

2020: Year of the Rubicon

Merri at The Pillarist



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Introduction

At the time of this writing, we have witnessed what has been so far a successful coup of the United States of America. It's surreal to write about, since no one is totally sure what's going on yet, but a spade has to be called a spade.

The media acknowledges that it's occurred, but in typical duplicitous fashion, they have unilaterally accused those who were ousted from power as its perpetrators. Welcome to day ten of the two thousand and twenty-first year of Our Lord, and point-of-no-return when it comes to the American collapse.

I admit a certain pessimism when writing this. 2020 was an unprecedented year in American social and political life. President Forty-Five had somewhat of an unprecedented administration. His first campaign was just as unprecedented. The memes of Trump's ascendancy to office took the form of a nostalgia for the 80s and 90s, when the bubble economy was strong and America's optimism was at the highest it had been in its entire history. But as his administration went forward, it became pretty clear that this was not a reinvigoration of the optimism to take into the future, but a mere recognition of an optimism long-since past. The Trumpian spirit, try as it might, could not look forward, because it was—as critics pointed out even in 2016—built around a man. We took a gamble that the man had the right stuff, but we might have overestimated what he had just as much as we'd underestimated the scale of the task at hand.

In 2016's GOP primaries, I voted for Ted Cruz. Not long after that decision, it became clear to me that he definitely would not have won against Clinton. Now, after the electoral betrayal of the 2020 voter fraud, and after the march on the Capitol building being deemed an insurrection, it's become clear that Cruz wouldn't have won against Hillary just because he came across too oily. He wouldn't have won because he's part of the same Washingtonian political swamp. He plays ball. He's actually pretty good at it, since he embraces being the heel so often. But that's the problem.

By the time the 2016 generals came around, I happily voted for Trump; it didn't matter, of course, since I lived in a region guaranteed to go hard for his opponent. Nonetheless, we have a civic responsibility to pull the lever every two years—after all, how can we have rights to complain about the people who lord over us if we refuse to partake in the system that puts them there?

Or so I used to believe. The theft of the 2020 election was too blatant for those of us that followed it to ignore. It wasn't just that we had our bubbles, either. I still live in one of the bluest regions in the

country, and even I saw support for the Orange Man in numbers that far exceeded my expectations—roadside gatherings, signs, happy mascots, the works. Maybe you could argue that their presence was amplified by their proximity to such a heavy Democratic stronghold. Fair enough. But I didn't see this in 2016. And I saw a lot more *I'm With Her* sentiment in 2016, too.

Even the anecdotal evidence aside, we watched the theft occur in real time. We saw the statistically impossible leaps in mail-in ballot counting occurring at three in the morning, when unmarked cars would arrive at tally buildings and unload box after box of haphazardly-filled in ballots. We heard the scandal plaguing Dominion voting machines, their flimsy software, their questionable updates the day before the election, the holes in their equipment left open to tampering that had been talked about for a decade and a half. We watched polling centers cease counting at eleven o'clock and resume in the morning, a wildly nonstandard practice that is so inappropriate one wonders how there weren't regulations against it already.

It's okay, I was told, we have a system. We can deal with this. The fraud will be caught. I believed it. We got three of our guys on the Supreme Court this time around, and although one of them had proven to be an unreliable liberal, the other two seemed okay. It was supposed to be a solidly 6-3 conservative court. When this goes the way 2000's election did, I figured, we'll have it in the bag. I was confident.

We saw the standard play by the media afterward. "No evidence of voter fraud," became "no widespread evidence," which became "not enough to suggest it challenged the results of the election." We saw Trump's campaign, already openly hated by the political establishment, draft lawsuits in a multitude of counties, and we watched most of them get thrown out before the judges even looked at the evidence. The trials that did see the light of day resulted in thousands of eyewitness testimony to tampering and fraud. And then, when we saw this go before the Supreme Court, we saw issued a single page memorandum declaring the case invalid on grounds that, now typical of the Court, were self-contradictory even on their face—that one state has no business critiquing the management of an election to federal office in another state.

