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I. Commissioned Essays

The following three essays were prepared for the 2008 Bradley Symposium, “Encounter at 10: The Power of Ideas,” held on June 4, 2008 at the St. Regis Hotel in Washington, DC. The symposium was co-sponsored by Hudson Institute’s Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal and Encounter Books.
Memory and Civic Education: The Perils of Cultural Amnesia

by Victor Davis Hanson

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The traditional—and classical—definition of civic education rested on the assumption of a people’s collective memory. Citizens in constitutional governments had to be reminded, taught—even indoctrinated—about the great deeds of their own past if they were to have any notion of their own present privilege or the obligations that accompanied their citizenship and maintained it. The second-century A.D. biographer Plutarch—late in the classical tradition—simply reflected a long-standing ancient interest in offering moral exemplars from the past. Contemporary Roman generations could measure their own worth by studying the biography of a Demosthenes or the Gracchi, and thereby learn to be better citizens by both emulation and critique of the mistakes of “illustrious Greeks and Romans.”

The Funeral Oration of Pericles, as recorded in the second book of Thucydides’ history, is the locus classicus of civic memory with the statesman’s famous pronouncement, “I shall begin with our ancestors.” Pericles then goes on to make several points. The first is to remind the Athenians that they were simply born lucky: the imperial grandeur that they enjoyed was due to their fathers and grandfathers, who “handed it down free to the present time by their valor.”

Such gratitude and humility in the moral sense are, of course, important for a free people, likely to think their present success is all their own, and therefore, in their self-congratulation, prone to hubris and a lack of reflection. Recitation of the accomplishments of earlier others also reminds Athenians that they are a mere link in a larger chain. And therefore they carry obligations to their children not to squander what the sacrifices of their parents achieved. The desired aim is to accept delayed gratification; that is, to warn the present generation not to expend capital bequeathed from others, and thereby rob their own children of a collective and rightful inheritance—and therein forfeit the continuance of democratic society.

Finally, Pericles assumes that appreciation of this enormous responsibility will serve as a moral guide to Athenians, in the same manner in which religion, the family or community reputation can all curb our dangerous appetites. Athenians must take on the responsibilities of citizens not just in regard for the advantages of the present, but also to avoid shaming those now dead by becoming lesser folks than were their fathers.

How odd it would be today for a contemporary statesman to remind us that we as Americans were born lucky, given our ancestry and the gifts we inherited from others. Just as rare would be
to hear that the citizen should not damage the public good—by slandering his country or avoiding his taxes—in fear that he might break faith will all those beneath the white crosses of our national cemeteries who died in god-awful places like Shiloh, Tarawa, and Chosun for the continuance of the freedom and material options that we now take for granted.

Unless we have an active memory of, and feel a certain awe for, those now dead and too often forgotten—who built our universities, erected our majestic buildings, crafted the protocols of our government, and won our wars—then we become dead souls of a sort, who drift among the infrastructure they left behind, which at best we take for granted but otherwise know nothing about, and, at worst, convince ourselves that we in fact built it.

I. THE DRUDGERY OF THE PAST

Of all the damage that political correctness has wrought, none has been worse than this cultural amnesia about, and disdain for, our own American past. Americans seem to have lost any empathy for what our ancestors suffered in the most basic physical sense. The history of the Western frontier expansion, for example, has become reduced often either to the atrocities at Wounded Knee or the Trail of Tears, as mountain men, cowboys, and pioneer women all become cardboard representations of environmental exploiters and criminals involved in premeditated genocide of the native Americans.

But lost in this melodrama is tragedy. We make no allowance for the horrific frontier experiences of millions of poor immigrants of all races, whose real enemies were not always each other, Native Americans, or the “system”—the nebulous “they” who do all sorts of injustices in the mind of the present generation—but rather the physical world itself. In pre-industrial times, how did people head westward without good maps, with only horse-powered wagons, when a strep throat, a pregnancy, or an infected small cut could mean a painful death? If today’s American is inconvenienced after a few days of camping in the rough, how did families of fifteen in tiny cabins address problems of clean water, sewage, and food preparation without modern science and technology? Would appreciation of that material adversity in some way mitigate common condemnation of our ancestors as somehow less liberal than us, if, for example, we remember that they had neither toilet paper nor antibiotics?

Politically-correct history forgets that the enemy of liberalism is drudgery. Those who spent hours cooking meals were a harvest away from starvation. They assumed that a fourteen-hour work day was a requisite for survival, and that they often had too little time to speculate about radical changes in the material world about them, accepting that change could come safely only in small increments. In that sense of having no margin of error, reactionary rote was safer than liberal experimentation.

All that appreciation of past ordeal is lost in the present practice of tabulating in the abstract the various racial, class, and gender transgressions of a dominant culture. Yet in some sense, there was not so much a dominant culture in eighteenth- or nineteenth-century America as instead millions of victims subject alike to nature’s awful whim. I say victims, but, of course, nineteenth-century Americans triumphed over nature and thus the roads, schools, airports, and prosperous cities of the modern West only emerged once our forefathers settled the countryside and established a template for what followed.
In this regard, I think of my grandmother, born in 1890, as a typical turn-of-the-century pioneer. Georgia Davis reached my present grandfather’s farm in central California after a rough childhood on the New Mexican frontier in which her twelve-year-old brother was gunned down while sweeping a saloon and her sister perished from diphtheria. She was later to spend a year near death, without antibiotics, from a ruptured appendix that was never removed. I imagine that she developed prejudices, but they seemed incidental in comparison to the sheer exuberance she displayed by surviving to ninety-three and knowing that the progress, both moral and material, of her country between 1890 and 1983 was simply a collective reflection of her own odyssey.

II. WHAT WAS IMPORTANT?

A second legacy of our collective amnesia about the past—due to the nature of history instruction in our schools and the bridle of political correctness—is the complete loss of any notion of magnitude. Quite simply, how do we determine what is important in the past? How do we distinguish between what was merely significant and what were landmark occurrences that changed the lives of tens of thousands and the future of hundreds of thousands more? And if we can’t ascertain what of importance happened in our past, how then can we have any fair guide to our present ordeal?

In our school history texts, when students arrive at the Civil War, the noble Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth often merit more notice than William Tecumseh Sherman, who split the Confederacy, took Atlanta, saved the 1864 election for Abraham Lincoln, and helped General Grant destroy the Confederate resistance. Why? Not because the work of Tubman and Truth to end slavery was more seminal than preserving the Union that alone could stop slavery in America, but because, as women of color, they far better serve as valuable milestones in the narrative of American pathology, while offering racial and gender role models for the present.

Note that most of our children know of Hiroshima and the Japanese internment—as the now infamous Reverend Wright apparently evoked repeatedly in his sermons—as proof of American malevolence during World War II. But they have little clue about Guadalcanal or Okinawa, where at great cost imperial Japanese expansion was checked and then defeated. Why again? Because the story of American violence and racism resonates more than the narrative of Americans sacrificing to stop a racist imperialist Japan doing to the United States what it systematically had done to China and most of the eastern Pacific. The Vietnam War is usually the story of student protests and My Lai, not amazing American victories at Tet and Hue that for a time saved South Vietnam from a cruel Stalinist tyranny. Why? Because the war is useful in reminding Americans not of the need to protect others from communism, but rather in emphasizing our own amorality.

The loss of a proper notion of magnitude about the past not only means we elevate the less important over the seminal, but also lose any yardstick of the past by which to measure the present. Today we speak of the 4,000 American dead in an ongoing war for a democratic Iraq as part of the “worst” decision in American diplomatic or military history. But only a generation that was ignorant of the nearly 23,000 casualties suffered in a single day at Antietam, or the 81,000 dead and wounded lost at the Battle of Bulge, or the over 5,000 Americans killed in the
first four years of the Philippines insurrection could employ such superlatives of their own experiences with war in Iraq.

If there is any measurement of what now warrants our attention and what does not, it is often what I would call oppression studies—to what degree does a past life or an incident serve the contemporary goal of victimology and further an equality of result. Recently Barack Obama called for more emphasis on the history of various racial, gender, and religious victims, arguing for more African-American history “as well as women’s struggle for equality, the history of unions, the role of Hispanics in the U.S. and other matters that aren’t given enough attention. I want us to have a broad-based history even including more of the Holocaust as well as other issues of oppression around the world.” Note how “broad-based history” is seen as equivalent to “issues of oppression around the world.”

We elevate the individual narratives of particular Native Americans, African-Americans, and women over the collective achievement of prior generations of Americans, because thereby we serve the noble aim of racial inclusiveness in the present—but also the ignoble goal of alleviating our own present guilt about the past by demonizing or ignoring those others who left us the very prosperity and tradition of free speech that has allowed us to caricature them.

III. BAD OR WORSE?

Another result of our cultural amnesia is the inability to understand dilemmas, or the need to accept a bad choice when the alternative is far worse. For example, we hear the constant refrain that the United States gave intelligence information to Saddam Hussein when he was fighting the Iranian theocracy that had stormed our embassy and taken our diplomats hostage. We are remonstrated that in Anbar province in Iraq we recruited ex-insurgents to turn on their former allies, the far worse al-Qaeda terrorists. We fault ourselves for disbanding the Baathist-led army that left a security vacuum, as if keeping an authoritarian force of Saddamists would have posed no similar dilemmas.

History is not melodramatic therapy, but rather tragedy. To defeat an horrific Nazi Germany America allied itself with an horrific Soviet Union in 1941, not much more than a mere decade after its mass annihilation of twenty million of its own. And then after successful completion of the war, the United States promptly refocused its effort against Soviet expansionary communism. The feeling of the cruel irony of it all was strong in 1945. General George Patton and others lamented that a war to keep Eastern Europe free and independent from Nazi aggrandizement in 1939 had ensured it would not be free from Soviet terrorism in 1945.

Yet a prior generation, understanding the value of a Soviet alliance to defeat Hitler, likewise understood the immediate need to resurrect Europe and Germany to defeat Soviet communism—rightly aware that we are mere humans, not gods, and cannot guarantee that today’s ally won’t be tomorrow’s enemy, only hope that in such contortions the nature and aims of America as foes of totalitarianism remain constant. If we do not understand the sometimes bleak choices of history, then in the present and for the future we place upon ourselves such utopian burdens that almost any result will be caricatured and second-guessed. And the ultimate result with be a moral stasis, and the bankrupt notion that inaction is not an error of omission.
IV. PRESENT HYPOCRISY

Another symptom of our neglect, or denigration, of our past is hypocrisy. There are two subsets. The first is the implausibility of well-fed and secure scholars and teachers passing casual judgment on those whose deeds they themselves are simply incapable of emulating. By easily condemning the fire raids over Hamburg and Tokyo as amoral—in the luxury of peace once there is no longer an ascendant fascist German or Japanese empire to threaten our daily lives—we forget that few professors or teachers of history could climb in a blister gun turret and fly sixteen hours over the Pacific from the Mariannas to Japan—three times a week, amid foul weather, hostile fire, and in often unreliable airplanes in the belief that they were one of the few tools available to Allies to stop Nazi barbarity.

It is easy now to sermonize about American racism in the island campaigns of World War II; but rather difficult to remain unbiased when engaged in hand-to-hand combat with those who routinely resorted to atrocity, and were willing to blow themselves up to kill. The point is not that the teacher of history is to suspend moral judgment, or that there is a not an abstract standard that can calibrate morality of the past across time and space. For example, we would make no moral exemption for the SS General Sepp Dietrich, who conducted a cruel war on both the Eastern and Western fronts that required physical endurance and strength beyond our own. Rather, the point is humility—that before we pass the judgment on the B-17 bombardier over Hamburg we understand physical and psychological dilemmas he endured.

Second, we earn a further charge of hypocrisy when we take for granted our present affluence and prosperity, while collectively condemning those in the past who were largely responsible for it. The neo-Marxist campus critic of capitalism assumes a prosperous economy and free markets to supply him with ample salary, tenure, legal protections, and the technology to fly to conferences, publish books, and be equipped with state-supplied computers and electronic appurtenances.

Yet given what we know of universities under totalitarian systems from the former Soviet Union, to North Korea to Cuba, such a comfortable campus embryo is simply impossible under communism. Almost all the present popular causes of the contemporary Left—the plight of the Palestinians, the egalitarianism of Cuban health care, the rape and pillage of the innocent in Darfur, or the callous treatment of the Tibetans—highlight these paradoxes. No one would chose to be operated on in Palestine in a Ramallah hospital rather than in Tel Aviv. The American tourist would not choose brain surgery in Havana. Only the U.S. military, not U.N. peacekeepers, could stop genocide in the Sudan. And the ability to voice concerns about the Dalai Lama’s plight is simply not possible in China, but only in the West and its spheres of influence. At some point, even the most severe critics of American history must acknowledge that our present inherited bounty and freedom were derived in some part from a system not of our own generation’s making—and not the product of canonized socialists, communists, and pacifists of the past.

V. THE WAGES OF HISTORICAL IGNORANCE

What are the ramifications of an amnesiac democratic society that either cannot or will not appreciate its past? The first dividend is sheer ignorance. History is a referent of the present, and there is no guarantee that each generation will maintain what was bequeathed by others without
guidance of what has and has not worked. If we forget the lessons of the past, we lack any models to live by in the present. For example, today America suffers from a vast energy shortage. We claim that we cannot drill petroleum off our coasts or in Alaska. We insist that more coal plants and oil refineries are too dirty, and nuclear power is too dangerous. We turn to ethanol even as food prices skyrocket as land for food is diverted to fuel. We praise wind and solar power, even as they have not supplied much more than a fraction of our daily demands. We praise, and rightly so, conservation, but due to population growth consume more energy than ever before, and then are bewildered when all our options from drilling, farming fuel, importing Middle Eastern oil, and mining to developing nuclear power appear to us alone as novel dilemmas—and were not known to prior generations who nonetheless made decisions that bequeathed a prosperous nation.

Our forefathers—have we forgotten?—built hydroelectric dams, drilled wells, and mined coal, not because they enjoyed pollution, or were even careless and uncaring about the environment, but because their first allegiance was to feed, clothe, and provide for the citizenry, impossible in a modern age without accessible and inexpensive power. By thinking there are no difficult choices, we find ourselves as inactive as our ancestors were proactive—and are finding our food too expensive, energy too scarce, or self-righteousness all too common.

Second, historical revisionism can mask self-indulgence. Once a society damn its past and its benefactors as illiberal, it has provided the intellectual exegesis for its own conspicuous consumption. Our present generation has nearly bankrupt the social security system, accumulated trillions of dollars in national debt, lost a war in Vietnam, spent trillions of dollars in national wealth on cosmetic surgeries, and induced a crass popular culture of conspicuous consumption and self-indulgence—and yet has rewritten our public school history textbooks to emphasize the sins of our prior generations. The more we demonize the dead, the more we the living are then free to rewrite the rules of our own moral behavior.

Finally, there is the expectation even among critics of the United States that America is foreordained, nearly omnipotent in its exercise of its power. In fact, America is history’s fragile aberration—a nation based on ideas and principles, not traditional unifiers such as race, religion, or identical ancestry. At numerous times in its brief history—the winter of 1776, the awful summer of 1864, the panic of 1929, the dark years of winter 1942, and the social chaos of 1968—its very existence as a democratic nation was in doubt. For this country to continue, a majority of its citizens each generation must believe not that it is perfect, but rather than it is far better than the alternative, and therefore worth investing one’s loyalty and talents in its preservation.

But should collectively we come to see the history of America as largely the story of racial, gender and class oppressions, far worse than what was found elsewhere at the time, or simply have no idea at all about our own past or the ordeal of our ancestors, then history suggests that there would be no reason for the experiment to continue, at least as we have known the United States. And of course then it would not. The hard work of uniting diverse peoples under uniquely humane principles is the work of over two centuries; the easy task of ending it can by accomplished in a mere generation through our ignorance or hatred of ourselves and own past.
Global Governance vs. the Liberal Democratic Nation-State: What Is the Best Regime?

by John Fonte

John Fonte is a senior fellow and director of the Center for American Common Culture at the Hudson Institute. His book Sovereignty or Submission: Will Americans Rule Themselves Or Be Ruled By Others? will be published by Encounter Books in 2009. Further biographical information can be found in section III.

Who Governs

In the coming years of the twenty-first century the ideology, institutions, and forces of “global governance” will directly challenge the legitimacy and authority of the liberal democratic nation-state and American constitutional sovereignty. What is this ideology, what are these institutions and forces, and how do they challenge liberal democracy and American sovereignty? To begin to examine these issues let us start with the primary questions of politics.

Who governs? To whom is political authority responsible? How are rulers chosen? How are rulers replaced? How is the power of rulers limited? How are laws made? How can bad laws be changed? These are the perennial questions of politics. As Plato and Aristotle inquired: what is the “best regime”?

In this first decade of the twenty-first century, has the question of what is the best regime been settled? For many throughout the developed world the answer is yes. Liberal democracy, that hybrid combination of liberalism and democracy, is the “best regime.”

Liberalism in traditional political theory means an emphasis on individual rights, free institutions, the impartial rule of law, freedom of speech and association, private property, and freedom for religion, commerce, culture, and educational institutions. Under liberalism, equality of individual citizenship is the norm.

Democracy means rule by the “demos,” the people. At the heart of modern democracy is the doctrine that governments derive their powers from the “consent of the governed,” as famously put in the American Declaration of Independence. National self-government, popular sovereignty, and majority rule (within constitutional limits, i.e., limited by liberalism) characterize the norms of liberal democracy.

These great questions of politics are in theory answered in liberal democracy. Political authority resides in a self-constituted people based on “consent.” This self-governing people choose their own rulers through elections and can replace them if they are unresponsive. The people limit the power of rulers through a constitution that functions as a basic law. Bad laws can be changed by elected national legislatures. Moreover, in practice, democracy occurs only within the borders of
individual liberal democratic nation-states. As Marc Plattner, co-editor of the National Endowment for Democracy’s *Journal of Democracy*, recently wrote, “…we cannot enjoy liberal democracy outside the framework of the nation-state.”

In his seminal 1989 essay “The End of History,” Francis Fukuyama argued that the great question of politics—what is the best “regime”?—has been settled. We have arrived at “the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government,” Fukuyama declared. To be sure, the practical process of spreading liberal democracy throughout the world might take hundreds of years, but the ideological hegemony of liberal democracy has already been established—that is to say, the notion that the only legitimate form of government is liberal democracy is now widespread and almost universally accepted. Even non-democratic governments either pretend to be democratic in their own particular way or claim that they are working towards democracy.

Fukuyama recognized that there will be competing ideologies to liberal democracy, but no rival political worldviews *with universal appeal*, in the final analysis. He argued that the potential ideological rivals (Asian values, Islamic fundamentalism) would not likely gain widespread support among Western intellectuals; thus the crux of his argument is that there are “no rival ideologies with universal appeal.”

**Global Governance: From Internationalism to Transnationalism**

Nevertheless, with the coming of globalization the issue of “who shall govern” is very much alive. For many of the world’s elites the big project of the twenty-first century is how to achieve global governance. It is argued that there are global problems, such as war; terrorism; climate change; world hunger; vast inequalities of condition; diseases such as HIV/AIDS; human rights violations; racism, sexism, and xenophobia; and migration or immigration from poor to rich countries. These problems are beyond the capacity of nation-states to “solve.” Therefore, some form of “global governance” is required to address them.

There is a crucial distinction between internationalism and transnationalism (or globalism). As a leading theorist, John Ruggie of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and a former deputy secretary general of the United Nations, explains, “Simply put, postwar institutions, including the United Nations, were built for an inter-*national* world, but we have entered a *global* world. International institutions were designed to reduce external frictions between states; our challenge today is to devise more *inclusive* forms of global governance [italics in the original].”

Unlike the traditional international system of sovereign nation-states, this new transnational system of global governance seeks to establish supranational laws, regulations, and institutions whose authority extends beyond and within nation-states (including democratic ones). Nation-states continue to exist but they are subordinate to transnational authority. This authority is exercised by new definitions (“evolving norms”) of international law (really transnational law);

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Transnational courts such as the International Criminal Court; myriad UN conventions that establish new global norms, particularly in the area of human rights; supranational institutions like the European Union; and non-government organizations (NGOs) that act as “global civil society.”

**Transnational Progressivism: A Post-Liberal Project**

At the most abstract level the advocates of global governance loudly proclaim support for human rights, tolerance, justice, and democratic values. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown’s April 18, 2008 speech at the Kennedy Library in Boston is a classic example of this type of rhetoric. Brown stated that “global problems require global solutions,” and that “the twenty-first century can be the first progressive century in which we created the first truly global society.” Further, he spoke of the “need…to face up to the international consequences of poverty and inequality.”

What does this mean in practice? What do promoters of global governance advocate at the operational level? As a practical matter the supranational institutions they favor and the group-rights/equality-of-condition policies they promote could be described as “post-democratic” in process and “post-liberal” in substance. What I call “transnational progressivism” has a number of recurring characteristics.

First, the basis of political society ought not to be the individual citizen and voluntary associations, but the identity group, often ascribed, to which one belongs or claims as a primary identification (racial, ethnic, gender, religious if non-Western, sexual orientation, et cetera).

Second, these identity groups ought to be divided into two categories: the privileged (whites, males, Christians, heterosexuals, citizens) and the marginalized (non-whites, females, non-Christians, homosexuals, non-citizens).

Third, the major inequities in society are “systemic” or “institutional,” built into the nature of the system. Thus, we have “systemic racism” or “institutional racism,” and “systemic sexism,” along with homophobia, Islamophobia, and xenophobia that are embedded in the nature of society. The repeated use of this type of rhetoric challenges the legitimacy of the liberal-democratic nation-state. If a political regime is engaged in systemic bias, it clearly is devoid of moral authority and is not really “legitimate.”

Fourth, an important goal of society ought to be eliminating these identity group-based inequities. A just society means a group-based equality of condition.

Fifth, the nation-state is an inadequate institution to achieve social justice and is ill-suited to the problems of the future. Therefore, national identity, and exclusive national citizenship are, by their nature, problematic.

Sixth, global migration from less developed countries to more developed countries will be a major characteristic of the twenty-first century. Instead of promoting the assimilation of

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immigrants into an existing national culture, “fairness” requires that we promote transnational citizenship, diaspora consciousness, and group-oriented multiculturalism.

The positions outlined above have entered the mainstream of political discourse not only in Europe, but in America as well. They are being expressed with increasing frequency by American NGOs that are strongly supported by major American foundations, especially the Ford, CS Mott, Rockefeller, and Tides foundations, among others. These foundations supported an NGO report of February 2008 to the United Nations Committee reviewing American compliance with the UN CERD (Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) Treaty. The NGO report entitled “Structural Racism in the United States” declared, “The United States is responsible for failing to address unjustifiable racial impacts” in education, housing, health care, employment, transportation, criminal justice and other domains.5

The United States was admonished to change its laws and to “align” them with the United Nations CERD definition of discrimination that includes “facially neutral policies . . . as well as unintentional action and inaction by individuals’ that result in “racially disparate outcomes.”6 Further, the report lamented that “decision-making authority, however, is highly fragmented in the United States” (the federal system).7 The report recommended that a new federal agency modeled on the Department of Homeland Security coordinate compliance from state and local governments. In addition, it stated that the “US judiciary which as a branch of the US government” has a “duty to act in conformity with CERD.”8

Close to Home, a publication of the Ford Foundation on NGO human rights activity in the US, discusses the need “to break the chokehold of domestic law.”9 Indeed, the publication states that, “every nation and all people need ultimate recourse to an alternative ethical and legal authority.”10 The Ford document approvingly declared that, “US human rights activists are trying to reshape US society according to a philosophy and framework of rights that most people either have not heard of or have been taught to think of as foreign.”11

Although both adherents of the liberal democratic nation-state and transnational progressives favor the “integration” of immigrants, the issue is deeply “contested.” Democratic national sovereigntists more or less support a form of patriotic assimilation that was successful in twentieth-century America, France, and other democracies (with some modifications to be sure). Global progressives emphasize transnational citizenship, as advocated in a recent Financial Times article on “diaspora consciousness.”12 In the progressive view, “integration” means the incorporation of a specific immigrant community as a specific community that retains loyalties

6 NGO Report, p.2
7 NGO Report, p.3
8 NGO Report, p.20
10 Close to Home, p.15.
11 Close to Home, p.16
to authorities outside the host democratic nation-state. Thus, instead of European Muslims, the
globalists seek to integrate “the Muslim community in Europe” that maintains loyalties to the
worldwide ummah.

