon tax.

That, Mr. President, is a strategy. Not one assured of success, but having a better chance than one built on subverting the Constitution and relying on government planning of a complicated energy sector rather than on price signals from millions of consumers of energy. ♦

Maine's Man

The inimitable Paul LePage.

BY MICHAEL WARREN

Augusta, Maine

Paul LePage has a funny way of campaigning. The 65-year-old Republican governor is touring the distribution center for Renys, a Maine-based department store chain, in Newcastle with the company's president and scion, John Reny. The barrel-chested LePage is wearing dark slacks and a loud, fluorescent yellow golf shirt. He looks like a big highlighter pen.

LePage chats with Reny about Christmas season sales projections and plans for new stores. Before he was governor, LePage helped run a competitor to Renys, another local retail chain called Marden's. Dozens of workers (and potential voters) buzz throughout the Renys warehouse, loading and unloading pallets, operating forklifts, checking off order lists. LePage smiles at them, sometimes even says hello. But there's no speech about the beginning of the turnaround in long-suffering Maine. No assurances that in a second term LePage would keep working to bring more companies to the state and remain a bulwark against tax increases. No questions about what's on the minds of these hardworking Mainers. Instead, he spends nearly an hour with their boss, talking shop. It's kind of unusual.

Then again, LePage's whole life is kind of unusual. He was born in Lewiston, the oldest of 18 (that's not a typo), to French-Canadian parents. His father, a drunk with a third-grade education, would abuse LePage and his siblings. In 1959, when LePage was just 11 years old, one beating put him in the hospital. His father gave him a 50-cent piece and told him to tell the doctors he fell. LePage says he pocketed the coin, walked out of the hospital, and never went home again.

For several years, LePage lived on the streets of Lewiston and did odd jobs for money, including shining shoes at a strip club. Working in a restaurant as a teenager, he met the late Peter Snowe, a Republican state legislator and the first husband of future U.S. senator Olympia Snowe, who took an interest in the young LePage. Snowe convinced administrators at Husson College in Bangor to let LePage take the entrance exam in French after he failed it in English. At Husson, LePage improved his English and graduated with a business degree, later earning an MBA at the University of Maine. He went on to work in the lumber and paper industries, then as a business consultant, before taking on the job at Marden's. He also served on the city council and as mayor of his adopted hometown of Waterville before running for governor in 2010.

Now, LePage is in a close race for reelection, and Democrats in Maine are champing at the bit. In their view, he's an accidental governor. Four years ago, LePage won a seven-way primary to face the Democratic nominee, state senate president Libby Mitchell. Throughout the year, LePage held a small lead in nearly every poll, thanks to the independent bid of environmental lawyer Eliot Cutler, who cut into Mitchell's voter pool. By November, support for Mitchell had all but collapsed, and Cutler ended up a close second, losing to the Republican by just 10,000 votes. LePage became governor with 38 percent of the vote.

This time, Democrats have a stronger candidate in Mike Michaud (pronounced "me-shoo"), the likable and openly gay congressman from the state's more rural, conservative district. Michaud has a small, 2-point lead over LePage in the polls, while Cutler, running again as an independent, is at 15 percent.

LePage's numbers as governor, meanwhile, are middling at best, with one poll in July showing 52 percent disapprove of his job performance. While the Republican touts himself as an effective executive, recently his agenda's been stymied in Augusta. After two years of complete GOP control of the state government, Democrats retook the legislature in 2012. That same year, Barack Obama won the state by more than 15 points, and like the rest of New England, Maine looks increasingly Democratic. And then there's the Democrats' ace in the hole: Paul LePage is crazy.

That's the perception, at least. An article in *Politico* called him "America's craziest governor," and not without evidence. During the 2010 campaign, he told supporters the type

Michael Warren is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

of headlines they could expect if they elected him: "Governor LePage Tells President Obama to Go to Hell." In his first year in office, LePage said the leaders of the Maine NAACP could "kiss my butt." And he once said the assistant majority leader in the state senate, a Democrat, had "no brains," a "black heart," and is "the first one to give it to the people without providing Vaseline."

Unsurprisingly, his tenure in office has been a field day for the Maine media, but if you ask LePage, newspapers are just out to get him. Actually, you don't even have to ask. As we eat lunch at the Blaine House, the governor's residence across the street from the state capitol, I begin with a perfunctory question about the campaign. But LePage is suddenly off on a tear about the newspapers. Since the day he was elected governor, the papers have been on a "mission" against him. He tells me that buying a newspaper in Maine is "paying someone to lie to you." Newspaper distribution is down 38 percent from 2011, he claims.

"I win another term, and they're out of business!" he adds, his gravelly New England accent modulating into a pinched giggle.

His fixation on newspapers borders on obsession. Just a few weeks back, LePage told a group of fellow Republicans in Auburn that the continued existence of the state's several broadsheets is "the worst part of my life." Last year, while visiting a defense contractor in North Berwick, LePage was trying out a fighter plane simulator when someone in the crowd asked what he'd like to do. "I want to find the *Portland Press Herald* building and blow it up," LePage said. Asked again if he had any targets, the governor doubled down: "The *Press Herald* and the *Bangor Daily News*."

Despite the seemingly endless string of off-color jokes and gaffes, LePage isn't on his way to a landslide defeat at the polls. When asked if his blunt speaking style hurts his political success, he admits that he could "say things a little differently," but thinks that Mainers respect his straightforwardness and honesty. "They can get a smooth-talking, politically correct politician who tells you what you want to hear," he says. "Or they can listen to me, put up with a few cringes at times, but at the end of the day, I will not lie."

LePage says he rather likes Michaud, his Democratic opponent, and thinks Cutler is very smart. "But this isn't a contest about like," he says. "This is a contest about performance."

How's Maine performing under Paul LePage? Unemployment has dropped considerably, from 8 percent in 2010 to around 5.5 percent today. After inheriting a budget deficit from his Democratic predecessor, LePage can now point to more than $93 million in the state's cash reserves, though that's partially thanks to a sales tax increase he opposed. And in 2011, LePage pushed through what he calls the "largest tax cut" in state history, dropping the top income tax rate by more than a half percent and eliminating payments for thousands of lower-income Mainers.

In 2002, Maine expanded its Medicaid program, years before "Obamacare" had even been coined. By 2010, nearly 30 percent of Mainers were enrolled in Medicaid. The toll on Maine's 39 hospitals was severe. By the time LePage took office, the state and federal government together owed more than half a billion dollars in unpaid Medicaid reimbursements. Paying off the hospital debt was one of LePage's major campaign promises, and by 2013, both Maine and the federal government had fulfilled their obligations. "We paid that off without raising taxes," LePage says. Liberals howled when LePage vetoed efforts to expand Medicaid again under Obamacare—he already has more vetoes than any other governor in Maine history—but the Republican hasn't budged.

AP / ROBERT F. BUKATY

LePage speaks to reporters after seeing one of his vetoes overridden in June 2013.

LePage calls himself a "numbers guy," but at one point in our interview, he gets almost poetic, reminiscing about traveling up and down the Maine coast when his kids were young. The coast is a point of pride for lifelong Mainers like LePage. It's the source of the state's lobster and shipbuilding industries. It's a fine example of America's natural beauty. Some of the nation's wealthiest and most powerful people have built magnificent mansions along Maine's rocky, picturesque shore.

"I'd like to see more Mainers own some of these properties," says LePage. "That's my mission. Making Maine more prosperous." That's not too crazy, is it? ♦

Al Qaeda Wasn't 'On the Run'

Why haven't we seen the documents retrieved in the bin Laden raid?

By Stephen F. Hayes

In the early morning hours of May 2, 2011, an elite team of 25 American military and intelligence professionals landed inside the walls of a compound just outside the Pakistani city of Abbottabad. CIA analysts had painstakingly tracked a courier to the compound and spent months monitoring the activity inside the walls. They'd concluded, with varying levels of confidence, that the expansive white building at the center of the lot was the hideout of Osama bin Laden.

They were correct. And minutes after the team landed, the search for bin Laden ended with a shot to his head.

The primary objective of Operation Neptune Spear was to capture or kill the leader of al Qaeda. But a handful of those on the ground that night were part of a "Sensitive Site Exploitation" team that had a secondary mission: to gather as much intelligence from the compound as they could.

With bin Laden dead and the building secure, they got to work. Moving quickly—as locals began to gather outside the compound and before the Pakistani military, which had not been notified of the raid in advance, could scramble its response—they shoved armload after armload of bin Laden's belongings into large canvas bags. The entire operation took less than 40 minutes.

The intelligence trove was immense. At a Pentagon briefing one day after the raid, a senior official described the haul as a "robust collection of materials." It included 10 hard drives, nearly 100 thumb drives, and a dozen cell phones—along with data cards, DVDs, audiotapes, magazines, newspapers, paper files. In an interview on *Meet the Press* just days after the raid, Barack Obama's national security adviser, Thomas Donilon, told David Gregory that the material could fill "a small college library." A senior military intelligence official who briefed reporters at the Pentagon on May 7 said: "As a result of the raid, we've acquired the single largest collection of senior terrorist materials ever."

In all, the U.S. government would have access to more than a million documents detailing al Qaeda's funding, training, personnel, and future plans. The raid promised to be a turning point in America's war on terror, not only because it eliminated al Qaeda's leader, but also because the materials taken from his compound had great intelligence value. Analysts and policymakers would no longer need to depend on the inherently incomplete picture that had emerged from the piecing together of disparate threads of intelligence—collected via methods with varying records of success and from sources of uneven reliability. The bin Laden documents were primary source material, providing unmediated access to the thinking of al Qaeda leaders expressed in their own words.

A comprehensive and systematic examination of those documents could give U.S. intelligence officials—and eventually the American public—a better understanding of al Qaeda's leadership, its affiliates, its recruitment efforts, its methods of communication; a better understanding, that is, of the enemy America has fought for over a decade now, at a cost of trillions of dollars and thousands of American lives.

Incredibly, such a comprehensive study—a thorough "document exploitation," in the parlance of the intelligence community—never took place. The Weekly Standard has spoken to more than two dozen individuals with knowledge of the U.S. government's handling of the bin Laden documents. And on that, there is widespread agreement.

"They haven't done anything close to a full exploitation," says Derek Harvey, a former senior intelligence analyst with the Defense Intelligence Agency and ex-director of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Center of Excellence at U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).

"A full exploitation? No," he says. "Not even close. Maybe 10 percent."

More disturbing, many of the analysts and military experts with access to the documents were struck by a glaring contradiction: As President Obama and his team campaigned on the coming demise of al Qaeda in the runup to the 2012 election, the documents told a very different story.

Stephen F. Hayes is a senior writer at The Weekly Standard.

In the days immediately following the bin Laden raid, the document haul was taken to a triage center where a CIA-led interagency team of analysts and subject-matter experts began to comb through it for perishable intelligence. It was, by all accounts, a fruitful effort.

The initial scrub took several weeks. It was never meant to be comprehensive. "It was more data-mining than analysis," says one intelligence official with knowledge of the project. Researchers and analysts searched the documents for key names, phone numbers, and addresses that could be used by U.S. troops to target senior al Qaeda leaders. In subsequent congressional testimony, James Clapper, director of national intelligence, reported that there were "over 400 intelligence reports that were issued in the initial aftermath immediately after the raid."

Then the document exploitation stopped. According to sources with detailed knowledge of the handling of the documents, the CIA did little to build on the project after the initial burst of intelligence reports.

Officials at the Defense Intelligence Agency and CENTCOM responsible for providing analysis to U.S. troops fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan wanted to study the documents. But the CIA had "executive authority" over the collection and blocked any outside access to them.

The ensuing bureaucratic fight, reminiscent of the intragovernment battles that led to the reorganization of the intelligence community after 9/11, unfolded over the spring and fall of 2011. It was resolved, at least temporarily, when then-CIA director David Petraeus weighed in on behalf of the team from CENTCOM and the DIA, a move that did little to improve his standing with the CIA bureaucracy. Petraeus was angry when he learned that the CIA hadn't been actively exploiting the documents, and as the former head of CENTCOM, he was sympathetic to the pleas from military intelligence. The dispute made its way to Clapper, who met with representatives of the warring agencies and agreed that DIA and CENTCOM should be allowed to study the documents.

The CIA provided access on a read-only basis, but even that limited look into bin Laden's world made clear to the military analysts that the Obama administration's public story on al Qaeda reflected the president's aspirations more than reality.

The narrative heading into the 2012 presidential election was simple. "Al Qaeda is on the path to defeat," Obama said repeatedly. And "Al Qaeda has been decimated." And "Al Qaeda is on the run." And "We have gone after the terrorists who actually attacked us on 9/11 and decimated al Qaeda." And "Al Qaeda is on its heels."

There was some truth to the claims. Drone strikes on al Qaeda senior leadership in Pakistan had eliminated several of the group's top leaders, and the resulting turnover created uncertainty in its senior ranks. And Obama was well within his rights to boast about the killing of Osama bin Laden.

But the administration chose to portray these short-term tactical successes as long-term strategic victories. The official spin required a static analysis of al Qaeda and its leadership, an assumption that al Qaeda wouldn't adequately replace fallen leaders or adjust its strategy to counter U.S. moves.

The weeks before the administration marked the one-year anniversary of the bin Laden raid featured several leaks about al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, and the documents captured in Abbottabad, all designed to show that the group was reeling in the face of the tough counterterrorism measures of the Obama administration.

