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“This is a republic, not a democracy — Let’s keep it that way!”

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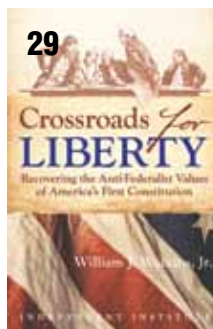
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Destruction by “Rule of Law”

I have noticed that especially during election time the “rule of law” becomes the one issue everyone seemingly believes in. As a lawyer, when asked about the rule of law, I tell people that I am more like Thomas Jefferson, who was not a big promoter of the rule of law. Jefferson was more of a believer in liberty and justice for all.

I tell people that the Constitution does not even mention or refer to the rule of law anywhere. When law is mentioned in the Constitution it is either preceded by “no,” as in “congress shall make no law,” or by “due process.” Our Founders were meticulous and precise in the wording they used in writing documents such as the Constitution.

Some people say that when they say “rule of law,” they are referring to the Constitution. When progressives refer to the rule of law, they are referring to a law passed by our well-lobbied and compensated legislature; they are promoting the wonders of democracy. Most, if not all, of the establishment appear to buy into this also.

A foundational element of the rule of law is the “presumption of innocence.” I have asked several so-called constitutional experts, and even a couple of judicial candidates, where a clause such as the presumption of innocence is found. I have been told that is definitely in the Constitution when, in fact, it is not. Our Founders considered it to be part of the due process of law. By conflating or making identical the rule of law and the due process of law, we create a situation where a right such as the presumption of innocence can be extinguished by a law that was lobbied for by many special interests in the legislature.

During the recent presidential campaign, Hillary Clinton, a great believer in the rule of law, actually suggested that the presumption of innocence be done away with for certain crimes. Ironically she was talking specifically about the crime of rape!

Hopefully, if truly originalist justices are appointed to the Supreme Court, our country maintain the republic for which it stands.

DR. W. DAVID
HERBERT ESQ
Billings, Montana

Feeling for Pharmacies?

Reading the article “ObamaCare on the Brink” in TNA (November 21 issue) left me with the feeling that AETNA and other large insurers are “victims” in this whole healthcare fiasco. But I really question insurers’ commitment to patient healthcare.

I am an independent drugstore owner in a rural area. We have been in business for 131 years and strive to provide the best pharmacy care and other services possible. We know most of our customers, and we are often the first healthcare professionals they see. Essentially, we are a modern pharmacy with very traditional “old time” drugstore values.

Companies mentioned such as AETNA often exclude the smaller drugstores from their networks and force their clients to use the large big-box and chain pharmacies (preferred networks). I find it hard to stomach the whining by these insurers, when at the same time they are systematically eliminating the smaller businesses from their networks. We have lost several longtime customers, who are now being forced to travel 30 miles to a big-box pharmacy when they live down the street.

Usually we are not even offered the opportunity to service these people. Employers (many of which want us to use their services and products) choose insurance plans that will not allow their employees the choice to patronize our drugstore, and Medicare-D plans (which use our business tax dollars) force patients — through preferred pharmacy plans — to use big-box retailers.

These practices by these large insurers are getting worse, eliminating smaller healthcare businesses, including drugstores and small doctor practices, hastening the demise of our healthcare system and leading to a mega-corporate, government-led single-payer system.

It is truly a sad time in our country for healthcare and the smaller businesses that do such a good job in providing it. ■

TOM LAMARTINA, RPH
Brookneal, Virginia



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Facebook Develops Censorship Tools to Gain Chinese Market

To say that Facebook has a spotty record where privacy and censorship are concerned would be an understatement. Now, for the sake of gaining official access to China, Mark Zuckerberg's company has developed tools to allow the Communist Chinese government unrestrained censorship of Facebook posts.

According to three current and former Facebook employees, Facebook "has quietly developed software to suppress posts from appearing in people's news feeds in specific geographic areas," the *New York Times* reported on November 22. Those former and current employees spoke on the condition of anonymity, since the software and its development are confidential. The software — created specifically to help Facebook get into the Chinese social media market — would take Internet censorship to a whole new level. In the past, Facebook has complied with government requests in nations such as Pakistan, Russia, and Turkey, removing posts after receiving government requests to do so. As odious as that may be, this new software would allow the oppressive communist regime in Beijing to skip the requests altogether. Rather than Facebook removing posts *after the fact*, Beijing will be able to keep them from showing up *in the first place*.

And while the current and former Facebook employees are careful to say that the software has not yet been — and may never be — deployed, this does illustrate the company's willingness to violate a major plank of its own mission statement to "make the world more open and connected."

Facebook appears poised to do whatever it takes to gain the Chinese market, even if it means handing the keys of censoring and monitoring Facebook posts to the Communist Party in China. Part of the push for tighter controls over the Internet comes from the increase in activism among the Chinese populace, particularly younger, more tech-savvy citizens. While officials claim the measures are being put in place to protect national security, most of the deliberately ambiguous new law is aimed at curtailing dissent.



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McDonald's Reacts to \$15 Minimum Wage: Automation in Every Store



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It's official: McDonald's says that every one of its 14,000 stores nationwide will be replacing cashiers with automated touch-screen kiosks. As CNNMoney noted November 17:

So the fast food giant is rolling out self-order kiosks, mobile pay options, an updated interior design, even table service. The changes are already starting to show up at locations in Florida, New York and Southern California, where 500 restaurants have been updated. Restaurants in San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, D.C. and Seattle will get upgrades in early

2017. Now, McDonald's loyalists will be able to place their customized order on a touch screen, take a seat and have their meal brought right over. Next year, they'll even have the option of mobile ordering.

This means that, eventually, more than 20 million customers every day will place their own orders at a kiosk or on a mobile device and then have them delivered by a human to their table. And it's just a matter of time before those humans will be replaced by machines as well.

In May, former McDonald's CEO Ed Rensi was asked about the discussion over raising the minimum wage. He responded: "I guarantee you if a \$15 minimum wage goes across the country you're going to see a job loss like you can't believe. It's cheaper to buy a \$35,000 robot than it is to hire an employee who's inefficient making \$15 an hour bagging French fries."

Here's the math: A worker being paid \$15 an hour costs his employer \$38,500 a year, including unemployment insurance and the employer's part of Social Security. If Rensi is right, and the average robot in a McDonald's costs \$35,000, in less than a year that store has paid for it in reduced wages, and eliminates that \$15 an hour cost forever after. If there are 30 employees in a McDonald's, and if just 10 of them are replaced by a robot, customers will enjoy another benefit: lower prices on their Happy Meals.

Amid Anti-globalist Outcry, New Push to Grant UN Tax Powers

UN bureaucrats and establishment voices are calling for an international war on national governments that do not adopt pro-tax and anti-privacy policies demanded by globalists. A UN “expert” even claimed that tax competition among different jurisdictions — a key check on government abuses — was something that needed to be stopped by a newly empowered UN.

The latest demands come after years of globalist scheming to impose UN taxes directly on humanity, too. That would allow the dictators club to raise money independently, bypassing national governments. But as the public mood sours on globalism — as evidenced by Donald Trump’s victory, Brexit, and survey results from across European polls showing anti-globalist fervor rising — the globalist agenda may face some serious setbacks in the years ahead.

The most recent globalist demand for greater UN powers over taxation came on October 20 from UN “human rights expert” Alfred de Zayas, a Cuban-born “international lawyer,” who demanded “an international Tax Body to fight tax evasion and corruption, phase-out tax havens, stop competition among tax jurisdictions and abolish secrecy.” Translated into plain English, Zayas called for a new globalist UN bureaucracy with draconian law-enforcement powers, a full-blown assault on self-government and democratic principles, a UN effort to harmonize and rig taxation policy worldwide in favor of oppressive Big Government, and a total end to privacy. The policies would undoubtedly



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produce a collapse in prosperity, in addition to crushing liberty and self-government.

Rather than fight back against every new totalitarian scheme dreamed up by the UN and the globalist establishment behind it, Americans should push for a complete U.S. government withdrawal from the UN — an Amexit. The American Sovereignty Restoration Act would do exactly that. With Trump declaring on the campaign trail that the UN was not a friend to the United States or to freedom, and with the UN making more ludicrous and autocratic demands by the day, the time has never been better for Americans to demand a permanent end to U.S. participation.

Venezuelan Currency Lost Half Its Value in November

Bloomberg reported November 24 that Venezuela’s currency — the bolívar fuerte or “strong bolívar” — had lost 45 percent of its purchasing power so far that month. The underlying cause was put simply by Professor Milton Friedman, a member of the “Chicago School” of economic free market thinking and winner in 1976 of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences: “Inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon ... and can be produced only by a more rapid increase in the quantity of money than in output.”

Venezuela’s president, Nicolás Maduro, has inflated the country’s currency to pay for its welfare state. In the last 12 months, Venezuela’s money supply has increased by 127 percent.

Maduro has shut down the government’s reporting on the matter, and so thanks to the Internet and the ingenious efforts of a Home Depot employee in central Alabama, Bloomberg has a better idea of the destruction of the currency than do most Venezuelans. Gustavo Diaz, who works at Home Depot, heads up, in his spare time, an Internet site called DolarToday, which uses a scanning program to add up the requests by its 800,000 unique daily visitors to exchange the bolívar for other currencies or for goods such as soap, prescription drugs, and the like.

Officially the exchange rate in Venezuela is 10 bolívares to the dollar. But with hyperinflation taking over, the rate is likely to accelerate, reaching 3,500 to 4,000 bolívares to the dollar shortly,



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according to Asdrubal Oliveros, director of Edoanalitica, an economic forecaster in Caracas.

The end is called a “crackup boom”: Citizens become suddenly aware of the fact that inflation is a deliberate policy and will go on endlessly. A breakdown occurs. The crack-up boom appears. People are anxious to swap their money against real goods, no matter whether they need the goods or not. Within a very short time, perhaps a few weeks or even days, the currency used as money is no longer used as media of exchange. It becomes scrap paper.

EXTENDED INSIDE TRACK

Fidel Castro: Death of a Murderous, Communist Dictator

Fidel Castro died November 25 at the age of 90, but the communist tyranny he imposed on the Cuban people lives on. Unfortunately, much of the American media is trying to bury the truth about his murderous regime — and those in America who helped Castro come to power — with him.

In its coverage of Castro's passing, the increasingly discredited mainstream media is downplaying or ignoring Castro's crimes against humanity — and generally refers to him as the “former Cuban leader,” as opposed to a dictator, which he was. He was also a mass murderer, and his brutal oppression of the Cuban people caused many of his fellow citizens to risk their lives to flee their island homeland on rafts and whatever else might float.

News of the death of the tyrant touched off celebrations in Miami's Little Havana in South Florida.

Despite the glossing over of inconvenient facts about the Castro brothers — Fidel and his younger brother, Raúl, who currently holds power — by most of the American media, the Cuban community of exiles in Miami knows the truth. That is why they or their ancestors fled their Cuban homeland at some point since the Castros' seizure of power in 1959.

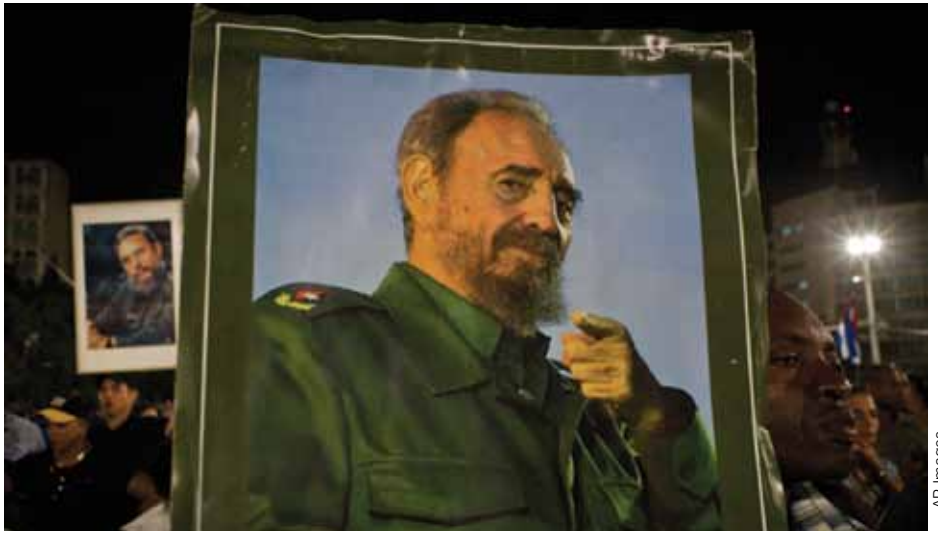
Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz was born August 13, 1926, the son of a Spanish immigrant who was a sugar plantation owner. Contrary to the belief that communism is a product of the “exploited” working class, Castro was not drawn to the ideology of Marx and Lenin by toiling in the cane fields. He was introduced to the ideas of communism while a student at the University of Havana, where he received a social science degree.

In 1953, the Castro brothers joined with others in an attack on a military barracks in Santiago. The attack failed, and the brothers wound up in prison, only to be eventually pardoned. Fleeing to Mexico, they brought together rebels and returned in 1956, organizing a guerilla band in the mountains of the eastern Sierra Maestra.

By January of 1959, Castro led his victorious rebels into the streets of Havana, where he established a new government. Fulgencio Batista, who had ruled Cuba for several years, had shortly before fled the country.

Castro's improbable taking of absolute power is largely the result of media reports by the *New York Times* and machinations by the U.S. State Department under President Dwight Eisenhower. Speaking before the U.S. Senate in 1960, U.S. Ambassador to Cuba Earl Smith said, “Without the United States, Castro would not be in power today.”

Later, Smith wrote a letter published in 1979 in the *New York Times*, in which he still held to that belief. “The final coup in favor of Castro came on December 17, 1958. On that date, in accordance with my instructions from the State Department, I personally con-



veyed to President Batista that the Department of State would view with skepticism any plan on his part, or any intention on his part, to remain in Cuba indefinitely. I had dealt him a mortal blow.”

Inside Cuba, the people there felt the full weight of life under a brutal communist dictatorship. Soon after coming to power, Castro announced the need for gun registration, ostensibly to fight gangsterism on the island. Nine months later, he simply rounded up the guns, asserting that there was no longer any need for individual citizens to own guns.

Armando Lago, a Harvard-trained economist, has estimated that almost 78,000 Cubans may have died trying to flee Cuba since Castro imposed his communist dictatorship on the island. Lago, writing in *The Black Book of Communism*, was able to document nearly 100,000 killed by Castro, either by firing squads, assassinations, or deaths in prisons, or by attempting to flee the island through the treacherous waters between Cuba and Florida, 90 miles away.

Miguel Faria, writing in his book *Cuba in Revolution*, said, “Since Fidel Castro took over the island in 1959, the best figures that we can glean is that between 30,000 and 40,000 people have either been executed [by firing squad or at the hands of their jailers].” Of course, the exact number of Castro's killings cannot be known with certainty.

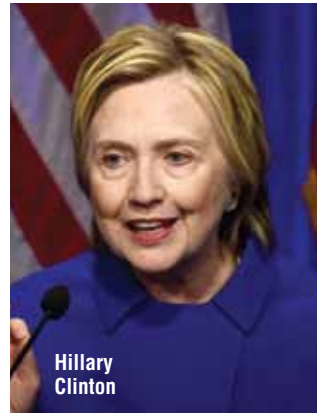
Then, of course, there is the reduction in the standard of living imposed on the country under the command economy of communism. Before Castro, the Cuban economy was ranked the second-highest in Latin America.

All in all, Fidel Castro brought much pain and misery to the world during his 90 years on Earth, and it is quite understandable that the Cuban community in Miami is relieved to hear of his passing. Unfortunately, many Americans will remain mystified at the intensity of animosity toward Castro by the South Florida Cuban community, considering the sugar-coated version of his life they have been presented by the mainstream media in the United States, who are simply continuing a coverup of the Castro record dating back to the 1950s. ■

Did Clinton's Use of the Term "Deplorables" Seal Her Fate?

"You could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call the basket of deplorables. Right? The racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, Islamophobic — you name it. And unfortunately there are people like that. And he has lifted them up."

Hillary Clinton issued that slur during a fundraising event on September 9 in New York City. Donald Trump immediately responded, "I think it will cost her at the polls." He may have correctly assessed the effect of his opponent's remarkably derogatory comment.



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Incoming President Has at Least One Tool to Stop Climate Programs

"Congress can always pass an appropriation's rider that for one year prevents any funding for the implementation or enforcement of a particular regulation. You don't have to repeal statutes. You just have to make it impossible to implement them."

A partner at the Bracewell Law Firm in Washington, **Scott Segal** pointed out one way to stop the regulatory juggernaut that is impeding progress in America.

