

[Chronicles, January, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

The New Populism

In the twelve months since Bill Clinton stumbled into the White House, the most notable political events in the country have consisted neither of his own successes and failures nor of the triumphs and achievements of what purports to be the administration's loyal opposition in the Republican Party. Mr. Clinton's performance in his first year was remarkable chiefly for its inconclusiveness, and if he eventually extracted a kind of victory from the congressional fight over his preposterous budget proposals, he has used no small amount of his time backtracking from, qualifying, explaining the true meaning of, evading, and outright violating a number of his more exotic campaign promises.

As for the Republican opposition, its main claim to our attention is that it provides a seemingly endless supply of potential extras for a future remake of "Night of the Living Dead." With the exception of the reasonably united Republican resistance to the Clinton budget, not one of the challenges to or reverses of the administration has derived from the Grand Old Party, and the comatose conduct of its leaders in House and Senate in the last year renders almost all of them suitable for some future role in a George Romero zombie movie.

Nevertheless, reverses and challenges there have been. Mr.

Clinton spent a good part of his first year in office trying -- none too successfully -- to locate a law-abiding attorney general, trying to explain to the lavender portions of his rainbow coalition why he did not at once live up to his promise to remove the ban on homosexuals in the military, trying to keep Haitian boat people out of Florida (again, contrary to his campaign pledges), trying to figure out how to coax, intimidate, or bribe the Congress into passing NAFTA, trying to control, pitch overboard, or just keep quiet the assorted political nuts and crackpots in the shape of feminists, Afrocentrists, lobbyists for foreign governments, aggressive bull dikes, and nearly decrepit 1960s left-overs who clung to his coattails, and trying finally to avoid or contain the innumerable wars, invasions, police actions, and humanitarian missions in which the globalist exuberance of his foreign policy cadre would like the rest of the nation to embroil itself. These efforts, of course, have occupied only the first year of the political quadrennium, and the thought that there are three more to go is nearly too much for most normal Americans to contemplate.

Yet almost none of the Clinton administration's difficulties sprang from the thick brows of those whose constitutional function it is to create difficulties for the majority party. The Democrats themselves were the first to voice opposition to Mr. Clinton's plans for a presidential diktat on homosexuals in the armed forces, as they were in expressing skepticism about the Somali insanity the president inherited from his predecessor and which he quickly contrived to inflame, and probably no Democrat

was so shameless as to exude the coos and cuddles with which the Republicans themselves greeted most of the Clinton Cabinet nominees last January. But despite the healthy skepticism of some in Mr. Clinton's own party toward his plans and proposals and the unhealthy supineness of the Republicans, what is most striking about the difficulties of Year One of the Clinton Era is that it has largely been the American people themselves who have forced the president to retreat from his ill-conceived schemes.

This became apparent in the controversy over Zoe Baird, whose appointment as attorney general was originally embraced by Republicans and Democrats alike. Not until Miss Baird's own legal infractions came to light did anyone raise a question, and even then such brainless stalwarts of the Stupid Party as Orrin Hatch and Alan Simpson seemed to find it inexplicable why anyone would object to an attorney general whose compliance with federal law was suspect. In the Baird case, it was the massive and largely spontaneous protest against her confirmation that developed on a popular level, especially through the medium of call-in radio shows, that quickly dispatched her back to her six-figure salary with the insurance industry, and the threat to the republic that these shows represented was soon recognized in subsequent legislative efforts to muzzle them.

Similar popular outbursts were the proximate causes of the president's (and several other office-holders') reversals on immigration policy. In California, where uncontrolled immigration

nearly bankrupted the state last year, liberal Republican Gov. Pete Wilson revived his flagging political fortunes by a hasty retreat from his earlier enthusiasm for open borders, and both of the state's new and well-to-the left senators, Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein, retreated even faster. California, it so happens, is the one region of the country where immigration is a clear political issue, and it has become so precisely because the state sports probably hundreds of small but increasingly vocal citizens' groups committed to blocking the human tide from the south.

The opposition to NAFTA, too, was largely due to grassroots activism, and though much of it was cranked up by Ross Perot, there were noticeable independent populist anti-NAFTA activities in Florida, Pennsylvania, and Michigan, if not other places. Not since the controversy over the Panama Canal Treaties in the late 1970s has the nation witnessed as much popular fury directed at the country's governing class as it has over NAFTA, even though none of the trade agreement's architects, supporters, or well-remunerated lobbyists had anticipated any such problem. Much the same kind of independent populist resistance lay behind the growing efforts in several states to enact resolutions condemning "homosexual lifestyles" or espousing variations on that theme, with Mary Cummins' smashing rebuff to the New York educational elite, Will Perkins' kick in the teeth to the queer agenda in Colorado, and similar efforts in Georgia and other states.

But such movements were only the most prominent. There now sprouts across the American countryside a dense undergrowth of citizens' groups whose energies are concentrated on such issues as immigration, homosexuality, gun control, rights of the victims of crime, and others as well; the religious right has embarked on an ambitious crusade to muster political influence at local levels, and both talk radio and personal computer networks enormously facilitate all such efforts.

Like Dr. Johnson's dog standing on its hind legs, this new populist activism is remarkable not so much for being done well as for being done at all. What usually occurs after a presidential election is the speedy return of the citizens to political dormancy. Most citizens have better and more important things to worry about than political issues, and they typically allow the country's brotherhood of professional office-holders to monopolize their fate for a few years. But the current wave of populism is occurring in the wake of the last election, and there is every reason to think it will become even more intense as the wheels of the electoral cycle begin to churn again.

But the continuing political activity of Americans is not the only peculiar feature of the new populism. Almost all the activism of the last year comes from the right; if it does not explicitly identify itself with the right, it is readily identified with it by virtue of its alignment around the themes of traditional morality, national interest, and national identity.

Yet at the same time almost none of these efforts owes anything to the "conservative movement" or the Beltway conservative establishment. Indeed, some of the populist initiatives such as opposition to immigration and NAFTA are strongly opposed and even held in contempt by the Beltway Right, and certainly hardly any of the local efforts are due to any help from the labyrinth of light-fingered eggheads in Washington who are always pleased to send you letters demanding money but who never seem to be at work when you call to find out what they've done with your contribution.

Secondly, not only does the new populism come from the right and come from it in a way that it has not come for a good many years, but also it centers around issues that are themselves relatively new. The controversies about homosexuality may in some respects be merely extensions of older orthodox and mainstream conservatives' concerns about traditional morality and the family, but in the debates over immigration and NAFTA appear values and concepts that enjoy respectable ancestry on the political and cultural right though they have not generally been articulated in the right-left conflicts of the recent past. Whatever may be said about Mr. Perot's real political identity, his opposition to the Gulf war, the Somali and Balkan adventures, and NAFTA shares a common, though not yet explicitly articulated, principle that is present also in any serious movement of the right: the determination to put the interests of one's own nation first. The point is not that he is necessarily correct about these issues but

that the implicit reasoning by which he arrived at and expresses his positions on them is characteristically nationalist and distinctive of the right rather than the left.

The new populism, then, appears to share several unique features: it is largely authentic and spontaneous, in contrast to the contrived and largely fake populism of the computer console and mailing list that has buzzed about the country for the last decade and more, and as an authentic populism, it demands and succeeds in enlisting the energies and efforts of real people -- not just professional activists who make a lucrative career out of crusading or pretending to crusade. It is right-wing, conservative, and nationalist in its content, centered on what "we" -- i.e., Americans, Christians, workers, citizens, the law-abiding, the nation, or whatever other reference group is involved -- want and need, not on what is good for Mexico, immigrants, sexual perverts, criminals, the Global Economy, Mankind, or World Peace. And, finally, it is militant -- not in the sense of being extreme but rather in the meaning that it is serious, more insistent on attaining its goals than in acquiring political office for its adherents, and uninterested in settling for compromise solutions that fail to achieve its goals but placate incumbent elites. What is perhaps most striking about its militancy is the very absence of extremism; most right-wing populism in the United States has quickly attracted to itself the most banal fringe elements whose preoccupation with combatting the

Elders of Zion and Satanic conspiracies of one kind or another has always succeeded in repelling normal Americans and guaranteed the marginalization and trivialization of the cause. For the most part, the nuts don't seem to be too much involved in the new populism (maybe because they all have jobs in the Clinton administration); the driving force in it appears to be the serious concerns of citizens who are mentally and socially well-wrapped and who have no secret agendas for repealing the Federal Reserve Act or restoring the Habsburgs.

Indeed, the thrust of the new populism is pragmatic, and it may well be too pragmatic for its own good. Either it will succeed in achieving its specified and limited goals or it won't.

If it achieves them, it will disappear, because it will cease to have any further purpose in existing. If it doesn't achieve its goals, it may disappear anyway, because those involved in it will find themselves frustrated, will not make money or gain from their activism, and will eventually find it to be unrewarding if not harmful to their personal interests. Moreover, in the kind of deracinated democracy that America has become, there is little institutional reinforcement for enduring populist movements. Americans now move in and out of their neighborhoods and local communities like vagrants in a flophouse, their economic interests are dependent on vast industries and anonymous bureaucracies over which they have little control, and the managed cultural milieu in which they are enveloped is dedicated to inculcating passivity and

complacency rather than the healthy and active habits of militancy that a free people requires to keep its freedom. And, even if the new populism does endure, it may itself soon go the way of most other movements in a mass-managerial society, becoming dependent on a professional bureaucracy and all the technology of manufactured and manipulated consent and illusory participation.

Nevertheless, the new populism suggests that the American people -- or at least some of them -- retain enough social, economic, and psychic independence and integrity to recognize threats to their material interests and cultural identity and to mount serious political movements to counter those threats. In a sense, of course, "populism" is always a bit of a fraud, since most of the populus is inherently too passive, uninformed, stupid, lazy, or distracted to bother with its own future. A truly successful populist movement is almost always the breeding ground for the birth of a new elite, centered around emerging social and political interests and myths that express and define such interests, and prepared to challenge an incumbent elite whose apparatus of power has become an impediment and a threat to its emerging rival. The new populism may well be just such a movement, and what it needs now is an institutional structure that can perpetuate and magnify its efforts without emsaculating them, a national leadership that will respect and re-inforce its dynamism rather than exploit and ruin it, and a political myth that formulates a coherent national vision around which less

active and less committed Americans can gather. None of these is available in either of the two major parties and certainly not in the ridiculous Clinton administration, and the new populists will have to look outside the present political establishment, right and left, to find or invent for themselves what they need for definitive national victory.■

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A Banner with a Strange Device

As the House of Representatives slithered toward its vote on the North American Free Trade Agreement last November, the regiments of lobbyists who were peddling the pact set up their tents in what the New York Times described as "a stately conference room on the first floor of the Capitol, barely an elevator ride away from the action in the House chamber." There, in the high-tech opulence with which the public interest is bought and sold, the real rulers of the United States bargained and bickered over the economic future and national sovereignty of the country. According to the Times' account of the scene, the "stately conference room" was plastered with banners that proclaimed the ethic of the New World hog trough into which the lobbyists were bartering the nation and which were intended to inspire those who required inspiration with a firm moral grounding for the bribery and lies by which they earn their bread. One of the banners tells us all we need to know about both NAFTA and the larger issues that stood on the auction block that week. "We Defend," it blared, "and We Build a Way of Life Not For America Alone, But For All Mankind." There was a time not too long ago when such banalities of humanitarian universalism were left to gather cosmic dust on the surface of the moon, but today they are

taken seriously as formulas by which the managed evanescence of the United States is rationalized.

But for all the banality of the banner, the device it bore communicated an important truth about NAFTA and the forces that pushed it. Strangely enough, it was NAFTA opponent Jesse Jackson who perhaps encapsulated those forces most succinctly in a statement uttered soon after the vote. "President Clinton," the country's most voluble Professional Negro proclaimed, "leads the Reagan-Bush-Limbaugh-Iacocca-Kissinger-Rostenkowski-major publishers-Wall Street-Republicans victory team." While this, of course, is not a precise analysis, the Rev. Jackson's proclamations are never noticeable for their precision or their analytic clarity, but at least this one doesn't rhyme. Nevertheless, his description does accurately suggest that it was the nation's elite that offered the most fervent apologetic for NAFTA, and not merely the corporate elite but also our political and cultural oligarchs. That is why Mr. Clinton could trot out every living ex-president in support of the treaty as well as the recently retired chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and most of the country's governors, and that is why NAFTA lobbyists enjoyed such posh headquarters in the U.S. Capitol, while their opponents had to make do with rather less up-scale offices considerably farther from the elevators.

What binds these different elites together, however, is not merely their commitment to NAFTA but their larger investment in the emergent transnational regime, variously known as the "New World Order," the "Global Economy," the "First Universal Nation,"

etc., toward the construction of which, as Henry Kissinger announced, NAFTA is the first vital step. Probably more than any other political issue for years, NAFTA shows clearly the immense gulf that separates the interests of these elites from the interests and aspirations of Middle Americans. In an analysis of the NAFTA conflict soon after the vote, Washington Post reporter Thomas Edsall made it clear that the real source of the struggle over the trade agreement was not simply "left" versus "right" or "free trade" versus "protection" but rather a social conflict between the elite as characterized by Mr. Jackson and what Mr. Edsall described as "men and women without college degrees for whom the work ethic no longer is paying off. For the past 20 years, for men especially, their inflation-adjusted wages have been eroding, and the likelihood of permanent layoff has grown."

Democratic Whip David Bonior, one of the leading opponents of the trade agreement in the House, was even more specific about the Middle American opposition to the treaty. "When jobs are lost," he said in the debate on the House floor, "these are the people who have to sell their homes, pull their kids out of school and look for new work. The working people who stand against this treaty don't have degrees from Harvard. They don't study economic models. And most of them never heard of Adam Smith. But they know when the deck is stacked against them." It will be recalled, and Mr. Edsall did recall it, that it was precisely this stratum of the American population to whom Mr. Clinton pledged his troth

in his acceptance speech at the Democratic Convention in 1992, "the people who work hard, pay their taxes, [and] play by the rules," and of course, as with every other successful presidential candidate who has gulled Middle Americans into supporting him, Mr. Clinton's practice in office has been to betray them at every opportunity and to ally himself with the elite and its interests.

The conflict between, on the one hand, the Middle American core of the American nation and, on the other, an elite lodged in the bureaucratized, technocratic, and increasingly global mass organizations of the state, economy, and culture is of course not new and has underlain and informed most of the social and political conflicts in the United States since the 1960s. Yet with the NAFTA debate the conflict reached a new level, turned a corner, and took a giant step toward an explicitly nationalist (and, on the other side, an explicitly anti-nationalist and globalist) consciousness. While earlier stages of the conflict have settled on cultural, racial, and social issues, what the NAFTA battle accomplished for the first time was to bind together and synthesize the economic complaints of the Middle American core with the issue of nationhood itself.