That was about when I knew it was over. We had some avenues left, of course, but the Court again betraying public trust is, sadly, the one thing we can rely on it to do. The steal was going to succeed. In the interests of avoiding too heavy of a fruitless despondency, I maintained an optimistic look on the proceedings and hoped to be wrong. Then the states declared their electors, the electors voted, and on January seventh of this year, the results were certified. That was it. The only recourse to resolving the issue of this grave injustice now would have been to operate outside the limits of the system—a Rubicon moment, a term now so overused that I'd be glad to see it retired for another decade.

But we all knew Trump wasn't a Caesar. If he was, the last four years wouldn't have unfolded the way they did. Admittedly, if there was to be a president who *would* do something so drastic, and so against the ruling elite, it could have been Trump. But deep down, we all knew that he wasn't that guy. As much as he likes to rock the boat, his background is in business and entertainment. He's not even a revolutionary, much less a reactionary.

What I didn't expect was what happened on January sixth. What I didn't expect was the coup. Why bother, after all, when Trump had already conceded, despite the fight he put up? Why bother, when he only had another two weeks in office? What good does it do to demand the resignation of an obviously well-loved President when the incoming administration is ostensibly calling for unity and bridge-building?

Well, we all know the answer to that question. The year leading up to the coup, riddled as it was with bureaucratic incompetence and outright maliciousness already told us the answer. Our cities burned. Our businesses closed. Our relatives died alone. And the same people responsible for the coup lied about all of it every step of the way. It was never about winning, for them; they'd already won. Trump's inability to garner support among his own cabinet and his own family proved that. The man was isolated and had only his base left, and his base, unfortunately, will always be easily-duped into hysterics.

For the elites, this wasn't about winning. It was about sending a message. Trump, and more importantly, "Trumpism," would not be tolerated. He had to be removed from office, impeached, forced to resign, whatever, purely so that future generations could be taught that the American system 'worked'—i.e. that the ruling elite could and would remove from power, using their own set of rules, anyone that stood in the way of their America.

Two Americas and the Media

Since the re-election of Barrack Obama in 2012, there's been a vague recognition that America has become two totally separate countries. Those of us more tuned into politicking and culture might recognize that the country has been divided for much longer than that, tracing this particular split to the cultural revolution in the 60s. Some might trace it back to the Civil War and some failure of Reconstruction to adequately mend the divide. Others, having read Tocqueville, America has always, to some degree, been two separate countries.

Whatever date is assigned to it, the election of Donald Trump in 2016 made the distinctions impossible to ignore, paint over, or downplay. The centerpiece of this short volume explores this notion somewhat briefly, but each piece herein seeks to understand the tension of a doubly-occupied nation.

There won't be reconciliation between these two nations, either. Calls to heal the divide are issued somewhat disingenuously on both sides, though perhaps many who call for such 'healing' genuinely don't see how bad the division really is. And this isn't specifically a left-right division, either, much less something as superfluous as a Democrat-Republican one. It's not even quite as simple as an elite-prole division, although that's at least in the ballpark.

Moderately-inclined conservative pundits are more than willing to recognize the degree to which the culture in the United States has been split across liberal shibboleths. Unfortunately, moderately-inclined conservative pundits seem to have spent most if not all of their lives surrounded by right-liberals and in Democratic strongholds. These are the people who write for opinion pages of places like the Wall Street Journal or the New York Times, or who run your until-recently LA-based media

companies like The Daily Wire or Blaze TV. They're the types who will insist that America has always been liberal, and that the choice in valid, home-grown political orientations comes down to being a right-liberal (soft-libertarian) or a left-liberal (soft-socialist). Anything that falls outside of this arbitrary distinction is considered "European-style" politics and thus irrelevant to the American ethos.

This is totally wrong, and all those who speak of such things should be presumed to be lying to you. All of them know better. If they don't know better, then they have no business writing their op-eds or running their media companies. It's best to treat these pundits, who for some reason still have jobs in 2021, not as bumbling and optimistic fools, but as duplicitous and deceitful snakes interested in keeping what's left of their audiences in the dark.

