

A Sensitized World Order

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In *Promised Land, Crusader State*, Walter A. McDougall traces the stages in the evolution of American foreign policy from the country's founding. Focusing on two biblical images, the Hebraic notion, picked up from the Puritans, of a godly society removed from a world of sinners, and a militarized Christian mission to convert the heathens, if necessary by the sword, McDougall shows how the second image has come to replace the first for American international relations.⁽ⁿ¹⁾ The most recent phase of these relations is "global meliorism," a tendency McDougall finds to be ascending since the 1960s. It is vividly exemplified by President Lyndon B. Johnson's comments about extending domestic wars against poverty to other societies far away. McDougall cites as an illustration of this melioristic aim a speech given by Johnson at Johns Hopkins University on April 7, 1965, calling for "a greatly expanded co-operative effort" to bring American-style prosperity to Indochina: "We dream of a world where all are fed and charged with hope. And we shall make it so."⁽ⁿ²⁾

McDougall is right to distinguish such a view of American foreign relations from the "liberal internationalism" once associated with Woodrow Wilson and FDR. For these earlier internationalists, the goal of foreign policy was international cooperation, to be achieved under Anglo-American auspices, and occasional support for the principle of national self-determination. But liberal internationalists did not hope to make the world over to suit American tastes; and the ideals they invoked, as noted by McDougall, could be articulated on the eve of US entry into WWII by non-interventionists as well as by fervent Anglophiles.⁽ⁿ³⁾ More importantly, these ideals were not sufficient for the polarized world of the Cold War or for a struggle that lasted as long as that war did. With the future of the globe hanging in the balance, it may have been inevitable that the US should present its own side as the only alternative model to the Communist example -- a tendency already prefigured in the earlier struggle waged against Nazism and fascism. Moreover, as the US expanded its welfare state, amid expressions of self-congratulations, it became common to interpret this political appendage as basic to the American way of life. By 1966, McDougall observes, South Vietnam received 44% of USAID's entire budget. Though this funding often disappeared into a black hole, it was considered necessary to build Vietnamese prosperity as a precondition for an anti-Communist Vietnamese democracy. The American practice of throwing federal money at domestic problems was being applied to international trouble spots as well.⁽ⁿ⁴⁾

While this analysis is both useful and accurate, it omits mention of another pressure leading to global meliorism: the dynamics and ideology of the American managerial state. In a defense of the Vietnamese war made by Johnson in 1966, Americans were told that "our foreign policy must always be an extension of our domestic policy. Our safest guide to what we do abroad is always what we do at home." Thus our military involvement in Southeast Asia "had its origin in the same presidential impulse that gave rise to the Great Society."⁽ⁿ⁵⁾

This speech is paradigmatic for a view of American foreign policy that continues to be dominant. This view already existed embryonically in the 1960s, but by the 1970s, during the Nixon-Kissinger era, foreign policy considerations shifted from geopolitical interest to the

propagation of "American values." In the 1980s, the notion of global democracy came to dominate Cold War strategy, as welfare-state antiCommunism became a defining mark of the struggle against Soviet imperialism. The National Endowment for Democracy and Reagan's security advisor Elliot Abrams typified the new course in combatting the Communist enemy, now viewed as anti-Semitic, opposed to the international labor movement, and essentially "anti-democratic."⁽ⁿ⁶⁾ The same set of ideas was also turned against the authoritarian Right, as the US backed the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines and to the overthrow of Augusto Pinochet in Chile. This flowering of internationalist idealism had support from across the American political spectrum. What divided the Left and the Right was only the question of whether the US government was to get tough with the Communists as well as with the authoritarian Right. Neither American faction fussed over distinctions between internal and external politics; both approached foreign relations in the context of a massive proselytizing enterprise.⁽ⁿ⁷⁾

Whereas the meliorism pushed by Lyndon Johnson consisted for the most part of bringing the Great Society to Indochina, by the end of the century, as NATO forces bombed Serbia, President Clinton announced to a G8 Summit in Bonn that "the new millennium" required a world "without ethnic hate." In an address to the Humanitarian Relief Organization on April 14, 1999, Clinton again justified military action against Serbia for driving Albanians out of Kosovo as an assault on bigotry. The "common future" was "threatened by the oldest problem of human society, our tendency to fear and dehumanize people who are different from ourselves."⁽ⁿ⁸⁾ Prime Minister Blair hailed this military operation as a blow against the obsolete notion of national sovereignty and helped organize a Commission for Democratic Education that would operate in conjunction with NATO.⁽ⁿ⁹⁾ Headed by a director and deputy director sympathetic to feminist and expressive freedoms, this commission would function as a disseminator of pro-diversity attitudes, understood both in the ethnic and social senses. A similar mission is being tackled by the Canadian foreign ministry, partly in cooperation with the Organization of American States, throughout the Western Hemisphere. Sending authorized military and civilian personnel to instruct Third World Hispanic and Amerindian populations in feminist values and practices and in the proper organization of family relations, Canadian government publications now identify these efforts with the spreading of diversity. In a highly instructive interview, held on March 31, 1999, President Clinton responded to a query by CBS commentator Dan Rather concerning his "pent-up feelings" about having to send young people into "the valley of the shadow of death." "I do have pent-up feelings and I think the President is supposed to keep a lot of feelings pent-up. But let me say I think throughout human history one of the things that has most bedeviled human beings is their inability to get along with people that are different than they are, and their vulnerability to be led by demagogues who play on their fear of people who are different than they are."⁽ⁿ¹⁰⁾