The opposition to NAFTA generally emphasized two major flaws of the agreement. One was its effect on American jobs and the "giant sucking sound" the agreement would cause the economy to emit as American jobs gurgled across the Rio Grande. The other was its erosive effect on national sovereignty through the

trilateral panels that the agreement empowers to rule on which local and state laws remain valid under the agreement's terms, thereby severely limiting American sovereignty, the degree to which Americans may make, enforce, or repeal the laws under which they live and work. Both are essentially nationalist issues, the latter concerning sovereignty obviously so but the former concerning the national economy no less so. It was the unique accomplishment of the best known opponent of the agreement, Ross Perot, to muffle his implicit grasp of these nationalist issues in his disastrous debate with Vice President Gore just before the vote. By his useless chatter about the environmental depredations of American corporations in Mexico, Mr. Perot dropped the nationalist ball and succeeded only in showing that he didn't understand his own argument, which originally spoke to the effects of the agreement on his own country and its people.

Yet despite Mr. Perot's fumbling, NAFTA remained for most of its opponents a nationalist issue, and the conjunction of the Middle American economic crisis with the matter of sovereignty for the first time in the NAFTA controversy raises the level of the Middle American conflict by a notch or two. Sovereignty, of course, has been an issue at the heart of U.S. foreign involvement in the Gulf War, the Balkans, and Somalia under United Nations authority for some years, but for most Americans it has been a rather abstract and elusive concern. Only when President Clinton actually transferred military command of U.S. troops to foreign

officers under U.N. authority last year and only when body bags began to come back to the United States from Somalia was the issue of national sovereignty in the continuing adventures of New World globalism rendered concrete. The NAFTA debate rendered sovereignty not only concrete but also made it a matter of dollars and cents, because it at once became clear that the managed erosion and violation of national sovereignty that NAFTA enshrines were closely linked to the loss of American jobs and the economic ruination of the middle class. It suddenly dawned on millions of Middle Americans that the diminution of national sovereignty would march in step with the decline of their own economic position. Finally, NAFTA also made clear that if the material interests of Middle Americans were linked to national sovereignty, they were at odds with the interests of the transnational managerial elite, just as the interests of the elite also are closely linked to the abandonment of sovereignty.

What NAFTA showed, then, was that two socio-political blocs have now emerged in American politics. On the one hand, there is a Middle American core that remains not only culturally and emotionally loyal to the institutions of American nationality but also is materially interested in a strong, independent, and sovereign nation and accurately sees its material interests as in conflict with those of the dominant elites in the American economy, state, and culture. On the other hand, there is an elite driven by its multinational corporate and commercial

interests to dilute, erode, and compromise the sovereignty of the American nation and at the same time and for the same material reasons to weaken the economic position of Middle America. The latter is not merely a side-effect but a deliberate strategy on behalf of the corporate structures the elite controls. In a column here last year, I quoted the remark of Donald V. Fites, chairman of the Caterpillar Corporation, to the effect that "there is a narrowing of the gap between the average American's income and that of the Mexicans. As a human being, I think what is going on is positive. I don't think it is realistic for 250 million Americans to control so much of the world's GNP." The jury may still be out as to whether Mr. Fites is really a human being, though it's pretty clear he's not much of an American, but his view is not exceptional among other "American" corporate leaders.

"For the first time," the New York Times reported as long ago as 1987, "American manufacturers are talking openly about a new and startling wage goal: They want to greatly narrow the gap between what they pay their factory workers and the earnings of workers in South Korea, Brazil, and a handful of other third world countries." Robert E. Mercer, chairman of Goodyear, echoes this sentiment. "In one way or another," he vows, "the gap will have to close."

The reason the gap will have to close is intimately connected to the economic logic of world trade; U.S. firms cannot afford to pass up the bonanza of foreign markets, but they find themselves

priced out of those markets by goods produced by the cheap labor of the Third World. They cannot swallow the rock of trade protectionism, by which the wage level of their American employees could be salvaged, since that would provoke retaliations by foreign nations that could close off access to world markets; but neither can they keep sitting in the uncompetitive hard place where the payment of high American wages puts them. Hence, something has to give, and of course what the corporate elite is eager to give is the economic position of Middle America, which the corporate managers have decided to convert into a Third World work force.

Hence NAFTA, which will achieve this goal in part by simply moving jobs to the Third World and in part by using the threat of movement as a club with which to hammer wage negotiations into acceptable shape. Hence also mass immigration, which imports a cheap work force in competition with American workers as well as a new urban underclass with which the governmental managerial elite can play its social-therapeutic games for a generation or more. As long as the interests of the managerial elites of corporate capitalism and the mega-state are placed ahead of those of the core of the American nation, this conflict between the interests of the elite and those of the Middle American core will persist, and only the displacement of the elite in both the corporate economy and the mega-state and of its structural interests in the organizations of Leviathan Capitalism and the Leviathan State can

resolve the conflict in favor of Middle Americans.

Decades ago, Joseph Schumpeter showed how modern managerial capitalism subverts the very cultural fabric that produces it, and last August, in an article in Harper's, David Rieff showed how the real engine of the much-lamented "multiculturalism" that now subverts Western and American civilization in the nation's schools and universities is driven by what he called "Multiculturalism's Silent Partner," the "Global Economy."

The more one reads in academic multiculturalist journals and in business publications, and the more one contrasts the speeches of CEOs and the speeches of noted multiculturalist academics, the more one is struck by the similarities in the way they view the world. Far from standing in implacable intellectual opposition to each other, both groups see the same racial and gender transformations in the demographic makeup of the United States and of the American workforce. That non-white workers will be the key to the 21st century American labor market is a given in most sensible long-range corporate plans.

Mr. Rieff's article and the remarks of American corporate leaders quoted above point toward another social and political convergence that parallels that of the Middle Americans of the anti-NAFTA movement last fall. So far from constituting a culturally conservative force that works for the preservation of the nation and its demographic cultural core, the managerial regime and its elite in state, economy, and culture are the enemies of the nation and its people; managerial capitalism works to undermine, weaken, and destroy them, and therefore an alliance

of managerial capitalism with the multicultural and anti-national left is natural and logical. And if that alliance also includes the Clinton administration as well as the globalist conservatism of Newt Gingrich, Jack Kemp, Ronald Reagan, Bob Dole, and Phil Gramm, it makes equal sense for the Middle American foes of NAFTA to make their bed with a nationalist right that places little faith in the Republican Party and its tepid ideologies but constructs a new political force founded on putting the interests of the American nation and the American people first. Last fall, these new alliances began to emerge and to engage in the struggle for the nation that their interests and aspirations compel. If the banners they waved then seemed to bear strange devices, it may not be too long before the armies that march under them reshape American politics on explicitly nationalist lines that the rest of the world now finds familiar.■

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Global Retch

Nearly four years after George Bush, on the eve of the Persian Gulf War, first popularized the expression "New World Order," is there anyone in the United States who does not greet that phrase with either a grin of sarcasm or a growl of hatred? The answer, in a nutshell, is yes. The expression may have become a cliché and the concept may have stumbled and tripped far more than its conceivers anticipated, but what it expresses remains the main driving force in American foreign policy and in the minds that inhabit those cryptic circles where the course and contours of foreign policy are crafted.

The Gulf War, as a number of its critics pointed out at the time, was merely an experiment, a vanguard action intended to test the waters and see how far the trappings of patriotism and the jolliness that always accompanies successful military slaughter could be exploited to mobilize the American populace for the higher purpose of global salvation. The answer to the question "how far?" turned out to be "very far," and the national chest-thump that celebrated the mass murder of some 250,000 Iraqis who never even contemplated attacking Americans suggested that the architects of the global cow pasture could easily recruit all the sit-com-saturated cattle they needed to serve in future round-ups.

Since the end of the Gulf War, however, the embryonic global regime those architects planned to construct has not slouched forward to be born. Stage Two of its birthpangs was supposed to take place in the Balkans, but not even the architects could delude themselves that the Balkan terrain and politico-military conflict lent themselves to the kind of high-tech juggernaut that Mesopotamia permitted. In lieu of a Balkan crusade, we had to make do with the dunderheaded mission in Somalia, and that, with all its prospects of tossing lollipops to starving children while shooting down their mothers and fathers in the streets (and not infrequently the children too), almost worked. What wrecked it was not any surfeit of compassion or regret for the acts of aggression the United States has committed there but the dawning realization that the mission of feeding the loathsome place could not be accomplished in the absence of inventing a government for it and inventing a government for it could not be done unless we also engaged in a protracted war with its natural rulers. By the end of last summer, the folly of Mr. Bush's legacy to his successor and the nation in thrusting the country into a minor war in Somalia was evident even to Republicans, and neither President Clinton nor her husband showed any desire to scuttle their unsteady vessel of state with further involvement there.

Nevertheless, despite such contretemps, the passion for global meddling continues. At the end of 1992, an article in Foreign Policy entitled "Saving Failed States" (a phrase used

later by U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright to argue for continuing and escalated involvement in Somalia) postulated the compelling need for the United Nations and its largest province, the United States, to mount regular administrative and military escapades to salvage unsalvageable countries. Not only Somalia itself as well as the several non-countries of the Balkans but also Liberia and Cambodia were among the targets the authors identified for future missions of mercy, in addition to Ethiopia, Georgia (Stalin's, not Scarlett O'Hara's), and Zaire, with several other new nations of the old Soviet Union pitched in for good measure. In February of last year, The New York Times listed no fewer than 43 different countries into whose internal affairs the U.S.-U.N. colossus ought to inject itself, and when Secretary of State Warren Christopher explained in his confirmation hearings before a patient Senate Foreign Relations Committee his philosophy of global do-good, he worried that unless the United States "did something," the world might soon witness the unprecedented horror of having "5,000 countries rather than the hundred plus we now have."

Why the prospect of 5,000 independent countries should be disturbing (I can think of at least 48 provinces of Washington that ought to be independent) Mr. Christopher did not explain, but the United Nations has been doing its best to make sure it doesn't happen. The number of U.N. troops involved in "peacekeeping" missions quadrupled in a single year between 1991 and the middle

of 1992 from 11,000 to more than 44,000, as did the cost of fielding them, from the pittance of \$700 million in 1991 to a whopping \$2.8 billion in 1992, a quarter of which is disgorged by Americans.

Global reconstruction of states and countries that cannot function independently and probably should be swallowed by their neighbors is only one morsel on the globalist plate, however. The project of reconstruction -- through military repression followed by the arrival of less lethal but no less destructive armies of educators, doctors, engineers, economists, goat and poultry experts, dam-builders, well-diggers, womanologists, childologists, vaccine scratchers, and ethnic relations managers -- offers a bottomless pit of employment and empowerment for the therapeutic branch of the transnational elite, as well as rationales for more booty from the subordinate governments and peoples that pay for them. The creation of what Mr. Christopher called "a world where borders matter less and less, a world that demands we join with other nations to face challenges that range from overpopulation to AIDS to the very destruction of our planet's life support system" would also offer a bonanza for multinational corporations and the eat-and-swill-and-screw economy they promote. Last year also, Time magazine published a special Fall issue, largely financed by the Chrysler Corporation, burbling in glee over the arrival of a mono-cultural, mono-racial planet, and Pico Iyer in an essay called "The Global Village Finally Arrives," bubbled over the

erasure of traditional cultures and countries by the planetary swarm of immigrants bound together through the chewing gum and chicken wire of global consumptionism. "In ways that were hardly

conceivable even a generation ago," he wrote,

the new world order is a version of the New World writ large A common multiculturalism links us all -- call it Planet Hollywood, Planet Reebok or the United Colors of Benetton. ... The global village is defined, as we know, by an international youth culture that takes its cues from American pop culture. Kids in Perth and Prague and New Delhi are all tuning in to Santa Barbara on TV, and wriggling into 501 jeans, while singing to Madonna's latest in English. ... As fast as the world comes to America, America goes to the world -- but it is an America that is itself multi-tongued and many hued.

Time's special issue appeared just on the eve of the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, a somewhat weaker U.S. analogue to the Maastricht treaty's continental unification of Europe, and the year closed with former Secretary of State James Baker, Jeane Kirkpatrick and several other globo-crats calling for the extension of NATO to encompass all of Europe, regardless of the minor detail that the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, the raisons d'etre of the Atlantic alliance, rendered NATO superfluous. Their arguments for expanding the Atlantic treaty, like the economic argument for NAFTA, were only pedantic sidebars to their real purpose, to nail down the planks of the New World Order in such a way that the principals could not escape from the transnational house they were constructing around themselves.

The temptation, to which writers on both the undomesticated right and left have readily succumbed, is to call the trend toward a global regime a form of imperialism, and apologists for the new planetary order like Charles Krauthammer afford some reason for doing so. Mr. Krauthammer has expressed no small skepticism about a Balkan engagement and no small disenchantment with the Somalian adventure, but only a few years ago in The National Interest, he was slobbering over the prospect of nothing less than "Universal Dominion" for the "West," an expression that to him seems to mean not much more than a global fast-food chain occasionally backed up by the Marines, and when he plumped for the United States "to wish and work for a super-sovereign West economically, culturally, and politically hegemonic in the world," it might not have been unreasonable to infer that he was advocating imperialism.

But in fact globalism is not at all the same thing as imperialism. In imperialism, at least the historic versions of it we know, a particular political and cultural unit expands and imposes itself and its power on other particular political and cultural units, as when Rome, Great Britain, or the United States conquered and controlled other countries and other territories. Up to a point, imperialism is a perfectly normal and natural (though not necessarily harmless) result of any successful state.

If a state keeps winning its wars, if its subjects or citizens are economically successful, then sooner or later the state and its people will wind up with an empire, and typically the state

then sends out some of those people to govern the empire, exploit it, and bring back lots of swag and ego-gratification for those remaining at home.

Globalism is rather different. Under globalism, the political and cultural unit that is expanding is not the city-state, nation, or people that expands under imperialism; indeed, the dynamic of globalism works to submerge and even destroy such particularities. What expands under globalism is the elite itself, which progressively disengages itself from the political and cultural unit from which it originated and becomes an autonomous force, a unit not subordinated or loyal to any particular state, people, or culture. In the globalist regime that is writhing toward birth today, the transnational elite that runs it does not even claim to be advancing the material or spiritual interests of the nations it uses; the elite has only contempt for national identity, regards national sovereignty as at best obsolete and at worst a barrier to its aspirations, and believes (or affects to believe) that nationality and all its characteristics are on the way out.

Economies, in the globalist mind, are already "global," so nations no longer possess distinct and conflicting economic interests. Populations also will and ought to be global, so nations no longer serve as the depositories of distinctive cultural identities carried by specific peoples and coupled to political expression, and there is only Mr. Iyer's planetary

consumption culture of Reeboks and Madonna. Political interests too are supposedly joined together, so that we can now forget about territorial disputes between countries, centuries-old national hatreds, and geopolitical conflicts determined by the evolution of earth and sea. Today, in the globalist goo-goo land, the only interests that exist are common ones, such as curing AIDS and saving whales, which separate and sovereign nations can't pursue successfully by themselves.

But, while the transnational elite is busy persuading us that we have no collective interests as separate and distinct peoples, it neglects to point out the common interest that binds its own members and the organizational structures that house them -- in multinational bureaucracies like those of the United Nations, the IMF, GATT, UNESCO, etc.; in multinational corporations; and in communications and educational institutions that are now transnational in reach and operations. Most of the "problems" the elite frets over, from curing AIDS and saving whales to pacifying Somalis and explaining to Serbs and Sinhalese the ethics of Bertrand Russell and Phil Donahue, are contrived to suit its own interests in gouging nations and their peoples for more money, conscripting their citizens into global legions to protect the elite and its projects, and locking itself into permanent power by diminishing the sovereignty and independence of nations and taking over the functions of their governments.