The events of 2020, and in particular the events of the election and the GOP's interests in dumping Trump as he's on his way out, have shredded whatever image of credibility that the party and its pundits had left. Trump's image as a populist American rich guy go-getter turned out, in the end, to be mostly bluster. Although he certainly wasn't part of the same oligarchical Regime that runs the global elite, he was still one of the richest men and most public men in the country; despite the image he'd cultivated in 2016 as an outsider, his time in office proved that he was very much a part of the system that his "Trumpism" was so harshly critical of.

There are two possibilities for his major failure to put the system into line. Either he didn't feel like or didn't think of doing what was necessary—specifically dismantling the media apparatus that has allowed social media giants to act as an extra-political monoparty, run by the same people who move and shake the Democratic party—or he was unable to do so. Either possibility seems valid. Despite Trump's bluster about the unfair media and the censorship on places like Facebook or Twitter, he never publicly leaned on anyone to get something done about it. He did no campaigning on these issues, aside from cracking jokes at rallies to his base. He complained, sure, but there was little action done visibly to challenge the approaching cyberpunk dystopia.

On the other hand, I'm sympathetic to arguments that he worked a lot behind the scenes. You don't run a real estate empire on Manhattan island without knowing your way around backroom deals, after all.

Regardless of what the reason was, the reality is that he failed in this. Worse, since the conflict between our two Americas is so heavily informational, Trump's failure on this field meant a failure in the whole war. And even worse than that, Trump was probably the best we could hope for in terms of a man willing to work within the system in order to fix it, ironic or depressing as that may sound. For as long as the present electoral system exists, and for as long as the Democratic party maintains its current structure, there won't be another chance.

The reason is simple: the media controls the narrative, and there is no alternative. Social media, for ten years, has offered opportunities to branch away from the mainstream spin, but legislators—despite their awareness—have allowed tech oligarchs to squelch the dissent on their platforms as well. Legacy media has bought its way into an intimate relationship with social media platforms, undermining their usefulness as alternative means of information dissemination. Hiding behind a facade of nonintervention, lawmakers have refused to rule the status of corporate platforms like Facebook or

Google as technological equivalents to the public square. The result has been a technocracy with more power than the political establishment. Gone are the days of a free internet.

Again, for as long as this is allowed to stand, the America taught in our civics classes remains a nostalgic myth with no basis in reality. The Democratic party has zero interest in resolving this issue, as the entire party consistently demonstrates its willingness to unite in the service of the global oligarchs that it serves. The Republicans fare little better, despite less overall willingness to operate as a cohesive body. We can watch Ted Cruz grandstand on Senate committees as much as we want, yet despite his blustering at Jack Dorsey, nothing's been accomplished.

Modern Civics

The American system is not an impartial structure in which operate two different parties with mutual goals but conflicting beliefs of achieving them. It's a system governed and run by people, and it's shaped toward achieving the ends of those with their hands on its levers of power. Far from being a lifeless system of laws and rules that people integrate their own interests into like a machine, the liberal framework that governs America is one where the people in power conform its structures to match their interests for validation. The process of ensuring something is legal or rightful is a grand ceremonial spectacle that services the democratic mythology. Popular sovereignty doesn't really exist, but because it's foundational to the American identity, it's part of the "Big Lie" that binds American polity as much as it binds American politicians. That's one reason why, when elections are stolen, they still have to make up ballots to do it.

Some of us would naturally prefer the pretenses to be dropped. We'd rather our dictators came out and simply professed themselves as such, or that the international corporations ceased pretending to be bigger versions of the mom and pop stores that they drive out of business. But dropping the lie would mean destroying the identity of a responsible civic America that even the elites tend to buy into, at least to some degree. Popular sovereignty is the political expression of America's free spirit, liberty, rough-and-tumble pioneering. Americans have been so conditioned by these abstractions that it's the only way they know how to express what the flag represents. The notion of a shared heritage, of blood, of ancestry, of history, of true nationality—to many Americans, these are ideas so antiquated that they couldn't identify them even if they tried. Many still recognize that they're important, but not that they have a foundational relationship with understanding nationhood. You're not American because you believe in low taxes and free enterprise. You're American because you were born to Americans living in America.