From the hyphen to the ampersand. In the US, the traditional concept of the proud and loyal
hyphenated-American is becoming blurred. There is now discussion of the “Mexican community
in America” with transnational (dual) citizenship and political loyalties. Indeed, for the first time
ever, thousands of naturalized American dual citizens voted in the 2006 Mexican presidential
election and one was elected to the Mexican Congress. A Wall Street Journal op-ed
triumphantly declared that the traditional hyphenated-American is being replaced by the
“ampersand” citizen. Instead of being a Mexican-American or Dominican-American, one is
both a Mexican & American or a Dominican citizen and an American citizen at the same time.
The op-ed was written by two mainstream international-immigration law professors, Peter
Schuck (Yale) and Peter Spiro (Temple). Schuck is currently involved in an American Enterprise
Institute project with James Q. Wilson, and they have edited a new book of essays on
understanding American exceptionalism; Spiro has testified before the House Judiciary
Committee as the chief Democratic Party witness on dual allegiance (which he favors).

In general, transnational progressivism and its political agenda, listed above, are advancing in
ideological world politics. The social base of transnational progressivism is an increasingly
connected post-national intelligentsia including elements such as the following: leading US and
European international lawyers; international judges; NGOs, especially human rights activists in
groups like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Amnesty International USA and
Human Rights Watch; UN officials; EU political leaders and bureaucrats; corporate executives
from multi-national companies (the “Davos” crowd—not ideological progressives, but pragmatic
allies who see practical benefits in the global governance approach); major American
Foundations (Ford, Rockefeller, Mott, MacArthur, Tides, etc.); and, most importantly, practicing
politicians throughout the West.

One could reasonably argue that transnational progressivism is more or less the dominant
ideology in the European Union, certain European nations, the American university and in many
Western political parties. To be sure there is resistance to the transnationalists in all of these
institutions from what could be called liberal democratic nationalists. The struggle for power
between transnational progressives and liberal democratic nationalists could go either way, but it
will be the main ideological event of the twenty-first century.

The European Union. The European Union (EU) represents a model of “post-democratic”
governance and “post-liberal” ideology. Originally power was to reside with the member-states
represented in the Council of the European Union, but for decades most of the authority has been
exercised by the European Commission (EC), the bureaucracy in Brussels. Indeed, legislation is
initiated by the EC. The Council and the European Parliament can only refuse to accept policies
already formulated by the EC (something they almost never do) or they can amend EC
legislative proposals through a rather complicated process. No wonder one of Europe’s most
prominent sociologists, Ralf Dahrendorf (former commissioner of the EC, current member of the
House of Lords) stated that the European Union’s decision-making process is “an insult to

13 Rafael Alarcon Acosta, “Voting Abroad for the First Time in Mexico: An Assessment, El Colegio de al Frontera
Norte,” International Metropolis Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, October 2006
democracy.” He went so far as to say that “it is not just a joke to say that if the EU itself applied for accession to the EU, it could not be admitted because it is insufficiently democratic.”

The prevailing ideology within the EU is as close to corporatism as it is to liberalism. Unlike the US with its strong First Amendment tradition, the EU and some EU member states restrict free speech through a loose interpretation of prohibitions on “hate speech.” Currently, a city council candidate in Austria is being prosecuted for charging Islam with being a “totalitarian system of domination that should be thrown back to its birthplace on the other side of the Mediterranean.” Further, the institutions of the EU promote gender proportionalism in elections (with a certain percentage of party parliamentary lists reserved for women. These corporatist measures are enacted in the name of implementing the UN CEDAW Treaty (the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women).

The transnational progressive response to radical Islam. This response has been twofold: Externally, it mostly takes the form of denial that terrorism is in any way connected to Islam. As Princeton University Dean Anne-Marie Slaughter put it: “Our enemy is not Islamic anything. The threat to our security comes from individual terrorists organized in global networks [italics in the original].” At the same time, internally within territorially based nations there is widespread accommodation to Islamist ideology, culture, and even, in some cases, Shariah law across the West.

Thus, in March 2007 the Daily Telegraph reported that the European Union issued a classified handbook that banned the words “Islamic” and “jihad” in reference to terrorist attacks. Instead the EU directed public officials to replace concepts such as “Islamic terrorism” with words that are not “offensive” to Muslims. In 2007 British Home Secretary Jacqui Smith instructed its officials to use terms such as “violent extremists” and “criminal murderers” instead of “jihadists” or “Islamic extremists.” In the last few months, the US State Department and Department of Homeland Security have essentially followed suit, dropping references to Islam in connection with terrorism.

Throughout the West (and particularly since 9/11) Muslims have been granted special autonomous privileges that contradict the liberal principles of equality of treatment and of citizenship. The Archbishop of Canterbury was roundly criticized when he derided what he called “the legal monopoly” of the British common law and endorsed the partial application of Shariah law for British Muslims. Nevertheless, this view has been at least partially incorporated into law. For example, the British government admitted in February 2008 that it has recognized polygamous marriages and provided welfare, housing, and tax benefits for the multiple wives of Muslim husbands.

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21 Pipes, Jerusalem Post.
22 Ibid.
Even beyond the issue of special privileges, there are regions of the West where de-facto autonomous zones exist outside the control of the democratic nation-state. For example, as of November 2006 the French government has officially recognized that there are 751 “Sensitive Urban Zones,” or so-called “no go zones” in France. These are areas where the French state does not exercise authority but where youth gangs, sometimes in collusion with Muslim clerics, rule.23 Clearly, all of the above constitute a challenge to the so-called reigning “liberal hegemony.”

The Response of the American Governing Center-Left to the Transnational Challenge

As noted earlier the activist American left (NGOs such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International USA, foundations such as Ford and Mott) embrace a rather radical form of transnational progressivism often remote from the American mainstream. But what of the governing American center-left? By the governing center-left I mean the views of policy makers who serve as political appointees in administrations, such as deputy secretaries of state and assistant secretaries of defense (figures like Strobe Talbott, Anne-Marie Slaughter and Harold Koh), as opposed to “theoretical left” academics, such as Martha Nussbaum at the University of Chicago.

Overall, the American governing center-left is intellectually prepared to deal with transnational governance conceptually and rhetorically. In essence, the governing left has internalized the global governance project as America’s “leadership” mission. However, in promoting this “leadership role” the governing left has blurred the boundaries between our constitutional democratic order and post-constitutional supranational governance, while at the same time obfuscating the distinction in foreign policy between traditional American leadership within an inter-national system versus an American “leadership” that translates into acquiescence to a transnational system with its concomitant surrender of democratic sovereignty.

Strobe Talbott clarifies this mindset best. In a memo to Bill Clinton shortly before the 1992 election the future deputy Secretary of State wrote:

“Americans are all for having the Japanese and West Europeans pony up to pay for the Gulf War, but they are mighty chary about any arrangement that smacks of pooled national sovereignty or authority. The way to counter this resistance, of course, is to sell multilateralism as not just an economic imperative but as a means of preserving and enhancing American political leadership in the world, since the various multilateral outfits will be effective only if the US does lead them.”24

The concept of “pooled” or “shared national sovereignty” is central to the thinking of the transnational elites who are promoting global governance. This is an idea we will be hearing about over and again in the decades to come. Talbott’s endorsement of the principle of “shared sovereignty” suggests that his interpretation of “multilateralism” is, in effect, a means of fostering transnational authority.

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Dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of International and Public Affairs at Princeton University Anne-Marie Slaughter could be described as the “John Bolton of the left.” She would in all likelihood be appointed to a top foreign policy post in a future left-of-center administration. Slaughter has envisioned a system of global governance based on “trans-governmental networks.”

Slaughter argues that nation-states should cede a degree of sovereignty to transnational networks “horizontally” and supranational institutions “vertically.” Horizontally, means, for example, that American judges would interact with foreign judges, quote each other’s opinions, and develop joint legal doctrine (what she calls “transjudicialism”). Vertically, she argues that nations should cede sovereign authority to supranational institutions in cases requiring global solutions to global problems, such as the International Criminal Court. In this way, Slaughter maintains that global government networks “can perform many of the functions of a world government—legislation, administration, and adjudication—without the form,” thereby, creating a genuine global rule of law.

Harold Koh, the dean of Yale University Law School, served as assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights, and labor during the Clinton Administration. In a detailed article in the Stanford Law Review responding to the Bush foreign policy, Koh articulates the central viewpoint of the American governing left.

Koh chastises the US for failing to “obey global norms.” America, Koh tells us, “promotes double standards” by refusing to ratify the International Criminal Court treaty; “claiming a Second Amendment exclusion from a proposed global ban on the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons”; and “declining to implement the orders of the International Court of Justice with regard to the death penalty.” Indeed, Koh complains: “The World Court finally found that the United States had violated the Vienna Convention” (on the death penalty), but “American courts have essentially ignored” the ruling of the ICJ.

Koh’s proposed remedy to American exceptionalism is for “American lawyers, scholars and activists” to “trigger a transnational legal process,” of “transnational interactions” that will “generate legal interpretations that can in turn be internalized into the domestic law of even resistant nation-states.” For example, Koh suggests that, “human rights advocates” should litigate “not just in domestic courts, but simultaneously before foreign and international arenas.” Moreover, they should encourage foreign governments (such as Mexico) and transnational NGOs to challenge the US on the death penalty and other human rights issues.

Supporters of the International Criminal Court should, Koh recommends, “provoke interactions between the United States government and the ICC” that might lead to the US becoming enmeshed in the ICC process (by, for example, having the US provide evidence in ICC trials). These interactions with the ICC would show cooperation with the tribunal and therefore “could

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28 Ibid. pp. 1480-1487.
29 Ibid. pp. 1485-1486
30 Ibid. p. 1486.
31 Ibid. p. 1502.
32 Ibid. pp. 1509-1510.
be used to undermine” the official US “unsigned” of the treaty because it might “constitute a de-facto repudiation” of the “act of unsignature.”

Of course, the “transnational legal process,” advocated by Koh (and others in the governing center-left) is a process outside of American constitutional democracy. The American people have a Constitution, judicial institutions, and a democratic political system. Transnational “interactions” (such as appealing to foreign courts) are not part of the institutional authority and accountability inherent in the meaning of the phrase: “We the People of the United States.” Koh’s “interactions” are something “outside” of the “People of the United States” and “beyond” the Constitution and our democratic process. Therefore, they could be characterized as extra-constitutional, post-constitutional, or post-democratic. In effect, they seek to achieve results that could not necessarily be achieved through the regular process of American democracy. This clearly raises the core “regime” questions of what constitutes legitimate political authority and who is responsible to whom in a democratic state.

The Response of the American Governing Center-Right to the Transnational Challenge

While the governing center-left has internalized global governance and is prepared to promote it, in some form at least, the governing center-right has for the most part failed to engage on the issue (with some exceptions that will be discussed later). The main problem for the governing center-right could be described as one of underdeveloped conceptualization. There are a number of obstacles standing in the way of clear and comprehensive thinking on the challenge of transnational progressivism. I will list five.

(1) The Fukuyama Paradigm. The first obstacle is that the governing center-right has internalized the core elements of the Fukuyama paradigm. In the main, the bulk of the center-right would agree with Fukuyama that the core principles of liberal democracy face no serious rival with a universal appeal in the world today. To be sure, the rival ideologies that the center-right considers rival ideologies—radical Islam, Chinese nationalism, Russian nationalism, and “Asian values”—do not, unlike Marxism, have wide appeal for Western intellectuals. But as argued in this essay the institutions of global governance and the ideology of transnational progressivism: (1) constitute a root-and-branch challenge to both the principles of traditional liberalism and to majority-rule democracy within the liberal democratic nation-state; and (2) possess universal appeal and a critical mass of widespread support among Western intellectuals.

(2) Viewing radical Islam as the sole overarching threat. Unlike large chunks of the Western left who speak only in terms of generic “terrorism,” “extremism,” or “violence,” the American center-right, to its credit, has identified radical Islam as major threat to liberal democracy. Radical Islamists are capable of inflicting tremendous damage, but it would be a mistake to focus solely on the struggle against the radical Islamists because they are not the only “transcendent” threat facing American constitutional democracy in the twenty-first century.

First, as the century progresses, the indirect, “soft,” non-violent (but coercive) challenge from transnational progressivism (that has great appeal within the West) should prove to be as great a threat (if not, ultimately, a greater threat than radical Islam) to the continuing existence of the independent liberal democratic nation-state in general and to American constitutionalism in
particular. Second, the transnational progressives constitute a major obstacle in the conflict with radical Islam by refusing to acknowledge both the seriousness and the ideological nature of this conflict.

The center-right and anti-radical Islamists in general will have to fight on two ideological fronts. They will have to wage major ideological (and increasingly, as Andrew McCarthy has pointed out, lawfare) battles with both the radical Islamists and a significant contingent of Western anti-radical Islamists (the John Espositos, the Juan Coles, the ACLUs, Amnesty Internationals, etc.), who are essentially transnational progressives. This state of affairs parallels the Cold War era, when anti-communists had to fight an ideological civil war within the West against the anti-communists as well as against the communists themselves. Thus, the conflict with radical Islam is intertwined with and cannot be separated from the challenge of transnational progressivism.

(3) The Kagan narrative. In his new book The Return of History and the End of Dreams and in a long New Republic article (“The End of the End of History”) Robert Kagan alters the core Fukuyama narrative by arguing that “autocracy” has been revived (both in theory and practice) during the past decade in China and Russia. What this means according to Kagan is that the more than two-hundred-year-old conflict between liberal democracy and autocracy has been renewed and will become the main event of the twenty-first century. The conflict with radical Islam, while extremely dangerous, is secondary to the emerging struggle with the “great autocratic powers” of China and Russia, who are (among other things) enablers of the Iranian regime and other Islamic radicals.

Kagan tells us that the conflict between democracy and autocracy started during late eighteenth century; was inspired by the Enlightenment world view that promoted an emerging liberal world order; and involved the young American republic from the beginning firmly on the liberal side. While containing some truth, this is essentially an inaccurate and misleading portrayal of history and contemporary world politics. While Kagan presents a more or less monolithic Enlightenment promoting progress, Gertrude Himmelfarb and others have noted differences between the Anglo-American and French Enlightenments that have led to very different revolutions and political regimes.

In a previous book (Of Paradise and Power) Kagan declared: “Americans, as good children of the Enlightenment, still believe in the perfectibility of man, and they retain hope for the perfectibility of the world.” Of course, the American Founders did not believe in the “perfectibility of man” and created a constitutional republic of checks and balances that recognized a flawed human nature. During the early republic the American governing center-right (Washington, Adams, Hamilton) opposed the utopian wing of the Enlightenment and its offspring the French Revolution both in principle (Adams debated Condorcet) and practice (quasi-war with the French republic).

The ideological geopolitical struggle was *tripolar*, with American constitutional democrats in conflict with both radical utopians and autocrats (including Islamists from the Barbary coast), rather than simply bipolar as presented by Kagan. Today, too, Kagan’s bipolar conceptualization (liberal democracy vs. autocracy) is inadequate because liberal democracy again faces a tripartite challenge (from both anti-democratic autocracy and post-democratic transnationalism). In one sense transnational progressivism—with its utopianism, transformative view of human nature, substantive equality, and militant secularism—is the heir to the radical wing of the Enlightenment, while the liberal democratic nation-state is the progeny of its moderate wing. As noted earlier in this essay transnational progressivism represents the de-liberalization of the West (it is a post-liberal project) and therefore Kagan’s view of a unified liberal West in conflict with autocracy is a very thin reed on which to build a conceptual model of global ideological politics.

**Corporate elite and libertarian ambiguity.** Another obstacle to clear thinking on global governance is that elements of the broader center-right coalition, specifically many corporate leaders and some libertarians, are ambivalent about the nation-state and transnationalism. Many American business leaders have internalized the core global governance arguments. They take great pains to tell us that American brand-name businesses are not “American.” Jeff Seabright, vice president of Coca Cola, emphatically stated: “We are not an American company.”37 A leading Colgate-Palmolive executive declared, “There is no mindset that puts this country (the USA) first.”38

Samuel Huntington describes these American business leaders as “economic transnationals” who identify more with their colleagues among the global elites than with their fellow citizens. In 2003 the annual World Economic Forum in Davos launched its Global Governance Initiative (GGI). A team of forty experts is the core of the project. They are almost all left-of-center globalists like Strobe Talbott, Mary Robinson (who organized the UN Durban conference), John Ruggie (Kofi Annan’s former deputy), Tim Wirth (President of UN Foundation), and the Canadian Maurice Strong (organizer of UN Rio Earth Summit, the precursor to the Kyoto Treaty).39 The American business leaders who have internalized the global governance project are not, of course, ideologues, but they could be described as “transnational pragmatists” and as essentially “post-Americans.”

For some (clearly not all) libertarians opposition to the “state,” even the constitutional democratic nation-state leads to an affinity to transnational (as opposed to international) politics. Indeed, on Cato’s website, adjunct scholar Arnold Kling (formerly senior economist at Freddie Mac and staff economist at the Federal Reserve) “proposes” an “alternative ideology” that “might be called transnational libertarianism.” Ideally, in this regime, Kling declares, “governments would be local rather than national.”40 Closer to the political mainstream is Cato’s congressional handbook, which declares that, “the right to trade is a fundamental human right” and “protectionism violates human rights. It is an act of plunder that deprives individuals of their autonomy.”41 Protectionism is usually bad policy, but to describe it as a “violation of human

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rights,” redefines (and thus fundamentally dilutes) the concept of human rights in much the same way that transnational progressivism does.

On China, Cato insists that “trade policy should be de-coupled from [political] human rights”; all sanctions such as Jackson-Vanik should be repealed; and that nation should be afforded “unconditional” MFN (most favored nation) trading status. Even closer to the political mainstream and at the core of the governing center-right was the persona of the late editor of Wall Street Journal, Robert Bartley, who is reported to have told a Forbes journalist, “the nation-state is finished.”

(5) Ellis Island Nostalgia and the failure to embrace the essentials of the Huntington critique of de-nationalized elites. Large-scale immigration to the United States in the twenty-first century is occurring under entirely different circumstances than existed during the last great wave of immigration at the beginning of the twentieth century. Today, besides the technological (inexpensive travel, instant communications), geographic (many immigrants coming from a single contiguous country), and linguistic (predominance of Spanish as opposed to many tongues) differences, the ideological landscape among the American elite has been totally altered. One hundred years ago elites unapologetically promoted “Americanization.”

Today an anti-assimilation ideology and infrastructure is in place, including the following: multilingual ballots; bilingual education that includes using Mexican textbooks and importing Mexican teachers to instruct American children of Mexican descent in US history in Spanish; Executive Order 13166 that requires official multilingualism in all institutions receiving federal funds; transnational citizenship or dual allegiance with naturalized Americans violating their oath of allegiance by voting and running for office in their birth nations; and the promotion of multiculturalism over American unity in public schools. Not surprisingly, the strongest indicator of assimilation, intermarriage between immigrants and native-born and among ethnic groups, has declined for the first time since the 1970s. At the same time, among newly naturalized citizens self-identification as “Americans” is lower than self-identification with their birth nation. In short, the situation is not Ellis Island revisited no matter how much some conservatives tell us it is.

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42 Ibid.
43 The Forbes journalist was Peter Brimelow. National Review, April 22, 1996, vol. 48, no. 7, p. 43 (5).
44 See Heather MacDonald, “Mexico’s Undiplomatic Diplomats,” in The Immigration Solution: A Better Plan Than Today’s, essays by Heather MacDonald, Victor Davis Hanson, Steven Malanga and an introduction by Myron Magnet (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007), pp. 143-149.
Let us examine how integration works “on the ground” in Illinois. In that state, “immigrant integration” is administered by Jose Luis Gutierrez, the head of the Office of New Americans. Mr. Gutierrez is a political appointee of Governor Blagojevich. His concept of integration is different from that of, say, Theodore Roosevelt; it is the ampersand and diaspora rather than the hyphen and the melting pot.

Gutierrez told the Chicago Tribune in April 2007 that, “The nation-state concept is changing. You don’t have to say, I am Mexican or I am American. You can be a good Mexican citizen and a good American citizen and not have that be a conflict of interest. Sovereignty is flexible.”

Further, Gutierrez stated that he and others like him form a “third nation” that “transcends the border and is built on a new political consciousness.” Gutierrez is a dual citizen and clearly a proponent of the ampersand model. He organizes the involvement of Mexican immigrants including American citizens in Mexican politics. His political loyalty is clearly as much to the Mexican regime as much as the American regime. Mr. Gutierrez and the ampersand could very well be the face of the future.

In Who Are We: Challenges to American National Identity, Samuel Huntington argues that issues such as transnationalism, globalism, dual citizenship, “racial preferences, bilingualism, multiculturalism, immigration, assimilation, national history standards, English as the official language, Eurocentrism,” and so on, are “all battles in a single war over the nature of American national identity.” Huntington’s core point is that “de-nationalized elites” are promoting the “transnational” and the “multicultural” in order to “deconstruct” America’s creed and common culture.

Huntington did not use the term, but these controversies are (in James Ceaser’s formulation) “regime issues.” What is being contested is the nature of America’s liberal democratic regime as it has been traditionally understood. Will this regime be perpetuated and transmitted to future generations or will it be transformed into a new type of transnational-multicultural-post-sovereign regime? Huntington’s Who Are We is a tour de force that cuts to the heart of this question. Needless to say, Huntington was hysterically attacked by nervous “de-nationalized elites” on the left, who don’t want these issues discussed openly.

However, even on the center-right, Huntington’s core argument seems to have gotten lost in Harry Jaffa-style sectarian in-fighting over the extent to which America is a “proposition” nation and the persistence or disappearance of an “Anglo-Protestant culture.” But, surely, it is possible to disagree with Huntington (which, to an extent, I do) on the creed vs. culture aspect of American nationhood; the degree to which American culture is still formed by the “dissenting Anglo-Protestant” tradition; and on the “Clash of Civilizations” thesis, but still, at the same time, recognize the accuracy of his description of the comprehensive assault on our national identity by “de-nationalized” elites.