This new internationalism, as suggested by Clinton and Blair, aims at nothing less than a transformation of human consciousness. In this respect it is light years away from that liberal internationalism that gained vogue in the first half of the 20th century. In its visionary scope, the new meliorism goes beyond material tinkering in far off places, such as Johnson's attempt to export the Great Society. What the current project seeks to do is to overcome history as the cumulative record of prejudice, by extending the domestic revolution in sensitivity to other parts of the globe. Calling this neo-Wilsonianism misses its radical nature. Thus, when Charles Gati, Flora Lewis, Morton Kondracke, and Ben Wattenberg wrote passionately in favor of American intensive involvement in reconstructing post-Communist East Central Europe in the early 1990s, they mistakenly identified their plan as Wilsonian.⁽ⁿ¹¹⁾ Their

consuming interest in "exporting American democratic values" to an area supposedly grappling with an authoritarian past has a far more contemporary origin. Neither Wilson nor FDR had proposed that the US commit itself to "moralizing" societies with whom Americans were not at war.

While Wilsonians and the current meliorists have both been in favor of the US playing world police, the second are ideologically more intrusive. They also generally favor post-national units of political control, like the European Community, and insist that these instruments be used to advance fashionable social agendas, such as promoting gay rights internationally. The enforcement of the gay agenda among EC members has been going on since the mid-1990s, in the framework of advancing "human rights." Thus, recently the EC commanded the British armed forces to create a more welcoming environment for gays, on the grounds that they had been heretofore excluded from some aspects of British military life.(n12)

In the last year, this value-imposition has taken another form in the US and in the EC, treating those who are perceived to be outside the prescribed value-consensus as a "threat" to international peace. The angry responses by EC-officials, such as Romano Prodi, and various Western political dignitaries to the granting of a minor cabinet-level post in the Austrian government to Jorg Haider included references to a new international threat. American security advisor Sandy Berger warned that his country would not sit idly by in the face of what was going on in Austria.(n13) Throughout February 2000, there were many other warnings by, among others, the US President and Secretary of State, the Italian, French, and Belgian premiers, and the British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary. In all of them references were made to Haider as a global danger, for opposing immigration into his country, recalling Hitler's "successful employment policy" and opining that "decent people" could be found among the Waffen SS.(n14) The upshot of the warnings issued by various heads of state was summed up by the director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, which had been set up in Vienna to report on the alleged assault on democracy there. Director Beate Winkler expressed anguish that "Europe is going through a dangerous phase. There is an increased move away from centrist positions, and rightwing, even far right positions are losing their taboo." Then, to underline the danger of the present drift, Winkler brought up the specter of the past: "It starts with discrimination, then comes exclusion, and it can go as far as the Holocaust."(n15)

Despite Haider's subsequent departure from the Austrian government, after partially apologizing for his faux pas, neither the EC nor the offended Western political figures thought the "crisis" was over. Measures to quarantine Austria economically and diplomatically remained in force through the spring of 2000, as long as EC leaders continued to fear that democracy was endangered.(n16) Meanwhile, to avoid other "anti-democratic" threats, German Chancellor Schroder sent warnings to the Italian government that grave repercussions would follow if right-of-center politician Gianfranco Fini were allowed back into a national cabinet. For those who follow such arcane matters, it might be mentioned that Fini's Alleanza Nazionale had incorporated, among other ailing factions, the Movimento Sociale Italiano, a predominantly Southern Italian neo-fascist, pro-American party (subsidized by the CIA) that had crested by the late 1950s.(n17)

Weekly Standard editors William Kristol and Robert Kagan provided a counterfactual picture of international relations when, in *Foreign Affairs* (1996) they set out to defend a "neo-Reaganite perspective." From the authors' pleas for a foreign policy to accompany "the remoralization of America at home" and admonitions about the "relativistic multiculturalism"

being practiced by American diplomats, it would seem that American foreign affairs are being conducted by raving nihilists. Allegedly reflecting this cynicism is an unwillingness to "recognize that the principles of the Declaration of Independence are not merely the choices of a particular culture but are universal, enduring, self-evident truths." Some conservatives had drifted into the prevalent cynicism by embracing "the pinched nationalism of [Pat] Buchanan's 'America First,' where the appeal to narrow self-interest masks a deeper form of self-loathing."(n18) The references to the hidden motives of American neo-isolationists and the insistence that the Declaration of Independence properly read mandates an activist and even missionizing foreign policy are both open to question. Even more so is the underlying assumption that the current American foreign policy has been divorced from moral concerns.