Lacking a morally convincing argument with which to clothe

this naked grasp for power, the elite and its apologists make their case by appealing to drippy moral opacities and patching up such appeals with dubious claims of historical inevitability and irreversibility. But even a casual consideration of their claims exposes their weakness. Not long after the end of the Gulf War, Brian Urquhart, former U.N. undersecretary general and one of the Global Village's foremost town criers, announced in The New York Times that "The unravelling of national sovereignty seems to be a fixture of the post-Cold War era." The march to global rule is irreversible, you see, and we might as well get on with building upon it instead of trying to thwart it by shoring up the crumbling and illusory dikes of national sovereignty. But of course what had unravelled was not sovereignty. What had unravelled was the denial of national sovereignty by the Soviet Empire, and what had proliferated and is proliferating today and will keep on proliferating is precisely the national sovereignty the transnational elite so despises and fears.

The main conflict in the world today is the struggle between the forces of nationalism -- which encompasses and includes cultural, racial, tribal, religious, and other group loyalties and collectivities -- and those of globalism, which includes the interests and ideologies of the elites who push globalism for their own benefit. It is a conflict that supersedes (but also to some degree encompasses) the truly obsolescent division between right and left. It is one that will not go away, no matter how

many of Madonna's songs you listen to, and with the conjunction of nationalism and populism in the opposition to NAFTA, it is a conflict that is now beginning to erupt in the United States. If the United States has a future as anything more than the tax base and recruiting grounds for the transnational elite and its regime, the conflict between a popular nationalism and elite globalism will need to develop even more, as it will in other nations. What America needs today is its own General Mohammed Aideed, a leader willing and able to rally Americans in resistance to our own local branch of the elite, and what the rest of the planet needs is not more Bushes, Clintons, Christophers, Urquharts, Iyers, and Boutros Boutroses, but to let 5,000 national sovereignties bloom.■

[Chronicles, April, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

Beam Us Out

On a morning in April, 1990, practitioners of the journalistic craft received in their mail a communication from one Jack Lichtenstein, at that time the director of public affairs for the National Endowment for the Arts, an agency then embroiled in a desperate onslaught by an army of Philistines, voters, and taxpayers who imagined that they ought to have some voice in determining what their government does. Mr. Lichtenstein's purpose in reaching out to the purveyors of news and opinion was to do whatever he could to keep the hordes at bay and save the NEA and his own job from the appointment with a brick wall that the outraged citizens had in mind for them. In the course of expatiating upon all the good things the federal art munchkins had spawned upon the Republic, Mr. Lichtenstein let slip his insight that "The arts, once found only in metropolitan areas, today are flourishing in Alaska and Alabama, in Maine and Montana, and everywhere in between."

So far as I know, the editors and editorial writers who were the objects of Mr. Lichtenstein's solicitations ignored his entire package, and to this day the awesome banality he emitted in the above passage has remained undiscovered. It apparently occurred to no one to upbraid the director of public affairs for the

ignorance of "the arts" that he betrayed, the contempt in which he evidently held the rest of the country, or -- most interesting of all perhaps -- the facile conceit his insight revealed. That conceit, of course, is the assumption that the only civilized parts of the country are Mr. Lichtenstein's beloved "metropolitan areas" and that the non-metropolitan portions of the land -- Alaska, Alabama, Maine, Montana, and all those unnameable and unpronounceable regions "in between" -- are naturally immersed in such an impenetrable cultural darkness that only the bureaucratic enlightenment of the federal leviathan could lift them out. The whole burden of Mr. Lichtenstein's impassioned communication to journalists was that if the rubes and yahoos then besieging his beloved endowment should succeed, the nether portions of the land would once again be delivered into the iron grip of Chaos and Old Night.

It does not occur to those of Mr. Lichtenstein's persuasion that art, so far from being dependent upon or the invention of the state and the monopoly of "metropolitan areas," is inherent in man's nature and that it will flourish and does flourish even when the state and the metropolitan areas with which the state naturally allies itself do not exist. If the famous prehistoric paintings in the paleolithic cave dwellings of central France prove nothing else, they confirm that no sooner had human beings separated themselves from their tree-swinging ancestors than they began to create art, and the careful depictions on that dark stone by primeval Raphaels and Michaelangelos of elk and bison, religious ritual and hunting adventures, display a developed

technique of art that most of the recipients of NEA grants today are unable to match. Had Cro-Magnon men enjoyed the assistance of Mr. Lichtenstein and the U.S. government in their aesthetic efforts, it is likely that the emergence of human civilization would have been retarded for several millennia and that even today the whole planet would remain engrossed in the same darkness that Mr. Lichtenstein imagines still holds sway in Maine and Montana.

Mr. Lichtenstein, of course, is not alone in harboring this conceit, and the main reason his banality passed unnoticed was that most of the journalists who received it share the conceit with him and never entertained an inkling that he had made a fool of himself by disclosing it. The idea that the arts, and with them the whole of human civilization, are the exclusive inventions of metropolitan areas and the federal government is one of the central assumptions of the body of men and women who in recent years have come to be known as the "cultural elite," and it is through this idea that the elite not only legitimizes its existence and activities but also establishes the rationale for its continuing war against the real culture of the American Outback. It is precisely for the waging of that war that the NEA was created in the first place, and the more bizarre eroto-digestive escapades in which the endowment indulged in the 1980s (and which it continues to this day) when the Stupid Party took it over are only the most extreme examples of its continuing mission.

It is entriely appropriate that the cultural elite the NEA

serves should entrench itself in bureaucratic form. Earlier cultural elites -- of Periclean Athens, Augustan Rome, Renaissance Florence, Elizabethan England, 17th-century France, etc. -- also often allied with the state, but the state in those regimes was not bureaucratic but a personal despotism of one kind or another, and neither the elites nor the despots employed themselves in the destruction of the culture of the peoples they ruled. Today, however, all elites typically assume bureaucratic forms, not only because bureaucracy provides the most efficient means yet invented for organizing power but also because, lacking any deep support or roots in the civil society, today's cultural elites have no other organizational basis for their power. Unable to peddle its garbage on the market, incapable of duping or flattering wealthy patrons into supporting it, and despising the prospect of working for a living like everyone else, the cultural elite has no other recourse but to rely on bureaucratic mechanisms to sustain itself, its privileges, its productions, and its power.

Indeed, what is true of that part of the cultural elite supported by the NEA and similar federal agencies is true of the cultural elite as a whole, even those parts not directly subsidized by the state. The expression "popular culture" originally meant those elements of culture produced by the people.

Today, it means nothing of the sort but rather culture produced for the people by elites, and the elites, whether "publicly" or "privately" endowed, are invariably entwined with bureaucratic

organizations. A number of scholars, from Daniel Bell to Jacques Barzun to Russell Jacoby, have remarked on the singularity of a culture that is increasingly lodged in bureaucratized universities in the forms of art departments, literature departments, writers and artists and poets in residence, and so forth. Outside the universities, what passes as popular culture manifests itself in television, films, journalism, publishing, music, museums, galleries, and amusement parks, all of which are bureaucratic and professionalized in form, most of which are almost always directly or indirectly dependent on the state, and all of which claim to provide for the people a culture that is so superior to what the people can produce for themselves that no one needs to worry about producing their own.

Moreover, the incessant message of this culture is a thematic development of the conceit Mr. Lichtenstein revealed. My personal favorite of it is the series "Star Trek," though any number of other television series also exemplify the pattern. "Star Trek," however, has been plastered on the screens of American living rooms for some 30 years, and despite the vapidness of its plots and characters the show seems destined to attain at least as much immortality as paleolithic cave paintings. Week after week during those 30 years, the crew of the starship Enterprise" has bustled back and forth about the universe violating its own laws that forbid interference in other planet's business and performing deeds of liberated derring-do. Usually

the cosmic conundrums it encounters and speedily resolves are transparent allegorical representations of whatever social crisis preoccupies the real cultural elite at the moment. In the 1960s, racial discrimination was a favorite target of the series, later variegated by the iniquities of war, ecological catastrophe, sexism, and the psychological problems of children. The constant butt of "Star Trek" jokes are the obsolete customs and sometimes obnoxious beliefs and habits of 20th century man, who is nothing more than a metaphor for Mr. Lichtenstein's Maine and Montana, and the typical and predictable "irony" the series inevitably presents is that the monstrous aliens and androids who populate its cast are more morally responsible beings than the backward humans of either our own time or the progressive and emancipated world of the future.

The public orthodoxy of the world of "Star Trek" is virtually identical to that sappy and syrupy credo concocted by Francis Fukuyama in his ill-advised "end of history" thesis, though the TV series is better science fiction. The planet Earth and much of the inhabited universe have been unified under a mysterious, omnipotent, but benevolent "Federation," and there seem to be no wars, no political or social conflicts, and no wants in this warp-speed utopia unified by Global Democratic Capitalism gone galactic. Indeed, what else does the human race in the Star Trek cosmos have to do but stick its nose into the affairs of other species? They can zip about the galaxy at velocities faster than

light and "beam" themselves from one place to another instantaneously, and there never seems to be any question of food, clothing, money, disease, aging, or even of career advancement in this placid paradise. Having resolved all conceivable material problems of the human race, the only woes that remain to it in the world of "Star Trek" are those perennially invented by the cultural elite, of which the Enterprise's crew is an equally transparent representation, and, of course, armed with energy weapons and beamer-uppers, the elite always solves these problems as quickly and as happily as it discovers them.

"Star Trek" represents what the cultural elite thinks America and the world should and would be like if only the Philistines would get out of the way and let the Federation (i.e., the leviathan) spend their money as the elite wants, and the enduring popularity of the series suggests that no small number of viewers at least unconsciously share this vision or have absorbed its premises. That, of course, is what comes of surrendering the production and even the meaning of "popular culture" to the elite.

Long ago, sometime between the sketching of the paleolithic cave paintings and the beginnings of real history in 1965 when the NEA was foisted upon us, there used to be a real popular culture in America, not only in Maine and Montana but even in metropolitan areas like New York and Boston. In that veiled and lost epoch, many Americans played musical instruments they were raised to play instead of buying recordings produced by European musicians and

Japanese corporations, wrote poetry for themselves instead of puzzling over thin volumes of crippled and bitter verse cranked out by whatever Lesbian poetess-in-residence New York publishing houses have decided to make a celebrity for a week, and acted in and sometimes even wrote plays that they produced themselves in local theaters instead of packing the house to gibber over Madonna, Michael Jackson, "Wayne's World," and "Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 79." Today, in most American cities and towns, locally owned bookstores that sell anything but second-hand books are almost extinct, and the Crown's, Walden's, and B. Dalton's that dominate professional bookselling offer exactly the same stock in every city in the country, almost none of which would have complied with the conventional and moderate obscenity laws of the 1950s.

The transference of cultural power and cultural production from the people who consume it to bureaucratized elites that despise and fear their own audiences is of course an aspect of the continuing destruction of republican self-government, no less than the transference of political and economic power to similar bureaucratized elites in the centralized government and economy. Indeed, it is hardly an accident that the corporate, governmental, and academic bureaucracies that house and support the cultural elite also provide lodgings for the elites in the state and economy. The function of the cultural elite in the managerial system is to provide legitimation, not only for itself but also

for its siblings in government and corporation, and the calculated insults to and debunking of the culture of the American Heartland are an integral part of the revolutionary strategy the elite pursues and practices. Only by portraying those parts of the country not totally under managerial control -- namely, Alabama and Alaska, Maine and Montana -- as dark-age wastelands isolated from the metropolitan and cosmopolitan centers of managed mass culture can the elite purport that what it is and what it does is useful or necessary, and when it so portrays the rest of the country, it also paves the highway by which the rest of the managerial apparatus will one day ride into town. The result, so far from the interstellar utopia of Star Trek, is an emsaculated population unable either to produce an enduring civilization in the shape of a culture of its own or to understand what civilizations of the past have already produced, a passive and continuously entertained and continuously managed mob that has already surrendered its capacity to govern itself and is now busily and merrily in the process of surrendering its capacity to think and create for itself. The final and unpredictable irony of our civilization may be that at the dawn of its history we were more civilized than at the end of it. The paleolithic savages who painted the walls of the caverns they lived in with pictures of the beasts they hunted created a higher and better civilization than Captain Kirk and his preposterous band of progressive monsters and robots promise us, and those savages were far more

civilized than the Mapplethorpes and Serranos financed by the NEA or the Lichtensteins who make their livings defending them. If Americans who still know what a culture is would like to have one of their own, the most revolutionary act they could perpetrate would be simply to turn off the television, cancel their subscriptions to most magazines, and start looking for a cave with some bare space on its walls.■

[Chronicles, May, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

Forty Years After

In the last few years, you may have noticed, Americans have more and more frequently begun to celebrate anniversaries of one kind or another. I first noticed this new habit myself during the national thrombosis over the Statue of Liberty back in 1986, but more recently the habit has swollen into something like an epidemic. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, we endured the anniversaries of the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the birth of Thomas Jefferson, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Munich accord of 1938, the attack on Pearl Harbor, the emancipation of Negro slaves, the assassination of John Kennedy, the liberation of Dachau, and every stage, factual or fictitious, in the life and career of Martin Luther King, Jr., not to mention a number of other events of equally galactic significance that just happen to elude my memory. The reason for the rigorous observance of these commemorative occasions ought to be clear to those Americans who have even the dimmest glimmer of what is going on in their country today. Anniversaries, like national holidays, provide excellent opportunities to subvert the meanings of historic events as understood by a particular culture and to substitute other meanings of those same events as understood and preferred by the exponents of a rival culture.

This month we will observe yet another anniversary, that of the Brown vs. Board of Education decision that Earl Warren and a unanimous Supreme Court handed down to an unsuspecting nation exactly forty years ago. The Brown decision, of course, marked the beginning of that extended political, cultural, and racial revolution that has come to be known to its adherents as the "civil rights movement," and for all the genuflections to Rosa Parks and Dr. King that are popular and even obligatory today, the forces that really allowed the movement and the revolution to succeed were the Warren Court, which issued the decision; the Eisenhower administration, which enforced it with federal troops in Little Rock; and a Southern white population that, when confronted with real soldiers in the streets, rather quickly muted its braggadocio about "white supremacy" and the heritage of Lee and Jackson and did what it was instructed to do. Since the movement and its adherents have today everywhere triumphed, the meaning that will be imposed on the anniversary of the Brown decision will be the meaning of those victors, and it most definitely will not be the meaning of those Americans who dissented from the decision and the revolution that ensued from it but who preferred a comfortable and convenient silence to any serious resistance.

