the weekly Standard

WILL RUBIO REBOUND?
STEPHEN F. HAYES

YIPPEE-KI-YAY!

WILLIAM KRISTOL • JONATHAN V. LAST
AARON MACLEAN • JOHN McCORMACK

FEBRUARY 22, 2016 • $4.95 • WEEKLYSTANDARD.COM

Contents

February 22, 2016 • Volume 21, Number 23

5

11

20

40

2 The Scrapbook — *Motel hell, to the barricades! & more*

5 Casual — *Lee Smith, sick with hunger*

6 Editorials — *He's Beatable* BY WILLIAM KRISTOL; *Two Centuries of Police Work* BY MAX BOOT

Articles

10 Grim Tidings for Hillary — BY JONATHAN V. LAST
They don't like her—they really don't like her

11 A Draft for Women? — BY JOHN MCCORMACK
A surprising split among Republicans

14 Veterans Shouldn't Trust Trump — BY AARON MACLEAN
The billionaire's 'love' for them is recent, shallow, and insincere

15 Will Alabama Send in a Marine? — BY QUIN HILLYER
Sen. Richard Shelby faces a challenge

17 Let Them Go Bankrupt — BY IKE BRANNON
The federal student loan guarantee isn't all it's cracked up to be

18 Curious Fiscal Sense — BY ELI LEHRER
You'll never guess who's targeting federal disaster spending

Features

20 Rubio Plays Defense — BY STEPHEN F. HAYES
Can he bounce back?

25 Don't Scoff — BY ANDY SMARICK
Conservatives and labor find common ground. Can they do it again?

29 On Top of Mount Rushmore — BY JOSEPH BOTTUM
Where every day is Presidents' Day

Books & Arts

34 Churchill at War — BY ANDREW ROBERTS
As statesman and journalist

36 Stubble Trouble — BY SONNY BUNCH
The cultural implications of eschewing the razor

38 Guy of Letters — BY WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD
The qualities of Terry Southern's correspondence

40 Picture Perfect — BY HENRIK BERING
One Velázquez points in a thousand directions

42 Ordinary People — BY ARAM BAKSHIAN JR.
Dreams of happiness amidst the chaos

43 Hail, Coens! — BY JOHN PODHORETZ
For giving us 'one of the most sophisticated satires ever made'

44 Parody — *Hillary's gold mine*

COVER BY DAVE MALAN

A Good Reason to Stay at 99 Employees

On January 29—not coincidentally, the anniversary of President Obama signing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009—the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced it was proposing new regulations. The EEOC wants to amend its mandatory EEO-1 report so that employers with 100 or more employees would have to submit employee W-2 earnings and hours along with a breakdown of salary data by race and gender.

"For the past few years, at the President's direction, EEOC and OFCCP have sought to develop a reporting tool that would require employers to submit pay data on employees nationwide so the agencies can target investigations to address the gender 'pay gap,'" observes Jackson Lewis, a law firm specializing in employer issues. "This proposal is the culmination of that effort."

For employers, that sounds more than a little ominous. Warren Meyer, a small-business owner who writes the popular Coyote Blog, spells out what this means in practice:

> Forget for a moment that the whole purpose of this rule is to provide litigation attorneys a database they can mine to legally harass businesses. The reporting requirements here are incredibly onerous. It takes the current EEO-1 (the annual exercise where we strive for a post-racial society by racially categorizing all of our employees) and makes it something like 15-20 times longer. In addition, rather than simply "count" an employee as being on staff in a certain race-gender category, we now have to report their income and hours worked. Either I will have to hire staff just to do this stupid report, or I will again (like with Obamacare) have to pay a third party thousands of dollars a year to satisfy yet another government reporting requirement. This is utter madness.
>
> Get this—the report has 3600 individual cells that must be filled in. And this is in addition to the current EEO-1 form, which also still has to be filled out. The draft rule assumes 6-7 hours per company per year for this reporting. They must be joking.

Not only is the EEOC assuming that this reporting requirement will only take six or seven hours, they're estimating that it will cost each employer only $160 to comply. This is an affront to the value of employers' time; it's also an insulting lie, and the EEOC knows it. "To get to this 'one-size-fits-all' six-hour estimate, the EEOC changed the rules it traditionally used to estimate EEO-1 burden, basing its 'departure' on increased use of technology," reports Jackson Lewis. And making matters worse, the EEOC plans to make the aggregated salary data by race and gender publicly available by region and industry, raising significant privacy concerns. That's even assuming no one hacks into the EEOC and steals the data outright.

That gender discrimination is the impetus for this is particularly frustrating because the best available evidence suggests there is no gender pay gap. Even liberal publications have debunked the oft-repeated line (used by the White House to scare women into the polling booth) that "women make 77 cents to every man's dollar." Meanwhile, the actual evidence shows that it's blue-collar males who are being left behind by Obama's economy.

The public comment period for this proposal ends on (no fooling) April 1, and The Scrapbook suggests that congressional Republicans get off their duffs and stop this from happening. Once these requirements are implemented, things can only get worse. Just wait until the Sanders administration mandates salary data be broken down according to 51 different genders. ♦

Motel Hell

Washington mayor Muriel Bowser has presented plans to open new homeless shelters across the District of Columbia, including along the U Street corridor (a newly hip area of restaurants and bars) and in swanky neighborhoods such as Wisconsin Avenue, blocks from the National Cathedral, where a proposed shelter would stand across from the Russian embassy.

The new facilities will, one can hope, reduce the number of homeless families—currently more than 700—being sheltered in local motels. An exposé in the *Washington Post* in January captured the desperate conditions at motels, such as the Days Inn on New York Avenue in the northeast quadrant of the District, where homeless women and their children are being warehoused.

Tiera Williams, for example, lives at the Days Inn with her four tykes (ages 5, 3, 1, and a newborn) in a room with only two double beds. The refrigerator in the room is small. And Williams isn't a fan of the meals ("continental breakfast in the lobby, and lunch and dinner in the 170-room motel's banquet room") provided gratis by taxpayers.

She did not, at least as far as the *Post* reported, have any complaints about the free Wi-Fi.

However, one detail of her plight caught the eye of The Scrapbook. According to the *Post*, homeless residents at the Days Inn only receive "every-other-day maid service." An outrage, pure and simple. After all, one can be sure that non-homeless patrons of the Days Inn enjoy maid

service every day. How then to explain the bald discrimination being perpetrated against the homeless, who get only half the maid service they might otherwise expect?

We can only hope that, as new plans for homeless shelters in the District are rolled out, this type of odious inequality will be addressed. Perhaps, if he can only be made aware of this ongoing enormity, Bernie Sanders will take up the baton and become a champion for the sacred principle of daily maid service for all. ♦

To the Barricades!

The Scrapbook was distressed to read last week that the French education ministry is planning to "simplify" the language, primarily by getting rid of the circumflex. (Hey, we sweated for hours in the college language lab memorizing all those complexities they now want to bulldoze.) So we were heartened by the immediate eruption of social-media counter-revolutionaries, rallying under the hashtag #JeSuisCirconflexe.

Scrapbook friend (and Weekly Standard contributor) Anne-Elisabeth Moutet mounted the barricades with a column in the *Daily Telegraph* that we enthusiastically endorse. Writes Moutet:

> What fresh hell is this? Gone are the circumflex hats over words such as *maîtresse* (mistress), *hôte* (host), *coût* (cost), *vêtements* (vestments)—the accents were inherited from the Latin "s," which vanished from French but is still present in English. An "oignon," meanwhile, will henceforth be spelled "ognon" because, we are told, the i is redundant: the new word will be simpler for schoolchildren to learn. Verb tense rules are to be "relaxed" along with many logical grammatical rules. "Adults," the official decree loftily allows, "can still use the old spellings"; but the young will now be taught in manuals using this terrifying esperanto of unsurpassed ugliness. . . .
>
> This dumbing down of the French language is supposed, after many other similarly "inclusive" reforms, to help pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds obtain the degrees the Ministry has set targets for and find jobs. The result, of course, is the near illiteracy among undergraduates of all but the most prestigious French universities.
>
> You don't need to be George Orwell to see that there is something sinister in any regime that sacrifices the memory and structure of the language to convenience and political fiat. When the Bolsheviks came to power, one of their first edicts was to do away with several letters of the old Russian alphabet, even though that, in effect, changed the pronunciation of many words: my own Russian grandmother, half a century after the fact, still bitterly rued the disappearance of the chtch every time she came across one in her pre-Revolutionary edition of Lermontov. . . .
>
> Tinkering with such a long-developing organic structure for the sake of facility is not just stupid: it is ugly, actively evil. I'll vote for whichever presidential candidate next year will promise to reverse the . . . decree. In the meantime, they'll pry the last circumflex from my cold, dead hands. ♦

Home News

Not that readers should notice—unless they are old-fashioned enough to send their fan mail to The Scrapbook via the Postal Service—but The Weekly Standard moved its

offices last week. This was not a protracted journey: Our new address is just a couple of blocks east of our old address in downtown Washington, and the transfer was accomplished over the Presidents' Day weekend. Nor should any particular significance be attached to this event: The aging building in which we were located is to be demolished, and *TWS* and our fellow tenants have been obliged to find new homes.

We would not be entirely honest if we suggest this has come without cost. The Weekly Standard offices have been in the same place since we published our first issue in September 1995 and, after 20-plus years, we will miss the old quarters. But the new quarters are not far from the old neighborhood, and in a gleaming new office block with one unexpected amenity: From our office windows we now have a front-row seat for the ongoing demolition of the old *Washington Post* building next door.

The Scrapbook will resist the temptation to suggest that this is some sort of metaphor for the brave new world of journalism. But there will be something very satisfying about the spectacle unfolding before us during the next few months.

And of course, in the Internet age, the location of magazine offices is less pertinent than it used to be. It would, perhaps, be a little odd if, say, the *New Yorker* offices were someplace other than New York; yet, from a reader's perspective, it makes little difference. The *Atlantic*, associated indelibly with Boston for a century-and-a-half, is now in Washington; *Architectural Digest*, which began in Los Angeles as a chronicle of West Coast building design, is now headquartered in Manhattan.

So, as we unpack our books, hang pictures, rearrange furniture, plot new commuting paths, and plug in the various devices essential to contemporary publishing, The Weekly Standard will continue to do what we've always done, and more so. ♦

the weekly Standard

www.weeklystandard.com

William Kristol, *Editor*
Fred Barnes, Terry Eastland, *Executive Editors*
Richard Starr, *Deputy Editor*
Eric Felten, *Managing Editor*
Christopher Caldwell, Andrew Ferguson, Victorino Matus, Lee Smith, *Senior Editors*
Philip Terzian, *Literary Editor*
Kelly Jane Torrance, *Deputy Managing Editor*
Stephen F. Hayes, Mark Hemingway, Matt Labash, Jonathan V. Last, John McCormack, *Senior Writers*
Jay Cost, Michael Warren, *Staff Writers*
Daniel Halper, *Online Editor*
Ethan Epstein, *Associate Editor*
Chris Deaton, Jim Swift, *Deputy Online Editors*
David Bahr, *Assistant Literary Editor*
Priscilla M. Jensen, *Assistant Editor*
Erin Mundahl, *Editorial Assistant*
Shoshana Weissmann, *Web Producer*
Philip Chalk, *Design Director*
Barbara Kyttle, *Design Assistant*
Teri Perry, *Executive Assistant*
Claudia Anderson, Max Boot, Joseph Bottum, Tucker Carlson, Matthew Continetti, Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Reuel Marc Gerecht, Michael Goldfarb, Mary Katharine Ham, Brit Hume, Frederick W. Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Yuval Levin, Tod Lindberg, Robert Messenger, P.J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer, *Contributing Editors*

MediaDC
Ryan McKibben, *Chairman*
Stephen R. Sparks, *President & Chief Operating Officer*
Kathy Schaffhauser, *Chief Financial Officer*
David Lindsey, *Chief Digital Officer*
Catherine Lowe, *Integrated Marketing Director*
Mark Walters, *Sr. V.P. Marketing Services & Advertising*
Paul Anderson, Rich Counts, T. Barry Davis, Andrew Kaumeier, Brooke McIngvale, Jason Roberts, Elizabeth Sheldon, *Advertising Sales*

Advertising inquiries: 202-293-4900
Subscriptions: 1-800-274-7293

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of Clarity Media Group, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in March, fourth week in June, and third week in August) at 1152 15th St., NW, Suite 200, Washington D.C. 20005. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 421203, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1203. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-274-7293. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders and changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 421203, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1203. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-386-597-4378 for subscription inquiries. American Express, Visa/MasterCard payments accepted. Cover price, $4.95. Back issues, $4.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1152 15th Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1152 15th St., NW, Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20005.

My Shawarma

Istanbul

It's not polonium. That was the first thing I thought, my head hanging over a toilet bowl in the bathroom of the Pera Palace, the first European-style luxury hotel in the former capital of the Ottoman Empire. Even with my stomach in convulsions and my brain on fire, it hardly escaped my attention that it was the same hotel where Agatha Christie may have written *Murder on the Orient Express*. Murder, indeed. And of course Istanbul has a reputation as a playground for spies—Bond and Smiley say so. Still, I was pretty sure I hadn't managed to get anyone mad enough to try to kill me, yet. On the other hand, I don't get food poisoning.

I've eaten street food throughout the region—couscous, with what I assumed was lamb, in an open market in Marrakesh; a pasta, rice, onions, lentil bean, and tomato sauce concoction called koshari in Cairo; and shawarma in Beirut. I had mansaf, a lamb dish served with the head of the animal in the middle of a plate of rice, in the Jordanian desert; sheep intestines in the mountains of Lebanon; and camel in upper Egypt.

It couldn't be food poisoning because this is Istanbul, with some of the greatest food in the world. In fact, the first time I visited here a decade ago was to write about food—from classical Ottoman cuisine to the modern Turkish kitchen. My friend Engin Akin is one of the country's great food experts, an anthropologist of Turkish food. Her groundbreaking book *From Tents to the Palace* explains how a once-nomadic tribe that conquered much of the known world perfected its food to create a suitably imperial cuisine. If it was food poisoning, Engin would know. Unfortunately, it was 3 A.M., and I couldn't safely call for another four hours, maybe five.

Perhaps it's because your head is hanging over a toilet, but when you have eaten something wrong, the clock, as your stomach has, turns upside down. To figure out how you got to this place, and how long you will remain this way, the forensic chronology must begin with what you last ate, working backwards.

DAVID CLARK

I had a nightcap at the hotel bar and spoke with Emre the bartender about Ireland, where he studied English. But I ordered Scotch. Maybe that made him mad. I snacked on a few peanuts, and an olive, which actually didn't taste great. I wonder.

For dinner I met a friend in the Beyoglu area, not far from the hotel. We walked along Istiklal, one of the city's major streets, a broad pedestrian thoroughfare, with restaurants, clubs, and nearly as many tourists as locals. For dinner we had a number of cold and hot meze dishes, including fried cheese, beef cheek, and a lamb dish with baba ghannouch and béchamel, which was an especially delicious plate. My friend is a well-known TV journalist, with some controversial opinions. Maybe she was the target.

In the afternoon, I sat in a café and read a guidebook about Mimar Sinan, the chief Ottoman architect who served under four sultans and built so much of Istanbul in the 16th century. I ordered a Turkish coffee and a raspberry éclair. I probably shouldn't have also had the cupcake with the likeness of Yoda rendered in pistachio icing, but as everyone knows, it's the time of *Star Wars*—and Turkish pastries are awesome.

Lunch I ate with a friend down by the Bosphorus, a dark and dramatic body of water that moves like a hunting panther's shoulders and haunches. The direction of the traffic changes daily, one day feeding into the Black Sea, and the next the sea of Marmara, feeding into the Mediterranean. We saw the cargo ships lounging like stray cats and drank raki, Turkey's version of the anise-flavored liquor popular throughout the Mediterranean. There was a simple tomato, cucumber, onion, garlic, and red pepper salad, and then a local sea bass grilled. And more raki.

Ah, I almost forgot! Right before lunch, as we were walking along the water, we stopped for some mussels, plucked straight from the water and sprinkled with lemon. It might very well have been the mussels—though they, too, were delicious, like everything else I'd had that day, starting with the sujuk, a spicy Turkish sausage, for breakfast.

Eureka. I felt better. Surely Hercule Poirot would have grasped the paradox. It was losing my conscious self by thinking of all the food that might have gotten me sick that cured me. I felt much better. Hungry. "Engin," I said when she picked up the phone when I called at eight. "Where are we going to lunch today?"

Lee Smith

the weekly Standard

He's Beatable

We seem to be at a point in the election season where, to quote George Orwell, "restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men." So to restate the obvious: Choosing Donald Trump as the Republican party's nominee would be a mistake. He lacks the character to be a trustworthy president and the convictions to be a conservative one. He's a confidence man who said, a day after winning the New Hampshire primary, "I will be changing very rapidly. I'm capable of changing to anything I want to change to." To invest in this man the accumulated capital and the future aspirations of what is, despite everything, a great political party, the party that carries with it the cause of constitutional government at home and American leadership abroad, would be a grave error.

We've been saying this for a while. Are we merely a *vox clamantis in deserto*? (Not that there's anything wrong with that!) Perhaps. But as a *vox clamantis* in a democracy, we'd prefer to find ourselves in accord with a majority of the Republican party and the American people.

Beware 'talents for low intrigue.'

Whether we shall be in such accord is very much in question. On February 1, the confidence man gained the support of almost a quarter of the caucusgoers in Iowa. On February 9, he won the votes of just over a third of the Republican primary voters in New Hampshire. The good news is that most Republicans in the first two states resisted the allure of Donald Trump. The bad news is that placing second in Iowa and first in New Hampshire makes Trump the frontrunner for the Republican nomination, with the most votes and delegates so far.

Trump can be beaten. Will he be? His opponents have focused more criticism on each other than on him, and some will continue along this path as they move on to South Carolina. Last year's overconfidence in the political class that Trump would naturally fade (and we plead guilty to this misjudgment) has mutated among some into a kind of fatalism that Trump can't be stopped.