As a consequence of the center-right’s failure to embrace the essentials of the Huntington critique, conservatives have continued to see a series of often unconnected “social” or “cultural”

issues (racial preferences, politically correct history education, immigration without assimilation, NGOs at the UN Durban conference) or the rantings of academic post-modernists instead of a serious comprehensive ideological offensive directed at the traditional American regime. Thus, when state government officials in Illinois emphatically endorse transnational and “ampersand” citizenship, the center-right does not respond with principled arguments, but with silence or simply dismissive derision. And, as noted earlier, some conservatives, like the editorial board of the *Wall Street Journal*, apparently are not troubled by ampersand citizenship. Ironically, a major problem with last year’s “comprehensive immigration reform” bill was that it was not “comprehensive” enough and did not dismantle (or even discuss cutting back on) the anti-assimilation infrastructure that has accumulated for decades.

**The good news.** Two positive developments could be cited against the backdrop of the advance of transnational progressivism: (1) the American people remain strongly attached to our national identity and democratic nation-state, and (2) there are signs that some counter-elites on the center-right are starting to take the global governance challenge seriously.

In a review attacking Huntington’s *Who Are We* in *The New Yorker*, Louis Menard wrote, “By nearly every statistical measure, and by common consent, Americans are the most patriotic people in the world.” Menard pointed to polls conducted from 1989 through 2004 and cited that around 96 percent of the respondents were “proud” to be Americans. A recent survey by a major polling company found similar results, with 94 percent “proud” to be an American.

Moreover, on issues of transnationalism, Americans come down firmly on the side of affirming national sovereignty, the patriotic assimilation of immigrants, and meeting the threat of radical Islam. No less than 83 percent think of themselves primarily as American citizens, not “global citizens” (12 percent). Two-thirds (66 percent) believe the Constitution should be the “highest legal authority” for Americans if there is a dispute with international law (16 percent chose international law). Fully 60 percent believe it is a “bad thing” that some American companies consider themselves “global” with no particular attachment to the USA. Some 90 percent favored the “Americanization” of immigrants defined as “learning English and embracing American culture and values.” Nearly three quarters, 73 percent, believe that naturalized citizens should “give up all loyalty” to their former homelands. And an overwhelming 86 percent believe that potential immigrants who favor replacing the US Constitution with Islamic law should not be allowed to immigrate to the United States.

In April of 2008 the Federalist Society and the American Enterprise Institute launched the new website, Global Governance Watch, with former UN Ambassador John Bolton giving the keynote address at an inaugural luncheon. Eight years ago, Bolton had organized the AEI conference, “Should We Take Global Governance Seriously.” Bolton, of course, considers this challenge serious, and in the past few years a group of thinkers (dubbed the “New Sovereignists” by law professor Peter Spiro) have emerged who are defending the principle of liberal democratic sovereignty within the nation-state.

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Besides John Bolton these analysts include, among others, Robert Bork, Jeremy Rabkin, David Rivkin, Lee Casey, Jack Goldsmith, Stephen Krasner, Curtis Bradley, Andrew McCarthy, Herbert London, John O’Sullivan, Frank Gaffney, Daniel Pipes, James Kelly, David Horowitz, William Hawkins, Kenneth Anderson (formerly director of Human Rights Watch Arms Division), and liberal Yale Law professor and Bush Administration critic Jed Rubenfeld. At the same time, a new book published by the Manhattan Institute, *The Immigration Solution* authored by Heather MacDonald, Victor Davis Hanson, and Steven Malanga, takes a strong national sovereignty-assimilationist position and assails the diaspora-ampersand model on the issue of mass immigration.\(^{54}\)

### Conclusion

I would like to conclude with the following thoughts: What is needed now is the development on the center-right of a broad conceptual framework that takes seriously the global governance project and its ideology of amorphous progressivism. (See Chart A.) It is important to bear in mind that global governance is a regime challenge. It questions the legitimacy of the liberal democratic nation-state and the core principles of our constitutional sovereignty. It is not democratic, but post-democratic; it is not liberal, but post-liberal. This challenge must be met forthrightly and directly.

As the twenty-first century progresses, the center-right will be involved in several “transcendent” conflicts simultaneously. In the late eighteenth century, as noted earlier, the American center-right (Washington, Adams, Hamilton) waged a two-front ideological struggle against both the forces of anti-democratic reaction and against the radical utopian wing of the Enlightenment emanating from the French Revolution. During the Cold War, the center-right waged a two-front ideological conflict against the communists and against the anti-anti-communists of the Western left. Today and in the years to come, the center-right will have to confront two ideological adversaries, the anti-democrats (radical Islam, perhaps Chinese autocrats and others) and the post-democrats (transnational progressives). Interestingly, in all three cases, the American center-right has found itself in conflict with both anti-Enlightenment and radical Enlightenment thought that opposed (and still opposes) constitutionalism, federalism, national sovereignty, and limited government.

A conceptual critique of global governance will be stronger if built on universal principles and not simply on America’s unique role in the world as the chief provider of international security. The ideological counter-point to global governance progressivism is support for the universal principles of constitutionalism, government by the consent of the governed, and the sovereignty of the liberal democratic nation-state. The United States should champion not only its own sovereignty, but the sovereignty of other liberal-democratic nations as well. This would particularly include those democratic nation-states under pressure from supranational forces, such as Israel, Columbia, and some Central and Eastern European states within the EU. Further, instead of supporting the EU as the EU, we should support those forces within the EU that are seeking to restore authority back to the democratic nation-states. Further still, India, Australia, and Japan, and possibly a future Tory Britain, could also constitute potential supporters of a stronger vision of constitutional democratic sovereignty.

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\(^{54}\) Heather MacDonald, Victor Davis Hanson, Steven Malanga, *The Immigration Solution: A Better Plan Than Today’s* with introduction by Myron Magnet (Chicago, IL: Ivan R Dee, 2007).
Let me conclude this paper by examining how this appeal to the universal principles of constitutional democratic sovereignty would work in practice by looking at the controversy over the International Criminal Court (ICC).

To date, the United States has argued against the International Criminal Court (ICC) primarily on the grounds that the treaty would subject American soldiers to prosecution outside our constitutional system. This is true enough and the US should continue to make this point. However, the US should also argue on universal grounds that the entire ICC process itself is an affront to democratic self-government everywhere. The operating principles of the International Criminal Court are in direct contradiction to the values of democratic self-government.

Under the ICC rules, the soldiers of a constitutional democracy whose nation did not ratify the ICC treaty could nevertheless be tried by ICC judges against the will of that democratic state. For example, India and the Czech Republic are democracies that have not ratified the ICC. If Indian or Czech troops serving in peacekeeping missions in the Congo (which did ratify the ICC) are accused of human rights violations, they could be tried before this court. Since the Congo is a party to the treaty it would not be necessary to have Security Council approval.

Supporters of the ICC claim there is a “safeguard” that the constitutional democracy in question (or any nation) has the first option of investigating the alleged crimes of their own soldiers before the ICC would act. But whether their judicial procedures are deemed sufficient and valid are determined not by the democratic nation-state itself but by the ICC (whose membership includes eight undemocratic authoritarian regimes).

Besides India and Czech Republic, other democracies have refused to ratify the ICC including Israel, Japan, Taiwan, and Chile. Moreover, these democracies do not have veto power in the Security Council and would not be able to protect their troops in particular circumstances. In the final analysis the United States should oppose the ICC not only for its own national interests, but also for the interests of other liberal democratic states and for the principle of constitutional sovereignty and self-government that the charter of the International Criminal Court flagrantly violates.

In summation, the perennial question of politics (who shall govern and in what regime?) remains contested at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The liberal democratic nation-state in general and American constitutionalism in particular will confront what is perhaps the greatest challenge ever to their moral authority and legitimacy from the ideology and forces of global governance. This challenge is “existential” because it challenges the existence of the American constitutional democratic regime. It is formidable because it comes from within Enlightenment thought and Western civilization. It will be the great challenge of the twenty-first century.

Author’s Note: In developing a book proposal on the complicated topic of the ideology of global governance, I found that, in general, liberal publishers wanted me to restrict criticism of some of their sacred cows among the NGOs, and many conservative publishers urged an oversimplified “red-meat” approach. I am grateful that Encounter Books and its publisher Roger Kimball support an open and comprehensive approach to serious subjects.
Chart A. What Is the Best Regime?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEOLOGIES with UNIVERSAL APPEAL</th>
<th>IDEOLOGIES that LACK UNIVERSAL APPEAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democracy <strong>(liberal and democratic)</strong></td>
<td>Radical Islam <strong>(anti-liberal, anti-democratic)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• democratic nation states</td>
<td>• transnational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• international system</td>
<td>• violent; hard challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• based on democratic sovereignty</td>
<td>• based on the ummah (the worldwide Muslim community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Governance <strong>(post-liberal, post-democratic)</strong></td>
<td>Chinese Nationalism <strong>(non-democratic)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational Progressivism</td>
<td>• potential aggressive military challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• transnational system</td>
<td>• economic-military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• based on evolving global norms</td>
<td>• not an ideological challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ideological challenge to liberal democracy</td>
<td>Russian Authoritarianism <strong>(non-democratic)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• non-violent, but coercive</td>
<td>• minor material challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• soft challenge, but existential</td>
<td>Asian Values <strong>(non-democratic)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• minor material challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chavez-Bolivarism <strong>(non-democratic)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communism</td>
<td>• mischief challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fascism</td>
<td>Ethnic Chauvinism <strong>(non-democratic)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• not a challenge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**The Jihad in Plain Sight**

by Andrew C. McCarthy

*The threat posed by radical Islam was with us long before September 11, 2001, but from its hard-power attacks to its soft-power encroachments, we stubbornly refuse to see it.*

Andrew C. McCarthy directs the Center for Law & Counterterrorism at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies. He is the author, most recently, of Willful Blindness: A Memoir of the Jihad (Encounter Books, 2008). Further biographical information can be found in section III.

THE LEFT is in full swoon over . . . restaurant menus.

For well-meaning progressives, there is, of course, no war on terror. The “war”—at least this week’s “war”—is on obesity. Thus, with barely contained glee, the *New York Times* reported on April 17 that a federal judge had upheld the regulation, promulgated by the Health Commissioner of Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s Nanny City, requiring all eateries to post a calorie-count for each menu offering.

Disgruntled restaurateurs had groused that they knew best how to serve their patrons, and that the patrons were adult enough to make their own choices. The Commissioner, though, would have none of it. He urged the court that this battle of the bulge was a crisis. In such straits, he declaimed, nothing is more crucial than information. Judge Richard J. Holwell agreed. Edified about their interests, it seemed to the jurist only natural that “consumers will use the information to select lower-calorie meals,” and that “these choices will lead to a lower incidence of obesity.”

Alas, information turns out to be crucial only in a manufactured crisis. When it comes to the real thing, like the jihadist threat to our lives and our way of life, we’d prefer not to know.

That is the clear message from our diplomatic progressives at Foggy Bottom. A week after Judge Holwell issued his calorie-count decision from the very courthouse that served throughout the nineties as frontline in what then passed for the war against jihadism, the Bush administration circulated guidance, long touted by the State Department and other pockets of Islamophilia, that would purge “jihadism”—the word, the very thought—from our public lexicon.

The Surgeon General believes smokers need a neon warning of the pluperfectly obvious. State, however, does not think jihadism is hazardous to your health. To the contrary, our top policy makers—the officials who regard Yasser Arafat’s legacy, Fatah, as an indispensable partner for peace; who’ve just responded to the news that North Korea is helping Syria build nukes by . . . removing Kim Jong Il’s terror regime from the perennial list of State Sponsors of Terrorism—have determined that jihad, like Islam itself, is a public good and therefore (try to follow this) we should just stop talking about it.

We Western non-Muslims, you see, must school the world’s 1.4 billion adherents of Islam: The “real” jihad is an internal struggle for personal betterment, a key tenet of the Religion of Peace—or the “religion of love and peace,” the iteration preferred by Secretary of State Condoleezza
Rice at the annual Iftaar dinner by which official Washington now marks the end of the “holy month of Ramadan.” Besides, administration officials helpfully explained to the Associated Press, referring to a terrorist as a “jihadist,” an “Islamo-fascist,” or a “mujahideen” “may actually boost support for radicals among Arab and Muslim audiences by giving them a veneer of religious credibility or by causing offense to moderates.”

Of course, if jihad truly were a sublime summons to become a better person, it is not entirely clear how plowing jumbo jets into skyscrapers and mass-murdering civilians could achieve the sheen of the sacerdotal in the eyes of the faithful—droves of whom took to the streets in celebration of the 9/11 atrocities. Nor is it clear why calling a terrorist a jihadist would cause angst for “moderates” … unless they are pretending that jihad is something other than what it is.

And they are. In so doing, moreover, they enjoy enormous support from special pleaders strategically dotted throughout government, to say nothing of their academy and media allies. Yet, as I’ve recently documented in Willful Blindness: A Memoir of the Jihad (Encounter Books 2008), for all its energetic earnestness, the campaign to refurbish jihad (and to crush dissenters) is persuasive only in the ivory towers of elites desperate to be persuaded. Down here on Planet Earth, it is futile.

The Muslim world is not populated by Western intellectuals hard-wired to nuance white into black by legalistic arcana and historical massaging. In large swaths of the ummah, there is rampant illiteracy, education consists of myopic focus on the Qur’an, and intolerance (especially anti-Semitism) is so rudimentary a part of everyday life that any jihad rooted in “good works in society” would not conceivably comport with Western liberals’ understanding of that term.

Progressive, moderate Muslims would doubtless like the concept of jihad to vanish. They are in a battle for authenticity with fundamentalists, and jihad would be far easier to omit than it is to explain away. Indeed, if anyone should resort to a purge of jihad, better it be Muslim reformers repealing the concept than U.S. Pollyannas striking the word. To persist in conceding jihad’s centrality as an Islamic obligation while distorting its essence can only fatally damage the reformers’ credibility and, hence, the entire reform effort.

Jihad, however, is very unlikely to go away. There are too many Muslims who believe in it, and there would be no Muslim world without it. When it comes to jihad, authenticity is simplicity, and, simply stated, jihad is and has always been about forcible conquest. As explicated by the West’s pre-eminent scholar of Islam, Princeton’s Bernard Lewis:

Conventionally translated “holy war” [jihad] has the literal meaning of striving, more specifically, in the Qur’anic phrase “striving in the path of God” (fi sabil Allah). Some Muslim theologians, particularly in more modern times, have interpreted the duty of “striving in the path of God” in a spiritual and moral sense. The overwhelming majority of early authorities, however, citing relevant passages in the Qur’an and in the tradition, discuss jihad in military terms.¹

In fact, the erudite former Muslim of the nom de plume Ibn Warraq points out that even

It is no wonder that this should be so. The Qur’an repeatedly enjoins Muslims to fight and slay non-Muslims. “O ye who believe,” commands Sura 9:123, “fight those of the disbelievers who are near you, and let them find harshness in you, and know that Allah is with those who keep their duty unto him.” It is difficult to spin that as a call to spiritual self-improvement. As it is, to take another example, with Sura 9:5: “But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them. And seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war),” relenting only if they have accepted Islam. The hadith, lengthy volumes recording the words and traditions of the prophet, are even more explicit, as in Mohammed’s teaching that “[a] single endeavor (of fighting) in Allah’s cause in the afternoon or in the forenoon is better than all the world and whatever is in it.”

It is an unrelenting fact that Islamic doctrine is the catalyst for the cataracts of Islamic terror raining down on the globe. This does not mean all or most Muslims are or will become terrorists—though some percentage will, and a far larger number will sympathize with fundamentalist goals if not terrorist methods. Nor does it mean that Islamic doctrine is not rife with many virtuous, peaceable elements—though many of these, their resonance with Western intellectuals notwithstanding, trace to the initial, Meccan phase of the Mohammed’s ministry, borrowing heavily from other religious traditions as the prophet sought to entice conversion to the new creed; they were later superseded by the bellicose scriptures of the Medinan period, when the warrior prophet spread Islam by the sword.

What it does mean, though, is that the mortal threat we face is jihadism, which is caused by Islam—no less than obesity is caused by high calorie counts, lung cancer by smoking cigarettes, birth defects by imbibing alcohol during pregnancy, and countless lesser risks to our well-being by pathologies our benevolent bureaucrats compel us to confront remorselessly (unconcerned that they might be misconstrued as crusading to rid the world of food, tobacco, alcohol, etc.).

No less do we require accurate information about jihadism to arrive at sound public policy.

Because discussions of this topic are so infected by timidity, passion and no small amount of demagoguery, it bears emphasis that there is no single Islam. In marked contrast to most Judeo-Christian traditions regnant in the West, Islam is bereft of a regimented clerical hierarchy, councils, or synods to provide standards of orthodoxy. Though the Sunni/Shiite divide draws most of our attention, there is in fact a wide variety of Islamic sects, to say nothing of the prevalent phenomenon—quite familiar to Westerners—of adherents who are at best culturally or nominally Muslim but care little about theology and its demands. That said, however, it is whistling past the graveyard to ignore or minimize the virulent strain of fundamentalist Islam that galvanizes jihadism. And it is positively fatuous to suggest that it stems from what

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3 See also Andrew Bostom (editor), The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims (Prometheus Books, 2005), pp. 125-26 (collecting Qur’anic verses commanding warfare).
Americans say about it. Witness, to take just one recent example, the rioting jihadists in Indonesia who stoned and burned a . . . mosque—their anger provoked by another sect of Muslims, the Ahmadi, who are deemed heretics because they don’t accept Mohammed as the final prophet or jihad as a divine injunction.

It is simply not the case that a mere nineteen terrorists hijacked a peaceful religion, as President Bush hastened to assure Americans while smoke billowed from the Pentagon and lifeless bodies were pulled from the rubble of the Twin Towers. It is not the case, as the Clinton administration and its Justice Department were equally emphatic in mollifying the public when the World Trade Center was first bombed in 1993, that a rag-tag handful of miscreants had “perverted” the “true Islam.” The species of Islam that has spurred these and other attacks has a long and distinguished pedigree. It is fourteen centuries old. It is rooted in the literal commands of the scriptures. It is a project that has engaged high intellects, and a belief system that continues to win the allegiance of the educated and the illiterate, rich and poor, young and old, princes and peons—cutting even across the Sunni/Shiite divide. It is not the majority construction of the faith, but it is the creed of a sizable minority—and a dynamic one, underwritten by Saudi billions and catapulted by Khomeini’s revolution. Even if it were representative of only twenty percent of the Muslim world (an estimate which probably sells it short), that would translate into over a quarter-billion people.

For the past thirty years, Omar Abdel Rahman, the infamous “Blind Sheikh,” has been among the most consequential exponents of this doctrinal interpretation. It is he who spurred the murderers of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981, the WTC bombers in 1993, and, according to al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, the 9/11 suicide hijackers. He is no perverter of scripture. To the contrary, he is better understood as a party-spoiling resister of modernization and anti-literalism. A doctor of Islamic jurisprudence graduated from al-Azhar University in Egypt, the seat of Sunni learning, his renown as a master of doctrine accounts for his influence.

Jihad, he instructed hordes of admirers, is “the peak of a full [embrace] of Islam…. There is no work that equals” it. He recounted that, for over a millennium, jihad had unambiguously and unapologetically called for the aggressive application of brute force against oppressors and infidels. It “means fighting the enemies.” Jihad was not about internal betterment, other efforts at peaceful achievement. It was not to be accomplished by such quotidian practices as prayer, mosque attendance, alms giving, or living a virtuous life. At such suggestions, he scoffed:

Jihad is jihad…. There is no such thing as commerce, industry and science in jihad. This is calling things . . . other than by [their] own name. If God . . . says, “Do jihad,” it means do jihad with the sword, with the cannon, with the grenades and with the missile. This is jihad. Jihad against God’s enemies for God’s cause and his word.

Echoing his most profound influences—fourteenth century scholar Ibn Taymiyyah, the Muslim Brotherhood’s intellectual engine Sayyid Qutb, and Ayatollah Khomeini (a Shiite whose triumph in Iran Abdel Rahman hoped to replicate in Egypt and beyond)—the Blind Sheikh exhorted followers that it was their duty to wage jihad against any regime that did not govern by Allah’s law, Shariah. In the short term, this meant in Islamic countries; in the long term, because Islam aspires to global hegemony, it meant throughout the world.

The command is straight out of Qutb, who rejected as an absurdity that Islam’s core mission could ever be achieved by individual efforts at personal betterment or the religion’s intellectual
force. Supplanting man’s dominion with God’s could never “be achieved only through preaching,” he warned, because incumbent regimes were plainly “not going to give up their power merely through preaching.”\(^5\) Expelling them was the mission of jihad, highlighting its centrality as a core Islamic obligation. The purpose of jihad is “to wipe out tyranny and to introduce freedom to mankind.” Whenever Islam is obstructed by “the political system of the state, the socio-economic system based on races and classes, and behind all these, the military power of the government,” the religion, according to Qutb, “has no recourse but to remove them by force so that when [Islam] is addressed to peoples’ hearts and minds they are free to accept or reject it with an open mind.” All such impediments are deemed to be persecution, implicating the Qur’anic injunction (in Sura 2:190-91) to “Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you . . . and slay them whenever you catch them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter.”

There were blazing signs that Abdel Rahman’s acolytes were preparing just such an offensive in the years before radical Islam declared war by bombing the World Trade Center in 1993. We refused to see them. The FBI ended surveillance in 1989 despite witnessing the nascent jihad army conducting paramilitary training. The CIA allowed its lavish aid for the Afghan mujahideen to flow to the most anti-American elements of the anti-Soviet jihad—elements that promptly turned on the United States once the Russians were defeated. A brazen 1990 killing by Abdel Rahman henchman Sayyid Nosair, the murder of Jewish Defense League founder Meir Kahane, was treated as the work of a lone, crazed gunman despite a wealth of seized evidence proving Nosair was part of a jihadist network which had far greater ambitions.

Simply stated, we did not take the enemy and his motivations seriously before he announced himself. We did not react seriously in attempting before 9/11 to prosecute him into submission while he attacked again and again. And we are not serious now if we believe we can democratize him into submission—a fact that should be palpable given his penchant for exploiting democratic freedoms in furthering the jihad, and given that lack of democracy is not what drives him to act. His motivation is what he takes to be the divine summons to jihad.

The jihadist project—and it most certainly is a jihadist project—is to remove all barriers to the establishment of Shariah (the prerequisite for Islam’s dominance). Those barriers are not merely military but political, cultural, spiritual and attitudinal. Force is used when necessary, but the theory of terrorism—and, while barbarous, terrorism is a rational method, not a form of madness—is that force should rarely be necessary. The terrorist defies our settled assumptions about civilized behavior. His actions, quite intentionally, are wanton and depraved, the better to extort us into capitulation through occasional shock and awe rather than a regular, predictable pattern of attacks. Though his self-perception is hallow, the terrorist’s strategy is not in principle different from the mafia loanshark, who generally collects his usurious payments without incident because the debtor well knows the wages of resistance.

The strategy is having the desired effect. The administration did not arrive at the language purge initiative on its own. It was done in consultation with what our government regards as influential Islamic organizations, such as the Muslim Public Affairs Council. MPAC greeted AP’s report of the new language code with a chest-beating press release, braying that its “regular … engagement with government agencies including [the Department of Homeland Security,]”

\(^5\) Quotes from Sayyid Qutb are from his book *Milestones* (Ch. 4, “Jihaaad in the Cause of God”) (Mother Mosque Foundation, Cedar Rapids, IA, 1993), pp. 57-63.
coupled with its long advocacy of a “nuanced approach” that stresses “the importance of decoupling Islam with [sic] terrorism,” had been instrumental. Naturally, it omitted its equally long history of lobbying for government recognition of the Hamas and Hezbollah terrorist organizations, and statements by some of its leading figures endorsing terrorist bombings as legitimate “resistance” against Israel.