Obviously, the main meaning of Brown that will be declaimed in the course of observing its anniversary will be that the ruling struck down school segregation laws as unconstitutional and that

it therefore was the principal source of the racial integration that the nation so amicably enjoys today. The irony of this interpretation is that racial integration as the architects of the Brown decision claimed to understand it and to be promoting it is virtually non-existent in the United States today. As Jared Taylor wrote in a survey of racial integration last year, "The attempt to integrate public elementary and high schools has been a fiasco. All across the country the attempt followed the same pattern: once the number of non-whites reached a certain level, standards collapsed and whites moved to the suburbs. During the past 25 years, most big-city public schools lost nearly all their white students. In Atlanta their percentage went from 41 percent to 7 percent, in New Orleans from 34 percent to 8 percent, in Detroit from 41 percent to 9 percent, in Los Angeles from 55 percent to 16 percent. ... Today, two thirds of all black children go to schools that are predominantly non-white."

Of course, the United States today is a racially integrated society, but it has not been integrated by means of what the architects of Brown (or indeed of the "civil rights movement") publicly advocated -- the simple removal of racial segregation from public laws, to be followed by the voluntary and harmonious social mixture of the races. Racial integration has come about, quite simply, because of force -- because of forced busing imposed by unelected judge and bureaucrat with federal troops at his back, because of affirmative action laws and policies that most

Americans do not want and do not believe in, because of the threats (not infrequently carried out) of prosecutions, law suits, boycotts, and other instruments of intimidation directed against restaurants, hotels, companies, and other private institutions that fail to meet the demands of integrationists, and because of a massive and continuous inundation of propaganda in every conceivable form and over every conceivable medium of communication to enforce racial right-think and punish and scorn racial wrong-think.

The Brown decision, then, cannot accurately be interpreted as the triumph of "freedom" over "force." At best, it can be seen as the triumph of one level of force (federal) for one purpose (racial integration) over a lesser level of force (state and local) for another purpose (racial segregation). But since the federal level of force has had to be applied strenuously and consistently to induce even minimal racial integration in places where no force at all prevented it, a more accurate interpretation of Brown and the "movement" for which it was the official signal and sanction would be that it actually achieved the opposite of increasing freedom, that it succeeded only in replacing what often was free and non-coercive (segregated) association with un-free and forced (integrated) association.

Defenders of Brown today generally do not shrink from just this interpretation of it, though it is directly contrary to the original intent, if you will, of the case and those who crafted

it. But Brown itself, of course, largely rejected the whole concept of "original intent" jurisprudence, and that rejection should have been a warning to those who eagerly embraced the court decision when they thought it applied only to Southern Jim Crow statutes but were amazed a few years later to find similar reasoning invoked to justify quotas that excluded their sons from law and medical schools. Since the Court rejected the rule of "original intent" in the one case, why should anyone have expected it or other courts to respect that rule in other cases where its application might offer inconvenient obstacles to the desired results?

The only feasible moral defense of the Brown decision today is not that it replaced force with freedom but that it replaced one kind of free but morally inferior conduct (segregation) with unfree but morally superior conduct (integration). That defense also is preposterous on its face, if only because conduct that is unfree and forced cannot be morally better than conduct that is freely chosen and unforced, but its preposterousness does not mean that it is not seriously believed. Indeed, in one form or another, it seems to be the standard defense of the Brown decision (and in a larger sense of all subsequent "civil rights" laws and policies) through the unexamined (or perhaps all too well examined) premise that racial integration, no matter why or how it is achieved, is preferable to racial segregation, even if the racial segregation is voluntary on the part of both races. But of

course this premise needs some qualification; it is not to be taken to mean that non-whites must integrate when they don't want to. As Jared Taylor also has pointed out, it is entirely permissible for non-whites to retain racially reserved jobs and positions, racially exclusive schools, clubs and universities, and racially discriminatory language and conduct, and only non-whites are permitted to question the desirability of racial integration at all. Sometimes this sort of thing -- "double standards," "reverse discrimination," or "Afro-racism" -- is deplored by those racial liberals who, like earlier liberals, actually thought you could make their toy train of egalitarianism stop at whatever stations you wanted, but more often even the whining of dispirited and disenchanting liberals is drowned out by those who now disclose the real meaning of Brown and the revolution it ignited.

The meaning of the revolution has long been perfectly clear. The revolution consists of what Lothrop Stoddard, the American racist writer of the 1920s, called in the franker language of that era, "The Rising Tide of Color against White World Supremacy." Regardless of the alarmist connotations that Stoddard's phrase was intended to incite, it ought to be fairly obvious today that the cognitive content of the expression is unexceptionable. You may be for or against "white supremacy" or a "rising tide of color" and you may think either or both of them good, bad, or as morally meaningless as the death of grasshoppers at the end of the summer, but there is not much doubt that not only in the United States in

the 70 years or so since Stoddard wrote but also throughout the world, "white supremacy" has been displaced and that the beneficiaries of that racial displacement have been largely non-white or "people of color." This development should not be surprising to anyone who is aware of global demographic trends, let alone to anyone who has paid attention to the fate of the European colonies from the British withdrawal from India to last month's election in South Africa.

Of course, it is surprising to many, and remains shocking to talk about openly, because the superstitions of liberalism and egalitarianism lead those who believe in them to expect the sequel of white supremacy to be racial equality and not just domination by a different race. Yet historian William H. McNeill argues in a set of lectures delivered in 1985 at the University of Toronto that what he calls "ethnic hierarchy" is "on the rise, everywhere," and that it is indeed the normal condition of human civilizations. "Other civilized societies have almost always accepted and enforced inequality among the diverse ethnic groups of which they were composed," he writes. McNeill's term "ethnic hierarchy," of course, consists of words derived from Greek; if those words are loosely (but not too loosely) translated into their Latin equivalents, it is fairly clear that McNeill is saying that racial domination, in one form or another, is the norm of human civilizations, that ethnic and racial equality has little historical foundation, and that the illusion of such equality is

about to be rudely dispelled.

It is already being dispelled, at least for some white Americans. Last summer, the Newhouse News Service published the results of a multi-state survey conducted for it by the Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan on the effects of immigration into the United States on "white flight" from regions within it. The survey found that while "two-thirds of all new immigrants poured into just seven states," the "non-Hispanic whites in those states are fleeing to places largely untouched by immigration." Between 1985 and 1990, the survey found, "New York lost more than a half-million whites in its exchanges with other states; Texas and Illinois more than a quarter-million; New Jersey nearly 200,000, and Massachusetts 114,000." California, the survey reported, "experienced an exodus of struggling middle- and working-class whites, nearly 100,000 households." What used to occur at the local level of city and suburb because of the impact of the Brown decision on school districts is now beginning to happen at the state level because of the combined impact of non-white immigration into the United States and the legal, political, and cultural legacy of Brown. What is happening, in short, is "white flight" from entire states as their white populations are displaced by non-whites pushing into their territories. No doubt in places like South Africa, as in most of the rest of the old colonies of the white West earlier, the "white flight" will soon occur on a national scale. Of course, when the "white flight"

from European colonies took place in earlier decades, the whites flew to Europe and the United States. Since Americans at least are already flying to the interior of their own country, it's not clear to what other nations future waves of white flighters will fly, anymore than it is clear where the South African whites who have now (with U.S. help) lost their country will go.

The real meaning of the Brown decision, and of the subsequent history of the "civil rights movement," is not that it caused or initiated Stoddard's "Rising Tide of Color." As Stoddard saw, the racial revolution had begun some decades earlier. What events like Brown accomplished was to confirm that certain white elites were on the side of the revolution, that the Warren Court, the Eisenhower (as well as the later Kennedy and Johnson) administrations, and eventually the whole established political, economic, and cultural leadership of the nation were supportive of the dethronement of whites as the dominant race in the United States. No doubt many in these elites actually believed their own egalitarian claims, though almost none of them believed in them so strongly that they practiced racial integration in the choice of their own places of residence or the education of their own children. But whatever their motives, the result of their official endorsement in the Brown decision of a revolution against their own people and civilization has been and promises to be the displacement of that people as the dominant political and cultural core of their nation and the enthronement of other and

increasingly hostile racial and ethnic strains in their place. Whether this is an anniversary of something you want to celebrate is another matter, but at least you should understand exactly what it is you are observing and being made to observe by the new rulers of what used to be your nation.■

[Chronicles, June, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

The New Meaning of Conservatism

One of the most amazing and alarming features of the managerial system in the United States is its capacity to alter the meaning of things without changing their external appearance.

This property is essentially what the Old Right political analyst Gareth Garrett observed in his insight about "revolution within the form," a concept he drew from Aristotle, whom he quoted to the effect that in some kinds of revolutions, "one thing takes the place of another, so that the ancient laws will remain, while the power will be in the hands of those who have brought about revolution in the state."

The technique of revolution within the form, of course, is not confined to the present managerial system. Thucydides discussed how, in the chaos of the Peloponnesian War and the revolutions it provoked in the ancient Greek city-states, words came to change their meanings and to express the exact opposite of what their forms intended. It operated in ancient Rome as well, where, as historian Ronald Syme noted about the Augustan revolution that transformed a decadent republic into a monarchy, "Despotism, enthroned at Rome, was arrayed in robes torn from the corpse of the Republic." Augustus, that is, as the new Roman monarch, was careful not to do away with the forms and trinkets of

republican government that the Romans loved so much and which he used to mask his own dictatorship, knowing that most men, as Machiavelli remarked a millennium and a half later, "are often even more influenced by the things that seem than by those that are."

In a broader sense, revolution within the form is merely a definition of what used to be called "subversion," which the ex-Trotskyist sociologist Philip Selznick described as "the manipulation of social institutions for alien ends, this manipulation being conducted covertly in the name of the institution's own values." In our own time, just as the managerial system was really locking itself into place in the 1950s, a cinematic exploration of the theme of "revolution within the form" appeared in Don Siegel's classic science fiction-horror movie, "Invasion of the Body Snatchers." For four decades film critics have quibbled about the real meaning of the Jack Finney story on which Siegel's film is based, whether the outer-space creatures who have the ability to replicate human bodies and take over their minds and personalities are really communists or McCarthyites. The larger point of Finney's novelette and Siegel's film that both groups of critics manage to miss entirely is that the story represents a primal human fear, the simple recognition that things are not necessarily what they seem, that things, including people, can be identical in shape, looks, intelligence, and behavior but yet not be what they appear to be.

When "revolution within the form occurs," the appropriate vehicle for the revolutionary party is a pseudo-conservatism that

preserves the form even as it subverts the meaning of the form, and in the case of the present managerial system, the system and its architects purport to be "conservative," in the same way that Augustus could purport to be a republican, and thereby acquire the legitimacy that traditional forms impart. Thus, Franklin Roosevelt supposedly "saved capitalism" while in fact he engineered revolutionary changes in the relationship of the national state to private property and enterprise that helped subvert traditional capitalism, and Earl Warren and his comrades on the Supreme Court inserted revolutionary meanings into the words and concepts of the U.S. Constitution without ever altering a single letter of its textual form. In the 1950s, as the managerial system that Roosevelt imposed settled into place, there appeared such heirs to his throne as Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson who actually called themselves "conservatives," while propagandists like Clinton Rossiter and Peter Viereck set to work to show in their writings how characters like Roosevelt, Stevenson, Eisenhower, and Warren were the philosophical descendants of Burke, John Adams, and Metternich. If the revolution takes place within the form, then the revolutionaries have to array themselves in the robes of the kind of conservatism that preserves the form, while making sure that the substance of power flows into their own hands.

Hence, genuine conservatives like Garrett and most of his Old Right colleagues, whom Justin Raimondo discusses in his recent

Reclaiming the American Right, had to be vilified by the revolutionaries of the new regime and their pack of pseudo-conservative hounds. The story of how this occurred is familiar to readers of Mr. Raimondo's carefully researched book, but today the same process of vilification, coupled with further adjustments in the meaning of "conservatism," continues. As evidence of it, consider the recent "Conservative Summit" sponsored by the National Review Institute held in Washington on March 5 and 6 of this year.

I didn't attend the "Summit," but friends did, and according to their accounts, the chief consequence of the meeting, if not the real purpose, was precisely to redefine and adapt the meaning of "conservatism" to the needs of the managerial regime in the 1990s. Yet another purpose, by no means distinct from the first, was to re-confirm National Review itself as the main leader and voice of the American Right. That goal is clear from the very title of the meeting. Only supreme leaders can convene "summits," and only subordinate leaders show up to attend them. Given the ideological fracturing of the Right that took place in the 1980s and early '90s, it is now necessary for its aspirant leaders to try to pour the wine of the Right into their own bottles and to put their own labels on the product. Thus, the "Conservative Summit" ostensibly rounded up just about everybody whom the self-appointed leadership thinks is worth having in its corral, including a handful of token Old Rightists whose presence could be

exploited to prove that the Summit was really inclusive and whose remarks, if my sources are reliable, were strong expressions of an authentic Old Right conservatism.

The Old Rightists might have been useful as ornamental twigs in the pseudo-conservative nest National Review was trying to build, but they weren't the main attraction of the Summit. The main attraction was a batch of neo-conservative gurus, politicians, policy wonks, and perennial presidential wanna-bes who spent the week-end trying to erase just about every syllable ever breathed by the real Old Right. Those few Old Rightists who made the mistake of showing up at the Summit soon found themselves the objects of the public scorn of the neo-con luminaries.

Thus, when Old Rightist Llewellyn Rockwell, president of the Ludwig Von Mises Institute, dared to criticize Franklin Roosevelt in his public remarks, he was at once corrected by none other than the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Hon. Newt Gingrich himself, who happened to be a copanelist of Mr. Rockwell.

The chief Republican in the House held up the Democratic Old Rubberlegs as America's "greatest politician," the man who should be the model for conservatives and from whom "we" can learn how to "build coalitions" and how to "govern" (it's interesting that Mr. G. prefers Roosevelt to Reagan in these respects). As examples of how "we" should govern, presumably, the leader of the Stupid Party in Congress proposed the federal control of all law enforcement in the country and the "saving" of the children of the underclass by

federal programs.

Mr. Rockwell had criticized "big government" and urged the adherence of the American Right to the tradition of small government advocated by the Anti-Federalists, the Agrarians, and the Old Right of the 1930s. He received a good deal of support from the audience, but Karlyn Bowman of the American Enterprise Institute, also a copanelist, made haste to disassociate herself from the dangerous Mr. Rockwell. The American people, she proclaimed, were supportive of big government, and she at once was able to unbosom polling data to buttress this dubious and irrelevant claim.

Jack Kemp, the ubiquitous favorite of the Stupid Party, was also on hand, this time to deliver yet again his standard sermon on the joy of non-whiteness. He pronounced that the high black crime rate is due to the "root causes" of poverty and racism, a stale theme of 1960s liberalism and progressivism (not to mention New Leftism), and held that the low loan rates of black businessmen are due to white racism also. Mr. Kemp then launched into a speech on What Conservatism Means To Me, which informed his audience that the first duty of conservatives is to battle "anti-Semitism and racism." He offered as exemplars of this fight Elie Wiesel's attack on Ronald Reagan for his visit to the Bitburg cemetery and William F. Buckley Jr. for his attack on the John Birch Society. Apparently, Mr. Kemp believes Mr. Reagan and the Birchers were paradigms of anti-Semitism and racism, though

neither ever gave voice to either persuasion. After thumping the tub in favor of a medley of welfarist and socialist measures for the underclass, the ex-Housing Czar then declared that at next year's Conservative Summit, he wanted to see an audience "one-third black and one-half Latino." Apparently also, Mr. Kemp believes, the white majority of the country should have only a fractional one-sixth representation in National Review's parliament of the Right.