Or, so such a theory would presume. The ethnic stock of Americans is, unfortunately, well into the stages of irreversible decline. The WASP's proliferation of the pill, aided by the revolution that followed, has resulted in an insurmountable demographic hole that isn't just going to go away. Between the children who were never conceived, the children who were actively murdered by abortion, and the destruction of the very idea of a cohesive family, the presumptive American stock that we nostalgically recall from old movies is only a few generations away from irrelevancy. And that's a generous estimate.

Couple this with the unprecedented migration of more than a hundred million people into this country in just two generations—something in the range of a quarter of our entire population—and the speed with which America took over the world and overstretched herself economically and militarily, and the bleak future ahead of us starts to come into a bit of focus. Ironic as it is, the elites that so disdain this nation are one of the last holdouts of such traditional American lineage. Presuming that they aren't all just possessed demon-reptiles (asking a lot, I know), the actions of the oligarchs can most charitably be taken to be attempts to salvage the wealth of the empire that is careening toward collapse.

This would seem to jive with their economic prerogatives, at least: forcing us to live in pods and eat bugs while wealth is concentrated ever upwards. The endgame is to get as much wealth and resources into the hands of investment experts who are supposed to know what to do with it, because frankly, those of us removed from the academic-industrial complex are simply too stupid to manage our own lives. So they believe.

It doesn't, however, explain their embrace of sexual values that actively exterminate the very people they need to keep the machinery running. Automation might be a way to cut out the middlemen necessary to facilitate this wealth transfer, and the hedonism appeased by the sexual revolution might be what they need to keep the population zombified enough to pull off this social transformation, but anyone with eyes in their head can see how self-destructive and counter-productive it is to promote the Dionysian spirit. Yet even as I write this, their propaganda is successful enough for the entire country to nonviolently tolerate hundreds of thousands of its children being institutionally murdered every year. So what do I know?

This Collection

All of this has been intended to serve as an introduction to the present work: a collection of seven long form posts written over the course of 2020 and the early days of 2021. This was a period of months that will no doubt be considered a major turning point in American history, regardless of who gets to write the textbooks of the future.

Over the course of 2020, unprecedented measures were enacted to keep one America humiliated and the other America empowered. The degree to which these measures were successful, from the standpoint of the Regime, has yet to be determined. We probably won't know for another couple of years. Right now, it seems to be working—the civil unrest it generated among the President's base of support is turning out to be a poisoned pill that's going to get a lot of people incarcerated and a lot more people fired. That's already happening.

Of particular focus throughout these pieces isn't just the exasperation that this could happen, but the fact that it's not being understood. Some of us on the right—mostly anonymous amateurs who probably post too much on Twitter—can recognize what's going on for what it is. The dinosaurs in legacy media, however, especially those who claim a position right of the center, consistently demonstrate their utter ignorance. One of the biggest benefits to Trump's four years in office has been the unmasking of so many of these pundits as actors in bad faith.

In the wake of the stolen election, demands to come together and reconcile have been made most obnoxiously by those figures who would have you consider abandoning the very foundation of their precious democratic process in order to validate that same process. They present to your face an unsolvable contradiction, demanding that you repeat back at them the lies they're telling you. Whether they consider them lies themselves or not is irrelevant. This is a tactic in humiliation designed to break your will; not to flog a dead horse, but the Soviets did this sort of thing all the time. So does the Devil.

If one thing defined the events of 2020, this tactic is probably the most crucial. The response to the COVID virus, the use of local governments against their own populations, the summer of riots, Biden's campaign, the tech censorship, and of course, the election: it was all something of a surrealist misrepresentation of reality that we, as good citizen-civilians, were supposed to not merely comply with, but actively enforce and parrot back.