Meanwhile, the State Department having successfully pushed for an outright reversal of the American policy against direct negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Iran (as it pursues nuclear weapons and supplies the jihadists fighting American soldiers in Iraq), is known to be considering negotiations with the Muslim Brotherhood—the font of modern jihadist thought whose credo remains, “Allah is our objective. The Prophet is our leader. Qur’an is our law. Jihad is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.” This should come as little surprise, one supposes, given the gushing praise State’s director for public diplomacy, Alberto Fernandez, publicly offered in 2006 for Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi, the Brotherhood’s “spiritual leader” who, when not inciting the infamous riots over a Dutch newspaper’s cartoon depictions of Mohammed, can be heard urging his audiences to continue the fight “in Palestine, in Iraq, in Lebanon, and in every country that has been conquered by foreigners.”

Administration officials frequently point to the powerful Ayatollah Ali Sistani as our key ally in Iraq, a true “moderate” and friend of democracy. Sistani, of course, does not meet personally with American officials. As his website elaborated, interface with non-Muslims is to be avoided since they must be considered in the same category as urine, feces, semen, dead bodies, blood, dogs, pigs, alcoholic liquors, and “the sweat of an animal who persistently eats [unclean things].” Even after the State Department midwifed Iraq’s new “democratic” constitution—which, in stark contrast to Western democratic traditions, establishes Islam as the state religion and enshrines Shariah as a fundamental component of law—Sistani issued a fatwa calling for homosexuals (“sodomites,” as he put it) to be “killed in the worst manner possible.” In Afghanistan, meantime, where State helped draft a very similar constitution, a man was subjected to a death-penalty trial for converting from Islam to Christianity, apostasy being a capital offense under Muslim law. He was spared due only to international outcry, though, it should go without saying, survival required his relocation to a country where the religion of peace is not predominant.

The list of horrors could go on all day. State has issued a grant to fund a “citizen exchange” program coordinated by the Islamic Society of North America—notwithstanding that the Justice Department named ISNA as an unindicted co-conspirator in its prosecution of an Islamic charity, the Holy Land Foundation, for funding Hamas. Another designated unindicted co-conspirator in the case, the Council for American-Islamic Relations, which was begun by a Hamas spin-off and boasts several members who’ve been convicted or deported due to terrorism investigations, is frequently consulted by government agencies. They now require investigators to undergo cultural sensitivity training. So even as CAIR counsels Muslims on how to avoid cooperation with the FBI, and even as it protests against (and brings lawsuits to impede) virtually every sensible

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national security measure enacted since 9/11, it is permitted to teach our agents that jihad, the real jihad, is the internal quest for self-improvement.

The clear message is that resistance is futile. That, at least, is what the Pentagon sought to convey to Stephen Coughlin, a reserve officer and distinguished lecturer who was among the government’s leading scholars of Islam. Coughlin was threatened with non-renewal of his Defense Department contract job for refusing to “soften” his views on jihad and the nexus between Islamic doctrine and Islamic terror. They had proved offensive to one Hesham Islam, a top aide to Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England. Mr. Islam, a navy veteran who was born in Egypt, has reportedly opened Pentagon doors for the Muslim Brotherhood and ISNA. Though not a theology expert, his 1992 master’s thesis in national-security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate school was largely devoted to lambasting Israel and the influence of American Jews on U.S. politics.\(^8\) In today’s ship of American state, the Hesham Islams are at the wheel while the Stephen Coughlins walk the plank.

The purge mentality’s infiltration of the U.S. government is complemented by lawfare suppression tactics beyond our borders. Most illustrative is “libel tourism,” the practice by which persons or entities identified as having abetted Muslim terrorists (especially by funding them) trawl the planet for respected legal systems (particularly, the British courts) which provide less protection for journalists than America’s First Amendment jurisprudence. The strategy of suing U.S. journalists in foreign courts has proved especially effective for Saudi Sheikh Khalid bin Mahfouz, who has managed to block or impede publication of several exposés despite having been cited as an al Qaeda underwriter in congressional testimony by Richard Clarke, former Clinton administration counterterrorism czar.

In a shrinking world, foreign libel judgments have a grievous in terrorem effect not only on journalists but on potential publishers and patrons of their work. All must now consider legal liability, to say nothing of the ruinous costs of litigation, in assessing works that address the patent links between Islam and terror. Consequently, recent legislation in New York as well as a proposed federal law to combat libel tourism are welcome developments. They target the very abuses from which the right to free-expression, so fundamental to informed self-governance, was intended to liberate our society. Those abuses are especially foreboding for a publisher such as Encounter Books, which has made a purpose of enriching the public discourse regarding the salient national security challenge of our age—recently publishing not only my own book, but such critical works as Melanie Phillips’ *Londonistan*, Bruce Thornton’s *Decline and Fall*, David Price Jones’ *Betrayal*, Caroline Fourest’s *Brother Tariq*, and Herb London’s *America’s Secular Challenge*, to name just a few.

Could the truth set us free? Islamic fundamentalists certainly think so. In late March, the invaluable Middle East media monitor, MEMRI, reported on a telling interview given by a top

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cleric, Muhammad al-Munajid, to Saudi television.\(^9\) Free speech, he explained, was intolerable because it could lead to free belief:

The problem is that they want to open a debate on whether Islam is true or not, and on whether Judaism and Christianity are false or not. In other words, they want to open up everything for debate. Now they want to open up all issues for debate. That’s it. It begins with freedom of thought, it continues with freedom of speech, and it ends up with freedom of belief.

Why the next thing you know, he groused, they’ll be saying, “there are loopholes in Islam, or that Christianity is the truth.” Who knows, they might even say,

anyone is entitled to believe in whatever he wants…. If you want to become an apostate, go ahead. Leave Islam and join Buddhism? No problem. That’s what freedom of belief is all about. They want freedom of everything. What they want is very dangerous.

Indeed. We are confronted by a tyrannical suppression culture that knows exactly what’s at stake. That’s why it’s fighting so hard. How tragic that the liberty culture, the one founded on the conceit that free expression is truth’s crucible, has lost its way.

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II. Edited Transcript

**PROGRAM AND PANELS**

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This transcript was prepared from an audio recording and edited by Krista Shaffer. To request further information on this event or the Bradley Center, please visit our web site, contact Hudson Institute at (202) 974-2424, or send an e-mail to Krista Shaffer at Krista@hudson.org.
Introductory Remarks by William Schambra

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: My name is Bill Schambra, and I’m director of the Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal at Hudson Institute here in Washington. It’s my privilege to welcome you to the 4th annual Bradley Symposium, “Encounter at 10: The Power of Ideas.” As are many of the groups represented here today, the Bradley Center is a proud grantee of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation located in Milwaukee. We’re honored to have with us today so many of the foundation’s board members and spouses, as well as staff members. We’re particularly grateful to foundation vice president Dan Schmidt for his advice and assistance over the past several months. As ever, of course, the real work for this symposium was done by Hudson research fellow Krista Shaffer. Thank you so much, Krista, for all the work you’ve done. We join in celebrating the winners of the 2008 Bradley Prize, Gary Becker; Victor Davis Hanson, who will be on our first panel this morning; Alan Kors; and Robert Woodson, who has long been a friend of the Bradley Center.

At the end of last year’s Bradley Symposium, we took note of the formation of the Bradley Project on America’s National Identity under the wing of Anne Neal’s American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). The project aimed to examine some of the questions we raised at that symposium—questions about who we are as a nation and a people, confronting ideas and forces that seem to be pulling us apart. Since then, that question has if anything increased in salience as our presidential candidates begin to discuss in earnest what draws us toward and what drives us away from each other as American citizens. This week, the Bradley Project issued its report entitled, *E Pluribus Unum*. I hope you all will consider carefully its a diagnosis and its recommendations.

For this year’s Bradley Symposium, it’s a particular honor to have as co-host Encounter Books, a publishing house that has also been a beneficiary of generous support from the Bradley Foundation—and that is now celebrating ten years of operation. Roger Kimball, who directs Encounter today, is a one-man illustration of the power of ideas and the various ways they can be placed into the public debate. He’s not only a publisher, but also a prolific writer. He blogs almost daily at “Roger’s Rules” on the web site Pajamasmedia.com (http://pajamasmedia.com/rogerkimball/). His books include *The Rape of the Masters: How Political Correctness Sabotages Art*, *The Long March: How the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s Changed America*, and *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted Our Higher Education*. How does he do it all? He will also be our master of ceremonies for the day, and it’s now my honor to turn matters over to Roger Kimball.

(Applause.)

Introductory Remarks by Roger Kimball
“Publishing and the Importance of Ideas”

ROGER KIMBALL: Thank you so much, Bill. It’s a great pleasure to be here. My gratitude also goes to the Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal for organizing this. I must say

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1 For more information on the Bradley Project, or to view a copy of the report online, please visit the project’s web site at http://www.bradleyproject.org/, or visit the Bradley Foundation’s web site at http://www.bradleyfdn.org.
that Krista Shaffer has done a fantastic job, and I know from doleful experience how difficult it can be to get these conferences put together. So I’m very grateful.

Bill just mentioned the famous phrase *e pluribus unum*, and just as a kind of indication of what we’re up against, I think of Al Gore’s translation of that phrase, “out of one, many.” (Laughter.) I think he wasn’t paying attention in Latin class.

I just want to make a few remarks before I don my role as *immoderator* of today’s festivities. The work of the Spanish-born, American philosopher George Santayana is not as well known today as it should be, in my opinion. But nearly everybody knows Santayana’s observation that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. As the publisher of Encounter Books, a press concern with ideas and public policy, I often think of Santayana’s admonition. It always inspires a certain fear and trembling, especially when I remember it in conjunction with that old Chinese curse, “May you live in interesting times.”

We certainly do live in interesting times. It is an age in which faster is synonymous with better. When yesterday seems like ancient history and when empty hortatory words like change, audacity, and innovation are widely regarded as beneficent talisman of universal happiness—a happiness that never actually arrives, of course, but—so we are told anyway—is always just around the corner. At such a time simply remembering where we have been as a culture is of paramount importance. And it is worth pausing to note that a crucial part of remembering is facing up to reality—which means, among other things, having the courage to call things by their real names. One of the most corrosive legacies of political correctness is the culture of intellectual and moral euphemism that results from it. And it is part of Encounter’s mission to resuscitate those essential cultural memory markers and speak frankly about the constellation of ideas that lead and mislead contemporary public life.

I’m deeply pleased, on the occasion Encounter’s tenth anniversary year, to have this opportunity to reflect briefly on these perennial tasks, and introduce this distinguished panel of present and forthcoming Encounter authors. Let me start with a few questions: Who are we—we Americans of the twenty-first century? How did we arrive at our present prosperity? What sacrifices were made by our forbearers to bequeath us the richest, freest, physically most secure society in history? What good ideas did the founders of this republic promulgate to our eventual benefit? And equally important, what bad ideas did they shackle, tame, and inoculate us against?

It is worth stressing the bad ideas. Santayana’s observation about the dangers of forgetting the past is fearsome not only because of the good things we might miss should forgetting progress and metastasize. It is fearsome also because of the many bad things we thought we had vanquished only to see them striding buoyantly over the horizon once more. More than two decades ago, Daniel Patrick Moynihan ruefully noted that Republicans had become “The Party of Ideas.” And all though it is not universally acknowledged, especially perhaps in this city, he was right about that, as recent American political history amply attests on issues from welfare and taxes to free markets and national security. And this fact tempts me to indulge in an extended parenthesis. Last week *The New Yorker* magazine ran a long piece by George Packer about the alleged bankruptcy of conservative ideas. The cover of the newsstand edition even featured a headline wondering whether the GOP were, brain-dead—a question which prompted me to ask, compared to whom? (Laughter.)

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Now you might wonder why Mr. Packer identifies the GOP with conservatives. It seems pretty obvious that they are distinct creatures. But distinctions are not high on Mr. Packer’s list of accomplishments in this article, which I found notably unsatisfactory in ways large and small. On the large side of the ledger, he seemed to mistake the triumph of intellectual sobriety with intellectual weakness. Compared with a situation of just a few decades ago, conservative ideas enjoy an enormous influence in our society nearly everywhere that doesn’t begin with the words “The University of.” On economic matters, for example, it is widely understood that low taxes and free-markets conduce to the production of wealth, and then what Friedrich Hayek called the “Extended Order of Cooperation”—that is capitalism—was enormously more successful at ensuring prosperity and underwriting liberty than any of the more sentimental, socialistic alternatives on offer.

It is part of the responsible exercise of intelligence to recognize the difference between ideas that work and those which merely produce a species of moral intoxication. Mr. Packer points to no left-wing liberal ideas that compete with the conservative ideas that he disparages. He merely assumes that because conservatives are not beating the gong called “change,” they’ve run out of ideas. The truth is, conservative ideas are regnant, and those who support them understand the wisdom of Lord Falkland’s observation that when it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change.

There is much more that I might say about Mr. Packer’s article but I’ll confine myself here to noting his description of The New Criterion as a “dour” publication—a characterization which suggests either that Mr. Packer doesn’t know what the word “dour” means, that he’s never read The New Criterion, or that he was engaged in this article primarily in a species of ideological combat masquerading his journalism. And these options, I should note, are not mutually exclusive. (Laughter.)

Let me return to Senator Moynihan. I wonder what he would say, were he with us today, about conservative ideas. It was the philosopher Samuel Goldwyn, I believe, who spoke of feeling as if it were “déjà vu all over again.” I know what he means. Ideas that have been tried and found wanting, tried and found to be disastrous—the totalitarian temptation in all of its many guises, the multifarious utopian schemes for universal beatitude, efforts to curtail freedom in the name of an abstract republican virtue—all of these ideas were thoroughly discredited only yesterday. But, like some strange villain out of the science-fiction movie, they have suddenly changed shaped and are poised to attack again. We have yet to learn, even now, even at this late date, that promises of liberation often turn out to conceal new enchantments and novel forms of bondage.

Consider, to take just one issue that Encounter has weighed in on and that we will be discussing more this morning, the various efforts to deconstruct American identity and replace it with a multicultural rainbow or supranational bureaucracy. Such efforts have made astonishing inroads in the last few decades, and especially in the last few years. As the political philosopher Samuel Huntington has noted, the attack on American identity has counterparts elsewhere in the West, wherever the doctrine of multiculturalism has trumped the cause of national identity. The European Union, whose unelected leaders are as dedicated to multicultural shibboleth as they are to rule by top-down, anti-democratic bureaucracy is a case in point. But the United States, the most powerful nation-state, is also the most attractive target for deconstruction.
It is a curious, not to say alarming, development. It corroborates James Burnham’s observation that liberalism permits Western civilization to be reconciled to dissolution. For what we have witnessed with the triumph of multiculturalism is a kind of hypertrophy, or perversion, of liberalism as its core doctrines are pursued to the point of caricature. As the Australian philosopher David Stove pointed out, we in the West set ourselves to achieve a society which will be maximally tolerant. But that resolve not only gives maximum scope to the activities of those who have set themselves to achieve the maximally intolerant society. It also, and more importantly, paralyzes our own powers of resistance to them. Freedom, diversity, equality, tolerance, even democracy—how many definitive liberal virtues have been redacted into their opposites by the imperatives of political correctness? If a commitment to diversity mandates bilingual education, then we must institute bilingual education even if it results in the cultural disenfranchisement of those it was meant to benefit. The passion for equality demands affirmative action even though the process of affirmative action depends upon treating people very unequally.

Since September 11, 2001 these issues have taken on, I think, a new urgency. The murderous fanatics who destroyed the World Trade Center, smashed into the Pentagon and killed thousands of innocent civilians took the issue of multiculturalism out of the fetid atmosphere of the graduate seminar and into the streets. Or rather, they dramatized the fact that multiculturalism was never merely an academic matter. In a sense, the actions of those terrorists were less an attack on the United States than part of what Benjamin Netanyahu called “a war to reverse the triumph of the West.”

We are still very far from being in a position to assess the full significance of September 11th for the simple reason that those detonations that began that day continue to reverberate. A battle of wills, a contest of values, indeed a war of ideas was initiated, or at least openly acknowledged, on September 11th. It is much too early to predict the course of that conflict. Indeed, September 11th precipitated a crisis, the end of which we cannot see.

Part of the task that faces us now is to acknowledge the depth of barbarism that challenges the survival of culture. And part of that acknowledgement lies in reaffirming the core values that are under attack. That reaffirmation is another part of Encounter’s mission. Ultimately, victory in the conflict that besieges us will be determined not by smart weapons, but by smart heads. That is to say, the conflict is not so much—or not only—a military conflict as a conflict of world views, a conflict of ideas. And that is where institutions like Encounter Books can play an important role. My point is that when we speak of publishing and the power of ideas, we need to give at least as much attention to criticizing seductive bad ideas as we do to promulgating the good ones. Indeed, because vital good ideas that impinge upon politics and social life tend to be elaborations of relatively simple home-truths, the critical project of exposing bad ideas is often tantamount to revealing the good ideas that the bad ones had obscured or perverted.

We have, as I say, assembled a distinguished panel of present and forthcoming Encounter authors to discuss some of these issues—the issues that face Western society, and that will determine the course of our civilization. I’d like to begin our program by turning to the classicist and military historian Victor Davis Hanson, who will deliver the first paper. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)
VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: Thank you very much. I am very happy to be here and honored to be a part of this panel.

I was asked to speak about cultural amnesia and the wages of not knowing who we are and who our ancestors were. We should remember that in the very beginning of the Western liberal experience—that is, the ancient Greek city state and the Roman republic—there was a sense that if free citizens did not know who the people in their immediate and distant past were, then they could not really go forward themselves or pass on that legacy to their children. One thinks in this regard of the famous opening remarks of Pericles in the second book of Thucydides’ history; he said, “I shall start with my ancestors.” Or one thinks of the AD second-century biographer Plutarch, who wrote *Illustrious Lives*—that’s how it translates in English—of notable Greeks and Romans. The book’s point was to provide young Roman citizens with pillars of emulation.

What was behind this idea, whether it manifested itself in literature or in art or in collective monuments and memories, graphic, artistic, in stone, or on papyrus? What was the point of this? I would sum it up briefly as, the Greeks and Romans believe that all of us are a part of a great chain of culture and civilization; that our link in the here and now is not predicated on what we have done, but what our ancestors have done; we have a responsibility to them to pass on something better then what we inherited to our children; and if we were to not do that, if we were to indulge in our appetites, then this fragile chain—I use “chain,” but it is the wrong metaphor, because it is very fragile—would break and all of what people, if I could use a modern illustration, who were in crosses at Normandy Beach had done would be squandered by us, and we would not be able to transmit the affluence and prosperity that we were bequeathed.

And I think, as we all know, we are worried about our cultural amnesia. We’re worried that our youth today are not aware not only of the dates and facts and people of the past, but of how dependent we are upon their sacrifices. We could talk for quite a long time about the wages of multiculturalism, or utopian pacifism, or moral equivalence in our schools and universities, but I would like just to point out four or five trends in the writing of history, in the looking back at the past, that seem to me have done a lot of damage and impair our appreciation for our ancestors.

The first is what I would call the drudgery of the past. The enemy of liberalism at any time is drudgery, so today when we write history as melodrama—that is, we go back and pick and choose heroes and villains, often based on their race or class or gender, with the idea that by doing so we win applause or praise in the present for our apparent liberality—what we are forgetting is the physical conditions of the past. If somebody is on the frontier and they are less sensitive to Native Americans, we forget that to cook a meal or to clean a home might take four or five hours. We forget that if you were not entirely “equal”—“you” being a man or a woman—in a frontier hut, it might be predicated on the fact that to have two children or three children survive you and then perpetuate your culture, you might—as was true of civilizations until the
nineteenth century—have to be pregnant ten or twelve or thirteen or fifteen or twenty times. I am thinking in this regard of my grandmother, who was one of twelve children; to have twelve children her mother was pregnant nineteen times, and out of those nineteen pregnancies twelve came to full term, and out of those twelve, four died. For me to suggest that I would hear my grandmother use the word “Indian” rather than “Native American” is absolutely absurd. In their way of thinking—“their” meaning almost everybody up until the present generation—it was simply a matter of survival one more day. When we go back and we apply these standards of the utopian future or indeed the prosperous present, and we condemn them for being illiberal, it’s the worst sort of hypocrisy.

There is a recent book out by Nicholson Baker about how we committed something tantamount to a war crime by bombing Hamburg. Forget the decision, whether it was tactically, strategically or morally sound. Does anybody in this room realize what it was like to get into a rickety B-17, fly nine hours, deal with somebody like the Wehrmacht in the sky with a Focke-Wulf 190, fly back, and do that twenty-five to thirty hours a week? Part of our inability to appreciate the past is, we have no idea of the physical conditions—the diseases, the problems with food, the dangers from security—that our ancestors not only overcame, but overcame in such a way to pass on this culture to ourselves.

There is another problem with the present generation’s inappreciation of past, or “cultural amnesia,” as many of us have termed it, and that is the absence of any notion of magnitude. We look back in the past and almost all the events were of equal merit. I think all of us appreciate the work of Sojourner Truth or Harriet Tubman in helping slaves escape the Confederacy, but by any notion of what destroyed the notion of slavery, it was the work of two men, largely, as well as Lincoln; the two men were William Tecumseh Sherman and Ulysses S. Grant. Those names are almost unknown to today’s youth. Why? Because they don’t resonate in the present in terms of a class or a gender or a racial connotation. And yet by any fair measure there is a reason why today there is a General Sherman tree and General Grant tree. Our ancestors understood that had those two men not done what they had done, we wouldn’t have inherited a unified United States today.

I have been very lucky to have three children who were all history majors. They have all now graduated from college. One of the games I used to play with them was to say, before they took a class in World War II history or Civil War history, that when the class was over I was going to ask them a simple question. For the Civil War, the question was, what is the Battle of Shiloh? And when the course was over and I asked the question, they could tell me everything about women’s roles in the pre-plantation South but almost nothing about the Battle of Shiloh. In the case of World War II, I reserved the question, what was Okinawa and the 50,000 Americans who were killed, wounded or lost there? or what was it like to go into Iwo Jima? In almost every case they could not tell me, but they volunteered very rapidly information about three topics: the Japanese internment, the amazing career of Rosie the Riveter, and the war crime of dropping the bomb on Hiroshima. It’s not that those are not profound incidents in the nature of World War II, but they have no notion of magnitude—of the twenty million Russians civilians who died on the Eastern Front; of the complete destruction of the German Army Group “B” at the Falaise Gap; or what the Americans suffered—80,000 dead or wounded—in the hedge rows after the successful D-Day landing.

So part of our problem is that when we don’t examine the past, we lose all sense of what was important, and you can see the ramifications for the present. We ourselves do not think and do
not know what is important in the present and what is not. So we can say something like, “Iraq is the worst blunder in our history” because we lost 4,000—in, I think, a noble sacrifice—because we have nothing to calibrate that with. Nobody knows what the Meuse-Argonne (World War I) was. Nobody knows what Belleau Wood (World War I) was. Nobody knows what Chancellorsville (Civil War) was. That is the second problem with the inappreciation of the past, the notion that we can’t calibrate what is important and what is less so.