The opposite seems to be the case. The UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva features almost daily orations and policy statements, many given by American and British leaders, on what must be done to combat "xenophobia" and "ethnic hate" internationally.(n19) In February and March 2000 Western political celebrities weighed in against the "fascist" danger in Austria, competing with each other to find a sufficiently grim punishment for Austrians, whether or not they voted for Haider. Secretary of State Albright dug her fingers in deeper by scolding the Austrians for "not making peace with their past."(n20) All of this came less than a year after the bombing of Belgrade and Pristina, presented as the punishment for ethnic hate taking the form of ethnic cleansing. In short, there is no evidence that, under the impact of multicultural professors, Americans are pursuing amoral international relations. The problem is not a drift into relativism, but, rather, according to Henry Kissinger, a plunge into theocratic politics in a new key. Western states are lapsing into liturgical formulas each time they try to talk about politics.(n21)

Equally apparent is the critical observation by the Canadian journalist Eric Margolis that the current moralizing about historical sins is always directed against the Right: "Italy's prime minister Massimo D'Alema has been Haider's most vocal European critic. What chutzpah! D'Alema is a 'modern' Communist. His Communist party is part of Italy's growing coalition. Communists, let's recall, murdered 100 million civilians last century, Hitler 12 million. According to the Euro double standard, reformed Communists are dandy, but anyone to the right of the moderate left must be an extremist or a Nazi."(n22) Margolis's insight is entirely correct (save for the designation of Socialist D'Alema as a member of the Italian Communist Party). Euro-Communists and their Socialist allies have been relentless in calling for action against politically incorrect figures and statements, while ignoring the beams in their own eyes. This strategy, adopted in the wake of the Soviet collapse, may be intended to deflect attention from the evidence of Communist brutality and the craven cover-ups provided by Western Communist parties. It is also an attempt by Socialist leaders to truckle to Communist coalition-partners, by turning public anger against exaggerated anti-establishment dangers on the Right.

The present double standard fits into an apparently irremovable fixation of Western intellectual elites; an anachronistic, but steadily adapted confrontational setting between the Right and the Left. Presumably, this raise en scene dates back to Europe in the 1930s. Hence, the endless reenactments of what Ernst Nolte calls "the European civil war"(n23) that once took place between Communists and fascists and their respective devotees. Warnings are sounded stressing the obsolescence of this frame of reference, as when two moderately left-of-center journalists, Tony Judt and Jacob Weisberg, suggested that the attacks on Haider evoked the wrong historical parallels. We are no longer living in the 1930s; while Haider, moreover, has made reckless statements in reaching out to an older generation, he is essentially a critic

of sclerotic socialist bureaucracy; finally, Austria in 2000 is not the same depression-wracked, broken society that welcomed Hitler's occupying armies in 1938.(n24)

Obsessing about right-wing extremism takes the form of returning to Hitler each time Western governments impose sanctions or go to war against "human rights" violators, be it Saddam Hussein or Slobodan Milosevic. One mocking journalist has suggested creating a "Hitler of the Month Club" to which international malefactors are now routinely consigned.(n25) Essential to this demonization is the appearance of Elie Wiesel on news programs for the purpose of comparing some breaking international crisis to Hitler's Final Solution.(n26) Although these lamentations may appeal to those already converted, there is the snag of Wiesel's contradicting himself when he asserts that Nazi crimes were "uniquely" evil. On March 24, 1999, in a televised address to the American people explaining the war against Serbia, President Clinton furnished his own gloss on modern history: "Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where WWI began. WWII and the Holocaust engulfed this region. In both wars Europe was slow to recognize the dangers and the US waited even longer to enter the conflict."(n27)

Although neither Clinton nor most of his listeners may know what really occurred in the Balkans in 1914 or in the early 1940s, it may be useful to underline the fanciful nature of this appeal to History. WWI broke out because the major powers did not resist plunging into a Balkan crisis; it is doubtful that US entanglement in that crisis would have led to peace instead of widening the conflict. As for the Holocaust that took place in the Balkans, it was not the Serbs, but the Bosnian and Albanian Muslims who worked for the Nazis in rounding up and killing Jews and Serbs. It testifies to the power of the Holocaust as a malleable symbol and to general historical ignorance that it could be applied to a situation so thoroughly unlike the one that had befallen Serbia in 1941.