Humiliation, national divorce, social madness: that's what this collection details. And additionally, what could be mistaken for pessimism. There will be no political solution to the present crisis. Don't get me wrong; we should be vigilant in mitigating how bad it will be for ourselves and our families, staying on our guard against bad advice or stupid decisions. There could very well be extra-political solutions, and in fact, if I were a gambling man, I'd consider it a safe bet that there will be—but that isn't necessarily something to hope for, because resolving this crisis doesn't mean that it's been resolved in our favor. Where we may hope for Octavian, the modern world is more likely to deliver us Stalin instead.

But recognition of these likelihoods isn't cause for despair. The fact that things are going to get bad—and whether they get better afterward doesn't really matter here—isn't pessimism so much as it is a reality. If you're not in a position of power or influence, such as most us amateur bloggers and Twitter users, then you're along for the ride and the vehicle has already jumped the track. We could ask ourselves, *why is this happening to me*, and cry out, *this is unfair*, lamenting that *I didn't sign up for this!* But aside from trying to causally understand the breakdown—as this collection attempts—these declarations only serve to scandalize the person uttering them.

This is where an understanding of politics tempered by Faith is imperative. History is providential. There is a point to all of this. Nothing happens completely arbitrarily. For as long as we remember this, there is no reason to despair. The Faith is what ties us to the ship as the storm begins to make its timbers groan with stress. *Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?*

We would do best to remember that little boat on the sea of Galilee. The times we enter now are reminders that we have always been on it, and things could very well get so tumultuous that we will be reminded of Who our our sole source of comfort really is.

Coming Apart

April 24th 2020

About a month ago, the Atlantic dropped a bomb entitled [Beyond Originalism](#), which somewhat briefly outlined an integralist approach to ensuring that the Constitution of the United States—the document—isn't used to subvert the very things it was supposedly written to protect. The piece's author was Harvard Constitutional Law professor Adrian Vermeule, no stranger to controversy, and I can only assume that the Atlantic decided to publish it in an attempt to make 'conservatives' look as authoritarian and as menacingly Catholic as possible. While it scared the liberally-minded conservative dilettantes into quite a barrage of counterpoints and rebuttals—most of which aren't worth mentioning—the conservatives who actually take the definition at face-value sat back and said, “yeah, okay, that's a start.”

Vermeule's piece sparked responses not because it was particularly inflammatory, but because he strikes at the splinters of conscience that irritate all the uneasy conservative pundits who haven't yet completely given up. The most noteworthy of these, in this complete amateur's opinion, was [one submitted to the American Conservative](#) and penned by Thomas FitzGerald, which summarized an opposition to such constitutional interpretation without stumbling over the natural law in the process. We'll be treating FitzGerald's case in the third part of this post.

This isn't going to be a particularly close analysis of constitutional interpretation, law, nor even the pieces in question. I'm not a lawyer, nor do I have any interest in being one. Rather, the divide across how to even approach running the country is what's interesting here, as its a divide that is increasingly begging for practical solutions.

State of the Union

Before we get into either of these essays, let's briefly put what they're talking about into perspective. In order to understand the role the US Constitution and its various methods of interpretation play in the country's governance today, we should have at least a general grasp over the constitution of the nation to begin with. By this we certainly mean its people, its culture, its general approach to solving social or political problems, its language, its moral values, etcetera—what *constitutes* the country. Its moral values should be reflected in its legal apparatus. No matter how much a liberal desires, there is no law that does not support one particular moral position at the expense of its alternatives.

So given that the legal system exists to enforce our constitution—both its unwritten one and, ostensibly, the one sealed away under bulletproof glass in Washington—what sort of condition is our country actually in after two hundred and fifty years of its founding?

Well, where to start?