There is another, third train that’s very disturbing, and it is an element of our cultural amnesia—and that’s the notion of what I guess I would call utopianism, the notion that in the past there were always good and bad choices, and we can fault our ancestors for making a wrong choice. But in fact if you were an American and you were trying to stop the Wehrmacht in 1941, and most of Europe was overrun and on every level of technology you were at a disadvantage, whether we are talking about German Mausers, 88mm artillery, or fighter planes, or tanks, especially. What would you do if you didn’t have the resources and you had to stop that? You might find that an alliance with Soviet Russia, which after all had killed twenty million people, was of some advantage to you—and the Soviet Union did kill two out of every three soldiers of the German Army.

But the point is, you would not go back and say, the Soviet Union at that point was not perfect, and therefore it didn’t do good for us. These are terrible choices that are involved in history. We will have an inability to grasp the dilemma that our ancestors were faced with if we often hear that the people who came west were exploiters of the wild, and we never hear that there were two to three Native Americans per hundred square miles in the West, while there was the opposite situation in Ireland or in Russia at the time—there may have been a hundred or two hundred individuals per square mile. Any time history gives you that dilemma—where people have the ability to come to a place that is quite empty and leave a place where they were quite crowded and sick—history doesn’t say, don’t do that—it’s not moral. That’s a choice that happens. People in Ireland did not want to come here and kill people; they found that they were either going to starve, or they were going to have a chance at a different life.

We can really see, again, the wages of that when we look at this present war. For example, we are told that, gosh, we empowered Iran or we empowered Iraq in the Iran-Iraqi war. Well, what choice is there? In Iran you had a country that took hostages and sponsored international terrorism, and in Iraq you had a country that had attacked four of its neighbors. We are told that we shouldn’t have helped the tribal sheikhs that were Sunni and may or may not have been actively involved in Al-Qaeda. What choice do you have between Al-Qaeda and tribal Sunni sheikhs that want to get rid of Al-Qaeda? But this inability to distinguish a bad and a worse choice is one of the great legacies that comes from not knowing the past.

Finally there is a fourth that I think is very important, and this is sort of a modern example of hypocrisy: We in the twenty-first century are the most affluent, leisured and comfortable generation in history, and there is something very strange about all of us who get behind our desks in our library carrels and start to pass judgment about a prior generation that had the ability to do what we simply cannot do.

I can remember this very clearly: When I was a high school student and I was taking a class in world history, the teacher made us read John Hersey’s Hiroshima. I finally made the vague correlation that my father had flown forty missions in a B-29, so I came home very arrogantly
and said, “Well, we were just told you dropped a bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. How dare you do that! Aren’t you afraid?” My father said, “Well that was small potatoes compared to the fire raids that I participated in, so why don’t you get mad at me for that as well?” So I went back to class and told the teacher, and she got mad at him. And I went back home and I said, “You are even worse then I thought!” And I remember my father, rather than trying to defend the strategy, the tactics, the politics involved—which were all defensible, said something I will never forget. He said, “When you get to be twenty-one, son, I want you to get up in the morning at three, take your (inaudible) tablet, and fly the distance from here to Salt Lake City—only you will be over the ocean in the black of the night. Then sit on top of twenty tons of napalm and don’t wear a parachute, because if you bail out they are going to behead you anyway—so what’s the point? And then turn around and fly back. And when you have done that for six months and you have had sixteen planes with eleven men in each crew, and there are only two left, I want you to welcome the next eight crews and know that out of those eight, seven are going to be dead. And when all that’s done I want you to grow up, and then have your sixteen year old son tell you what you have just told me.” (Laughter.)

I just returned from Europe leading a group of people to examine sites like Agincourt, Waterloo, Bastogne. There is a Meuse-Argonne cemetery not far from Luxembourg City. 18,000 Americans are buried there. Last year 30,000 Americans went there. It doesn’t get the attention that Normandy Beach does after Saving Private Ryan. We have simply lost the collective notion of what is important and who lies under the crosses and what they did.

So, what are the wages, then, of our cultural amnesia and this arrogance of the present?

The first, of course, is that it creates a certain arrogance on our part; we feel that all of the infrastructure we inherited—all of the roads, the universities, the freedom, the abstract and the material—are somehow our creations. We are a generation of dead souls who float around our buildings, float around our universities and our roads, and we have no idea that almost everything that is there came from somebody else.

The second thing is, it encourages this sense of self-importance. My generation—I’ve said and it’s true that we have been the worst generation in a hundred years—we have this idea that we solved the Civil Rights problem; we solved the environmental crisis; we solved the question of gender equity. But all of those issues had precursors, and we wouldn’t have been able to do anything had we not discussed this in a manner and in a way that led to the eventual evolution. And the truth is that we are the generation that gave us Botox, and we are going to bankrupt the Social Security system, and we will not under any circumstance raise the retirement age for Social Security or lower the benefits. And yet we claim that we are far more liberal than the people who created the Social Security system.

Finally, there is a fragility about constitutional government. The notion of America is not some notion that was written in stone and as such is going to exist in perpetuity. The very idea that you could create a constitution; and it would be a nation of ideas; and it would evolve; and the natural evolution of it would be what we see today, many races, many religions; and they would all be united by not just a common language, but a common, shared culture, that is a very radical idea. The people in the United States do not understand how exceptional, but also how fragile this country is, and that the work of 225 years or more can be lost in a single generation, then we are in big trouble. We should keep remembering what history, which is very cruel, tells any culture,
any people, any civilizations, you get no pass. The first time you think that you are no better than the alternative, or you do not know who you are and how to defend yourself, then there is no reason for you to continue. And as we know from classical Athens, eighteenth-century France, or the France of 1940, they don’t continue.

Thank you very much!

ROGER KIMBALL: Thank you, Victor. It is my pleasure now to introduce James Piereson, who will respond to Victor Hanson’s talk. I won’t burden you with a long description of everyone’s biographies since you can find that information in your packet, but I will mention that one of Jim Piereson’s more recent accomplishments is to have written a very good book for Encounter called Camelot and the Culture Revolution: How the Assassination of John F. Kennedy Shattered American Liberalism (2007).

JAMES PIERESON: Let me add my congratulations to Victor and the other recipients of the Bradley Prizes, all richly earned and deserved.

I find that I have very little to add to Victor Davis Hanson’s fine essay on the collapse of civic education into a corrosive mixture of ignorance and political correctness. The great strength of his essay is that it documents the real price the American people are paying now and will pay in the future for the distorted view of the American past that is now taught in our schools and colleges. Churchill warned that those that would start an argument between the past and the present will soon find that they have lost the future. Mr. Hanson shows us that in losing our past, we may also lose our future. Since I cannot add anything to Mr. Hanson’s essay, please permit me to make some remarks on the questions that he raises with an eye to arriving at the same destination by a somewhat different route.

He notes in his essay that the classical definition of a civic education is linked to an ideal of collective memory—that is, how a people views its past, what duties it prescribes to the living, and how it aims to shape the future. The Greeks and Romans took civic education most seriously, looking to great figures of the past as exemplars of virtuous conduct and relying on statesmen to infuse both catastrophe and victory with historical meaning. The ancients—the Athenians, the Spartans, and Romans alike—understood that their lofty position in the world was due to the sacrifices of their ancestors. The funeral oration of Pericles, the classic statement of civic memory, begins with a dedication to Athenian ancestors.

Yet America, as a new nation and as a nation of immigrants, finds itself in a somewhat novel situation, in some of these respects. For many Americans today as in the past, their ancestors were not in Philadelphia in 1776 or 1787, or at Gettysburg in 1863, but in Silesia, Sicily, Scandinavia, and other such far off places. When Americans cite the achievements or sacrifices of their ancestors, they do so more in a metaphorical than in a literal sense.

This gives rise to the thought that America is not an ancestral nation, but rather a propositional nation—that is, to be an American one need not be descended from the Founders, but only must endorse a set of ideals found in the Declaration or the Constitution. Many view that this is America’s great strength, and perhaps it is. On the other hand there is, as Mr. Hanson notes, a certain fragility to it as well, for if the ideals somehow lose their power, the nation disintegrates with them. This is the troubling proposition that he introduces in his fine essay.
Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address is usually understood as America’s answer to the funeral oration of Pericles. In that speech, given to dedicate a cemetery for the soldiers killed in the battle four months earlier, Lincoln did not dwell on the sacrifices of ancestors but on their creation. They had brought forth a new nation dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Lincoln’s vision of America as set forth here and later in the Second Inaugural Address was biblical. The American story was a modern retelling of the biblical story of the ancient Israelites. Americans, he said, were “the almost chosen people.” This was is some ways a Protestant telling of the American settlement, but now applied to politics and civic education. This was Lincoln’s version of a civil religion.

Lincoln was joined on the platform at Gettysburg by Edward Everett, a renowned orator and then the leading American scholar of ancient Greece. As a young man Everett ventured to Germany to earn a Ph.D. in Ancient Greek, the first American to earn a doctorate and the first of many to travel to Germany for advanced education. Everett was later a professor of Greek at Harvard, president of the college, and later secretary of state. Everett was part of the Greek revival of the nineteenth century. The founders, on the other hand, had focused more on Rome than Greece. In his address, Everett pointed to the honors that the Athenians bestowed upon those who fell in battle. He went on to compare the Battle of Gettysburg to the Battle of Marathon. The victory at Marathon had saved Athens, just as the victory at Gettysburg had saved the Union. Those who fell at Marathon were given special honors comparable to the obsequies at Gettysburg.

In these speeches Lincoln and Everett set forth the two great civic metaphors that propelled the growth of the United States through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. American was Israel; America was Athens, or perhaps Rome. These two ideals had enormous power through this entire period. Ancient studies and biblical theology were the two great civic and religious themes taught in the nation’s schools and colleges. In tandem they addressed one of the great intellectual questions of the millennium now past, how to square pagan learning with biblical revelation. Together they provided both a moral and a historical perspective on the American experiment.

Madison and Hamilton, as we know, looked to the ancient world for historical lessons to guide the construction of the Constitution. Federalism, the senate, the unitary executive—all were argued for in the Federalist Papers drawing on examples from Ancient Greece and Rome. That generation believed that the lessons of the ancients were timeless, that certain principles of human conduct applied at all times, and that history therefore moved in cycles of growth and eventual decay. The Constitution was designed to slow down or arrest the decay.

These two civic metaphors no longer have the power that they once did, and have largely been swept aside in elite educational circles. The secular and anti-religious drift of our age has swept away the biblical metaphor. The rise of historicism has elongated the intellectual distance between ourselves and the ancients, which has thereby shattered Madison’s assumption that there are genuine lessons for our time to be found in Greece and Rome, or indeed in the past. Mr. Hanson has himself written an outstanding book on the decay of classical studies: *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom*, published by Encounter Books. I recommend that volume highly.
These powerful civic metaphors have been replaced by conceptions that are either weak—secular liberalism, or destructive—multiculturalism and political correctness. A great value of the biblical and the ancient traditions was that they provide an external perspective on American life and the American experience, a standpoint from which we could assess our progress, evaluate our institutions, and understand disappointment and tragedy. The liberal doctrine of rights and equality, which has taken over our educational institutions and in many cases even our churches, provides no such perspective that might introduce limits to its own claims or point to more realistic ways of assessing the past. Liberalism as a doctrine is too abstract to supply that perspective; we must rely on other traditions of thought to supply it. The older civic metaphors provided a map and a compass for the American journey into the future, cultural tools that today we find lacking. One wonders where we might find them again.

Perhaps, on the other hand, this is precisely the kind of crisis or failure that Madison anticipated when he designed that magnificent political machine, the US Constitution. The multiculturalists and deconstructionists still have to reckon with that obstacle to their aims. One hopes that Madison will have outsmarted the post-modernists after all. Still, one cannot be too confident about that, in view of constitutional developments over the past many decades. This is why we still need authors like Mr. Hanson and publishers like Encounter Books to develop auxiliary safeguards against the intemperate passions of our time.

Thank you.

ROGER KIMBALL: Thank you, Jim. Before we open it up to questions, I wonder, Victor, if you have anything you’d like to say in response to Jim’s comments?

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: I think what Jim talked about was the definition of what a classically liberal education is, and we forget that what the ancients thought education was. We have all these different terms for it today. It’s not making one aware, and it’s not necessarily just making one sensitive or knowledgeable about what the right or wrong thing to do is—moral education.

Basically, in the classical sense all education was, was two things: It taught the student to look at the world inductively—so, it taught a method. You were to look empirically at examples, and you were to come to a general thesis that would apply as sort of a wisdom of the ages; it would transcend your situation in the present. The second that was critical to that classical education is, you had to have what the Romans called exempla: names, dates, people. If you didn’t have the examples and you didn’t have the methodology, you weren’t educated. If you had the methodology without the examples you weren’t educated. If you had the examples without the methodology you weren’t educated.

And what was the purpose for education besides being a good citizen and having some technae, or the ability of science and reason, to be a good citizen? There was also something that I think is very critical that we’ve forgotten, and I thought of it when Jim was reading that excellent essay. An education makes us immune from the charge of “presentism”—that is, if we have a bad day at the office, or if we’re a woman who sees that a man is being promoted by his gender, or we see that the nicer we are to somebody, the worse they treat us—we have these exempla. We look to Sophocles’ Ajax, or Oedipus, or Euripides’ Bachae. We have all of these friends out there that
we’ve accumulated as part of our education that remind us that we’re not unique, and it’s all happened before. I think that’s really the great value of civic education.

ROGER KIMBALL: Thank you, Victor. We have about fifteen minutes for questions. Yes—right over there?

QUESTION: I’d like to turn the question of bad to worse back on the speaker, Mr. Hanson. That is, maybe our education today is bad, but is it worse than it was? You mentioned what your teacher taught back when you were growing up, and to throw out a random cultural example—I could throw out a lot more—I’m much happier that my children are watching Stephen Colbert than Walter Cronkite.

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: I’m not. I know that we can easily find examples of bias in Walter Cronkite’s efforts, and what he said during the Tet Offensive, I think, not only was reprehensible but had very deleterious effects for a generation. But there was, in the evening news, some facts and data. I’ll be candid—what I don’t like about Stephen Colbert or any of that genre is the sarcasm, the cynicism, and almost the nihilism, where nothing is at it seems. It’s the David Letterman take on the world: There’s always a double entendre. When you see Stephen Colbert, you don’t know whether he’s serious. It’s funny, but it sends the wrong message to our young people, the message that nothing is as is or it should be, and there is always somebody a little bit smarter and a little bit more clever. And for the young person, the net effect of that is, when he wants to talk about civic education or memory it seems corny or straightforward or too one-dimensional. We live in an age, I think, of nihilism and skepticism, and it sends the wrong message.

As far as education in general, the reason why I think that education is not as valuable today, and is not as competitive today as it was when I grew up in public schools in the ’60s and ’70s, is because we and the people immediately prior to us destroyed classical education in the United States—classically liberal education—but we were still the beneficiaries. We got that great gift, and then we turned around and destroyed it. I know that as a graduate student we complained about having to write in Greek and Latin and take Greek and Latin composition. But then we destroyed that requirement at most graduate schools, and the next generation never got to have that benefit.

And when I look at the education that my children got, and I look at the eight-hour day or six-hour day they had, how in the world were they going to be educated in a zero-sum game when they had to take AIDS education, drug education, gender sensitivity, citizenship—citizenship in the very narrow sense of environmentalism—and things like that? There are so many therapeutic dimensions to the present education that there’s simply no time for all of what the ancients said education was—and it was very simple; it was just history, science, rhetoric, language, and philosophy. So we’ve created the worst of both worlds. We’ve created people who are enormously ignorant and at the same time sort of arrogant. I think it has been a classic tragedy of American public education in the last twenty years.

ROGER KIMBALL: I’d like to add that this starts very early. My wife and I took our five-year-old son a few years ago to a possible school where he would go to kindergarten. We were greeted at the door by big posters proclaiming the institution’s commitment to diversity and so on, and shepherded into an auditorium where we were introduced seriatim to the school
psychologist, the school social worker, and the school “literacy expert”—who when I was growing up was called the reading teacher. The literacy expert, a woman in late middle-age, proceeded to act out the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears—sort of vamping it up that Goldilocks was a “babe.” This went on for a while, and afterwards it took me some time to kind of calm down—we left—but I remember that as I was driving home I asked James, our son, what he had thought of it because he knew the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. And his one response—maybe he’s a budding literary critic or something—his one response was, “She left out the porridge”—which was true. So, in her effort to tart up the story, she had totally destroyed it. So it starts very early.

Are there other questions or comments—yes, sir?

QUESTION: This is for Professor Hanson. I see a conflict or potential conflict between your first two principles. It seems to me that your point about a life of drudgery being the enemy of liberalism would point to teaching a certain kind of social history, while your second principle, that we need to understand magnitude better, would point to political history. You did say that Lincoln is more important than Harriet Tubman. Don’t you see a conflict there, and how would you resolve it?

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: I don’t see a conflict. I was suggesting that if people in the past don’t conform to our present definition of “liberal” or “illiberal,” it’s not just because they were selfish or they were unaware, (but) that simply because to survive, they didn’t have enough time, enough attention, enough hours to read, enough access to communication capable of changing their awareness. They were worried pretty much from one minute to the next. That was more at home to me when I first read Hesiod’s Works and Days. He has a great description of a wagon, and when I came home from university that weekend I looked at my grandfather’s wrecks of wagons around the hills, and I realized that there was no difference. In other words, we were the first generation that had done something different in 2,500 years—in his case, even longer.

My point was that it’s easy to be more sensitive when you have the leisure and the affluence and the capital that our generation does. But if all of us right now were out in a wheat field, and many of us were sick today without antibiotics, we wouldn’t have this access. I’m not suggesting that that excuses illiberality or insensitivity or prejudice; it’s just something that we have to take into account. That was my only point.

I don’t know quite the parallel you were making with magnitude, but I think that’s one that’s very important. We don’t have the classical criteria any longer, a grasp of how many lives were changed, or how many borders were changed, or how many people died or were saved. I know that Harriet Tubman in the long term did a lot of good, and that the Underground Railroad was important, but for that moment of saving the Union, there (were) only four or five people in the United States in the summer of 1864 who could do that.

It’s sort of like saying today (that) it’s very important that we understand and we study the role of women in Iraq, I think it’s essential that we do so. Or that we look at the question of race and class on promotions in Iraq. But at this moment, at this time, if we did not have this Matthew Ridgway/William Tecumseh Sherman figure like David Petraeus, an entire theatre, and with that theatre an entire region, and with that region an entire moment in American history would be lost. One individual has done something that’s quite extraordinary.
That was my only point. Maybe Jim wants to—

JAMES PIERESON: I would just add that the people who live today—well, let’s put it this way: people who lived in 1900 or 1850 probably lived lives more similar to those living five-hundred years before, or maybe even a thousand years before, than they (did) to the people living today. People from the mid- to late twentieth century lived in a kind of world that no one had ever imagined before. So it was easy for people in the past to understand that life really was difficult and tragic; they needed no reminders of that. We seem to require some reminders about how difficult was the passage to the point that we’ve arrived at today. We do live in a kind of unprecedented civilization and we seem to lack the appreciation of what was required to arrive here.

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: I would just add one last point—that conservatism really is in some ways easy to fathom in the past. You tried to do what exactly your father did, because if you made one mistake you could be dead. Today you can experiment with all sorts of different protocols, lifestyles, and there’s no worry that you’re not going to have enough to eat. But in the past, if you didn’t plant wheat at a particular date based on your reading of the stars and the constellations, and you didn’t do it after a particular rain—and instead you decided that you wanted to do something a little different and you wanted to gamble—you weren’t gambling with yourself or your lifestyle. You were predicating the very survival of your wife, your children (and) your community. And that tends to be reinforced in everything you do, and it promotes a certain conservative view of the world that I think today’s liberal critics don’t appreciate at all.

ROGER KIMBALL: I would like to add that we have kind of a terminological difficulty here, too, because in many ways the kind of conservatism that Victor (Hanson) is talking about is not opposed to liberalism in the old sense of “liberal,” the sense in which, for example, Edmund Burke was a liberal or I am a liberal or Victor, I think, is probably a liberal.

I remember Russell Kirk saying that he was a conservative because he was a liberal—that is to say, he was conservative wanting to conserve that which was handed down to us, the best from the past, precisely because he wanted to provide the most secure guarantees possible for freedom, and I think that’s been lost sight of in the, sort of, illiberal liberalism that has gained so much traction in our culture.

Some other questions? Yes, sir?

AL MILLIKAN, Washington Independent Writers: What have you both been hearing from the intellectuals, the academics, and the cultural elites you know in response to the topics Jeremiah Wright has brought to the forefront of American consciousness?

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: I would just make a brief remark. I was born in 1953, and I did not think in my lifetime that the national scene, the collective public, would ever see something that Reverend Wright did; I never thought that an African American or any member of the clergy would go to a regional meeting of the NAACP, as he did—I think it was in Detroit, and in front of the entire audience make the case that we humans have genetic differences in learning ability and those genetic differences are predicated by race, and then be greeted by a standing ovation and silence from the candidates. No censure. What was something that was just absolutely
stunning—that nobody challenged that. I think that was a great setback in the public attitude towards race. That was something right out of the nineteenth century, and yet nobody said a word.

Barack Obama promised us an honest dialogue about race and, in fact, you only get one chance, when you give a landmark speech about race. If you don’t speak honestly and candidly—you can only do that one time, and now we’re in this dilemma. We are seeing that people are making this argument, and Roger (Kimball) knows it better than I do because he has written about the “wages of the university.” The esoteric theories of post-modernism do filter down, and this idea that one can’t be racist or one can’t be sensitive or one should not be subject to abstract censure because of one’s race or gender has finally filtered down and we can see in the flesh in what happened.

JAMES PIERESON: I’d only add that I think there is a sense of embarrassment and the wish that (Wright) would disappear. Of course, many of the kinds of things that he said are the kinds of things that are taught on the college campus about America and the sins of the past. To many people it’s somewhat indelicate to raise it publicly the middle of an election campaign.

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: I would just make one last point. His comments about Hiroshima were very interesting because he said, essentially—if I can remember right, that we were pathological when we had done something like drop the bomb on Hiroshima. If he were to go back and read the literature in the newspaper, accounts of that time, there was a great deal of censure about Hiroshima, but there was also censure, I guess, from veterans themselves who felt that we should have used the bomb earlier on Okinawa, which we invaded in April 1945 and lost fifty thousand dead, wounded, and missing.

So it’s just the opposite of what he thinks. There were no good choices, and we don’t want to get into that historical crux, but it does seem that from what we know now about Japan, Reverend Wright was absolutely clueless that we were going to have to invade all the way until 1946 and hundreds of thousands of people were going to be killed. Curtis LeMay had a nightmarish idea to bring six or seven thousand bombers from Okinawa and do what he had done in March of 1945 almost monthly.

Again, it’s an example of someone who doesn’t know much, but knows “one great thing” to paraphrase Archilochus: that if you evoke Hiroshima it has a sort of shock value; it’s a fides or a pledge of how liberal you are, and the discussion stops. Nobody can dare challenge you. That’s what’s so scary—how we are self-censoring ourselves.

JAMES PIERESON: I would just add that it turns out that Reverend Wright’s church received many millions of dollars in federal grants over this period in which he was preaching for housing and that sort of thing. So one wonders why one wins government grants by damning the country and the government that provides it. But that’s been a kind of tactic that we’ve seen, really, from the 1960’s and 1970’s. You win grants from the government by denouncing it. If we had a somewhat different policy we might have a different kind of rhetoric from people like Reverend Wright.