This in turn provides an excuse for accommodation to and appeasement of him. Power attracts. Winning works. People like to be on the winning side. Politicians yearn to be on the winning side. Lobbyists make a living by being on the winning side. Donors feel satisfaction from being on the winning side. Pundits want to show they "get it" by embracing the winning side. As Trump himself understands, no one wants to be a "loser."

Well, we stand unapologetically with the New Hampshire losers. They're not perfect. Ted Cruz could appear more appealing and Marco Rubio more intimidating. John Kasich could seem less of a mushy moderate and Jeb Bush less of a blast from the past. But none is an embarrassment. We hope one or more of them defeats Trump in South Carolina and beyond. We hope for this not so we can be on the winning side, but because we're convinced that resisting the blandishments of Donald Trump is right for the party and the country.

It would be easy to blame the nominating process for the situation in which we find ourselves. That process certainly isn't perfect. In describing the original plan for the election of the president in *Federalist* 68, Alexander Hamilton remarked that

> This process of election affords a moral certainty that the office of President will seldom fall to the lot of any man who is not in an eminent degree endowed with the requisite qualifications. Talents for low intrigue, and the little arts of popularity, may alone suffice to elevate a man to the first honors in a single State; but it will require other talents, and a different kind of merit, to establish him in the esteem and confidence of the whole Union, or of so considerable a portion of it as would be necessary to make him a successful candidate for the distinguished office of President of the United States. It will not be too strong to say that there will be a constant probability of seeing the station filled by characters pre-eminent for ability and virtue.

Well, today's nominating process may not live up to Hamilton's vision. But finding fault with the process does no good at this point. Whatever modifications of the nominating process are desirable should be on the agenda for the future. And whatever contingencies of this year's race that have made it harder than it should be to stop Trump provide no excuse for not doing what we can, now, to stop him.

After all, it's not every day that we're given the opportunity to rise above the normal jousting of personal ambitions and partisan politics. It's not every day that we can do something to carry on the work of the Founders. Denying the Republican nomination for the presidency to a man

with "talents for low intrigue and the little arts of popularity" would be a modest but not negligible contribution to vindicating what *Federalist* 39 calls "that honorable determination which animates every votary of freedom to rest all our political experiments on the capacity of mankind for self-government."

—*William Kristol*

Two Centuries of Police Work

Amid the incessant clashes of the campaign season, there is at least one thing that pretty much all of the presidential candidates can agree on.

Bernie Sanders: "Of course the United States must lead. But the United States is not the policeman of the world." Jeb Bush: "We're not going to be the world's policeman, but [we'd] sure as heck better be the world's leader." Chris Christie: "We are not the world's policeman, but we need to stand up and be ready." Carly Fiorina: "We cannot be the world's policeman, but we must be the world leader." Donald Trump: "At some point, we are going to have to stop being the policemen of the world . . . whether we like it or don't like it." Marco Rubio: "I don't think that's necessarily the role that I would advocate."

GETTY IMAGES

In this the candidates side with the incumbent, Barack Obama, who says, "We should not be the world's policeman," even as he employs military forces to kill terrorists in, *inter alia*, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Somalia. They agree, too, with Bill Clinton, who said, "We should not be the world's policeman," as he launched cruise missiles into Afghanistan and Sudan, bombed Iraq, and dispatched troops to Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor. And with George H.W. Bush, who said, "We're not the world's policeman," even as he sent U.S. troops to overthrow Manuel Noriega in Panama, to eject Iraqi forces from Kuwait, to save Kurds from Saddam Hussein's wrath, and to succor Somalis from the ravages of famine. And with Ronald Reagan, who agreed that "it is not the American role to play policeman around the world," even as he bombed Libya, sent peacekeeping forces to Lebanon, invaded Grenada, and sent U.S. naval forces to fight Iranian attempts to close the Persian Gulf. And with Jimmy Carter, who said, "We have no desire to be the world's policeman," even as he promulgated the Carter Doctrine that pledged the United States to defend the free flow of oil in the Middle East and created what became Central Command to do so.

In short, American presidents for decades have been disclaiming any desire to be the "world's policeman" even as they have been taking actions that are pretty much the definition of what a "world policeman" would do. It is the foreign policy that dare not speak its name, but it is one that the United States has been following in one form or another since the early years of the republic. Think, for example, of the Barbary Wars (1801-1805, 1815) waged to protect commercial shipping from pirates based in North Africa. That was America policing the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

The United States long saw itself as having a special duty to police its "backyard," the Caribbean region. In 1904 President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed what became known as the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine: "Chronic wrongdoing . . . may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation," he announced, "and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power." This "international police power" justified dozens of American military interventions, including long-term occupations of Haiti (1915-1934) and the Dominican Republic (1916-1924) to stabilize those turbulent countries.

The U.S. policing role went global in 1941 when President Franklin Roosevelt joined Prime Minister Winston Churchill to issue the Atlantic Charter, pledging to fight for goals such as giving "all peoples" the right to "choose the form of government under which they will live," to "see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them," to create a peace "which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries," to "enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance," and to disarm aggressor nations.

While the language of the Atlantic Charter was high-minded, its issuance was rooted in stark considerations of national security. FDR realized that by abjuring its policing

role in the 1930s, the United States had given free license to predatory states such as Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. He vowed not to repeat that mistake in the future.

After World War II, the United States had fresh impetus to police the world, because it confronted the threat of Soviet expansionism. During the Cold War, hundreds of thousands of American troops were stationed in Europe and Asia, and the United States took responsibility for the security of nations such as Greece and Turkey, France and Germany, South Korea and Japan, South Vietnam and the Philippines. There were few corners of the world where the United States did not send its diplomats, spies, and soldiers to stymie the advance of communism, real or perceived.

One might have thought that the end of the Cold War would end the American global policing project—many did think that—but the disorder of the 1990s showed otherwise. That decade saw U.S. troops being sent from Kosovo to Somalia. Since 9/11, the U.S. impetus to police the world has only been enhanced for fear that if we leave a vacuum, it will be filled by terrorists—as has indeed happened in countries from Libya to Syria.

Few today imagine that we can simply abandon all or even most of our international obligations without compromising our own safety. U.S. military forces patrol all the world's oceans, deter aggression on the part of states such as China and Russia, fight terrorists and pirates, combat nuclear proliferation and drug trafficking, and even deploy regularly to aid countries caught in natural disasters. You might say we are the world's social worker in addition to being its policeman—and there's nothing wrong with that.

Actually, it's something that we need to do in our own self-interest, because if we don't do it, who will? China? Russia? Iran? We can't count on any of those countries to fill the vacuum and would not be happy if they did. But if nobody polices the world, the result is likely to be disorder that will threaten the security of the United States and our allies. Indeed, that's already happened in Syria: Because of President Obama's refusal to intervene in the Syrian civil war, millions of refugees are swamping nearby states and an Islamic State has been established that is inspiring terrorist attacks from Paris to San Bernardino. With defense spending consuming only 3.5 percent of U.S. GDP, it's far cheaper to police the world ourselves than to suffer the consequences of chaos.

That is something presidents of both parties have long realized, even if they haven't leveled with the American people about what they were doing. It would be nice if someone in high office, or seeking it, would explain why, yes, we need to be the world's policeman. But, whether the mission is made explicit or not, it is one the United States will perform for as long as it remains a great power.

—Max Boot

Grim Tidings for Hillary

They don't like her. They really don't like her.

BY JONATHAN V. LAST

Manchester, N.H.

Hillary Clinton's loss to Bernie Sanders in the New Hampshire primary wasn't as bad as she'd feared. It was worse. Sanders's margin of victory—60 percent to 39 percent—was the largest ever by a Democrat who wasn't a sitting president. It was a come-from-behind win: Eight months ago, Sanders was at 9 percent and Clinton held a 46-point advantage. And Sanders overperformed the polls. Only 1 of the last 15 polls had him above 60 percent; the *Real Clear Politics* average in New Hampshire had him at 54.5 percent going into the vote.

Then there are the crosstabs. The exit polling for Clinton was brutal. Sanders won men by 35 points; he won women by 11. He won voters under the age of 30 by 67 points. People expect that of Sanders and his children's crusade. Clinton took home senior citizens, 54 percent to 45 percent. People expect that of Clinton's boomers. But in the big band of middle-aged Democrats, ages 45 to 64 (who made up 42 percent of the electorate), Sanders beat Clinton 54 percent to 45 percent. He beat her among Democrats with a high school diploma or less; he beat her among Democrats with postgraduate degrees. Among people who'd voted in a Democratic primary before, Sanders won by 16 points; among first-time voters, he won by 57. He won self-identified "moderate" voters by 20 points.

Clinton made gun control a substantial part of her pitch in New Hampshire. Sanders won voters who own guns by 40 points. But he won voters who don't own guns by 14. He even won voters who said that terrorism was their number one concern.

At lower right: 'Settle for Hillary'

The biggest problem for Clinton, however, came in the candidate-perception categories. The second-most important quality voters said they wanted in a candidate was someone who "cares." Sanders won these voters by 65 points. The most important quality people said they wanted was "honesty." Sanders took those people home 92 to 6. Look at that again. When asked "Is Clinton honest and trustworthy?" 53 percent of all voters—not just Sanders voters, but everyone casting a Democratic ballot—said "no."

The final insult came from the raw vote totals. The hardest thing to do in politics is convert a new voter. The easiest thing is to retain an old one. A voter who has previously pulled the lever for a candidate is the easiest person to get back on your side. In 2008, Hillary Clinton got 112,404 votes in New Hampshire. If she had brought all of those voters with her, she still would have lost to Sanders this time around. But this year she got just 95,242. That's 17,000 voters—1 out of every 7!—who refused to come back and vote for Clinton again.

On the ground in New Hampshire, it was obvious why Democrats were resisting Clinton. Her campaign is offering eight years of trench warfare. Everything is about "fighting." To be sure, she's promising to fight the "bad" half of America—those evil, nasty Republicans. But her entire pitch is like a recruiting poster for World War I: *Vote for me and we'll take this country back one trench at a time, whatever the cost!* It's hard to get excited for the political equivalent of the Battle of the Somme.

Sanders, on the other hand, is offering a revolutionary vision: He wants to turn America into Scandinavia. But in Sanders's view, the revolution won't require much of a fight, because once The People are engaged, they'll impose their will on the handful of corporate oligarchs who have set up the current, corrupt system. In Sanders's view, outside of a tiny number of super-elites, we're all brothers and sisters. And no matter how conservative you might be, the truth is that Scandinavia *is* lovely. Who among us wouldn't want paid maternity leave, shorter work weeks, free state-college tuition, and locally sourced dairy products?

TOP: THOMAS FLUHARTY

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

In the face of this, the Clinton campaign has pinned its hopes on two theories. The first is that Democrats will eventually settle for her. Literally: At an event in Hudson, New Hampshire, a guy on the stage behind Clinton wore a T-shirt saying "Settle for Hillary." There were two rays of sunshine supporting this theory in the New Hampshire exit polls. The first is that Sanders and Clinton were neck and neck among registered Democrats—49 percent each. The second is that 62 percent of the voters said they'd be satisfied if Clinton wins the nomination. (To put this in context, 50 percent of New Hampshire Republican voters said they'd be satisfied if Trump wins the nomination.)

The other theory of the Clinton campaign is salvation at the hands of black and Hispanic voters. They assume, as a matter of course, that Sanders will not perform well with blacks and Hispanics and that Clinton's margins with these groups will be enough to drag her to the nomination, eventually.

This theory will be tested, first at the Nevada caucus on February 20 and then a week later in South Carolina's primary. Clinton thinks she can reassemble her 2008 coalition, but with the addition of Obama's minority voters. If she does, she will win comfortably. But the numbers from Iowa and New Hampshire suggest Clinton has lost a great deal of support from 2008. Gone are her "moderate" supporters—the Jacksonian Democrats of Kentucky and Pennsylvania who powered her to victories in Appalachia. Splitting minority voters with Sanders won't be enough for Clinton; she'll have to win them decisively. And even then, the delegate race will be a close-run thing.

For Clinton, the long, hard, trench warfare doesn't start with fights against Republicans. It starts now. Her vision is that she will grind her way to victory over Bernie Sanders, one demographically advantageous state at a time. And a combination of her machine, her money, and her superdelegates will secure the nomination by late spring.

And she wonders why Democrats are resisting. ♦

A Draft for Women?

A surprising split among Republicans.

BY JOHN MCCORMACK

SCOTT OLSON / GETTY

Female Marines finish a 10-kilometer hike carrying 55-pound packs at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, February 22, 2013.

Should women be required to register for the Selective Service in case there's ever a draft again? It's an obvious question now that the Obama administration has ruled—over the objections of the Marine Corps—that all combat roles must be open to women.

In testimony to Congress February 2, the commandant of the Marine Corps and the chief of staff of the Army both said women should sign up for the Selective Service just as young men are required to do: "Now that the restrictions that exempted women from [combat jobs] don't exist, then you're a citizen of a United States," Gen. Robert B. Neller, the Marine Corps commandant, told a Senate panel. "It doesn't mean you're going to serve, but you go register."

The issue was injected into the Republican presidential race during the February 6 GOP presidential debate, when three candidates—Marco Rubio, Jeb Bush, and Chris Christie—were asked if women should register for the Selective Service. All three said yes.

"I have no problem whatsoever with people of either gender serving in combat so long as the minimum requirements necessary to do the job are not compromised," Rubio said. "I do believe that Selective Service should be opened up for both men and women in case a draft is ever instituted."

The next day, Ted Cruz came out

John McCormack is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

as a voice of dissent among GOP contenders: "I didn't have an opportunity to respond to that particular question," Cruz said. "But I have to admit as I was sitting there listening to that conversation, my reaction was, 'Are you guys nuts?'"

Cruz denounced the idea as dangerous political correctness and said "the idea that we would draft our daughters to forcibly bring them into the military and put them in close combat I think is wrong. It is immoral, and if I'm president, we ain't doing it."

Heading into the South Carolina primary, the issue could help Cruz peel away support from Bush and Rubio. A national poll conducted by Rasmussen found that 53 percent of Republicans oppose requiring women to register for the Selective Service. The issue may have even more resonance in conservative South Carolina.

But it's unclear just how much of an advantage Cruz really has. Questions about a draft are highly theoretical, and lawmakers will likely act to ensure that no changes are made without congressional approval.

Senator Mike Lee of Utah is drafting a bill that will prevent the executive branch or the courts from changing current law. "We simply can't trust this president or the courts to honor the law and protect our daughters," Lee said in a statement. "We need new legislation making clear that if the United States is going to change this policy, Congress must be the one to do it." Congress would then have the authority to prevent women from being drafted into combat units, should a draft ever be instituted. Rubio and Cruz will cosponsor the Lee bill, according to their spokesmen.

On the real and immediate issue of opening up combat infantry roles to women, Cruz and Rubio essentially have had the same position. When I asked Rubio last October about a Marine Corps study showing that integrating women into combat units harmed unit cohesion and performance, he replied that the Armed Forces "should be able to perform at peak efficiency" and "if there's evidence that any sort of change would undermine that, it's something we should be deeply concerned about. I don't believe that the military should be used to make social impact statements."

But then Rubio hedged, saying, "as you've seen through the Ranger program and others, it is clear that women already serve a role in combat. They do in the Air Force, increasingly in the Army. We interacted with them during my visit to Afghanistan. They're playing a critical role in combat operations that are occurring."

The Obama administration ruled in December that all combat roles must be open to women, and in January Ted Cruz told the Center for Military Readiness that the Marine Corps request for exceptions "must be reconsidered." He added that as "long as the requirements are fair and universally applied, the military must always place the best person for the job at hand, whether male or female, but we cannot let political correctness compel the military to lower its standards."

Yes, physical standards—such as whether female members of the infantry would be at a disadvantage in hand-to-hand combat or would struggle to carry a wounded 230-pound infantryman to safety—matter. But it also matters a great deal that gender integration harms social bonding and unit cohesion.

In other words, Rubio and Cruz both believe that as long as physical standards aren't lowered, they have no problem with the full gender integration of the infantry.

But critics have two main objections. The first is that political pressure will inevitably lead to the lowering of physical standards, despite current promises to the contrary from the Obama administration and Republican presidential candidates.

The second objection is equally significant. Yes, physical standards—such as whether female members of the infantry would be at a disadvantage in hand-to-hand combat or would struggle to carry a wounded 230-pound infantryman to safety—matter. But it also matters a great deal that gender integration harms social bonding and unit cohesion.

Lance Cpl. Chris Augello was one of the Marines who participated in the Marine Corps study that found that exclusively male units outperformed gender-integrated units on 93 of 134 battlefield tasks. Augello "arrived at the integrated task force believing that women should get a shot at service in the infantry as long as they could meet existing standards," the *Marine Corps Times* reported. But by the time the study was done, he had changed his mind: "The female variable in this social experiment has wrought a fundamental change in the way male NCOs think, act and lead," Augello wrote in a 13-page paper he presented to Marine leaders and shared with the *Marine Corps Times*. Those changes, he wrote, are "sadly for the worse, not the better."

Put young men and women together day and night for months in close quarters: No amount of social conditioning will prevent some from becoming romantically involved with each other. No amount of social conditioning will teach men to ignore their natural instinct to protect women. And the problems that necessarily arise from gender differences in this context—favoritism, jealousy, resentment—will lead to much worse consequences in infantry units that face more stress and danger than support units do.

If Ted Cruz wants to have a debate about the far-off possibility of women being drafted, he's free to do that. But if he, or any other candidate, really wants to stand up for the military, he'll speak out against the Obama administration's decision, which, for the sake of gender equality, is weakening the infantry and needlessly endangering the lives of American troops. ♦

Veterans Shouldn't Trust Trump

The billionaire's 'love' for them is recent, shallow, and insincere. BY AARON MACLEAN

If there's one thing Donald Trump wants veterans to know, it's that he loves us, he's going to take care of us, and by the way, he's going to rebuild the military so that it's "so big, so strong, so powerful, nobody is going to mess with us." Going into South Carolina—a state where something like a quarter of voters in past Republican primaries had served in the armed forces, where there are eight military bases, and where there are tens of thousands of military retirees—it's important for Trump that veterans trust him.