On March 18, 2012, *Washington Post* writer David Ignatius's column appeared under the headline: "Osama bin Laden, a lion in winter." Ignatius, a conscientious writer, conceded the limits of his knowledge. "I've only seen a small sample of the thousands of items that were carried away the night of May 2, 2011," he wrote. "But even those few documents shown to me by a senior Obama administration official give a sense of how bin Laden looked at the world in the years before his death." Bin Laden, wrote Ignatius, "sensed that the movement itself had lost its momentum." He and his associates "were hunted so relentlessly by U.S. forces that they had trouble sending the simplest communications." Ignatius cited a 48-page memo from bin Laden to a top deputy that communicated the leader's concerns.

The next day, Peter Bergen, a CNN national security analyst, reported on the documents. "Bin Laden wrote a 48-page memo to a deputy in October 2010 that surveyed the state of his organization," wrote Bergen. The U.S. efforts to root out al Qaeda had been too successful and bin Laden had grown despondent. (Three months later, Bergen would write something of a follow-up: "Time to Declare Victory: al Qaeda Is Defeated.")

Not surprisingly, that memo was one of a small batch of documents the Obama administration had approved for declassification and release on the one-year anniversary of the bin Laden raid.

Three weeks before the anniversary, the administration provided that handpicked set of documents to analysts at the Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at West Point. The CTC team, according to two sources familiar with the events, was instructed to prepare a study to accompany the release of the documents around the upcoming anniversary.

To some involved in the CTC study, it was clear that the report was to be part of a broader administration public relations effort. But others assumed good faith on the part of the administration. "They didn't pressure us on timing at all," says Lieutenant Colonel Liam Collins, at the time the director of the center.

The administration originally approved 19 documents for declassification and release. But shortly after providing them to the CTC, Lieutenant General Doug Lute, a senior official on the National Security Council, called to ask that one of the documents be withheld. The document in question detailed the close relations between al Qaeda and senior leaders of the Afghan Taliban. Lute explained that the administration had restarted secret negotiations with the Taliban, and releasing the document could present unwanted complications. The document was not released.

The White House may have been spooked by a report from Jason Burke in the *Guardian* on April 29, just days before the scheduled release of the declassified materials. "Documents found in the house where Osama bin Laden was killed a year ago show a close working relationship between top al Qaeda leaders and Mullah Omar, the overall commander of the Taliban, including frequent discussions of joint operations against NATO forces in Afghanistan, the Afghan government and targets in Pakistan."

Burke continued: "The news will undermine hopes of a negotiated peace in Afghanistan, where the key debate among analysts and policymakers is whether the Taliban—seen by many as following an Afghan national agenda—might once again offer a safe haven to al Qaeda or like-minded militants, or whether they can be persuaded to renounce terrorism." Burke tells The Weekly Standard that he doesn't know if he was shown the documents as part of a broader rollout.

On April 30, John Brennan, then Obama's top counterterrorism adviser and now his CIA director, made a striking claim: The elimination of al Qaeda was imminent. "If the decade before 9/11 was the time of al-Qaeda's rise, and the decade after 9/11 was the time of its decline, then I believe this decade will be the one that sees its demise," he told an audience at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. Then Brennan previewed the release of the bin Laden documents:

> With its most skilled and experienced commanders being lost so quickly, al Qaeda has had trouble replacing them. This is one of the many conclusions we have been able to draw from documents seized at bin Laden's compound, some of which will be published online, for the first time, this week by West Point's Combating Terrorism Center. For example, bin Laden worried about—and I quote—"the rise of lower leaders who are not as experienced and this would lead to the repeat of mistakes."
>
> Al Qaeda leaders continue to struggle to communicate with subordinates and affiliates. Under intense pressure in the tribal regions of Pakistan, they have fewer places to train and groom the next generation of operatives. They're struggling to attract new recruits. Morale is low, with intelligence indicating that some members are giving up and returning home, no doubt aware that this is a fight they will never win. In short, al Qaeda is losing, badly.

Others echoed Brennan's claims. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta declared that the United States was "within reach of strategically defeating al Qaeda," and President Obama, in remarks the day after Brennan's speech, boasted, "The goal that I set—to defeat al Qaeda and deny it a chance to rebuild—is now within our reach."

The CTC report was released on May 3 under the title "Letters from Abbottabad: Bin Laden Sidelined?" The authors were careful to note that they were given just a fraction of the document collection and that researchers there had "no part in the selection of documents." The conclusions of the study were consistent with the administration's line: Al Qaeda had been badly weakened, and in the months before his death Osama bin Laden had been marginalized.

As the public heard this carefully managed story about al Qaeda, analysts at CENTCOM were poring over documents that showed something close to the opposite.

The broader collection of documents paints a far more complicated picture of al Qaeda. There are documents laying out al Qaeda's relationships with terror-sponsoring states, including Iran and Pakistan. There are documents that provide a close look at bin Laden's careful cultivation of a vast array of increasingly deadly affiliates, including the one we now know as ISIS. Other documents provide a window into the complex and highly secretive system of communications between al Qaeda leaders and operatives plotting attacks. Still others offer a glimpse of relations between bin Laden, Ayman al Zawahiri, and the others who run the global terror syndicate.

One document laid bare bin Laden's relationship with Hafiz Saeed, the leader of Lashkar-e-Taiba, and suggested that the al Qaeda leader helped plan the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai that killed 150 people and injured more than 600. "The documents and files found in Abbottabad showed a close connection between bin Laden and Saeed, right up to May 2011," former Obama adviser Bruce Riedel told the *Hindustan Times*. The documents "suggested a much larger direct al Qaeda role in the planning of the Mumbai attacks than many had assumed."

The CENTCOM team reviewed documents detailing the complicated and dangerous relationship between al Qaeda and Tehran and found evidence that senior Iranian officials facilitated the travel and safe haven of top al Qaeda operatives both before and after the 9/11 attacks. Other documents suggest that the relationship between Pakistan's intelligence service and al Qaeda leaders was even stronger than many intelligence officials had understood.

The exploitation by the CENTCOM team, though far from comprehensive, generated "hundreds of additional reports" on al Qaeda that were distributed throughout the intelligence community, according to congressional testimony from Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, then

director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. The findings were briefed to senior intelligence and military officials, including Robert Cardillo, deputy director of national intelligence, and Admiral Michael Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Several members of Congress were briefed as well on the findings.

Derek Harvey, who supervised the DIA/CENTCOM team and conducted some of the briefings, has considerable credibility on these issues. He was one of the first intelligence analysts to warn of the growing insurgency in Iraq—just months after the invasion—challenging the happy talk from some members of the Bush administration. Later, Harvey worked closely with Sunni tribes in Iraq to lay the groundwork for the Iraq surge in 2007—work that was highlighted in *The War Within*, Bob Woodward's account of the Bush administration's attempt to save Iraq between 2006 and 2008. When David Petraeus went to CENTCOM, he took Harvey with him to the Tampa headquarters to create and run the Afghanistan-Pakistan Center of Excellence.

Harvey would not discuss the contents of the documents. But he acknowledges that the DIA/CENTCOM conclusions contradicted the story the administration was telling the American people. "They were saying al Qaeda was on the run," he recalls. "We were telling them al Qaeda was expanding and growing stronger."

Meanwhile, the internal squabbling continued. The CIA, now under the direction of John Brennan, who had moved back to the agency from the White House, sought once again to limit DIA/CENTCOM's access to the documents. And some analysts at the CTC were becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the analysis in "Letters from Abbottabad." According to three sources with knowledge of the handling of the documents, at least one CTC analyst drafted a memo—sometimes referred to as an "affidavit"—describing how the conclusions of the study would have been different had analysts been provided access to the full range of documents. The Weekly Standard asked CTC director Liam Collins about the memo in April. He responded: "I'm not tracking you on that." Collins denied that anyone at CTC had written or distributed such a memo, and he reiterated his denial this month.

But one U.S. intelligence official, told of Collins's claim, scoffed, "It exists. Period."

In July, Lieutenant General Flynn left his post as director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, a year earlier than scheduled. Many intelligence professionals believe he was forced out, in part because he—and many who worked for him—aggressively challenged the administration's view that al Qaeda was dying. Flynn's views were shaped by the intelligence in the bin Laden documents.

Before he left, Flynn spoke to reporter James Kitfield, of *Breaking Defense*, who asked why he pushed back on the White House's view that al Qaeda had died with Osama bin Laden. "There's a political component to that issue, but when bin Laden was killed there was a general sense that maybe this threat would go away. We all had those hopes, including me. But I also remembered my many years in Afghanistan and Iraq. We kept decapitating the leadership of these groups, and more leaders would just appear from the ranks to take their place. That's when I realized that decapitation alone was a failed strategy."

Flynn recalled pushing to get information to policymakers with the hope that it might influence their decisions. "We said many times, 'Hey, we need to get this intelligence in front of the secretary of defense, the secretary of state, the national security adviser! The White House needs to see this intelligence picture we have!'" He added: "We saw all this connective tissue developing between these [proliferating] terrorist groups. So when asked if the terrorists were on the run, we couldn't respond with any answer but 'no.' When asked if the terrorists were defeated, we had to say 'no.' Anyone who answers 'yes' to either of those questions either doesn't know what they are talking about, they are misinformed, or they are flat out lying."

There is, nevertheless, some good news. After sustained pressure from members of Congress, led by Representative Devin Nunes of California, and outside experts, including Bruce Riedel, the public will soon begin to see more of the bin Laden documents. "I have gone to great lengths to get access to these documents, but I have met with excuses and stonewalling at every turn," says Nunes. "If there is nothing to hide, as the Obama administration claims, then it should release these vital papers." Nunes inserted language into the Intelligence Authorization Bill requiring the director of national intelligence to complete a declassification review of the documents within 120 days and justify in writing any remaining classification.

There is little reason to believe the law will lead to the release of documents contradicting the administration's narrative—at least not right away. Those in the administration and the intelligence community who propagated the myth that al Qaeda was dying have every incentive to fight revelations that make clear their mendacity.

It's far more likely that the declassification requirement will trigger another round of fighting over the documents. But that fight will take place in public—and the administration will be forced to defend withholding information. This is a small victory.

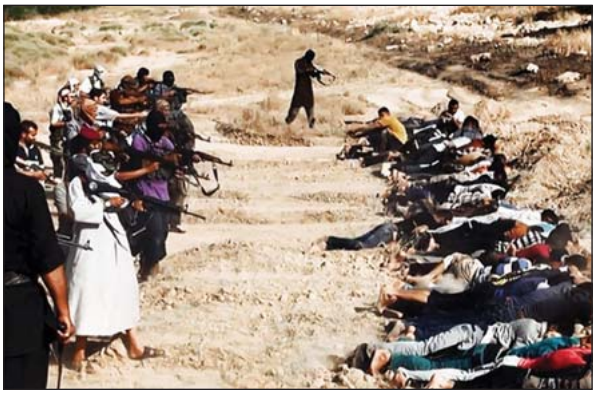
Already in congressional testimony last year, DNI Clapper said there is "good reason for us to declassify" more of the documents, so long as doing so does not jeopardize "current operations." ♦

They Have a Strategy

The jihadists' insurgencies may look like 'local power struggles,' but their ambitions are far grander

By Thomas Joscelyn

During a press conference on August 28, Barack Obama had a rare moment of candor. "We don't have a strategy yet," the president said in response to a question about the prospect of using military force against the Islamic State in Syria. Obama's declaration drew widespread criticism, as the Islamic State (often referred to by its previous name, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIL) has made stunning advances this year. Administration officials sought to deflect critics by noting that the president was referring solely to Syria, and not to neighboring Iraq. This does not make the president's admission any less troubling, however.



ISIS jihadists executing Sunni tribesmen, 2014

The jihad in Syria is inextricably linked to the fighting in Iraq, and, therefore, Obama cannot have a strategy for combating the jihadists in one country without tackling them in the other. The organization is dedicated to wiping out the boundary between the two nation-states. Its propaganda videos frequently feature footage of bulldozers symbolically demolishing an Iraqi-Syrian border that has defined maps for decades. Today, the Islamic State controls a large swath of contiguous territory across both nations.

Only belatedly this year, in early August, did Obama authorize airstrikes in Iraq. The bombings have halted the Islamic State's momentum in some areas, but there is no reason to believe the strikes will dislodge the jihadists from the significant ground under their control. Obama has no strategy for winning back the territory lost to the Islamic State and its allies in either Iraq or Syria.

Thomas Joscelyn is a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

Obama's lack of strategy is no accident. It is a direct result of the way he has chosen to see the post-9/11 world.

For the president, the only terrorists who have ever really mattered are the ones who planned the September 11, 2001, attacks or plotted similar spectacular strikes against the U.S. homeland. Obama is satisfied as long as America's vast intelligence bureaucracy stops jihadists from committing mass casualty attacks on American soil. This is the real reason he doesn't have a strategy for combating jihadists in Iraq, Syria, or elsewhere. Simply put, he doesn't think such a strategy is necessary.

Obama has thought this way since well before he became president. During the summer of 2008, Obama toured the war zones of Afghanistan and Iraq as a presidential candidate. He repeatedly told the press that Afghanistan mattered, whereas Iraq did not. When he arrived in Iraq, he was challenged by General David Petraeus, who was in charge of the American-led war effort at the time. The exchange between the two was recorded in *The Endgame: The Inside Story of the Struggle for Iraq, from George W. Bush to Barack Obama*, by *New York Times* reporter Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor.

No matter what one thought of President Bush's decision to invade the country in 2003, Petraeus explained, al Qaeda's leaders had made Iraq the "central front" in their war. Obama disagreed. "The Al-Qaeda leadership is not here in Iraq. They are there," Obama said, pointing to Pakistan on a map. He wasn't telling Petraeus anything he didn't know, of course. Obama pressed on, wondering "whether Al Qaeda in Iraq presented a threat to the United States," according to Gordon and Trainor's account. "If AQI has morphed into a kind of mafia then they are not going to be blowing up buildings," Obama said. Petraeus pointed out that an AQI operative was responsible for a failed terrorist attack in Scotland in 2007. Obama was unmoved. Al Qaeda's

fight for Iraq was not, in Obama's opinion, a major concern.