Turkey's Leader Now Purging Journalists

"There is no more critical journalism. Ninety percent of the free press is destroyed directly or indirectly. Investigative journalism is considered treason. Journalism has been stolen by the government."

The Turkish representative for Reporters Without Borders, **Erol Onderroglu**, told of the jailing of 120 journalists and the arrests of others who criticized President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Turkey's crackdown on journalists has now made it the country with the least amount of press freedom, even exceeding similar action in Communist China.



AP Images

Steve
Bannon

Trump Political Strategist a Hard-liner

"You don't come to us for warm and fuzzy. We think of ourselves as violently anti-establishment, particularly 'anti' the permanent political class. We say Paul Ryan was grown in a petri dish at the Heritage Foundation."

Chosen to be the top political strategist in the Trump administration, **Steve Bannon** made a name for himself at Breitbart News, where he made these remarks in early 2016.

He Escaped From Cuba in 1962, Wishes Castro Had Died Long Ago

"I was very happy to hear of Fidel's death. I would have been happier if it had happened 50 years ago, before he killed so many people, it would have saved my mother. It would have saved a lot of people who tried to leave Cuba in boats."

The owner of an auto accessory business in Florida, **Eduardo Vassallo** expressed a view held by many others who fled from Castro and communism.

Pedro
Díaz Lanz<https://www.loc.gov/item/2011648829>

A Quote From the Past

Once Castro's Pilot, He Defected to America in 1959

"If there had been even one chapter of the John Birch Society in Havana prior to 1959, working to expose Castro as Robert Welch was at the time, Cuba would never have fallen to Communism."

Pedro Díaz Lanz worked as closely with Fidel Castro as anyone. But six months after Cuba fell to communism, the former revolutionary fled to America, where he eventually joined The John Birch Society and became a very popular speaker for the pro-freedom group. ■

— COMPILED BY JOHN F. MCMANUS



The Dawn Of Hope

In the wake of an ugly election and the midst of near-worldwide social chaos, hope lies in the fact that people, in general, are beginning to recognize the cause of the problems.

by Dennis J. Behreandt

Events of the last year or so have been unusually significant, in that they have been indicative of an increasingly rapid acceleration of crisis in the American form of government. Scandal has piled upon scandal; leaks have been followed by counter-leaks; and rhetoric and accusation, from both the usual suspects and from sources usually silent and in the dark, have made the present political milieu into something of a hall of mirrors, where reality itself is no longer obvious.

An example of just how strange the situation became in the days before the presidential election was the otherworldly, bizarre video from Steve Pieczenik. The former high-level official in the Kissinger State Department, and one-time member of the Council on Foreign Relations, announced in a much-watched YouTube video that the Clinton organization had orchestrated a new type of coup, which he and others in the intelligence and federal law-enforcement community reacted to by launching a counter-coup via leaks to the WikiLeaks organization and others. In that video, was Pieczenik telling the truth? Has there been, as some usually sober com-

mentators have said, a vigorous interne-cine struggle between warring factions of the “deep state”? Or is everything seen and heard part of an unprecedented campaign of propaganda and cointelpro?

The net result of the recent election was to induce a widespread feeling of despair. Prior to the election of Donald Trump, much of this despair was seemingly confined to the more conservative side of the population. Since the results of the election became known, that despair has manifested itself in the form of increasing violence and dangerous rhetoric from the political Left. When viewed from a distance, the situation appears disconcertingly volatile.

Standing too close to this apparent firestorm of political emotion and confusion, it is all too easy to feel that human civilization has reached a tipping point, and that a great and fearsome catastrophe looms. Stepping back, however, things appear considerably

different. A perspective informed by the past demonstrates that Christian civilization has flourished even in much darker times. This was certainly true during the first centuries of Christendom, when the absolute power of the Roman state turned its malevolent gaze on the Faithful of Christ. It was true at the dawning of the Renaissance, when the great plague emptied the cities of Europe. And it was true even within recent memory, when during the bloody 20th century, the total state ascendant waged war on the world. From the trench warfare and chemical weapons of the First World War through the increasing horrors of the Second World

Seeing the light: The Western revolt against the establishment calls to mind Plato’s allegory of the cave (illustrated here) in his *Republic*, in which he describes the process of people coming out of error and seeing the truth.



War and on to the terrible genocides committed by communists and Nazis alike, our own recent past has, by these measures, been the most horrific of all.

And yet, during each of these dark ages, every year Christians have gathered with their families and in their churches throughout the world to pay tribute in blissful wonder at the coming Christ, the birth of God as the Son of Man, born to the humblest and poorest of human parents at a time of personal trial. This was the new birth of hope, the triumph of the individual presence of God over the manifold sins of man, and the reaffirmation of the supreme dignity of the individual, God-granted, human soul. The birth of Christ that we celebrate each year at Christmas was the birth of hope and the birth of joy. It was, Christians believe, God giving His Son to each individual, and no greater gift has ever, or could ever, be given. This gift was a revelation to the downtrodden and a rebuke to evil, including to the evil of the total state.

As it was then, it remains today. Christmas is the celebration of the coming of the Savior, the birth of hope and joy. Standing back and seeing the bigger picture of the future, informed by the grace of God and in the spirit of Christmas, it appears ever more likely that the future can be embraced with anticipation and optimism.

Trumped by Plato

The anchor of hope should never be affixed to a single leader, no matter how charismatic, intelligent, or persuasive that leader may be. Indeed, hope should never be completely associated with any human system, for humans are imperfect creatures, prone to error, forever struggling in ignorance and surrounded by temptation. The Christian, and other believers in a Supreme Being who has endowed us with “certain unalienable rights,” can put faith and hope in God alone. To do otherwise is to raise up an idol and invite the darkness of tyranny.

This is the challenge before some, and

For the first time in a very long time indeed, the program of the internationalists has met significant resistance. That’s a gift worth celebrating.



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Turning of the tide? Socialism and globalism have been watchwords in France for decades, with consecutive administrations spouting politically correct rhetoric to promote global governance, but now the National Front Party — which is at least anti-globalist — is making large inroads.

perhaps many, of the fervent supporters of Donald Trump. It is also, it should be said, the same challenge faced by the supporters of Hillary Clinton. In either case, those who seek a savior in the form of another human person flirt with heresy and court danger, to themselves and others, should that leader come to believe himself sanctified by the “power” of his office, as Lord Acton warned.

No, Trump will be no more a solution and savior than the alternative would have been. Nonetheless, his remarkable election itself should be taken as a sign that unfortunate trends of the recent past may be about to end.

It hardly needs to be said that in every election for at least 70 years (and, arguably, longer), what some call the “deep state” or the power behind the throne has had its hand on the levers of control behind the scenes. The fact that this “hardly needs to be said” is itself a sign of hope. It is the emergence into the collective awareness of the majority of a fact that was once little known, scarcely understood, and oth-

erwise ridiculed if articulated openly.

The emergence of this awareness seems almost unprecedented, so much so that Plato, the Greek student of Socrates, would be astonished. Indeed, it’s possible-Socrates himself would be astonished.

In his allegory of the cave, Plato compared the effect of education and the lack of it on human nature. In the famous section of his *Republic*, Plato uses Socrates to describe a group of people chained in a cave all of their lives, the extent of their knowledge of the world being shadows cast on the wall of the cave by things passing in front of a fire behind them.

“And now,” Plato has Socrates say in his dialogue with Glaucon, “look again, and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error.”

Plato continues:

At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows.... And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast

until he's forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.... He will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day. Last of all he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is.

The election of Donald Trump is the result, simply, of a very large fraction of the American people having at last made the rugged ascent up from the cave and seeing more clearly what has been happening.

Moreover, it isn't just Americans emerging from the cave, but this is instead a worldwide phenomenon. Before Trump, the result of Brexit, so frightful and astonishing to the deep state's agents in the U.K. and Europe, sprang from the same growth of awareness. In fact, this same trend has been apparent in France with the rise of Marine Le Pen, in India with the election of Narendra Modi in 2014, and with the rising popularity of Norbert Hofer in Austria and the leadership of Viktor Orbán in Hungary.

The success of these leaders has little to do with each of them taken as individuals. Indeed, in many cases, some of their policy ideas are counter to the theological underpinnings of Christian liberty. Yet their rise to power speaks especially to the growing worldwide awareness of the machinations, lies, and manipulations of the internationalist deep state, which seeks to overthrow any vestiges of tradition in favor of a transnational bureaucratic tyranny.

For the first time in a very long time indeed, the program of the internationalists has met significant resistance. That's a gift worth celebrating.

The Strength of Freedom

The technocrats of the deep state have long sought a fully managed economy for the entire world. They look wistfully back at the old Soviet scheme of five-year plans and rub their demonic paws together at the prospect of similar control over the whole planet. Fortunately, that eventuality looks less and less likely in the wake of the watershed awakening of recent years.

The alternative remains the amazing inventiveness, effort, productivity, and goodwill of free enterprise. Even shackled with high taxes, ObamaCare, currency manipulation, and red tape, individuals working to build companies, invent new products, and save for their families and rainy days continue to enrich the world.

This Christmas, people the world over will be reminded of the Gift of Christ, and will remind others, by giving and receiving gifts of their own. Under Christmas trees around the world will be gifts, from the most modest to the most grandiose, of incredible variety. On tables, families and friends will dine on the widest variety of foods ever available, many once considered to be extraordinary rarities and luxuries that only the princelings of power could access.

This is solely due to the power of free

enterprise, or, more fundamentally, the productive power of individual freedom. Each person does what is necessary for the good of him or herself and family. This isn't usually the vain pursuit of riches, but only application of God-given faculties in procuring food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. In so doing, these efforts have the follow-on impact of enriching the lives of others. By learning, helping, producing, and trading, the world grows healthier, more prosperous, more advanced. Hunger decreases and lifespans increase.

Hans Rosling provides an astonishingly visual representation of this at his website, gapminder.org. Built with his "Trendalyzer" software, the site presents animated bubble charts on numerous topics, including one on lifespan and income per person. When the chart starts in 1801, world average lifespan levels are almost uniformly capped at age 40, with most far below that. Meanwhile, incomes are likewise small. Playback of the animated chart shows the continual and astonishing increase in average lifespan worldwide by 2015 when the chart ends, along with a simultaneous steep rise in personal income. It's most noteworthy that this trend corresponds with



When freedom reigns: Owing to the power of free enterprise, Americans can enjoy products that bring joy, ease pain, make us healthier, comfort us, and allow us to become more knowledgeable. Slightly more than a century ago — and for all of the time before — such things were little available.

By learning, helping, producing, and trading, the world grows healthier, more prosperous, more advanced. Hunger decreases and lifespans increase.

the advent and growth of modern free enterprise. The dips it encounters along the way are always due to the wars waged by unhinged state power and the genocidal crimes of the total state.

Nothing vindicates famed economist Adam Smith more than this. Writing just a few years before Rosling's chart picks up the story, Smith wrote in *The Wealth of Nations*:

Every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. By preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry, he intends only his own security; and by directing that industry in such a manner as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an

end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was not part of it. By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.

Today, the invisible hand is driving innovation faster than ever in ways that are practically invisible, but no less of tremendous impact. Food, for example, is packaged more effectively now than ever before, making it more reliably transported for longer distances while retaining flavor, freshness, and nutrition. Yet the technology that makes this packaging possible is completely unknown except to the scientists, engineers, and production technicians that make it on vast, high-speed machines every day. These machines deposit multiple layers on thin films simultaneously at speeds of up to 2,000 feet per minute or faster. The technology and its benefits are ubiquitous, and contribute

considerably to the vast improvements of life and welfare charted by Rosling.

This is hardly the only place where “invisible” technology is accelerating wellness and wealth. It is now possible to protect functional ingredients within a coating at a scale that can only be viewed with a scanning electron microscope, and then disperse those protected ingredients into other substances and environments that would otherwise be hostile to them, thereby bringing their benefits to new and novel applications never before possible. Though the fundamental basis for this technology has been known since the 1940s, advances in materials science, chemistry, physics, and, ultimately, manufacturing have made this technology now much more broadly available.

Of course, everything is enabled by the increasing power of computers, and that increasing power comes from ever more subtle and sophisticated manufacturing capabilities.

The majority of computers most people use every day are powered by processors from Intel, making them a convenient example of technological innovation. Just a few years ago, in 2011, Intel was selling its “Sandy Bridge” line of chips, based on a 32-nanometer process of fabrication. Now, just five years later, the company has introduced its “Kabylake” line of processors, based on a 14-nanometer process.

It's astonishing that in just a few short years it has been possible to mass produce these devices at such infinitesimally small sizes. And it's purely due to the power of free enterprise. An infinite supply of communist five-year plans would not have produced such an outcome.

Within the next year or so, the company will likely introduce chips based on a 10-nanometer process. And that's not all: In 2015, IBM demonstrated a lab-scale chip made with a seven-nanometer process. Since then, other labs have begun work on five-nanometer fabrication processes. For comparison, a single human red blood cell is about 5,000 nanometers across.

The Unknown Country

No one can know the mind of God. He is beyond human comprehension, beyond the universe of matter. What we can know is only what is revealed through the power



Wealth and health: This chart by Gapminder shows income per person and life expectancy for the year 2015 — the big green dot on the right is America. The trend is obvious: High incomes correspond with long lives. In this chart, the color blue represents African countries, red is for Asia and Australia, yellow is for Europe, and green is for North and South America.



Celebrating Christmas: In tough times, it pays to remember what Christmas is about: the birth of God's son to grant salvation to man. Though polls repeatedly show that Christians are among the most joyous people, even during strife, there is always the truth that evil cannot win in the long run.

of the intellect he provided or by His miraculous grace. By these means freely applied and guided, as it were, by an "invisible hand," human civilization has reached a level of unprecedented advancement. And with a new awakening among Americans, and more broadly, among large numbers of citizens of other nations, that the operatives and bureaucrats of the "Deep State" seek a broad return to poverty, tyranny, and oppression, new possibilities have come into view.

There can be no perfection, no utopia. There will always be those who turn from God, meaning there will always be evildoers. There will always be mistakes, even well-meaning ones. Perfection cannot be achieved and utopia is a mirage, an unknown, unreachable country.

But perhaps now the dystopia we have been hurtling toward is now no longer the *fait accompli* it seemed and that historian Oswald Spengler wrote about. Writing after the First World War, but a decade before the Second, Spengler noted in *The Decline of the West* that we were then living in the age of "contending states" with permanent armies and associated control mechanisms that were driving the fate of the world.

In an eerily predictive passage, one that still chills today, he wrote:

The place of the permanent armies as we know them will gradually be taken by professional forces of volunteer war-keen soldiers; and from millions we shall revert to hundreds of thousands. But *ipso facto*, this second century will be one of *actually* Contending States. *These* armies are not substitutes for war — they are *for* war and they want war. Within two generations it will be their will that prevails.... In these wars of theirs for the heritage of the whole world, continents will be staked, India, China, South Africa, Russia, Islam, called out, new techniques and tactics played and counterplayed. The great cosmopolitan foci of power will dispose at their pleasure of smaller states — their territory, their economy and their men alike — all that is now merely province passive object, means to end, and its destinies are without importance to the great march of things.

This, of which Spengler wrote, was the manifestation of the deep state, the ma-

levolent force that millions around the world have indicated that they oppose by choosing Trump, and by choosing Brexit.

Reflected in the decades-old prose of Spengler is the cry of Hungary's Viktor Orbán: "We will not be a colony. Hungarians won't live according to the commands of foreign powers, they won't give up their independence or their freedom."

We are on the cusp of something new. Millions have been brought screaming into the light from the darkness of the cave in which they had been chained, and seeing the real, have revolted from it.

There is a new demand for freedom and independence, the like of which has not been seen before on such a mass scale. If its objectives are even partially achieved, it will lead to a new birth of human possibility, one that, launched from our already advanced technology, can scarcely even be imagined.

Christmas each year reminds us of the gift of Christ, who came to bring a renewal of dignity to the human person by opening up salvation that had been damaged by the deceiver. That deceiver still attempts to thwart God's grace and pollute His creation. But, the forces of those who have spurned God have been rebuked this Christmas season. It is a reminder that those who have turned from the Good and embraced evil cannot win, no matter how much damage and pain they can inflict. It recalls the words of Jesus to Peter:

And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The tide may have been turned, and a new opportunity has appeared. Be of good cheer, and let's make the most of it! ■



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PURCHASING ANTI-TRUMP VIOLENCE

Immediately following the presidential elections, well-organized protesters appeared in big cities across the country, spewing hate and spreading violence — paid for that purpose.

by C. Mitchell Shaw

Less than a day after the election of Donald Trump, the protests against candidate Trump turned into riots against President-elect Trump. The radical resistance against Trump — seen throughout his campaign — shifted into high gear. In cities all across America, from New York to Los Angeles and almost everywhere in between, angry, frightened young protesters — mostly minorities — could be seen in media coverage staging “spontaneous” demonstrations, chanting, “Not My President! Not My President!” as they illegally blocked highways and byways, threw Molotov cocktails, set fires, defaced public buildings and monuments, assaulted people they perceived as Trump supporters, and destroyed property. When confronted by police over these acts of wanton lawlessness, the crowds — on multiple occasions — turned their violence against the police, injuring officers.