Before vets succumb to Trump's blandishments, though, we need to realize that his promises are as self-interested as those from any other politician—and, if possible, even less genuine. Consider that as recently as 2004, before he felt a need for their votes, Trump was pursuing his own private jihad against veterans in New York City who had the temerity to operate as street vendors on Fifth Avenue—which is to say, in front of Trump Tower.

New York had long offered licenses for veterans to ply this sort of trade. But Trump, as the *New York Daily News* reported, found the veterans unsightly. "Whether they are veterans or not, they should not be allowed to sell on this most important and prestigious shopping street," he wrote to Michael Bloomberg, mayor at the time. "The image of New York City will suffer. . . . I hope you can stop this very deplorable situation before it is too late." Fifth Avenue was too important and prestigious a spot—the kind of place a billionaire might live!—for vets to try to earn a (legal and honest) living.

This attempt to clear the veterans off his street was not a one-off affair. In 1991, Trump sent a similar letter to an influential member of the New York State Assembly, asking, "Do we allow Fifth Ave., one of the world's finest and most luxurious shopping districts, to be turned into an outdoor flea market, clogging and seriously downgrading the area?" So, for well over a decade, Trump's position on lending a helping hand to veterans was that it was fine, so long as it didn't offend his eyes or hurt his bottom line.

And vice versa—this year, at least

What a difference a run for the presidency can make! To Chuck Todd, earlier this campaign season, Trump lamented the condition of all the wounded vets he sees in New York City: "And they're walking all over the streets of New York, all over the streets of every city, without arms, without legs and worse than that. And I would take care of them. They paid a big price." How would he take care of them? Famously, by taking ISIS's oil and giving them the proceeds: "It's okay. We're going to circle [Iraq]. We're going to circle. We're going to have so much money, and what I would do with the money that we make, which would be tremendous, I would take care of the soldiers that were killed, the families of the soldiers that were killed, the soldiers, the wounded warriors that are—see, I love them."

If Trump were serious about wooing veterans, you might think he would have the grace to propose a scheme that might actually come to pass. The notion that Trump could actually send the U.S. military to Iraq to seize the oil there, then give the money to wounded warriors, is about as ridiculous as the notion that Trump's love for veterans is anything other than a convenient and very recent affectation. As John McCormack pointed out on this magazine's website ("For Years, Trump's Charity Gave Veterans Little More Than Peanuts," Jan. 27), Trump's ostentatious hosting of a fundraiser for wounded vets in Iowa, in lieu of attending a Fox News debate, elicited surprise from veterans' charities, who had little experience of any support from the man. Indeed, in recent years, Trump gave significantly more money to the Clintons than he ever did to veterans' organizations.

Maybe Trump hopes all of these declarations of love and all of these promises of money will make veterans forget or forgive the fact that, rather than serve in Vietnam, he did everything a young rich kid could to get out of the obligation. First, he sought four separate education deferments. The *Washington Post* reported that during his second year of college, Trump had an armed forces physical that found him fit for duty—and another shortly after graduation in 1968 that arrived at the same conclusion. But then, in September of that year, a new physical found that he had developed "bone spurs" in one or

BILL PUGLIANO / GETTY

Aaron MacLean, a former Marine Corps infantry officer, is managing editor of the Washington Free Beacon.

both of his feet. At one point Trump told reporters he couldn't remember which foot it was. Later he said it was both feet.

Trump has also claimed the reason he wasn't drafted is because of a high lottery number assigned in 1969 to those with his birthday. While it's true that those born on the same day as Trump did indeed get assigned a high number in 1969, it appears that Trump's medical deferment would have gotten him out of serving anyway. Trump has said he feels "a little guilty" about the fact that he didn't serve—but he also told Michael D'Antonio, a recent biographer, that because his wealthy father had sent him to a private military school growing up, "I felt that I was in the military in the true sense because I dealt with those people."

My impression is that most people who have served "in the true sense" would hesitate before they mocked a political opponent because he became a prisoner of war. "He's not a war hero," Trump said last year of John McCain, who could have been exchanged early because his father was an admiral, but who refused, suffering years of captivity and torture for his principled stand. McCain's refusal to make a deal with his captors must be incomprehensible to a dealmaker like Trump. "He's a war hero because he was captured," Trump said. "I like people who weren't captured." Someone who has served "in the true sense" would not have said of up-armored Humvees captured by ISIS: "Armor plated, top, bottom, all over, if a bomb goes off our wounded warriors—instead of losing their legs, their arms, worse, they're okay. They go for a little ride upward and they come down." Several thousand American troops have been killed by IEDs since 2001. Quite a few were in up-armored Humvees when they died.

As Trump directs all of this flattery, all of this love, all of these vague promises of money for veterans in South Carolina, those who have actually been in the military should keep in mind that Trump's real concern, now as always, is what's in it for him. ♦

NEWSCOM

Will Alabama Send in a Marine?

Sen. Richard Shelby faces a challenge.

BY QUIN HILLYER

Mobile

Can an ex-Marine's "*Oorah!*" defeat an incumbent's moolah? That's the question Marine veteran Jonathan McConnell poses to Alabama's veteran U.S. senator, Richard Shelby. McConnell (no relation to Kentucky's senior senator) has a remarkable résumé for a 33-year-old: combat veteran, businessman, and lawyer. Now he's challenging Shelby in the Republican primary, accusing the senator of being a career politician.

Shelby in a Capitol corridor, February 4, 2016

No doubt Shelby is a Washington, D.C., fixture. First elected to Congress in 1978, Shelby won his Senate seat in 1986. Now in his fifth term, if reelected he would be 88 at the end of his next. But even in an antiestablishment year, Shelby is no soft target. His voting record is solidly conservative and he dutifully tends his home front. That makes him less vulnerable than other superannuated Republican senators—Richard Lugar, anyone?—who in recent elections have been defeated, or just scared silly, by conservative primary challengers. And then there is the blunt force of the money at Shelby's disposal: He began the race with $19 million in his campaign coffers, a mind-boggling sum for Alabama, a midsized state with low media costs.

But for all the challenges he faces in taking on Shelby, McConnell isn't exactly a political neophyte. He was reared in a political household: His parents are Republican activists and his father, Roger, was a GOP state chairman who closely aligned himself with conservative senator Jeff Sessions. (Sessions, though, has endorsed Shelby, which suggests a GEICO ad: *If you're a Republican senator, you endorse your home-state GOP colleague. It's what you do.*)

McConnell learned to campaign in college. At Auburn University he ran for president of a student government dominated by fraternity and sorority members. Though not himself in a frat, McConnell won.

By the time he graduated, McConnell was on track to go to law school. Instead, he volunteered for Marine officer-training school. Deployed twice to Iraq, McConnell led a platoon in tough combat near Fallujah in 2006. Their mission: going house to house searching for terrorists and militant fighters.

Retiring as a captain, McConnell returned home to attend University of Alabama law school. That's where he was when he learned pirates had hijacked the Maersk freighter *Alabama* (events later dramatized by Tom Hanks in *Captain Phillips*). Astonished that riff-raff in skiffs could seize a large merchant vessel, McConnell launched a "private maritime security" company, Meridian Global Consulting, deploying ex-Marines to secure commercial ships in treacherous waters. McConnell did this while studying to be a lawyer and still managed to finish law school a semester early.

The leathernecks who have worked for McConnell's company show great loyalty to him, even after they leave: "You learn in the military

Quin Hillyer is a veteran conservative columnist living in Mobile, Alabama.

that a good leader takes care of those under his command before taking care of his own needs," says Nick Pronesti, an ex-Marine who guarded ships for Meridian before leaving to work for a Mobile manufacturer. "Jonathan does that, always." Pronesti specifically cited McConnell's intense focus on employee safety and his diligence in meeting payroll, even when Meridian's clients were late paying.

McConnell will need that tenacity for what many political analysts consider a foolhardy race against Shelby—and not just because of the incumbent's $19 million war-chest. Seeking his sixth Senate term, Shelby is as entrenched as he is well-funded.

Shelby's closest race was his first Senate run in 1986, when he was still a Democrat. He challenged the Republican incumbent, stalwart conservative and Vietnam war hero Jeremiah Denton. It was a horrible year for Republicans, and Shelby squeaked out a win. For eight years Shelby remained a Democrat (back when there were such things as conservative Democrats), at times voting along party lines rather than ideological ones, as with his vote against Robert Bork for the Supreme Court. But the day after Republicans captured Congress in 1994, Shelby switched parties.

Though sometimes disappointing on spending—Shelby savors pork projects; buildings on five separate college campuses are named after him—the senator's voting record lately has been solidly conservative. He has a 99-percent approval rating from Heritage Action; his lifetime American Conservative Union rating, though, is a less-impressive 76. He's been known to take lonely conservative stands. Years before the 2008 mortgage meltdown, Shelby was the most outspoken senator calling for reform of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. He was among the 25 senators who rejected the 2008 financial bailouts.

"There are a lot of reasons national conservatives should support me," Shelby says. "There are a lot of things I can do and will be doing for the conservative cause. I know how it works, and I've been part of it. And it is both that I have the experience and that I'm in a position to help carry out [real conservative victories] in a way others can't."

Shelby would remain Senate banking chairman if reelected, and he says he would use his committee to "dispense with" the Export-Import Bank once and for all (he has been among its most consistent critics). And he would use banking leverage to torpedo Obama's Iran deal, reimposing sanctions on the mullahs' regime.

On seemingly every TV and radio station Shelby's ads brag around the clock about him visiting all of Alabama's 67 counties every single year: He knows the 'back roads,' and he 'stands up to Obama every single day.' They are good ads, but their relentless repetition and increasingly cornpone quality are brewing a backlash.

Now that Shelby finally faces a primary challenge (three other, lower-profile Republicans also are running; on the Democratic side, there are two no-names in the race), Shelby is not shy about spending the campaign cash he has hoarded over the years. On seemingly every TV and radio station Shelby's ads brag around the clock about him visiting all of Alabama's 67 counties every single year: He knows the "back roads," and he "stands up to Obama every single day."

They are good ads—the first two or three times they air. But their relentless repetition and increasingly cornpone quality are brewing a backlash. Alabama's most popular political cartoonist, J.D. Crowe, hilariously portrayed Shelby's ads as a kind of zombie apocalypse. Noting all the idyllic shots of Shelby's vehicle traversing those "back roads," statewide political columnist Kyle Whitmire derided it as "the most beautiful commercial for a Ford Explorer you've ever seen."

All that ad spending may be an obvious strength, but it may also suggest a weakness. Mobile County Republican party chairman John Skipper isn't picking sides in the primary contest, but he says, "To me, Shelby's aggressiveness with media does indicate that he may be feeling like he's somewhat vulnerable."

Still, the ads do convey an essential truth: Shelby, at age 81, maintains his work ethic and isn't taking reelection for granted.

McConnell, meanwhile, is stumping on all the conservative hot buttons—anti-debt, anti-abortion, anti-immigration, pro-defense—but only in passing, as if he assumes everybody knows where he stands. His recurring theme is one that has had resonance in the broader election this year: "America is in crisis," and "career politicians" can't or won't do anything about it: "I think for the first time in a very long time our country is not safe, and we've left future generations bankrupt," he says. "Career politicians have failed us. We need change agents in Washington, D.C., and Richard Shelby has proven time and time again that he's not one."

McConnell is hardly lacking for self-confidence: "I've never failed at anything important in my life," he says quite believably, leaving the impression that he walks the line between overeager ambition and patriotic impatience with Washington's drift. "I think his military career, his track record, his personality are working well in meeting people and in gaining more support," says Skipper, the Mobile County chairman. "But I'd rather be in Senator Shelby's position. The power of incumbency sometimes is all you need."

Alabama voters right now have a Senate tag-team: One senator, Sessions, takes the bold ideological stands while the other, Shelby, usually votes right while working the insider's game for the state. The voters now have a choice whether to keep that arrangement or scuttle it with someone eager to clean out entrenched Washington interests, lobby by lobby. ♦

Let Them Go Bankrupt

The federal student loan guarantee isn't all it's cracked up to be. BY IKE BRANNON

Most student loans in the United States are guaranteed by the federal government. The main difference between private loans and the guaranteed loans is that the former usually come with a higher interest rate: Students generally don't seek these out until they cannot access guaranteed loans any longer. However, neither type can normally be discharged via bankruptcy.

The problem with government-backed loans is that the guarantee creates a moral hazard of the same sort that bedeviled mortgage markets before and during the Great Recession. A college can treat a guaranteed student loan as a sure thing with no attendant obligations: The school admits the student, cashes the loan check, and need not concern itself with whether he graduates or gets a job that allows him to pay the loan back.

Recently the Department of Education proposed making it easier to discharge private student debt via bankruptcy. While the knee-jerk reaction is that doing so will be disadvantageous for students who need to borrow money, that's not necessarily true. Doing such a thing—especially if we expanded it to all student loans—would drive up interest rates. But it would not be a bad outcome if students were forced to make better college choices and economize on how much they borrow. It would likely also increase graduation rates and reduce the total amount of student debt.

That colleges now lack a financial incentive to push their students to succeed is just part of the problem: Because the student cannot discharge student loan debt via bankruptcy, neither the lender nor the college need worry about default. Admitting (or lending to) students at an institution where they are unlikely to succeed is a regular occurrence that goes well beyond the suspect trade schools and for-profit colleges.

Another candidate for Chapter 11

A common—but mistaken—contention is that public universities lose money on each student and thus have no financial incentive to expand their enrollment. It may be true that, in the aggregate, tuition does not entirely cover expenses at most schools—endowment funds and grants from the state and federal government also defray costs at most colleges—but it's irrelevant: Additional students, at the margin, can be quite lucrative for a well-managed university.

The cost of adding one more student to a university is close to zero: The enrollment in each of his classes goes up by one, a previously empty dorm bed is filled, and the cafeteria throws out less food. Colleges know this and work hard to fill their classes. It's why enrollment in most colleges and universities has crept upward during the last two decades: Colleges have a high fixed cost but the variable costs are much lower.

Some colleges take it even further. Both of the state universities at which I once taught offered a special three-semester program for high-risk students whose test scores and high school performance suggested that their potential to succeed in a university setting was low. The classes were taught not by Ph.D.s but by graduate students or retired high school teachers, paid well below what any professor made. That made sense because the curriculum was far from being college-level rigor: The three semesters of math culminated in algebra I, something their classmates outside of their program had probably completed in 8th or 9th grade. The students in these special programs lived together, ate meals together, and studied together, remaining perpetually apart from the rest of the student population. And within a semester or two of joining the rest of the student body they failed out together as well: At each school only a handful of students from the special program managed to graduate.

Their education was funded mainly with a combination of Pell grants and guaranteed student loans that more than covered the modest additional costs of admitting this cohort. While the colleges boasted that these programs were a manifestation of their concern for children from marginal neighborhoods and weak high schools, they were also cash cows.

Whether this was a societally beneficial investment is dubious. Did the kids get anything from their college experience? We know that attending college even without graduating does boost incomes—having it on a résumé can open doors. Later on in life a few of them did reenroll and complete college somewhere else. And of course, college can be fun. But were these experiences worth the student-loan

DAVID MCNEW / GETTY

Ike Brannon is a visiting fellow at the Cato Institute.

obligations they were left with? It may be an overstatement to say these students were simply being exploited by the university, but it is a little too close for comfort.

If we made student debt dischargeable in bankruptcy (like nearly all other debt) then the banks that make these loans would do their best to lend to people who have a reasonable chance at succeeding at the educational institution they choose. The data support this: Private student loans, which are easier to discharge in bankruptcy than government student loans, have lower default rates.

Would an expanded market for private student loans deny the poor and disadvantaged a college education? Not by a long shot—what it would do is nudge marginal students towards institutions that are less expensive and where they have a better chance at succeeding.

Senator Elizabeth Warren recently wondered why minority students are much more likely to leave college with debt than other students. Her solution—which is simply to bail out students with loans they can't easily repay—doesn't fix the inherent problem, although to be fair, she's at least asking the right questions. Adam Levitin, a professor at Georgetown Law School, has suggested that the fact that student loans guaranteed by the federal government have stronger bankruptcy protection than private loans makes them superior to those issued by private lenders, because they charge the same interest rate to all borrowers, which reduces potential income inequality.

It's a position that is mystifying. The bankruptcy exclusion for most student debt is bad policy and leads to lousy outcomes. The market discipline that would be engendered by making all student loans dischargeable via bankruptcy would result in students making better educational decisions while giving heretofore insulated colleges a desperately needed dose of market discipline. It's something we ought to encourage in this day and age, when the cumulative student debt exceeds $1 trillion. ♦

Curious Fiscal Sense

You'll never guess who's targeting federal disaster spending. BY ELI LEHRER

Politicians of both parties have learned in recent decades the perils of being seen handling a disaster poorly—as was the case with George W. Bush following Hurricane Katrina—as well as the potential dividends that come from handling a disaster well. Bill Clinton, after all, helped turn around his presidency with a resolute response to the Oklahoma City bombing.

It's global warming, Elmer—I know it.

But the politics of disaster are almost always bad news for taxpayers. After all, few leaders suffer at the polls for spending *too much* on disaster recovery, and the regular budget-vetting process tends to break down when it comes to emergency appropriations. After natural catastrophes or terrorist attacks, the incentive is to keep the largess flowing. The problem with disaster costs isn't just that they're wasteful; they also reduce incentives for communities to prepare for the next big storm or other calamity.