Obama has not changed his mind in the years since, even as AQI evolved into the Islamic State, eventually gaining power and territory. The president has, if anything, doubled down on his belief that America's only real priority is to stop the terrorists who pose the most immediate threat to the U.S. homeland.

The president said as much during a fundraiser on August 29 in Newport, Rhode Island. While recognizing that the upheaval in the Middle East is "scary," Obama sought to assure his supporters the government's "security apparatus" has been sufficiently improved since 9/11 such that it "makes us in the here and now pretty safe." Obama continued: "We have to be vigilant, but this doesn't immediately threaten the homeland. What it does do, though, is it gives a sense, once again, for future generations, is the world going to be upended in ways that affect our kids and our grandkids."

The president did not seek to assuage concerns about the possible terrorist threat to Americans for generations to come. He said that "there are going to be some things that are a little bit out of our control." And he later added, "We're not going to solve every problem in the Middle East right away, although we can make sure we're safe and that we're empowering better partners rather than the worst in the region."

This is not a strategy. America is playing defense on Obama's watch. Our jihadist enemies, meanwhile, are on offense. And the threat they pose to the United States and its interests, both at home and abroad, is rising. They are fighting for "future generations."

When Osama bin Laden and his closest allies established al Qaeda in 1988, they were not centered on attacking the United States. To his dying day, this was never bin Laden's lone goal. Attacking America was always a tactic, a step, in al Qaeda's plan.

Bin Laden and other al Qaeda leaders, including his successor, Ayman al Zawahiri, sought the creation of Islamic nation-states governed by their exceedingly harsh version of *sharia* law. They could not create their idyllic societies, however, without first removing the dictators who, prior to the 2011 Arab uprisings, governed most Muslim-majority countries. And, they came to believe, they could not supplant the dictators without striking America.

The jihadists' earliest attempts to topple the rulers in countries such as Algeria, Egypt, and Libya were abysmal failures. Al Qaeda reasoned that American support for the dictatorships was propping them up. Striking America became an increasingly important part of al Qaeda's plan over time, but it was never the group's primary reason for existence. More than a quarter of a century later, al Qaeda's goal remains the same: to establish Islamic emirates, or nations, and eventually resurrect the caliphate.

In late June, the Islamic State declared that its leader, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, was now known as "Caliph Ibrahim," the ruler of a caliphate stretching across large parts of Iraq and Syria. For the jihadists, the dissolution of the Islamic caliphate in 1924 was a disaster that continues to resonate. They believe that a resurrected caliphate will be capable of defending Muslims from all sorts of imagined conspiracies against the Islamic world.

After Baghdadi's declaration, some commentators claimed that there is a sharp difference between the Islamic State's goals and al Qaeda's. The Islamic State is supposedly focused on seizing territory and governing, whereas al Qaeda is interested in other matters. This is simply not true. Al Qaeda also seeks to govern territory. And al Qaeda's top leaders have repeatedly said that they are fighting to reestablish the caliphate. Just this past week, al Qaeda announced the creation of a new branch named Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent, which will likely unite jihadist groups across several countries. One of the group's stated goals is to wage jihad "so as to revive the caliphate."

Before it expanded into Syria, the Islamic State was a formal branch of al Qaeda. Shortly after Osama bin Laden was killed in May 2011, Baghdadi released a eulogy pledging revenge for "the martyrdom of our sheikh." Addressing his "brothers" in al Qaeda and their leaders, including Zawahiri, Baghdadi declared: "You have in the Islamic State of Iraq a group of loyal men pursuing the endeavor of truth; they shall never forgive nor resign."

The Islamic State was eventually disowned by al Qaeda's senior leaders, in February of this year. That decision was based on differences over tactics, not goals. Islamic State leaders repeatedly disobeyed orders from al Qaeda's general command, including by expanding into neighboring Syria. Once it became a significant part of the Syrian war, and changed its name from the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the group decided that it should have dominion over all jihadists fighting Bashar al-Assad's regime. This brought ISIL, which was rebranded again as simply the Islamic State in late June, into direct conflict with the group al Qaeda was grooming to take over the Syrian jihad, Jabhat al Nusrah, as well as other allied jihadists. The Islamic State even initiated a bloody campaign against its fellow jihadists, eventually killing one of Zawahiri's top leaders in the country. For al Qaeda, the infighting sparked by the Islamic State's desire to rule the roost is a most grievous sin, as it jeopardizes the mission to overthrow Assad. Al Qaeda also does not agree that Baghdadi should be the top jihadist on the planet.

Beyond the power politics, there are other differences between al Qaeda and the Islamic State, all of which have

been set forth by al Qaeda leaders. Stung by setbacks in Iraq during the height of the American surge and other failures, al Qaeda has adopted a more gradualist approach to inculcating its jihadist ideology within the population. Muslims have frequently rejected al Qaeda-style *sharia* law because of its extreme absurdities. Al Qaeda has decided, therefore, to implement its laws in the areas under its control more slowly, educating the public about the supposed merits of its rule along the way.

Al Qaeda also thinks that it is premature to declare an Islamic nation-state in any locale because the jihadists are too weak to effectively counter the opposition from America and others that will crystalize to fight any political body openly ruled by al Qaeda.

Thus, al Qaeda and its regional branches, all of which have sworn loyalty to Zawahiri, do not claim to rule over Islamic nations in any of the countries in which they currently hold territory. This does not change the fact that al Qaeda and its closest allies currently control turf in parts of Afghanistan and northern Pakistan, West and North Africa, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere. It does not change the fact that the jihadists, whether part of al Qaeda, the Islamic State, or similarly inspired groups, have executed a massive land grab on Obama's watch.

Obama and his closest advisers do not believe that this territorial expansion matters when it comes to American security. They are utterly dismissive of the jihadists' stated goals.

"Our strategy is . . . shaped by a deeper understanding of al Qaeda's goals, strategy, and tactics," John Brennan, then Obama's senior counterterrorism adviser and now CIA director, argued during a speech on June 29, 2011. "I'm not talking about al Qaeda's grandiose vision of global domination through a violent Islamic caliphate. That vision is absurd, and we are not going to organize our counterterrorism policies against a feckless delusion that is never going to happen. We are not going to elevate these thugs and their murderous aspirations into something larger than they are."

What Brennan did not understand, or chose to ignore, is that, in some respect, it does not matter if al Qaeda or any other group successfully establishes a caliphate capable of ruling in the long term. Thousands of recruits have flocked to join the Islamic State, which was part of al Qaeda's international network when Brennan spoke those words. Thousands of Iraqis and Syrians have perished as the jihadists have pursued their violent fantasy of resurrecting the caliphate. Many thousands around the globe are killed each year in the name of this "feckless delusion."

A smarter approach would be to devise a plan to roll back the jihadists' sprawling geographic footprint and the ideas that motivate it. But Obama is enamored with the notion that he can ignore our enemies' broader strategy and focus narrowly on the terrorists who pose an immediate threat to the U.S. homeland.

As the Islamic State marched through Iraq in recent months, many have revisited Obama's interview with the *New Yorker*'s David Remnick, published in January. Remnick "pointed out that the flag of Al Qaeda is now flying in Falluja, in Iraq, and among various rebel factions in Syria; Al Qaeda has asserted a presence in parts of Africa, too." He asked Obama why, then, he had claimed that al Qaeda had been "decimated."

"The analogy we use around here sometimes, and I think is accurate, is if a jayvee team puts on Lakers uniforms that doesn't make them Kobe Bryant," Obama said, in what Remnick described as an "uncharacteristically flip analogy." Obama continued: "I think there is a distinction between the capacity and reach of a bin Laden and a network that is actively planning major terrorist plots against the homeland versus jihadists who are engaged in various local power struggles and disputes, often sectarian."

Obama's answer demonstrates that, fundamentally, he does not understand the jihadist threat. Since its earliest days, al Qaeda has invested heavily in what Obama describes as "local power struggles." The central reason for al Qaeda's existence is to foment political revolutions that sweep its ideology into power. Most of al Qaeda's resources are, therefore, devoted to the same "local" fights Obama believes America should stay out of.

Consider the findings of the 9/11 Commission, which published its final report more than a decade ago, in July 2004. In Staff Statement No. 15, titled "Overview of the Enemy," the commission described al Qaeda's role in supporting various insurgencies around the world in the early 1990s. The commission found that bin Laden "sought to build a broader Islamic army that also included terrorist groups from Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Oman, Tunisia, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Somalia, and Eritrea." While "not all groups from these states agreed to join . . . at least one from each did." Al Qaeda's plans evolved and suffered some setbacks in the years to come. But its grand strategy always contained a version of this original vision—geographic expansion.

Al Qaeda has consistently devoted some portion of its budget to attacking the United States, but not nearly a majority of its assets have been deployed in this manner. "We can conservatively say that thousands of men, perhaps as many as 20,000, trained in Bin Ladin-supported camps in Afghanistan" from 1996 until September 11, 2001, "Overview of the Enemy" reads. Only "a small percentage" of those recruits, however, "went on to receive advanced terrorist training." Bin Laden knew that al Qaeda needed to train "terrorists who could bomb embassies or hijack

airliners," but it also needed "foot soldiers" and "guerrillas" to wage its insurgencies. Therefore, "most" of al Qaeda's "recruits received training that was primarily geared toward conventional warfare." To this day, al Qaeda devotes most of its resources to waging insurgencies in the pursuit of power.

From al Qaeda's inception, therefore, the group has devoted "most" of its resources to the types of operations that Obama thinks are fit only for the junior varsity squad of terrorists. The reason for this imbalance is obvious: Building nation-states governed according to jihadist ideology is a far more ambitious project than striking the United States.

Obama's gamble is that even as the jihadists have spread out across the globe, fighting in more countries than ever, they will not be able to successfully launch a catastrophic attack against the American homeland. We all hope he is right. Obama is certainly correct when he says our defenses have greatly improved since 9/11. America's intelligence community will undoubtedly thwart plots in the years to come.

Obama announcing his lack of strategy, August 28

But there are already worrisome signs that the president shouldn't be so confident. U.S. counterterrorism officials are hardly infallible. On December 25, 2009, a would-be suicide bomber trained by Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) nearly detonated an underwear bomb aboard a Detroit-bound plane. Several months later, on May 1, 2010, an operative trained by the Pakistani Taliban left a car bomb in the middle of Times Square. Both plots went undetected and failed on their own accord, not because America stopped them. Before AQAP's attack on the homeland, U.S. intelligence officials believed that it posed a threat only to American interests in Yemen.

On April 15, 2013, a pair of brothers detonated backpack bombs during the Boston Marathon, killing three people and wounding over 200 more. The elder brother's suspicious ties to jihadists abroad were well known beforehand. He wasn't stopped. And then there are the November 5, 2009, Fort Hood shootings, which killed 13 Americans and wounded dozens more. They were executed by a man whose jihadist beliefs were familiar to the U.S. military and the FBI.

The threats to America are multiplying. The terrorists will continue to seek ways to strike. And as their footprint expands, so do the possible ways they can mount an attack on the U.S. homeland. We are fortunate that the jihadists have not devoted more of their resources to attacking inside the United States. It is likely that if they did, they would be successful.

Even absent attacks inside the United States, the jihadists threaten us significantly. The attacks on the U.S. Mission and Annex in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11, 2012, killed the ambassador and three other Americans. This was the first murder of an American ambassador in decades. Nearly one year later, in August 2013, the Obama administration was forced to shutter more than 20 diplomatic facilities after learning that al Qaeda was planning to attack one or more of them.

In the end, President Obama thinks that these types of attacks on American interests abroad are a fact of life. During a speech at National Defense University on May 23, 2013, Obama outlined his vision of the fight ahead. The president described "the current threat" as coming from "lethal yet less capable al Qaeda affiliates; threats to diplomatic facilities and businesses abroad; homegrown extremists." Obama added, "This is the future of terrorism. We have to take these threats seriously, and do all that we can to confront them. But as we shape our response, we have to recognize that the scale of this threat closely resembles the types of attacks we faced before 9/11."

Notably absent from Obama's threat matrix was a jihadist group capturing a significant amount of territory in the heart of the Middle East. In fact, the president downplayed the threat posed by groups he described as "simply collections of local militias or extremists interested in seizing territory."

His own officials are now telling a different story. In a speech on September 3, the director of the National Counterterrorism Center explained that "the terrorist threat emanates from a broad geographic area, spanning South Asia across the Middle East, and much of North Africa." Matthew Olsen warned that the terrorists "are now active in at least 11 insurgencies in the Islamic world." He added that the threat from the Islamic State "extends beyond the region to the West," and the group "has the potential to use its safe haven to plan and coordinate attacks in Europe and the U.S." The Islamic State's rivals in al Qaeda's Jabhat al Nusrah have the same deadly potential: "In Syria, veteran al Qaeda fighters have traveled from Pakistan to take advantage of the permissive operating environment and access to foreign fighters. They are focused on plotting against the West."