In all of the protests, professionally made signs bearing the same images and slogans can be seen. The crowds are all shouting the same slogans. In some of the protests, participants can be seen carrying larger-than-life Donald Trump heads on large sticks.

Given that the crowds took to the streets less than a day after the election results were known, it seems odd that they already had signs and Trump heads all ready to go. Printing that many signs would be quite expensive. Having a rush job done to print them within hours would be even more expensive. It would also be a difficult order for almost any print company to fill on such short notice.

This demands the questions, “Are these protests really spontaneous?” and, “If not, who is behind them?” After all, somebody had to pay for those signs and Trump heads. Somebody had to rally the “troops” and organize when and where to meet. Somebody had to hand out the signs. Somebody had to inform



AP Images

the angry, frightened young people what they were to chant as they terrorized cities all across America. Perhaps the most germane question is, “Does anyone really believe that all of this is spontaneous?”

The answer to that question — based on sheer logic alone — would easily be that the protests and riots are likely not spontaneous, but instead are being funded, equipped, manned, and organized by the same deep-pocketed leftists who were behind the earlier protests against Trump during his candidacy and who also spawned other subversive movements and organizations, such as Black Lives Matter (BLM). As *THE NEW AMERICAN* reported in a previous online article on September 5, 2016, leftist organizations such as George Soros’ Open Society Foundations (OSF) and the Center for American Progress have already given BLM at least \$33,000,000 with which to fund their subversive agenda. And that is not nearly the complete story. Encouraged by the “success” of BLM’s use of that funding, other leftist groups decided to chip in as well. As this writer said in that online article:

As bad as all of that would be on its own, even that \$33,000,000 is — yet and still — just a drop in the bucket. The Ford Foundation and Borealis Philanthropy have recently formed the Black-Led Movement Fund with a six-year commitment to a pooled donor campaign to the tune of \$100,000,000. Race-hustling, it would appear, is a booming industry. After all, you can’t make omelets without breaking a few eggs and you can’t reconstruct a society until you first tear it down. And there is no tool better at tearing down a

Given that the crowds took to the streets less than a day after the election results were known, it seems odd that they already had signs and Trump heads all ready to go. Printing that many signs would be quite expensive.

society than the proven method of divide-and-conquer. \$133,000,000 will pay for a lot of #BLM #FTP t-shirts.

In a move that surely pleases its leftist elite patrons, one of the beneficiaries of that \$133,000,000 — the Movement for Black Lives (MBL) — is using its portion of the ill-gotten gains to make outright communist demands. Besides reparations including free college and a minimum wage with no requirements for the one receiving the “wage” to perform any work in order to receive it, MBL also demands the retroactive legalization of drugs and prostitution (complete with — say it with me — reparations for those who have been jailed for these crimes), and “economic justice” to include “collective ownership [of businesses in black areas], not merely access.”

Besides funding groups that are under the subversive and violent BLM umbrella,

the Left has been shown to have illegally funded and organized activities to skew the narrative against Trump and in favor of Clinton throughout the election. As THE NEW AMERICAN’S Selwyn Duke reported in an online article for October 24, 2016, Project Veritas exposed the “election rigging” actions of Clinton and the Democratic National Committee (DNC). In one hidden video released by Project Veritas, Democrat operative Bob Creamer admits that Hillary Clinton directed illegal coordinated campaign expenditures by paying to have activists in Donald Duck costumes holding signs demanding to see Donald Trump’s tax returns. Creamer can be seen saying, “In the end, it was the candidate, Hillary Clinton, the future president of the United States, who wanted ducks on the ground. So, by God, we would get ducks on the ground.” As he apparently realized how damning that admission was, he fol-

lowed it by saying, “Don’t repeat that to anybody.” Project Veritas repeated it to anyone with both Internet access and the willingness to hear it. That video has over 2,000,000 views on YouTube and has been shared all over the Internet.

In an earlier Project Veritas hidden video, another DNC operative admits the Left paid for and organized violence to create a path to the White House for Clinton. As Selwyn Duke wrote in an online article for THE NEW AMERICAN for October 21, 2016:

Scott Foval ... was the national field director for the left-wing group Americans United for Change until he made the mistake of getting caught campaign-ridin’ dirty. (He also previously worked for “People for the American Way,” a George Soros-funded organization, and has his own company, the Foval Group.) Captured on video by an undercover Project Veritas reporter posing as a Democrat donor, Foval is part of a web of leftist conspirators “led by Robert Creamer, a veteran Chicago activist and convicted felon who is thought to have planned Democrats’ political strategy during the push for Obamacare in 2009 and 2010,” reports Breitbart.

In the video, Foval admits to staging violent actions, which he calls “conflict engagement.” He brags of “conflict engagement in the lines at Trump rallies” and proudly says, “We have mentally ill people that we pay to do s**t, make no mistake. We’re starting anarchy here.”

After the election, some famous and well-connected leftists called for violence. Paul Schrader, who was involved in writing or directing such films as *Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, *Blue Collar*, *American Gigolo*, and others, took to Facebook on November 11 to fan the flames of the violent protests. He wrote:

I have spent the last five days meditating on Trump’s election. Upon consideration, I believe this is a call to violence. I felt the call to violence in the 60’s and I feel it now again. This attack on liberty and tolerance



AP Images

Paid to lash out: Black Lives Matter — funded by deep-pocketed leftists — has continued to terrorize America’s cities with riots and looting and has been joined in the days and weeks following the elections by the “Not My President” crowd, funded and manned by those same leftist elites.



AP Images

Politics of violence: On the third night of the “Not My President” demonstrations in Portland, Oregon, “protesters” destroyed numerous cars at a local Toyota dealership. This is typical of the anti-capitalist bent of many of the angry young rioters — most of whom did not even bother to vote.

will not be solved by appeasement. Obama tried that for eight years. We should finance those who support violent resistance. We should be willing to take arms. Like Old John Brown, I am willing to battle with my children. Alt right nut jobs swagger violence. It’s time to actualize that violence, Like [m]y Civil War Michigan predecessors I choose to stand with the black, the brown and the oppressed.

That post has since been removed, but it was replaced with a picture of the infamous John Brown, whose violent and murderous terrorist actions led to his execution in what is now Charles Town, West Virginia, on December 2, 1859. Schrader’s Facebook post accompanying the picture of Brown reads, “This will end badly. Badly for Trump. Badly for America. The question is how soon and how bad. We have sowed the wind.” Of course, Schrader is used to playing the role of director. Rather than take part in any violence himself — which might get him hurt or killed and would almost certainly lead to his arrest — he is content to do what he does best: direct from a safe distance.

Schrader is not alone in calling for violence. Monisha Rajesh, who has written for both *The Guardian* and the *Telegraph*, woke up to the election news and appears

to have at least temporarily lost her mind. She took to Twitter and in a string of angry tweets, she wrote, “Just woken up, checked Twitter, felt the swirling sickness of Brexit, but this is far worse. The whole world is f**ked.” She followed up with a tweet to photographer and travel writer Mark C. O’Flaherty, saying, “It’s about time for a presidential assassination.” O’Flaherty replied, “Haaaaa — that’s all we’ve talked about for the last hour.” Both accounts have since been deleted. Whether that is part of Twitter’s new policy, which also led to the deletion of thousands of accounts related to the Alt Right and racist groups using that designation, or whether both Rajesh and O’Flaherty just needed to retreat to their safe places is hard to say.

That the message of Schrader, Rajesh, and O’Flaherty — and others — has been heard is not in doubt. A man going by the name Charles Walz on Facebook wrote a post so vulgar and violent that his account was deleted. In that post, he wrote that any of his friends “that live in red voting states” need to move from those states within two months, saying that if they do not do so by the deadline, “do not consider us friends. I want you dead. I want your families dead. I want your wives, husbands, children and grandchildren dead. Not just dead but horrible painful deaths. Torturous cancers — bone, brain. Burning alive in a fire. Drowned.” He went on to

say that the wives and daughters of those in red states “should be brutally raped” before being killed.

The Left is just filled with tolerance and love. You know, the kind of love that trumps hate.

So, it would be fair enough — based on logic alone — to suspect the Left of staging the riots across America in the wake of the election. After all, it is their standard operating procedure to pursue illegal and subversive means to further their agenda. But sheer logic aside, there is evidence that leftist elites are behind the protests and riots across the nation.

For instance, beginning in late October 2016, ads for paid protesters began appearing on Craigslist in Pittsburgh, Boston, Columbus, Denver, Philadelphia, and other cities. The ads, which were all carbon copies of each other, read:

**STOP TRUMP — up to \$1500/week
Hiring Immediately! Call Today
Start Tomorrow!**

**\$15 - \$18 hourly rate + bonus +
overtime! up to 77 hours per week!
Drivers Earn Gas Reimbursement!
Morning and Evening Shifts**

**No previous experience required
Full time and part time positions
Weekend positions available
No fundraising! No commission!**

Each ad carried a phone number to call, which was answered by either a Google Voice messaging system or a voicemail belonging to the Community Outreach Group (COG), a for-profit organization formed by Planned Parenthood as “a vendor of large-scale advocacy,” according to a report by Fox News. While the ads were placed before the election, they are still active, indicating that the group is likely still funding protests.

According to Fox News, Planned Parenthood’s COG is not the only leftist group paying for protesters. MoveOn.org placed a Craigslist ad that said, in part, “We only want protesters under the age of 30.... We prefer minorities.” In other words, the optics are better if the streets are filled with black and brown young people carrying ready-made signs and chanting prepared slogans. Washington Community Action Network (Washington CAN) posted an ad on Craigslist of-

fering \$15 an hour. Some protesters later told Fox News that they were recruited by the ad. With Washington CAN apparently taking cues from the same playbook, the ad reads, in part, “Students, women, and minorities are urged to apply.”

It seems that since a sufficient degree of outrage — that which would lead those young minorities to take to the streets on their own — could not be drummed up, it had to be manufactured. And hired out. The leftist elites who practice the advice of Democrat Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel to “never let a crisis go to waste” are willing — based on the evidence — to create a crisis if one cannot be found. In this case, the crisis is a series of riots manned by paid operatives whose job it is to terrorize cities all across America. And while these protests may appear to be the reaction of minorities who are fearful of the policies of Donald Trump, it must be remembered that the Craigslist job posts excluded anyone who did not meet age and race requirements to fit that manufactured perception.

To add to the body of evidence against the Left, a report from Zero Hedge from November 13 shows how the protesters were able to mobilize so efficiently. The report includes a video showing that in Chicago, buses — stretching five city blocks — were reportedly hired to bring in protesters. This brings up two important points. First, if the protesters had to be bussed in, they were certainly not locals who spontaneously reacted to the election. Second, given that they were bussed in from out of the area, many of these protesters were likely paid for their participation.

It appears that the economic hardships created by leftist policies have also created an environment where those unemployed or underemployed millennials who are also historically, economically, and politically ignorant are willing to sign on as the thugs-for-hire to protest for the continued propagation of those same leftist policies. Interestingly, other millennials — even those who may share in the economic hardships of their peers — who are not ignorant of the historic, economic, and political context, have not participated in taking to the streets to protest a fair election simply because they do not like the outcome.



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Head honcho: George Soros — who funded much of the Black Lives Matter movement as a tool of social revolution — has joined with other leftist individuals and organizations such as Planned Parenthood to fund the “protests” of the election of Donald Trump.

As Frédéric Bastiat, a Frenchman who lived to see France begin adopting the mind-set of socialism in the mid-1850s, wrote in *The Law*, the “disseminators of subversive doctrines” — such as the social revolution these paid protests demonstrate — are “concocting the antidote and the poison in the same laboratory.” In this case, the Left has created the economic problems and is using them to create social chaos for the purpose of offering the antidote of more — and more powerful — government. That cure is at least as bad as the disease.

While it is certain that not all protesters were paid, it is also certain that many were. The material point is that without leftist elites paying protesters and providing the logistics to bring about the protests, there would not likely have been any protests. Drinking deeply from the poisoned well of the Left, paid, young, minority protesters (and those encouraged by them to join in) have helped create the social chaos which will — if successful — lead to even greater problems, economic and otherwise, for not only the protesters, but for all Americans. While political protest may have its place, this is not that. It would not be accurate to refer to paid operatives as protesters. If monetary recompense is their goal, they are not protesters; they are — as noted above — merely thugs-for-hire. Even those who

joined the party once it was paid for and organized are not truly protesting, they are merely creating havoc.

Perhaps this can best be seen in contrast to what protests looked like eight years ago. In the wake of Obama’s election (and again after his reelection), Tea Party groups rented fields, fairgrounds, buildings, and other venues. They brought in speakers and musicians. They spoke against the policies and politics of the Left. They rented billboards and took out radio, television, and newspaper ads. They organized to try to do something about what they saw as the problem. While many Tea Parties missed the mark by endorsing — time and again — establishment candidates, they missed the mark honestly. And honorably. And peacefully. They did not block traffic. They did not disrupt businesses and neighborhoods. They didn’t burn or smash anything. The protesters who have taken to the streets in the wake of Trump’s election have not even attempted to bring about their goals by positive, effective means, instead relying on all of the negative, subversive means social revolutionaries almost always do. Rather than build anything, they seek to tear down everything.

And even while Trump supporters and others on the Right have been accused of defacing buildings, these accusations have been proven — time and again — to be

false and those crimes proven to have been committed by others. One well-known case involved the vandalism of a campus chapel at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. When swastikas and other symbols along with racist words and phrases and the word “Trump” were found painted on and in the chapel in March, it was assumed — by the media and the man on the street — that the vandalism was the act of Trump supporters. This episode — like so many others — turned out to be a false-flag operation. This particular false flag was flown by two liberal students, Anthony Morales, 19, and Matthew Kafker, 18, in an attempt to cast a negative and fearful light on Trump as the election approached.

Perhaps the biggest difference in the political activism of the Right (as seen in the Tea Parties) and the political activism of the Left (as seen in the recent riots) is that those on the Right who protested also voted. They participated in the electoral process as they sought to bring about change. In the recent anti-Trump riots in Portland, the local NBC affiliate reported that “at least seventy-nine demonstrators either didn’t turn in a ballot or weren’t registered to vote in the state.” That means that most of the 112 rioters arrested did not even bother to vote in the very election they were protesting. That is a special type of ignorance. The report says:

Following Tuesday’s presidential election of Donald Trump, thousands of people took to the streets in downtown Portland for five straight nights. The activity included at least one night that the police declared to be a riot, with more than \$1 million in property damage. The bulk of the arrests happened on Friday and Saturday evenings as protesters faced off against police.

KGW compiled a list of the 112 people arrested by the Portland Police Bureau during recent protests. Those names and ages, provided by police, were then compared to state voter logs by Multnomah County Elections officials.

Records show 39 of the protesters arrested were registered in the state but didn’t return a ballot for the November 8 election. Thirty-five of the demonstrators taken into custody weren’t registered to vote in Oregon.

Taking the arrestees as a sampling, it appears that 70 percent of the protesters have no one but themselves to blame for being dissatisfied with the election results, since they did not participate in the basic function of citizenship by voting in the election. Of course, if they were among those

who were being paid for their “participation,” their lack of an “I Voted” sticker makes much more sense. It was simply not a job requirement. If that is the case — and it is likely, given the facts — then their motivation to take to the streets with violence was at least as much monetary as it was anything else.

The money — coming from Planned Parenthood, George Soros’ MoveOn.org, Washington Community Action Network, and other leftist organizations — has helped create a false perception that these protests are the spontaneous actions of angry, scared, young voters who are pushing back against a system that they see as targeting them. In reality, it is the very leftist organizations behind these manufactured protests that are targeting the participants. Once arrested, they will have criminal records. The organizations behind the lawlessness will simply “move on” to the next event.

One such “next event” is Inauguration Day. Afraid to let the inauguration take place, the Left is arming those angry, scared, young, professional protesters to “shut it down.” With nearly two months left to fund and organize, the Left is planning something big. As of this writing, just one page on Facebook that is dedicated to the “Not My President” cause has more than 31,000 “interested” and more than 9,500 who say they are going. And that number is growing fast. The website of the Act Now to Stop War & End Racism (ANSWER) Coalition — which is behind the Facebook page — lists more than 15,800 RSVPs and is also gaining steam. The page says, “Real social change comes from the bottom, the mobilized grassroots, and not from the centers of institutional power, the professional politicians or the capitalist elites.” But that is not what is happening here. The estimated hundreds of thousands who will march on Washington to “shut down” the inauguration will not be “mobilized grassroots” activists; they will be manipulated cannon fodder in the service of the leftist elites.