But two recent initiatives by the Obama administration could actually help put the brakes on out-of-control federal disaster spending. The first—an executive order handed down last year ordering agencies to adopt more stringent building and siting standards in flood-prone areas—received a cool reception from some on Capitol Hill, who complained that it would kill some federal projects. Meanwhile, a new disaster "deductible" proposal for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's public assistance program could save taxpayers billions by encouraging states to invest in appropriate disaster planning and risk mitigation. Whether it faces similar pushback may depend on how skillfully it is framed.

Eli Lehrer is president of the R Street Institute.

According to the Center for American Progress, between 2011 and 2013, federal disaster spending totaled nearly $140 billion. While CAP's number includes some expenses, like drought costs, that may stretch the definition of "disaster," it is a good ballpark estimate. And many expenses are off the books. For example, the National Flood Insurance Program owes the Treasury more than $22 billion—including more than $8 billion rung up during 2012's Superstorm Sandy—that every expert believes Congress eventually will have to forgive.

This growth in disaster costs is likely to accelerate, as Americans continue to move to disaster-prone areas. To take just one example, before World War II, hurricane- and flood-prone Florida was the least-populated state in the South, with just 1.9 million people. Last year, it crossed the 20 million mark, passing New York to become the third-most-populous state.

Floods account for roughly half of all disaster costs and 80 percent of all disaster declarations. Obama's building standards order could thus save a big chunk of the $260 billion the federal government has spent on flooding over the past 30 years. It would have no impact on private property or even on local governments' own spending. It would simply require that federal building projects meet certain flood-control benchmarks. Eight Gulf Coast Republican senators signed letters opposing the new standards, but they went forward, more-or-less intact, as part of the recent budget deal.

The more recent FEMA proposal, published in the January 20 edition of the *Federal Register*, would go further still in stemming the tide of federal aid

by giving local governments a stronger incentive to prepare. While details remain to be worked out, the proposed program changes would ask that states, territories, and tribes do things like set aside their own disaster funds, improve building standards, or purchase privately backed insurance if they hope to receive full levels of federal aid in the wake of a disaster. Those local governments that fail to prepare adequately would be subject to a "deductible." If properly implemented, the plan would create strong incentives for underprepared localities to get their affairs in order, as they no longer would enjoy the certainty of a generous federal bailout in the event of a disaster.

But it certainly does not help the prospects for this sensible plan that, as with the earlier building standard order, the Obama administration has sought to sell it as a "climate change" measure. While there's little doubt that such initiatives *would* help to deal with climate change arising from human activity, that's far from the only, or even the most pressing, reason to support them.

In fact, a review of the literature conducted by the Berkeley Earth Group makes it clear that the jury is still out on the link between greenhouse gas emissions and most natural disasters. Obviously, there's no causal link between climate change and earthquakes (although some environmentalists have actually tried to claim there is). And even when it comes to more common events, like tornadoes, evidence of a direct link is close to nonexistent.

There *is* ample evidence that increased coastal floods have resulted from sea-level rise and that official heat waves would almost certainly be less common if there were no greenhouse gas emissions. But linkages between other disasters and climate change are harder to tease out. For example, while climate models do provide reason to speculate that hurricane formations and/or intensity might increase in the future as temperatures rise, there's much less certainty about the frequency of storms making landfall. (Florida is now in the midst of one of its longest-ever periods without a direct strike from a major storm.) Meanwhile, analysis by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration found the 2011-2014 California droughts—which environmentalists largely blamed on climate change—were "dominated by natural variability."

If the link between climate change and natural disasters is often overstated, the fiscal case for addressing runaway disaster spending is compelling. More people will almost certainly continue to move into disaster-prone areas no matter what happens. The new building standards and proposed disaster deductibles would cut federal spending and create incentives to prepare. To be sure, they're "tough love" measures that an administration seeking a second term probably wouldn't risk politically. But they should be embraced as a rare outbreak of fiscal common sense from an administration that will go down in history mostly for its profligacy. ♦

Rubio Plays Defense

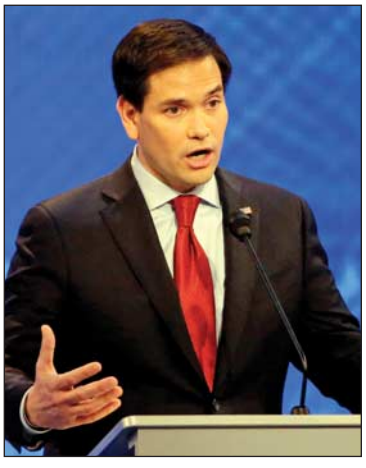
Can he bounce back?

By Stephen F. Hayes

Nashua, N.H.

There are better ways to start a day. Thirty-six hours after the primetime presidential debate in which Marco Rubio repeatedly sought to dispel the fiction that Barack Obama doesn't know what he's doing, Rubio stood near the long countertop of Norton's Classic Café, surrounded by campaign aides and reporters and the metal-on-metal clatter of a short-order kitchen, staring into a television camera that would broadcast his smiling face live to televisions across the country.

As the interview began, the earpiece in Rubio's right ear started replaying the bizarre exchange between Rubio and Governor Chris Christie from Saturday night.



'He knows exactly what he's doing.'

Rubio: And let's dispel once and for all with this fiction that Barack Obama doesn't know what he is doing. He knows exactly what he's doing. . . . But I would add this. Let's dispel with this fiction that Barack Obama doesn't know what he is doing. He knows exactly what he's doing. . . . So here is the bottom line. This notion that Barack Obama doesn't know what he's doing is just not true.

Christie: There it is.

Rubio: He knows exactly what he's—

Christie: There it is. The memorized 25-second speech.

Rubio: Oh, that's the—that's the reason why this campaign—

Christie: There it is, everybody.

Rubio: —is so important.

In all, Rubio would give some version of the dispel-this-fiction line four times. The same clip had been played on a virtual loop across cable and broadcast television networks since the debate. Rubio, wearing a blue suit, white shirt, and pink tie, stood expressionless as he heard once again the moment his detractors hoped would bring his promising political career to an abrupt and premature end.

When the clip was finished, Rubio listened to *CBS This Morning* host Norah O'Donnell inform viewers that the "reviews were rough on Senator Rubio with the word 'choke' used several times."

Good morning to you, Senator Rubio.

Rubio took two questions from O'Donnell on his debate answer and struck a defiant note. "I look forward to continuing to say it. I hope they keep replaying those lines."

Cohost Gayle King was dubious. "Wow, all right. A lot of people are wondering about your strategy on that," she said, "but let's move on."

She did not, in fact, move on.

"After the debate, people said, 'Well, he took a big fall.' How do you feel about your debate performance? And how were you feeling going into New Hampshire?"

Rubio patiently answered this question and then another and another and another. But his good cheer had worn out by the time the interview ended. "Did something happen over my shoulder?" he asked no one in particular, explaining that he could hear the clamor and noticed those facing him looking past him to see what had happened. He found the commotion distracting and said it had been hard to focus on the questions through all the din.

Rubio was clearly aggravated—maybe because of the noise, maybe because of the interview, maybe because this awkward debate moment had taken on a life of its own. Maybe all of it.

But directly behind him, sitting beneath a blizzard of cutout paper snowflakes hanging from the ceiling, supporters and potential supporters sipped coffee and ate their waffles as they waited for a moment with the candidate. He didn't have time to dwell on his frustration.

Rubio moved from booth to booth answering questions, sometimes in great detail. As he did, a man in a black pinstriped suit with a shamrock lapel pin maneuvered past the knot of reporters and photographers to get close to Rubio. He waited for his moment, sidled up to the candidate, and then leaned in for a word.

IMAGES: DAVID GOLDMAN / AP

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

"Hang in there," he said. "It's just gonna make you tougher."

For three days, Rubio world remained suspended in this odd news-cycle purgatory: The political media were in a full froth over Rubio's debate stumble but the candidate wasn't acknowledging a misstep. Even as Rubio's rivals sought to capitalize on the debate story, especially Christie and Jeb Bush, it wasn't immediately clear whether the frenzy was a real problem or the kind of story that captivated the political class but was irrelevant to actual voters.

Rubio's polling suggested that while the incident may have stalled the momentum he had built with his surprisingly strong third-place finish in Iowa, it hadn't been reversed. And early Monday afternoon, the campaign received two pieces of information that seemed to suggest Rubio might survive without serious damage. As Rubio and his team boarded the campaign bus after a stop at the Puritan Backroom, a famous Manchester eatery, they learned that Rush Limbaugh was mounting an aggressive defense of Rubio. It was even better than they might have hoped; the talk radio pioneer had not only supported Rubio but chastised the other Republican candidates for failing to make the same critique of Obama. Rubio asked if there was a transcript. Todd Harris, a senior Rubio adviser, said that they had the audio, and after a moment he played it for Rubio on his laptop.

> Folks, you go out and talk to actual Republican primary voters. You go out, outside of Washington, outside New York, go out to where these primaries and caucuses are being held, and you will find that this is exactly what has propelled Republicans to the polls in droves in 2010 and 2014. It is not the belief, it is not the theory—it is the knowledge that Obama is doing this on purpose and there isn't and hasn't been any pushback. And Republican voters are livid.

A short time later, the team learned that the new CNN/WMUR tracking poll would show Rubio in second place in New Hampshire—with 17 percent of the GOP vote. More important, the track showed no dropoff in support for Rubio in interviews conducted after the debate.

It was good news. And yet some 18 hours before voting in New Hampshire started, there was a lingering sense that it was too good to be true.

Rubio didn't seem terribly affected by the frenzy. Aside from his momentary expression of frustration that morning, his face was fixed in a broad smile all day—both in public and away from the voters and the journalists following him. As the bus emblazoned with his name rolled toward the next stop, Rubio sat in a large black recliner chatting with his wife and top aides, his lap occasionally serving as a seat for one of his two young sons. The strong smell of chicken fingers and French fries overwhelmed the small front room of the bus as the conversation jumped from the kids and school to foreign policy and the bin Laden raid, from practical questions about the next campaign stop to news of the day.

Fox News played without sound on a television built into the wall opposite Rubio's chair and occasionally prompted a comment from the candidate. He noticed a new poll that flashed on the screen showing him beating Hillary Clinton head-to-head in New Hampshire and moments later laughed and shook his head at a chyron displayed on the lower third of the screen—"Trump: Jeb Bush a 'Loser.'" Fox reported that Rubio was leading the presidential field in endorsements from members of Congress. Rubio asked: "Does that include Deb Fischer?" The senator from Nebraska had endorsed Rubio that morning.

'There it is. The memorized 25-second speech.'

The bus stopped next at the Barley House, an inviting tavern in Concord, where Rubio would record a "Pints and Politics" interview with Chris Ryan, a local radio host. A chalkboard sign near the front door announced the specials of the day, including a Marco Rubio burger, which brought together the ingredients of a good Cuban sandwich (ham, roast pork, pickles, and cheese) with a burger. Rubio strode past the sign, waded through a thick throng of voters and cameramen packed into the small front room of the bar, and climbed down some stairs leading to the small bar where he'd sit for his interview.

Ryan asked questions on a wide range of topics—Libya, Syria, the federal budget, entitlements, infrastructure spending—and Rubio gave thoughtful, detailed responses, a fact that seemed to surprise the host.

"It's interesting, we've sat here for 15 minutes, we've done a round-robin of questions—you had no idea what's coming—and the narrative about you in the media and in the debate is 25-second sound bite stump speeches and so

forth. Do you feel that the media and some candidates have taken liberties with your bio?"

Rubio laughed and downplayed any sense that he'd been slighted. "I mean, look, people are running for president and they're looking for any competitive advantage. And if they don't have one, they'll make it up."

Then he turned serious for his "jerk store" moment. "If you're Chris Christie, and you supported gun control, gave a personal contribution to Planned Parenthood, supported Sonia Sotomayor's appointment to the Supreme Court, and are a big strong proponent of Common Core, you can't run on your record."

Ryan closed by asking Rubio what he'd learned running for president. Perhaps not surprisingly, Rubio passed on the invitation to put himself on the couch, and spoke instead about all the things he'd learned by interacting with voters.

Back on the bus, Rubio was a bit more contemplative. Apropos of nothing, he volunteered that he hoped his sons would play competitive football as they grow up. Football, he said, teaches important life lessons and he pointed to his freshman year at Tarkio College in Missouri as an example. His team was playing a much bigger school, Missouri Valley College, and Rubio was assigned to cover Brian Clayton, an all-conference running back who was split out wide. "I'm a freshman and this dude beats me—like, embarrasses me—for like an 80-yard bomb for a touchdown. And even though he beat me, my attitude was, 'Well, he's their best player.'"

He was. Clayton was named to NAIA's All-American team that year and the touchdown he scored on Rubio was one of the 31 he tallied that year—a total that led the nation.

"At that moment, my attitude was, even though I gave up a touchdown, I thought I was like a world-beater, I didn't care, I hope he runs that play again. You have to have such a short memory. If you're a corner and you get beat on an 80-yard bomb and you go into the tank, you're going to get eaten up all day long. You literally have to believe that even if you gave up that touchdown, well, that was a fluke. I hope they run it again."

According to Rubio, they did. "They tried the same route again, like in the third quarter, and I picked it off in the end zone. I didn't run it back—he was a big guy, like 6′3″—but I picked it off." It wasn't enough, however, as Missouri Valley defeated Tarkio College 54-7.

Rubio never directly mentioned the debate, though everyone there knew why he was sharing these life lessons. His only reference to it came in passing and in anticipation of an argument no one had made. "I'm not saying that I just gave up an 80-yard bomb. I don't agree with that assessment. But when you play corner you have to have the shortest memory possible."

Quarterback, too, he said. "Peyton Manning got booed off the field this year in Denver. They literally booed him off the field. Week seven or whatever." It was week six, but close enough. "So I just think that's one of those things that you can learn in football . . . and I think it has application to politics."

And then, as abruptly as his life lesson began, it ended. "Leopard injures four people after entering private school in India," he read off the television screen. "Only four people? Explain that to the parents," he said, lowering his voice as he mimicked a serious-sounding school official. "Ah, we got a leopard in the school today. We've had a leopard incident today in school."

James Poulos, an insightful right-leaning columnist with the *Week*, wrote that Rubio 'blew it' in the debate and 'came off as an empty vessel that someone had poured some rather uninspiring anti-Obama talking points into.'

In a presidential election with dozens of bizarre and confounding moments, most of them involving Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, one of the strangest was the moment surrounding Rubio's debate performance.

The conventional wisdom, shaped these days at the speed of social media, moved from accurate to overstated, and then from exaggerated to absurd. First: Rubio sounded scripted and robotic in his exchange with Christie (accurate). Then: Rubio turned in a disastrous debate performance (overstated). And then: The debate revealed that Rubio is an overly programmed and robotic candidate (exaggerated). And finally: Rubio is a lightweight incapable of anything other than scripted answers designed to cover his lack of substance (absurd).

James Poulos, an insightful right-leaning columnist with the *Week*, wrote that Rubio "blew it" and "came off as an empty vessel that someone had poured some rather uninspiring anti-Obama talking points into."

Eugene Robinson from the *Washington Post*, often a reliable indicator of center-left conventional wisdom, went further. "The truth," Robinson wrote, is that "once you get past the façade, there appears to be no there there." The debate was thus "revealing," because it confirmed "the narrative of a talented and ambitious young man in far too much of a hurry, programmed to say what he thinks voters want to hear."

But for anyone still listening after the painful exchange with Christie—a group that doesn't include many journalists—Rubio answered those concerns later in the same debate. Co-moderator Martha Raddatz, a national security correspondent with ABC News, pushed Rubio hard—with three consecutive questions—on ISIS. She first asked him to clarify what he meant by the "overwhelming force" needed to defeat ISIS, and Rubio detailed his plan to use Sunni allies—he specified five countries—to work alongside U.S. special operators, backed up by increased U.S. airpower in strikes not limited to Iraq and Syria but in the dozen other countries where ISIS is operating.

She followed up by asking why he wouldn't commit more ground forces if ISIS is such a grave threat to the United States and its allies. Rubio replied:

> Because they currently occupy Sunni cities and villages. Sunni cities and villages can only truly be liberated and held by Sunnis themselves. If they are held by Shias it will trigger sectarian violence. The Kurds are incredible fighters, and they will liberate the Kurdish areas, but Kurds cannot and do not want to liberate and hold Sunni villages and towns. It will take Sunni fighters themselves in that region to take those villages and cities, and then to hold them and avoid the sort of sectarian violence that follows in the past. And why that is important is because if Sunnis are not able to govern themselves in these areas, you are going to have a successor group to ISIS. ISIS is a successor group of al Qaeda. In fact, they broke away from al Qaeda, because as horrible as al Qaeda is, ISIS thought al Qaeda was not radical enough. This is who we're dealing with, and they have more money than al Qaeda ever had.

When she asked him how he'd bring Sunnis aboard, Rubio described, again in great detail, the current reservations our Sunni allies have, including the request, conveyed during a visit to Washington three weeks earlier by Jordan's King Abdullah, for permission to target caravans, something the coalition's current rules of engagement do not allow. It was easily the best answer—or set of answers—in the entire debate.

Rubio's policy fluency shouldn't surprise anyone who has spent just a few minutes listening to him. He focused on domestic policy during his time in the Florida legislature, but with seats on the foreign relations and intelligence committees, Rubio has developed a special interest in national security and foreign policy since his arrival in Washington. In April 2012, a little more than a year into his term, Rubio gave a major foreign policy address at the Brookings Institution, a center-left think tank in Washington. In an interview in his office the day before that speech, we spent 45 minutes previewing its contents and discussing his approach to the world. He moved fluently from the impact of sanctions in Iran to continued Taliban dominance in Afghanistan, from Vladimir Putin's designs for Russian expansion and the unsustainability of China's growth, all in the context of the changing geopolitical landscape and America's role in shaping it.