3 “The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one great thing.” or word for word, “Fox knows many, / Hedgehog one / Solid trick.” (The latter is from Guy Davenport’s Carmina Archilochi: The Fragments of Archilochus: University of California Press, 1964.)
ROGER KIMBALL: It’s also interesting to note that Reverend Wright was to be the commencement speaker at Northwestern University, but it was only because of his recent travails that they, at the last moment, withdrew the invitation. I find it absolutely shocking that a major university would consider such a character to be a commencement speaker. What sort of wisdom would he be imparting to the next generation?

On the subject of Hiroshima, my father was a Marine in World War II, and I know that he was very grateful indeed that he did not have to invade the islands of Japan. That would have meant absolute carnage for hundreds of thousands of Americans and millions of Japanese.

I think we have time for one more question.

QUESTION: This is for both of you, Dr. Hanson and Dr. Piereson. I’m on a school board in California and Dr. Hanson, you wrote a book called *Mexifornia*. We’re dealing with educating a lot of Title I children who don’t speak English. In trying to defend the classical education, what are the best defenses that this is helpful preparation that they need to enter our society? I’d appreciate your comments.

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON: One of the reasons I wrote the book is, my children went to public school, and I knew something was wrong—I was a professor of Latin and Greek who can read Spanish, and I would have parents come to me and ask me to translate Spanish documents to them because they didn’t speak Spanish. They didn’t read Spanish. They either had left school in seventh or eighth grade and did not read Spanish very well, or they were *mestizos* and Spanish was not their first language. So the federal government was spending money to teach people desperately in need of the tools to compete with those who had advantages of foreign language. That wasn’t true of all, of course, or even the majority, but it was true of some.

One of the things that we tried to do at California State University, Fresno, was have a pilot program—it sounds absurd, but we offered Latin to sixth and seventh graders who were predominantly Hispanic-Mexican-American. And we found that if somebody speaking Spanish wanted to transition to English, not only would Latin be something, as a romance language, that would have commonality—in vocabulary, in philology, in syntax, and in grammar—if they were successful it would give them a boost over other groups that had advantages. Again, it seems to me and I tried to point that out in that book, but as Roger says, the classically liberal position was always integration, inter-marriage, assimilation and trying to offer classical education to people who had just arrived here so that they could compete in the way that they speak. But that’s a tragic lesson lost.

I’ll just finish with this: I can remember that when I was a third grader, I was in a predominantly Mexican-American and Mexican-national class. And our teacher—in a very illiberal sense—would ask us to stand up and say, “I have a stick-shift Chevy.” And anybody who garbled it was remonstrated—not because the teacher was being cruel but because she wanted us to realize that we were going to be judged on the quality of our speech and our diction, and people were going to make unfair inferences about our inability to speak perfect English. “When I get done with you you’re all going to speak perfect English,” she told us.
When I think of my English compared to some of that generation—I don’t speak as well as they do today, and there are very successful Mexican-American students. So we were about as illiberal as you could be to immigrants. We ask nothing of the immigrant. We didn’t want anything of him, didn’t require any sacrifice of him, and I think in many cases he was willing to give that.

ROGER KIMBALL: Professor Higgins said, “The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.” We need to take a lesson from his book. Thank you all very much for coming to this first panel. We are going to adjourn for a brief break now, but I’ve been told to run this symposium with Prussian efficiency, so we will begin again at quarter to eleven sharp.

Thank you very much.
ROGER KIMBALL: We’ll proceed now with our second panel. John Fonte from Hudson Institute will speak first, and then responding to him will be John O’Sullivan. John (Fonte)?

EDITOR’S NOTE: John Fonte referred during his remarks to a PowerPoint presentation, the slides of which have been incorporated below.

JOHN FONTE: Thank you, Roger.

The primary question of politics is, who shall govern and in what regime? The traditional American answer has been, the people govern themselves within the liberal democratic nation-state.

Recently, an ad from a major American university asks the question, “As a global citizen, to whom do I pledge allegiance?” The ad suggests that the issues of American identity, sovereignty, and our constitutional democracy are, as academics put it, “contested.” For many of the world’s elites, the big project of the twenty-first century is how to achieve global governance.

The argument goes something like this: There are global problems beyond the capacity of nation-states to “solve.” These global problems include: terrorism; war; climate change; world hunger; inequalities of wealth; diseases; human rights violations; racism; xenophobia; increasingly
Islamophobia; and global migration from poor countries to rich countries. Therefore, some form of “global governance” is required to address these problems.

Now, unlike the international system of sovereign nation-states, this new transnational system of global governance seeks to establish supra-national regulations and institutions whose authority extends beyond and within nation-states. Nation-states continue to exist, but they are subordinate to transnational authority. This authority is exercised by “evolving norms” of international law, which is in effect transnational law. Major American foundations have endorsed the view that US constitutional law should be subordinate to “evolving norms” of international (“transnational”) law; a publication of the Ford Foundation on human rights in the United States stated “all people need ultimate recourse to an alternative legal authority.” The Ford document also talked about the need to “to break the chokehold of domestic law.” It declared: “US human rights activists are trying to reshape US society according to a framework of rights that most people either have not heard of or have been taught to think of as foreign.”

I call this viewpoint “transnational progressivism” and argue that it is “post-democratic.”

The European Union (EU) represents a conscious model of supra-national governance. Most of the authority is exercised by the European Commission (EC), the bureaucracy in Brussels. Even legislation is initiated by the bureaucracy. One of Europe’s most prominent sociologists, Ralf Dahrendorf, declared that, “It is not just a joke to say that if the EU itself applied for accession to the EU, it could not be admitted because it is insufficiently democratic.”

The global progressive response to radical Islam has been twofold: First, externally, the response has been mostly denial that terrorism is in any way connected to Islam. As Princeton University Dean Anne Marie Slaughter put it “our enemy is not Islamic anything.” However, internally throughout the West, Muslims have been granted special privileges that contradict the liberal principle of equality of citizenship. While the Archbishop of Canterbury was roundly criticized for endorsing the partial application of Shariah law for British Muslims, the British government has admitted that it has already recognized polygamous marriages and provided benefits to the same.

This is essentially “post-liberal” practice.

The activist American left supported by Ford and other foundations embrace a view remote from the American mainstream. But what of the governing American center-left?—and by that I mean the views of policy makers who serve as political appointees in administrations, as opposed to the academic left.

The mainstream left is prepared to deal with transnational governance both conceptually and rhetorically, for the most part. But the governing left has, for the most part, internalized the global governance project as America’s “leadership” mission. Strobe Talbott clarifies this mindset best. He has a recent book subtitled “The Quest for a Global Nation.” In a memo to Bill Clinton shortly before the 1992 election he wrote: (See slide below.)
This concept of “pooled” or “shared national sovereignty” is central to the thinking of transnational elites who are promoting global governance. It’s an idea that we will be hearing about over and again in the decades to come.

Harold Koh, the dean of Yale University Law School, served as an assistant secretary of state during the Clinton administration. Koh articulates the viewpoint of much of the governing left. He proposes in a Stanford Law Review article that “American lawyers and activists…. trigger a transnational legal process,” that will “generate legal interpretations that can in turn be internalized into the domestic law of even resistant nation-states.” He also suggests that, “human rights advocates” should litigate “not just in domestic courts, but simultaneously before foreign and international arenas.” Moreover, they should encourage foreign governments (such as Mexico) to challenge the US on the death penalty and other human rights issues.

Harold Koh et al. “transnational legal process”
I just want to point out a cartoon that appeared in the *Washington Post* just recently—May 27—on the right side of the slide (above); it’s a suggested “flag” lapel pin, with the implication that a globe might be a more appropriate symbol for candidates to wear during campaign discussions.

Of course, the “transnational legal process” advocated by Koh and others—essentially, the mainstream left—is outside of American constitutional democracy. Transnational “interactions” (such as appealing to foreign courts) are not part of the authority and accountability inherent in the meaning of the phrase: “We the people of the United States.” They are something “outside” of the “people of the United States” and “beyond” the Constitution and our democratic process. They reopen the primary question of politics: “Who shall govern and in what regime?”

On global migration, Western progressives argue that immigrant integration into the host country should be based on two concepts: dual citizenship and diaspora connectedness. The mainstream American left has pretty much internalized these concepts. Three weeks ago at the Women’s National Democratic club I heard an editor at the *Washington Post* declare that the US is not really a nation of immigrants, but a nation of dual citizens—and that the ampersand has replaced the hyphen. The editor said that a citizen is not an Iraqi-American, but an Iraqi & an American—so, dual citizenship, dual loyalties, and so on. “Transnational citizenship” is the word used for what these people think is coming.

*Washington Post* editor

> The United States is not really a nation of immigrants, but a nation of dual citizens; the ampersand has replaced the hyphen. One is not an Iraqi-American, but “Iraqi & American.”

Director (by political appointment) of the Illinois Governor’s Office of New Americans Policy and Advocacy

> “The nation-state concept is changing. You don’t have say, I am Mexican or I am American. You can be a good Mexican citizen and a good American citizen and not have that be a conflict of interest. Sovereignty is flexible.”

Sometimes this view reaches the center-right; about ten years ago the *Wall Street Journal* published an op-ed favorable to the notion of the ampersand replacing the hyphen.

Let us examine how the integration of immigrants works “on the ground.” Under the mainstream-left Governor of Illinois, the state’s Office of New Americans is administered by a
political appointee, Jose Luis Gutierrez. His concept of assimilation is different than that of, say, Theodore Roosevelt. He told the *Chicago Tribune*: “The nation-state concept is changing. You don’t have say, I am Mexican or I am American. You can be a good Mexican citizen and a good American citizen and not have that be a conflict of interest. Sovereignty is flexible.” And if you examine the Illinois government website, it is clear that the emphasis is on transnational or dual citizenship and diaspora connectedness, not on traditional American notions of assimilation. Or you could say, it’s on the ampersand, not the hyphen.

While the governing center-left has for the most part internalized global governance and is prepared to promote it, in some form at least, the governing center-right has for the most part failed to engage on the issue—with some exceptions that will be discussed later.

Now, in writing the commissioned essay for this symposium and for my book for Encounter (to be published in 2009), *Sovereignty or Submission*, I developed this chart (see slide below or Chart A in the commissioned essay), a world ideological chart. I was thinking of Frank Fukuyama’s point that in the future only ideologies with universal appeal will challenge liberal democracy—that is, ideologies that would also appeal to Western intellectuals in places like Berkeley, Berlin, Cambridge, Oxford, and so on. The key distinction, though, is the Fukuyama distinction between ideologies that have universal appeal and those that don’t.

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<td>Liberal Democracy (liberal and democratic)</td>
<td>Radical Islam (anti-liberal, anti-democratic)</td>
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<td>Global Governance (post-liberal, post-democratic)</td>
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<td>Transnational Progressivism</td>
<td>Russian Authoritarianism</td>
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IDEOLOGIES that used to have UNIVERSAL APPEAL

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<th>Communism</th>
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(Fonte reads the slide.)

A number of obstacles stand in the way of clear thinking on the challenge of global governance. In the paper, I describe how Fukuyama’s narrative has been widely internalized by the center-right, so global governance is not seen as a distinct ideological challenge. Likewise, Bob Kagan’s new thesis—that the main ideological event of the twenty-first century will be the
perennial conflict between democracy and autocracy—also sidesteps the transnational issue. It sidesteps questions of the Enlightenment, too, which I talk about in the paper.

Now, it would also be a mistake to view radical Islam as the only “transcendent” threat facing American constitutional democracy. I get into that in the paper; due to time constraints I won’t say more about it here.

But I will say that all of these frameworks have something in common. They are all bi-polar, pitting democrats against anti-democrats. But it’s my point that the ideological conflict in the twenty-first century will be tri-polar, with an overlapping struggle among democrats, anti-democrats, and global post-democrats over the great question of politics, who shall govern and in what regime?

It’s important to realize now that these transnational progressives constitute a major obstacle in the conflict with radical Islam. The center-right and liberal anti-Islamists will have to fight on two ideological fronts. As Andrew McCarthy and others have pointed out, there will be “lawfare” battles with both the radical Islamists and a significant contingent of Western anti-anti-radical Islamists—the John Espositos, the Juan Coles, the ACLUs, and the Amnesty Internationals who are attempting to use “evolving norms” of international law to thwart the war against Islamic terror. This parallels the situation during the Cold War, when anti-communists within the West had to fight against anti-anti-communists as well as against the communists themselves. Thus, the conflict with radical Islam is intertwined with and cannot be separated from the challenge of transnational progressivism.

Another obstacle to clear thinking on global governance comes from some libertarian and corporate elements of the broader center-right coalition. Some American business leaders have internalized the global governance arguments. A vice-president of Coca Cola emphatically declared: “We are not an American company.” These corporate officials are not ideologues, obviously, but could be described as “transnational pragmatists” as opposed to progressives.

For some (clearly not all) libertarians, opposition to the “state”—even a constitutional democratic one—leads to an affinity to transnational politics. The late editor of Wall Street Journal, Robert Bartley, is reported to have told a Forbes journalist, Peter Brimelow: “The nation-state is finished.” If so, that raises the question of who shall govern and in what regime?

In Who Are We, Samuel Huntington argues that issues such as transnationalism, dual citizenship, multiculturalism, immigration, assimilation, national history standards, and so on, are “all battles in a single war over the nature of American national identity.” They are all what Jim Ceaser called “regime issues.” Huntington’s core point is that “de-nationalized elites” are promoting the “transnational” and the subnational, the “multicultural,” in order to “deconstruct” this regime. Unfortunately, Huntington’s core argument got lost in series of sub-controversies, but it is possible to disagree with Huntington—which, to an extent, I do—on the creed vs. culture aspects of American nationhood; the degree to which American culture is still formed by the “dissenting Anglo-Protestant” tradition; and on the “Clash of Civilizations” thesis, and still, at the same time, recognize the accuracy of his description of the comprehensive assault on our national identity by “de-nationalized” elites.
As a consequence of the center-right’s failure to embrace the core of the Huntington critique, conservatives have continued to see—on the one hand—either a series of unconnected “cultural” issues such as racial preferences, history standards, immigration without assimilation, the UN Durban conference, and so on, or—on the other hand—simply the rantings of post-modern academics instead of a comprehensive ideological offensive directed at the traditional American regime.

But there is good news. (1) The American people remain strongly attached to our national identity and nation-state, and (2) there are signs that some are starting to take the global governance challenge seriously. Let me share with you some of the poll results announced yesterday by the Bradley Project on American National Identity (www.bradleyproject.org). The Bradley project commissioned Harris interactive polling to conduct a random sample of American citizens in December. Let’s take a look.

83 percent of Americans think of themselves primarily as American citizens, not “global citizens” (12 percent).

89 percent favored the “Americanization” of immigrants defined as “learning English and embracing American culture and values.” It’s a rather thick interpretation of “Americanization,” and still 89 percent approve.

(For the remaining slides, see next page.)
An overwhelming 86 percent believe that potential immigrants who favor replacing the US Constitution with Islamic law should not be allowed to immigrate to the United States. This is a question of belief—not of whether the potential immigrant is a member of a terrorist organization. So that’s pretty clear.

Two-thirds (66 percent) believe the Constitution should be the “highest legal authority” for Americans if there is a dispute with international law. (Sixteen percent chose international law.)

Naturalized citizens take an oath promising to absolutely and entirely reject all allegiance to their former state—or in other words, they reject the ampersand. We asked whether this should continue to be a requirement, and 73 percent said yes, naturalized citizens should give up all loyalty to their former homelands. Among registered voters, the number was 75 percent.

Should someone who believes that the US Constitution should be replaced with Islamic law be allowed to immigrate to the United States?

Which should be the highest legal authority for Americans (in cases where US law conflicts with international law)?
The second bit of good news, in April of 2008 the Federalist Society and the American Enterprise Institute launched a new website, Global Governance Watch (http://www.globalgovernancewatch.org/), with former UN Ambassador John Bolton giving the keynote address at a kick-off luncheon.

Besides John Bolton, other analysts are taking this seriously as well, many of them in this room: Robert Bork, Jeremy Rabkin, David Rivkin, Lee Casey, Curtis Bradley, Andrew McCarthy, Herbert London, John O’Sullivan, Kenneth Anderson and others.

Another piece of good news is the role of Encounter Books, which has helped shape the debate and therefore will help shape the future. Many publishers on both the left and right are seeking an oversimplified—you might say a “red meat”—approach. Encounter permits a comprehensive approach to serious subjects as the books of Andy McCarthy, Victor Davis Hanson, Jim Piereson, Jim Bowman, and others testify, and I’m grateful to them.

In conclusion, the 21st century will witness a renewed argument over the primary question of politics, who shall govern and in what regime? Make no mistake about it, global governance is a direct challenge to American constitutionalism. The American center right must be prepared to do theoretical and conceptual work necessary to defend the American regime and the liberal democratic nation-state generally on universal grounds against this new threat. This challenge is “existential” because it challenges the existence of the American constitutional democratic regime and liberal democracy. It is formidable because it comes from within Western civilization. It will be a great challenge of the twenty-first century.
Thank you.

ROGER KIMBALL: Thank you, John. Next we’ll hear John O’Sullivan. John?

JOHN O’SULLIVAN: Well, first of all, Roger, thank you for your introduction. It is a great privilege to be on this platform on behalf of Encounter Books, Hudson and the Bradley Foundation. I had a little to do with the original *Encounter* Magazine when it was run by Melvin Lasky in London, and of course, the distinguished first editor of *Encounter*—Irving Kristol—is in the room here today.

I think that that magazine played a very crucial role in English and European intellectual political life in the ’50s, the ’60s, and later. First of all, it was a strong encouragement and an inspiration to pro-American social democrats in its first phase. And then secondly, in the ’70s and later, it shifted from support for social democrats like Tony Crosland, who of course is no longer around, and moved toward support for more conservative opinions like Thatcherism. And I think it was extremely important in giving arguments to conservatives at that time, and making them less provincial.

Secondly, and I will just say, too, that a new magazine has just been launched in London—Standpoint, edited by Daniel Johnson. It attempts to provide a kind of *Encounter* for the present day, and I think its arrival on the scene—it was launched last week—is a very good omen.

But here today, Encounter Books, Hudson, and the Bradley Foundation are examining and ventilating some of the ideas that, I think, will determine the politics of tomorrow. John Fonte’s work is extremely important here—and not simply his paper commissioned for this symposium, which I think is a very fine paper. The fact is that John has been the single-most important voice on his side of the argument in questions of post-democracy, post-nationalism—I would say post-sovereignty, and all of the related issues—multiculturalism, immigration, and so on. And while John is kind enough to mention me in his work, the fact is that almost all of us who work on these questions are dependent on the work he has already done.

There is a slight risk today that this is going to be a debate between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, because I don’t differ very much with John, if at all. But I would just like to add a couple of points in immediate response to what he has said.

I think the ampersand argument can be very quickly demolished by asking whether or not the ampersand idea should be applied to marriage: “The fact, my dear, that I am married to her in no way conflicts or reduces my commitment to our marriage.” (*Laughter.*) I think most women would not feel that to be a particularly persuasive statement. Of course, the whole notion of pooling things like sovereignty is absurd. Sovereignty to a group is what liberty is to an individual—the ability to make decisions. If you have a group of five nations and the voters of one nation rebel against a joint decision, either they are able to carry through their decision—the government that they have elected is able to do what they wanted it to do, in which case the pool’s sovereignty is dissolved and they regain full sovereignty—or they are not allowed to do so because in pooling their sovereignty they have lost their sovereignty. In other words, the notion of pooled sovereignty, when examined seriously, is seen as an oxymoron.

My one difference—and it is not really a difference, it’s a gloss—with John is when he classes radical Islam as one of the ideologies that can’t have universal appeal. Now, it is probably true that it can’t have absolutely universal appeal, but it is interesting that radical Islam does seem to be the
choice ideology of the lower depths of society, different groups who want some meaning in their lives. Quite a lot of people in prison who are not themselves Islamic get converted to it. Robert Reed, the would-be shoe bomber, was converted to radical Islam in prison. I’ve read a number of newspaper accounts of various different groups being recruited although they had no connection with Islam until they encountered it in places like prison.

And then finally, if the world were a rational place it would be very surprising to find that some left-wingers in Europe and some feminists managed to forge alliances or at least form a kind of an informal alliance with radical Islamists whom by any normal test of opinion they should shun.

Now, I am not going to repeat what John said in his paper. He gave you a very good account of his own views. I am just going to make a few points about it. As I said, I believe his facts are accurate, his reasoning is valid, and his conclusions are correct. But I would just add a few marginal notes.

First of all, what is the essence of what is happening, in my view? Where does it begin? Well, I think it begins actually some time back. I would put the beginning in the interwar years—because it is the transfer of power from elected bodies such as Congress or Parliament to unelected bodies such as the courts, bureaucratic agencies, the UN and other international bodies, treaty-based global groups which place obligations on us, and so on and so forth. These bodies—bodies such as Kyoto, International Criminal Court, the “alphabet agencies” in this country, the courts here, the courts in Europe, the courts today in Britain under the Human Rights Act—now have considerable political power which they wield. But they are either not accountable at all to us, or they are accountable at so many degrees that voters exercise no real authority over them.

With regard to the former, in what sense, for example, is the International Criminal Court accountable to the voters of the Western Europe? The British judges, as I say, have emancipated themselves largely from political control under the Human Rights Act. And, to put it mildly, the US Supreme Court’s accountability to the American people is extremely remote. With regard to the latter, the decisions, for example, of European bodies are very difficult for the citizen of any single European state to significantly influence through voting, organizing, and doing all of the democratic things we take for granted. And in the case of the alphabet agencies, well, as early as 1929 the famous book by the Lord Chief Justice of England (The Rt. Hon. Lord Hewart of Bury), The New Despotism, raised alarms about this, but these alarms were largely dismissed as well: “He was being nostalgic for the world that is lost.”

So, this has been going on a long time, but it has been accelerating lately—since the end of the Cold War. Why? Why is it happening?

Well, one argument we hear all the time is that we need these bodies. We need these powerful bureaucratic bodies, these unelected authorities. They are “uncontaminated” or uncontrolled by democratic gridlocks to deal with matters that are either too big for a single state or matters on which the legislative authorities have failed to act—that is, generally speaking they have failed to carry out the policy favored by the person who is talking.

But first of all, states can, do, and for a long time have acted on big international problems through international bodies and treaties. And there I agree with John; there is a distinction between an international body and a transnational body. An international body is one which operates under rules that make it subordinate to the governments that establish it. It acts as its agent to perform certain
common tasks. A transnational body is the body to which governments cede powers and sovereignty and authority, and to the decisions of which they are subsequently bound whether or not they particularly like them. We have had international bodies since the International Telegraph Union (which dates back to 1865), I think—and probably before that, the experts will tell me. These were essentially forms of international cooperation.

To give one example, people used to sneer at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as the “General Agreement to Talk and Talk.” (Laughter.) But in fact, GATT was an extremely effective mechanism of spreading and establishing free trade by the principle of voluntary adoption. You signed up to it, you made concessions, and you receive fair treatment in return. No one was forced to do so, but because there were benefits in doing so people generally signed up.

The second argument is that legislatures—Congress—have failed to act. I think the latest argument where this is used is immigration, but it has been used on many other issues. But the objection here is false, because, of course, it is not that Congress has failed to act. Very often it has deliberated long and hard. It has simply reached the conclusion either to do something that these people do not like, or to do nothing at all.