And the “change” they hope to bring about will be nothing more than the same policies that have left them high and dry in the past. Of course, since many of them will likely be paid for their “protesting,” they aren’t due any change. ■



Public pouting with a purpose: Borrowing a move from the playbook of their comrades in the Black Lives Matter crowd, the “Not My President” demonstrators blocked traffic both at major intersections and on highways in cities all across the nation.

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*"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free ...
It expects what never was and never will be."*

— Thomas Jefferson



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Who Really Won the Popular Vote?

Both Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton have claimed “the popular vote,” but the truth is that the system is so exposed to fraud and closed to oversight that nobody knows who’s right.

by Kurt Hyde

Opponents of the Electoral College are attacking it again, claiming it doesn’t represent the will of the people as evidenced by the popular vote in the latest presidential election. With votes still being counted as of Thanksgiving weekend, Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine lead Donald Trump and Mike Pence in the popular vote count by about one percent of the 130 million votes counted so far (48 percent to 47 percent), with Libertarian candidates Gary Johnson and Bill Weld playing the role of spoilers in the popular vote, garnering about three percent.

Hillary’s lead in the popular vote is expected to increase to about two percentage points, as most of the still-uncounted votes are in Democrat stronghold states such as New York and California.

Some point to the Libertarian ticket, which got considerably better media coverage in this campaign amidst the anti-Trump bias in the mainstream news

media, as the fly in the electoral ointment. But the Libertarian ticket was comprised of two former Republican governors who could have been expected to siphon more votes from Trump than Hillary. On the other hand, it could be argued that the ticket’s position on certain issues such as abortion may have attracted more votes that otherwise would have gone to Clinton. Regardless, it is clear that no one got a majority of the popular vote according to the official totals.

But there are reasons to question the popular vote totals, and Hillary’s victory therein. First, burning questions exist regarding how accurate and honest the vote counts are. And these questions come from a wide range of the political spectrum. It’s no longer just Alex Jones, True the Vote, Bev Harris, and THE NEW AMERICAN publishing articles pointing out dangers in our elections. Undercover reporters from Project Veritas have filmed political insiders admitting what appears to be widespread voter fraud, with voters being bussed to

Donald Trump claims millions of people voted illegally, and Hillary Clinton questions the vote counts on paperless electronic equipment. If the election equipment had a paper trail, and the election audit procedures included a verification process to ensure the votes were cast by voters who really exist, the media circus would end and we’d know for certain one way or the other.

different polling sites and backup plans to transport them via carpools in case stealth becomes necessary. Even leftists are questioning the outcome, though from a pro-Hillary point of view. CNN, in an online article updated November 22, reported that computer scientists have examined the vote totals and found “a questionable trend of Clinton performing worse in counties that relied on paperless electronic voting machines compared to paper ballots and optical scanners.” It is not known if the differences are caused by the voting technologies or from demographic differences.

Project Veritas Films a Democratic Operative

As to the claims that the vote was skewed in Hillary’s direction, as previously reported by THE NEW AMERICAN online on October 21, 2016, an undercover reporter from Project Veritas used a hidden camera while interviewing a major Democratic Party operative, Scott Foval, who boasted, “We’ve been rigging elections for 50 years”:

It’s a very easy thing for Republicans to say, “Well they’re bussing people in.” Well, you know what? We’ve been bussing people in to deal with you f***ing a**holes for 50 years and we’re not going to stop now.

The Project Veritas cameras also captured some of the strategies used to avoid getting caught and getting prosecuted when employing repeater voters to commit vote fraud:

Are they going to charge each individual of voter fraud? Or are they going to go after the facilitator for conspiracy which they can prove? It’s one thing if all these people drive up in their personal cars. If there’s a bus involved? That changes the dynamic. It’s the legality,

When even people inside the system admit to the lack of credibility in New York's vote totals, that's hardly a strong endorsement for using popular vote totals as justification for ending the Electoral College.

because you can prove conspiracy if there's a bus. If there are cars it's much harder to prove.

Another tactic used to keep from getting caught is by having vital tasks accomplished by several organizations that secretly work together while supposedly not coordinating with each other. As Foval put it, "We talk about lots of things we don't talk about."

Foval's claims are consistent with recent findings of volunteer organizations such as True the Vote (TTV). Its nationwide network of volunteers has uncovered large numbers of phantom voter registrations across the country. THE NEW AMERICAN has attended True the Vote's national summits and interviewed TTV volunteers, who have explained in detail how obstacles are put in their way when they attempt to become election observers or attempt to learn how many votes have been cast using phantom voter registrations.

While political campaigns build images of mobilizing support via positive encouragement of voters, Foval's further remarks gave insight into a more negative aspect of mobilizing people in political campaigns:

We have to do a better job of making our people do what they're supposed to do. Not asking them. Making them. Not expecting them and taking them for granted but beating the s**t out of them and then making them do it.

Project Veritas Films a New York City Elections Commissioner

Foval's boasts about Democratic fraud were seconded by a completely unrelated Democrat with insider information. In New York, one of Hillary's stronghold states, one of Project Veritas' undercover reporters interviewed Alan Schulkin, a New York City commissioner on its Board of Elections. Schulkin told the reporter:

I think there is a lot of voter fraud. Right. Like I say, people don't realize certain neighborhoods in particular, they bus people around to vote.

Schulkin also pointed to the lax standards for New York City ID requirements.

But they didn't vet the people to see who they really are. Anybody can go in there and say, I'm Joe Smith, I want an ID card. It's absurd. There is a lot of fraud, not just voter fraud, all kinds of fraud.

When even people inside the system admit to the lack of credibility in New York's vote totals, that's hardly a strong endorsement for using popular vote totals as justification for ending the Electoral College.

How Much Fraud Was There in the Absentee Vote?

A second reason to question the popular vote totals is the absentee vote. Absentee ballots have long been an opportunity for fraud, and the elections of 2016 were no exception. In an October 28 press release from Katherine Hernandez Rundle, a state attorney in Miami-Dade County, Rundle announced the arrest of Gladys Coego, who had been hired as a temporary worker opening absentee ballots. The press release stated:

It appeared that Ms. Coego concealed a black pen in her purse and brought it into the ballot sorting room. The Miami-Dade Elections Department immediately contacted members of the State Attorney's Multi-Agency Public Corruption. Ms. Coego provided a voluntary statement to investigators and admitted that she had marked a number of absentee ballots involving the Miami-Dade County mayoral race that had been left blank, marking each ballot for candidate Raquel Regalado.

While the press release didn't cite any alterations of presidential votes, it does show the vulnerability of absentee ballots for all contests on the ballot.

Some of Hillary's popular vote plurality comes from states such as Oregon and Washington, where virtually all the ballots



AP Images

Making their votes count: Voters are shown here lined up in Brooklyn. Now that Project Veritas has filmed a New York City election official admitting to wholesale fraud, will these voters demand better elections in New York City?

are cast via absentee balloting, and opportunities for absentee ballot fraud are much greater. The loose chain of custody for ballots in Oregon was documented in John Fund's book *Stealing Elections — How Voter Fraud Threatens Our Democracy*, where he cited an example by Melody Rose, a professor at Oregon State University:

Rose herself once stopped by a library after hours to deposit her ballot, only to find an overflowing bin of ballots in the lobby. She could have taken all of them to her car and done some creative pruning based on where people lived or their gender.

John Fund should have also added that Professor Rose had the opportunity to stuff the ballot box with fraudulent ballots. And she wasn't the only person with behind-closed-doors access to those bins of ballots that were left unattended in government buildings. All manner of employees, such as librarians, janitors, security guards, students with after-hours access to the building, and numerous others have access to the government buildings where ballots are dropped off in states that offer unrestricted absentee balloting. It should also be noted that government employees, especially those with government patronage jobs, have a history of being involved in electoral fraud schemes, and access like this is an open invitation for electoral fraud.

Another weakness in absentee ballots is that many states allow absentee ballots to arrive after election day, provided they have postmarks on or before election day. This can be an opportunity to do a little extra stuffing of the ballot box if a contest becomes surprisingly close. Consider the arrests in the aftermath of a contest to guess the score in the 1987 Super Bowl. The suspects were accused of postmarking empty envelopes before the deadline date, writing down the final score after the game ended, and bypassing the stamp cancellation process by putting the letters directly into outgoing mail sacks the next day. The *New York Times* of April 20, 1988 said:

Fourteen postal employees and three associates in New York City were accused yesterday of using their post-office know-how to win a 1987 Super Bowl "Pick the Score" contest.



AP Images

Unsecure voting: Using a freestanding drop box, a voter casts a ballot in King County, Washington, in 2008. As noted by Professor Melody Rose in nearby Oregon, which has similar ballot laws, the chain of custody for the ballots has gaping holes.

They were charged in a Federal complaint of pre-dating their entries, and waiting until after the game to "predict" the winning score. They won most of the \$100,000 awarded in the contest.

Don't forget, government employees are frequently involved in many different roles in vote-fraud schemes. Many of them owe their jobs to people in the political establishment, and they are often called on to use their governmental positions to benefit the political bosses.

And why aren't the absentee ballots counted immediately? All that is needed to count extra absentee ballots is to add extra ballot counters. It could be a deliberate slow count, a stall for time while the needed number of extra ballots with appropriate postmarks is being calculated. Slow counts have been known in the past to be opportunities for mischief.

Moreover, add to this that most absentee ballots are counted behind closed doors. There was a time when the American public had unrestricted access to observe all aspects of elections, except for the marking of the secret ballots. That openness is a safeguard that needs to be restored to our elections. Absentee balloting should return to being used only when justified. It must be mandated that the ballots must arrive by election day, and the process must be open to public monitoring. Until then,

vote totals including widespread usage of absentee ballots should not diminish the credibility of the Electoral College.

Were the Vote Totals Subject to Tampering?

A third reason to question the veracity of popular vote totals is vote tampering, a process made easy by electronic voting.

Elections expert Bev Harris recently appeared on Alex Jones' *Infowars* news show and unveiled a computer program that was written by white-hat hacker Bennie Smith. (White-hat hackers are good guys who apply hacking skills to identify and fix security flaws in computer systems.) Smith's program, called Fraction Magic, is capable of altering vote totals from the top down. That means he can specify a desired final total, and the computer then replaces the actual vote totals and subtotals all the way down to the precinct level with plausible but dishonest totals. The fact that such a program exists doesn't mean it was used, but it does mean there's a security flaw that needs to be fixed.

THE NEW AMERICAN and many others have advocated for years that electronic voting equipment should have a voter-verified paper trail that can be used by the voter to ensure the computer has done as instructed by the voter and can also be used for manual recounts. That is an important first step. But that is not the only paper trail needed. The vote totals at the precinct

level need to be printed and posted publicly at the precinct voting site as well as posted online immediately for the public to know. Additionally, the public needs to be allowed to witness and photograph the vote count as a public event.

But there is a disturbing trend in American elections to make precinct vote totals secret and use secure means of transmission to keep these totals secret until after they have been collected by a centralized authority. Secrecy tactics such as this have been used by dictators in their dishonest elections:

Another dirty deed, very closely related to behind-closed-door vote counts, is keeping precinct vote totals secret from the public while forwarding them to the central election administration. This gives the powers at the top the final opportunity to review the vote totals and adjust them as necessary to achieve the desired outcomes.

At the Iowa Republican Caucuses early this year, the votes were counted in front of the caucus attendees, but the county chairman recorded those totals on a piece of paper, which he put in a manila envelope, and would not let the news media see what he recorded. The vote totals were securely transmitted to a central location using modern encryption technology. The

liberal news media that reported on this generally put a positive spin on it by focusing on the impressiveness of the technology, failing to ask what good was being accomplished by concealing public information from the public.

Were the vote totals and subtotals in the 2016 general elections altered by such a program as Fraction Magic? Probably not — at least not extensively. Many local voting officials printed their precinct's totals, and those paper copies, where saved, could be used for an audit. Another reason is because Donald Trump raised the issue of whether or not the vote was being rigged, something Republican candidates generally do not do. This, coupled with news reporting in the alternative news media, raised the public awareness. That may have served as a deterrent in case there were such plans. Let's reopen the doors and allow the public to monitor this electoral process.

Repeater Voting Has a History in Election Frauds

A fourth reason not to trust the popular vote total is repeater voting.

Repeater voting, in which people make multiple appearances at numerous election locations, and sometimes multiple visits to the same location during an election, is commonplace. It's no wonder why certain segments of the political landscape are in love with early voting, are opposed to al-

lowing cameras to be used even outside of voting locations, and are opposed to voter ID laws.

How many fraudulent votes can a repeater cast in an election, especially now that early voting has extended the number of days to vote? There have been investigations of fraudulent elections in the past. In 1869, the U.S. Congress investigated frauds in New York in the previous year's presidential election. The *Report of the Select Committee on Alleged New York Election Frauds* stated:

These frauds were the result of a systematic plan of gigantic proportions, stealthily prearranged and boldly executed, not merely by bands of degraded desperadoes, but with the direct sanction, approval, or aid of many prominent officials and citizens of New York.... They were aided by an immense, corrupt, and corrupting official patronage and power, which not only encouraged, but shielded and protected, the guilty principals and their aiders and abettors.

The report went on to say:

Many hundreds of persons voted in New York city from two to forty times or more, each under assumed or fictitious names, fraudulently registered for the purpose.

If a repeater could use fraudulent voter registrations to vote as often as 40 times in an election in 1868, he could fraudulently vote at least that many times today. The techniques of stealth in repeater voting in the 1800s were documented in James B. Glentworth's book *A Statement of the Frauds on the Elective Franchise in the City of New York in the Fall of the Year 1838 and Spring of 1839*:

To most of the men a slip of paper was given, with the name and residence they were to assume written upon it.... Frequently alterations were made among the men during the election, by exchanging hats and coats among themselves.... These men boasted of having voted in several of the different wards, and in some instances multiple times in the same ward.



Playing with the Post Office: The Giants beat the Broncos 39 to 20 in Super Bowl XXI. In the wake of a contest to guess the score before the game, 17 people were accused of not really guessing the outcome correctly, but submitting the known final score using envelopes with a previous day's postmark. Are similar things being done with postmarks on absentee ballots?

Forbidding public access and photography makes the repeater's job less risky. For example, if someone gets multiple photographs of a repeater in the act of voting in a state such as Texas where it's illegal to use a camera at the polls or within 100 feet of the outside door, the photographic evidence, having been obtained illegally, can't be used in court to prosecute the repeater.

We need to reinstate elections as public events, in public places, with the public allowed access to witness to assure the elections are being run accurately and honestly.

How Effective Are Voter ID Laws?

A fifth reason to question popular vote totals is the lack of ubiquitous and strict voter ID laws. Some people say state laws requiring voter ID are useless. After all, with today's technology it's easy to put a repeater's photo on multiple fake IDs. But as in the difference between transporting repeaters to the polls in buses versus cars, it's more discreet to camouflage repeater voting by suppressing voter ID laws than by equipping repeaters with fake IDs. Sooner or later a large stash of fake IDs with the same person's photo on multiple IDs would be discovered. Can you imagine what would happen if a car with multiple occupants got into a fatal crash and the accident investigators found each person in the car in possession of perhaps 20 or 50 fake photo IDs, and it was subsequently learned they were traveling from one polling location to another? The consequences could be as severe as when a courier for the Illuminati was found dead, and the authorities discovered messages on his body. That led to an investigation of the Illuminati.

Voter ID laws at the state level are constitutional, and they serve as a deterrent to repeater voting. They should be strengthened to include an indication of citizenship. Until that happens, how can the popular vote totals from states with lax voter ID requirements be considered more credible than the Electoral College?

Currently, Donald Trump and many in the alternative news media are claiming that millions of votes were illegally cast by non-citizens and that repeat voting took place. Many establishment news sources, such as the front page of the *New York Times* for November 28, have described



AP Images

Prove it: Voter ID laws can reduce illegal voting by non-citizens or people who assume other people's names, but the ID cards must either require citizenship or show citizenship status.

this as a baseless claim. This controversy could be resolved by having Trump pick a few precincts where he thinks this has happened and use the list of persons who voted to see if they really exist, if they are eligible to vote, and whether or not they voted.

This type of verification was done in the infamous Ballot Box 13 scandal in the senate primary runoff of 1948 in Texas where 200 votes were added after Lyndon Johnson gave orders to "Find the votes." J. Evetts Haley, in his book *A Texan Looks at Lyndon*, described how the list of voters was used to gather evidence of illegal votes being cast in Precinct 13: "202 new names had been added alphabetically in blue ink, whereas the original list was in black." Haley went on to describe what happened when attempting to vet these voters:

They found grave difficulty in locating the addresses they had jotted down except three, "whose last known address was the cemetery," one of whom, according to the church records, had been there for four years. At least two of those they did locate swore they had not voted, while others shrugged off their questions with the frank admission that people in Parr's province who did not talk prospered better and lived longer than those who did.