Illustrative of the kind of blame game that centers on historical burdens and symbols is the loud disagreement now heard in the Italian Senate over a national "day of remembrance" for the Holocaust. While the Center-Left (which now prominently includes the Communists in Western Europe) pushed through the House of Deputies on January 27 a remembrance of "Nazi-fascist" atrocities, the bill nonetheless has been stalled in the Senate. The Center-Right insists on a modification that would extend the official remembrance to "all victims of political tyranny," and the Center-Left and its journalistic sympathizers have responded by attacking this as a subterfuge.(n28) Supposedly, the Right is trying to "refocus responsibility for not hesitating to pass the anti-Semitic legislation of 1938 that deprived Jews [in fascist Italy] of public positions and then, for collaborating in the deportation of Italian Jews." Hence, the desperate efforts to divert attention from the rightist male oscuro of anti-Semitism by bringing up the already half-forgotten crimes of non-Western Communists. An unabashedly partisan columnist, Clelia Piperno, explains the matter as follows: Unlike alleged Communist crimes, anti-Semitism must remain a pressing daily concern. Given the presence of Holocaust-deniers and the furtive painting of Swastikas on buildings, it must be assumed that "anti-Semitism is a plant that seems to have infinite roots and with which humanity will have to grapple forever."(n29)

Presumably, Communists and Socialists will explain how to come to terms with this male oscuro by banning inappropriate communications, as they have already begun to do in Italy, and by decrying the notice taken of Communist mass murder as a tactic of fascist self-defense. The most astonishing part of this brief, however, is the implied identification of the Polo coalition (headed by Italian TV magnate Silvio Berlusconi) with Fascist Party deputies

who voted for the Jewish-exclusion act of 1938. Almost equally misleading is the confounding of those fascist deputies with the government of the Salo Republic, formed more than 5 years later. Although there were participants, starting with Mussolini, active in both, the two governments were quite distinct, the latter having been set up as a Nazi puppet state after the Allied invasion of Italy. Both Italian Black Brigades and the Nazi SS were the ones directly responsible for the deportation of Italian Jews in 1944. This was a moral crime, but one that had nothing to do with the present members of the Polo coalition. One might wonder why this fictive connection continues to be made without drawing widespread critical attention.(n30)

Those who engage in this practice are not, for the most part, Marxists or Marxist-Leninists. One would be hard put to demonstrate that Jospin, Prodi, Schroder or any other vocal anti-fascist embraces dialectical materialism or is about to nationalize key industries in his country. It is not Communism, but anti-anti-Communism that drives many of those who feign ignorance of Communist mass murder. In the 1980s, Jean-Francois Revel, a former Communist, pointed out that to be against Communism means being "anti-progressive" and therefore being cheek by jowl with right-wing extremists.(n31) When Angela Davis spoke at Harvard University in December 1991 and deplored the downfall of East European Communist regimes, she received a standing ovation from a crowd of more than 500 professors and students. (200 other members of the Harvard community watched Davis' performance over closed-circuit television.) It is unlikely that this approval, apparently shared by the Harvard Crimson, was expressed for the decrepit tyrannies that had recently fallen and which, in many cases, had bestowed awards on the speaker,(n32) The thunderous applause was more likely being bestowed on the anti-fascist cause Davis presumes to speak for and which her well-wishers identify with a feminist, black, socialist revolutionary. She and her side are imagined as being locked in combat with international fascism.

Furthermore, the unconquered fascist past has a remarkably fluid content. It keeps taking the shape of whatever is deemed politically incorrect, be it restrictions on immigration, customary gender distinctions, or making a fuss about a European national heritage. While reasonable people may disagree about the merits of any or all of these positions, it is a bit of a stretch from there to generic fascism or to its gruesome Hitlerian subtype. But that stretch is negotiable as soon as one appeals to a hypothetical regression, i.e., to the idea that one slippery slope leads to an even more perilous one. Presumably, if one accepts indelicate social premises one opens oneself and others up to a desensitization process that might culminate in Haiderism or even worse. After all, Haiderism, like Hitlerism, is about excluding the other and appealing to national solidarity, and as soon as one allows such drawing of distinctions into public discussion, all hell might break loose, particularly since the prejudice in question is said to suffuse the Western subconscious.