The president hasn't been thinking strategically about the jihadists' territorial ambitions. Unfortunately, our enemies have been. The threat they pose to the United States has only grown. ♦

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Rotherham's Collaborators

The helping professionals didn't help; the caring professionals didn't care

By Sam Schulman

Two weeks ago, the British press broke the news contained in Professor Alexis Jay's "Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham." Between 1997 and 2013, Jay estimated, 1,400 young girls in that Yorkshire town were exploited: gang-raped, trafficked to other cities, threatened, beaten, and forced to bring other girls into the network. The police did not respond to emergency calls from the girls and their families; fathers reported being threatened and even arrested for complaining. The victims and the authorities knew that "by far the majority of perpetrators" were "Asian," meaning Pakistani/Kashmiri Muslims, who constitute about 3.7 percent of Rotherham's population of 260,000. Members of this group dominate the town's taxi industry, and therefore had easy access to victims. The perpetrators were not merely pimps: They also dealt drugs and sold guns. Yet during the 17-year period she studied, Jay found, "councillors did not engage directly with the Pakistani-heritage community to discuss how best they could jointly address the issue."

Alexis Jay following the release of her report, August 28

Jay's report proved that virtually everyone in any position of authority from the late '90s until today must have known the scale of the sexual exploitation. Internal documents show that they heard reports on the situation several times, most notably in 2005. Town councillors have been accused of having business interests in the taxi companies —one of the companies that was accused of rounding up and grooming girls also had a contract with the city to ferry children between social services locations.

The story of such grooming rings in the north of England had been broached by many newspaper reports over the past decade, particularly by Andrew Norfolk of the *Times*. But the impact of the Jay report overwhelmed the usual attempts to say it was being exaggerated out of racism and Islamophobia. "This scale of criminality and victimhood is vast for a country that has traditionally regarded itself as law-abiding," the British journalist John O'Sullivan wrote last week. And the size and scope of the tragedy has made it safe not only for columnists but for cabinet members to say that "institutionalized political correctness" is responsible for the tragic fate of the girls of Rotherham. From 1997 to 2013 it was imprudent to say anything like this, or even to mention the ethnicity and religion of the perpetrators: A Home Office researcher who tried to tell police and superiors what was going on was sent on a diversity training course instead. (The influential 1999 Macpherson Report said any policeman who has not been given formal diversity training must be assumed to be racist.)

The only ones who haven't had much to say are the feminists—but given their dismissive attitude even to women of Muslim background like Ayaan Hirsi Ali who testify to their mistreatment by Muslim men in the name of Islam, one can't expect them to show up to support women of English ethnicity or Christian heritage, especially from the working classes. Some feminists try to defuse the situation without actually criticizing the perpetrators, such as Suzanne Moore in the *Guardian*: "The bigger picture is not, as the right claim, about ethnicity but systematic abuse of girls and boys by powerful men," expounds the subheading above her piece. "Our untouchables turn out to be little girls raped by powerful men," she claims. Dan Hodges of the *Telegraph* replies, "But they weren't. Our little girls were raped by Kashmiri cab drivers. Yes, powerful men were involved in the Rotherham abuses. But they weren't the ones doing the raping. They were the ones turning a

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Sam Schulman is a frequent contributor to The Weekly Standard.

blind eye to the rape. And why were they turning a blind eye? Because of the ethnicity of the rapists."

Thanks to the Jay report, however, we can say that the Hodges rejoinder is not entirely true. The Rotherham problem—which we'll call Childhood Sexual Exploitation, or CSE, because everyone uses that jargon—was the subject of repeated scrutiny throughout the period when 1,400 girls fell victim to it, not only by the local government itself but also by social services, private charities and their consultants, the National Health Service (NHS), and the police. The girls were abandoned only partly because so many made a cowardly choice to let a crime go unreported when they could not think of a "non-racist" way to describe it. They were also abandoned because of the way that these agencies tried to do good. The process of "caring for children" was already bad; the distortions and systematic mendacity encouraged by the ideology of multiculturalism and racial and gender theorizing made it worse.

Jay needs only about 10 pages of the 119-page body of her report to tell the big story: 1,400 victims neglected, mistreated, and betrayed. Every agency contributed to silencing the whistleblowers and abandoning the girls. Parents who acted to protect their daughters were ignored, harassed, even fined and arrested. Rotherham Council ignored their pleas and continued to give contracts to the taxi firms whose owners and drivers were the perpetrators, and in whose cars no teenager in town would ever willingly travel.

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The remaining pages offer material that is, in a way, even more horrifying, because in them Jay patiently, plonkingly details the organizational behavior of perhaps half a dozen stakeholders in the tragedy, as seen through some 16 reviews, audits, and assessments by governmental supervisory agencies and private experts from the child protection establishment. Thanks to Jay's work, we can at least answer the question of what those who were responsible for protecting the girls of Rotherham *thought* they were thinking. They thought they were thinking very hard and caring very much about CSE, and doing so in the way that they had been instructed was the proper and professional manner to do so. The politicians, social workers, police, and medical professionals had every reason to believe that their efforts—which in fact were completely nugatory—demonstrated the "best practice," or as the British more modestly say, "best known practice" on the subject. Jay demonstrates that the public services of England have been marinated in a managerial culture that makes it almost impossible for a frontline institution—local government, social services, the police force, schools, private charities, and the NHS—to see that they and their partners are doing virtually nothing at all about CSE.

Jay surveys the results of planned and unannounced inspections by government agencies, including the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) and Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education): "a full inspection in 2003, a follow-up in 2004, a full inspection in 2008, a 'monitoring visit' in 2009, an unannounced inspection in August 2009, a full inspection in 2010, an unannounced inspection in 2011, and an unannounced review of child protection services in August 2012." In addition, consultants from the venerable charity Children First reported on Rotherham's child protection efforts in 2009; inspectors from HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) reported on the South Yorkshire Police in 2010; the well-regarded child protection charity Barnardo's conducted a "Rotherham Practice Review" in 2013.

The inspectors told the various players in Rotherham that ever more must be done to deal with CSE—but just as urgently, the agencies must also create initiatives to *prevent* CSE, to create *awareness* of CSE, to ensure that the focus on girl victims of CSE isn't so exclusive that boy victims of CSE and LGBT victims of CSE don't have their own solutions. (Outside reviewers warned Rotherham agencies not to neglect male and LGBT victims as early as 2002, and frequently queried them about it thereafter; perhaps the nagging worked, because there have never been any reported.)

The individual girls who were victims and the particular men who picked them up in taxis from their middle schools and preyed on them in public places all over town lose their specificity. The inspectors continually praised the "focus" and "commitment" of the city and its agencies, but made victims and perpetrators vague and fuzzy categories. The weapons they recommended to fight the evil were even more abstract and ineffectual. The activity the inspectors prescribed and praised in the most lavish terms will be familiar to anyone who has ever been in private business: It

consists of nominating teams from different departments to tackle a certain problem on a coordinated basis. Rotherham was urged above all to "develop multi-agency responses to CSE." The goal was multitudinousness itself: Where two or three agencies are gathered together in the name of tackling CSE, there must be something productive going on. In business, after a point, the teamwork approach will be measured against a goal that can be enumerated: Sales must grow or production time shrink. If the goal is not attained, the collaborative effort withers away. But no social agency, policeman, town councillor, or inspector ever mentioned a numerical goal, such as reducing the number of victims or increasing the number of arrests—with the exception of adequate budgeting for staff.

In reality, the number of victims grew every year, and the number of arrests was vanishingly low. But the inspectors continued to praise Rotherham's "commitment to safeguarding young people"; continued to measure commitment by the quality of collaborativeness itself. In 2003, the SSI praised "examples of innovation, moves towards integrated services and new preventive strategies." In 2010, Ofsted was delighted by "effective, creative multi-agency work" to prevent sexual exploitation, and even more so by "cross-agency training." Two years later, Ofsted smiled upon "good collaborative work between the local authority and the Police resulting in a targeted approach."

Barnardo's experts admired the joint "commitment to addressing CSE" on the part of the town council and social services agencies, a commitment expressed vividly in "their plans to widen the inter-agency partnership." Barnardo's left Children's Services with this praise ringing in its ears, and with an advanced model for calculating risk of CSE, which it had sold to management. Social workers dealing with girls in the field found the Barnardo's model consistently understated the degree to which their real-life cases were exposed to rape and abduction, but were made to use it, even though it undermined their recommendations.

The Inspectorate of Constabulary praised the collaborative disposition and, of course, the commitment of the South Yorkshire Police's CSE work. Not only was everyone "conscientious, enthusiastic, and focused," but "the force had improved its engagement with other agencies working in this field and had co-operated with them in developing strategies." The strategies thus developed did not require constables to arrest specific sex traffickers who had been pointed out to them by material witnesses: According to the Jay report, they systematically refused to do so, using a variety of excuses that may have been developed on an inter-agency basis.

Most ecstatic was Children First's 2009 review of the Rotherham Office of Children's Services, the welfare division directly responsible for protecting children from exploitation—which, Jay reported, demonstrated little interest in children not already on their files, and none at all in children who had become sexually active or pregnant because they were raped. Children First gave the division alpha-plus marks in interagency-manship: Its partnership with one of the six Rotherham NHS units has "been well developed and represented 'highly advanced and ambitious practice.'" The CEOs of the two organizations had "ambition to create an integrated locality structure"—all that was needed was for their joint vision to be "refreshed."

But without social workers, volunteer advocates, and police, in uniform or undercover, to go out to the streets, schoolyards, and taxicabs of Rotherham, the most advanced integrated locality structures could not realize their full potential. It emerges in Jay's narrative that there was once such a group, ironically organized directly by the Rotherham town council itself in the late 1990s. It was called Risky Business, and its social workers went out to the streets, gained the trust of the girls at risk, and actively defended them from their tormentors. Many informants told Jay that Risky Business was the only organization they felt they could trust. But when the Risky Business staff identified girls at risk to Children's Services, they were treated with contempt. Jay says that Children's Services treated a recommendation from Risky Business as "a pretext for attaching lower importance to it"—since Risky Business's 12- and 13-year-olds were having sex or babies, they weren't really children anyway. Cops told them their clients were prostitutes or "white trash." When Risky Business gave police a carefully compiled map of victims and perpetrators, no investigation ensued.

Did the Inspectorate credit Risky Business for its success with girls at risk, limited as it was? Far from it. Risky Business lacked precisely the excellences that Children's Services and other players in the CSE game possessed in such abundance: It was judged deficient in "managerial and risk assessment skills, the rigour of case management supervision, procedures, risk management plans, defined roles and responsibilities, and office systems." The cure for such shortcomings was obvious: integrated interagency co-location. Accordingly, Risky Business was folded into Children's Services offices, where it lost its separate identity and, evidently, its effectiveness.

When it comes to the girls who are victims, Alexis Jay is most indignant about the failure of Children's Services to provide after-rape counseling to them. As a longtime social worker, she believes in the power of counseling, and she is right that these children were treated coldly and reluctantly, if they were treated at all. But it seems to me that the only failure that really matters was that of the South Yorkshire Police, who could, by aggressive policing, have pursued and

arrested the relatively small group of men, whose identities were well known, who started the ring in 1997-98. Why didn't they? The leading theory is a culture of political correctness: Crudely stated, the police refused to arrest the perpetrators because they were Muslims. One of the first journalists to write about the Rotherham grooming scandal, Julie Bindel, reported this conversation in a pioneering 2010 article in *Standpoint*:

> "The fact that these particular gangs are made up of Pakistani men is significant but not in the way racists would have us believe," says one child protection expert who asked not to be named. "While the BNP would have us believe that abusing white girls is an endemic part of these men's culture —which it absolutely is not—the truth is that these men are aware that the police do not want to be accused of racism in today's climate."

The eruption of Rotherham's grooming gangs in 1999 coincided with publication of the infamous Macpherson report, which concluded that the Metropolitan Police Service demonstrated "institutional racism" in its investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, an 18-year-old black man, in London in 1993. A famous 2000 analysis of the report by the think tank Civitas concluded that "there was no attempt to show that the Metropolitan Police Service was racist in the sense of being formally structured to put members of ethnic minorities at a disadvantage. In spite of this, the Macpherson report found the Metropolitan Police, and British society generally, guilty of 'institutional' or 'unwitting' racism." Even to question that a crime was racist was, "in itself, adduced as evidence of racism."

One of the 1,400+ Rotherham sex abuse victims

But there are other factors to consider—again, factors having to do with the managerial culture of the police and criminal justice system in Britain. Begin with the fact that policing in Britain is both reluctant and, compared with American "best practices," incompetent. In 2001-02, Rotherham's director of education complained to police about taxis picking up young girls at school gates with the intention to abuse them. Persistence led to meetings with senior police officials. In the last, Alexis Jay reports,

> she was shown a map of the north of England overlaid with various crime networks including 'Drugs', 'Guns', and 'Murder'. She was told that the Police were only interested in putting resources into catching 'the ring leaders' who perpetrated these crimes. She was told that if they were caught, her local problems would cease.

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This kind of thinking—conveyed with a kind of Yorkshire arrogance and impatience that Jay's careful retelling can't disguise—is not only bad policing, but heartless. We're not talking about a ring of safecrackers, but of men who capture young women at the beginning of adulthood and ruin their lives. It's the small fry who cause the greatest human damage. Rapists need no ring leaders or complicated distribution systems to enjoy the fruits of their crime.

The police may have been reluctant to arrest Muslim suspects accused by white Christians, but the police in Britain are comparatively reluctant to arrest anyone at all. The incarceration rate in England and Wales is about a fifth of ours, and accordingly, the citizens of the law-abiding country John O'Sullivan describes are 228 percent more likely than we are to be a victim of a violent crime. The actual crime rate is likely to be even higher, since the police are believed by HMIC itself systematically to underreport crime.