This type of follow-up should be done after all major elections, especially this one.

The Founding Fathers of the Ameri-

can Republic never intended to calculate a popular vote for president. Part of the reasoning for the Electoral College was the fact that each state has the right to determine the qualifications for voting, and each state should have the final say over their electoral votes. South Carolina's presidential electors were elected by the state legislature.

Today, many are calling for the abolition of the Electoral College and/or for extra-constitutional federal oversight and election standards. Yet, federal intervention under the guise of securing the ballot could have the opposite result. About the only major difference in voter qualifications in different states is whether or not to allow former felons to vote. But there are huge differences in how accurately and honestly the elections are conducted in different states.

The Founding Fathers never wanted to see the quality of elections degrade to the point seen in America today. The Electoral College now serves an additional purpose: It protects the electoral votes in each state from being adversely affected by fraud or sloppiness in another state. No matter how much electoral fraud or sloppiness is committed in Chicago, that affects only Illinois' electoral votes, not those of any other state. That can't be said for the national popular vote.

So who really won the popular vote? Unless we clean up the potential for sloppiness and fraud and implement a verification procedure that ensures the votes are cast by real voters, we'll never really be sure. ■

Does God Exist?

“We hold these truths to be self-evident,” wrote Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence, “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” Whatever their sectarian inclinations, the Founding Fathers (with the possible exception of Thomas Paine) would have agreed with Jefferson’s first assumption, namely, that there exists a Supreme Being from whom all rights, and the natural laws they are predicated on, originate.

Freedom and limited government as unquestioned goods depend ultimately on the notion that God is real, and that freedom and natural rights are gifts from Him to His children, to be safeguarded by properly constituted government. But is the existence of God, an almighty cosmic lawgiver, anything more than unprovable dogma, an article of personal faith lying outside the realm of reason?

The caricatures of Christianity offered up by its enemies notwithstanding, Christian theology has always sought to ground itself in reason. Proving the existence of God has been a fruitful exercise since the days of early Christian thinkers such as Augustine of Hippo, who sought to prove the existence of God by showing, via the inherent perfection of numbers and mathematical proofs, that man could not possibly be the highest being.

Perhaps the best-known and most influential proofs of the existence of God were served up by that quintessential thinker of the high Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas. With characteristic concision Aquinas laid out his *Quinque Viae* or “Five Ways” by which the existence of God could be proven. These ways are the unmoved mover, the first cause, the argument from contingency, the argument from degree, and the teleological argument or argument from design.

By the first argument, Aquinas meant that all things in this world are in constant change, and every change is effected by some agency that is itself changing. Yet change cannot be infinitely recursive; somewhere far up the chain of causation, there

must be some unchanging agency that is the source of and standard for all change. This unchangeable source is held to be God.

The argument of first cause holds that all things have some cause external to themselves but, as with change, it is impossible to conceive of an infinite concatenation of cause and effect. There must be some first cause that is not the effect of some other prior cause, from which all other causes, and their effects, spring. This first cause is God.

According to the argument from contingency, all things in our mortal experience are perishable and will only exist for a finite time span, however long. Yet if we assume an infinite past, then all things in a perishable universe should have ceased to exist. The fact that this is not so implies the existence of Something that is eternally imperishable, which is God.

The argument from degree is one of Aquinas’ strongest. By this argument, we recognize degrees of goodness, virtue, truth, and so on, such that we can recognize, e.g., that A is better than B, or C is more correct than D. But in a universe with no absolutes, such distinctions would be impossible. Thus there must exist some ultimate, perfect standard for goodness, beauty, virtue, truth, and the like, and that perfect standard is God.

Finally, Aquinas’ teleological argument asserts that, just as intelligent beings behave in regular, purposeful ways to achieve ends, so too do non-intelligent things behave in regular ways to bring about predictable results. A seed planted in the ground will produce a plant of determinate type (and not, say, a rock or an animal), while a stone thrown in the air will follow a predictable trajectory. But such results can only obtain if guided by some type of intelligent agency, and if the thing in question does not possess such agency, it must be guided by an outside intelligence, which is God.

Nor was Aquinas alone in seeking to prove the greatest of all questions. A couple of American thinkers of surpassing originality and penetrating insight added proofs of their own. Charles Sanders Peirce, the brilliant philosopher, logician,

and scientist who was the son of America’s first mathematical physicist and astrophysicist, Benjamin Peirce (and who is credited, alongside his father, with the invention of that most essential of modern mathematical tools, the matrix), was deeply religious after his own fashion. In one of his better-known papers, “A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God,” Peirce pointed out the remarkable and seemingly contradictory circumstance of immense variety in a universe clearly governed by law. Peirce saw law as something conceptually distinct from God Himself, observing that “the endless variety in the world has not been created by law. It is not of the nature of uniformity to originate variation, nor of law to beget circumstance. When we gaze upon the multifariousness of nature we are looking straight into the face of a ‘living spontaneity.’”

Elsewhere, Peirce clarified his point: “The variety of the universe ... which we see whenever and wherever we open our eyes, constitutes its liveliness, its vivacity. The perception of it is a direct, though darkling perception of God.”

In other words, while laws may originate with God, in and of themselves laws tend toward uniformity and predictability. We are thus left with the need to explain diversity and spontaneity, and God must be the direct source of these.

Another American philosopher and near contemporary of Peirce, Josiah Royce, argued that error, or human fallibility, of all things, was the strongest evidence for the existence of God. For where could men have gotten the notion of fallibility and error in the first place, much less the capacity to confront and overcome error, if not from some perfect Source? A world without God would perforce be a world in which the very notion of error would be inconceivable.

These are but a smattering of the many arguments for the existence of God brought forth by humanity’s most ingenious intellects. None of them, of course, will move the dogmatic skeptics among us. But the fact remains that God does exist, and that He is the ultimate author of our liberty and laws. ■

— CHARLES SCALIGER

HISTORICALLY WRONG, AND RIGHT

History has relegated the anti-federalists – who opposed passing our country’s Constitution – as simply wrong, if not foolish. But in hindsight, they proved correct.

by Joe Wolverton II, J.D.

Crossroads for Liberty: Recovering the Anti-Federalist Values of America’s First Constitution, by William J. Watkins, Jr., Oakland, California: Independent Institute, 2016, 336 pages, hardcover.

The first American constitution was an amazing and amazingly powerful pact that held together the disparate former colonies in a “firm league of friendship” that was strong enough to keep the states united in their war to restore their liberty and flexible enough to preserve the power of the states to govern themselves without the need for a consolidated national government, one like they had just driven from their shores.

This isn’t quite the description of the Articles of Confederation published in high-school history textbooks or in the innumerable volumes of popular Founding Fathers biographies that regularly top best-seller lists and inspire Broadway blockbusters.

This is, however, the story — the true story — that is found in the pages of William J. Watkins, Jr.’s new book *Crossroads for Liberty: Recovering the Anti-Federalist Values of America’s First Constitution*.

In this remarkable recasting of the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, Watkins paints a picture of patriotism that highlights the wisdom and foresight of a faction of Founders typically cast as losers in the struggle to establish “a more perfect union” and men who lacked faith in the promises of the promoters of a stronger central government. These men are known as Anti-Federalists.

Anti-Federalists vs. Federalists

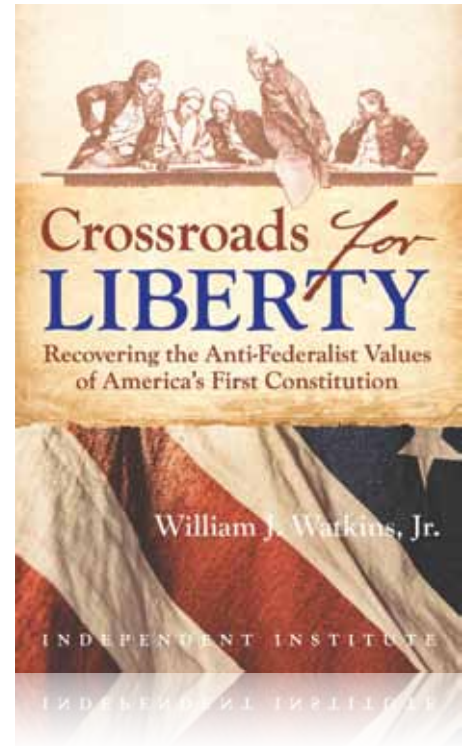
“Rather than men of little faith,” Watkins writes, “the Anti-Federalists were men of great faith.”

“Their faith, however, was in a concept of republicanism alien to us today. Indeed, one Anti-Federalist writer, chaffing at the anti- prefix attached to his cause, remarked that a more accurate designation for the opponents and proponents of the Constitution would be Republicans and Anti-Republicans,” Watkins explains.

Watkins’ defense of the Anti-Federalists and their cause is not a case of iconoclastic zeal, but rather of the restoration of the republicanism of many of our country’s earliest freedom fighters. Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, and George Mason were all men of highest renown who served the cause of American liberty without reserve. They were also men who saw in the Constitution drafted at the convention in Philadelphia in 1787 a document that would destroy the states, swallow up the liberties of the people, and eventually permit the growth of an all-powerful central government that would surpass anything they’d ever faced in the British crown.

The Federalists — headed by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and George Washington — pushed for years before the “plenipotentiary convention” was finally gavelled to order in May 1787. There was a small convention of several states held at Mt. Vernon in 1785 and then another, more productive, gathering at Annapolis in 1786.

While neither of these preliminary conventions were well attended — both were all but completely ignored by state governments — the latter did result in a call from Congress to state legislatures to send



delegations to Philadelphia to hammer out the regional disagreements that were plaguing the confederacy.

Sole and Express Purpose: Amend the Articles

The precise language of the invitation sent from Congress to the states reveals the real intent of the meeting, as far as Congress was concerned.

This is the last paragraph from the report of the Continental Congress calling for the convention of the states held in Philadelphia and begun in May 1787: “Resolved that in the opinion of Congress it is expedient that on the second Monday in May next a Convention of delegates who shall have been appointed by the several states be held at Philadelphia for the sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation and reporting to Congress and the several legislatures such alterations and provisions therein as shall when agreed to in Congress and confirmed by the states render the federal constitution adequate to the exigencies of Government & the preservation of the Union.”

In 1787, the document known as the Articles of Confederation was the capital “C” Constitution of the United States. Article

XIII of that Constitution mandated that regarding the making of changes to it: “Nor shall any alteration at any time hereafter be made in any of them; unless such alteration be agreed to in a Congress of the United States, and be afterwards confirmed by the legislatures of every State.”

When the constitutional convention met in Philadelphia in May 1787, that legally binding and constitutional provision was ignored. From the moment Edmund Randolph stood and proposed what was known as the “Virginia Plan,” the Constitutional Convention of 1787 became a “runaway convention” and the Articles were left on life support.

Advocates of the constitution claimed that the new charter was necessary to cure the defects of the Articles of Confederation and that without an entirely new constitution, the union would have dissolved, the states would have been left weak, and they would have fallen prey to the powerful forces of European monarchy who were waiting for the United States to splinter and succumb to sectionalism.

Furthermore, they pointed to the fact that the new constitution was strong where the old constitution was weak: taxing power, executive authority, and no unanimity clause hamstringing the progress of the “perpetual union.”

Could the Articles Have Been Saved by Amendments?

If the problems the would-be constitution crafters had with the Articles of Confederation truly were Congress’ lack of taxing authority, the lack of executive power, and the impossibility of getting anything over the unanimity hurdle, couldn’t those issues have been resolved by amendment rather than by throwing the baby of state sovereignty out with the bathwater of state self-interest?

Here’s how Watkins frames the issue of the alleged mortal weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation: “Could the Articles have been revived to meet the exigencies of the union without destroying the self-government won in the Revolution? Thomas Jefferson and other republicans thought so. Writing in 1786, Jefferson described the Articles as a ‘wonderfully perfect in-



William J. Watkins, Jr.

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strument, considering the circumstances under which it was formed.’ He believed that three or four new articles could have been added to address the palpable defects of America’s first constitution.”

That’s not how the drama played out, however. The Articles of Confederation were thrown onto the scrap heap of history.

Of course, the Constitution drafted in Philadelphia in 1787 is a remarkable document and is a singular example of federalism that has been attempted but never replicated anywhere or anytime in the world since. This is likely due to the character and erudition of the men who helped compose the Constitution and who applied timeless principles of liberty in innovative ways.

The various provisions of the Constitution of 1787 create then check the legislative, executive, and judicial powers granted in it. No one man or group of men is given absolute authority, and when one man or group of men attempts to accumulate greater powers than are allotted to them, the Constitution cleverly pits one or more of the other branches against the would-be consolidators.

At least, that’s how it’s supposed to work.

Lessons for Today

We are all witnesses that the Constitution isn’t quite the protection against despotism it was intended to be. In fact, it has become little more than a “parchment barrier” to

the forces of statism and autocracy, which seem to grow stronger and stronger every passing election.

In *Crossroads for Liberty*, Watkins reminds readers that this dire predicament was predicted with remarkable accuracy by many of the Anti-Federalists. “Over and over they [the Anti-Federalists] predicted the inevitability of a puissant federal government under the Constitution. The *Federalist Papers* is celebrated for insights of political theory, but James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay missed the mark more often than they hit it,” Watkins writes.

In fairness, Madison, Hamilton, Jay, Washington, and the rest of the Federalists would be shocked by the way the Constitution they supported has been wrested and twisted, unmoored from the anchor of enumerated and limited power to which it was meant to be firmly attached.

There is no way any of the men present in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787, no matter how ardent a nationalist, would have remained a single day at that convention had they known what a potent enemy of liberty the government they were founding would become. These were not men committed to destroying self-government, but they were men, many of them, who ignored the prescient and persistent warnings of those who opposed ratification of the document produced by the convention.

Americans interested in discovering the truth of the Articles of Confederation and in debunking the establishment detractors who claim it was unsalvageable could find no better place to start that journey than in Watkins’ *Crossroads for Liberty*. There, the reader will see the early days of the Republic in a new light and will come to know the names and opinions of the so-called Anti-Federalists who have been dropped into the footnotes of American history.

Finally, and most importantly, Americans who read Watkins’ book will come to understand that there was great wisdom in the Articles of Confederation — our first constitution — and the restoration of some of that wisdom might undo much of the damage that has been done to our Republic and to the principle of popular sovereignty upon which it was originally built. ■



An Early Christmas

When local residents in Concord, North Carolina, learned that their terminally ill neighbor may not make it to Christmas, they rallied together to give her a chance to celebrate her favorite holiday one last time.

In October, Michelle Fadel learned that what started as breast cancer had spread throughout her body and that she would not likely make it to Christmas.

Fadel told *today.com* that she was devastated because she wanted to celebrate the holiday with her six grandchildren, but her husband, Dan, had a plan. He began putting up Christmas decorations and lights at their home on October 8. When neighbors spotted him, he explained his reasoning and word quickly spread throughout the community. The response was immediate.

Dan Fadel recalls, “When I came home from work and I pulled into the street, I saw all these lights and decorations from everyone, and it tore me up.”

More than a dozen homes were decorated for Christmas in a month when Halloween decorations would normally adorn the properties. The community even took it a step further, offering Christmas cookies and cards to the Fadels, despite it only being October.

“It may look a little strange this close to Halloween but we hope it makes her happy and we hope she knows we’re thinking about her,” neighbor Tim Hawkins told ABC affiliate WBTV.

Though the Fadels have only lived in their home for two years, the neighborhood has embraced them like family. One neighbor, Sarah Connor, told *today.com* that Michelle Fadel was the “happiest person I’ve ever met.”

“She says, ‘If I’m alive I’m happy, and when I’m not alive I’ll be happy with God,’” Connor said. “The only thing she’s ever said to me about it is that she’ll miss her grandchildren having a grandmother, and that weighs on her mind more than anything.”

What’s more, carolers have visited the Fadels several times to sing Christmas songs to Michelle.

Despite her grim diagnosis, Michelle has been uplifted by her community and remains positive. “It’s been a blessing,” she said. “The more I can think about what Christmas means to us, it’s more hopeful.” According to *People.com*, home fronts featured decorated Christmas trees, lights, and nativity scenes.

Redeemed Birthday

Strangers, including an acclaimed children’s author, Jeff Kinney, gave a little boy in Bend, Oregon, a birthday he won’t soon forget.

Mahlon Layne had just moved from Portland, Oregon — where he was homeschooled — to Bend, Oregon, where for the first time he began attending public school. According to *Oregon Live*, he was excited to celebrate his October 23 birthday this year because he was going to have a party and for the first time would have friends from school to invite. The party’s theme was in honor of his favorite book series, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

Unfortunately, to Mahlon’s utter disappointment, no one showed up for the party. His mother, Kristen, took to her blog, entitled “Life on Peanut Layne,” to share the tale of her son’s devastation.