A question that arises here is to what extent the new internationalism is to be applied to non-Western societies. Are non-Westerners fit targets for the behavioral policies that Western governments are now imposing on their own willing subjects? Allegedly, there are historical circumstances that make these policies particularly applicable to the Western white Christian populations on which they are now being tested. If these groups and their ancestors have been associated with the system of oppression delineated by liberal Christians, designated minorities, and the media, they would seem to be the ones most in need of reconstruction. Defenders of multiculturalism have also argued that the "identities" granted to Western victims are necessary for their moral validation. Women, blacks, and Amerindians, in the view of Charles Taylor, have had to fashion for themselves "positive identities" as part of the

"politics of recognition" and to overcome the "negative, devaluing identity" thrust upon them by others.(n33) This selective identitarian politics is also isomorphic with the kind practiced by the managerial state at home. Viewed through the prism of state-sponsored diversity, the claim of Southern whites to a unique cultural identity does not earn the same respect as black or Hispanic efforts at consciousness-raising. Indeed, the Southern white claim to identity is treated as a stubborn indisposition to atone for the past, while the black or Hispanic one is something forced by the federal government on institutions of learning.

Other considerations would seem to necessitate a mission to the Third World on behalf of groups who rate as historic victims in the West. As Rene Girard has observed, the "victimophilie" that increasingly pervades Western Christianity is still, like Christianity itself, universalist in scope.(n34) It must therefore dawn on Western Christian victimologists that many of their "suffering just" are at least as victimized outside of the Western world as within it. The sneering comments that Anglo-American prelates made about their conservative counterparts in Asia and Africa at the Lambeth Anglican conference in the summer of 1999 may portend even stormier encounters between liberal and non-Western Christians. Although, in the Balkans, Western leaders and journalists took the side of Muslims against Christians, by the fall of 1999 a new political spirit was evident. National newspapers in the US and England were calling for action, and not ruling out military force, to impose gender equality on Muslim Afghanistan.(n35) The two positions are not necessarily at odds: if sides must be taken between Christians and Muslims, the new internationalism will rally to the Muslims, everything being equal, as it is not when Russian power becomes a factor, as it does in Muslim Chechnya. On the other hand, when the conflict is between the demands of feminists and a non-Western patriarchal religion, it is clear who trumps whom. It is also clear which side exercises more influence in Western countries.

Finally, the politics of recognition is no more than what its name signifies, i.e., the reduction of identity to a political tool that elites may wield as they see fit. The increasingly tortured efforts to define group identity among multiculturalists always come back to the need to validate what is arbitrary. This arbitrariness operates in two ways. Identity, for Richard Rorty and Charles Taylor, is a subjective choice, which may help provide a cultural dimension or be an ideological stance(n36) (The two are not mutually exclusive). It is not a condition that defines the subject, but something that the subject may assume for a particular reason at a particular point.(n37) 'Presumably, identity is a condition that one may slough off as one's position in life changes --or as one ceases to feel victimized.

Identity as recognition, however, is something that must be granted, which means (and here the multiculturalists are politically right) by those in power or by those who intend to seize it. The predicate does not have an ontological status that adheres to it, as in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, or an evolutionary, but more or less fixed character, as in the anthropology of classical conservatism. As here understood, identity is neither about universal qualities of likeness or unlikeness nor about an acculturating process, family bonding, and shared genes. Rather, postmodernist identity has a relational and confrontational content and is contingent on being recognized by those who matter.(n38) This last qualification is essential for understanding its connection to the managerial state and to that state's internationalist project. Identity can be extended or denied, depending on whether a group is beneficial to what that regime is undertaking to do. This remains the case even with an ideology of sensitivity to victims and of overcoming one's historical burdens. There are some victims the state may wish to help more than other ones or some burdens that seem more in need of overcoming.

Such political choices may involve underscoring the culpability of the Western society now being overcome, but need not necessarily do so.

Finally, these choices do not have to target Westerners in trying to bring about cultural and mental changes. In advertising the largest meeting ever of the OAS, scheduled to convene in Windsor in Spring, 2000, the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs expressed its commitment to making the gathering "more inclusive, conducted in a spirit of international transparency and openness."⁽ⁿ³⁹⁾ But, while this apparent statement of good will was framed in multicultural cliché, it also revealed a starkly imperialist intention. The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs gave as "Canada's goal" for sponsoring OAS activities the promotion of "the Inter-American Children's Institute, the Inter-American Commission of Women, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights." Every one of these organizations the CD of FA designates as integral to "the family of Inter-American institutions" operates explicitly to change social patterns in traditional non-Western societies. Whether or not one supports these groups, Third-World critics who present them and UN agencies involved in reconditioning populations as instruments of Western imperialism are correct.⁽ⁿ⁴⁰⁾ These advocates of behavior modification point to the fact that the extending of Western domestic politics to the international scene is now reaching out beyond a Western base.