The speech itself won positive reviews from journalists and thinkers across the political spectrum. Ryan Lizza described it in the *New Yorker* as a "crisp and thoughtful tour of the world." But what was particularly impressive was the off-the-record lunch discussion afterwards. For nearly an hour, Rubio, 16 months into his Senate term, took questions from a wide range of scholars and think tankers on a number of topics. The questioning was often intense—highly specific inquiries from subject-matter experts on the topics that they knew best. Rubio gave thoughtful, detailed answers that demonstrated his understanding of the subject matter and his ability to discuss these issues well beyond his prepared remarks. The consensus afterwards: The guy really knows his stuff.

Rubio speaks before taping an interview at the Barley House in Concord, February 8.

JACQUELYN MARTIN / AP

Michael O'Hanlon, director of foreign policy research at Brookings, says that while he doesn't agree with everything Rubio says on the campaign trail, particularly his claim that Obama has "eviscerated" the U.S. military, in his meetings with Rubio, including that lunch, he "found him very engaging and a very good listener and very smart."

After "Pints and Politics" at the Barley House, the bus headed through increasingly heavy snow to the Village Trestle in Goffstown, just outside of Manchester. Rubio sloshed to the door and entered a room packed with supporters and journalists. He walked to a

makeshift stage in front of a black curtain and began speaking.

The candidate started with an impromptu joke about his children remaining on the bus to finish a competitive game of Minecraft and then launched into his speech. Electing Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders, he warned, would mean a continuation of the kinds of policies the country had gotten from Barack Obama.

When a woman from the audience shouted "more of the same," Rubio challenged her claim. "Not just more of the same, worse. Obamacare becomes permanent. Dodd-Frank becomes permanent. All these unconstitutional executive orders become permanent. In essence, this effort by Barack Obama to redefine this country, to change the role our government plays, to undermine the Constitution, to weaken us in the world—this deliberate effort to change the country continues."

Rubio touted his electability, citing the poll he'd seen on Fox less than an hour earlier. "Another poll came out today. It shows that if I'm our nominee, I don't just beat Hillary, I beat Hillary in New Hampshire, which we need to win in November."

He moved on to a riff built on the final question he had received during his interview at the previous stop. "What have you learned on the campaign trail?" He answered his own question with a soliloquy on the difference between the American people and their government. "We talk about all the things that are going on in America—and we have problems," he said. "But we should not confuse our government and our people. Our country is not a government, our country is our people."

Rubio told a story of a chance encounter two days earlier as he was leaving church. He and his wife were invited to sit in on a faith-based rehabilitation group that meets in the parish. "After people go through detox and recovery, this program helps them go on about their lives," he said. "It doesn't just restore them physically, it restores them spiritually. It brings them closer to the Lord. They didn't wait around and ask for permission from the government to start a program. They're not sitting around waiting for a government grant to come to continue that program."

The "robotic" and "scripted" candidate gave an extemporaneous speech that included a poll he'd just seen on television and a question he'd been asked at a previous stop. It ended with a powerful Toquevillian example of the quality of functions performed by private citizens.

It wasn't enough. The debate blunder—and the three days of blanket coverage of it—hurt Rubio in New Hampshire. He'd come out of Iowa a strong third and appeared to have momentum. But he finished fifth in New Hampshire, with 11 percent of the vote. Two of the candidates who finished in front of him, Jeb Bush and John Kasich, had effectively bet their candidacies on New Hampshire. Bush also pulled 11 percent but beat Rubio by about 1,300 votes, spending almost double the number of days in the state (52-28) and more than double the money ($36 million to $15 million). Kasich spent 70 days in the state, conducted more than 100 town halls, and spent $12.1 million. (Judging by return on investment the winners were Trump, who won 35 percent of the vote spending just $3.7 million and 27 days in the state, and Cruz, who spent less than $1 million and also spent 27 days in New Hampshire.)

The exit polls made clear that the debate hurt Rubio: 89 percent of voters told pollsters that "recent debates" were a factor in their decision (8 percent said they were not). In Iowa, late-deciders broke more strongly for Rubio than for any other candidate; in New Hampshire, he was the fourth choice of late-deciders (behind Trump, Kasich, and Cruz).

Despite all of this, Rubio was still seen as highly electable. Among voters who cited "can win in November" as the most important candidate quality, Trump took 32 percent. Rubio followed closely with 30 percent, nearly double the total of the other non-Trump candidates. (Kasich had 16, Bush 9, and Cruz 6.)

After polls closed in New Hampshire, Rubio told his supporters that he accepted blame for the debate moment and promised that it wouldn't happen again. The campaign moved to make Rubio, already one of the more accessible Republican candidates, even more open to the media. The day after the New Hampshire primary, Rubio held a 45-minute press gaggle aboard his plane to South Carolina, and the day after that he had breakfast with reporters covering his campaign. The campaign plans to host regular sessions with the candidate aboard the campaign bus over the next several weeks—reprising John McCain's "Straight Talk Express" media strategy in 2000 and 2008. Their view: Rubio is good, let's make sure everyone understands it.

It's still early—with Iowa and New Hampshire behind us, just 53 of 2,472 delegates have been assigned. The Rubio campaign is prepared for a long slog, perhaps all the way to the convention in Cleveland this summer.

That's probably wise. ♦

JACQUELYN MARTIN / AP

Don't Scoff

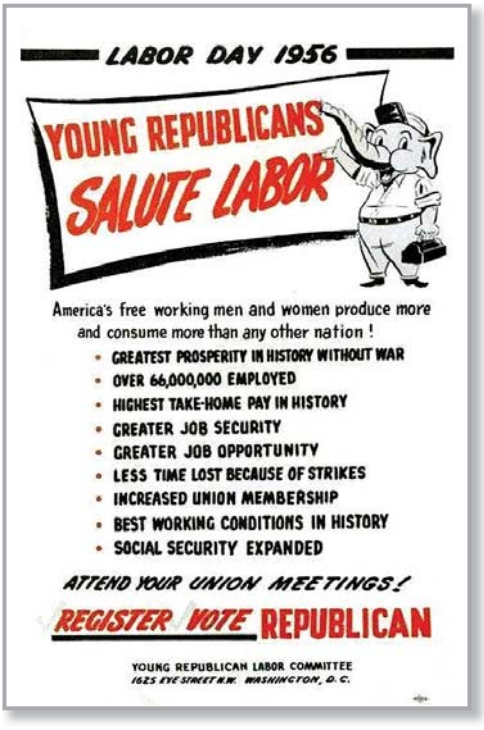
Conservatives and labor find common ground. Can they do it again?

By Andy Smarick

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaces No Child Left Behind, unceremoniously ushers Uncle Sam out of a domestic arena like no legislation since welfare reform two decades ago. How in the world did that happen during the hyper-progressive Obama administration?

The conventional wisdom ascribes it to the president's depleted political capital, bipartisan exasperation with recently departed education secretary Arne Duncan, and Senate committee chair Lamar Alexander's shrewd legislative strategy. But another explanation has gotten entirely too little attention: the collaboration of Republicans and teachers' unions. This ostensibly unlikely partnership contributed to an unexpected bipartisan win. But it also speaks to a deep-seated—some might say deeply buried—bond between conservatism and workers.

Political conditions may have created an unusually propitious opportunity to exploit this attachment. Elections analyst Henry Olsen recently noted how blue-collar anxieties are transforming political coalitions in a number of nations. Across the pond, for example, David Cameron's Conservative party is aiming to rebrand itself the "party of workers." Domestically, the most improbable pair of candidates, billionaire Donald Trump and socialist Bernie Sanders, are demonstrating that working-class votes are very much up for grabs.



But a pending Supreme Court case, *Friedrichs* v. *California Teachers Association*, may prove to be the most disruptive and auspicious variable in this equation. It could help untether labor from its progressive moorings and make new coalitions possible.

All of this is occurring alongside conservatives' peaking frustration with the power-consolidation of big government and crony capitalism. If that augurs the right's reinvigorated commitment to decentralization, a key question emerges: Might conservatives see workers and their local organizations as allies?

The story of this new federal education law offers invaluable insights into the roots and implications of a possible conservative/labor coalition.

Conservatives and teachers' unions joined forces to end federal meddling in schools, helping generate veto-proof majorities in both houses. Some think this strange-bedfellows liaison will prove fleeting: The two sides came together for a specific purpose and will now go their separate ways.

But such analysis misses two crucial points. First, as a practical matter, this wasn't a onetime affair; organized labor and some conservatives also joined forces to oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal. Second, there's a deeper philosophical connection: Both conservatives and unions prioritize localized decision-making.

At its core, the new federal education law is Burkean and anti-technocratic. It swears off Beltway sophisticates and large-scale initiatives—products of what George Will recently referred to as "governments gripped by the fatal conceit" of central planning's smarts. The new law assumes the wisdom of local institutions and trusts the judgment of state and district leaders. For instance, it puts states back in charge of assessing and improving schools. Gone are federal

Andy Smarick is a partner at Bellwether Education Partners and senior fellow at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute. He worked at the White House and Department of Education in the George W. Bush administration and was appointed to education posts by governors Chris Christie and Larry Hogan.

school ratings, federal initiatives like teacher-evaluation reform, and federal programs like Race to the Top.

The appeal to conservatives is clear. It reduces the influence of faraway national "experts" and enables community-based problem solving. The appeal to unions may be less obvious, but it's just as powerful.

Though conservatives generally see teachers' unions as advocates of a retrograde political agenda (e.g., anti-school choice, impenetrable job protections), these organizations can—at their best and when their political activities are put aside—be considerably more. As longstanding associations of professionals, they are able to steward their craft, mentor their members, and develop a deep understanding of and deep relationships with their communities. To the extent they function in this way and membership is noncompulsory (important qualifications, for sure), unions can take the form of Tocquevillian voluntary associations, the building blocks of civil society. Indeed, Harvard professor Robert Putnam, in his communitarian opus *Bowling Alone*, considers them alongside fraternal societies and veterans' groups as incubators of local social capital.

It may seem that there is inherent antagonism between organized labor and the right. At the recent Kemp Forum on Expanding Opportunity, Governor Chris Christie called teachers' unions "the single most destructive force for public education." But this isn't orthodoxy for conservatives involved in K-12 education. Leading conservative education scholar Frederick Hess wrote in 2014 that the Obama administration's avaricious federal policies gave the right an opportunity to find common cause with teachers' unions on, among other things, "empowering professionals." And in 2015, more congressional Republicans earned an A, B, or C on report cards from the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers' union, than ever before. Sen. Alexander got an A.

Some conservatives might cry, "Apostasy!" But reflexive anti-unionism isn't to be found in conservative scripture. Two of the scholars most frequently celebrated by the right, Friedrich Hayek and Michael Oakeshott, had no automatic labor enmity. Their concerns stemmed primarily from unions' becoming *involuntary* associations, the result of mandatory union membership for those seeking work or mandatory agency fees from those covered by union-negotiated contracts. Even more open to unions was famed free-market economist Milton Friedman. He opposed "right-to-work" policies, arguing union-favored "closed-shop" arrangements were acceptable so long as they existed in a competitive environment in which workers and firms could also choose other arrangements. Ronald Reagan, once a union leader himself, expressed strong support for voluntary-association unions, declaring "Where *free* unions and collective bargaining are forbidden, freedom is lost" and calling "the right to belong to a *free* trade union" "one of the most elemental human rights" (emphasis added).

This has important implications for those interested in the social value of community empowerment. As conservative scholar and former White House aide Yuval Levin wrote in *Room to Grow*, a manifesto of the budding "reform conservatism" movement, "the premise of conservatism has always been . . . that what matters most about society happens in the space between the individual and the state—the space occupied by families, communities, civic and religious institutions, and the private economy." Progressive journalist Jeff Spross, in a recent article about conservatism and labor, argued that these kinds of mediating organizations "make up the fabric of social life outside the government," adding that "unions are a textbook example of exactly this form of association."

It is in this context—unions functioning as voluntary professional associations of local practitioners—that conservatives might place American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten's criticisms of No Child Left Behind's "top-down accountability" and her call for "listening to those closest to kids." Likewise, NEA president Lily Eskelsen García praised the new education law for ensuring "educators will have a seat at the table." It is no coincidence that California governor Jerry Brown, whom the *Los Angeles Times* called "a loyal friend" of unions, speaks glowingly of the principle of "subsidiarity," pushing authority as close to the ground as possible.

So the key overlap in the conservative/union Venn diagram is a respect for local custom and knowledge—Yale political scientist James Scott, in his groundbreaking book *Seeing Like a State*, uses the Greek word *metis*. The corollary is that cocksure D.C.-dwellers not only lack the right answers; they also inadvertently warp local practice by concocting policies that serve the purposes of central administrators. The cognoscenti may view the local leader as helplessly parochial, but conservatives and unions can recognize her as informed, no-nonsense, and prudent.

This argument may seem fanciful at this particular moment. Few political observers would now say either conservatives or unions are primarily motivated by a fidelity to decentralization and local wisdom. The GOP race—thanks to Trump's bombast, continued economic sluggishness, terrorist threats at home, and mounting dangers abroad—has put a premium on national energy and a strong executive. Unions, which spent $1.7 billion on campaigns during the last presidential election year, appear to be merely progressive political bodies; some of them vocally support Sanders-style socialism.

But the ESSA experience could help reenergize conservatives' latent bent for decentralization. By teaming with practitioners to empower local leaders in the service

of kids, the right humanized this conservative principle and claimed a major legislative victory. It's not hard to see how other decentralization efforts premised on partnerships with practitioners—with doctors to overhaul Obamacare, with small-business owners to reform employment policies—might prove similarly fruitful.

Decentralization, after all, is a longstanding tenet of conservatism and catalyzed many of its past wins. The right has traditionally sought to reinvigorate America by explicitly pushing authority down and out, not up and in. Reagan campaigned on disempowering Uncle Sam, the Contract with America handed authority back to states, and the Bush tax cuts returned dollars to citizens. This is the essence of conservative humility: America's genius is found in its thousands of communities and millions of citizens.

While the right may choose to refocus on decentralization and local practice, unions might be forced to do so. The Supreme Court is currently considering *Friedrichs* v. *California Teachers Association*, a case giving the High Court the opportunity to declare mandatory agency fees unconstitutional. Such a decision would immediately hit union budgets hard: Nonmembers covered by union-negotiated contracts would no longer be required to compensate the union for those services. But the damage could be even worse—paying members could leave the union entirely. After Michigan passed right-to-work legislation in 2014 and Wisconsin restricted the ability of public-sector unions to collectively bargain, union membership in both states fell by thousands.

The end of the rhetorical line

If the Court bans agency fees, one possible outcome is unions becoming more ideologically pure (that is, uniformly progressive) and politically pugnacious. As education-labor expert Mike Antonucci wrote in the journal *Education Next*, a union loss in *Friedrichs* could enhance solidarity "since only those who voluntarily join will partake of the union's voice and influence." As a result, "The tent will be smaller, but it will be filled with true believers."

But there is another possibility. Unions could offer potential members a new value proposition: We are about practice, not politics.

This lesson would apply across industries, but education offers a clear example. Needing to make its case on an educator-by-educator basis, a teachers' union will want as large a target membership as possible. A far-left political agenda touching on issues outside common professional interests would alienate a substantial share of possible members. The alternative would be a narrow, moderate political agenda focused on members' shared priorities—or no political agenda at all.

With less time and money spent on elections and lobbying, unions could focus on the craft. Contrasted with those in the era teachers' unions came of age, today's public schools are more accountable (thanks to state and federal transparency policies) and face more competition (thanks to a range of school choice programs). In other words, unions represent teachers employed in a dramatically different industry. This reality, when combined with teachers' personal desire to do right by kids, builds pressure on unions to focus on continuously improving the profession and individuals' practice. The Court's decision could catalyze, or simply accelerate, a fundamental shift in how unions engage with their members.

It is striking how often this theme comes up across the political spectrum in prognostications of the post-*Friedrichs* world. Ari Paul, a journalist who writes for socialist and progressive publications like *Jacobin* and *In These Times*, laments that unions' "political departments would have to be scaled back." But it would allow for "deep renewal and rebuilding" based on unions' greater focus on member needs. "Rank-and-file dissidents have long had doubts about most forms of automatic dues collection, worrying that such a set-up helps create an ossified system in which a complacent top never comes face-to-face with a demobilized bottom." *Friedrichs* could "drive unions to reconnect with their membership." Similarly, in *Think Progress*, Ross Eisenbrey, vice president of the union-aligned Economic Policy Institute, was quoted arguing that the end of agency fees could have the benefit of increasing communication between unions and their members.

Nat Malkus, a researcher at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, echoed these sentiments, writing that a loss in *Friedrichs* could make unions "more focused, leaner, and more effective for their core constituents." Karen Cuen, a plaintiff in *Friedrichs*, believes that if unions are "worried about people leaving in droves, they might need to improve their product and make it a little more user-friendly."

So, should the Court side with the plaintiffs, today's unions could become more practice-oriented. But if they are unwilling or unable to do so, there are organizations eager to take their place. Educators 4 Excellence and the

MARK WILSON / GETTY

Association for American Educators, for instance, aim to serve teachers and advance the profession by working outside the traditional union structure. Frederick Hess noted the "Tocquevillian impulse" behind such efforts, writing that reform-minded teachers bring "a practical appreciation of consequences and daily realities" that eludes nonpractitioners.

Whether traditional unions evolve or are replaced, in a post-*Friedrichs* world organized labor could behave more like the voluntary associations of professionals that Friedman and Reagan defended. And perhaps they would then function as the mediating, civil-society bodies that Tocqueville, Putnam, and Levin contemplate.

So what does all of this forecast for the future? First, regardless of the Court's decision in *Friedrichs*, in the short-term we'll start to see the consequences of the conservative/labor alliance on education. With ESSA's devolution of authority, we'll be able to assess what practitioner-led reform looks like. It could be the case that districts (often controlled by powerful union affiliates) increase job protections and salaries; maybe more conservative localities expand school choice. Nonideological state and local leaders might chart moderate courses marked by small-scale reforms and continuous micro-adjustments. The lessons learned here will be applicable far beyond education policy.