“I write this post with swollen, puffy eyes, still raw and burning from crying myself to sleep on my pillow,” the blog began. “What was supposed to be a fun filled birthday party weekend, complete with pizza, cake, games, prizes and friends, went horribly wrong.”

Layne explained that she had not received any RSVPs to the party in the days leading up to it, but simply assumed that Mahlon’s classmates would attend nonetheless. Being new in the area, they did not have any of the classmates’ phone numbers, so they could not make contact with any of the parents. Still, she could never have imagined such a scenario as the one that unfolded.

“Seeing my heartbroken little boy sitting all alone at his brightly decorated, empty party table was more than I could take. I briefly excused myself to my bathroom and sobbed quietly, as I

didn’t want to upset him any further,” she wrote.

Layne used her blog to plead with parents everywhere to never ignore RSVPs and birthday invitations from their children’s classmates, to prevent something like this from happening to another child.

“I know you’re busy, tired, stressed, have a million and one other things to do, etc ... but please the next time you’re tempted to ignore the handwritten invitation from a classmate, please remember that there could be a child sitting at an empty party table, crying into his napkin, feeling unloved and rejected,” she wrote.

Somehow, her story reached Jeff Kinney, author of the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series. Amazingly, Kinney reached out to Mahlon and turned what was a terribly sad ninth birthday into a memorable one for Mahlon.

“Not only did Jeff take time out of his super busy day to talk to him, but he Face-Timed him as well and gave us a personal tour of his office/studio,” wrote Layne in a follow-up post.

Kinney also sent Mahlon an advance copy of his book *Double Down* before it was available to the general public. And, perhaps the best surprise of all, Kinney flew Mahlon and his family out to Seattle so that they could meet in person and explore the city.

“I cannot even begin to thank Jeff Kinney enough for reaching out to our sweet boy, and to a couple of very special people who helped connect him to us, in order to make all of this happen,” she wrote.

What’s more, people all over the country reached out to Mahlon to offer encouragement and stories of their own failed birthday parties, *Time.com* reported. Many sent birthday wishes and anonymous gifts.

“We are so humbled by the number of people who just wanted to make sure that our son had a happy birthday and to know that he is loved, so thank you from the bottom of our hearts,” Kristen wrote. “This will truly be a birthday that none of us will ever forget.” ■

— RAVEN CLABOUGH

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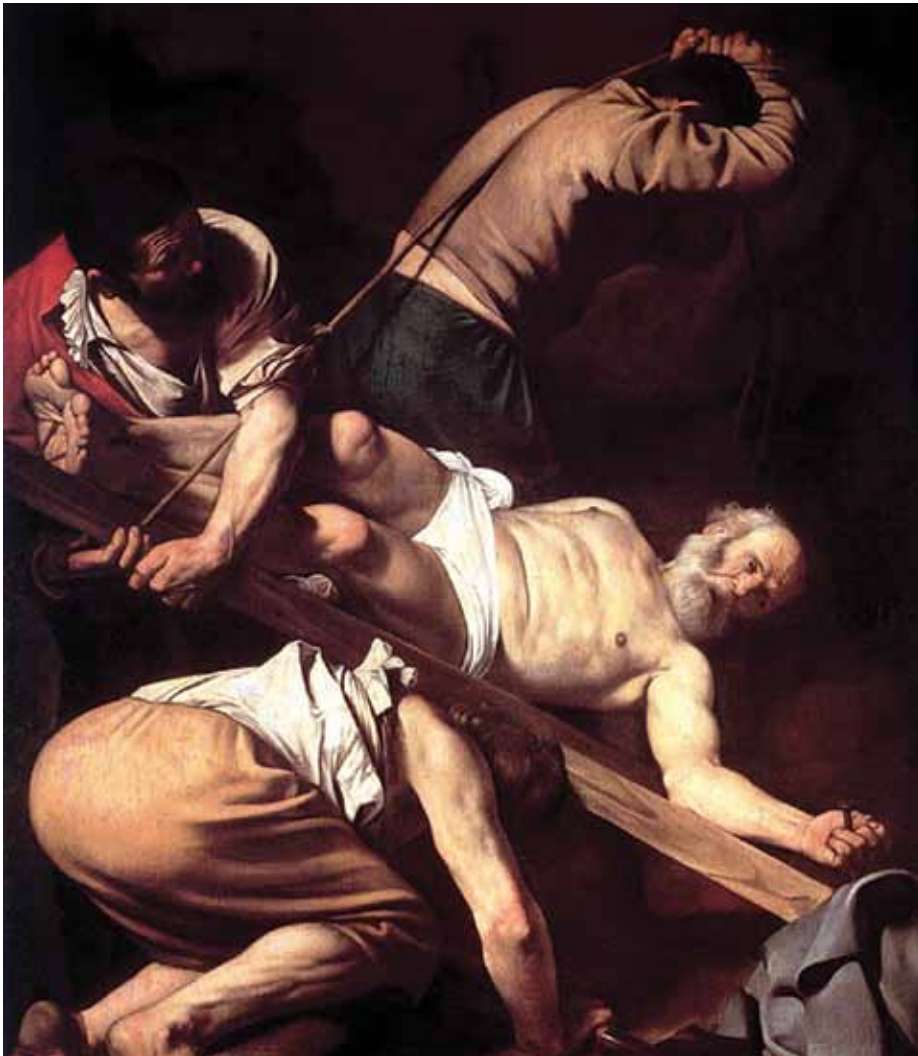
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Early Church Grew Despite Persecution

That truth wins out in the end is evidenced by the expansion of the early church in Roman territory, even as emperors had Christians hunted down, tortured, and killed.



Tradition tells us that the Apostle St. Peter was crucified upside down since he did not believe himself worthy to be crucified in the same manner as Christ.

on an X-shaped cross; St. James, the son of Zebedee, was decapitated; St. Philip was crucified; St. Bartholomew (Nathaniel) was flayed; St. Thomas was run through with spears; according to one account St. Matthew was martyred by fire; St. James, the son of Alphaeus, was sawn to pieces; St. Simon the Zealot was crucified; St. Jude-Thaddaeus was hung on a cross and then killed by spears; and St. Matthias was martyred by stoning. In addition, St. Paul, the apostle to the nations, was beheaded. And so it was that even from the beginning, becoming a follower of Jesus Christ was always arduous and fraught with danger since to live a Christian life required one to live apart from the intrinsic corruption of the pagan society of the Roman Empire.

For more than 300 years, Christianity existed on the fringes of society and near the boundary of legality, a vaguely defined boundary that shifted to and fro according to the whims of the public and of officialdom. Intervals of comparative peace alternated with bouts of savage persecution. All the while, however, the church grew ineluctably, the periodic persecutions purifying and strengthening her in her witness for Christ. So, despite harsh and deadly forms of intimidation meant to destroy the church, the number of Christian believers nonetheless multiplied steadily.

The Pagan Roman Empire and Its Religion

What were the reasons for those periods of persecution? To understand that time better, let us briefly consider the nature of the Roman State and religion. The government of the Roman people had been a republic for nearly 500 years until, in the year 27 B.C., the Senate voted excep-

by Fr. James Thornton

It is common knowledge that during the first three centuries of the Christian Era, Christians were frequently subjected to severe persecution. Jesus Himself had prophesied that his followers would suffer for their faith: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteous-

ness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” (St. Matthew 5:10-12). Indeed, Christ’s prophecies were not long in being fulfilled.

Of His 12 Apostles, all save St. John were martyred: St. Peter was crucified upside down; St. Andrew was crucified

Fr. James Thornton is a priest in the Eastern Orthodox Church and is the author of several books on the early history of Christendom.

Of His 12 Apostles, all save St. John were martyred: St. Peter was crucified upside down; St. Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross; St. James, the son of Zebedee, was decapitated...

tional powers to the first Roman emperor, Octavian, better known by the title he assumed, Augustus. Augustus was sufficiently clever to restore the outward features of the republic, that is, to retain what historian Michael Grant calls the “decorous façade” of traditional republicanism. In actual fact, under the new regime, the Senate was reduced to political insignificance. The emperor simply ruled as a dictator, with the Senate acting in the fashion of a rubber stamp. The only institution to which the emperor paid any serious attention was the army, which possessed the *de facto* power to make or break emperors.

The religion of the Roman people underwent a gradual evolution as the empire expanded. The earliest Roman religion was a simple system in which good and evil spirits abounded. There was the spirit of light and lightning, the spirit of crops, the spirit of the woods, the spirit of gardens, and so forth. One was obliged to propitiate these spirits through sacrificial acts if one wished to have a peaceful and prosperous life. Under the influence of the Etruscans, and later the Greeks, these spirits became gods and were transformed from invisible to visible entities in the temples. As before, the gods were appeased through libations and sacrifices.

An important official within the Roman religion was the *haruspex*, who, after the sacrifice of an animal, examined the entrails of the dead creature to determine the will of the gods, according to the shape and condition of certain internal organs. The Roman pagan religion had no moral or ethical content; there was no concept of sin, nor was there any but the vaguest notion of an afterlife in

which one might be rewarded or punished. Morality and ethics were regulated by social conventions, not religion.

As new lands and peoples were added to the empire, new gods were added to the pantheon of the Romans, such as Isis and Osiris. For the most part, worshipers of these foreign gods were not troubled by the Roman authorities so long as they were willing also to honor the Roman gods and, especially, to honor the emperor, who was regarded, in a sense, as a living god or, at least, as the living personification of the empire. The adherents to the various for-

eign cults had no difficulty in rendering religious homage to the Roman gods or the emperor. The only exceptions were the Jews and the Christians, whose religious tenets forbade such activity. The prohibitions prescribed by the Jewish religion were long known to the Romans, and were considered a peculiarity of the Jewish nation, and so were not found objectionable. The Christians, however, were not identified with any particular nation and so their refusal to show proper honor to the emperor and the gods was considered by some a sign of disrespect, or even of subversive intent.

The Christians flatly rejected the idea of blending their religion with that of the pagans. As St. Paul wrote in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians (6:17), “be ye separate”, Christians were to remain separate from all aspects of paganism. Additionally, rumors circulated that the Christians were engaged in horrifyingly evil practices. Because they were commanded to love one another and referred to each other as “brother” and “sister,” it was thought that their rites involved immorality; and because they referred to receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, pagan gossips spread the story that Christians were cannibals, secretly killing babies and consuming their flesh and blood. The second century apologist St. Athenagoras of Athens responded to these calumnies by pointing out that Christians exalted virginity and chastity and forbade even thoughts of an immoral nature, and so obviously would not allow immoral acts of any sort to take place at Christian gatherings. He also noted that Christians believe that “women who use drugs to bring on abortion commit murder, and will have to give an account to God for the abortion,” and therefore could not possibly murder babies. Despite the attempts by educated Christians to refute the charges made by pagan accusers, the slanders were widely believed.



Bow before this: This statue of Jove, or Jupiter, the father of the gods according to Roman mythology, was the type before which Christians were ordered to make sacrifices.

Nero (Reigned 54-68)

The first serious attack by the Roman State against the Christians was launched by Nero in 64. That year, a great fire erupted in the Roman capital that some believed was started by order of Nero himself, who wished to clear land to build a huge new palace. (Subsequently, he did build the palace, a fantastically luxurious edifice known as the “Golden House.”) As it turned out, almost half the city was consumed while Nero sang and played a lyre, watching it all burn. Stung by the accusations against him, Nero promptly blamed the fire on the Christians and, as a result, had many of them killed, including Sts. Peter and Paul. According to the historian Tacitus, Nero had Christians wrapped in the skins of wild animals and then torn apart by dogs. He also had them fastened to crosses, drenched in inflammable liquid, and then set ablaze to illuminate a circus he staged in his own gardens. Tacitus remarks that “the victims were pitied” by the crowd since “it was felt that they were being sacrificed to one man’s brutality rather than to the national interest.” Nero later died by his own hand.

Domitian (Reigned 81-96)

Domitian is remembered by historians for several reasons. For example, he was among the first to show genuine contempt for the old republican system and establish the imperial autocracy more openly. The moment he succeeded to the throne, he presented himself first to the praetorian guard, and only afterwards to the Senate. In so doing, the new emperor sought deliberately to emphasize the impotence of the Senate. In fact, he showed his hatred for the senatorial establishment by refusing to take an oath guaranteeing the traditional immunity of the senators and recognizing their status as coequals in power. Far from regarding them as coequals, he instead replaced defiant senators with men more compliant. To assure a cooperative Senate, which he retained only for the sake of show, toward the end of his life he initiated a veritable reign of terror in which those who dared oppose him were accused of treason and executed. The church historian Philip Hughes writes that the ensuing persecution was directed at “all the better elements of the population and the Christians with them.” Among the many Christians martyred at this time were



Christians blamed for anything bad: Nero accused the Christians of starting a fire that burned half of Rome, when more probably he himself had it burned to clear land on which to build a new palace.

St. Clement of Rome and the kinsman of the emperor himself, Titus Flavius Clemens, who had apparently converted to Christianity since he was executed for “atheism,” a charge usually leveled at Christians for spurning the gods. Domitian was assassinated by officials in his own court.

Trajan (Reigned 98-117)

Early in the second century, the Roman governor of the province of Bithynia-Pontus (a region along the Black Sea coast of Asia Minor), Pliny the Younger, wrote to the Emperor Trajan asking for advice about dealing with the Christians in that province. Pliny stated that when Christians were obstinate in their adherence to that faith, he ordered them executed, as the law required. He wondered, however, if “any difference is to be made on account of age, or no distinction allowed between the youngest and the adult; whether repentance admits to a pardon, or if a man has been once a Christian it avails him nothing to recant; whether the mere profession of Christianity, albeit without crimes, or only the crimes associated therewith, are punishable.” He thus asked the emperor for direction.

In the same letter Pliny said this of the Christians: “They affirmed ... the whole of their guilt, or their error, [and], that they were in the habit of meeting on a certain

fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to falsify their word, or deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food — but food of an ordinary and innocent kind.” It appears likely that Pliny was trying to convey the truth about Christianity to his monarch and, perhaps, mitigate the needless suffering of the Christians.

The Emperor Trajan responded by reiterating that Christianity was officially forbidden, that membership in that religion was itself a crime, and that those who admitted their membership in that illegal organization and refused to recant must be executed. However, if they did recant they were to be set free. It is clearly evident from this correspondence that there was an ongoing and harsh persecution and that it had not abated in the least. St. Ignatius of Antioch, among many thousands of others, perished during the reign of Trajan.

Marcus Aurelius (Reigned 161-180)

The Emperor Marcus Aurelius was, in certain respects, an admirable man. Philosophically, he was a stoic. In an age when immorality and all manner of

excess was rife (much as in our own time), this emperor was rigorously moral and abstemious in his personal life. At a time when rule was often arbitrary and cruel, he was deeply concerned for justice, taking pains, for example, to assist the poor through tax reform. While others used high positions in the imperial government to lead sybaritic lives, Marcus Aurelius devoted his time to selfless duty. He was, for his time, remarkably cultured and refined. And yet, when it came to such matters as Christianity and the Christians, he was not the same man.

Marcus Aurelius was devoted to the traditions of pagan Rome and to the old gods. Christians, with their “strange” belief in a God who was crucified like a common criminal and who refused to honor the traditional gods alongside their new God, were, from his point of view, not only abnormal in their religious observances, but unpatriotic and even dangerous to the empire and to the welfare of its people. Even worse, the emperor had heard all the gossip about the gross indecency and even cannibalism that supposedly took place in the secret ceremonies of this supposedly terrible sect. As a consequence, he was severe in his persecution of his Christian subjects, especially in Italy and Gaul. During this period the persecution became more intense than ever before and included, among countless other victims, St. Justin the Philosopher and, according to Eusebius of Caesarea, St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor.

According to the historian Tacitus, Nero had Christians wrapped in the skins of wild animals and then torn apart by dogs. He also had them fastened to crosses, drenched in inflammable liquid, and then set ablaze to illuminate a circus he staged in his own gardens.



Caring for the poor yet killing Christians: Marcus Aurelius was an admirable man in many respects, but followed the old religion and, believing the slanderous gossip against the Christians, persecuted them.