So, if the arguments for what is happening are not valid—because I think they are not—what is really happening? Well, I think one argument is that significant elites in societies find that the electorate has not favored their policies, and they are looking for some other electorate. I think—because I am a conservative, so I would say this—that the left in general has been disappointed with the people in the last thirty or forty years, and consequently it is looking for ways of getting its political will through international pressure and international organizations.

Secondly, I think we might rediscover here the old Marxist concept of class interest. There are a lot of people in today’s world, such as international lawyers, the officials of international agencies, the heads of NGOs—and the NGO revolution is one of the major new developments of our time—and people who work in these organizations, for whom post-democracy and post-sovereignty means an increase of power at the same time as they enjoy being exempt from some of the controls that exist in their democratic politics. It’s very agreeable, really. And not all of these people are on the left, as John rightly points out. He calls these people “transnational progressives” because they act transnationally, but they hold progressive views. A London lawyer named David Carr shortened this to “tranzis.” (See http://www.samizdata.net/blog/glossary_archives/2002/09/tranzi.html for Carr’s definition.) I like his term because it has a faint hint of sexual ambiguity. (Laughter.) That joke always gets a laugh, and I think it is a good example of the joke being true. (Laughter.)

Anyway, the thing is, there are quite a lot of careers, if you are a tranzi, which are very lucrative and pleasant and agreeable. Some of them may join an NGO and get sent out by the UN to some trouble spot, where they drive around in a Jeep, have a local girlfriend, eat cheap local food, live on a tax-free income with lots of dollars, and generally after that move on to a position, let us say, in the office of the assistant secretary for global humanitarianism at the UN, or whatever. But there are even grander things. Take a failed politician like Neil Kinnock, the former leader of the Labor Party, twice rejected by the British people—very sensibly—and known locally as the Welsh Windbag. (Laughter.) Once he was safely expelled from British politics, he was sent to Brussels—in the way that in the old days we used to send the failed politicians to the colonies, you know:
“. . . But as it is! . . . My language fails!
Go out and govern New South Wales!”

(Hilaire Belloc, “Lord Lundy,” Cautionary Tales for Children, 1920)

Well, these days we send them to Brussels. It’s nearer, but also it’s much more lucrative. The salaries are tax free. And you get to “lord it”; you get to take decisions. I mean, people differ about the extent, but some people would argue that as much as, say, 70 percent of political decisions now are essentially taken in Brussels. So, you get to exercise political power without annoying difficulty of being elected.

My third point here would be to say that it’s perfectly true that the tranzis themselves occasionally have a guilty conscience about this, and so—since they don’t have an electorate—they have decided to invent their own global electorate. They call it “global civil society,” and it consists of all those NGOs to whom they give the seal of good housekeeping approval, and they admit them to all of these side conferences that always occur, whether it is the UN or other conferences taking place of governments. So on the one side of the road you have the governments and the official UN bodies, and on the other side of the road you have the NGO conference, which sort of gives press conferences day and night, exerting pressure on the official conference. Kofi Annan used to like to refer to the second conference as “the global electorate.”

The problem is that the UN and governments select which NGOs are going to be at this conference. This is a good example of politicians at selecting their own electorate. And sometimes when they can’t find NGOs of a suitably compliant character, they set up their own, known as GONGOs—Government Organized NGOs. (Laughter.) And what you then have is a complete façade of democratic debate and argument in which the real decisions are taken by bureaucrats.

So, therefore, I reach the conclusion that post-democracy and post-sovereigntists are really empty democratic. Yes, it is as simple as that. Do you want to amend or appeal the decision of an international court or the decision of a bureaucratic agency in Brussels, or change the mind of a body set up under the Law of the Sea? For practical purposes, you can’t.

A good example of this is the EU’s democratic deficit. You see, the EU does admit it has a democratic deficit. It could hardly do otherwise. The most interesting example of it is that legislation in the EU has to come from the Commission, which is unelected and not subject to recall. It is a bureaucratic organization appointed by the different member governments. If they don’t propose the law, the law never gets discussed, debated and passed. So, they have what The Economist rightly described as an “advance veto” on legislation. This advance veto has survived all reforms—we had the Single European Act in 1986, the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, and the Lisbon Treaty, which is coming up before the Irish this weekend. None of these have reduced or removed that provision.

Now, how do they deal with it? Well, it is a brilliant way that they deal with the democratic deficit. They say, “Yes, we do—we have a democratic deficit. It’s terrible.” But this admission is then treated as a solution to the problem: “You see, we are aware of it! We don’t like it! If only something could be done about it! But it can’t.”

Why can’t something be done about it? Something cannot be done about it because if you were to do something about it in general, that would mean it would be possible for voters and private bodies and so on to successfully challenge the direction of European politics on the key issue of further
integration. And that is something which the European elites simply will not tolerate. The degree of their unwillingness to tolerate it is demonstrated by the fact that after failing to get the Lisbon Treaty through—in other words, a European constitution, which is itself a monstrosity and legally should have been finished, having been rejected by the voters—they have brought it forward again in almost unchanged form, and this time the politicians all agreed they would not put it to the test of a referendum in case it “went wrong” again. The Irish, for constitutional reasons of their own, had to put it to the referendum test. But everybody knows that if the Irish are to vote against it, they will be asked to vote again—as they were in the past—until they get the answer “right.” So, the EU is itself, therefore, an undemocratic body, as John (Fonte) said, and one that is fundamentally not going to become something else.

Now, that leads to my final point—namely, that there is going to be a series of clashes from now on into the future in world politics. There will be other clashes, of course, clashes to do with the War on Terror, the rise of China, and so on; but this clash is going to inform a lot of those other ones. And it is this: The mere existence of the US constitution as a binding liberal democratic document—and one, furthermore, which, as John’s poll showed, has great prestige with American people and, I would say, by the way, outside of the America as well—means that decisions taken by international bodies and organizations have to be accepted by the American people through their institutions or they won’t bind this country.

Now, there are other countries which are grateful for this. I think that they will in future days include, for example, India and China, because as they are rising powers, feeling their oats, so to speak. They will not want to be bound by decisions that are taken by the Lilliputians, which is another phrase for the tranzies. And consequently we are going to see a clash between, on the one hand, the United States as the head of the coalition of traditional nation-states—not all of them democratic—which support the Westphalian international order, and on the other side, the transnational progressives and the states that sympathize with those ideas, headed by the European Union. The European Union—and the Americans don’t seem to realize this, including American policy makers—sees itself ideologically as the champion of this new order.

Now, I have one final point—my final, final point. (Laughter.) All of the ideas dissected by John (Fonte) have been almost an international consensus, and an Establishment near-consensus in America, without ever having been properly debated or without being tested in an election. I don’t think they will be tested this November. Senator Obama is the very paladin of post-democracy, and John McCain is himself implicated in some of these ideas. He is, for instance, a strong admirer of the EU and proponent of Kyoto. And republican strategists, if that is not an oxymoron, are not likely to launch attacks that they have to explain at length in advance.

So, the battle, if it is not to be lost, will have to be fought initially at the high intellectual level of Encounter, Encounter Books, Hudson Institute, the Bradley Foundation, and, as I mentioned at the outset, the new British magazine Standpoint—which, by the way, bases itself explicitly on recovering and reviving the concept of the West. They are the reasons for optimism, as much as the polls of the American people to which John pointed.

Thank you.

(Applause.)
ROGER KIMBALL: Thank you, John O’Sullivan and John Fonte. I believe that John O’Sullivan has a couple of the jobs in Brussels; if anyone wants to see him after this, he can dispense them. (Laughter.)

We have a little time for questions. Yes, sir?

ROBERT CHANDLER, Strategic Planning International, Inc.: My question is in terms of a kind of a sweeping, waving hand about the American left being complicit in progressive transnationalism. That is certainly true, through my own research, in what the Institute for Policy Studies is doing through their gigantic network, and also in the UN through the Hague Appeal of Peace, which is run by Cora Weiss. They are moving forward on this. Marcus Raskin has written a book called Liberalism, which lays out the changes to liberalism (inaudible). So I am wondering who, specifically, are those on the left about whom you are speaking, besides some of those who are quite evident?

JOHN FONTE: Well, in the paper I mention three people: Strobe Talbott, who was deputy secretary of state—so he is in the mainstream; Anne-Marie Slaughter, the dean at Princeton who undoubtedly get a top job if Obama is elected; and Harold Koh, who served in the Clinton administration. These are just examples. I was concern not so much with Cora Weiss and the hard left, but rather the mainstream left. I don’t think that this is a done deal, however. I think its still evolving, so to speak, within the left, and there are certainly people who have not accepted transnational progressivism. I can think of people in the Senate—Senator Dorgan (D–ND) and Senator Webb (D–VA) and so on—who would not necessarily have a transnational progressive view. So I think this is in flux, but I think the majority of the mainstream has internalized it and they have accepted it—as Talbott said—as America’s leadership. This is the argument that is going to be used. This is what Madeleine Albright said: It’s not that we’re giving up power; it is in America’s interest to transfer authority to the International Criminal Court. That is the argument that is going to be made. That is the argument that Joe Biden makes. It is in America’s interest to sign the CEDAW treaty, the Convention against Women. Of course we are against discrimination but what the treaty promotes is gender proportionalism. It is illiberal, its post-liberal, and it promotes corporatism. Representation by group. But that’s complicated to explain and oppose.

So I think this is an evolving fight. They seem to have internalized the argument, and the argument is, well, we are leaders and this is what we do. As James Schlesinger said, they want to lead by following—by following European elites.

QUESTION: In the previous panel and also in this Bradley project publication E Pluribus Unum: A Study of Americans’ Views of National Identity, it was said that America is not founded on shared ethnicity but rather on ideas, and I wonder what your thoughts are on this proposition theory of American nation. Is it true and does it furnish us with a place from which we can defend America against multiculturalism and transnationalism?

JOHN FONTE: I’ll take it first. If you read further in the Bradley report, it says that there is a culture, too. In fact it says—and Jim Ceaser spoke yesterday, saying—that the two are essentially both very important. Both the creed and the culture are more or less equal, as he presented it. I would go back to Victor Davis Hanson and say that we are a “proposition plus” nation. That is my own personal label. The “plus” is the culture which is part of the civic narrative, if I could be forgiven for using that word in this company. It’s the narrative that the Victor Davis Hanson talked about this morning. The
story of America. Jim Piereson said that his ancestors—and my ancestors—weren’t in Gettysburg; they were in Sicily. But they adopted the story of America. So they are our ancestors, George Washington and the founders and the boys in blue and gray. They are our ancestors because we adopted them. So we are a proposition plus this story of America that is adopted by immigrants, the civic narrative which is a big part of the culture. It is not simply an abstract proposition but is based on a particular nation, a civic nation that has a national story to it.

JOHN O’SULLIVAN: Yes, I rather agree with John’s reply. I think obviously that the “proposition” part of the American nationhood is there because after all the Americans had to explain to the world why they were rebelling, and secondly they had to explain to people who were coming to this country what the essence of Americanism was. But it’s a distillation of the full American cultural sense of identity. And I think that it’s a mistake to confine America to the proposition side, and I am always therefore wary of the idea that America is a proposition nation.

I will say that I once had the embarrassing task of ringing up Professor Melvin Bradford to explain that the first sentence of his article, a review, contained a misprint—it now read, “It is often said that America is a nation founded upon a preposition.” When he finished laughing, he said that he hoped that it was “but” he rather was afraid that it was “for.”

ROGER KIMBALL: We’ve only (time) for one more question. Judge Bork?

JUDGE ROBERT BORK: It’s not my object to stamp out the last vestige of opposition here. (Laughter.) But when you talk about the US Constitution as being a brake on this transnationalism, isn’t it true that the majority of our (Supreme) Court is now looking to foreign law and international law—some of which they make up—so that you’re getting from within a change in our Constitution to correspond to international or transnational norms.

JOHN O’SULLIVAN: Yes, absolutely. And of course, the more you multiply the cases from which you can extract precedents and so on, the greater freedom of action you give the courts and the judges. And one of the problem we face is that judges now essentially feel free to write their personal policy preferences into law, and this will simply make that matter worst. So yes, I agree with that.

Having said that, because the American people actually believe in their Constitution, because it’s almost more than the flag, the symbol of America—you don’t have a sovereign in the personal sense but you do have the Constitution—I do think that alarm over the maltreatment, the assault on the Constitution can be raised. And of course no one has done more to raise it than you have, Bob (Bork). But it requires probably a grievous, bad decision by the courts to give people the interest to make them pay attention to the principal. And they have made such bad decisions, and sometimes there has been a rebellion—but, well, not enough, so we need more bad judicial decisions to arouse the people.

ROGER KIMBALL: I’d like to thank our panelists, John O’Sullivan and John Fonte. We are going to proceed without delay to the final panel. There would be an opportunity for questions—those of you who were not able to ask your questions now, please save them and we’ll have some time shortly. Thank you.
ROGER KIMBALL: We will proceed now with our third and final panel. I’m delighted to welcome Andrew McCarthy to give the paper. He will be followed by Judge Robert Bork. Andy?

ANDREW McCARTHY: I’m going to try to comply with Roger’s Prussian efficiency, but I do want to begin by thanking the Bradley Foundation and Hudson Institute for the honor of addressing this gathering this morning, and it’s a special treat to speak at an event that’s framed by the invaluable contributions of Encounter Books. I’m especially grateful to my friend Roger Kimball for giving me an opportunity to share in that.

It’s nearing lunchtime, of course, and more’s the pity for all of you. You may have had a nourishing breakfast. You may have splurged on the Danish. You may even have gone all out and put a splash of half-and-half rather than the two percent milk in your first or second cup of coffee. But let’s be serious—you did it in abject ignorance. You have no idea how many calories you’ve consumed. You may have thought yourself an adult; you may have thought that you pretty much understood the relative risks and rewards of opting for the waffle rather than the fruit cup. But alas, you’re frightfully wrong—at least according to today’s left.

Progressives admit: Our nation is at war against a deadly, incorrigible foe. Iraqi insurgents? The Afghan Taliban? The looming threat of Iranian nukes? Don’t be ridiculous. I speak, of course, of the war on obesity. (Laughter.)

You see, when it comes to their pieties, progressives stridently insist that you must be informed. The peril must be exposed, examined, and explained for you right down to the very last Cheerio. We need knowledge; we need wisdom; and in the progressive worldview we have neither until they have been certified by the central government and emblazoned on our consciousness by its alphabet soup of bureaucracies. So it is that ecstasy has gripped my hometown, the once rough-and-tumble New York City. There, the nanny-in-chief, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, has decreed through the city’s health department that restaurants must henceforth post the calorie count of each menu offering. What could possibly be more critical in a war than providing accurate information about the enemy?

That’s what Mayor Bloomberg’s minions argued to a federal judge when the restaurateurs had the temerity to complain. And you’ll be shocked to learn that the judge enthusiastically agreed with the city. He reasoned that if consumers were properly informed about their fundamental interest in waging this “battle of the bulge,” they would, as he put it, “use the information to select lower-calorie meals.”

“Accurate information would make them safer,” the judge said, “because their informed choices would lead to a lower incidence of obesity.” That’s the way it is, as long as we’re waging a right-minded campaign against trans fats, against secondhand smoke, against drilling for oil in a
barren tundra, against climate change, or against whatever the left’s trendy phantom of the week may be.

Things change starkly, though, when we are confronted with a genuine threat: a real war against real enemies whose mass-murder plots against Americans are, as we’ve seen again and again, only too real. When it comes to the real thing, the jihadists’ threat to our lives and our way of life, we’d prefer not to know. That is the clear message from our diplomatic progressives at Foggy Bottom.

The Bush administration has just circulated guidance, long touted by the State Department and other pockets of Islamophilia, language guidance that would purge “jihadism”—the word—from our public lexicon and thus eradicate from our public consciousness the core ideology that animates our enemies. The Surgeon General believes smokers need a neon warning of the pluperfectly obvious. The State Department, however, does not think jihadism is hazardous to your health. To the contrary, our top policymakers have determined that jihad, like Islam itself, is a public good, and therefore—try to follow this—we should just stop talking about it.

We Western non-Muslims, the thinking goes, must school the world’s 1.4 billion adherents of Islam in what simply must be the truth about their belief system: The real jihad is an internal struggle for personal betterment, a key tenet of the Religion of Peace, or the Religion of Love and Peace, as Secretary of State Rice prefers to put it. Besides, administration officials tell us, as the Associated Press quotes them, “Referring to terrorists a ‘jihadists’ or ‘Islamofascists’ or ‘mujahideen’ may actually boost support for radicals among Arab and Muslim audiences by giving them a veneer of religious credibility, or by causing offense to moderates.”

Of course, if jihad were truly a sublime summons to become a better person, it’s not entirely clear how plowing jumbo jets into skyscrapers and mass murdering civilians could achieve beatification in the eyes of the faithful, droves of whom took to the streets in celebration of the 9/11 atrocities. Nor is it clear why calling a terrorist a jihadist would cause angst for moderates—unless they are pretending that jihad is something other than what it is. And they are. And in doing so they enjoy enormous support from special pleaders strategically dotted throughout the government, to say nothing of their academy and media allies.

Yet, for all its energetic earnestness, the campaign to refashion jihad and crush dissenters is persuasive only in the ivory towers of elites desperate to be persuaded. Down here on the planet Earth, it is futile. The Muslim world is not populated by Western intellectuals hardwired to nuanced white-into-black by legalistic arcana and historical massaging. In large swaths of the ummah, there is rampant illiteracy; education consists of myopic focus on the Koran; and intolerance, especially anti-Semitism, is so rudimentary a part of everyday life that any jihad rooted in “good works in society” would never square with Western liberals’ understanding of that term.

Progressive moderate Muslims would doubtlessly like the concept of jihad to vanish. They are in a battle for authenticity with fundamentalists. Jihad would be far easier to omit than it is to explain away. Indeed, if anyone should resort to the purge of jihad, better it be Muslim reformers striking the concept than US Pollyannas striking the word. To concede jihad’s centrality as an Islamic obligation while distorting its essence can only fatally damage the reformer’s credibility and, hence, the entire reform effort.
Jihad, however, is very unlikely to go away. There are too many Muslims who believe in it, and there would be no Muslim world without it. When it comes to jihad, authenticity is simplicity, and simply stated, jihad is and has always been about forcible, military-type conquest. None less than Bernard Lewis has explained, “Conventionally translated ‘holy war,’ jihad has the literal meaning of ‘striving,’ more specifically in the Koranic phrase, ‘striving in the path of God.’” Some Muslim theologians, particularly in more modern times, have interpreted the duty of “striving in the path of God” in a spiritual or moral sense. The overwhelming majority of early authorities, however, citing relevant passages in the Koran and in the tradition, discuss jihad in military terms. And as the invaluable scholar Ibn Warraq has noted, guess what you find when you look up “jihad” in the celebrated Dictionary of Islam:

**jihad.** A religious war with those who are unbelievers in the mission of Muhammad. It is an incumbent religious duty established in the Koran and in the traditions as a divine institution enjoined specifically for the purpose of advancing Islam.

It’s no wonder that this should be so. The Koran repeatedly enjoins Muslims to fight and slay non-Muslims. “O ye who believe!” commands a famous verse (123) in chapter nine. “Fight those of the disbelievers who are near you, and let them find harshness in you, and know that Allah is with those who keep their duty unto Him.” It is difficult to spin that as a spiritual quest for self-improvement. And there’s plenty more where that came from.

It is an unrelenting fact that Islamic doctrine is the catalyst for the cataracts of Islamic terror raining down on the globe. This does not mean that all or most Muslims will become terrorists, though some percentage will, and a far larger number will sympathize with fundamentalist goals if not terrorist methods. Nor does it mean that Islamic doctrine is not rife with many virtuous, peaceable elements, though many of these trace to the initial peaceful enticements of the Meccan phase of Muhammad’s ministry. Many Muslims believe they were later superceded by the bellicose scriptures of the Medinan period, when the Warrior Prophet spread Islam by the sword.

What all this does mean, though, is that the mortal threat we face is jihadism, which is caused by Islam no less than obesity is caused by high calorie counts, lung cancer by smoking cigarettes, birth defects by imbibing alcohol during pregnancy, and countless lesser risks to our well-being by pathologies our benevolent bureaucrats compel us to confront remorselessly, without any concern that we might be misunderstood as crusading to rid the world of food, or alcohol, or tobacco.

No less do we require accurate information about jihadism to arrive at sound public policy. It is whistling past the graveyard to ignore or minimize the virulent strain of fundamentalist Islam that galvanizes jihadism. And it is positively fatuous to suggest that this ideology hinges on what Americans say about it. Witness, to take just one recent example, the rioting of jihadists in Indonesia who stoned and burned a mosque. Their anger was provoked not by American policy, but by another sect of Muslims, the Ahmadi, because the Ahmadi don’t accept Muhammad as the final prophet or jihad as a divine injunction. It is simply not the case that a mere nineteen terrorists hijacked a peaceful religion, as President Bush hastened to assure Americans while smoke billowed from the Pentagon and lifeless bodies were pulled from the wreckage of the Twin Towers. It is not the case and it was not the case, as the Clinton administration was just as
quick and emphatic to tell the public in 1993 when the World Trade Center was first bombed, that a rag-tag handful of miscreants had perverted the true Islam.

The species of Islam that has spurred these and other attacks has a long and distinguished pedigree. It is fourteen centuries old; it is rooted in the literal commands of the scriptures; it is a project that has engaged high intellects and a belief system that continues to win the allegiance of the educated and the illiterate, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, princes and peons, cutting across even the Sunni and Shiite divide. It may not be the majority construction of the faith, but it is the creed of at least a sizeable minority—and a dynamic one, underwritten by Saudi billions and catapulted by Khomeini’s revolution. Even if it were representative of only, say, twenty percent of the Muslim world, an estimate that may even sell it short, that would translate into over a quarter of a billion people.

By mulishly refusing to see this we put ourselves at great risk. We pretend that influential fundamentalist clerics are out of the mainstream. That’s what we did in 1990 with a guy I prosecuted, who was known as the Blind Sheik, Omar Abdel Rahman. He was no perverter of Islam. To the contrary, he’s better understood as a party-spoiling resister of modernization and anti-literalism.

He was a doctor of Islamic jurisprudence graduated from Al-Azhar University in Egypt, the seat of Sunni learning. His renown as a master of doctrine is exactly what accounted for his influence, and not just his influence among radicals. “Jihad,” he instructed his hordes of admirers, “is the peak of the full embrace of Islam. There is no work that equals it.” He recounted that for over a millennium jihad had unambiguously and unapologetically called for aggressive application of brute force against oppressors and infidels.

“It means fighting the enemies,” he said. Jihad was not about internal betterment, or other efforts at peaceful achievement. It was not to be accomplished by such everyday practices as prayer, mosque attendance, almsgiving, or living a virtuous life. At such suggestions he scoffed, and these words are his: “Jihad is jihad. There is no such thing as commerce, industry, and science in jihad. This is calling things other than by their own name. If God says to do jihad, it means to do jihad with the sword, with the cannon, with the grenades, and with the missile. This is jihad—jihad against God’s enemies for God’s cause and His word.”

The Blink Sheik exhorted followers that it was their duty to wage jihad against any regime that did not govern by Allah’s law, the Shariah. In the short term, this meant in Islamic countries; in the long term, because Islam aspires to global hegemony, it meant throughout the world. There were blazing signs that Abdel Rahman’s acolytes were preparing for just such an offensive in the years before radical Islam declared war by bombing the World Trade Center in 1993. We refused to see them, and I think we still refuse to see them.