These managerial cultures—which prevented the social services from doing their job and the police from doing theirs—have an absurd aim. The police must show loving kindness to those who are most dangerous and threatening, lest they think the police don't love them, at the expense of people who are vulnerable to the threats. The public services must work together as if they were members of a family, agreeing with one another on plans and standards of care before delivering any. The result is to tear apart real families, and destroy the lives of 1,400 schoolgirls. Meanwhile, only the perpetrators retained a real sense of community. The mother of a victim of grooming made this point to Julie Bindel in 2010: "These men all know and trust each other. They don't abuse these girls because they are Muslim, but because they are criminals who think they are above the law." The authors of the Civitas response to the Macpherson report made the same point about the effect of the new ethos of policing:

> To recommend that police officers should deal with anyone who is especially uncooperative, excitable, or anti-police with more than normal restraint and tolerance because that is their "culture" is simply to invite others to develop or to claim to be part of the same "culture."

Rotherham's "best practices" not only unintentionally did grave harm to real families, but created a sense of community and mutual trust among the very men who preyed on the most vulnerable. In Rotherham, only the rapists could rely on one another. ♦

A Muslim Identity Crisis

Rotherham and the failure of multiculturalism

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

The massive sexual abuse case in Rotherham, England, has revealed again how awkward and self-defeating the Western response often is to matters that touch on religious identity. Although the independent inquiry led by Professor Alexis Jay is tersely graphic about the 1,400-plus girls, some as young as 11 years old, who were sexually assaulted over several years by organized gangs of mostly Pakistani men, it isn't detailed about the male predators. The report strongly suggests that *all* of the rapists and sex traffickers were men who, if you asked them to self-identify, would probably describe themselves as Muslim. A Muslim identity in Europe has become similar to identity politics among Christians in Northern Ireland: It has next to nothing to do with worship and religious ritual and everything to do with the social and cultural milieu in which one is raised. The report shies away from talking much about "ethnicity" and "race"—the preferred words for alluding to the Muslim origins of the boys and men who were methodically raping, and often impregnating, overwhelmingly non-Muslim British girls. British and American press reports that refer to the male predators as "Asian" are also trying to avoid the issue of religion as the common denominator among these men, since surely no one meant to suggest that immigrants of Chinese, Lao, Japanese, Burmese, or Cambodian ancestry were involved in this organized crime. The inquiry and subsequent British press reporting reveal that local officials covered up this entire affair in part because they were concerned about being accused of racism.

Critics of using religion as a common denominator of these rapists and child molesters might argue that there is nothing in the Islamic faith that condones this behavior, and these rapists, if they were even practicing Muslims, were obviously failing to uphold the mores of nearly all Muslims in the United Kingdom, who are surely repulsed by what has happened in Rotherham. Some might say that Great Britain is chock full of non-Muslim rapists, pimps, and sex offenders, which is undoubtedly true. Grotesque sexual predation now seems to be common in the West—more common than in Islamic lands, where sex with minors who are not wives is a deadly risk since family structure, even among the poor, remains fairly solid and male honor is tightly bound to female virtue. Sexual predation of the type seen in Rotherham surely must have as much Western inspiration as Islamic.

Rotherham men convicted in 2010 of child sex offenses: Mohsin Khan, Adil Hussain, Razwan Razaq, Umar Razaq, and Zafran Ramzan

This may all be true, but it is beside the point. It ought to be obvious—and it ought to be a major subject of conversation and heated debate—that there is a moral distemper within the Muslim communities of the West, as there is in the Muslim lands of the Greater Middle East. The most

Reuel Marc Gerecht, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

severe disorder—the jihadism of groups like the Islamic State and al Qaeda and the creed of Wahhabism, based in Saudi Arabia but exported everywhere—afflicts a small percentage of Muslims, but those numbers are sufficiently frightening, especially in an age of technology and global travel. A less severe moral derangement, however, the kind that turns jihad-promoting, raging anti-Semitic legal scholars like Yusuf al-Qaradawi into popular icons, is much more common. These new moral codes, fed by the dark sides of both Western and Islamic civilizations, are a cancer that non-Muslim Westerners, Western Muslims, and Muslims in the Middle East are poorly combating. It's not at all ridiculous to suggest that the mores loose in Rotherham, a midsize working-class town of 260,000, where taxi and limousine services run predominantly by South Asian Muslims targeted, gang-raped, prostituted, kidnapped, and trafficked overwhelmingly non-Muslim English girls, are part of the same ethical matrix that encourages young men to abandon Europe for the battlefields of Syria and Iraq.

Islam conveys a powerful sense of group identity. As all monotheisms do, Islam divides the world between "us" and "them." Unlike Christianity, the other universal faith, which has been fundamentally transformed—compartmentalized and miniaturized—by Europe's wars of religion and the Enlightenment, Islam retains a greater attachment to the idea of a borderless religious community, the *umma*. Even when the faith is attenuated or gone, most often by the unrelenting secularization that comes with Westernization, the collective identity can remain. This shared identity has a greater pull on men: Islam is a profoundly fraternal religion. Even when the traditional faith has evanesced, this sense of brotherhood can remain. It can be easily politicized. This is one reason why Westernized Muslims who have rarely if ever gone to mosques, have little idea of the Koran and the Prophetic Traditions, and have never lived by the Holy Law can quickly—maddeningly fast in the eyes of Western counterterrorist officers trying to find, follow, and neutralize them—mutate into holy warriors who could turn on their former, non-Muslim compatriots. This same sense of fraternity, perversely twisted and Westernized, can lead Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Afghan men to band together in wolf packs to hunt girls in Rotherham. These girls existed outside of their moral universe where the predators' wives, sisters, and daughters live.

Islam is a profoundly fraternal religion. Even when the traditional faith has evanesced, this sense of brotherhood can remain. It can be easily politicized. This is one reason why Westernized Muslims who have rarely if ever gone to mosques can quickly mutate into holy warriors who could turn on their former, non-Muslim compatriots.

Western criminals—the Mafia most famously—often similarly segregate their souls and families. But it is an undeniable fact that within Islam this ethical stratification is easier to do since historically, legally, the world was sharply bifurcated between believer and unbeliever. Classical Islamic legal scholars, who'd fortunately advanced beyond the Arab tribal practices that viewed the killing of foreigners as more a question of etiquette than moral deliberation, resolutely defended the sanctity of non-Muslim life and property within Muslim realms. But even in the best of circumstances, there remained a moral division between Muslim and non-Muslim, superior versus inferior. This separation can allow for considerable hubris and abuse. In modern times, in the hands of poorly educated young men, in the West and in the Middle East, it can aid unspeakable crimes.

Muslim immigrants to the West, and their descendants, can have a very difficult time losing the sense of "otherness" that all immigrants have. My Pakistani-English roommate at university in Great Britain, a bright, curious, fun-loving fellow who was studying medicine, had the damndest time self-identifying as an Englishman even though he was born and raised in England, had no real knowledge of Pakistan, couldn't read the Koran in Arabic, and really had no idea of what it meant when he read it in English. Khalid was an Englishman, almost as thoroughly English as my classmate from Kent, John Smith. But for Khalid to call himself an Englishman was in some sense an act of betrayal to his parents' homeland, which he'd never seen, and, most importantly, his beloved, devout parents, who'd risked all so that their children could have better lives even if—as Khalid's father once put it to me—it meant that their children lost their faith.

All European identities—even the Albanian and Bosnian Muslim ones—have been forged through a Christian experience. Secular Britons may no longer see the crosses of Europe's most beautiful flag; Muslims do. When the English and Pakistani worlds collided in Khalid's home, there was a sadness amidst the bountiful love that nourished and launched five clever children into educational and professional success. That sadness—the inevitable friction of

incompatible ideas and sentiments living side-by-side—when not enveloped by love and humor and a tangible sense of progress can easily drown youths desperately in search of an identity. The West, with its unrelenting individualism, can be a harsh, cold place for third-world immigrants and their children. Add on the bigotry that comes so easily in Europe, where, unlike America, there are deeply rooted national cultures of which the natives are justifiably proud and protective, and European police and counterterrorist officers face a Molotov cocktail of deviancies.

How to confront this alternative moral universe is confoundedly difficult. When it comes to criminality like that in Rotherham, however, it's not that difficult: The predators need to be locked up, and all those who looked away, who feared the animadversions of the politically correct or thought less of good English girls who talked about sexual encounters with "Pakis," should be fired. The Labour party, which controls Rotherham, and is more sensitive to, partly because it is more successful with, the "Asian vote," ought to do some brutal soul-searching. Non-Muslim Europeans and Americans ought to have the basic decency to criticize Muslim citizens and denizens within their lands as they would criticize themselves. If Muslim immigrants to Western lands refuse to adopt the standards that Westerners consider fundamental to their identity, both cultural and political, then Westerners should rise in high dudgeon.

This doesn't preclude a generous spirit toward the travails that these immigrants, and the children of these immigrants, face. European cultures are heavy and often unforgiving, and the Western progressive ethic keeps liberating new corners of the human soul that many more traditional peoples find troubling, if not revolting. But kindness should never become a slippery slope for a cruel multiculturalism that leaves Muslims in Western lands bereft of a solid Western identity. We may already be in the absurd situation where the grandchildren of Muslim immigrants to Europe have become jihadists who proudly decapitate Americans.

Since the July 7, 2005, suicide-bombings in London, the British government under Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, and now David Cameron has deployed fairly aggressive outreach programs to British Muslims. These were essentially just an extension and amplification of a philosophy that had gained broad currency on both the British left and right. To wit: A multicultural Great Britain offered a welcoming home to Muslims. They could find a place in the United Kingdom without forsaking all that much from their Muslim past. Points of friction were downplayed, common bonds were played up. Extremist Muslims were the rare rotten eggs (who ought to be pinpointed to Scotland Yard and the domestic intelligence service MI-5) despoiling the happy moderate British Muslim basket.

The British might be wise to review this analysis. There is a lot to be said for multicultural Britain. London is an incomparably more exciting place now than it was when it was more English, aristocratic, and pub-and-club-ridden. But there need to be standards that don't slip, especially about women. Muslims should be able to lock onto a British dream with pride and dignity, knowing that what they've gained is greater than what they've lost. Outreach programs shouldn't be chucked. But they should probably be recast, especially at the highest levels of government, where the bully-pulpit can do the most good. It's a bit of a mind-bender to imagine David Cameron making an appealing argument in favor of a clearer British culture, but that is surely the direction that he and others ought to go. Doing so, of course, when economic growth is precarious and Britain's massive welfare state may do as much harm to Muslim immigrants and their children as it does good, is a challenge.

Americans should pay attention to our British cousins, and the rest of our European friends who have large Muslim populations, proportionately much greater than our own. The Europeans have, knowingly or not, undertaken a great experiment in absorption, vastly more daunting than anything that they have tried before. They—at least the British and the French, the two former great imperial powers—have done better in transforming Muslim immigrants into citizens than most Europeans *de souche* believe. But the predators of Rotherham, like the hundreds of young European Muslims who've gone to join Islamic radical groups in Syria and Iraq, ought to signal that there is a serious illness within that needs to be more aggressively treated.

Like the last three British prime ministers, Barack Obama has had a philosophy and plan to win the hearts and minds of Muslims, both overseas and at home. It has been an American variant of British multiculturalism. Beyond withdrawing from the Muslim Middle East, he stressed his reverence for Islam and Islamic civilization, and the (mostly illusory) bonds between Americans and Muslims around the world. In Cairo in 2009, he even said that it was "part of my responsibility as president of the United States to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear." He suggested that Americans would not interfere in how Muslims (that is, Muslim rulers) ran their own affairs.

This fraternal and felicitous experiment doesn't seem to be going well. It might be wise if he, too, considered an alternative approach. A good first step might be to say unequivocally that there is a serious problem within the House of Islam. And it's not incidental to the faith. ♦

Symmes Gate, Williams College

Learn and Live

Doth this ex-Ivy Leaguer protest too much?

BY WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

Its polemical title leaves us in no doubt of what to expect from this book. William Deresiewicz has written a passionate attack on everything that's wrong with today's elite universities and colleges and the credentialed students who attend them. He terms it "a letter to my twenty-year-old self," who would have benefited from hearing about such matters. Instead, he went dutifully through the correct academic motions: He majored in biology and psychology at Columbia, then decided it was literature he must pursue; graduate study and teaching at Columbia was followed by 10 years at Yale, after which he left the academy. (He doesn't say whether he was denied tenure or decided not to stand for it.)

Excellent Sheep
The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life
by William Deresiewicz
Free Press, 256 pp., $26

The book emanated from an essay he published in the *American Scholar* about the "disadvantages" of an elite education, an essay that received widespread response and launched him into his current role as culture critic, visiting many institutions and talking to the inmates thereof. By "elite" he means prestigious universities and colleges, as well as "the large universe of second-tiered schools." More sweepingly, this includes "everything leading up to and away from" such schools, from applications to post-college careers in medicine, the law, investment banking, and "consulting" (the last two of which are chosen by large numbers of graduates). Deresiewicz criticizes the students who, as "excellent sheep," play the college game all too well; but he adds that his critique is really directed at their parents ("the rest of us"), who

William H. Pritchard is Henry Clay Folger professor of English at Amherst College.

JOHN GREIM / GETTY IMAGES

cooperate and encourage the game with money and other resources.

As a professor of literature at one of those elite institutions, I have noted that parents are concerned that their children be taught to write well—a useful skill in various careers—but are not at all worried about what their children are reading. These students, "super people," victims of high achievement, engage in a "frenzy of extra-curricular activities" but are not as happy as they may look. Deresiewicz says that in his 10 years of teaching at Yale, he was unaware of the depths of unhappiness from which many of his students suffered, evidenced by the increasingly used college health facilities. He also charges them with a willingness to "color within the lines" their education had marked out for them. He finds very little passionate concern with ideas, even at the level of the once-famous college bull sessions that must have fallen by the wayside—too time-consuming, perhaps? Nor is he impressed by the Diversity that all elite insitutions pat themselves on the back for having achieved.