Despite the rejection of traditional Western identities inherent in this new mission, it is nonetheless attached to a geographically as well as socially expanding form of control. This situation of an imperial mission with a changing moral and cultural content is not something unprecedented. It was illustrated equally well by the transformation of the Roman Empire from a pagan to a Christian imperium. By the end of the 4th century, the Roman mission was no longer the *renovatio antiquitatis* preached by Augustus and Virgil, but the creation of a *respublica christiana*. A Christianized Rome was charged by the Emperor Theodosius to eradicate paganism, including its own ancestral religious past.⁽ⁿ⁴¹⁾ In a less natural way, but one still relevant to our case, Persia went from being a Zoroastrian to a Muslim empire after being invaded by Arabs in 640 A.D. The new Muslim government suppressed the Zoroastrian practices of the Sasanian dynasty that had been overthrown. But, at the same time, the religiously changed Persia became the center of the Muslim Caliphate established in the 8th century in Iraq and Iran.⁽ⁿ⁴²⁾ Imperial expansion does require a collective dedication to a particular enterprise, but not necessarily to the same one under whose auspices it had started. Nor does the managerial ascendancy, of which the US is the most powerful representative, require that the same ideology be associated with all phases of managerial governance. As long as its subjects remain submissive to those in authority, power can be exercised in the name of more than one ideal or vision.

In the case of mass democracy in the managerial state, the legitimating ideology has moved from advancing "scientific" management of public affairs and providing widespread access to material benefits to the raising up of designated victims and to the sensitization of everyone else. Support for the last two ideals does not exclude any and all appeal to the earlier ones. Managerial regimes and their defenders have been quick to take credit for material improvements, e.g., the rise of GNP and life expectancy in the US, despite the fact that government redistributionist plans have not contributed significantly to the improvements in question. It is the impact of material and technological advances, minus the kind of destructively grasping state common to the Third World, as pointed out by Peter Bauer, which accounts for growing Western affluence.⁽ⁿ⁴³⁾ The prosperity being observed is the latest phase of a process that has gone on for several centuries. It is not, as the US media often

seems to be suggesting, a product of the social concern of the current American administration.(n44)

The new internationalism has not overshadowed the older form completely, and it is therefore possible to encounter arguments among Western political leaders in favor of US-promoted free trade or the rule of law. Nonetheless, the view advanced by Samuel Huntington about a "clash of civilizations," between a constitutionally structured, capitalist West and non-Western rivals overlooks scales of size. Vast military and economic disparities exist between those associated with the US and other "civilizations," such as the resurgent Islamic world. Material rivalries and cultural antagonisms do not necessarily bespeak the operation of well-matched sides. Equally problematic, Huntington pays too little attention to the changes affecting American political culture.(n45) He creates the impression that the US is pretty much the same politically and morally as it was in the early 20th century. He conveys little awareness of the specifically managerial kind of regime that has helped shape the American and European present. This government has taken the place of a bourgeois liberal polity and is imposing on other parts of the world its own sensitizing ideology.

A final characteristic of the global meliorism that has evolved in the US and its imitators is the breaking down of distinctions between national and international. Movements of the Right in the US that stress this difference have increasingly limited appeal. This is not for the reason given by unfriendly critics of Pat Buchanan, that Americans are too generous to embrace "pinched" nationalist opinions. What has happened is that the US has come to define its national character in multinational and even multicultural terms. The reconstituted (neoconservative) Right and Center Left both accept a globalist formulation of American identity, and each favors the present immigration policy (in force since the mid-1960s), by which over a million immigrants, mostly from the Third World, arrive in the US legally each year(n46) The fact that US GNP has more than doubled since the 1960s, while unemployment rates are now at about 4 to 5 percent, argues Peter Schuck, has had a weakening effect on the anti-immigration movement.(n47) By 2000, opposition to the present high level of Third World immigration had dwindled to 45 percent, having fallen by 34 percent from where it had been in the mid-1990s. While Peter Brimelow is correct that US economic growth over the last few decades could have been sustained with minimal immigration, that this influx has in fact hurt the underclass and impeded minority assimilation, none of these objections may be historically relevant any longer.(n48) The fact that the immigration took place during a period of growth has undercut its saliency as a political issue. It has also allowed the managerial-media elite to present its multicultural initiatives as the price of material growth.

The image of an American nation being pushed into risky entanglements by foreign powers is an American conservative nationalist illusion. It was the American government that created UN cover to launch military action against Iraq in 1991 and did the same with NATO when it prepared to go to war against Serbia in 1999. By 1999, however, US management had been refined. When, on March 25, President Clinton delivered a speech comparing Serbian ethnic cleansing to Nazi genocide, President Chirac, Prime Minister Blair, *Le Monde*, *Nouvel Observateur* and other parts of the French national press reached immediately for the same tropes and parallel.(n49) As French social commentator Régis Debray has speculated, the timing was such as to make it hard to rule out the likelihood of direct influence. But, Debray also notes that the impact and increasing homogeneity of the Western media leave open the possibility that Western leaders on two continents were being edged simultaneously toward the same thinking and outcome.(n50)