Back in 1989 the FBI shut down a surveillance despite witnessing the beginnings of a jihad army conducting paramilitary training on Long Island. The CIA allowed its lavish aid for Afghan mujahideen to flow to the most anti-American elements of the anti-Soviet jihad, elements that promptly turned on the United States once the Russians were defeated. A brazen 1990 killing by Abdel Rahman’s henchman, Sayyid Nosair, the murder of the Jewish Defense League’s founder, Rabbi Meir Kahane, was treated by the authorities as the work of a lone, crazed gunman despite
a wealth of seized evidence proving that Nosair was a member of a jihadist network with much broader ambitions.

Simply stated, we did not take the enemy and his motivations seriously before he announced himself. We did not react seriously in attempting before 9/11 to prosecute him into submission when he attacked again and again. And we are not serious if we believe now that we can define him out of existence.

Thank you.

ROBERT KIMBALL: Thank you, Andy (McCarthy). We will have a response from Judge Bork.

JUDGE ROBERT BORK: Well, I’ve been sitting here desperately trying to make some notes fit the topic this morning. What it reminds me of, in a way, when we discuss this desire of the transnational folks to find a new electorate if the old electorate doesn’t produce the results they want, is that Bertolt Brecht saw that a long time ago when he said that the people had lost the confidence of the government, and a new people would have to be formed. (Laughter.)

The power of ideas is an intriguing topic because no one is sure what that power might be and how to wage the war. Intellectuals, of whom there are perhaps a sufficient number in this room, love the notion of the power of ideas because it suggests that they are the ultimate arbiters of society, and they control matters. And that I suppose springs from Holmes’ famous metaphor that the best test of truth is the power of thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market.

Holmes must have known better than that; the test of truth turned out to be the victory of the Union over the Confederacy in a war in which Holmes was wounded four times. And he cannot have supposed that Gettysburg was the marketplace of ideas. Ideas often are crucial but they must be implemented in many cases by force.

And I think that’s what we think we’re going to face with jihad. Jihad is maybe the latest evil idea. It is quite powerful. Nazism and Communism were very powerful ideas; Nazism lost to force, and Communism came apart when it didn’t produce a decent life for its people. I don’t know how we’re going to persuade—we’re clearly not going to persuade the jihadists that they are wrong, as Andrew (McCarthy) just mentioned. The debate about the superiority of Christianity and Judaism is unlikely to decide the issue in the war that’s upon us.

But what ideas does the West have that are capable of meeting the threat? As Herb London and others have pointed out, much—arguably all—of the West has adopted secularism as its religious idea. Traditional religion is rapidly declining or being eaten away from within. We talk about America still being the most religious society in the world, and in a way that’s true—but you have to examine what the content of that religion is and whether it’s just therapeutic or whether it actually imposes duties and obligations. In any event, secularism is unlikely to produce the kind of fighting spirit or morale that you need to face the jihad. As Robert Goldwin said, you don’t bring cheering throngs into the streets by marching under a banner that reads, “Be reasonable.” (Laughter.)
I once made the entirely unoriginal observation to an eminent social scientist that there is an emptiness at the heart of modern liberal democratic regimes. He said that was not so. I asked, what was at the center? The pursuit of happiness, he said. Thomas Jefferson’s somewhat unfortunate phrase. Although the formulation is empty, it has overtones of an individualism that tends to deny a community spirit. That combines with the high state of technology that in our society has produced a desire for convenience above much else. And the combination of that technology, a desire for convenience, and a lack of central purpose results in the rise of the couch potato, if said folks ever rise.

People for whom comfort and convenience are the meaning of life do not want to think about dangers that are growing but rarely impinge upon their personal, daily lives. Though it once seemed impossible, the memory of 9/11 has faded, and with it has faded the brief spurt of anger and patriotism that followed. The unpopularity of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are evidence that we don’t want our lives disturbed by thinking about even serious threats. Perhaps this is always true in liberal democracies faced with prolonged struggles that threaten comfort, and it may partially account for what Andy McCarthy so well describes as “willful blindness” to the evidence before us of jihad.

Today there’s ample evidence of the power of bad ideas. I think that bad ideas are more clearly formulated than good ideas right now. And among these are the intellectual-class religions of environmentalism, diversity, multiculturalism, and the encouragement throughout our educational system of a grievance mentality.

An acute commentator said that when socialism collapsed as a theory and a practice, liberalism had only anger left. That’s not quite true. In the first place, the socialism of the liberal left was always rooted in anger. The apparent demise of the socialist theoretical framework really required that the anger find new outlets, and environmentalism was the perfect candidate because it is socialism under another name. It involves the same desire to control people’s lives and to punish business and capitalism.

Global warming now rechristened “climate change” is perfect; it’s a crisis in perpetuity. There is no way you’ll ever solve it. One can never solve it so long as humans inhabit the planet. Its connection with jihadism is that the warmers refuse to allow technological steps that we must take in order to resist; I need not go into the question of their opposition to drilling for oil, their opposition to nuclear plants, their opposition to all kinds of things that would increase our national power. Instead, continual and intrusive governmental supervision of the way we live is bound to lower social morale and individual energy as well as foster divisions within our society.

Two related secular religions are diversity and multiculturalism.

We’re constantly told diversity strengthens society and its subsidiary communities. It is, for example, the driving force behind affirmative action throughout our educational system from primary levels to post-graduate and in our economy from entry-level jobs to the executive suites. It’s an obvious falsehood. Anybody who observes university life, for example, will see that racial and ethnic groups tend to segregate themselves rather than to enrich the educational experience. But what common sense tells us about artificially imposed diversity is confirmed by Robert Putnam’s study, which shows that as diversity in the community increases, trust between
individuals and groups declines, and voluntary social work diminishes as do all other forms of social cooperation.

I don’t know what we can do about it now, but it was obvious long ago that homogeneity had some advantages. John Jay, in his Federalist No 2, wrote, “Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country to one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs, and who, by their joint counsels, arms, and efforts, fighting side by side throughout a long and bloody war, have nobly established general liberty and independence.” He said these people should never be split due to a number of unsocial, jealous, and alien sovereignties.

Well, of course we’re well past the time when that kind of homogeneity could be expected in America, and nobody really wishes it to return. But there is something to be said for not speeding up the process of diversity to a point where community feeling becomes impossible, or becomes highly attenuated. I think it’s safe to say, for example, that the Constitution that Jay was advocating in Federalist No. 2 could not be written and ratified today. We’ve become a nation of too many groups—whites, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Muslims, and not to leave anybody out, Native Americans. The document would be swallowed by a voluminous Bill of Rights assuring everybody of non-discrimination as well as special treatment, as the Canadian Charter does. All that would mean is a nation governed by judges uttering politically correct pieties.

Now, I should digress here. When I asked John Sullivan about whether transnationalism had not already invaded our Constitution, I mean by that—if you look at it, I think six or seven of the nine justices have relied upon foreign law, or UN resolutions, or some other material that would not have been thought to be legal material in making decisions. And to that extent, transnationalism has invaded the court. And people who revere the Constitution in substantial measure believe that the Constitution is what the Court says it is. Now there are a few exceptions that are just too raw for everybody to accept—abortion being one. But by and large, the Court is viewed as the guardian of our sacred civic text, and when it begins to import the tenants of transnationalism into our Constitution, something is being weakened that ought not to be.

We’re told that we’re in a global war with jihadism that will last for generations if not for a century or more. The society we are becoming—with environmental socialism, extreme diversity, competing groups, multiculturalism, and grievance politics—is going to have the utmost difficulty in waging a war without tiring and perhaps losing what we value in the West. And we have groups within this society that are constantly attacking our ability to organize ourselves sufficiently to fight that war. The ACLU is the classical example.

I want to close with a quote from Walter Bagehot. What Bagehot said was, “The characteristic danger of great nations like the Romans or the English, which have a long history of continuous creation that, is, that they may at last fail from not comprehending the great institutions which they have created.” And I think that’s our danger today, and it’s a danger that is being met at an intellectual level by Encounter Books and by New Criterion and also by National Review, and Weekly Standard, and American Spectator. So we do have a number of groups that are fighting back intellectually, the war of ideas. Which is only part of the overall war. There isn’t cause for

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4 from “Lord Althorp and the Reform Act of 1832,” published in Fortnightly Review in November of 1876.
despair. I am sometimes viewed as a pessimist, but I deny it. There’s no hope but I deny it. (Laughter.)

And with that I subside.

ROGER KIMBALL: Thank you, Bob (Bork). I know Herb London is fond of quoting Kafka, who said, “There is hope, but not for us.”

(Laughter.)

I don’t know if pessimism is in order, but I think a certain measure of realism is, and while there is plenty to criticize about what the historian Arnold Toynbee wrote, he was probably right when he observed that most civilizations do not die from murder—from external attack—but from suicide.

One of the leitmotifs of our discussion today has been about liberalism and what happens when liberalism disintegrates or when it makes a fetish of certain core values—like tolerance, for example—and becomes empty. And if there is a tendency for liberalism to create a sort of vacuum—I think of something James Burnham, whom I quoted earlier today, wrote in his book *Suicide of the West* about the confrontation between the West and communism. He said that we aren’t going to be able to prevail in this battle if all we have to put against it are things like higher social security payments, universal health care, and things of that nature. We do need to somehow recapture, reanimate, and resuscitate, certain core values—which I believe that we have, that we share. After all, the republic that this country is is not based merely on abstract values like tolerance but real values like the rule of law. These values, the values that animated James Madison, for example, we really need to recover.

How one does that is a complicated process. Certainly I believe that institutions like Encounter Books and the ones that Judge Bork mentioned have a role to play, but so do we all as citizens—in our families, in our communities, in our churches. We need to be less apathetic. We need to speak up more for America, and speak out against anti-Americanism. just by way of response to some of the things that Andy and Judge Bork said.

But we have some time for questions. First, Andy (McCarthy), do you have anything you’d like to say in response to Bob’s comments?

ANDREW McCARTHY: Thank you. I just think that where this all unifies is, we are in a war, and how it will proceed from here on, and how it will ultimately turn out, probably is much more about us than it is about the enemy. The enemy really hasn’t changed in fourteen centuries other than now it has, as I tried to suggest before, the advantages of a lot of money and some nation-state leadership, which it has had from time to time. The question in the equation is about us, and what we ultimately think of ourselves.

David does occasionally be Goliath. The enemy that we’re fighting, aside from many other things that you can say about it, is utterly convinced that they’ll win. They understand who they are. They understand what it is that they believe. And they believe that they’ll be successful, and they think the trajectory of history is on their side. When they bombed the American embassy and the Marine barracks in Lebanon and the United States picked up stakes and left; when they
did the same thing in Somalia and the United States left again; when they waged a jihad against the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union not only left but faded out of existence; and when they conducted an operation like 9/11 and the mighty Twin Towers became just a gaping hole in the ground, they took it as a sign and as confirmation that history is on their side, and if they just hang in long enough, because they are more confident in who they are than we are in who we are, they believe they can win.

JULIANA PILON: First of all, I want to put a plug in for your book, Andy (McCarthy), it should be required reading. The nice thing about it is that it’s a page-turner. Nevertheless, if I may take exception to—

ANDREW McCARTHY:—I don’t like that “nevertheless”! (Laughter.)

JULIANA PILON: Well, I think it’s fair to say that “jihadism” is not necessarily an ideal way to describe our enemy because of the obvious ambiguity at the root. I think what you’re really reflecting, and what Roger very succinctly picked up on, is that we do have some problems in defining ourselves in positive terms. When communism was still kicking we could call ourselves anti-communist and make it clear that we are the opposite. Both liberalism and democracy share a certain problem—namely, that they are process oriented.

Liberalism allows freedom for something, or freedom against—even more negative—freedom against coercion, for example. Why are we reluctant to use, perhaps—because I haven’t heard it all morning—a term such as “humanism,” perhaps “spiritual humanism,” in order to dispel the idea that it may be nihilist or even secular. It need not be. Why are we having difficulties? Is it perhaps because the very concept of an “ism,” as such, is what we abhor in a liberal society?

ANDREW McCARTHY: I guess the problem is that what we’re trying to define is what we’re fighting against. And that kind of objectifies the enemy rather than being a commentary on us, even if we are the variable in the equation. Let me just take one aspect of what you said and agree with it, even though it may not be as you meant it.

I think that it may well be that we focus too much on jihad. That’s not to say that jihad is unimportant. I think jihadism is the enemy, and I think it’s utterly appropriate to call it that. But because—at least in the West—there’s a dispute about what “jihad” means, I think that has riveted our attention away from what may be a much bigger problem, which is Shariah. And as we argue out whether jihad is a holy war against us or whether it’s a spiritual quest for individual betterment, what goes on under the radar—and I try to get into this in the paper—is this creeping Shariah into our institutions, our government institutions, culturally in the academy, and throughout our society. And while we have our eye on the jihad ball, that may end up being a much bigger challenge to us.

ROGER KIMBALL: I think that what Victor Davis Hanson spoke about this morning, a cultural amnesia, can supply some of the lack that you notice there. I mean, our educational institutions have failed miserably in supplying those exempla that Victor spoke about. And that is certainly one way in which to provide some of the content that—you’re right—is missing.

FAITH McDONNELL, Institute on Religion & Democracy: After the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, a friend of mine who had lived in Khartoum was watching television and saw
her former bag boy as one of the perpetrators who was involved in that, and that makes me want
to ask you, are you concerned with the fact that the US government’s whole approach on Sudan
has been a humanitarian one—completely—rather than addressing it as a jihadist state that’s not
only attempting to “Islamize” and “Arabize” all the Sudanese but is an active participant in
global jihad, I believe, and also that the US government seems to believe that the Islamic regime
in Khartoum is cooperating with us in the war on terrorism?

ANDREW McCARTHY: Well, I’m concerned that I didn’t subpoena your friend! (Laughter.)
But I actually think that the approach to Sudan has been all wrong, and that’s not anything that’s
recent. We proved in the 1995 trial of the 1993 plot that two diplomats in the Sudanese embassy
at the United Nations were complicit in the plot and were helping the jihadists by providing them
with diplomatic plates so that they could bring a bomb-laden van onto the United Nations
complex in Manhattan and help blow it up. Not much was publicly made out of that, but they had
diplomatically immunity and they couldn’t be prosecuted. They were declared persona non grata
and thrown out of the country.

In 1998, after the embassies were bombed, the Clinton administration retaliated with one day of
cruise missiles. One of the targets famously attacked was a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan. The
reason that the factory was attacked was because it was thought by our intelligence to be a joint
venture among Al Qaeda, the Sudanese government, and the government of Iraq to develop
chemical weapons. And when the 9/11 Commission pressed Clinton administration officials on
that—including President Clinton, as I understand—during the interview, they continued to hold
to the view that that’s exactly what it is. So, the problem of Sudanese state sponsorship of
terrorism is not anything new, and I think that it is something that should have been addressed in
a serious way a long time ago.

MARK KRIKORIAN, Center for Immigration Studies: I agree completely that we need to fight
against this elite unwillingness to confront and name the enemy in a variety of ways. But, I
would suggest we also need to acknowledge it and incorporate it in planning how we confront
jihadists. In other words, we have two options—rollback or containment, to put it in earlier,
simple terminology. Against previous enemies where there wasn’t this kind of elite
disagreement—against the Nazis and the Japanese—we pursued rollback. Against the Soviets,
we had, actually, a similar problem; much of the elite was anti-anti-Communist, and I would
submit that that’s one of the reasons containment ended up having to be our strategy, and it
ended up working.

I am actually completely confident that we are going to win and they’re not going to win. My
point is: Does this unwillingness to name the enemy have to be one of the things we factor into
our strategy on how to confront jihadism? Might containment rather than rollback be a more
viable and sustainable strategy precisely because of this elite unwillingness to name the enemy?

JUDGE ROBERT BORK: How do you contain a group that is worldwide and hard to identify?
It’s not like the Soviets, where you could contain their armies or deter their armies. I don’t know
how you contain a group like al-Qaeda.

ANDREW McCARTHY: Mark, let me just add to that that just on the legal aspect of it, there are
important changes. If I get this wrong, I hope Judge Bork will correct me, but there have been
important changes in the law in the last half-century, particularly in the interpretation of the First
Amendment in the 1960s and 1970s, that make a legal response a lot more complicated now than it may have been during the Cold War. For example, the Supreme Court has, at best, confused what the difference is, I think, between advocacy on the one hand, and instruction. It’s made it problematic to criminalize, for example, being a member of an organization like the Communist Party.

We had a raging debate in our office during the terrorism prosecutions of 1990s about whether it was a crime to be a member of al-Qaeda. I thought it was, because as I understood the al-Qaeda conspiracy, you couldn’t be in it without agreeing, essentially, to be in a conspiracy against the United States that was intended to kill Americans. Other people forcefully argued that under the Supreme Court’s precedence of the 1950s, ‘60s, and ‘70s, you could no longer criminalize being a member of an entity without doing something more affirmative to carry out its forcible designs. I just think it’s more complicated than it used to be.

JUDGE ROBERT BORK: You’re both right. It should be a crime, under any sensible approach, and the Supreme Court has prevented it from being a crime.

ROGER KIMBALL: That’s why it’s so important, as we were saying this morning, to be able to call things by their right names. I know, for example, that Gordon Brown’s government has recently re-baptized Islamic terrorism as anti-Islamic activity.

JUDGE ROBERT BORK: John O’Sullivan... (off mike) arouse the public, and I wonder when they’re going to get aroused! (Laughter.)

ROGER KIMBALL: Yes, Hillel?

HILLEL FRADKIN, Hudson Institute: I actually want to—not on her behalf, but on my own behalf—withdraw the “nevertheless” from the praise that Juliana (Pilon) first offered. It seems to me that your remarks today were very correct, Andy (McCarthy), in putting the stress on the fact that we are in a very strange situation now, where people are trying to deal with this problem by essentially saying it doesn’t exist, or defining it in such a way that it disappears from our speech. In that regard, what you have to say is really very important, and it’s really very important that Encounter helps it reach people—because it won’t reach them from the more obvious sources, which would be our academy’s experts on Islam, who are now extremely complicit in the attempt to deny that the problem exists or to actually insist that the problem really lies with America, the American public, and especially it’s most vicious anti-Muslim instincts. So, it’s really terribly, terribly important.

It’s also just very curious; I’m not aware of another situation, even looking back to our conflict with the Soviet Union, where people just simply were inclined to deny the problem altogether or to place the onus for it completely and utterly on the United States. There were, of course, certain people who did in Cold War, but everyone kind of admitted that there was some issue out there. This is unlike that in its extremity, and I just want to thank you for fighting against it.

ROGER KIMBALL: We have time for one maybe more brief question. Yes?

NESTOR FORSTER: Just a brief question. I have no question that on a civilizational scale,
jihadism is the big enemy of America, but I think we are too quick to dismiss the whole communist threat, you know, just because the Soviet Union ended eighteen years ago.

Anti-American sentiment throughout the world has increased a lot since the defeat of Soviet communism, and we cannot attribute this growth only to radical Islamism. So, I’d like to hear your comments. I think that the Chinese Communist Party thinks that communism is very much alive. So do the faculty of many American universities. And I agree with Judge Bork that environmentalism is the new face of socialism today, but so are all of these agendas on the left—gay rights, radical feminism, and so on. How do we fight this more complex, several-headed enemy?

ROGER KIMBALL: If I could just call to your attention a brilliant essay by a member of the audience, Irving Kristol, called “My Cold War,” written shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union. He said that his cold war is not over, because one institution after the next of Western society is being infiltrated by these various bad things. And I think you’re probably right, in that sense, that the Cold War is not over. Andrew?

ANDREW McCARTHY: My only reaction to that is to say, I don’t mean by focusing my remarks on jihadism to trivialize any other problem. But let me just put it as bluntly as I can: jihadism is the challenge that is on the main stage right now. It’s the most obvious one. And if we react to it with weakness; if we put our heads in the sand; if we decline to deal with it even as it becomes more serious, then I think that has an exacerbating effect on all of the other challenges. It really is front and center now, and if we are unwilling to deal with the main, present danger to us, I don’t see how that doesn’t just make everything else much worse.

ROGER KIMBALL: Well, I’d like to thank all of the panelists, all the discussants today, for participating in what I think has been a marvelous conversation, and all of you for helping to make it possible.

You know, the sage of Ecclesiastes said (in 12:12) that of making many books there is no end. I don’t think he’s very pleased about the prospect, either, but I like to think that he would smile benignly on some of the efforts that we undertake at Encounter Books. We are deeply, deeply grateful to the Hudson Institute’s Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal, and, of course, to the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation for making our work possible. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)
III. Biographies


John Fonte joined the Hudson Institute in March 1999 as a senior fellow and director of the Center for American Common Culture. His forthcoming book, Sovereignty or Submission: Will Americans Rule Themselves or be Ruled by Others? will be published by Encounter Books in 2009. Fonte has been a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute where he directed the Committee to Review National Standards under the chairmanship of Lynne V. Cheney. He also served as a senior researcher at the U.S. Department of Education and a program administrator at the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). He is currently on the board of the American Council for Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). Fonte has testified before Congress on immigration, assimilation, citizenship, citizenship naturalization and on civil rights issues, and has served as a consultant for state departments of education, several private organizations, and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. He was a member of the steering committee for the congressionally-mandated National Assessment for Education Progress (NAEP) which issued the “nation’s report card” on civics and government. Fonte’s articles and essays on citizenship, history, civic education, patriotism, assimilation, civil rights,
global organizations, American sovereignty, and liberal democracy have appeared in dozens of journals, magazines, and newspapers. He is co-editor of *Education for America’s Role in World Affairs* (University Press), a book on civic and world affairs education used in universities and teacher training institutes. His ideas on democratic sovereignty and international law were cited in the annual *New York Times Magazine’s* “Year in Ideas” as among the most noteworthy of 2004.

**Victor Davis Hanson** is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, a professor emeritus at California University, Fresno, and a nationally syndicated columnist for Tribune Media Services. He is also the Wayne & Marcia Buske Distinguished Fellow in History, Hillsdale College, where he teaches each fall courses in military history and classical culture. He was a full-time farmer before joining CSU Fresno, in 1984 to initiate a classics program. In 1991, he was awarded an American Philological Association Excellence in Teaching Award, which is given yearly to the country’s top undergraduate teachers of Greek and Latin. Hanson was a National Endowment for the Humanities fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, California (1992-93), a visiting professor of classics at Stanford University (1991-92), a recipient of the Eric Breindel Award for opinion journalism (2002), and an Alexander Onassis Fellow (2001) and was named alumnus of the year of the University of California, Santa Cruz (2002). He was also the visiting Shifrin Chair of Military History at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland (2002-3). He received the Manhattan Institute’s Wriston Lectureship in 2004, and the 2006 Nimitz Lectureship in Military History at UC Berkeley in 2006. Hanson is the author of hundreds of articles, book reviews, scholarly papers, and newspaper editorials on matters ranging from Greek, agrarian and military history to foreign affairs, domestic politics, and contemporary culture. He has written or edited sixteen books, including *Mexifornia: A State of Becoming* (Encounter, 2003), *Ripples of Battle* (Doubleday, 2003), and *Between War and Peace* (Random House, 2004). His newest book, *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*, was published by Random House in October 2005, and was named one of the *New York Times* Notable 100 Books of 2006.


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