Septimius Severus (Reigned 193-211)

At the beginning of his reign, Septimius Severus showed certain sympathy toward his Christian subjects, in part because his own physician, a Christian, had cured him of a serious illness. The church writer Tertullian insists that Severus “was graciously mindful of the Christians,” meaning that he did not order persecutions. Tertullian also notes that a number of men and women of the highest rank who were Christians were protected by the emperor’s authority “from the hands of a raging populace.” In contrast, church historian Eusebius of Cae-

sarea counts Severus as one of the persecutors. It seems likely that this emperor was sympathetic to the Christians, but had to contend with the growing trepidation on the part of officialdom about the spread of Christianity. Hence, he is supposed to have issued a decree forbidding conversions to Judaism or Christianity. Much more significant was the “raging populace” to which Tertullian referred. Throughout the empire, the mob had been inflamed against Christianity because of the outrageous slanders spread about it. As a consequence, whenever there were earthquakes, fires, floods, crop failures, disease outbreaks, or other untoward events, the public was ready to blame the Christians, since they refused to pay homage to the gods, for which, it was thought, the gods retaliated. Taking matters into their own hands, the rabble would descend on Christians and suspected Christians and literally tear them limb from limb. Where mob justice did

not prevail, local officials were sufficiently intimidated by the anger of the people to protect themselves by instituting local persecutions. It was at this time that Sts. Felicitas and Perpetua, and their companions, were martyred.

Maximinus I (Reigned 235-238)

Maximinus I was neither a true Roman nor of aristocratic background. He was, rather, what came to be known as a “barack-square emperor,” a man who had risen through the ranks of the army and, by brute force, had seized the imperial throne by murdering his predecessor. He was, according to accounts, crude and illiterate, hating the middle and upper classes and setting his tax collectors on them to squeeze ever more money out of them. His immediate predecessors had been tolerant of Christianity, but he reversed that policy and ordered an empire-wide persecution. Whereas Trajan, in his letter to Pliny the

Younger, had ruled that the government need not hunt down the Christians but need only act when Christians for some reason came to the government's attention, Maximinus insisted that the authorities throughout the empire search out the Christians so that every one might be exterminated. This persecution aimed especially at the leadership, the bishops and priests. Sts. Hippolytus of Rome and Pontian of Rome were both exiled to Sardinia and martyred by being worked to death in the mines. Maximinus was assassinated by his own soldiers after a reign of only three years.

Decius (Reigned 249-251)

Before rising to the imperial throne, Decius had served as a senator and as a governor of several Roman provinces. His primary objective during his reign was to roll back the clock of internal decay and, thereby, to revivify the traditions of Rome, bringing back the Golden Age of Augustus, two and a half centuries before. To achieve his goals, Decius believed that the first requirement was the revitalization of the old religion. Christianity, he believed, disturbed the harmony between the gods and the Roman people, thus bringing down the wrath of the gods upon mankind. Decius therefore ordered that prominent Christians be immediately

arrested. Second, he issued a decree that everyone in the empire make a sacrifice to the gods by a certain date. The Jews were exempt inasmuch as the government had long been aware of Jewish sensibilities in this matter and accepted it as part of the nature of the age-old religion of that conquered people. By way of contrast, the Christians, in the Roman view, had given up their ancestral religions to become members of an illegal sect.

To each person making the required sacrifice, a certificate was issued testifying to their compliance with the decree. Not only were sacrifices required, but those complying with the order were additionally required publicly to denounce and insult Christ and then to attend a dinner to partake of the sacrificed meat and wine. No one could escape, and so huge numbers of Christians were ensnared and forced to choose, the lukewarm apostatizing through terror, and the faithful going to their deaths. Curiously, Decius, whose reign lasted less than two years, ended his persecution before his death. As Philip Hughes writes, the emperor "realized that he had gained for the State religion merely the feeblest and most worthless of the Christians" and "had failed utterly to rally that better element whose falling away from the old ideals he so deplored."

Valerian (Reigned 253-260)

Like Decius, the Emperor Valerian was a member of the Roman nobility. St. Dionysius of Alexandria wrote of this emperor, "He was kind and well disposed to the men of God, and none of his predecessors ... showed them more sympathy and made them more welcome than did Valerian at the beginning of his reign." The saint ends by saying that so many were the Christians in service to this emperor that the palace was almost a church. Yet Valerian himself was dedicated to the old religion, and so when one of his trusted advisors told him that the mounting disasters befalling the empire were due to the anger of the gods over the rise of the Christianity, the emperor took notice. In August 257, he decreed that Christian bishops and priests were to be commanded to sacrifice to the gods. Refusal meant exile. Furthermore, all Christian cemeteries, buildings, and other properties were seized by the State. Non-ordained Christians, if they persisted in meeting for their liturgies, were to suffer death. One year later he issued an even

True believers: It required astonishing courage and great faith to face vicious beasts or to be set ablaze as a human torch rather than to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods.



Whenever there were earthquakes, fires, floods, crop failures, disease outbreaks, or other untoward events, the public was ready to blame the Christians, since they refused to pay homage to the gods, for which, it was thought, the gods retaliated.

stronger decree: Clergy who refused to sacrifice were to be sentenced to death; the laity also must sacrifice or die; nobles who were found to be Christians were to lose their rank, their property, and their lives; and those who were in service in the imperial palace were to be reduced to slavery. Among those perishing at this time were Sts. Sixtus II of Rome, Lawrence of Rome, and Cyprian of Carthage; 300 martyrs in Utica, North Africa; and thousands more elsewhere.

Following is an excerpt from the brief trial of St. Cyprian before the Roman proconsul, Galerius Maximus, which shows the arbitrary nature of the proceedings:

Galerius Maximus: “Are you Thascius Cyprianus?”

St. Cyprian: “I am”

Galerius Maximus: “The Emperors have ordered you to make sacrifices.”

St. Cyprian: “I will not obey.”

Galerius Maximus: “I advise you to think it over.”

St. Cyprian: “Do as you are instructed. There is no need to take counsel in such a righteous deed.”

Galerius Maximus: “It is the sentence of this court that Thascius Cyprianus be executed with the sword.”

St. Cyprian: “Thanks be to God.”

In 260, Valerian was captured in battle by King Shapur I of Persia. His ultimate fate is not known for sure. One account has him humiliated by Shapur, killed, and then stuffed and mounted as a trophy in a Persian temple. Another says that he lived out his years as a slave in Persia. Whatever his fate, his end was ignominious.

Diocletian (Reigned 284-305)

The Emperor Diocletian was one of the more talented and remarkable men to ascend the Roman imperial throne. His ascen-

dancy brought to an end the continual upheavals and near anarchy of the third century and re-established stability and respect for law and order, but also established an extreme form of despotism. Since the sheer magnitude and complexity of imperial rule threatened collapse, Diocletian resolved on a comprehensive reform of the imperial system. Most notable was his creation in 293 of the Tetrarchy (“rule by four”) in which the empire was divided between East and West, each half ruled by a senior emperor, or *augustus*, and an assistant emperor, or *caesar*, who, upon the death or disability of the senior emperor, would assume supreme power. Power was thus decentralized, making it possible, in theory anyway, for the gargantuan imperial State to be properly administered. Diocletian himself became *augustus* of the East, assisted by his *caesar*, Galerius. In the West, Maximian was named *augustus*, while Constantius Chlorus (the father of Constantine the Great) became *caesar*. For a number of years the Tetrarchy achieved its goal, though it ultimately failed.

For nearly all of his reign, Diocletian, although a pagan, was tolerant of Christians, allowing several to occupy important positions of trust within the imperial court and in his personal household. Despite that record, in February 303, he launched the bitterest and lengthiest of the anti-Christian persecutions, known to history as the “Great Persecution.” Why did he turn from the fair-minded, tolerant, fatherly ruler to vicious persecutor? First, we must remember that Diocletian was a believer in the religion of the old gods and was extremely superstitious. At some point shortly before the persecution was ordered, the emperor held a religious sacrifice in his palace. All members of the household were expected to attend, including the Christians. When the time came for the *haruspex* to examine the sacrificed animal’s entrails to look for omens that would guide future actions, some of the Christians spontaneously made the Sign of the Cross. Seeing this, the *haruspex* was furious, claiming that the Christians had deliberately spoiled the reading of the omens. Diocletian was shocked and angered by the incident, interpreting the



Pulling back the persecution: The edict of Emperor Galerius, pictured in this plaque, granted freedom of worship to Christians and asked only that they pray for the emperor and for the empire.



Free, as of yet: Today, we Americans are still free to worship God, while elsewhere Christians are suffering and dying for their faith, exactly as did Christians of the pagan Roman Empire.

Christian gesture as some sort of dangerous magic that thwarted the purpose of his sacrifice and, doubtless, angered the gods. In addition, his assistant, Galerius, a fanatical pagan, placed great pressure on Diocletian, appealing especially to his superstitious nature, to halt the spread of Christianity, which, he believed, threatened the empire. Edicts against the Christians immediately followed.

The first edict required that all church buildings be demolished, all Bibles and liturgical books surrendered and destroyed, all sacred vessels seized, and all meetings by Christians forbidden. The second edict, a few months later, ordered the arrest of all clergy, though an amnesty was granted on condition that a released clergyman make a sacrifice. Finally, in 304, all citizens of the empire were commanded to sacrifice on pain of death. The edicts were much more strictly enforced in the East, while in the provinces governed by Constantius Chlorus — Britain and Gaul — the edicts were almost totally ignored since he, though remaining a pagan, was friendly to the Christians and had many Christian officials in his court, regarding them as excellent and loyal citizens, which indeed they were. Sts. Agnes

of Rome, Felix of Rome, Gorgonius of Nicomedia, and Pamphilus of Caesarea were among the many thousands martyred during the Great Persecution.

The Edict of Milan (313)

In 305, Diocletian abdicated and retired to his estate in Dalmatia, his assistant, Galerius, becoming the new emperor of the East. Galerius continued to fan the flames of persecution until he fell ill in 311 and issued an Edict of Toleration, ending the persecution and granting the Christians freedom of worship. In that document he begged his Christian subjects to pray for the empire and for him, since he was dying from a very painful form of cancer. Despite Galerius' edict, his assistant, Maximin Daia, continued the persecution. Only with the Edict of Milan, in February 313, issued by Emperors Constantine in the West (who had succeeded his father), and Licinius in the East, was Christianity granted full freedom and equality with the old religion.

It is believed by some that when he became sole emperor, Constantine elevated Christianity to the official state religion. That, however, is incorrect. Christians constituted a small minority in most

parts of the empire (10 percent or less), and thus, making Christianity a state religion would have been impossible. It is also believed by some that Constantine's legalization of Christianity encouraged a type of syncretistic blending of paganism with Christianity. However, it is absurd to believe that the men and women who stood up against that very syncretism even under torture and even unto death in refusing to honor the old gods would be seduced into doing so by the Edict of Milan. While it is true that Constantine himself had to proceed very carefully as ruler, since paganism remained the majority religion for some time, the church itself ever remained rigorously apart from every taint of paganism.

The Lessons

What can we learn from the persecutions of the first centuries of the Christian Era, when one of the mightiest empires in history failed to defeat the comparatively small, weak early church? First, the witness of those who resisted the attacks by government authorities on Christianity by valiantly facing wild animals, flames, and swords was an inspiration to many at that time, who consequently became Christians, and has inspired much of the world ever since. The millions of Christians who have gone to their deaths for Christ in the 20th and 21st centuries were likewise inspired by the heroism of their spiritual ancestors, and followed courageously in their footsteps.

We learn also that in spite of the apparent victorious march of evil at various times, in the end evil will always lose, though it often takes time. Many in the pagan Roman Empire believed that Christianity was a mere ephemeral aberration. They were wrong. Many people in the 1960s and '70s believed that communism would ultimately defeat freedom. It did not. Many today believe that traditional Christianity will soon disappear, as faith in science seems to replace faith in God. They are mistaken. Many in America today think that the assemblage of disgusting iniquities known as liberalism or leftism will inevitably be victorious. It will not. Let us therefore be confident in our stand for truth, confident in the power of God, and confident that in spite of all, truth will have the last word and will triumph. ■

First Time in 30 Years

WTAE.com reported out of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on November 4 about an 81-year-old man who was the victim of a home invasion. The man, who lives with his invalid sister, was awakened in the middle of the night by the sounds of someone breaking in to his home. After the burglar broke in to the house, he entered the homeowner's bedroom and demanded that the homeowner give him money. The elderly homeowner told the burglar that he didn't have any money, and the suspect became irate and physically attacked the homeowner. Fortunately, the senior citizen kept a handgun by his bed on his nightstand, and had for 30 years. He was able to grab his handgun and fire it at the suspect. Lt. Tom Kolensic of the Uniontown Police Department told WTAE.com that the homeowner said the suspect was wearing a “skeleton mask with gloves” and “he demanded money” from the victim. The homeowner grabbed his “firearm off his nightstand and fired one shot, and the actor ran out of the house.” Authorities soon arrived on the scene and discovered the body of the suspect, who had died due to his gunshot wound. The 46-year-old attacker, identified as Franklin Schrou, has an “extensive” criminal record.

Saving the Day

NBC-2 out of Fort Myers, Florida, reported that a high-speed car chase in Estero, Florida, on November 14 resulted in an injured sheriff's deputy, a dead suspect, and a bystander credited with saving the day. The drama began when 53-year-old Edward Strother started to swerve and speed recklessly down a Florida interstate, reaching speeds estimated at more than 100 miles per hour, according to witnesses. Deputy Dean Bardes, a 12-year veteran, was assisting an unrelated crash on the interstate when Strother's car veered toward the deputy and narrowly missed hitting him. Bardes, suspecting that the driver intended to hit him, jumped into his patrol car and began to chase Strother's car. The car chase ended when Strother suddenly stopped on an interstate offramp, exited his vehicle, and approached Deputy Bardes' car. The suspect then forcibly pulled the deputy out

of his patrol car and began to attack him violently, throwing the man to the ground and repeatedly punching him.

Kimberly Jenkinson, a Florida woman, witnessed the scene as she was driving in her car. “He just started punching him and hitting and hitting and hitting,” she told NBC-2. “I was afraid for the police officer. I thought he was going to kill him.”

Another passerby, who has not been publicly identified as he wishes to remain anonymous, saw Deputy Bardes being brutally attacked and decided to take matters into his own hands. This “good Samaritan” had a concealed weapons permit and his firearm. He pulled his car over onto the offramp and approached the scene as Strother was beating the deputy and slamming him into the ground. The man then aimed his gun at the attacker and warned him to stop hitting the deputy. The warnings went unheeded, and witnesses say the deputy yelled out, “Shoot him! Shoot him! Shoot him!” The man fired three shots, hitting and killing the suspect.

Lee County Sheriff Mike Scott expressed gratitude for the passerby “who engaged the crazed assailant and stopped the imminent threat of great bodily harm or death to our deputy.”

The suspect's brother, however, was less impressed with the passerby's heroic actions. Louis Strother, brother of Edward Strother, questioned whether lethal force was necessary. “They are calling him a Good Samaritan?” Louis asked the *News-Press*, insinuating that the only time deadly force should be necessary is when criminal culprits are armed. “Was my brother armed?” Edwards asked the *News-Press*, seemingly unable to comprehend that his brother's brutal attack on the officer was deadly enough to warrant lethal force.

Momma's House

WDRB reported out of Louisville, Kentucky, on November 18 about two men who tried breaking in to a house but were stopped by an armed mother. The Louisville Metro Police told WDRB that two men attempted to gain entrance to the house by breaking out a rear window. The woman, who was home at the time with her son,

armed herself and fired down a hallway toward the rear of the home where the two men were breaking the window. Her shots hit one of the men, mortally wounding him. The other suspect fled the scene but was apprehended by authorities soon thereafter. The suspect who was shot by the mother was pronounced dead at the scene. His body was discovered by law enforcement lying on the ground outside of the house. The mother's son spoke with WDRB and explained that his mother was shaken up by the incident. The son also explained that his mother had purchased the gun 18 months ago and had learned how to shoot it fairly recently. The investigation so far has shown that the mother had acted lawfully, and no charges will be filed against her. The surviving suspect has been charged with the murder of his accomplice under the state's felony murder statute, as well as burglary.

Preying on the Weak

WSAZ.com reported out of Kanawha County, West Virginia, about a trio of criminals who thought they had found an easy target but ended up dealing with the opposite. The victim in this story is in his late 70s and, according to his daughter, has health issues that have plagued him for years. The daughter said the suspects entered her father's house and assaulted him before throwing him to the floor. The criminals then began looking around the house for cash while the father, unbeknownst to the burglars, grabbed a pistol. He fired a warning shot, which caused the suspects to flee from the home. A female suspect in the group was arrested and charged with burglary and robbery and may be facing up to 10 years for each charge. The police were able to quickly identify the female suspect because the father knew her. She is a former relative by marriage. The daughter told WSAZ.com that burglars had victimized her father this past summer and stolen about \$20,000 in cash, as well as personal financial information. The daughter had no patience left for criminals. “Shoot 'em,” she told WSAZ.com. “That's what I've told him from the get-go. Shoot 'em. Then we'll call the cops and we'll sort it out.” ■

— PATRICK KREY



The (Political) Climate Is Changing

ITEM: In an article on November 15, Reuters reported that France and the United Nations that day had “stepped up warnings to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump about the risks of quitting a 2015 global plan to combat climate change, saying a historic shift from fossil fuels is unstoppable.”