But perhaps the piece de resistance of the Summit was Judge Robert Bork, who was dragged forth from a comfortable retirement as the Stupid Party's martyr-in-chief to declaim on one subject or another. Celebrated by the stupidos as the world's greatest constitutional expert a few years back, Judge Bork said that while he doubted that gun control would "work," there is no constitutional problem with it because "there is no constitutional right to bear arms." In place of citizens relying on a combination of local law enforcement and their own arms to protect themselves from criminals, Judge Bork also, like Mr. Gingrich, endorsed the "federalization of all crime control functions" and said that "federalism is dead, no matter what one speaker said yesterday," the speaker in question being the hapless Mr. Rockwell.

Just to let everyone know where he stands, when yet another stupido said (in public, no less) that Bill Kristol is the nation's leading conservative intellectual, Judge Bork at once

dissented volubly and identified Irving Kristol (Bill's father) as the leading conservative egghead in the country, Irving's wife, Gertrude Himmelfarb, as the second leading conservative intellectual in the country, and Bill as only the third leading conservative intellectual in the country, for which remarks Judge Bork received massive applause from the stupido audience.

At last Irving the Magnificent himself made his appearance, but only after Jeanne Kirkpatrick had praised and endorsed the "liberal welfare state" and "national health care" and Elliot Abrams rang the rafters with praise of global interventionism and global free trade on the lines of NAFTA and GATT, as did probably most of the speakers at the Summit. As for Don Irving, he seems to have reported that, yes, indeed, civilization is in decline, but there's not much anyone can do about it, so not to worry. Why is everyone talking about economics all the time, he pondered; national health insurance didn't wreck Great Britain and it won't wreck us, so what's to worry? What we should really worry about is the rising white illegitimacy rate (this remark may induce Mr. Kemp to forbid Mr. Kristol to come to next year's summit), but then there's nothing we can do about that either, so why worry? A woman in the audience asked the nation's leading conservative intellectual how his remarks about the decline of civilization could be consistent with a recent article he published in the Wall Street Journal that argued the next 100 years would be the "conservative century." Mr. Kristol replied that he couldn't

remember the article but he was sure there was no contradiction and if he had it in front of him he could no doubt prove it, so not to worry. One has the distinct impression that the nation's leading conservative intellectual belongs in an institution, and I don't mean a Beltway think-tank.

Among the dinner speakers at the Summit there also was one Ed Koch, formerly liberal Democratic Mayor of New York City and now trotted out as a conservative, who took the opportunity to endorse a two-year National Service program for everyone and a mandatory government-run after-school program for children from the age of seven onwards.

To be sure, informants report, there were serious, hard-line, and eloquent speeches from some of those present at the Conservative Summit -- not only from Mr. Rockwell himself but also from Bay Buchanan of the American Cause on protectionism and an America First foreign policy, from Peter Brimelow of Forbes on immigration and from National Review editor John O'Sullivan, but on the whole, the ideological rating of the Conservative Summit seems to have been well to the left of Lyndon Johnson's administration.

As Greek civil society decomposed during the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides tells us, "Words, too, had to change their meanings," so that the form of the word no longer meant what it previously meant but whatever those who used it wanted it to mean.

Essentially the same thing happened at the Conservative Summit,

the more or less formal adoption by the self-appointed leadership of the American Right of a new meaning of conservatism. The new meaning is one that, while it retains the form of the old word, suits the purposes and needs of the managerial class in the United States in a way that Old Right conservatism does not and cannot.

In place of Old Right adherence to small government limited by the rights of states and individuals and by self-governing and independent social institutions, it champions Big Government, promotes the absorption of individual and institution and social function by the state, and celebrates the heroes and icons of Big Government in American history -- Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Franklin Roosevelt. In place of a strict constructionist, original-intent school of constitutionalism that defends small, limited government and opposes a big, active, and centralized state, it champions a Borkian version of constitutionalism that is blind to such inconveniences of the constitutional text as the Second and Tenth Amendments and enumerated powers and is actively hostile to real federalism and anyone who espouses it. Instead of a foreign policy that defends the interests and rights of the nation and a trade policy that protects the national economic interest and the interests of American workers and businesses, it champions "free trade" as measured by the One-World bureaucratic titans erected by NAFTA, GATT, and their grim globalist sisters. Instead of a defense of the traditional cultural and social institutions of American civilization and the people who created

them, it wallows in guilt about race, bubbles a sappy egalitarian universalism, and promotes the dispossession of the demographic and ethnic core of the nation. In place of the long roll call of Americans and Europeans who have defined and defended the Old Right tradition for centuries and the several hundred scholars and writers living today who continue it, it chooses as its hero a self-serving mediocrity who can't even remember what he wrote in his own newspaper column. Through this redefinition of the Right, the managerial system succeeds in coloring both ends of the ideological-political spectrum in the United States the same hue, so that American "democracy" reduces to a phony choice between two largely identical persuasions and becomes essentially a one-party state masked by the form of two parties with indistinguishable ideologies.

How exactly the new meaning of conservatism was imposed on the old form is a long and complicated tale that has been told in part by writers such as Thomas Fleming, Paul Gottfried, Murray Rothbard, Justin Raimondo, and myself, among others, but let us have no more illusions that the imposition of the new meaning has indeed now taken place. If there's anyone out there on the Right who doesn't share the agenda and values of the new managerial conservatism, he needs to look beneath the body the managerial conservatives have snatched and understand exactly what new meaning and whose power the form conceals. With a Right like the one unveiled at the Conservative Summit, who needs a Left?■

[Chronicles, August, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

Secessionist Fantasies

Throughout the first half of the present year, "secession" became the new watchword for a growing number of people on the American right. Economist Walter Williams has written at least two newspaper columns openly advocating secession. Jeffrey Tucker of the Ludwig Von Mises Institute describes secession as "the cutting-edge issue that defines today's anti-statism," and Tom Bethell in The American Spectator writes that "secession" is "the counter-revolutionary word that I have begun to hear from some of my conservative friends." Of course, if the word were uttered only by conservatives, the normal folk of the country would never hear anything sensible about it, and what makes the revival of secessionism interesting if not yet important is precisely the fact that a good many non-conservatives are starting to bat it back and forth, occasionally even in public.

There is, for example, a movement in the northwestern United States and western Canada to promote at least a more autonomous regional identity for, if not actual political separation of, the area called "Cascadia," based mainly on what are taken to be the region's distinctive economic interests and the constraints that membership in Canada and the United States place on the pursuit of such interests. Then there was the effort of Staten Island to

secede from New York last year and a similar effort by the Eastern Shore of Maryland to secede this year, on top of the attempts of northern and southern California to divorce each other every year.

Finally, there is the politically serious movement led by a group known as the Committee of 50 States, which promotes a measure called "The Ultimate Resolution." This is a proposal that would essentially fire the president, members of Congress, and federal judges if and when the resolution is approved by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states and the federal budget reaches \$6 trillion. It is in essence a measure for secession, since it would be a declaration, with intended legally binding force, that the existing federal government no longer has authority over the states. And, on top of these several more or less serious movements, there are always the Southern flag-wavers whose fantasies about standing up to the Yankees just one more time, if they never achieve anything concrete, at least perpetuate the myth of secessionism as a feasible alternative to the hard work of reconquering North America from the savages into whose hands the Yankees allowed it to fall.

Secessionism of any stripe, of course, has not been a serious political movement since the 1850s, and even then it was difficult enough for those who pushed it to get it to take wing. It did not take wing except when the election of Lincoln and the Republican Party in 1860 made it clear to the slaveholding interests of the Deep South that their predominance within a united state was entering its twilight. Elsewhere in the South secession was explicitly rejected until Lincoln, either by deliberate design or

the most colossal blunder in American history, called for the mobilization of 75,000 troops in reaction to the Confederate firing on Fort Sumter. It was thus the prospect of military invasion and conquest, and neither allegiance to slavery nor adherence to a particular view of the Constitution, that precipitated the secession of the Upper South and made civil war all but unavoidable.

What this little history lesson suggests, and what similar and less successful bouts of secessionism in American history also suggest, is that secession is typically an option for losers, a path that is taken or touted only when all others have been closed off, and not a choice that is selected because of its intrinsic theoretical merits or the bright practical prospects it offers. As for its theoretical merits, they are admittedly considerable. The theory of secession normally rests upon the doctrine of state sovereignty in the Constitution, and the circumstances surrounding the drafting and ratification of the Constitution make it reasonably clear that the Framers did not intend for the new federal government to be able to use force against the states. No such power was granted to the federal government, and three states at the time of ratification explicitly reserved the right to resume their sovereignty as they chose. In the text of the Constitution it is clearly the states themselves, and not the "people," that are the fundamental units of government, the units that are represented in the Senate, that elect the president, that

ratify amendments to the Constitution.

Lincoln's argument against secession in his First Inaugural responded to none of these points. He argued mainly from the nature of a national government (thereby begging the question as to whether the federal government was in fact a "national" government in the sense he intended), and, knowingly or from ignorance, he distorted the essence of the secessionist argument by claiming that secession would lead to anarchy, each seceding unit in time breaking up into still smaller ones because the process of fragmentation, once begun, could not logically be halted. The obvious response to Lincoln's claim is that units smaller than the states are not sovereign and have no legitimate basis for asserting sovereignty and that units at the sub-state level such as counties, cities, or townships are themselves creatures of the state government in a way that the states most definitely are not the creatures of the federal government. Lincoln's pseudo-argument in fact inverts the very nature of the American federalist system; designed as a system in which the federal government was created by the states, the system becomes in Lincoln's assertions one in which the states are essentially the creatures and subordinates of Washington. But of course it was the U.S. government itself that violated Lincoln's own argument when, under his presidency and for obvious military reasons, it endorsed the secession of West Virginia from Virginia once the Upper South had taken its leave of the union and started

sharpening its sabers.

Nor, apart from Lincoln's banalities, is there much in our history, either before or after the Civil War, to suggest that the case for secessionism is a flawed one. New Englanders, the most ardent of nationalists when the vile slaveholders of the South sought to go their own way, were the first to invoke secessionist pretenses on the eve of the unpopular War of 1812, and abolitionists, always a sour crew, later proposed secession because by their own admission they were just too morally pure to remain part of a republic that also harbored such knaves as slaveowners. As with the Southern secessionists of the 1850s and 1860, these earlier apostles of separation were losers, parties unable to persuade the rest of the country to follow the courses they demanded and unwilling to travel the route the rest of the country wanted to adopt. Probably no one has ever advocated secession, let alone been willing to die for it, simply on its own merits; almost every secessionist has chosen it because at the time he did, there simply was nothing else for him to choose short of the unpalatable path of abiding by the rules of the political game and shutting up.

And so it is today. The reason secession is being bruited about in the dark corners of the land, from Alaska to Annapolis and from Staten Island to San Diego, is that its partisans have simply lost all serious hope of gaining victory for their particular causes. Those muttering about secession for regional

economic reasons know very well, at least as well as Deep South slaveowners in 1860 knew, that their particular interests are not sufficiently significant to other people in the nation ever to gain the satisfaction they want and need, so that leaving the larger national political unit and forming a smaller unit that they can more easily dominate is the obvious course to take. There is no reason to be too cynical about such naked attempts to fracture the nation for the purpose of serving particular (and often private) economic interests. The fact is that such movements are commonplace throughout history, and there is no right or wrong to them. Those interests strong enough to sustain secession or independence get away with it; the others go down in history as scoundrels or as foolish romantics who bucked history's tides.

But, precisely because some evolving regional economic interests are beginning to find they can no longer gain satisfaction by remaining in the present American nation-state, there is also beginning to be some ideological flutter about secession on the right. Here again secession is a game for losers. Those on the political right who have expressed sympathy for secession are among the best, the smartest, and the most principled conservatives and libertarians in the country, but their problem is that they too have basically lost. Unable to gain sufficient political support for their beliefs in the existing nation-state, they find themselves doomed to a lingering

extinction if they remain within its political boundaries. The only path open to them now is secession, or at least so they imagine.

My own view is that secession -- or regionalism or separatism or whatever we want to call it -- is actually not a path that is open to us. It is quite true that we could conceivably succeed in mustering a movement somewhere in the United States to pull off an act of secession, though it is not at all clear who "we" are or what the seceding units might be. Assuming "we" eventually figure out who "we" are and what exactly is going to secede, if secession were to take place without violent resistance, the only hope for it would be to persuade the existing political regime to grant a right to it. A right to secession can pertain only to states -- not to regions, races, religions, or ideological reflexes, which are often the proposed seceding "units." Moreover, it is all but inconceivable that the existing national regime would ever grant any explicit right to secede from it -- for the same reason that Lincoln understood. Acknowledgment of any such right is, if not a prescription for anarchy as Lincoln claimed, at least a prescription for the suicide of the larger unit that acknowledges it, and to recognize the secession of one unit or group would lead at once to recognition of every other unit aspiring to independence. What that means in practice is that those asserting a "right to secession" can never expect to gain recognition of it, that if they are serious about it they have to expect to fight for

it, and that assertion of a right to secession ultimately is more or less identical to an assertion of a right to revolution. This brings us back to where we came in.

The American right is beginning to tinker with the idea of secession because the serious right, like most of the secessionists who preceded it, is now beginning to perceive that it has lost -- that neither Good Old Dutch nor his all-but-forgotten successor nor any of the leading candidates for president in 1996 achieved or can achieve much of anything that the serious right wants, and that there appears to be no reasonable way at this point to mobilize yet another popular political movement able to recapture the country from the forces of the left. The most that Reagan, Bush, Quayle, et al. succeeded in accomplishing was to teach the left wing of the Democratic Party how to mouth sounds about "family values," low taxes, and patriotism and to instruct politicians of all stripes in the subtle art of holding office for more than a decade without even trying to fulfill any of the promises and principles by which they gained office in the first place.

But the sad truth is that the serious right will be unable to make use of secessionism as an alternative to political victory within the present nation-state for the same reasons it has lost the political contest in the first place. The right has lost the political contest within the nation simply because it lacks, and is generally uninterested in gaining, sufficient cultural power

and influence to sustain a political victory. Even when it wins elections, it lacks the power to govern, and it continually lacks the power to govern because the right refuses to understand that outside of a dictatorship you cannot govern unless you first enjoy cultural power.

What, then, would a successful secessionist system be like? Unless the right first undertakes and completes its own long march through the culture, a secessionist system would merely replicate most of the flaws, vices, errors, misconceptions, and dominant interests that now afflict the larger nation. It is all very well to say that the vicious habits and interests that have brought the nation to its present pass are all located in Washington, and if only we could get rid of Washington (or New York, or Hollywood) all would be well. The truth is that corruption and oppression flourish in Washington, New York, and Hollywood because they either sprout from state and local ground or are tolerated, rewarded, and encouraged at those levels of government by the very people who are supposed to remove these wicked ways by seceding from them.