Conservative nationalists also exaggerate the extent of popular opposition in the US to political actions they disapprove of. Whether one is speaking about government-support for black and Latino ethnic expressiveness, the costs of illegal immigration, or the inevitability that white Americans will become a minority if present immigration policies are continued, the trends and political actions deplored by the old Right have certainly not become national wedge-issues. Such matters are correlated to problems that have surfaced in particular places, in Southwestern border areas or in Utah, for example, where the drug trade has fallen into the hands of illegal immigrants.(n51) On the other hand, nothing connected to American nationalist politics resonates as strongly as the concern registered in polls about "fighting discrimination in the workplace." Not even quotas and affirmative action in education, issues that engage the entire American Right, have aroused a national opposition as noticeable as that counterpoised on the other side. Even granting other variables, the US President who has done most to identify himself with multiculturalism enjoys job-approval ratings of over 60 percent. The continuing inability of the anti-diversity side to make a fight of it should indicate why therapeutic socialization continues to make inroads at home and abroad. Contrary to what is believed by its opponents, it has simply not awakened any major resistance.

Notes:

(n1.) Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World since 1776* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), especially pp. 172-99.

(n2.) Quoted in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy*, Vol. 2, (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1989), pp. 572-73.

(n3.) McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State*, op. cit., pp. 150-51.

(n4.) *Ibid.*, pp. 188-95. On the often questionable costs of foreign aid, see Nicholas Eberstadt, *Foreign Aid and American Purpose* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1988).

(n5.) Paterson, *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 553.

(n6.) See *The Washington Post* (October 8, 1991), pp. A1 and A5; *The Wall Street Journal* (October 9, 1991), p. A14.

(n7.) This convergence of Right and Left in the framework of an American missionary enterprise is the subject of Claes G. Ryn, *The New Jacobinism* (Washington: National Humanities Institute, 1991) and of Christopher Lasch, "The Obsolescence of Left and Right" in *New Oxford Review* 56 (April 1989), pp. 6-15.

(n8.) Internet Department of State document (April 16, 1999).

(n9.) Transcript taken from the Internet: www.fco.gov.uk/newstext.asp2703 and www.fco.gov.uk/news/text.asp2506;see also remarks by Defense Secretary George Robertson (June 23, 1999), www.mod.uk/news.prs267.

(n10.) Internet Department of State document (March 3, 1999).

(n11.) Cf. Flora Lewis, "Postcommunist Blues," in *The New York Times* (September 22, 1990); Morton Kondracke, "The Democracy Gang," in *The New Republic* (November 6, 1989); and Charles Gati, "From Sarajevo to Sarajevo," in *Foreign Affairs* (Fall, 1992), p. 64.

(n12.) *The New York Times*, (January 24, 2000), p. A16.

(n13.) Quoted in *Il Corriere della Sera* (February 7, 2000); *The New York Times* (February 5, 2000), p. A15.

(n14.) *The New York Times* (February 5, 2000), p. A27; Roger Cohen, "A Haider in their Future," in *The New York Times Magazine* (April 30, 2000), p. 54.

(n15.) *Europa* 391 (November 1999), p. 24.

(n16.) See *The Wall Street Journal* (March 1, 2000), p. A23; and *The New York Times* (February 29, 2000), p. A3.

(n17.) See Charles Vaugeois, "Histoire et mutation du neofascisme italien," in *Enquete sur l'histoire* (August 27, 1998), pp. 13-22; and Marco Tarchi, *Dal MSI ad AN* (Bologna: Mulino, 1997).

(n18.) "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," in *Foreign Affairs* (July/August, 1996), p. 33.

(n19.) See the proceeding of the 54th session of the UNC of HR, ed. by Michael J. Dennis, in *American Journal of International Law* (January, 2000), p. 94.

(n20.) *The New York Times* (February 5, 2000), p. A1; and *The New Republic* (February 21, 2000).

(n21.) Syndicated in *The New York Post* (August 17, 1999).

(n22.) *The Toronto Sun* (February 6, 2000), Editorial Page. Another view on the commotion unleashed against Austria by the EU concerns the attempt of EU President Romano Prodi to divert attention from his executive failures by creating or at least exacerbating confrontations. See *L'Express* (April 13, 2000), pp. 24-25.

(n23.) See Ernst Nolte, *Der europäische Bürgerkrieg, 1917-1945: Nationalsozialismus und Bolschewismus* (Frankfurt a/M and Berlin: Fischer Verlag, 1997), pp. 46-106.

(n24.) Jacob Weisberg, "The EU, Not Haider Threatens Austrian Democracy," in *The Wall Street Journal* (February 4, 2000), p. 15A; Tony Judt, "Tale from Vienna Woods," in *The New York Review of Books* (March 23, 2000), pp. 8-10.