In 1965, the highest court of the land read into the Constitution a right to privacy where matters of sexual morality were concerned. *Griswold v Connecticut* resulted in the nationwide legalization of contraception, a harbinger of the decades of sexual license that were to come just as much as it was an indicator of the country's already deteriorating moral compass. Less than eight years later, the court decided, on very similar grounds, that the states had no business banning infanticide, so long as it was done under the guise of well-known medical procedure called 'abortion'. It resulted in a nationwide demographic hole that's nearly a sixth of our country's entire population. This is a sterilized way of saying that there are approximately sixty million men and women who should be here, but who were instead killed due to a group of nine judges (seven in favor) agreeing that it was fine. Today, this is considered a political issue rather than the humanitarian crisis that it clearly is. Ask yourself why that might be the case.

Along the same lines, we have divorce rates which [skyrocketed through the sixties](#) before more or less evening out in the late 80s and 90s. Aside from running roughshod over social stability, the more dangerous part of this upheaval can be spotted in the trends in childcare over the same period. You don't need statistics to recognize the number of broken homes that no-fault divorce policies have allowed to unfold in the last forty years. And this isn't even touching on the epidemic of single parent households—many of which aren't even a result of divorce so much as monstrously poor decision making by young people who are inundated by sexualized imagery of the culture around them.

It's cliché to simply point out how divided the national consensus is, but it should be noted here because these divisions highlight the scope of the crisis that Americans are becoming more and more accustomed to dealing with. And there are plenty of other divisions unrelated (mostly) to the sexual revolution—divisions across ethnic lines that have been exacerbated by the waves of third-world immigration since 1965, for instance, divisions across racial lines that were inflamed by the Civil Rights Act and continue to be fanned, or divisions across the wealth gaps that include individuals whose staggeringly disproportionate net worths are larger than those of some countries. We'll stick to the divisions rooted in sexual liberation, however, because this particular shibboleth is the best indicator of where someone's beliefs fall with relation to the ongoing war for our country.

It's important to note, also, that the passage of *Roe*, and *Griswold*, and *Obergefell*, et. al. were done under a system that was functioning exactly as it was supposed to. There weren't, that we're aware of, backroom deals between conspiring characters of questionable stereotype. The judicial process wasn't hijacked. Instead, the Justices had certain sets of beliefs, maybe were swayed one way or the other, and the result, in *Roe*'s case, has seen the blood of sixty million children seeping into the gutter of the American dream.

1992's *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern PA v Casey* deserves special recognition here, given its somewhat famous assertion that “[a]t the heart of liberty is the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life. Beliefs about these matters could not define the attributes of personhood were they formed under compulsion of the State.” (851). It goes on to state, two paragraphs later, that “reasonable people will have differences of opinion” over matters of contraception as well as abortion. Shelving the issue of contraception, it should be apparent now that reasonable people cannot disagree over whether or not children should be summarily euthanized before they have a chance to take their first gasp of air. It’s not reasonable to believe that. Advancements in technology in particular are making this fact abundantly clear.

Vermeule singles this case out toward the end of his article, mentioning that such an abhorrent assault on human life and dignity would be stamped out under the purview of a common good originalism. Commendable of course, but the statements he’s attacking deserve more attention for my purposes here.

These statements about the power of human beings to define their own meaning for “life”, and that the state has no business implementing its own definition, are indicative of the moral framework liberalism pretends to advocate. I say pretend, even though we’re talking about an ideology, because liberalism’s tenants are all dualistic: what the liberal will say he believes is very often the opposite of how he acts or what he implements in liberalism’s name, and usually without direct or obvious contradiction of what he believes. This has been clear from the beginnings of the American Revolution (and it’s more stereotypically continental, blood-soaked French remake) all the way through to today’s liberal pandering.

But the statements in *Casey* express something else, too. They’re the mask-off moment where the Supreme Court admits that it—at least under that bench—was morally bankrupt and in no position to be arbitrating law. If you can’t come to an agreement about who is or isn’t alive, how can you even have a coherent conversation about when it’s okay to murder children? But that didn’t matter. They arbitrated anyway, and the nation basically went along with it. It’s taken almost half a century and a mountain of dead, but the pro-life cause has inched its way back into a relevant position much more terrifying to its opposition than the boogeyman that anti-natalists believed it was in the 90s. Given the state of the current Supreme Court, it’s no longer outside the realm of comprehension to see *Roe* overturned.