Secessionism, then, is at best one more fantasy by which the right can avoid dealing with the problems it and the nation face and doing what it has to do if it ever wants to accomplish anything more than chatter and fund-raising. The American right has long been full of such fantasies, usually centered on a return to some mythical past golden age where all was well. The utopia

of the past has varied from faction to faction of the right -- the Middle Ages, the Old South, the ancien regime, the Gilded Age, the pre-New Deal 1920s, or (for neo-conservatives) the era of Cold War liberalism of the 1950s and '60s. What the American right has never done is try to construct, slowly and patiently, an apparatus of cultural power that can both challenge the corruption that now dominates the nation, attract a following from the contemporary American mainstream, and sustain whatever political efforts the right is able to undertake. Once the right wants to do that and is able to do it, then it might also be able to lead a secessionist movement that could achieve something worth achieving. But of course once the right is able to take back its culture, it won't need to follow the losers' road of secessionism anyway.■.

[Chronicles, September, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

De-Americanization

Although the summer of 1994 produced no entertainments to rival the fun of last year's "Jurassic Park," let alone the previous summer's Los Angeles riots, it did yield up the brief but amusing manhunt for O.J. Simpson and the edifying spectacle of the wanted killer of his ex-wife and her pretty young companion cruising up and down the Los Angeles freeway while fleets of squad cars, helicopters, and innumerable sympathizers and admirers sang him to his cell. It was my hope during the nationally televised parade that O.J. would end up being smashed by Rodney King driving at more than 100 miles an hour as the LAPD tagged helplessly along behind each of them, but these things never turn out the way I want, and maybe it's just as well.

Yet even more edifying for the nation's youth than the O.J. melodrama was last summer's arrival of global soccer, or, as the rest of the world insists on calling it, "football," in the form of the "World Cup" matches of June and July. Soccer, of course, along with global free trade, the metric system, hot wok shops, signs in Korean script outside Presbyterian churches, and mass immigration, is one further installment in the on-going and ever-accelerating de-Americanization of America, and despite the fact that the most prominent American athletes today seem to be

characters who beat their ex-wives to death as O.J. is alleged to have done, rape teen- -age girls like Mike Tyson, contract lethal venereal diseases like Magic Johnson, or conspire to win Olympic gold medals by having their rival's legs crushed with iron bars like Tonya Harding, the sports they play at least have a long history in the United States and in some sense can be said to be an important part of our national popular culture.

But hardly any American thinks much about soccer, watches it or wants to watch it, or plays it after he leaves high school or college. Since soccer attracts fanatical followings in almost all regions of the world outside the United States, its popularization in this country would represent a significant modification of the American character, and neglect of soccer or resistance to its adoption could certainly be construed as a form of xenophobia, if not an actual "hate crime." The massive amount of money spent on its promotion last summer surely was intended to make of soccer a kind of athletic therapy for warped nativists who insist that baseball and real football (O.J.'s kind) were good enough for true Americans like Washington and Nixon and therefore are good enough for them. But the emerging global regime cuts both ways, and if it demands that Saudi Arabians eat cheeseburgers and Chinese peasants ogle Madonna, it also means that Americans must modify their narrow-minded ethnocentrism and open their ears to what Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada on the first day of the World Cup matches in June called the "universal language" of soccer.

Whatever the real meaning of soccer, the de-Americanization

of America is a principal theme of Dr. Brent A. Nelson's America Balkanized, a monograph just published by the American Immigration Control Foundation of Monterey, Virginia, though Dr. Nelson deals mainly with the ethnic fragmentation and cultural decomposition of the United States caused by massive immigration and birth rates more than with the digestion of the nation in the belly of the New World beast. Dr. Nelson, a Ph.D. in English literature, manages to pack an amazing amount of learning into his monograph's 148 pages and presents an astonishing range of scholarship reaching from recent sociological and historical studies of the nature of immigration into this country and others to a consideration of the sociobiological implications of allowing different human "subspecies" to occupy the same territory.

A good deal of the book is devoted to considering the prospect of the emergence of ethnic separatism in the United States as a result of the settlement of foreign ethnic and racial fragments within our borders, particularly within what Dr. Nelson, following Joel Garreau, calls "MexAmerica," the southwestern portion of the United States that is increasingly being shaved off from North American civilization and grafted on to the Latin culture of the south. This process of "counter-assimilation," as Dr. Nelson calls it, is mainly due to the demographic and cultural drift of the region, but it is also deliberately promoted by Hispanic activists and their political leaders. Thus, writes Dr. Nelson, "Property owners in San Diego's McGonigle Canyon,

confronted with illegal entrants squatting on their land, experienced difficulty in getting city authorities to enforce the laws against trespassing. California's Assembly passed a resolution urging the federal government to delay building a ditch along the U.S.-Mexican border because the proposed ditch had aroused protests in Mexico when the governor opened the state's new trade office there. A 'Buy American-Buy Texan Bill' passed in the Texas legislature only after Mexico was defined in the bill as American. Also approved was a bill to allow Mexican nationals to pay in-state tuition when they attend five Texas state universities in the border area."

Dr. Nelson also cites articles from Excelsior, Mexico's leading newspaper, explicitly advocating that Mexico "recover its own" -- i.e., take back the southwestern U.S. territory lost to the United States in the Mexican War -- and an Excelsior poll of 1986 in which 59 percent of Mexicans said they regard the United States as an "enemy country." The Mexican government itself promotes the irredentist ideology that underlies this attitude. Almost anyone who has traveled or lived in "MexAmerica" and who has more eyes in his head than Wall Street Journal editorial writers knows that the region is ceasing to be part of America in any but a purely legal sense, and when the cultural and ethnic transition is complete, the legal transition cannot be far distant.

But the Southwest is not the only part of the United States

being de-Americanized by the lethal brew of mass immigration, high immigrant fertility coupled with low native (white) birth-rates, and a compulsively suicidal bent among American political leaders on both the right and the left. One of Dr. Nelson's chapters deals with the problem of "What Is a Nation," a question that in the last year or so has been pondered by the professional pundits of the mainstream American right as well. As immigration has become a major political issue in high-impact states like California and Florida, even mainstream conservatives have tumbled to the issue's importance and have started holding their typically bloodless and inconsequential conferences on the same question.

Dr. Nelson is rather more adept at answering the question than most of the rightish eggheads who are usually permitted to discuss it, however. He surveys the distinguishing features of nationality as several writers on nationality since John Jay have articulated them and offers a listing of the features on which they agree as the minimal characteristics of a nation. These features are a common ancestry, a contiguous territory, a common language, a common religion, common manners and customs, common political institutions or beliefs, and what may be called a common historic experience, manifested in such events as participation in war and expressed in belief in a common destiny or myth of history. By most of these standards, Dr. Nelson concludes, the United States is ceasing to be a nation, although throughout its history it has been one, and it is Dr. Nelson's argument that "the

fragmenting or dissipation of American national unity, which is revealed in this survey of national characteristics, is traceable to a prior weakening of the unity of the original ethnic core. This is the vital antecedent to nationhood and its abiding sustenance, in all of its cultural, legal, and historical manifestations." Moreover, he writes, the "ethnic core" is not "a mysterious thing-in-itself, like the folk-spirit of the Romanticists" but is "definable as a kind of natural phenomenon," citing here recent sociobiological studies arguing for the foundation of ethnocentrism in evolutionary biology and applying them to consideration of contemporary ethnic and national conflicts in Eastern Europe and Latin America. Dr. Nelson explicitly distinguishes both "nation" and "ethnic core" from "race," since "a race precedes a nation and precedes even the formation of the ethnic core which 'generates' a nation. A race can appear in history in the guise of numerous ethnic groups and nations. There is no one nation which in itself constitutes a race."

What Dr. Nelson is pointing to here are the ethnic foundations of nationality, and he is marshalling some very strong evidence to support this claim. The United States is and has been a nation in so far as its central ethnic core was and remained intact; once that core began to wither, dwindle, and experience challenges, numerical and cultural, from other ethnic groups that have retained more group consciousness, the nation that grew up

around the Anglo-European ethnic core has itself begun to shrivel.

The major implication of Dr. Nelson's ethnological concept of nationality is that nations are not merely artificial constructs, as metaphors of "melting pots," "mosaics," and "experiments," would suggest, but are themselves natural phenomena or something like them, subject to laws of cause and effect and the limitations that nature imposes, and the main implication of that concept is that those who control a nation politically cannot do whatever they please without risking destruction of the nation. For one thing, they cannot permit the immigration of millions of people from other cultures and ethnic groups and expect the original nation to survive, and Dr. Nelson's conclusions about the survival of the United States are as bleak as his analysis would suggest.

Not only does mass immigration into the United States promise the continuing de-Americanization of the nation and its eventual physical Balkanization but also there is little prospect of seriously controlling immigration because of the nature of the national political dialogue on the issue. Dr. Nelson sees this dialogue as dominated by neo-conservatives and New Leftists, both of whom for different reasons favor continuing large-scale immigration, refuse to countenance any control or limitation of it, and denounce anyone who does oppose it by a variety of epithets that range from the relatively kind "xenophobe" to outright comparisons with Adolf Hitler. Dr. Nelson sees as fundamental to neo-conservative support for immigration an

unexamined and unwarranted faith in unlimited economic growth.

Thus,

The beliefs that there are almost no limits to growth, that population increases are a positive stimulus to the economy, and that the United States has a virtually unlimited capacity to assimilate masses of immigrants from the Third World are beliefs held by many prominent neoconservatives. The belief in virtually unlimited growth is particularly associated with such spokesmen as the late Herman Kahn, Julian Simon, Ben Wattenberg, and the editorial staff of the Wall Street Journal. ... It is almost as if the Utopian impulse, discredited with regard to socialism, had somehow recoiled upon itself and re-emerged as the neoconservative and libertarian faith in an unlimited free market which will automatically solve all problems.

He is correct that the utopianism of neo-conservatism and libertarianism is to blame for their adherents' continuing support of immigration, but he seems to distinguish too sharply their beliefs from those of liberals and the left, which he thinks are driven by a desire for more diversity in the American population.

Yet the demand for "diversity" is also present among neo-conservatives, who always argue that their nemesis, multiculturalism, is the work merely of alienated Marxist elites and their agents and not the result of ethnic and racial conflict that is the direct legacy of diversity. Yet, in direct contradiction of their zest for "diversity," their constant refrain is that immigrants have assimilated, are assimilating, and will continue to assimilate, even though their concept of assimilation is banal and, as Dr. Nelson points out, in some parts

of the country immigrants are now beginning to outnumber those to whose norms they are supposed to conform. What is happening there in fact is "reverse assimilation," the adoption by natives of the cultures of the immigrants. Wattenberg, Simon, Jack Kemp, and the rest of the neo-con cadre are always boosting the very same diversification of the American people and culture that the Left finds so charming, and they do so essentially because their most influential spokesmen never really broke with the ideological left at all.

In the absence of at least a real debate about immigration in place of the happy chatter and name-calling that neo-conservatives prefer, there is not going to be any political or legal control of immigration. Even now, when political figures like California's Gov. Pete Wilson have broached immigration as an issue, most politicians are trying to appear to do something about it while sedulously seeking to avoid doing anything serious -- exactly what they are doing on crime as well. As a result, Dr. Nelson argues, the Balkanization of the United States is virtually unavoidable.

He foresees an "overall drift ... towards the extinction of European civilization in large areas of America, first at a slow but steady rate, but then at a rate steadily accelerating." The political dynamic by which the process will occur is clear enough, as American democracy will soon "have to be supplemented with new concessions and adjustments to keep the elites of other groups more or less acquiescent. Affirmative action, 'set-asides' for

minority-owned businesses, and affirmative gerrymandering will be pursued as relentlessly as ever and, perhaps, supplemented with systems of weighted voting and multiple voting so that minorities may win greater representation in elective offices. Legislation against 'hate crimes' may be supplemented by legislation against 'hate speech.' ... The political subjugation of European Americans will become a reality in certain limited areas of the country, mostly in the Southwest and the Southeast. In these areas, European Americans will no longer be able to elect officials above the local level and will be forced to cast their votes for those non-Europeans whom they believe to be most sensitive to their concerns."

The result of the Balkanization of the United States will be "a melange of peoples, an America without Americans, which will be governable only through the adoption of the separatist mechanisms developed in Canada, Switzerland, and Belgium," though whether even these mechanisms will be possible is open to doubt as the ethnic-demographic composition of the country begins to shift to a non-European majority by the middle of the next century. By then, those descendants of "Old Stock" Americans who have not fled to Europe will all be playing or watching soccer matches faithfully and screaming their passion for the game like a bunch of Bolivians, and some of them may even remember the good old days when their forefathers still had their own country and all they had to worry about were characters like O.J. Simpson and Rodney

King. ■

[Chronicles, October, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

The Abortion Gambit

Trying to be the chief intellectual in the Republican Party is probably a little like trying to be an admiral in the Swiss navy, but in the last year or so, that is more or less what Bill Kristol has become. The son of neo-conservative sex god Irving Kristol, young Bill made his bones by billing himself as the brains behind Dan Quayle when he served as the Vice President's chief of staff in the dark age of the Bush era. With the astute sense for the Main Chance we have come to expect from agents of the neo-con mafia, Mr. Kristol seemed able to make certain that every news story that said anything at all nice about Mr. Quayle (there weren't too many) also made sure the reader knew that it was really Mr. K. who was responsible for the niceness. Yet even then, Bill had his eyes set on something larger than keeping track of the vice-presidential cerebrum.

Alas, came 1992 and that something did not materialize. Mr. Kristol, along with the rest of his neo family and friends, found himself in the ranks of the Republican unemployed. But not for long. Suddenly there appeared the largesse of those bottomless pits of tax-exempt funds for neo-con causes, the Olin and Bradley Foundations, and now young Mr. Kristol could once again dine at

Tiberio's at least twice a week. The vehicle for his new career was the command of a new entity called the "Project for the Republican Future."

It is largely through adroit manipulation of the PRF and his friends in the Beltway media that Mr. Kristol has placed himself at the center of the GOP nervous system. In the course of the national debate on the Clinton health care scheme, Mr. Kristol emerged as the champion of the opposition to the plan by announcing his now-famous line that "there is no health care crisis." Such sentences pass for ineffable wisdom in the ranks of the Stupid Party, and Mr. Kristol's pearl was endlessly regurgitated by Republicans, rightish talk-show hosts, and Beltway pundits, some of whom even understood what he meant by it. Moreover, in what appears to be an endless series of memoranda recording his remarkably unremarkable thoughts of the day, Mr. Kristol has unbosomed himself of even more astonishing mental jewels, for which Republicans in House and Senate have scrambled like the children of Mogadishu clambered for American lollipops during our recent expedition in global uplift.

But it was this past summer that Mr. Kristol began to unveil his real agenda when he sponsored, under the auspices of the Project for the Republican Future, a panel discussion of the subject of abortion and what Republicans should think and say about it. Yet before the smoke had cleared, it seemed that perhaps the young man had blundered.

There is, of course, no mystery as to what the Republican Party "thinks" about abortion. Its position has been part of the

official party platform since 1980 and was endorsed repeatedly by both Presidents Reagan and Bush and Vice President Quayle. That position is that the party is opposed to abortion and commits itself to what is known as the "Human Life Amendment," to wit, from the 1988 GOP platform:

The unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We therefore reaffirm our support for a human life amendment to the Constitution, and we endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children.