To Deresiewicz, everybody looks pretty much alike, extremely normal:

> No hippies, no punks, no art school types or hipsters, no butch lesbians or gender geeks, no black kids in dashikis. The geeks don't look that geeky; the fashionable kids go in for understated elegance.

As he sees it, "diversity" pretty much means that "thirty-two flavors of vanilla" are now available on campus.

If one were to protest that these charges smack of simplification, even sensationalism, and adduce this or that person who doesn't conform to the norm Deresiewicz stakes out, he would say: Of course, but no matter; his exaggerations are of a real, unfortunate situation. In the chapter that treats the history of how things came to be what they are, he notes the replacement of an "aristocratic" system of colleges and universities that existed up into the 1960s. This system was taken to task by the onetime president of Yale, Kingman Brewster, who helped create a "meritocracy," displacing the old-boy network that was already being undermined as more colleges became coeducational. In the last few decades, acceptance rates have declined enormously, with some colleges even expanding their applicant pool so as to make their rates more impressive. Add to this the *U.S. News & World Report*'s yearly ranking to stoke the competitive fervor. In any given year, accepted students will be assured that they are the most intelligent, diverse, extraordinary group of young people ever so lucky as to fall in with one another.

In the face of all this, what can the student do who somehow begins to realize that, in the words of Columbia English professor Edward Tayler, he or she is there to "build a self" rather than add decorations to one already in place? Deresiewicz has some good advice for the many students who have to deal with their "helicopter parents." Aided by new technologies, children can report daily to their moms and dads about how they're doing. A memory: In my freshman dormitory, there was one pay phone on each floor (almost no one had one in his room), and the line you waited in on Sunday nights—when I sometimes tried to call home—was such as to discourage the attempt. Deresiewicz says bluntly, and I think wisely:

> Don't talk to your parents more than once a week or even better, once a month. Don't tell them your grades on papers and tests, or anything else about how you're doing during the term. If they try to interfere with course selection, tell them politely to back off.

He quotes with approval an essay by Terry Castle that recommends a kind of "self-orphaning," the idea that defying or disappointing one's parents is the only way to build self-reliance. He doesn't add that such strong advice is surely not about to be taken up by the majority of young people.

Of course, it's easier to say what *not* to do than to provide a "do" with convincing life. Deresiewicz's recommendation is an old one: In his chapter called "Great Books," he speaks of "that most powerful of instructional technologies," "a liberal arts education centered on the humanities, conducted in small classrooms by dedicated teachers," the product of which should be truly a liberal education. This idea was anticipated, and most eloquently formulated, by John Henry Newman in 1852, in the great Discourse V in *The Idea of a University*. Titled "Knowledge its own end," Newman was at pains to distinguish "liberal" from "useful" knowledge, the latter of which he does not denigrate but which is not directed toward philosophical, general ideas.

Newman's outmoded (and to some, offensive) vocabulary—that the aim of liberal knowledge is to produce a "gentleman"—can still, with proper verbal modification, be respected. Newman justifies the pursuit of liberal knowledge with this fine rhetorical sweep that ends one of his paragraphs: "Not to know the relative disposition of things is the state of slaves or children; to have mapped out the universe is the boast, or at least the ambition, of Philosophy."

Deresiewicz never invokes Newman, and his principal aim is more aesthetically than philosophically directed. He is also, perhaps, more sanguine than his predecessor about the possibilities: "Art teaches empathy and cultivates the emotional intelligence; maybe it *can* make you a better person." The "maybe" and the hopeful italicization of "can" signal Deresiewicz's less-than-perfect confidence in his own recommendations. He believes in mentorship, and my own mentor (he would have despised the word) Theodore Baird, who devoted his life energies to the teaching of literature and of composition, used to declare that "education doesn't work." It was a claim I never asked him to explain, but it has remained with me.

Deresiewicz tries hard not to be so gloomy, if that is the word, but doubts come creeping in when he surveys today's scene, with economics the preferred major in seven out of the top nine liberal arts colleges. Then there are athletics, not just at Big Ten or Big South football and basketball schools, but at elite colleges that field both men's and women's teams in baseball, softball, tennis, squash, golf,

crew, cross-country, track and field, and, especially these days, lacrosse. Living across the street from my college's elite, newly minted athletic stadium, I had the dubious privilege last spring of witnessing endless weekend lacrosse tournaments for both men and women, stretching from morn to night and watched by numbers of parents equipped with large cars, dogs, and bottled water. Newman would have had some difficulty in dealing with this situation.

So the notion that students, elite ones or otherwise, can cultivate a new self by reading and discussing *Hamlet* or *Middlemarch* is, I fear, a utopist one, given the press of activities, pleasant diversions, career worries, and the demands of keeping up with at least four courses per term.

> If the liberal arts turn certainties into questions, the humanities do that, in particular, with ethical and existential certainties: our convictions about how we should act and whom we should be.

This is what may result from reading *Pride and Prejudice* or *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, if you read "alertly, with your mind and not just with glands." But how to subordinate or subdue those glands, for want of a more inclusive term, to the claims of reason and of art? Newman again: "Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and the pride of man."

He was speaking about the failure of even a liberally educated person to deal with original sin, the passion and the pride of human beings. Against such forces, education may well not "work." Even if you spare today's young the glamour of original sin, they have their own giants to contend with. For all the strong truths in the first half of Deresiewicz's title—"The Miseducation of the American Elite"—its second half, "and the Way to a Meaningful Life," carries with it some whistling in the dark. ♦

B&A

A Stellar Eclipse

The fault, dear moviegoers, is not in our stars.

BY SONNY BUNCH

The multiplex in the age of brands—an era of sequels and prequels, of movies derived from comic books and board games, of repackaged and repurposed "intellectual property" that comes with "high pre-awareness" and appeals to "all four quadrants"—isn't the friendliest place for movie stars.

With very few exceptions, actors in these productions are more or less disposable. The star of the *Transformers* series was neither Shia LaBeouf nor Megan Fox but the digital effects; when director Michael Bay grew tired of the humans that were in front of the camera, he simply moved on to Mark Wahlberg and a lingerie model, respectively. The Chinese audiences for whom those films are actually made couldn't care less about who is reading the script aloud.

Over a span of less than a decade, Marvel has employed three different actors to play the Incredible Hulk in three different movies, and the gambit has paid off: Each film featuring the Hulk has grossed more than the last. Despite turning in a trio of huge hits as Jason Bourne, Matt Damon was replaced by Jeremy Renner in *The Bourne Legacy*. It didn't matter that Renner's character was of no relation to Jason Bourne; all that mattered was having "Bourne," a word audiences recognized, in the title.

If we define movie stars as those who can open a film on their own—the sort that audiences see and say, "Yeah, I'll give that a shot," regardless of what the picture is about—then there are very few left. Sandra Bullock, certainly. Channing Tatum, perhaps. Jennifer Lawrence, maybe. Robert Downey Jr., of course. But the list is vanishingly small and only likely to get smaller as the years go on and brands grow in importance.

Great acting and huge stardom are not exactly linked. The recently deceased Philip Seymour Hoffman, arguably one of the great actors of the last 20 years, didn't put audiences in seats. His last, and possibly best, film, *A Most Wanted Man*, will earn less in its entire run than a movie about a talking tree and a snarky raccoon earned in its opening 24 hours. As compelling as he was, Hoffman wasn't a star, at least not in the classic sense. Not in the sense that James Harvey means in his *Watching Them Be*. Not in the sense of John Wayne.

"Nobody thought much about his acting . . . any more than they thought about Errol Flynn's," writes Harvey about Wayne. "As with Flynn, the charm and masculinity were more than enough." It helped that Wayne had a mythmaker in the form of

Sonny Bunch is managing editor of the Washington Free Beacon.

Watching Them Be
Star Presence on the Screen from Garbo to Balthazar
by James Harvey
Faber & Faber, 380 pp., $27

Robert De Niro
Anatomy of an Actor
by Glenn Kenny
Phaidon/Cahiers du Cinema, 191 pp., $49.95

Tom Cruise
Anatomy of an Actor
by Amy Nicholson
Phaidon/Cahiers du Cinema, 191 pp., $49.95

director John Ford to introduce him to the public in *Stagecoach* (1939):

> A rifle report rings out, the coach slows—so does the cavalry escort behind—and comes to a halt. The rifleman (Wayne, as "the Ringo Kid") looms in full-length close shot . . . in a white hat and black shirt, saddle and blanket under one arm, the other outstretched and gripping the rifle by the trigger guard: "Hold it!" he commands—twirling the rifle in his hand, looking straight ahead as the camera moves swiftly in on him until his close-up fills the screen, his neckerchief lifting in the wind.
>
> This sudden camera move (very un-Fordian) is like a nudge in the ribs: Look at *this*, will you? It not only rhymes with and takes up the stopped movement of the stagecoach, it seems meant to be starmaking.

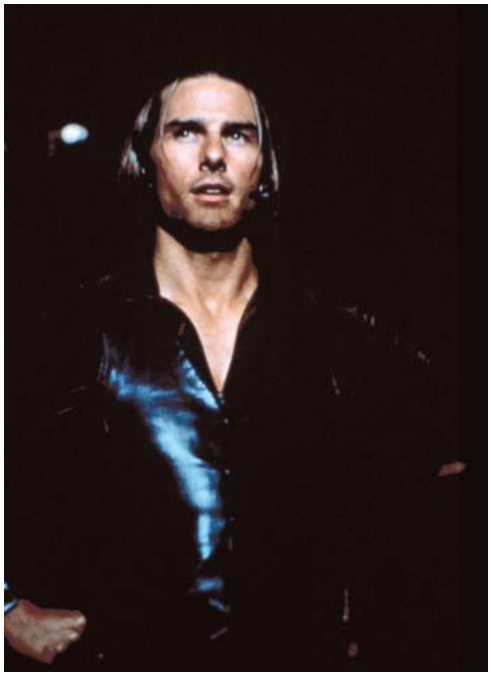
Star power is hard to define but obvious when on display: I know it when I see it. As does Harvey, writing here about Greta Garbo: "Her close-ups become like arias, they can negotiate so many meanings. The ground of all of them, of course . . . is her extraordinary beauty." The classic Hollywood stars were all beautiful in their own way: ruggedly masculine like Wayne or Clark Gable, innocently radiant like Ingrid Bergman, oddly but appealingly overemphasized like Bette Davis.

Working in a collaborative medium, film stars usually need a great director to wring out their best work. There was Wayne and Ford, of course, but also Bette Davis and William Wyler, and Marlene Dietrich and Josef von Sternberg. In the modern era, few pairings have been as successful as Robert De Niro and Martin Scorsese, who first worked together in *Mean Streets* (1973). Harvey recounts:

> Earl[y] on [in *Mean Streets*] there's a frenetic but dreamlike montage, to a percussive rock beat on the soundtrack, of Johnny Boy [De Niro], after one of his royal screw-ups, careering on foot through the nighttime Village streets, bumping into another guy going by, punching and mauling him almost in passing, then rocking on and appearing on a tenement rooftop next, raising his arms against the New York skyline first in a victory gesture, then a f—you one—before jumping down and leaving the frame.

That obsessive self-destructiveness is in all the Scorsese-De Niro characters.

In the meticulously researched and compellingly written *Robert De Niro: Anatomy of an Actor*, Glenn Kenny drills down into that relationship at much greater length. A quote from De Niro seems to sum up his early alienated outsiders, his Travis Bickles and Rupert Pupkins and Johnny Boys: "You know how a crab sort of walks sideways and has a gawky awkward movement?"



Tom Cruise in 'Magnolia' (2000)

"Not straightforward?" the interviewer queries.

"No. Not devious in that sense. Crabs are very straightforward, but straightforward to them is going to the left and to the right. They turn sideways; that's the way they're built."

De Niro, especially in his earlier years, always seemed to be looking for the right crab walk to emulate. It's why, for a long time, he was a great actor but not a huge star. Audiences are put off by sideways-movements; they need someone coming straight ahead. It's no real surprise, then, that Kenny's handsome volume—which features hundreds of full-color photos and 10 essays, each centered on one film from the great actor's career—focuses more tightly on De Niro's early years. Seven of its 10 essays focus on films that were released between 1973 and 1988; his most recent quarter-century of work merits just three.

Kenny writes, gently:

> In the movies of this period [the 1990s] in which De Niro's performances have had the most effect, the critical viewer can detect something different from the absolute immersion that characterized his work in *Taxi Driver* and *Raging Bull*. The emphasis seems less on the idea of "becoming" the character than on identifying and nailing defining or transformative moments for the character.

It is, perhaps, unsurprising that these more commercial works—many of which (*Goodfellas*, *Heat*, *Casino*, *Ronin*) are quite good—are also characterized by a De Niro who is digging slightly less deeply into the roles he has chosen. As his stardom grew, his acting—well, "declined" would be the wrong word, but the absolute immersion was definitely gone.

Tom Cruise, by contrast, has never wavered in his intensity, the quality for which he is best known. Amy Nicholson's *Tom Cruise: Anatomy of an Actor* catalogues the ways in which Cruise managed to become not just the biggest movie star in the world, but also one of the most interesting. Nicholson "tracks the superstar's smartest and most perilous choices, the roles that could have derailed his career but instead defined it. It's a study of craft and calculation, of Hollywood's most powerful underdog still chasing the respect he's more than earned."

Tom Cruise has always been considered a "star" rather than a great actor, a distinction Nicholson believes to be unfair. She catalogues Cruise's career choices, noting that for almost 20 years he refused to do a sequel—turning down millions to do *Top Gun 2*, for instance—opting instead for the riskier, less commercial *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989) or a run-of-the-mill action film

NEW LINE CINEMA / NEWSCOM

(*Mission: Impossible*, 1996). And yet everyone reacts with surprise when he hands in a head-turning performance, as he did as the pick-up artist T.J. Mackey in *Magnolia* (1999) or the outrageous studio head Les Grossman in *Tropic Thunder* (2008).