With less time and money spent on elections and lobbying, unions could focus on craft. The Supreme Court could catalyze, or simply accelerate, a fundamental shift in how unions engage with their members.

In the midterm, we may well see conservatives offering more policy proposals based on decentralization and collaborations with local practitioners. Some on the right have been vigorously championing this precise strategy; upstart conservatives have increasingly charged the GOP establishment with defending the "crony capitalism" of preferential treatment for massive, well-connected corporations.

If, instead, local expertise and energy are to serve as the wellsprings of conservatism's idea generation, the speaker of the House and a go-to source for the right's thought leadership, Paul Ryan, deserves close attention. It is instructive that in a 2009 *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article, the then-rising star was described as a supporter of free-market economics *and* a friend of his local labor unions. "A lot of conservatives just think unions are nothing but bad. That's just not true," Ryan was quoted as saying. "They're people who are just trying to make their lives better."

Lastly, in the long-term, we should be on the lookout for a political realignment; that is, will the interests of conservatives and labor increasingly coincide? Though once unthinkable, this is now at least plausible. The *Washington Post* recently reported on the disaffected blue-collar "towns that love Donald Trump." A range of widely read commentators, including former Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan and former Clinton domestic-policy adviser Bill Galston, have recently explored how the economic anxieties of working-class voters are influencing the 2016 race in unexpected ways. Even the leader of the SEIU, the nation's second-largest union, said many of the organization's members are responding to Trump's message. Regardless of who wins the GOP nomination, those skeptical of a conservative/labor coalition should recall that the Teamsters endorsed Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984.

The last decade hasn't been the best of times for our major institutions. Americans have been let down by big banks, the economy, our border patrol, even New Orleans's levees. We were told ISIS was a JV team, that we could keep our health care if we liked it, that Iraqi WMDs were a slam-dunk. It should come as no surprise, then, that Americans have responded by registering infinitesimal trust in the federal government and big business.

But it should also come as no surprise that recent years have seen a proliferation of books on trusting the many instead of the mighty: *The Wisdom of Crowds*, *The Allure of Order*, *Antifragile*, *The Evolution of Everything*, *Two Cheers for Anarchism*. Millennials, the generation that came of age during this era, have developed a staunch do-it-ourselves mentality, outpacing other generations in terms of charitable giving, volunteering, and entrepreneurship.

In short, the Decade of Mistakes by Experts has produced an understandable appetite for self-determination. Reagan understood this 35 years ago. After a decade defined by Vietnam, Watergate, stagflation, hostages, and a "crisis of confidence," he came into office seeking to hand power back to states, communities, and citizens. The opportunity and challenge for today's conservatives is to understand that this moment is the same. Whether the Tea Party revolt, the "reformicon" focus on civil society, or the GOP's takeover of Congress and state legislatures, distributing authority is the order of the day.

The ESSA experience suggests one repercussion might be the right's reconsideration of its relationship with labor. This could lead not only to electoral success and policy wins; it might also bring conservatives back to the basics, refocusing on the local organizations making up the space between individuals and our largest institutions. ♦

On Top of Mount Rushmore

Where every day is Presidents' Day

By Joseph Bottum

If we were angels, falling to earth—or space travelers, maybe, gliding down in a shuttlecraft—the Black Hills would be hard to miss. Eons of geographical grinding have left the small patch of Dakota mountains looking like an archery target, ring inside ring, when seen from above.

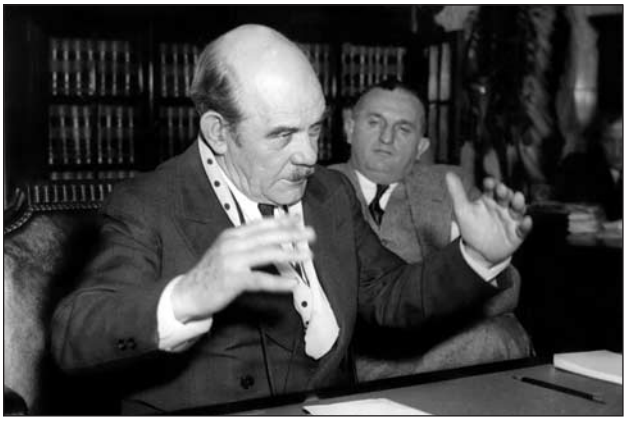
Admittedly, it's a target that has melted a little in the sun, drooping down into an oval and canting over to the west. But out of the rough Western prairie—those 500 little-known miles of American landscape between the Missouri and the Tetons—the Black Hills appear like . . . like . . . like an invitation, I suppose. Like a summons and a promise, marking the skyline beyond the Badlands. Like a target for angels, as they descend to earth.

Not that the Black Hills are enormous, when compared with other National Parks, National Monuments, National Wildernesses, National Forests, and National Recreation Areas. (The United States protects its scenic geography with a confusing swirl of designations, managed by an even more confusing swirl of federal agencies.) East to west—from the point at which it rises out of the prairie in Rapid City, to the point at which it falls again to high plateau in Wyoming—the old mountain range is only about 70 miles across. North to south, it reaches perhaps 120 miles, from the far edges of the forest north of Wyoming's Devils Tower to South Dakota's Angostura Reservoir (the region's largest lake, formed by a 1949 dam across the Cheyenne River narrows).

Of that area, just over 1.25 million acres, approximately 2,000 square miles, are designated as the Black Hills National Forest. Down in the southern part of the hills,

NEWSCOM

Joseph Bottum is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.



Top, Gutzon Borglum testifying before senators, 1938; center, Borglum with his model; below, Devils Tower, Wyoming

Wind Cave National Park adds 30,000 acres of protected land and Custer State Park another 70,000. Still, within its narrow bounds, the region is varied enough to have three National Monuments. On a visit, you might see Jewel Cave (two of the world's ten longest caves are in the Black Hills). And you probably should see Devils Tower, the first American site to be named a National Monument. But you *must* see Mount Rushmore—the wonderful and goofy, ludicrous and glorious, monument of four presidents' heads, carved on the side of a mountain.

The huge sculpture is overexposed, overwrought, and overdone, yes, and yet somehow it remains a powerful thing to see. An occasion to contemplate history, hubris, patriotism, and fame. Mount Rushmore rarely repays a second visit. There's only so much a rock tableau can tell you, after all. But the first visit—how could you miss it? Those stone faces *are* the nation, gathered into a single symbol and cast up in the grandest of scales. Every American should visit Mount Rushmore, even if it's only once.

On Harney Peak—at 7,242 feet, the tallest mountain in the Black Hills—there's a stone-built lookout tower, perhaps two miles from Mount Rushmore. And on the wall of the tower, there's a bronze plaque that declares the peak "the highest point east of the Rocky Mountains and west of the Pyrenees Mountains of Europe" (helpfully locating the Pyrenees for the tourists who didn't realize they could have gone to Spain or France instead of, you know, South Dakota for vacation). It's false, of course, or at least it's true only in a narrow, special-pleading sort of way. But the plaque does express how unexpected the Black Hills seem as one drives across the country: how they rise up to fill the horizon with the dark line that gave the hills their name.

The central dome of the Black Hills forms an inner bull's-eye of gray Harney Peak granite, 1.8 billion years old. Around it, there's a lower ring of metamorphic rock, over 2 billion years in the making. Around that, the hills form yet another lower ring—limestone, for the most part, carved into caves by ages of water beneath the surface. And then comes the Red Valley: a kind of race track, supported by a hogback ridge, that encircles the Black Hills with a narrow loop of shale and dusty red sandstone.

Covered with Ponderosa Pine and Black Hills Spruce, nearly a monoculture of those dark evergreens, the Black Hills are the oldest mountain range in North America. They must have been enormous, once, but the long geological eras have worn them down to small mountains and crumbly, soft stone. You'd never mistake them for the newer ranges of the far West. The Rockies, for instance, are around 140 million years old, and the Sierra Nevada much younger. Those western mountains always seem sharp and juvenescent, their flashy gray like silver. They look as though they would cut you if you ran your hand along them, and their peaks rise like proud fortresses in the forever war against the encroaching pine.

In the Black Hills—as in the Ozarks and portions of Appalachia—the plants and stones meet on an older, less bombastic battlefield; they have reached the stage of comfortable quarrel, a kind of détente, and though the trees must eventually win, grinding down the last of the hills, they seem content, as you walk among them, to share the landscape for now and let nature take its course. The ancient Dakota granite of the central Black Hills looks as though it

TOP & MIDDLE, NEWSCOM; BOTTOM, TIM PEARCE, LOS GATOS

would come off in dust and specks of mica if you brushed against it—which is part of what led to the carving of Mount Rushmore, thanks to a curious figure named Doane Robinson.

Back in the 1920s, Robinson was a lawyer with enough time and interest to study South Dakota history and be named the 40-year-old state's first official "State Historian." And one day, his mercurial attention was caught by the bas-relief of Confederate generals taking shape on the side of Georgia's Stone Mountain. He proposed that South Dakota make an answer to that Southern monument—with the Needles, strange spikes of granite that rise in the central Back Hills, being carved into the figures of people important to the history of the state and the opening of the West: Lewis and Clark, for example, along with Red Cloud and Buffalo Bill.

He soon roped into the project one of South Dakota's senators, the political powerhouse Peter Norbeck, together with the European-trained American sculptor Gutzon Borglum, who had recently left the Stone Mountain project in a huff. It was Borglum who explained to Robinson that the rock of the Needles was just too soft and weathered to carve, and the project was shifted to Mount Rushmore, about five miles away. Somewhere in those five miles, the purpose of the carving was also shifted, with the local heroes of Robinson's plan dropped in favor of Borglum's preference for national figures.

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln were selected as the main models, with Theodore Roosevelt tucked into the fold of the mountain. Borglum wanted to carve more than just the 60-foot heads of the presidents, but a lack of funds—matched by difficulties with the stone and impatience with how long the work was taking—scaled the project back to its present design of faces with a hint of shirtfronts. Begun in 1927, the monument was completed in 1941.

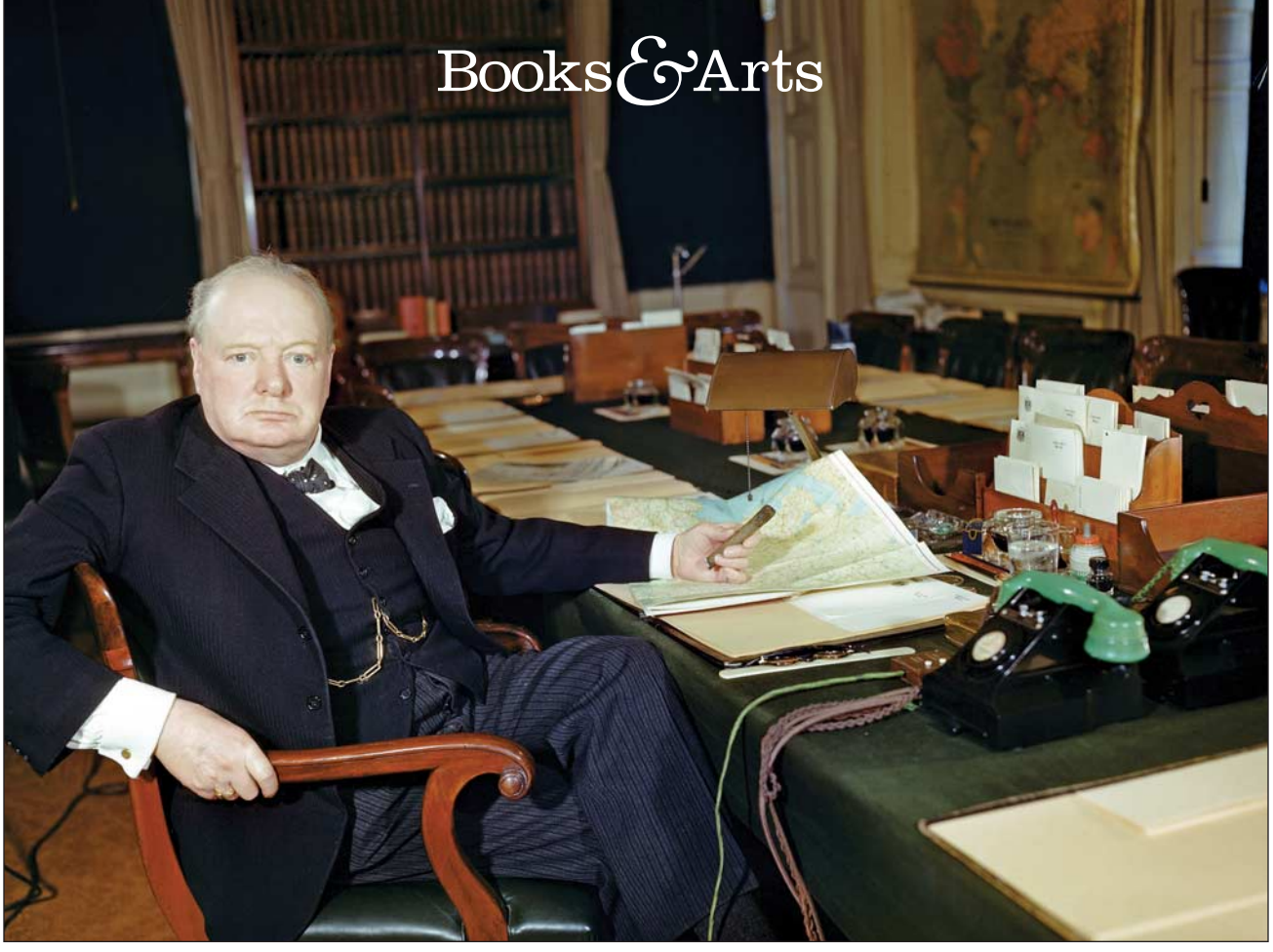
The sculpture may have benefited from the truncation of its sculptor's idea. During his studies in Paris, Borglum gained a strong feeling for looming monumentality from his friend and teacher Auguste Rodin, but most of his surviving pieces lack a sense of narrative (else he probably wouldn't have put Teddy Roosevelt between Jefferson and Lincoln). Even more, as the architectural critic Catesby Leigh points out, his sculptures lack geometry—any kind of classical arrangement of balanced weights and proportioned heights. His North Carolina Monument at the Gettysburg Battlefield, for example, is top-heavy enough that its battered Confederates look as though they are about to slam into the base of Cemetery Ridge, rather than join General Pickett in charging up it. His Aviator memorial at the University of Virginia presents a wingèd nude looking less like a man taking flight than like a man about to crash to earth.

Top, Lincoln maintenance underway; below, rock climbers scaling Devils Tower

IMAGES: NEWSCOM

With Mount Rushmore, however, the unfinished base helps emphasize the monumentality of the faces. If the carving had been carried down to the figures' waists, as Borglum planned, the sculpture would have had to take responsibility for its strange proportions and awkward grouping. The lack of geometry would have translated into lack of balance. Instead, with their bodies only hinted, the strong faces seem to begin in the mountain itself, as though American history emerged from American rock. Happenstance helped make Gutzon Borglum a better sculptor than he knew, and Mount Rushmore is his masterpiece.

The Black Hills are rich, old country. The canyon along Spearfish Creek in the north and the Mammoth Site in Hot Springs in the south. Jewel Cave and Wind Cave. Devils Tower and the buffalo that roam through Custer State Park. The granite of the Needles and the inner peaks, the limestone ring that surrounds them, and the outer loop of red sandstone—the Black Hills, with its National Forest, National Monuments, and National Park contain a hundred places worth visiting. A hundred targets at which to aim. Mount Rushmore is only one, but it's the one that has to be visited first. ♦



Winston Churchill (1945)

Churchill at War

As statesman and journalist. BY ANDREW ROBERTS

'There never was a war in all history easier to prevent by timely action than the one which has just desolated such great areas of the globe," wrote Winston Churchill in 1946. "It could have been prevented in my belief without the firing of a single shot . . . but no one would listen and one by one we were all sucked into the awful whirlpool."

The purpose of *Churchill and the Avoidable War* is to ascertain the extent to which this remarkable, poignant, and, if true, utterly tragic statement is accurate. No one is better qualified to answer it than Richard Langworth, who is Churchill's vicar-on-earth, a man whose encyclopedic knowledge of Winston Churchill and willingness to defend him—though not always entirely uncritically—is legendary in Churchillian circles.

This book does not follow the expected route of pillorying Stanley Baldwin, Ramsay MacDonald, and Neville Chamberlain, the British prime ministers of the 1930s who failed to stand up to Hitler until that terrible decade was all but three months over. Indeed, surprisingly enough, the word "appeasement" doesn't even appear in the text. Langworth does not attach moral blame to their generally earnest, well-meaning attempts to avoid war, instead quoting Churchill's own appreciation of Chamberlain, who, he said, "acted with perfect sincerity according to his lights and strove to the utmost of

Churchill and the Avoidable War
Could World War II Have Been Prevented?
by Richard M. Langworth
CreateSpace, 122 pp., $7.95

Churchill Comes of Age
Cuba 1895
by Hal Klepak
The History Press, 288 pp., $46.95

Winston Churchill Reporting
Adventures of a Young War Correspondent
by Simon Read
Da Capo, 328 pp., $26.99

Andrew Roberts is the author, most recently, of Napoleon: A Life.

POPPERFOTO / GETTY

his capacity and authority, which were powerful, to save the world from the awful, devastating struggle."

Langworth looks carefully at Churchill's own prescriptions and actions during the "locust years" of the thirties, largely through the welcome prism of Churchill's own speeches and writings and votes in Parliament. One of the great pleasures of this excellent book, besides its honesty and intellectual rigor, lies in its selection of Churchill's most powerful and moving, witty and scintillating speeches from the "wilderness years," which saw an outpouring of Churchillian rhetoric to rival even the more famous wartime speeches themselves.