The same plank also commits the party to opposition to public funding for abortion. In 1992, despite some grumbling by a handful of pro-choice Republicans, this position was overwhelmingly endorsed and re-affirmed at the national convention, and the vast majority of Republicans are perfectly happy with it.

But not Mr. Kristol and his neo-con colleagues, and it soon became clear that the PRF roundtable on abortion was intended as a first step toward dumping the HLA and perhaps the Republican Party's general commitment to a "pro-life" position. The roundtable took place in Washington on June 15 of this year and included, for the "pro-choice" side, Doug Bailey, a liberal Republican who now runs the American Political Network; for the "pro-life" side, the eminent Phyllis Schlafly; and on Mr. Kristol's side, the not-particularly-eminent George Weigel, a Roman Catholic neo-con who runs a Beltway think-tank. Mr. Kristol

himself served as moderator.

Yet, strangely for a moderator though not so strange to those who have studied neo-cons and their ways, Mr. Kristol and Mr. Weigel issued a joint statement about abortion and what the GOP policy on it should be. Essentially, they advocated the abandonment of the "human life amendment," the rescinding of the 1973 Supreme Court decision that invented a "right" to abortion, Roe vs. Wade, and continued opposition to public funding of abortion. In the Kristol-Weigel language, "We support efforts to return to the people their constitutional right to deliberate on this question in their legislatures. We endorse legislative efforts to expand the boundaries of legal protection for the unborn. And we flatly reject the use of public funds, at the state or federal level, to pay for or encourage abortion."

To all of which, say I: Pretty damned good for a couple of neo-cons.

Unlike the Human Life Amendment, the Kristol-Weigel language makes no mention of the deeply flawed 14th Amendment, an illegally passed section of the Constitution that has inflicted untold damage on the Republic and which ought to be repealed outright. Unlike the Human Life Amendment, the Kristol-Weigel language endorses and respects the rights of the states and the people of the states to enact laws suitable to their beliefs, customs, and circumstances regarding abortion. And, unlike the Human Life Amendment, the Kristol-Weigel language makes no mention at all of

the U.S. Constitution, and imports neither theology nor philosophy nor ideology into it. Whatever might be said of Mr. Kristol and his agenda, the language he offered was philosophically sound from the from the perspective of Old Right political theory.

But the Kristol gambit on abortion did not take place in a political vacuum, and it would be a distortion of the real meaning of the roundtable and the Kristol-Weigel language to fail to understand the context in which it did occur. Within that context, the purpose of the Kristol gambit becomes -- insidiously -- clear.

That context was the national controversy last summer over the "Christian Right," a controversy in which the Democratic Party, including President Clinton himself, several top-ranking Democrats and their allies among liberal Republicans, left-liberal columnists, and -- by what one is certain was merely coincidence - - the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith all almost simultaneously joined to denounce the "Christian Right" as "hatemongers," "bigots," "reactionaries," and, worst of all, people who threatened to defeat liberal Democrats en masse in the forthcoming congressional elections. It was in the midst of this controversy over the Christian Right that the Kristol-Weigel language on Republican abortion policy sprang to life.

Mr. Kristol himself, as well as neo-conservative swamis William Bennett and Charles Krauthammer among others, at once marched forth to defend the Christian Right against its enemies,

but what was interesting about their expressions of support was that almost all of them defended the religious right by downplaying the religious dimension as much as possible, excising the radicalism that derives from that dimension, and depicting the movement as simply another adjunct of the conservative (i.e., neo-conservative) apparatus. Thus, Mr. Bennett, writing in The Washington Post on June 26, while he defended the Christian Right's right to take part in politics and also defended the role of religion itself in informing political affairs, tried to make out that the religious right is merely concerned with purely secularist issues -- "Things like safe streets, good schools, strong families, nonintrusive government and communities where people care for one another. Good things all. And not, one would think, particularly controversial or 'divisive.'"

Mr. Krauthammer's defense was similar. To him the Christian Right consists of "members of a diverse community sharing a simple if nostalgic agenda returning America to the cultural condition and social values of the immediate postwar era. For them that means two-parent families, schools with authority, limited government, a culture not yet drenched in sex and violence," as well as "government policies that encourage intact families, the teaching of virtue, the encouragement of responsibility and the punishment of criminality." Mr. Kristol's reflections on the religious right, published in The Washington Times on June 17 (only two days after the PRF roundtable on abortion) struck a

similar theme, namely that the "Christian Right" is not much more than a coalition of citizens who simply seek the restoration of the manners and institutions of the 1950s and is not at all "out of the mainstream."

What is striking about these neo-conservative defenses of the Christian Right, however, is that the issues Mr. Bennett and Mr. Krauthammer mentioned as the movement's characteristic concerns are in fact hardly even blips on its radar screen. The main specific issues of the Christian Right include opposition to abortion, opposition to homosexuality, opposition to the exclusive teaching of evolution and of secular humanism generally, and support for prayer in schools. None of these, in the America of the 1990s, can truthfully be called "mainstream" issues; all of them are in fact radical measures, and all of them seriously challenge the drift of the United States for the last 50 years in their opposition to the country's secularism, its materialism, its libertarianism, and its moral relativism. By ignoring and even denying the implicit radicalism of the Christian Right, by trying to make out that it is really just a "mainstream" movement worried about good schools and safe streets, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Krauthammer, and Mr. Kristol were essentially seeking to strip the Christian Right of its most promising and refreshing radical aspects and to co-opt the movement, seize moral and intellectual leadership of it, and absorb it within the well-funded digestive tract of the neo-conservative imperium.

By doing so, Mr. Kristol and his cohorts would win for the neo-conservatives what they have never been able to build for themselves -- a genuine grassroots following, and one that in the last couple of years has gained considerable influence in the base of the Republican Party -- and at the same time wed the moderate, mainstream, establishment sections of the Party to that following, all under their own intellectual (and eventually political) leadership.

That is also what Mr. Kristol was trying to do with his new position on abortion, and that is why he needed Mr. Weigel, who is actually a Christian, to stand up and testify with him. Had Mr. Kristol, who happens to be Jewish, proposed a retreat from the Human Life Amendment by himself, his plan would have been transparent and would have elicited no following among Christian Rightists. But, as his fellow neo-con and effective press agent, Fred Barnes, wrote in The New Republic, the Kristol-Weigel proposal was received "warmly" by some leaders of the Christian Right, and the proposal is important because "It may allow the GOP to ease its position [on abortion] without an intraparty war. And it would bring the party nearer to the public's view: reduce the number of abortions, but no national ban."

Precisely. The effect, if not the actual mission of neo-conservatism ever since its appearance in the late 1960s, has been to muzzle whatever inclinations to an authentic, popular, grassroots, right-wing radicalism might emerge either within or

without the Republican Party. In the early 1970s, as just such a radical movement began to take wing in the wake of the Wallace campaigns, the first generation of neo-conservative eggheads showed up and soon ran off with it. The result, when Ronald Reagan entered office in 1981, was an administration never seriously committed to any of the authentically popular and radical issues on which Mr. Reagan had been elected. Now the second generation of neo-conservatives has shown up to undertake the same mission of co-optation against the same kind of popular radicalism of the right that flourishes today. The neo-conservative objective is always to "bring the party nearer to the public's view" and never to perform the mission of a real radicalism, to lead and instruct the public or the nation in where it may have gone wrong. The neo-conservative objective is always to avoid "intraparty war," to evade combat on the fundamental cultural conflicts that threaten the nation, and to mute any tendencies to radicalism in hope of gaining political office and influence. Those objectives may safely be communicated (indeed they need to be communicated) in the pages of such periodicals as The New Republic, but under no circumstances is this esoterica to be imparted to those at the grassroots levels whom it is intended to dazzle.

Hence, even though the position Mr. Kristol and Mr. Weigel deposed in their roundtable may, from the abstract perspective of Old Right political theory, be the correct position, it is, in the

perspective of its real meaning, a strategic retreat from the more radical posture the Christian Right has succeeded in implanting in the platform of the Republican Party. Hence, whatever its theoretical merits or even its practical advantages, it is not a position the party should adopt or serious men and women of the right endorse. Its net effect at this time would be the effective compromising or silencing of what is now the only remaining organized expression of a popular radicalism of the right that challenges the dominant regime in anything like a serious way, the effective emasculation of the Christian Right, and the effective take-over of that movement by forces that seek only to thwart rather than to fulfill its radical tendencies. Mr. Barnes may be correct in remarking that some leaders of the Christian Right embraced the Kristol-Weigel position "warmly," but it's doubtful that that has been or will be the response of the rank-and-file of the movement those leaders purport to lead, and once the chief intellectual of the Republican Party perceives that, he may begin to understand why it was that his gambit on abortion this summer was a blunder from which he and his allies may not be able to recover. ■

[Chronicles, November, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

Myths to Kill For

"I've got a little list, I've got a little list," twitters the Lord High Executioner in a famous line of Gilbert and Sullivan's The Mikado, and indeed these days who doesn't have one?

Abortion protestor Paul Hill seems to have been a man who had a little list of his own, and early in the morning of July 28 of this year he leveled a shotgun at two of those whose names led all the rest and dispatched them to that great abortion clinic in the sky (or perhaps it's located in a rather lower altitude). For the next several days, the official pro-life movement spent its time condemning, distancing itself from, and expressing repugnance for what Mr. Hill had done, even as the supporters of "choice," the preposterous euphemism for abortion that everyone now uses, insisted that the murders with which Mr. Hill was immediately charged, if they did not have the explicit support of the pro-life movement, at least grew logically out of the pro-lifers' own rhetoric and ideology. Whether they did or not is a question not to be dismissed as derisively or as speedily as most respectable pro-lifers habitually do, but whatever the answer to the question, it's clear that Mr. Hill is not alone in having come to the conclusion that there is a time to get down to the business of ridding the planet of those society offenders who might well be

underground and who never, never, never would be missed.

A few years ago a friend of mine told me there are only two political movements in the country for which he had any respect -- the animal rights people and the anti-abortion movement -- because these are the only ones composed of persons who are willing to go to jail for their beliefs. Perhaps this tells you more about the kind of people I have for friends than anything else, but he had a point that many on the right seem to find incomprehensible. It is all very well to canvass the neighborhood for votes, raise money by direct mail, publish magazines, host talk shows, and write books and newspaper columns, but unless you're willing to suffer for the cause in which you are enlisted, it will never get very far.

Willingness to suffer, of course, does not necessarily mean willingness to die, be maimed for life, or lose your job and family, but it does mean willingness to endure rather more unpleasantness than most on the political right these days seem prepared to accept, and it implies also a willingness to inflict some suffering upon one's adversaries. It is characteristic of the right that its adherents tend to be well-off and comfortable, and any political action they endorse or involve themselves in has to be such as not to threaten that comfort or even suggest that there may be times when living in affluent vegetation and voting Republican are not enough to preserve a way of life, a nation, or a civilization that consists of something more than fiscal restraint and cakes on the griddle. Anti-abortion crackpots like Mr. Hill are merely among the first to reflect on such matters,

but the time may soon be coming when others on the political right in this country need to ponder the same matters: When, if ever, is political violence justified? What other kinds of extralegal action might also be justified or necessary, and -- perhaps for many on the right the most unthinkable thought of all -- just how close are we in the United States to such a time?

For the left, such issues have never been much of a big deal.

The left appeared in history armed with a formal political theory that wrapped itself in absolute natural rights (later replaced by the dialectic of history and the myth of progress) and the myth of the consensual basis of political legitimacy. If a political order violated what the left took to be such "rights," if it behaved in a manner that did not respect the mechanisms of political consent, or even if it enlisted itself on the wrong side of history, woe betide it and its partisans. Thus, the notorious "double standard" of the left, by which it ignores or applauds the most brutal repression and the most vicious violence committed by its pals even as it giggles in glee over the punishment of its enemies on the right, is not really a logical contradiction.

A few years ago, when neo-Nazi thugs were ripping up the streets of a newly unified Germany, the German government talked seriously of banning even moderate right-wing groups there, and the Progressive Element amongst us clapped and cheered at the prospect, even though the neo-Nazis had done virtually nothing that both the European and American New Left in the 1960s had not

also done. The neo-Nazis, you see, were simply on the wrong side of history and had no rights, while the New Leftists over whom the progressive types gibbered and drooled were history's good guys. The same view is evident in the wretched and mendacious movie, Mississippi Burning, where Southern racists murder three "civil rights workers" and are finally brought to justice by FBI agents who literally threaten to torture, castrate, and burn to death citizens who had nothing to do with the killings. The assault on the Southern social order by organized armies of "civil rights workers" is never considered an act of violence, even though almost all such activists at the time saw themselves as the agents of an openly acknowledged revolutionary and socially destructive mission.

For Christians, of course, the legitimation of violence for political purposes is quite a bit more challenging a problem, and that is the formal reason so many pro-life activists leaped to condemn Mr. Hill's actions. Nevertheless, the Christian apologetic for attacking or even killing those who practice abortion does have a foundation in logic. As Donald Spitz of Operation Rescue Chesapeake says, "If there was a sniper in the schoolyard sniping off children one by one and the only way you could stop him was by stopping that sniper ... you would stop that sniper."

To that argument, mainstream pro-lifers voice several different responses, namely, (a) Christians may not kill or use

violence (but Christians do endorse violence in the form of self-defense, capital punishment, and just war); (b) using violence against abortionists and their clinics is counter-productive, at least as long as lawful and non-violent political and legal action is possible (though when liberals used the "counter-productive" argument against the New Left in the 1960s, they were laughed to scorn by outraged conservatives who demanded a stronger response and a more fundamental objection to political violence); and (c), perhaps the most compelling argument, expressed to me by Christian activist John Lofton, that if the model of Christian activism is that of the early Church, it ought to be clear that neither Jesus nor the Apostles nor any of the Church Fathers ever advocated violence against the pagan Roman state, nor did any Christian ever engage in violence; the point back then was not to stop abortion, prevent the worship of pagan gods, or improve the sexual morals of the Romans but to convert the empire, and once that conversion was accomplished, these Christian theological and ethical goals fell into place. In this view, snuffing abortionists is simply a distraction from the main business of Christians, which is to work for the Christianization of mankind.

Of course, the irony of political violence nowadays is precisely that it is self-professed Christians in the pro-life movement who commit it -- not neo-Nazis, Klansmen, tax resisters, gun nuts, or defenders of smokers rights who, in the paranoid mythology of the left, might be expected to be resort to guns more

quickly. Aside from various "hate crimes," most of which, even when real, appear to be largely spontaneous outbursts rather than acts of principled and premeditated terrorism, none of the more desperate factions of the right seems to be much of a threat to anyone. Only twice in this country since World War II has any part of what might be considered the "right" shown any inclination to resort to tossing brickbats -- during the civil rights war in the South, when a handful of people were shot or killed by the Klan and a few years later when anti-busing activists actually set fire to some school buses and on one occasion chased Teddy Kennedy, and during the early 1980s, when a gang of neo-Nazis killed a Jewish talk show host in Colorado, held up an armored car, and committed divers and sundry acts of useless mayhem. Except for occasional organized nuts and justly outraged parents of bused children, the right in the United States has mainly been a harmless bunch. Given what the right's enemies have done to the country over the years, this really does not speak well of the right.