Cruise's status is occasionally a bit confounding. "The oddity of Cruise's career is that his good looks don't translate into sex appeal," Nicholson writes. Indeed, one can't help but wonder if that odd asexuality is a reason Cruise—inarguably one of the five biggest icons of the 1980s and '90s—is omitted entirely from James Harvey's book. Cruise's intensity works against him. He's too driven to be believable as a lover; there's something missing just behind the eyes. Instead there's a calculating coldness that never quite disappears. It's hard to think of another megastar from Hollywood's past or present for whom this is true.

Robert De Niro and Tom Cruise have both suffered in our modern age. As the clout of movie stars declines, they seem a bit lost. This summer's *Edge of Tomorrow* was Cruise's first nonfranchise picture to top $100 million domestically in almost a decade—and it barely scraped past that mark. And with the exception of 2012's *Silver Linings Playbook*—not exactly marketed as a "Robert De Niro picture"—De Niro hasn't had a real breakout hit (that wasn't tied to the *Meet the Parents* series) since 1999's *Analyze This*.

We live in a post-movie-star age. Their presence on the big screen ain't what it used to be, and it never will be again. ♦

B&A

In the Beginning . . .

How the study of words leads to thought.

BY SUSAN KRISTOL

It takes a daring man, or a very erudite professor, to name a book *Philology*. Hardly anybody seems to know what the word means. And for that very reason, the professional organization of classicists to which I belong—the American Philological Association (APA)—is currently in the process of jettisoning its name. If nothing else, James Turner should feel some vindication, because the move by the APA reinforces his subtitle: *The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities*.

Founded in 1869, the APA is the second-oldest learned society in America, serving the professional needs of scholars of ancient Greek and Latin language, literature, and history. Following a decade of discussion, the membership of this venerable organization has finally acknowledged that its name is too arcane, a relic of a bygone era, and has voted to rename itself the Society for Classical Studies. Why the change? In 2012, then-president Jeffrey Henderson, an expert on the Greek comic playwright Aristophanes and therefore surely not unaware of the comic aspects of this process, offered this explanation:

> [T]he term philology has become so obscure to all but practitioners as to impede our efforts to gain broader public (even academic) visibility, and we are not readily found when people search online (for instance in Google) for information about classics and the classical world.

Philology
The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities
by James Turner
Princeton, 576 pp., $35

The APA's move away from the word "philology" was thus motivated mainly by a desire to become more accessible to nonprofessionals. In fact, the APA has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to help it become a "gateway" rather than a "gatekeeper." But to hold onto a bit of its past, the APA will retain its original Greek motto on its new masthead "as an essential design element," typeset as it would have appeared in antiquity, using the uppercase Greek alphabet, with no spaces separating the words. Transliterated into Roman script, it reads: *PSYCHESIATROSTAGRAMMATA*. As the current APA president writes: "[T]hose who can read and understand it will appreciate it; for those who don't read Greek, it will reinforce the identity of the organization and evoke the Classical world."

Aristophanes, where are you when we need you?

The APA's motto (in case *you* don't read Greek) means "Literature, the physician of the soul." A lofty sentiment; but has philology ever served as a healer? After reading *Philology*, sad to say, one would have to conclude that the answer is no, unless your soul's particular sickness is a longing to emend textual errors in a manuscript of Euripides, be a champion when your family plays the dictionary game of Balderdash, run a literary salon, or (like Dorothea's husband in *Middlemarch*) write *The Key to All Mythologies*. Turner's book, impressive in its scholarship and clear about his love for the humanities, does not make such grand claims for the power of philology ("the love of words").

Instead, he takes readers on a detailed journey beginning with the Presocratics, with the bulk of the book devoted to the 19th and early 20th centuries. We learn how the Hellenistic philologists of Alexandria and Pergamum compared multiple copies of manuscripts to arrive at the truest text, and about the marginal symbols, grammar books, glossaries, antiquarian ramblings, and etymological and phonetic studies they invented to help achieve their goal. Roman grammarians

Susan Kristol has a doctorate in classical philology.

took this methodology and ran with it in their typically thorough way. After the division of the Roman Empire, as the Scholastic movement came to dominate the monastic world, philology suffered, barely surviving the Medieval period as a "thin and pale" shadow of its former self.

Interestingly, the very term "Middle Age[s]," or *medium aevum*, is a philological construct, invented around 1600 as a result of newfound philological interest in historical phases. (When you think about it, of course, people living in the "Middle Ages" had no idea they were doing so.) But at last, with the resurgence of classical studies in Northern Italy in the 13th and 14th centuries, philology came roaring back.

During the Reformation, humanists' work on Christian texts and Hebrew scripture, studied at times with the assistance of Jewish teachers, could prove dangerous if their linguistic comparison of different translations of sacred books led to suggestions that the official text contained errors. This period, and the following century, were marked by a lack of formal boundaries between disciplines. It was a world populated by polymaths like Erasmus, Isaac Casaubon, and Joseph Scaliger. This is Turner's favorite period, a golden age to which he hopes the humanities may one day return.

The scope of this review won't allow a detailed treatment of all of the humanities disciplines discussed by Turner. Suffice it to say that, as time went on, philology became the possession of the academic world, not of erudite outsiders, and academic pursuits became more and more segregated from one another: "By 1800 philology strained against its own skin," Turner explains. The dominant position of classical learning began to be threatened. With the rise of anthropological research in the latter part of the century, moreover, came an emphasis on ancient barbaric rites and customs—what Turner calls "the weirding of Greece and Rome." No longer the unique source of moral lessons and paradigms, classical studies was toppled from its pedestal and became a modern discipline like any other.

The change happened surprisingly quickly. Turner reports that at Harvard in 1856-57, the study of classics consumed 40 percent of students' class time before senior year; by 1884-85, the Greek and Latin requirement had been eliminated entirely. He writes: "This revolution left teachers of Latin and Greek looking and feeling more like professors of geology or history" rather than defenders of a special area that was necessary for all educated men and women to know. The professional rigor that entered the field also transformed archaeology and ancient history. During this period, other parts of the philological world congealed into disciplines: art history, anthropology, and various types of religious studies. "Disciplinarity" had triumphed over the onetime "collective integrity" of the humanities.

Classical dancing at Vassar, ca. 1916

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS / VASSAR COLLEGE

Turner's historical survey is thorough and covers a lot of ground, and an engaging sense of modesty emanates from the author himself. For those interested in intellectual history, *Philology* is worth reading. But Turner is most concerned about the detrimental effect that disciplinary divisions have had on humanistic learning, with scholars increasingly being forced to focus on narrow areas, seeking what I like to refer to as "a niche with a twist." Turner does not say so, but this narrowing may be one cause of academics' inability to make good on the promise of the APA's motto that literature can "heal the soul."

Back in the 1960s and '70s, the field of classics was under attack for being irrelevant to, say, the urban crisis or Watergate or the Vietnam war. But at least there were generalists who taught popular survey courses like "The Greek Hero" and Latinists who could bring Catullus' poetry to life, or make a compelling (if controversial) case that the founding of Rome, as depicted by Virgil's *Aeneid*, was a criminal act typical of a tyrannical, imperialist power. Although graduate students were warned against the great sin of being a popularizer, there was still a sense that the content of these great works of literature was being read and debated.

Today, although there are surely many exceptions, the trend in humanities seems to be the embrace of meta-literature (which is interested in showing how the text is self-conscious of its status as a text) rather than the central issues raised by the texts. A case in point is this course description for an upcoming freshman seminar at an Ivy League university:

> The course covers a wide range of Greek literary and philosophical works as well as modern critical and philosophical writings on the Greeks. The focus throughout is on the status of language, the many forms of discourse that appear in literature, and the attempts the Greeks themselves made to overcome the perceived inadequacies and difficulties inherent in language as the medium of poetry and philosophy. The course inquires into the development of philosophy in the context of a culture infused with traditional, mythological accounts of the cosmos. It asks how poetic forms

such as tragedy responded to and made an accommodation with philosophical discourse while creating an intense emotional effect on the audience; and discusses how these issues persist and are formulated in our own thinking.

"The focus throughout is on the status of language"? This sounds like a wonderful course for a graduate student, but couldn't an 18-year-old freshman, anxious to talk about the meaning of life, simply study Plato's *Apology* or Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* without having to address "the perceived inadequacies and difficulties inherent in language"? The course's focus on language is especially ironic given this introductory disclaimer: "Knowledge of Greek and Latin is not necessary, since all texts are in translation."

But, gentle reader, despair not. The basic, gut-wrenching questions that emerge so clearly in ancient Greek and Latin works—questions about fate, immortality, individualism, courage, and justice—are still of interest today, even if they are not particularly on view in the university world. Few would consider the Marine Corps a likely repository of humanist inquiry, but the Commandant's Professional Reading List actually contains a surprising number of books relating directly or indirectly to the ancient world: *The Landmark Thucydides*, *The Mask of Command* by John Keegan, *The Warrior Ethos* and *Gates of Fire* by Steven Pressfield, *Achilles in Vietnam* by Jonathan Shay (a comparison of veterans suffering from PTSD with the soldiers of Homer's *Iliad*), and James A. Warren's *American Spartans* (a history of the Marines).

Meanwhile, the popularity of movies like *Gladiator* and *300* (about the Battle of Thermopylae), inaccurate though they may be, shows a hunger for the values of the ancient world. When a book written for today's military starts with a quotation from Plutarch and anecdotes about Sparta, and when lines from *Gladiator* appear in an online list of "Unsung Manly Movie Quotes for Every Occasion," it is clear that the world of antiquity still appeals to something deep within us. It's just a shame that the custodians of the ancient world—philologists who have devoted their lives to mastering living and dead languages and difficult, technical areas like numismatics, epigraphy, and paleography—often seem unprepared for the task of inspiring students, or the general public, to appreciate its richness.

James Turner, however, is not chiefly concerned with "the big questions," leaving those for political theory and philosophy, which (he clearly states) are not philological disciplines. In his epilogue, he returns to his vision of the lost world of humanists without boundaries, lamenting the way modern academia has divided the traditional humanities disciplines into artificial segments, their borders policed by each academic department. This, to him, is the true crisis of humanistic scholarship, and he hopes that the humanities may one day realize that they are more than "a set of isolated disciplines, each marooned on its own island." Perhaps, he muses, the humanities will regain their "primal oneness."

Turner is surely right that overspecialization has had a detrimental effect on the humanities. But with 81 percent of humanities professors identifying themselves as liberals, 1,500 history professors signing an open letter to chastise Israel, and three-quarters of English departments no longer requiring students to study Shakespeare, does anyone think that the worst problem in today's humanities is too much "disciplinarity"? ♦

B&A

A Healing Illness

Facing the unexpected, and inexplicable.

BY PETER WEHNER

Bret Baier, host of the popular Fox News program *Special Report with Bret Baier* and an accomplished journalist at a young age, has an interesting professional story to tell. And in *Special Heart* he tells it, if only in a few chapters. Born in New Jersey and raised in Atlanta, Baier attended DePauw and from there, worked at local stations in Hilton Head, Rockford, Raleigh, and Atlanta. His big break came when, while working for the Fox Atlanta bureau, he traveled to Washington on September 11, 2001, to cover the response to the terrorist attacks. It turned out to be a one-way trip: The Fox brass decided they wanted Baier to cover the Pentagon, and thus began the second stage of his career.

The portrait of Baier in these early chapters is of a young man in a hurry.

Special Heart
A Journey of Faith, Hope, Courage and Love
by Bret Baier with Jim Mills
Center Street, 304 pp., $25

Captivated at an early age by politics and journalism, he was driven and hard-working, earnest, and determined never to be out-hustled. He knew what he wanted and found ways to get it, including wooing Amy Hills, whom he married in 2004. By the time his wife was pregnant with their first child, in 2007, Baier felt that he was on top of the world.

And then, in an instant, his world came crashing down. Just after delivery, Baier learned that his son Paul was born with several life-threatening heart defects. "Your baby has heart disease," the Baiers were told by a cardiologist hours after Paul was born. "Heart disease can be simple

Peter Wehner is a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

or complex. Your son has a complex heart disease. He has a *very* complicated heart." Five congenital defects were eventually diagnosed. And then, Baier writes, "Dr. [Gerald] Martin uttered the words that have played in my mind on a continual loop every day since: 'If your son doesn't have surgery within the next two weeks, he's not going to make it.'"

The emotional core of this book centers on the weeks between Paul's birth and his first operation: the initial terror and tears, the shock and disbelief, the anger and denial. After having been told of his son's condition, Baier is candid in describing what he felt:

> Immediately my mouth went completely dry. I didn't know where my next breath would come from. Time stopped. Unlike any moment I have experienced in my life, it resembled one of those slow-motion scenes in a movie when you know the bomb is about to explode. Thoughts of complete doom filled my mind. I remember squeezing Amy's hand, but my whole body was weightless. For a minute everything got completely fuzzy. I simply could not believe what I was hearing.

Those feelings soon gave way to a focused determination by the Baiers to do everything they could to support their child and his medical team in the face of this extraordinary ordeal. "In the days immediately following our turnaround moment in the Children's emergency room," Baier writes, "Amy and I became downright evangelical in our newfound mission—our decision—to transform ourselves into the two most positive, upbeat people on the planet. Not because we necessarily felt like it, but because we genuinely believed being positive and uplifting would have a direct impact on Paulie's ability to fight and survive."