(n25.) See George Szamuely's commentaries for the New York Press. See also Barbara Amiel, "Fear and Loathing in Austria," in *The National Post* (February 16, 2000).

(n26.) Eli Wiesel, "The Question of Genocide," in *Newsweek* (April 12, 1999), p. 37.

(n27.) For the full text, see *The New York Times* (March 25, 1999), A15.

(n28.) *IlMattino* (April 17, 2000), p. 17.

(n29.) *Ibid.*; for a sympathetic, but penetrating criticism of "the blame the Christian West" syndrome among progressive intellectuals, see Jacques Ellul, *The Betrayal of the West*, tr. by Matthew J. O'Connell (New York: Seabury Press, 1978).

(n30.) Neither side in this debate mentions the indiscriminate slaying by anti-fascist vigilantes in 1944 and 1945 of more than 100,000 Italians considered to be fascist sympathizers. See Paul Serant, *Les vaincus et la liberation* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1964); and Silvio Bertoldi, "Roma liberata: Giustizia alia italiana," in *Corriere della Sera* (November 25, 1996), p. 19.

(n31.) Jean-Francois Revel, *Comment les democracies finissent* (Paris: Grasset, 1983), especially pp. 243-392.

(n32.) See the feature story in *Harvard Crimson* (December 13, 1991), and the impassioned account of Davis' visit to Harvard in *Peninsula* (February, 1992).

(n33.) Charles Taylor, *The Politics of Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 10.

(n34.) Rene Girard, *Je vois Satan tomber comme l'eclair* (Paris: Grasset, 1999); and the interview with Girard conducted by Stephen de Petiville in *Catholica* 67 (Spring 2000), pp. 10-15.

(n35.) *The Christian Science Monitor* (May 3, 2000), p. 11; *The New York Times* (May 3, 2000), p. A4; *ibid.* (April 26, 2000), p. 38.

(n36.) See Taylor, *The Politics of Recognition*, *op. cit.* ; and Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989), particularly pp. 44-69.

(n37.) *Ibid.* Although the changing self-definition of identity is essential for Rorty's liberal heritage, the Right he propounds to engage in subjective discourse is trumped by the obligation to "diminish" cruelty. In *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in the 20th Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 81-82, Rorty states that "what mocking neoconservatives call politically correct is necessary to help people who have been humiliated."

(n38.) This point is made by Giovanni Di Cristofaro Longo in *Identita e Cultura: Per un'Antropologia della Reciprocita* (Rome: Studium, 1993), especially pp. 32-36. Di Cristofaro Longo accentuates the indistinguishability of culture and identity in the formulation of a postmodernist concept of reality, i.e., the function of culture as a reference point or ideology in the individual's self-definition. The problem is whose culture viewed as identity is to be raised to a public ideology; given the fact that, by definition, there can be no postmodernist political principle freed of its necessarily subjective character.

(n39.) *Canada Worldview* 7 (Spring 2000), p. 10.

(n40.) *Ibid.*; see Noam Chomsky, "Brave New World Order," in *New Statesman and Society* (December 20, 1991), p. 19.

(n41.) John Bury, *History of the Late Roman Empire*, Vol. 1 (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1958).

(n42.) Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years* (New York: Scribner, 1995), pp. 51-86.

(n43.) Peter Bauer, *Equality, the Third World and Economic Delusion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.)

(n44.) See, for example, Sean Wilentz, "Yawn," in *The New Republic* (February 28, 2000); and "Give it a Rest," *ibid.* (March 6, 2000), p. 8.

(n45.) See Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), pp. 183-291.

(n46.) For analyses of this globalist view of American identity shared by the Center Right and Center-Left, see Paul Piccone, "The Crisis of American Conservatism" in *Telos* 74 (Winter 1987-88), p. 3-29; and John Lukacs, "The Stirrings of History," in *Harper's* 281 (August 1990), pp. 47-49.

(n47.) Peter Schuck, "Emigration and Immigration," in *The New Republic* (April 13, 1998), p. 16; "Dual Nationality," in *The Wall Street Journal* (March 18, 1998), p. A22.

(n48.) Peter Brimelow, *Alien Nation: Common Sense about America's Immigration Disaster* (New York: Random House, 1995); and George Borjas, *Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

(n49.) Cf. *Le Monde* (March 25, 1999), which cites references to "genocide" by Clinton, Blair and Chirac; see also the series on Kosovo in *Nouvel Observateur* (May 13, 1999) and the editorial by Serge July in *Liberation* (April 21, 1999).

(n50.) cf. Régis Debray, *Introduction à la médiologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000).

(n51.) Representative of monitory books trying to sway American public opinion on the economic and social costs of immigration is Edward N. Luttwak's *The Endangered American Dream* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).

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