The peacefulness of the American right is no less ironic than the readiness of some pro-life Christians to take up arms, and it ought to be the other way around, especially since the right's professed heroes and models include such trigger-happy warriors as the Minutemen of the War for Independence and the Confederates of the Second War for Independence. Yet even the "right-wing terrorist" group of the 1960s that called itself the "Minutemen"

never did very much except stash arms against der Tag and issue "communiques" about how the commies they believed were running the Federal Reserve System had just better watch out. Even the Ku Kluxers mainly restricted themselves to holding big barbecues beneath the fiery cross and listening to uplifting lectures on race relations that were probably more interesting than the revivalist sermons the audiences more commonly attended.

Of course, there are all sorts of reasons for the general harmlessness of the American right, and the ineffectuality of its supposedly violent wing merely reflects the same characteristic of its more mainstream political side. The main reason, I believe, for the absence of any serious rightist violence in this country is quite simply that there is no legitimizing myth of violence for the right here. The dominant myths are those of the left -- of the consent of the governed, of natural rights, of progress. Any movement that invokes these myths to justify a course of violence is, virtually by definition, part of the left, and any movement that takes up arms to challenge or violate these normative American myths soon finds that it can't think of any good reasons to justify itself. It cannot justify itself because its leaders and members have been raised and educated only in the myths of the left, and the myths of the left can never serve to justify a movement that seeks to challenge what the left demands.

Thus, when the above-mentioned right-wing terrorists of the "Silent Brotherhood" were brought to trial for their murder of

talk show host Alan Berg in 1984, their defense was that they simply didn't do it, and it never occurred to the defendants or their supporters to try to justify the killing, as genuine terrorists always do. In order to mount a case that killing Mr. Berg was justified, the killers would have had to reach for ideas, values, and concepts that simply are not on the American intellectual shelf and were probably beyond the mental grasp of most Silent Brothers anyway. Such concepts are readily available in Russia, certain countries of Europe, and Latin America, but here they just don't exist, and you'd be better off warning about invasions from the moons of Saturn than trying to explain those ideas in public, let alone using them to justify murder.

But of course the situation in this country today is such or is quickly becoming such that those ideas -- drawn from Georges Sorel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Charles Maurras, among others -- might soon find a more receptive audience. If the ineffectuality of the mainstream political right accomplished anything, it showed that Republicans cannot and will not do what they say they will do if elected. One reason for the emergence of anti-abortion violence in the last couple of years is precisely that after more than a decade of two right-leaning and professedly pro-life Republican presidents, each of whom appointed new justices to the Supreme Court, the pro-life cause was no closer to victory than before and perhaps even farther from it, and even several of the justices appointed by Reagan and Bush voted against overturning Roe vs,

Wade when they had the chance. If you believe, as pro-lifers do, that the fetus is a human being and that destroying it is an act of murder, then it is clear that the peaceful and lawful political and legal process has failed, and the logic of resorting to the killing of those who professionally commit such murders becomes more and more compelling.

But that logic is no more compelling than when it is applied to many of the other commitments the Republican right has regurgitated repeatedly in the past twenty years -- to lower taxes, to reduce the size and power of the state, to enforce laws against dangerous criminals, to protect Americans against foreign enemies, to resist the orchestrated destruction of American civilization by publicly funded schools and cultural authorities, to protect the country against the invasion of immigration, to abolish or radically reform and reduce the welfare state, to redress the injustice of the civil rights laws, and on and on. Not one of these commitments has been kept, and today it is hard to find a Republican politician or a conservative pundit who even understands them, though what they promised action against amounts to an onslaught on the American way of life at least as serious and lethal as any invasion by foreign armies.

Violence as a political instrument is a desperate measure, but it is not so desperate that it is unprecedented or unjustifiable. The (original) Minutemen and the Confederates who took up arms against what they perceived as tyranny understood

that it is force, and not discussion or votes or laws, that ultimately determines the courses in which political power runs, and the risk they assumed when they took up arms was no larger than what they would have faced had they remained peaceful. What we face today is far more repressive, far more dangerous, and far more entrenched than the oppressors of the late 18th and mid 19th centuries, and we have far more reason to take up arms against the oppressor and its agents than they did. There can be little question today about the ethical legitimacy of using violence in defense of a way of life that the rulers of the nation do nothing to protect and much to destroy and about which they no longer care or can be made to care through the normal processes of politics and law. It may be counter-productive now to start shooting federal judges, bureaucrats, and politicians who lie their way from one election to another, but it's certainly not too early to start making a little list and letting them know who's on it.■

[Chronicles, December, 1994]

Principalities and Powers

Samuel Francis

Religious Wrong

Despite the ocean of ink that has been spilled in the last several months on the "religious right," perhaps the most sensible comment that has thus far been uttered about it, or at least about its journalistic coverage and political analysis, was penned by John F. Persinos in an article published in the magazine Campaigns and Elections last September. "When examined with a coldly non-partisan eye," wrote Mr. Persinos, "it turns out that much of the mainstream's reportage on the Christian Right is a hodge-podge of cliches, regurgitated conventional wisdom, and fatuous analysis."

Of course, there is hardly any subject that mainstream political journalism in this country touches of which the exact same thing could not be said, but there seems to be something about the combination of "religious" and "right" that encourages the construction of veritable monuments of the very kind of "fatuous analysis" of which Mr. Persinos was writing. There are, in my mind, two main reasons why American journalists and analysts so smashingly succeed in making fools of themselves whenever they talk about the "religious right."

In the first place, with the Clinton administration still in office, the political left needs an enemy against which it can rail for the purposes of raising money for its various causes,

increasing the subscription levels of its magazines, and rallying the dozing voters to the tattered banners of liberal congressional candidates. The prospect of Falwell, Robertson, Buchanan, North, and Helms snooping into your bedroom, burning books in your local library, and outlawing lingerie advertisements in your local newspapers is probably enough to elicit a few dollars from even the most skin-flinted progressives, and, just as people on the political right have often resorted to similar tactics of scare and smear against their friends on the left, some liberal activists probably really believe their own propaganda about the religious right, a belief that contributes to the very kind of fatuity Mr. Persinos mentioned.

The other reason for the flood of rhetorical cow drop about the religious right is that, for a certain sort of mentality common on the left, the prospect of being persecuted is just too delicious to pass up. Leftism of all kinds often takes its moral energy from its own paranoia, its deeply rooted obsession that it stands alone against the forces of reaction and that those forces are on the eve of triumph, and while the left is invariably the first to head for the beaches when a real triumph of reaction actually takes place, to stand athwart the petty and usually harmless despots who try to close down local porno stores and to feel the nearly erotic stimulus that one is about to go to the stake oneself is always a lot of fun as well as immensely invigorating to the leftist ego.

We do not, therefore, need to look very far to find reasons for the yelling and screaming about the sinister emergence of the

religious right to which the nation was obliged to listen last summer. Part of the hysteria was deliberately engineered simply for political and fund-raising purposes, and the engineering was successful precisely because most adherents of the left are both credulous enough to believe that an inquisitorial tide is about to engulf the country and self-important enough to imagine that they will be the first victims of the reaction. It is not remarkable, then, that the emergence of a religious right excites people on the secular left; what is remarkable, however, is that the religious right exists at all.

It is remarkable because not only is the United States today, like most economically developed societies everywhere, a largely secular culture but also because the American right itself has not until fairly recently expressed much interest in religion. Prior to World War II, hardly any major figure on the American right was significantly religious at all, and some were more or less outspoken enemies of religion in general and Christianity in particular. H.L. Mencken, Albert Jay Nock, and most of the group that Justin Raimondo identifies as the "Old Right" of the anti-New Deal, anti-interventionist orientation were not in the least concerned with religion except to mock it. Robert A. Taft, who generally reflected the political views of this movement as he led its political efforts, himself seems to have lived and died as a thoroughly conventional Episcopalian, a calling almost indistinguishable from outright heathenism. The considerably less

libertarian persuasion grouped around the racialist right, including Lothrop Stoddard and Madison Grant, was explicitly anti-Christian, while the "American fascist" Lawrence Dennis (as well as Ezra Pound) were also either uninterested in religion or hostile to it. Even in the 1950s, the founder of the John Birch Society, Robert Welch, was a professing atheist whose personal hero was the Transcendentalist shaman Ralph Waldo Emerson, while Welch's one-time colleague, the late and brilliant Revilo P. Oliver, was as well-known for his bitterness toward what he called "Jesus juice" as he was for his animosity to Jews and their supposed conspiracy.

It was only in the post-World War II right, the right of William F. Buckley Jr. and the late Russell Kirk, that religion came to be closely linked with American conservatism. Part of this development was due to the general revival of religion in the post-War era that gave us such mainstream icons of holiness as Billy Graham and Norman Vincent Peale and the cult of "civic religion" in the 1950s, but part of it also was due to the emergence of anti-communism as a central issue of the right, as well as a dawning perception that what was occurring in the West as well as under communism was not simply a violation of the fundamental institutional categories of the civilization of the West but an implicit abandonment of and an ever-more explicit attack on them. It is hardly surprising, given the victimization of Christianity and Christians by the communists, that Christian

clergymen and thinkers were in the forefront of anti-communist movements, that they imparted their theological commitments to their political and social commentary, and that their thought mainly identified the West and its survival with Christianity rather than with other staples of conservative concern such as property and the free market, constitutionalism and the rule of law, nationality, race, or social hierarchy.

But conservative intellectualism, whatever thoughts it entertained about religion, had little practical or political impact either before or after World War II, and the emergence of the religious right in the 1970s owes little to the abstruse theology, obscure liturgical controversies, and head-spinning political theory with which so many conservative eggheads occupied themselves in the 1950s and '60s. What its emergence does have to do with is a socio-political phenomenon that is far broader and far more significant as a world-historical force than either organized conservatism or the religious right itself perceives.

The "religious right" is merely the current incarnation of the on-going Middle American Revolution, a cultural and political movement that has underlain the political efforts of the American right since the end of World War II. Despite what many right-wing sages would like to believe, that movement never had much to do with their perennial holy cow, the free market, but rather with the perception that the white middle-class core of American society and culture was being evicted from its historic position

of cultural and political dominance and was in fact in process of becoming an exploited and repressed proletariat. It was this perception, rudimentary as it was, that to a large extent underlay the political movements around Father Coughlin, Huey Long, and similar figures in the Depression and later around Sen. McCarthy, whose anti-communist radicalism is explicable only as a vehicle for Middle American resistance to and resentment of the ruling class that had by the 1950s displaced the traditional bourgeois elite of the nation.

Since the end of World War II, the American right as a mass political force in the United States has been driven by three successive causes. The first, anti-communism, carried not only McCarthy but also Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon in the 1950s, though Eisenhower merely piggy-backed on the synthesis of anti-communism and Middle American class and ethnic consciousness that Nixon and McCarthy had so brilliantly forged. The second, opposition to the civil rights revolution based mainly in the South and later in northern white working-class suburbs, carried Barry Goldwater, George Wallace and (again) Richard Nixon, though Mr. Goldwater never understood what he was leading and continues to this day to imagine that it was a movement for "individual freedom" (a delusion that helped him lose the support of northern working-class voters) rather than a social convulsion for the preservation of class, ethnic, and cultural dominance.

The third cause of the right is now and has been what was

called in the 1970s the "social issue" and in the '90s the "cultural war," and, far more explicitly and effectively than the earlier anti-communism and bourgeois individualism espoused by the right of the '50s and '60s, it focuses on resisting the erosion of traditional morality and the traditional middle-class social and economic dominance the morality codified. "Cultural" issues were indeed present in but remained largely tangential to the right-wing efforts of the earlier decades and emerged as prevalent concerns only in reaction to the cultural assaults of the 1960s and afterwards. The most obvious way to defend a moral code is through religion, and the most obvious people to defend it are religious leaders and their followers. Hence, religion emerged logically as the appropriate vehicle for the expression of Middle American moral, social, and cultural counter-revolution.

What follows from this line of analysis of the religious right as it exists today is that what ultimately drives its adherents is not religion in the ordinary sense. What drives them is the perception -- accurate in my view -- that the culture their religion reflects and defends is withering and that that withering portends a disaster for themselves, their class, their country and their civilization. Religion happens to be a convenient vehicle for their otherwise unarticulated and perfectly well-founded fears. But while it is a convenient vehicle and a more effective one than those that carried the right in earlier days, it is not the most effective vehicle the right could have.

This is not to say that the religious right is composed of hypocrites who use religion for political ends. With the possible exception of most of its more prominent leaders, it's not. Most adherents of the religious right are sincerely and seriously religious; but you can be sincerely and seriously religious without being political and without being political in the way the religious right is. It's not religion that drives; it's the legitimate frustrations of a social class that has been bludgeoned and betrayed by its established leaders for more than 50 years.

Religion is not the most effective political and ideological vehicle for expressing and publicly vindicating the frustrations that animate the Middle American Revolution because the Christianity of the right simply doesn't encompass very many Middle American interests. While the religious right is effectively armed with an ideology and a world-view that enhances its militancy, its energy in mounting effective political and cultural opposition at the local level, and its alienation from the dominant elite and the elite's regime in the leviathan state, the movement's aims remain too limited. The real problem with the religious right is that, in the long run, its religious vehicle won't carry it home. If they ever ended abortion, restored school prayer, outlawed sodomy and banned pornography, I suspect, most of its followers would simply declare victory and retire. But having accomplished all of that, the Christian right would have done absolutely nothing to strip the federal government of the power it

has seized throughout this century, restore a proper understanding and enforcement of the Constitution and of republican government, prevent the inundation of the country by anti-Western immigrants, stop the cultural and racial dispossession of the historic American people, or resist the absorption of the American nation into a multicultural and multiracial globalist regime. Indeed, the Christian Right for the most part doesn't care about these issues or even perceive them as issues, and in so far as it does, it not infrequently lines up on the wrong side of them.

Yet these are the principal lines of conflict in the Middle American Revolution, and it is by winning on them, rather than on school prayer and creationism, that Middle American interests will be served and the incumbent ruling class and its power apparatus be overthrown. While the purely religious perspective of the Christian Right helps to radicalize it more than anti-communism, libertarianism, or other and older ideologies of the right did, it also tends to narrow the vision of what really demands a radical challenge from the right -- the domination of a hostile ruling class that uses state power to entrench itself and wreck the country, the culture and the middle class as well. Thus, the religious orientation of the Christian Right serves to create what Marxists like to call a "false consciousness" for Middle Americans, an ideology that appeals to and mobilizes a socio-political class but which does not accurately codify the objective interests and needs of the class and in the end only distracts and

deflects its political action and ultimately works to buttress and re-inforce the dominant regime.

What is needed now is not a vehicle that will trap the right into a large but limited cultural and political ghetto but one that can steer it toward an authentic and serious understanding of the real needs of the Middle Americans who are attracted to the Christian Right as well as others who are repelled by it but increasingly perceive how they are exploited and misruled by the elite. If a movement should appear that could articulate that kind of vision, then, religious or not in its focus, it could successfully mobilize and lead the core of the nation and the civilization as it needs to be and ought to be led.■