The balance of *Special Heart* is about how the Baiers dealt with the first, and subsequent, open-heart surgeries, Paul's unfolding awareness of his condition, his questions about it, and his bravery in facing it. Now 7 years old, Paul has undergone three open-heart procedures, seven angioplasties, and a stomach operation. And yet his spirit is undaunted, and his life is remarkably normal, a tribute both to Paul and to the tremendous advances in medical science.

Several themes run through this account, one of which is the vital role community can play in our lives. We're told how both the Baier and Hills families rallied to the side of Bret, Amy, and Paul; how the Baiers have bonded with families whose children face similar challenges; and how they've grown in their trust in, and their affection for, the amazing medical team that saved Paul's life.

FOX NEWS

Bret Baier

(Richard Jonas, M. D., one of the leading pediatric cardiovascular surgeons in the world, emerges as a terrifically impressive doctor.)

Throughout, Baier refers to the hospital staff as "family" and says the medical crew treating Paul dealt with him as if he were their son. The Baiers are sustained by a web of relationships, some of which started when they were born, some of which they married into, and still others that began after their son was diagnosed with heart disease. Together, friends and family provided the Baiers with encouragement, tender care, spiritual support, and medical guidance. I'm reminded of what anthropologists call "relationships of affinity," which support us and keep us from being isolated in moments of genuine need. The Baiers were immeasurably helped by such relationships.

Another topic here is loss of control. Baier admits to struggling with his powerlessness: "Amy and I were a very happy couple," he writes. "We had everything going for us—had all we needed. Our hopes, dreams, and future prospects were unlimited. Everyone said so. But now, none of that meant a thing. There was only one reality now; our son was extremely sick, and there was a chance he was going to die." Later, he writes about "the pent-up insecurity of knowing I had zero control over anything that was going on." *Special Heart* reveals a couple that first struggled with the loss of control and then, by necessity, came to accept it.

Of course, life is filled with unexpected turns, trials, and shattered expectations. The most joyful people are those who release rather than cling to expectations, who adjust to new circumstances rather than try to re-create ones lost in time. The Baiers eventually chose to focus their energies on the areas they could control—most especially, loving their son and being with him virtually around the clock—and release the rest to their Lord.

Which leads to a third theme: the Baiers' increasing reliance on, and trust in, God. While they are lifelong Roman Catholics, their son's condition made them more spiritually minded and prayerful. Baier writes about the succor they found in the chapel at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, how scriptural verses became touchstones for them, and how much they relied on, and asked for, prayer. They took comfort not in knowing how things would finally turn out but in knowing that God is faithful and can redeem all things, including pain and brokenness. With the prospect of losing their newborn child, the Baiers turned *to* God rather than turning *on* Him. Which explains why this is, finally, a book of gratitude—gratitude for the Baiers' family and friends, for the medical team surrounding them, and for their son, the gift of life, and the giver of life. ♦

B&A

Tale Wagger

The Dane who perfected the art of enchantment.

BY EDWIN M. YODER JR.

Hans Christian Andersen
European Witness
by Paul Binding
Yale, 496 pp., $40

What's not to admire about the Danes, a people honored for their rescue of endangered Jews in World War II and an astonishing linguistic facility? When you throw in *Hamlet* and the great *ur*-classic of Englit, *Beowulf*, which both take place on Danish soil, it seems almost incidental that they were written in England.

And lest we forget, we must add to this roll call Hans Christian Andersen (1805-75), who, along with the brothers Grimm, was one of three godfathers of the fairy tale. What grown-up child has forgotten "The Princess on the Pea" or "The Emperor's New Clothes" or "The Ugly Duckling"? According to Paul Binding, Andersen ranks as a European, not just a Danish, figure: In the words of his best English translators, Diana Crone Frank and Jeffrey Frank, he was "a major literary figure enclosed by a minor language."

Binding, a British critic and biographer, writes about Andersen in the heavyweight scholarly style, omitting nothing and citing no passage without including the original Danish and the English translation. Such is the density of his informative work that one wonders about its intended audience. It is meant for specialists, certainly, but perhaps not the common reader. The Franks' translations of more than 30 of the familiar fairy stories—from *The Stories of Hans Christian Andersen* (Duke, 2005)—are pleasantly idiomatic and echo Andersen's invention of a new Danish idiom.

Andersen was born in the village of Odense of unpromising antecedents. As is often the case in such circumstances, there was a family romance that there was nobility somewhere in the family tree, but it was not found. When Andersen's father, a cobbler, died, his mother, a drinker, went to work as a laundress, no doubt leaving their gifted child with the determination that his destiny would surpass the visible horizon.

He might have said, with his American coeval Abraham Lincoln, that his were "the short and simple annals of the poor." But he didn't. As an adolescent, anticipating that he could charm his way into the kindness of strangers, he went off to Copenhagen with theatrical ambitions and soon gained a patron in Jonas Collin, director of the national theater, who arranged further education for Andersen. The Danish king also took a hand. By the age of 30, Andersen had to his credit not only many unforgettable stories but, according to the Franks, the invention of a "new" demotic Danish as their medium.

Fairy tales got a boost nearly 40 years ago with the appearance of Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment*, in which grownups were urged not to launder children's stories of their darker elements. Children are resilient, the great psychoanalyst argued, and parents and publishers do their psychic health no favor by shielding them from tragedy and adversity. Stock figures, he also said, are more heavily freighted with sub-surface meaning than we imagine. His most startling suggestion was that the "wicked stepmother" who figures in so many fairy tales embodies the flaws that children are reluctant to see in actual mothers.

Fairy tales remain a challenging form. Sometimes, as with Andersen's "The Little Match Girl," they seem merely pathetic: The girl freezes to death in the icy streets after striking all her matches to keep warm and witnessing celestial visions. Sometimes, as with "The Ugly Duckling," in which the odd duck turns out to be a misplaced swan, the story seems parabolic, a transmutation of Andersen's struggle against the currents of a society that promised children of his origins very little. As for "The Emperor's New Clothes," which has made its way into common metaphor, everyone (including the king himself) refuses to admit that the clothing woven for him out of plain air leaves him naked: It seems to anticipate the tinsel and pretense of any and all official behavior.

My childhood favorite was "The Princess on the Pea." I insisted that my mother read it again and again. The story offers a test to identify real princesses, since only they would lose sleep or lie awake on a bed furnished with 20 mattresses on top of a single pea, having a refined royal sensitivity to bodily irritation. The story seems free of deeper subtleties, but could it reflect Andersen's failed family romance? He couldn't feel the pea?

In fairy tales generally, and certainly in Andersen's, yearning is the engine of fate, and the yearnings are often royal. Every deserving girl is a princess and every boy a disguised or thwarted prince (if only a prince among birds). The tales are populated by monarchs in such profusion as to suggest a universal aspiration to the gilded life of court and castle. Perhaps Andersen saw more deeply than others into the reverse snobbery that animates our ambivalence about kings and queens—even when they are benevolent Danish kings. But it is no doubt the wiser course to concede Bruno Bettelheim a monopoly on theories and content ourselves with the simple charm of deceptively simple yarns. ♦

Edwin M. Yoder Jr. is the author, most recently, of Vacancy: A Judicial Misadventure.

B&A

He Who Laughs

Sherlock Holmes and the case of the serial chuckler.

BY JOE QUEENAN

It is always strange to stumble upon seemingly modern turns of phrase in books that are quite old. It proves that catchphrases and colorful expressions believed to have entered the vernacular in recent times have actually been around for decades, even centuries. What's more, they often originated in places one would not expect: *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, for example. It is now widely believed that the first use of the term "crib" to describe a home or apartment can be found in the 1894 Arthur Conan Doyle story "The Adventure of the Reigate Puzzle." Here, Conan Doyle, writing as Dr. Watson, remarks, "A gang of burglars acting in the country might be expected to vary the scenes of their operations, and not to crack two cribs in the same district within a few days."

This is not an isolated case. The term "cool hand"—closely associated with Paul Newman's winning turn as an affable convict in *Cool Hand Luke* (1967)—surfaces in that same Conan Doyle story, when one of Holmes's clients describes a supposed burglar as "a cool hand." More unexpected still is the passage in "The Noble Bachelor" in which Holmes inquires, "What's up, then?"—proving that the contemporary expression "Whassup?" did not originate in a hip, urban American environment.

Most surprising of all is the frequency with which characters chuckle in the works of Conan Doyle. Yes, *chuckle*. Sherlock Holmes chuckles heartily in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band." He also chuckles in "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist." He chuckles in "The Golden Pince-Nez" and in "The Red-Headed League" and in "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons." Then, in the otherwise-forgettable "The Adventure of Black Peter," he chuckles in two different situations—once while pouring coffee and, later, when he bursts out into "a triumphant chuckle."

And the chuckling is not limited to Holmes. In "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle," it is a salesman, not Holmes, who chuckles. And, inexplicably, when the man chuckles, he chuckles "grimly."

The term "chuckle" came into wide use in the English language in the 1770s, right around the time Great Britain was losing its grip on its North American empire. At the time, chuckling was limited to the chattering classes. Blacksmiths did not chuckle, nor did yeomen, farriers, fishwives, or costermongers. The word "chuckle" rarely appears in the work of Jane Austen, the Brontës, Charles Dickens, or George Eliot, primarily because chuckling was then (as now) viewed as a silly, almost undignified, activity.

The point is, chuckling is for namby-pambys. It is the sort of thing one associates with Dagwood Bumstead or Darren in *I Dream of Jeannie*. Chuckling is like tittering or guffawing, blubbering or chortling. Chuckling is simply not cool. Which makes it all the more strange that Sherlock Holmes should be doing it, as Holmes is the quintessence of late-Victorian and Edwardian cool.

Why, then, does Holmes so regularly chuckle? To answer this question, one must bear in mind that Conan Doyle had decidedly mixed feelings about his most famous creation. Desperate to have his other works taken seriously, Doyle grew to feel trapped in a creative straitjacket by Holmes, whom he actually killed off in "The Final Problem" (1893).

Recently, a number of critics have provided cogent explanations for the mysteriously rampant chuckling that occurs in the Holmes canon. "Conan Doyle despised Holmes," says Leigh Ashton-Hinds, author of *The House of Suppressed Mirth: Chuckling in Late-Victorian Literature*.

> He hated the fact that Holmes was more famous than he was. The reason he has Holmes chuckle so often is because chuckling is a dithering, goofy activity. It casts the master detective in a poor light. It makes him look like a ridiculous old fuddy-duddy. Subsequent mystery writers understood this. Sam Spade does not chuckle. Jules Maigret does not chuckle. Kurt Wallander does not chuckle. By writing so many passages in which Holmes chuckles, Doyle is literally saying, "This guy is a clown. He's a doofus. How could you idiots take this jerk seriously?"

Adele Piggott-Gwynne, author of the controversial *Sherlock Holmes, Bootymaster*, has reached a similar conclusion about Doyle's motivation for forcing his own creation to chuckle so often and so inappropriately:

> You never hear of Ivanhoe or Silas Marner or Heathcliff chuckling. Madame Bovary doesn't chuckle and neither does Madame Defarge. There is no record of Count Dracula ever chuckling, much less the Count of Monte Cristo. Neither Dr. Jekyll nor Mr. Hyde ever chuckles on the printed page. The same holds true for Dorian Gray. By making Holmes chuckle so often, Doyle was literally telling his audiences: "This guy is not in the same weight class as David Copperfield and the Lady of the Lake. So stop acting like this crap is literature. Read my other books instead."

Last winter, hundreds of rough drafts of famous Sherlock Holmes stories were unearthed in the basement of the British Museum. In them, Holmes chuckles, Dr. Watson chuckles, Mycroft Holmes chuckles, even the demonic Professor Moriarty chuckles. They chuckle often and they chuckle loudly. But Doyle's editors wisely forced him to delete most of these passages because they did such violence to the otherwise serious mood of the stories. ♦

Joe Queenan is the author, most recently, of One for the Books.

Nude celebrity photos ...

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Nude celebrity photos

prompt privacy concerns

By Debbie Weiner September 3 Follow @debbieweiner

Dozens of nude photographs of Jennifer Lawrence, Kate Upton, Kirsten Dunst, and others spread like wildfire around the Internet over Labor Day weekend, calling to mind a similar leak in 2012, when topless and nude pictures of Scarlett Johansson were posted anonymously online, and prompting fresh concerns over the security of private information in our increasingly digital society. This most recent incident, in which hackers posted naked photographs of Jennifer Lawrence, among others, on the website 4Chan.org, has proved to be the most revealing collection of nude celebrity photographs leaked to date.

JENN DEERING DAVIS

Jennifer Lawrence

Most experts agree that posting private pictures of celebrities on easily accessible, completely anonymous websites like 4Chan—especially pictures such as the topless and fully nude photographs of Jennifer Lawrence and other racy photos of young Hollywood starlets—is indeed an egregious violation of personal privacy.

Some people expressed outrage that someone could anonymously post naked pictures of Jennifer Lawrence and Kate Upton on 4Chan, where millions of people could view them anonymously and with impunity. Indeed, one is left to wonder what it says about our culture that publishing galleries of sexually explicit celebrity photographs did not elicit a more vocal demonstration of outrage. Indeed, privacy experts question the erosion of simple decency in a society that tolerates or condones the illegal release of explicit private photographs and videos of A-list celebrities.

While the FBI has promised to investigate the matter fully, exposed celebrities are concerned that more leaks may be imminent. It seems likely any further postings would include dozens or perhaps hundreds of topless and nude celebrity photos, or even explicit videos of celebrities engaging in sex acts with each other, and authorities insist that hackers behind such leaks are sure to be prosecuted and convicted, as the leaks are not even barely legal. Jennifer Lawrence, and other victims of the leaks, meanwhile,