In November 1945, Churchill recalled how, years earlier,

> President Roosevelt one day asked what this war should be called. My answer was, "The Unnecessary War." If the United States had taken an active part in the League of Nations, and if the League of Nations had been prepared to use concerted force, even had it only been European force, to prevent the rearmament of Germany, there was no need for further serious bloodshed. If the Allies had resisted Hitler strongly in his early stages, even up to his seizure of the Rhineland in 1936, he would have been forced to recoil, and a chance would have been given to the sane elements in German life, which were very powerful, especially in the High Command, to free Germany of the maniacal government and system into the grip of which she was falling.

Although Langworth fully agrees that Hitler could have been stopped, he controversially and thought-provokingly argues that Churchill did not, in fact, do all he could to bring this about. Yet he doesn't deny that Churchill was far in advance of most of his contemporaries in appreciating the danger posed by Hitler, stating in 1938:

> You must have diplomatic and correct relations, but there can never be friendship between the British democracy and the Nazi power, that power which spurns Christian ethics, which cheers its onward course by a barbarous paganism, which vaunts the spirit of aggression and conquest, which derives strength and perverted pleasure from persecution, and uses, as we have seen, with pitiless brutality the threat of murderous force.

But when it came to effective action, Langworth argues that Churchill was laggardly in opposing Hitler directly. He warned powerfully against German rearmament in 1934, but did not directly call for war or the threat of war when Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland. Instead, Churchill preferred a collective response to the Nazi threat based on French robustness in standing up for the provisions of the Versailles Treaty regarding a non-militarized Rhineland, something that was unlikely to be forthcoming given the demoralized state of French politics and society at the time. Langworth criticizes Churchill for never urging unilateral British action, but sheer geographical factors precluded it: The British and German armies weren't contiguous anywhere in Europe and so Britain couldn't have rebuffed Hitler leading to his overthrow.

Langworth readily acknowledges that "Churchill certainly would have backed French reoccupation of the Rhineland, at least of the bridgeheads in places like Cologne." But when France "proved unwilling to act, he fell back on the League of Nations," which proved an even less steady parapet than France had been. Langworth further points out that Churchill did not foresee Hitler's union with Austria in 1938, known as the *Anschluss*, while admitting that he had warned about it in a general sense, likening Hitler to a boa constrictor that needed to take time to devour its prey before moving on to the next victim. Churchill simply misread the degree of Austrian support for the *Anschluss* once the threat became apparent, which in retrospect was genuinely strong.

Langworth is no revisionist historian, but he also takes Churchill to task for not opposing more forcefully Mussolini's naked aggression in Abyssinia (1935) and the overgenerous provisions of the Anglo-German naval agreement that same year. However, he readily accepts that Churchill did spot that Czechoslovakia would be the Nazis's next victim only six months after Austria, and his condemnation of the Munich agreement that led to Czechoslovakia's dismemberment was sublime.

"Silent, mournful, abandoned, broken, Czechoslovakia recedes into the darkness," he said in the House of Commons once the agreement was signed by Hitler and Chamberlain:

> I do not grudge our loyal, brave people, who were ready to do their duty no matter what the cost . . . but they should know the truth. They should know that there has been gross neglect and deficiency in our defenses; they should know that we have sustained a defeat without a war, the consequences of which will travel far with us along our road; they should know that we have passed an awful milestone in our history, when the whole equilibrium of Europe has been deranged, and that the terrible words have for the time being been pronounced against the western democracies: "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting."

Langworth also rightly applauds Churchill's *volte-face* over the Soviet Union at this period, from being its sternest Western critic in the 1920s to appreciating its potential as an ally against the greater threat of Nazism in the 1930s. He also illustrates, with apposite quotations, that Churchill always believed that, had the United States not isolated itself after World War I, World War II might have been prevented. Writing after the war about the way that Chamberlain had rebuffed a prewar initiative from Franklin Roosevelt to act as a mediator in European affairs, which should have been grasped as an invaluable lifeline, Churchill stated:

> That Mr. Chamberlain, with his limited outlook and inexperience of the European scene, should have possessed the self-sufficiency to wave away the proffered hand stretched out across the Atlantic leaves one, even at this date, breathless with amazement. The lack of all sense of proportion, and even of self-preservation, which this episode reveals in an upright, competent, well-meaning

> man, charged with the destinies of our country and all who depended upon it, is appalling. One cannot today even reconstruct the state of mind which would render such gestures possible.

Churchill and the Avoidable War is no hagiography: Langworth examines critically whether Churchill was right to set so much store by an alliance with Stalin, for example; but overall, he concludes:

> Churchill was right on the big issues, like Hitler and disarmament, and with his military background and experience, would have been less likely than his predecessors to be bamboozled by a clever and resourceful enemy. Under Churchill, closer attention would have been paid to preparedness. The sad story of Churchill in those fateful years reminds us once again, if we have to be reminded, of a maxim by someone other than he, that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

It is no bad maxim of which to be reminded in the Age of Obama.

Hal Klepak's *Churchill Comes of Age*, chronicling the three weeks that Churchill spent in Cuba in 1895 covering the civil war there as an army officer on leave, but also as a war correspondent for the British press, is a well-researched, well-written, and original *aperçu* into a little-known aspect of the Churchillian epic. Professor Klepak, who was a strategic analyst at NATO but who has also lived in Cuba and walked all of Churchill's battlefields there, argues that Churchill really "came of age" in Cuba, where he came under fire for the first time, discovered his love of cigars and siestas, wrote his first military and political analyses, and was at the center of his first Anglo-American media controversy (for supporting the Spaniards against the locals). Having just returned from the central Cuban town of Arroyo Blanco—the place where Churchill was shot at on the day after his 21st birthday (not on his actual birthday, as Churchill alleged but Klepak disproves)—I can enthusiastically attest that the author's descriptions of the locality are insightful and accurate. It is rare that we learn brand-new things about Winston Churchill's micro-investigated life, but in this book we do.

Cuba also features prominently in *Winston Churchill Reporting*, Simon Read's highly readable account of Churchill's adventures as war correspondent, before he went on to report on the fighting on India's North-West Frontier, the Omdurman campaign in the Sudan, and the Boer War in South Africa. Churchill's mastery of the English language at school allowed him to present his experiences in vivid prose that still provokes admiration today, and his eagerness to take part in the fighting he describes—most notably in the last great British cavalry charge at the Battle of Omdurman and in the attempted rescue of an ambushed train in South Africa—catapulted him onto the national, and subsequently global, stage. Small wonder that he became the best-paid war correspondent in Britain and America, for as Read conclusively proves, Churchill was incapable of writing a boring sentence.

There is an old publishing saw that states: "Of the writing of books about Winston Churchill there shall be no end"—and long may it continue to be true. With books still being produced of the quality of this trio, we can still learn things about the greatest Englishman in history. ♦

B&A

Stubble Trouble

The cultural implications of eschewing the razor.

BY SONNY BUNCH

After Paul Ryan accepted the position of speaker of the House he did a curious thing, one almost unheard of by modern American politicians: He grew a beard. The reactions generally varied from "rowr, sexy" to "gross, beardo," which was to be expected. But there was another reaction, one even sillier and yet, somehow, more telling: quiet ruminations on social media and in the dark, dank corners of comment sections that the speaker's new beard was not a fashion statement but a semi-secret announcement that he had committed to Islam.

One might think that this accusation is too silly to dignify with a response, and one would be right. And while the impulse behind such ruminations is both absurd and malignant—one couched in baseless conspiracy-mongering and demonization of not just a religious minority but also a supposedly traitorous Republican—it's not altogether surprising. As Christopher Oldstone-Moore notes in *Of Beards and Men*, shifts in facial hair have long been a potent signifier of societal change.

Of Beards and Men
The Revealing History of Facial Hair
by Christopher Oldstone-Moore
Chicago, 352 pp., $30

"Changes in facial hair are never simply a matter of fashion," Oldstone-Moore writes. "The power of beards and mustaches to make personal and political statements is such that, even in the 'land of the free,' they are subject to administrative and corporate control."

Facial hair can also be used to inspire and impress, as we see in the tale of Alexander the Great. Oldstone-Moore notes that the Macedonian king kept his own face clean-shaven during an age when beards were the norm, likely in an effort to emulate the appearance of the smooth-skinned legend Achilles and the younger iteration of Heracles.

"It stood to reason that Alexander would attempt to look like these heroes," Oldstone-Moore writes, "and

Sonny Bunch is managing editor of the Washington Free Beacon.

Speaker Paul Ryan, December 1, 2015

BILL CLARK / CQ ROLL CALL / GETTY

because painters and sculptors of his day rendered gods and heroes in the immortal splendor of youthful, beardless nudity, he did his best to follow suit." The example Alexander set would pass down to his men, whom he commanded to shave ahead of the battle of Gaugamela. Outnumbered, at a minimum, by five to one, Alexander commanded razor be set to skin—a move Plutarch suggested was designed to give Persians nothing to grasp in battle but which Oldstone-Moore writes was designed to encourage them to "identify with their smooth-faced leader, and to distinguish themselves from the inferior, bearded Asians they confronted."

As a result, Greek fashions were forever changed. Out was the masculine beard, in was the chiseled jaw: "From Macedonia to Mesopotamia, it was a complete about-face for respectable men: a new look for a new era." The style would continue through much of antiquity—Caesars Julius and Augustus were both portrayed with clean chins—with brief interruptions here and there, such as the reigns of the noted Stoics Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius.

> Hadrian and Aurelius initiated a new masculine style in Rome and Greece that lasted a century. Leading men now opted for the natural manliness promoted by philosophy rather than the heroic manliness modeled on iconic conquerors of the past.

Sometimes the impact of rulers was far more direct than mere influence, as in the case of Russia's Peter the Great. The 17th-century ruler fancied himself a man of the West and tried to drag Russia kicking and screaming into the European world. One of his methods of doing so was forcing the bear to trim its fur. "When prominent nobles gathered to greet their long-absent lord," notes Oldstone-Moore, "Peter declared the advent of a new era by producing a pair of scissors and shearing off the beards of his leading courtiers right then and there."

But Peter wasn't done yet—and Cass Sunstein himself might approve of the "nudge" that Peter would utilize to convince the rest of his realm to follow suit.

> To prevent Russians from backsliding, he planned a national tax on beards. . . . [M]en of all ranks, other than priests and peasants, were to shave or pay a special tax. . . . The success of this tactic was evident in the fact that little tax was actually collected. Men preferred to keep their money rather than their hair.

The money vs. hair question hit a different pitch in America during the 1960s and '70s, as clean-cut businesses like Disney and McDonald's fought against the onslaught of hippie-inspired beards. That war already seems quaint, as beards are more or less mainstream again. Perhaps not de rigueur, but plenty common on magazine covers and behind restaurant counters alike. And at least for a brief moment, behind the speaker's podium. ♦

B&A

Guy of Letters

The qualities of Terry Southern's correspondence.

BY WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

Terry Southern (1973)

There is a sequence in Terry Southern's first novel, *Flash and Filigree* (1958), that features a TV show called *What's My Disease?* It is Southern's version of the once-popular Sunday night show called *What's My Line?*, during which a panel of four attempted to guess the identity of a mystery guest.

In *What's My Disease?*, the contestant is wheeled in, obscured in a sort of shrouded cage, thus invisible to the panelists. Questions from the panel follow the usual routine—"Is your condition local, or general?" "Are the manifestations of this condition *visible?*"—to which the answer is negative. A panelist asks, "Is it—your face?" (The negative answer provokes a sigh of relief.) One of the panelists whether its manifestations are above or below the waistline. (Answer: below.) "Is it of the limbs?" (A hesitant yes.) "A single limb?" (Yes.) "Is it elephantiasis?" A positive answer to which "with grand good humor" the moderator announces, "Yes, it IS elephantiasis!"

> At that moment as the shroud was dropped and the contestant revealed to them all, the audience took in its breath as one in a great audible gasp of astonished horror, and then burst into applause for the professor, the contestant, the moderator, and the whole panel.

Further contestants are found, eventually, to have ichthyosis, multiple goitre, and giant measle. *Flash and Filigree* is an odd "novel" to say the least, its plots not connecting with each other, the characters not (as my students now say) "relatable." But the what's-my-disease sequence hit me where I live, and in my depraved consciousness, I became an instant fan of Terry Southern.

This hefty collection of his letters, edited by his son Nile and the literary critic Brooke Allen, is published, appropriately, by Antibookclub, a name after Southern's own heart, since his career as a writer and film scenarist was predicated on an "anti" stance.

In a 1958 letter, written as his second and best novel, *The Magic Christian*, was about to be published, he pointed out that the novel's hero, Guy Grand, only deals with "social, intellectual, and humanitarian abuses." Readers of the novel remember that Grand ("Grand Guy Grand") dealt with such abuses by using his millions in concocting schemes designed to "make it hot" for people by putting them in fantastic, unbelievably embarrassing and degraded circumstances. Circumstances like being invited to plunge into a huge concrete vat, constructed in midtown Chicago, which Grand has filled with 300 cubic feet of manure, 100 gallons of urine, and 50 gallons of blood. The public is enticed to dive into this heated mess by a sign Grand has scrawled on the vat's sides—FREE $ HERE—to advertise the 10,000 hundred-dollar bills he has stirred into the mess with a wooden paddle.

This is one of the livelier instances of Guy Grand making it hot for people. Yet when Southern writes to John P. Marquand Jr. that "all of Grand's protests are against corny abuses of the mind and spirit within his own culture," the words seem hardly adequate to the outrageousness of Southern's comedy. In a "novel" made up of them, my favorite is the prize fight in which the two heavyweights are paid to prance about the ring in "effeminate" manner. Or there is the audience's bewildered and angry reaction

Yours in Haste and Adoration
Selected Letters of Terry Southern
edited by Nile Southern and Brooke Allen
Antibookclub, 368 pp., $65

William H. Pritchard is the author, most recently, of Writing to Live: Commentaries on Literature and Music.

SUSAN WOOD / GETTY

to improbable "inserts" Grand has made to movies (he now owns a theater) such as *Mrs. Miniver* and *The Best Years of our Lives*, in the latter of which a war hero who has lost his hand is suddenly seen to be "grappling urgently" with his metal hooks under the skirt of his fiancée.

In the titular and longest sketch, the equipping of a luxury liner called *The Magic Christian* results in a maiden voyage in which everything that could possibly go wrong does. During lifeboat drills, the lifejackets inflate in a colossal way, each one blowing up so much that the person wearing it is obscured and ends up either rolling on the floor or getting stuck in a corridor. It's far from clear what "corny abuses" are being sent up here; what we're left with is aesthetic delight in the creative fantasy rather than a moral response to some social wrong.

It may seem odd to invoke T.S. Eliot in connection with anything Terry Southern touched, but Eliot showed how, in the work of Ben Jonson and John Dryden, the "abuse" was enhanced rather than criticized (think Sir Epicure Mammon or MacFlecknoe). At one point in these letters, though it's hard to believe, Southern invokes Eliot by quoting from "Tradition and the Individual Talent" to (a perhaps surprised) Allen Ginsberg.

These letters, painstakingly edited with scores of names identified, are unlikely to cause serious reevaluation of the life and work of Terry Southern (1924-1995). Lee Hill's 2001 biography (*A Grand Guy*) carefully traced the main events of his life: boyhood in Texas; military service and some higher education; life in Paris and New York after World War II; and affiliations with players in the literary world: William S. Burroughs, Alexander Trocchi, George Plimpton and the *Paris Review* crowd, Jack Gelber, and many others. He married Carol Kaufmann in 1956 and they had a child while Terry scrambled to establish himself in what he always called the "Quality-Lit Biz."

The establishing came almost all at once, with the novels *Flash and Filigree*, *The Magic Christian* (1959), and most scandalously, *Candy* (1958), cowritten with Mason Hoffenberg, which got up there on the bestseller charts. Then, meeting with Stanley Kubrick and working with him on *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), he moved into writing film scripts, dashing off various shorter pieces of prose. He would publish two further novels, *Blue Movie* (1970), the travesty of putting together a dirty movie, and *Texas Summer* (1991), a charming, loving recollecting of boyhood in Texas, published not long before his death.

The years between *Strangelove* and his death are, overall, not pleasant to read about, with one after another project failing to catch fire. Still, the letters show scarcely a trace of defeat or depression that circumstances weren't going his way; his tone remains steadily upbeat, relentlessly productive of the fantasies or "bits," so constructed as to be unmentionable, obscene, or both. One was a suggested comic strip titled *The Adventures of the Vomiting Priest* to be drawn by Larry Rivers. Southern characterized the strip this way: "You have this guy, dig, the priest—naïve, sympathetic, sort of Karl Malden type, wants to be a regular fellow, one of the boys, have a drink now and then, an ordinary Joe . . . except that he's constantly vomiting."

Nobody picked that one up.

In one letter, Southern claims that "almost *everything* deserves sardonic treatment," although it would be a pity to ignore "rare instances" when something great genuinely was at hand. When he explained to the publisher Maurice Girodias the plot of what would become *Candy*, he told him that he had something in mind in the tradition of *Candide*. It would be modernized to follow the adventures of "an attractive American girl" who comes from the Midwest to New York to be an art student and social worker:

> She has an especially romantic notion about "Minorities," and, of course, gets raped by Negroes, robbed by Jews, knocked-up by Puerto Ricans etc.—though her feeling of "being needed" sustains her for quite a while, through a devouring gauntlet of freaks, faggots, psychiatrists, and aesthetic cults—until, wearied and misunderstood, she joins a religious order, where she finds fatherly rapport at last in the gentle priest, who, at the right moment of confidence, is stricken with a severe chill, has Candy cover him for warmth with her body, and slips it to her.

One notices here, in contrast to the crude, sensational subject matter, how carefully and satisfyingly formed are the sentences that convey it—more subtle than the novel that would eventually result. When his friend Marquand objected to the skit from *The Magic Christian* in which Guy Grand hires an airplane to write filthy words in the sky over Boston, he cautions Southern to avoid "vulgarity." Southern picked up the charge and turned it around:

> Vulgarity, Good Christ, man. . . . The word 'vulgarity' to be used with any meaning whatever always refers to something so blatant in its herd-liked commonness as to be obtrusive for that reason, and offensively so. . . . But since when is it common that four-letter words be written in 175-yard letters in the sky over Boston. As far as I know, it has never been done.