And here’s the crux of the issue. This is the degree to which the divisions across cultural lines in America run. Morality ceases to bind people together when some of them have decided that innocent life deserves to be taken for the convenience of others. The whole moral framework collapses once you allow murder to be acceptable. And as we see in the remarks of *Casey*, the court even admitted that their moral backbone was completely relative, but it made no difference in their ability or desire to arbitrate.

So what is the constitution of these United States? It’s one that can’t even agree on what a person is. Not good!

Common Good Originalism

So let's return to the meat of things. In his piece, Vermeule outlines his position:

This approach should take as its starting point substantive moral principles that conduce to the common good, principles that officials (including, but by no means limited to, judges) should read into the majestic generalities and ambiguities of the written Constitution. These principles include respect for the authority of rule and of rulers; respect for the hierarchies needed for society to function; solidarity within and among families, social groups, and workers' unions, trade associations, and professions; appropriate subsidiarity, or respect for the legitimate roles of public bodies and associations at all levels of government and society; and a candid willingness to "legislate morality"—indeed, a recognition that all legislation is necessarily founded on some substantive conception of morality, and that the promotion of morality is a core and legitimate function of authority. Such principles promote the common good and make for a just and well-ordered society.

Read in a certain light, this almost makes the case for the horseshoe theory of politics so blandly parroted by midwit centrists on Reddit. Solidarity of communities, authority, the legislation of morality, and a specific interest in unions and labor organization all point toward the practical implementation of what leftists try to get at when bumbling through a definition of socialism. But subsidiarity of general powers, solidarity of families, attention to hierarchy, and respect for *rulers*, specifically, delineate such aspirations as distinctly un-socialist, regardless of its exterior trappings.

Conservatives have for years tried to exist within a recognizably liberal environment. They insist on the necessity of subsidiarity while decrying the evils of a large, centralized state—something we'll get to as we approach Fitzgerald's rebuttal in a moment. And yet, regardless of who holds more of the power in Congress, who sits on the bench of the Supreme Court, or who's able to stack the alphabet agencies during his tenure in the White House, the scope, size, and cost of the government only grows. The state apparatus is not something that is capable of shrinking in any significant fashion. Intuitively, we all know this. No one can imagine a world where the CIA was disbanded, or the standing army of the US were all given their last paychecks and told "good luck in the workforce," or where one day, the welfare checks just stopped being mailed out. And there's a fairly good reason why no one can imagine a world like that: the world of today is not the world of 1783, or 1865, or 1946, or even 1990.

Vermeule's general appeals to integralism recognize that since the monster isn't going to go away, and it's not feasible to kill it, the best option left is an attempt at taming it. Efforts to delineate an originalism that anchors itself in the natural law is a means toward this end. And while it's a good suggestion, I do have to wonder exactly how this is to be done in practice. He mentions that "legal conservatism is no longer besieged," and that, assuming all goes well in November, Trump's presidency will more or less ensure that "some version of legal conservatism" will be normalized for "a generation or more." He would know better than I on this subject.

Opponents of integralism question whether it's even a good idea to trust the state, as FitzGerald touches on, but I haven't encountered many who question the feasibility of the project in the first place. As readers of the blog could probably predict, I'm completely sympathetic to attempts at normalizing, if not outright legislating aspects of Catholic social teaching. This is far more radical a position than merely grounding Constitutional interpretation in the natural law, so I'm no opponent, in principle, to what Vermeule suggests. I just don't see how a march through the institutions—in this case, the judges—is possible in a country as distinctly anti-Catholic as the present one.

And for the record, that's not to say that Catholics are out getting shot to death in the streets of Baltimore by marauding gangs of Reds. But any Catholic who tries to reasonably present just what the natural law has to say on the sexual revolution loses credibility among whole swaths of the American pseudo-elite. The reason that the Kavanaugh hearings were dragged out into the surreal, abhorrent spectacle that they were was out of fear that, one day, a case will come before a majority-conservative court that could threaten the tenuous grasp that *Roe v Wade* holds over the country. That charade was just a taster of the commotion you can bet will come should a case of that nature actually come before the Court.