The wire service noted that “French President François Hollande, addressing almost 200 nations meeting in Morocco on ways to slow global warming, said that inaction would be ‘disastrous for future generations and it would be dangerous for peace.’”

The French socialist was quoted as saying (“to applause,” noted Reuters) that the United States, “the largest economic power in the world, the second largest greenhouse gas emitter, must respect the commitments it has undertaken.” The Paris Agreement made the year before, he insisted, was “irreversible.”

ITEM: Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who is running again for the presidency, according to the International Business Times (in a piece carried by Yahoo.com on November 15), urged Europe to “impose a carbon tax on all U.S. products if President-elect Donald Trump pulled the country out of the Paris climate change agreement.”

Late on November 13, speaking to French broadcaster TF1, Sarkozy commented: “Donald Trump has said ... that he won’t respect the conclusions of the Paris climate agreement. Well, I will demand that Europe put in place a carbon tax at its border, a tax of 1-3 percent, for all products coming from the United States, if the United States doesn’t apply environmental rules that we are imposing on our companies.”

ITEM: Diplomats at Marrakesh, Morocco, reported the New York Times on November 16, meeting at an annual United Nations “global warming summit,” expressed “shock at the election of Donald J. Trump, who has called climate change a hoax and vowed to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate change accord, worrying



AP Images

Lot to learn about laws: French President François Hollande claimed that Obama’s personal validation of the Paris Agreement on climate change was binding, “irreversible.” But in the United States, treaties need to be both constitutional and ratified by the Senate to be binding.

that Mr. Trump’s presidency could cripple a decade of climate diplomacy.”

The paper noted that the Obama administration had “rolled out a slew of last-minute regulations since the election of Mr. Trump, and more are planned in the coming weeks.”

Meanwhile, the Times went on to say, “China, the world’s largest greenhouse gas polluter, is poised to step forward as the world’s new leader in climate diplomacy. ‘It is a new world order,’ Erik Solheim, head of the United Nations Environment Program, said.”

CORRECTION: Among eco-activists, the presidential election result has produced a remarkable overreaction. Or perhaps that term falls short. Fear, it would seem, is the only thing that multiplies faster than rabbits.

Here are just some of the headlines ginned up recently by the *New York Times* and *National Geographic*, for example: “Climate Protection Advocates Fear a Rollback of Emission Standards,” “Donald Trump Could Put Climate Change on Course for ‘Danger Zone,’” and “The Global Dangers of Trump’s Climate Denial.”

The activists will say anything to make their fear go away. We are being told, among other things, that the current administration has trapped us forever into a pact, though it is not even officially considered a treaty and therefore not subject

to ratification by the U.S. Senate, where it would never have passed. Moreover, we are told, the Obama White House can blithely continue to dream up and impose whatever stringent regulations it pleases, as long as it is in the name of its “environmental” ambitions (as if the next White House would have no similar authority). And then, if intimidation doesn’t work and we do dare to act like a sovereign nation with our own good in mind, “Europe” and the world in general will wage an economic war on us.

So are the threats of those who pride themselves on tolerance and who claim to love the planet. And if you don’t buy that pretense from the Brotherhood of Man crowd, they are more than willing to slug you, figuratively or literally.

Barack Obama has put the nation into a potentially vulnerable position, and the “international community” seems to be keen on holding our economy hostage. The head of the International Emissions Trading Organization claims that if “one big country backs out [of the Paris Agreement], it could trigger a whole wave of trade responses.” There is, in the words of Dirk Forrister, “no need to start a trade war over climate change. But it could happen.”

The United Nations has a lot at stake. At risk is about \$100 billion a year “committed” by rich countries to underdeveloped ones for climate-related projects. This



Correction, Please!

AP Images



Gullible glad-handing: Obama approved the Paris Agreement on climate change alongside China's President Xi Jinping, celebrating ideological unity. But while Obama promised to slash CO₂ emissions, China didn't agree to any reductions. Yet the UN is lauding China's stance.

serves as a global payoff so politicians in underdeveloped countries won't mind keeping their constituents in that condition. All they have to do is surrender their chance for affordable reliable energy.

And what of this vaunted international climate pact? Well, the science — or more accurately, the interpretation on which it is supposed to be based — is hardly settled.

The political stage is also shifting. What has been done may often be undone.

Before the UN summit in Morocco, Republicans from the U.S. Senate drew attention to what the Obama administration had done, and what it had not done, in its international maneuvering. In a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry, GOP members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works said they were concerned the administration had not been forthright about “the legal limitations of the president's domestic climate actions.”

As they wrote: “We urge you to be candid with parties to the agreement to preserve the diplomatic credibility of the United States.” That message was mentioned in a piece by Michael Bastasch in the *Daily Caller*; he wrote that Obama had

promised to cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions 26 to 28 percent by 2025. Obama's ambitious pledge — and every domestic regulation crafted

to meet it — was meant to convince China to sign onto the deal.

Obama ratified the U.N. deal in September alongside Chinese President Xi Jinping. China pledged to “peak” emissions by 2030, but made no promise to actually cut global warming emissions.

Republicans warned that [by] bypassing the Senate, Obama is relying on his “sole executive authority” to enforce the treaty, meaning it's “no different than the president giving a speech, or stating at a news conference” that he's fighting global warming.

More importantly, Obama's plan “leaves the door open for any future administration to alter its course,” Republicans wrote.

Meanwhile, there has been a lot of green-tinted misinformation passed along as if it were Gospel. The truth is that the world is really not going to be “saved from disaster” by the Paris Agreement.

Some of the facts that don't get featured by the so-called mainstream media follow. That agreement, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's own models, “only prevents 0.1 to 0.2°C of warming by 2100,” explain Patrick Michaels and Paul “Chip” Knappenberger.

That is why, as the two have written, any “attempts to mitigate significant fu-

ture warming with the current suite of politically acceptable technologies are doomed to failure.” The agreement is, as they put it, “meaningless, unenforceable, and compels developed nations to tender funds to the developing world. That makes it a treaty that should be submitted to the Senate for ratification, where it will be soundly rejected.”

Some in U.S. conservative and libertarian circles have been fans, or at least not outspoken opponents, of the theory of a carbon tax. (Whether they are as enthusiastic when a foreign tariff is pointed at the U.S. economy is another matter.) Michaels and Knappenberger are not in that corner, and they make a convincing argument in a lengthy, detailed “Policy Analysis,” with lead author Robert Murphy (“The Case Against a U.S. Carbon Tax,” October 17, 2016). As they point out, the “actual economics of climate change — as summarized in the peer-reviewed literature as well as United Nations ... and Obama administration reports — reveal that the case for a U.S. carbon tax is weaker than the carbon tax proponents claim.”

There is evidence bolstering their contention that such taxes do not perform as predicted by backers. For instance:

In Australia, the carbon tax was quickly removed after the public recoiled against electricity price hikes and a faltering economy. Even in British Columbia (BC), Canada — touted as having the world's finest example of a carbon tax — the experience has been underwhelming. After an initial (but temporary) drop, the BC carbon tax has not yielded significant reductions in gasoline purchases, and it has arguably reduced the BC economy's performance relative to the rest of Canada.

(Murphy is a research assistant professor at Texas Tech University; Michaels is the director of the Center for the Study of Science at the Cato Institute, a former president of the American Association of State Climatologists, and a long-time research professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of Virginia; and Knappen-

berger has more than 25 years of experience in climate research.)

As part of the campaign of fear, the scaremongers want us to be terrified about carbon dioxide. It makes you wonder: Who are the real science “deniers”?

Perhaps you recall learning about CO₂ in elementary or junior-high classes. Here’s a refresher by geologist Rodney Nichols and Harrison Schmitt, a former Apollo 17 astronaut; they are the co-founders of the CO₂ Coalition. They take note of the environmental progress made in recent years, even while reminding us about the characteristics of this greenhouse gas.

In this country, write Nichols and Schmitt, the most dangerous environmental pollutants have largely been cleaned up. “U.S. emissions of particulates, metals and varied gases — all of these: ozone, lead, carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen and sulfur — fell almost 70% between 1970 and 2014.” Yet, as they also have noted, a

myth persists that is both unscientific and immoral to perpetuate: that the beneficial gas carbon dioxide ranks among hazardous pollutants. It does not.

Unlike genuine pollutants, carbon dioxide (CO₂) is an odorless, colorless gas. Every human being exhales about two pounds of CO₂ a day, along with

a similar amount of water vapor. CO₂ is nontoxic to people and animals and is a vital nutrient to plants. It is also a greenhouse gas which helps maintain earth at a habitable temperature.

Facts don’t stop fear-mongers. As Nichols and Schmitt put it:

Fear of excessive warming from more CO₂ in the atmosphere, including that released from human activity, has caused some people to advocate substantial and expensive reductions in CO₂ emissions. But observations ... show that increased CO₂ levels over the next century will cause modest and beneficial warming — perhaps as much as one degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) — and that this will be an even larger benefit to agriculture than it is now. The costs of emissions regulations, which will be paid by everyone, will be punishingly high and will provide no benefits to most people anywhere in the world.

Let’s take another gander at China — at least at the current establishment line. The *New York Times*, which is generally where the brainwashing is hung on the line, happily parroted on November 19 about how China is now “lecturing the United States

on the need to fight climate change.” This is a “reversal” of roles and a sign that “China may have to take the leadership position in the global campaign,” said the paper.

China’s dictatorial command economy has not solved its environmental woes. However, China’s pollution afflictions are not caused by carbon dioxide.

Nicholas Loris, an economist who focuses on energy, environmental, and regulatory issues at the Heritage Foundation, acknowledged in the *Daily Signal* not long ago that there was “no denying [that] China has serious air and water quality problems. But people aren’t wearing masks in China because they’re worried about carbon dioxide. They’re worried about smog. The technology exists to reduce such pollutants and most power plants in China have them installed. However, because it’s cheaper to run the power plant with the scrubbers off, operators do so.”

Environmental problems and “solutions” in our own nation have been of a different nature.

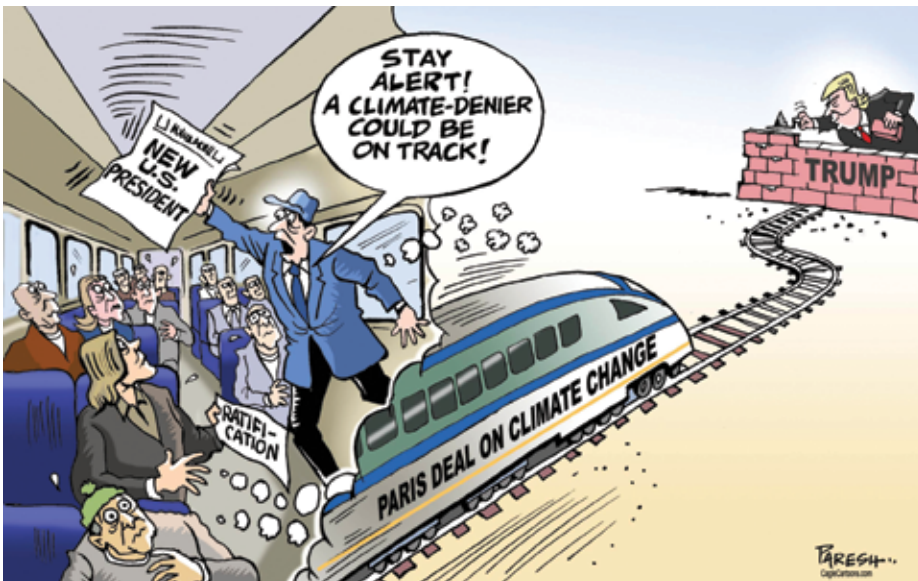
The *Wall Street Journal* has suggested that there is a good way for Donald Trump to start on promised infrastructure projects, with major energy and environmental ramifications — namely, approve the Keystone XL pipeline that “President Obama rejected to satisfy his climate friends.” As the *Journal* observed on November 11:

TransCanada’s Keystone could carry some 830,000 barrels of oil a day from Alberta to Nebraska....

In 2015 TransCanada withdrew its route application after seven years of haggling with the Obama Administration, which rejected the pipeline despite favorable environmental reviews from its own State Department. President Obama said that approving Keystone would undercut U.S. “global leadership” on climate change.

How about some real hope and change from Mr. Trump? It wouldn’t take much to get this symbolic Keystone pipeline on track. All the new president would have to do is say: Make it happen. ■

— WILLIAM P. HOAR



Anti-Trump Riots: **Follow the Money**

George Soros, Alex Soros, Jonathan Soros, Tom Steyer, Donald Sussman, Herb and Marian Sandler, and Michael Bloomberg: What do these and other billionaire Democratic Party donors have in common with the #NotMy-President rioters who ravaged American cities following the November 8 election? That's a crucially important question that demands answers, because a lot more anti-Trump mayhem is in the works.



causes, but he is not a Lone Ranger in this field by any stretch. One of his initiatives, the Democracy Alliance (DA), has brought together fellow deep-pocket funders of the Democratic Party and left-wing political ventures to concentrate their political money-laundering operations. They wasted no time after the election to plan their counteroffensives. The millionaires and billionaires of

Were the “protests” that quickly devolved into riots nationwide following Donald Trump’s historic upset of Hillary Rodham Clinton merely spontaneous outbursts resulting from widespread fear and anger over the Republican candidate’s alleged promotion of hatred, racism, misogyny, xenophobia, and intolerance? That, of course, is the narrative of the establishment media choir, which, thankfully, has been so thoroughly discredited and exposed — for lies, bias, propaganda, and censorship — in this past election cycle that tens of millions of Americans no longer believe a single word of the deceptive drivel dispensed by their scribblers and talking heads.

The riots and violence that continued day after day were the continuation and culmination of previous rehearsals in Ferguson, Baltimore, Milwaukee, Chicago, and elsewhere that were instigated and coordinated by activist leaders of Black Lives Matter, MoveOn.org, International Action Center, ANSWER Coalition, and other far-left, fake “grassroots” groups. They can be relied upon to perform on cue because they are lavishly funded by George Soros, the big tax-exempt foundations (Rockefeller, Ford, Carnegie, et al.) and activist “pass through” organizations such as the Tides Foundation and Democracy Alliance that bundle and launder hundreds of millions of dollars in “dark money” to the street revolutionaries.

Black Lives Matter (BLM), which has become one of the most efficient riot-making operations, has been especially blessed with largess from the billionaire elites. As *THE NEW AMERICAN* noted in a 2014 article (“Rioting for a Reason”), BLM was founded by Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi, three black lesbian Marxists “who idolize communist terrorist revolutionaries Assata Shakur and Angela Davis, as well as the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Movement.” Ah, that’s just the ticket for George Soros. He and his Open Society Foundations have showered BLM with more than \$33 million. That’s a pretty good chunk of change, but it was only seed money. The Ford Foundation announced a few months ago its plan to raise \$100 million in pooled donor funds for the BLM rioters.

George Soros is the most notorious funder of “progressive”

the Democracy Alliance gathered with a lineup of party activists and luminaries from Hollywood and Wall Street for a three-day “investment conference” (November 15-17) in Washington, D.C., which ran under the headline “2016-2018-2020: Seizing Opportunity & Building Power.”

The agenda for the closed meeting described President-elect Trump’s 100-Day Plan as “a terrifying assault on President Obama’s achievements — and our progressive vision for an equitable and just nation.” Between the time of its founding in 2005 and the 2014 election cycle, Democracy Alliance reportedly had funneled \$500 million into “progressive” left-wing organizations. The highly secretive Democracy Alliance serves as a “pass through” conduit that allows high-end donors to contribute anonymously to a variety of leftist causes — in addition to what they give directly to political campaigns. In the latest election cycle, the DA Partners comprised not only an important subset of Hillary Clinton’s prominent donors, but also key funders of virtually every port-side political activist contingent concerning everything from assisted suicide to gun control to gay “marriage.”

Donations from DA Partner Tom Steyer, the San Francisco hedge-fund billionaire, top the list of official political contributions during the latest election cycle. According to a survey of official records by the Center for Responsive Politics, Steyer gave more than \$67 million, all to Democratic and liberal-left causes. (However, the *Washington Times* reports that Steyer’s donations topped \$100 million in this latest cycle.) DA Partner Donald Sussman gave \$39 million. George Soros gave \$19.5 million. Of course, those are only the officially recorded donations; there’s no telling how many tens of millions more have been sluiced through the various “pass through” foundations and organizational fronts.

On November 22, Soros’ Open Society Foundations (OSF) revealed one of its new political initiatives: funding a \$10 million program to “confront hate” in the new Trump era. The OSF press release announced that the foundations would begin directing grants the following week on an “expedited basis.” It sounds as if the acts of hate carried out in the recent post-election riots may have been only a foretaste of what is to come. ■



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