John Simon once referred to Terry Southern's talent as a "slender, unwholesome [one]." A clever phrase, and I suppose the imagination behind *Candy* and many of the routines spelled out in these letters is certifiably unwholesome. But although Southern's output was small, the talent it showed was anything but slender. A trivial headline in the *New York Herald Tribune*—"Eisenhower Says His Faith in God Has Kept Him Sane"—can bring forth some original wordplay, as Southern suggests to Mason Hoffenberg, "Send that to your smart-aleck Jack Sartre and Al Camus! I'll bet it would make them cross as pickles." Or this free-floating fantasy devoted to "pure sloth."

> My idea of pure sloth would be to weigh so much (say about 5000 pounds) that one couldn't move and also to have sleeping sickness. As it is now I get up later and later each day. About four in the afternoon usually, don't bother to wash or dress or even eat really—just

> a bottle of milk with a couple of raw eggs in it, go to the bathroom, then get the Herald-Trib (we have it delivered to the door) and back into the old bed I go.

More than once the reader might have been tempted to say, "Enough, Terry! You're overextending yourself." But of course, overextension was what Southern practiced every day, all the time. At its best, as in *The Magic Christian*, the result is dazzling. In a 1964 talk given by Norman Mailer, "The Dynamic of American Letters," he ended his survey of 20th-century fiction with Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Southern's novel, which Mailer called satire, "the aristocratic impulse turned upon itself."

> Never had distaste for the habits of a mass mob reached such precision, never did wit falter in its natural assumption that the idiocies of the mass were attached breath and kiss to the hypocrisies, the weltering grandeurs, and the low stupidities of the rich, the American rich.

The Magic Christian, Mailer concluded, was "a classic of Camp." Fifty years later, that word—"camp"—has pretty much gone out of use. But it may have captured the particular nature of Terry Southern's contribution to American quality lit. ♦

B&A

Picture Perfect

One Velázquez points in a thousand directions.

BY HENRIK BERING

Paintings are delicate things that don't much like fire, floods, wars, or general mayhem. Velázquez's masterpiece, *Las Meninas*, which shows the infanta of Spain with her entourage of ladies-in-waiting, her dwarves, and her calf-size mastiff, certainly has had its share of close calls. To save it from a fire on Christmas Eve 1734 monks had to throw it out of a second-story window of the Royal Alcázar of Madrid. Miraculously, it suffered only light damage in the fall.

More hair-raising moments occurred during the Spanish civil war when the Nationalists bombed the Prado in November 1936. The Republican leadership decided to evacuate the Prado's main works, first to Valencia, then to the Catalan castle La Peralada. Throughout, the convoys had to dodge Franco's bombs: On the way to La Peralada, a low-hanging balcony caused a nasty gash in Goya's *The Second of May 1808*, which shows Napoleon's imperial guard charging Spanish rioters; but *Las Meninas* escaped unharmed.

Everything Is Happening
Journey into a Painting
by Michael Jacobs
Granta, 240 pp., $23

When it became La Peralada's turn to come under Nationalist attack, the Republican president Manuel Azana—who, before the war, had stated that all Spain's churches were not worth a single Republican life—apparently had a change of heart about his country's national heritage. Noting that the contents of the Prado meant more to Spain than "the Republic and the monarchy put together," he decided to whisk the collection off to neutral Switzerland in 1939, just before the collapse of the Republican cause.

By the time Generalissimo Franco's victorious regime had arranged for the collection's return, World War II had broken out and *Las Meninas* found itself on the last nonmilitary train to leave Geneva. On the journey, two cases—containing Goya's portrait of Charles IV and *Las Meninas*—split open, leaving the paintings hanging precariously over the train's side. A tunnel would have torn them to shreds. A hurried halt was made on a siding to secure them.

Las Meninas's brushes with disaster are vividly recounted in *Everything Is Happening*. The idea for the book came three years ago when Michael Jacobs, a travel writer and art historian, received a jigsaw puzzle of *Las Meninas* from an old schoolmate. This was the first painting the author had fallen in love with on a 1969 visit to Madrid. At the time, he was attending Westminster School in London, where tables were made of oak timber from the Spanish Armada.

Retracing that first journey to Madrid, Jacobs intended his book to be "a manifesto for the liberation of how we look at a painting" and to explain *Las Meninas* in the way one would explain it to a friend, not as some dreary academic exercise. He wanted to get across the "quintessential Spanishness of the work, its exotic and surreal character, its mix of somberness and sensuality, its element of the grotesque, as well as its place in the twilight of Spain's golden age. . . . The deeper I delved into *Las Meninas*'s past, the more I was uncovering my own." Unfortunately, Jacobs died of cancer in 2014, leaving just a series of fragments, and the work was taken over by Ed Vulliamy, based on conversation with Jacobs and on Jacobs's earlier writings.

"Few other works," writes Jacobs, are "open to so many interpretations that have mirrored to such an extent the changing preoccupations of each succeeding era." He ascribes its aura of mystery to its sense of suspended animation, its "evocation of a world in which everything is about to happen." Thus, *Las Meninas* is open-ended in ways that, say, many Victorian paintings are not. Once we have decoded their stories, we tend to lose interest; not so with *Las Meninas*.

Tracing its reception through the centuries, Jacobs found that while 18th-century connoisseurs thought that including dwarves was in poor taste—court inventories of the time assign it a lower value than some other Velázquez

Henrik Bering is a journalist and critic.

'Las Meninas' by Diego Velázquez (1656)

paintings—a reassessment took place in the 19th century. Courbet praised Velázquez's naturalism while impressionists such as Manet and Whistler admired its spontaneity and capacity to capture a moment in time. On seeing *Las Meninas* in 1881, Renoir was so overwhelmed that he considered choosing a different line of work.

Trust the 20th century to complicate things. Where *Las Meninas* had been seen as a straightforward example of naturalism, Michel Foucault broke new ground in 1966 by pronouncing it a meta-painting, a painting about the art of painting, making it what one observer has called "the first self-conscious work of modern art." Foucault focused on the "gaze" with which Velázquez pins the viewer and makes him part of the painting. This was a trick much employed by early Renaissance artists such as Piero della Francesca and Fillipino Lippi, making the spectator a kind of peeping Tom, witness to a scene he is not supposed to see. The mirror, notes Jacobs, has attracted much attention. Is what we see in the mirror a reflection of the painting on the easel, showing the king and queen, or the actual royal couple come to see how the painting progresses?

Foucault launched a torrent of learned treatises on vanishing points and paradoxes. Meanwhile, Marxists banged on about Spain's exploitation of her colonies.

"Sunless expertise" is how Jacobs characterizes such academic drudgery. Recalling his own student days at the Courtauld Institute—where he was repeatedly admonished to remember you are "an art *historian* and not an art *critic*"—he became disillusioned with his chosen discipline, which left no room "for too much emotion or imagination." But the institute's director, and his supervisor, Anthony Blunt, persuaded him to tough it out and finish his doctorate. Blunt, notes Ed Vulliamy, was "the inspiration, not only for Michael, but a generation of Velázquez enthusiasts." Blunt was also, of course, a Soviet spy, belonging to the Cambridge circle of Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, and Guy Burgess. Jacobs, who had intended Blunt's story to form part of this study, vigorously defended his mentor at the time of his public exposure, complaining that Blunt had been subject to a "baying maelstrom of indignation and bullying" and, in a letter to the *Times*, dismissing his espionage as "a minor and ultimately irrelevant aspect of his life." While one can only dismiss Jacobs's political views as naïve, and while some of his interpretations may seem overly personal, his accusations against much art writing as needlessly complicated and uninspired ring true. ♦

B&A

Ordinary People

Dreams of happiness amidst the chaos.

BY ARAM BAKSHIAN JR.

When Turkey's Nobel Prize-winning novelist Orhan Pamuk told his mother that he wanted to quit school and be an artist, she gave him an earful:

> "Look at Flaubert, he lived in the same house as his mother his entire life!" my mother continued . . . in her half-compassionate, half-condescending manner. "But I don't want you to spend your whole life lounging around the same house with me. That was France. When they say someone is a great artist, even the water stops running. Here, on the other hand, a painter who leaves school and spends his life at his mother's side ends up either drunk or in the nut house."

Fortunately, Pamuk left home to become a writer rather than a painter—and without turning either lunatic or lush. He has, however, narrowly avoided prison for having the courage to address matters of historical truth, e.g., the mass murder of Armenians by the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. In today's Turkey, as one of the characters in Pamuk's latest novel points out, you can still "end up on trial for insulting Turkishness" simply by speaking unpleasant truths.

It was Pamuk's last major novel, *Snow* (2002), a *tour de force* mixture of magic realism, political *roman à clef*, social commentary, and rollicking whodunit, that got him hauled into court and nearly incarcerated. In a conversation I had with the distinguished Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink, just a few weeks before he was gunned down in Istanbul by a Turkish nationalist in 2007, Dink expressed his affection for Pamuk the man and admiration for the courage and integrity of Pamuk the author. While critical of defects in his country's government and institutions, Dink never lost his faith in the basic decency of the average Turk. It's a pity that it took his murder to vindicate that faith, as tens of thousands of mainly Muslim Turks filled the streets of Istanbul mourning him and chanting, "I am Hrant Dink."

A Strangeness in My Mind
by Orhan Pamuk
translated by Ekin Oklap
Knopf, 626 pp., $28.95

Faith in the decency of ordinary people permeates *A Strangeness in My Mind*, not because it is a political novel but precisely because it is not. It is a novel about life, for the most part in a very hardscrabble world; it is also about the human capacity for sparking moments of hope, love, and laughter, even in darkness. Its hero is part Candide, part Admirable Crichton, and part Everyman, one of the millions of young peasant villagers from the poorest parts of Anatolia who flooded into Istanbul throughout the 20th century seeking a better life. The novel's subtitle sums it up admirably: *Being the Adventures and Dreams of Mevlut Karatas, a Seller of Boza, and of His Friends, and Also a Portrait of Life in Istanbul Between 1969 and 2012 from Many Different Points of View*.

How can one explain the significance of being a "seller of boza" to Americans who have never heard of the stuff, much less tasted it? Boza is a mildly alcoholic brew made from cracked wheat, bitter or sweetened, that was almost universally consumed by Ottoman Turks in the centuries when wine and spirits were—at least officially—prohibited. What kvass, another fermented drink (this time made from black bread), was to the peasantry of old Russia, or honey-based mead was to the early Anglo-Saxons, boza is to traditional Stamboulis, especially on winter evenings when its *soupçon* of alcohol creates a pleasant, warming glow. The boza seller, walking the twilit streets of Istanbul and calling out his wares, was a familiar sight during most of the 20th century, gradually fading as supermarkets and high-rise residential blocks swept away old neighborhoods and old ways. To see Istanbul through the eyes of Mevlut is something like seeing the changing face of Vienna or Berlin through the eyes of one of the last of the *Leierkasten* men (organ grinders), for boza, like the ancient tunes of the *Leierkastenmann*, evokes living memories of a near-dead past.

As in all lives, the everyday and the imaginary entangle and overlap, dreams are sometimes more real than reality itself, and love—shimmering, indefinable but undeniable—leads us on. This is particularly true for Mevlut, who falls in love with the prettier of two sisters, is duped into marrying the plain one, and gradually realizes that his "mistaken" wife was the best thing that ever happened to him. As Mevlut's father-in-law, a raki-swilling old rascal with a good heart and more than his share of peasant wisdom, concludes, "Mevlut and Rayiha are good people. . . . They will have God's blessing. God loves happy people, who know how to make the best of the little they have. . . . And if they're happy, then it's not our place to say any more, is it, son?"

Who can disagree? Except to add that, while some have decried Pamuk's latest novel for having fewer magic realism bells and whistles than his earlier works, there are times when there is more realism—and more magic—to be found in ordinary lives well lived. ♦

Aram Bakshian Jr., who served as an aide to presidents Nixon, Ford, and Reagan, is a writer in Washington.

B&A

Hail, Coens!

For giving us 'one of the most sophisticated satires ever made.'

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

There are jokes, there are inside jokes, and then there is the new movie from the brothers Joel and Ethan Coen, who are without question the most impressive and interesting American filmmakers of our time.

Hail, Caesar! portrays a day in the overcrowded life of a Hollywood studio executive in 1951. This is not just a movie about the movies; it's a deliberately artificial movie about how deliberately artificial movies are. It's a put-on of a put-on. At one moment you decide it's about how awful Hollywood is, and then you change your mind and decide it's about how wonderful Hollywood is. Which is exactly the point. *Hail, Caesar!* is a movie about how movies manipulate—which means it's also manipulating you, and the Coens know it. And then they make fun of that, too. The ironies *Hail, Caesar!* both exposes and revels in are bottomless.

Hail, Caesar! is one of the most sophisticated satires ever made. And some of what it satirizes—the homoerotic quality of classic MGM sailor-boy dance numbers, the florid words stuffed into the dry mouths of hapless actors playing ancient Roman centurions—will amuse and delight anyone who has ever seen a golden age Hollywood movie. But unless you're fully conversant with legendary tales of showbiz miscreancy *and* the weird behavior of Stalinist screenwriters *and* the theories of the New Left philosopher Herbert Marcuse, I fear much of what is brilliant about *Hail, Caesar!* will elude you.

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

Hail, Caesar!
Directed by Joel Coen and Ethan Coen

This movie sets a new standard for obscurantist signaling. Your enjoyment of it will be somewhat limited if you don't know that Loretta Young secretly had Clark Gable's baby out of wedlock and then adopted that baby as though she had been born of someone else. And that Gable supposedly once had a tryst in silent-movie days with a silent-film actor named Billy Haines, and later had the gay director George Cukor fired from *Gone With the Wind* because Cukor knew about it.

And the comic qualities of the movie's key subplot—about the kidnapping of a Gable-like character played by George Clooney—are best appreciated with an awareness of the fact that John Howard Lawson, the third-rate screenwriter who led the Communist cell in Hollywood, was said to have instructed his fellow scribes to stick in a line or two here and there in their scripts to advance the Communist cause subliminally.

What I'm saying is that *Hail, Caesar!* might be a movie with an ideal audience of one, and I think that ideal audience might be . . . me. It's no wonder *Hail, Caesar!* is not doing well at the box office. I'm not exactly John Q. Public.

Hail, Caesar! takes the form of a classic businessman's tale, the story of a decent man running a wild business full of irrational employees who has 24 hours to decide whether to take that comfortable, well-paying, more suitable, but tragically boring new job. The businessman in question is Eddie Mannix, a good family man and very guilty Catholic whose job is to make sure that the movies get made, the money men in New York are kept happy, the gossip columnists are kept at bay, and the actors behave. He's played by Josh Brolin, who's especially terrific in a movie filled with terrific performances. (There's a starmaking turn by a young actor named Alden Ehrenreich, who plays a Roy Rogers-like figure hilariously miscast in a drawing-room drama directed by an increasingly exasperated Ralph Fiennes—the film's high point.)

Mannix is the sane center around which the screwball madness of *Hail, Caesar!* revolves. This is the key Coen in-joke in *Hail, Caesar!*—because there was a real Eddie Mannix, and he wasn't a good guy in any way. Mannix was Hollywood's most notorious go-to guy: a mobbed-up former New Jersey bricklayer whose job it was at MGM to cover up felonious and scandalous activities by celebrities and executives. According to E.J. Fleming's book *The Fixers*, Mannix arranged abortions, set up beard marriages, bribed cops and journalists, suborned perjury, rearranged crime scenes, got people to confess falsely to crimes committed by stars, and gathered blackmail evidence against others to use as bargaining chips. Mannix was the opposite of a good family man: He had numerous affairs, beat his wife, and spent 15 years living in sin with a former Ziegfeld Follies dancer.

We see Mannix doing many of these things in the course of *Hail, Caesar!* but somehow they're just all in good fun and are excusable because, after all, he just wants to provide entertainment to the fun-starved masses. By using Mannix's name, Joel and Ethan Coen are playing their greatest ironic trick of all. They are deliberately scrubbing and sanitizing a dark Hollywood legend the way Hollywood, past and present, sanitizes reality to make it conform to the more sugary version we go to the movies to imbibe along with our 32 ounces of endlessly refillable Coca-Cola. ♦

"Asked whether she would be willing to release the transcripts from her paid speeches to Goldman Sachs and other organizations, Hillary Clinton dodged."

—Politico, February 4, 2016

HRC – GOLDMAN SPEECH – ARIZONA – OCTOBER 2013
(FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY)

TRANSCRIPT (cont'd)

difference does it make? *[applause]*

In any event, I think you're all doing a terrific job. You're creating wealth. You're making money for your clients. You put the "Gold" in Goldman Sachs! *[applause]*

Speaking of which, I do accept gold and not just cash for my speaking fee. *[laughter]*

Seriously, it's good to have—haven't you seen those commercials with William Devane? Precious metals, people! It'll save your life when the *[expletive]* goes down. That and the Bushmaster AR-15. We keep our bullion in a safe—right next to our server.

But as I was saying: Where would this country be without Wall Street, the investment bankers, and the hedge-funders? You are a model of prosperity for the country. When Bill, Chelsea, and I formed the Clinton Foundation, I told my family I want this philanthropic, nonprofit organization to be modeled after Goldman Sachs. Because they know how to make money! *[applause]* To be used for, um, good things.

When the market came crashing down in the fall of 2008, it was horrific. People were upset. You had Occupy Wall Street. These commie-hippie-anarchists took to the streets. They stank the place up. And they were blaming it all on you. Well, they were wrong! *[applause]*

When I saw this widespread anger, I wanted to give Goldman Sachs a big hug, grab its shoulders, and say over and over, "It's not your fault. It's not your fault. It's not your fault." *[applause]* I also wanted to eat a cheesecake, but that's neither here nor there.

Friends, I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Greed, for lack of a better word,