Vermeule this week [published an interview](#) he gave for *Le Grande Continent* that did briefly touch on the practical future for common good originalism. It's worth quoting here:

I am cautiously optimistic about the possibilities for a genuinely Catholic-inspired, solidaristic economics in the United States today — not as a final end goal, but as an interim situation that is better than the status quo ante of relentless, bipartisan neoliberalism. The main institutional locale for this program will have to be the administrative state, if only faute de mieux. We tend to forget that the New Deal, during which much of the current U.S. administrative state was cemented into place, was partly inspired by the principles of Catholic social teaching; in an important campaign speech in 1932, Franklin Roosevelt quoted from Pius XI's Quadregesimo Anno and called it “one of the most important documents of modern times ... it is as radical as I am.” Recently, leaders such as Senator [Marco Rubio](#) have begun to articulate a humane economics, oriented towards the common good, explicitly drawing upon Catholic social teaching. It remains to be seen whether that development will continue in the right directions, but it is an encouraging start. This could very well commence under a series of conditions: (1) under a constitutional principle of solidarity; (2) subject to reasonable administrative discretion (the determinatio); (3) and the understanding that whether and to what extent the principle is judicially enforceable is a separate institutional question.

He mentions also the Federalist Society, “who are deeply dissatisfied with originalism and are searching for alternatives,” which he believes “could easily be [‘integrated from within.’](#)” Another good sign that again indicates the possibility for a movement for the natural law—which returns us to a genuine sense of justice—to march through the institutions. On the other side of things, Rubio's recent endorsements for fiscal solutions that sound remarkably like the sodalism of the last century—or more popularly, the distributism that has been quietly butchering the thought of free-market Catholics for the

last ten years—is also a very good sign. The only problem is that it’s coming from Rubio, whose background doesn’t instill the most confidence going forward. But hey, people change, and he professes the Faith, so who can say what that future holds?

The Subsidiarity Delusion

To recap: our country is so ideologically riven that we have no national consensus on what a human life is, and our ruling body has declined to weigh in on the matter, choosing to ostensibly legislate and arbitrate according to an unsustainable moral relativism. In order to combat this, as we know that a system running on moral relativism will inevitably collapse into absolute chaos, we have one suggestion regarding an approach to legal theory that practically returns us to the natural law.

It is no surprise that even many self-professed conservatives took issue with such a take, as ‘legislating morality’ is a common boogeyman from libertarians and libertarian-infected conservatives. I’ll refrain from presuming what particular vices they fear might be arbitrated out of existence should a legal system grounded in the natural law ever come about, but it’s not hard to guess.

On the other hand, more nuanced criticisms are coming from a fear of simply consolidating too much power into the hands of the administration necessary to make this change. It can’t be denied that our legal system, complex and cantankerous as it is, has the sort of relationship with the natural law presently as drunken husbands have with their battered wives. Looking to shift gears now sounds like trying to move a mountain.

“He that violently blowth his nose, bringeth out blood,” Thomas FitzGerald notes, quoting St. Thomas Aquinas on the subject of drastic or radical governance. FitzGerald is no libertarian nor member of the liberal-right; he confesses himself an integralist not that unlike Vermeule. For FitzGerald, originalism doesn’t need to be changed from what it already encapsulates. He expresses this here:

Moreover, originalism already provides us integralists who want to see American law reoriented toward the natural law with solid arguments to establish protections for fetal personhood at the federal level, ban porn, ban gay marriage, and even restore the Early Republic’s establishments of religion in the states. Indeed, Vermeule notes in his Atlantic piece that “in 1811, the New York courts, in an opinion written by the influential early jurist Chancellor James Kent, upheld a conviction for blasphemy against Jesus Christ as an offense against the public peace and morals.” If Founding Era jurisprudence allowed the states to criminalize blasphemy against Jesus Christ, then why does Vermeule’s integralist project need to abandon originalism?

He sort of answers himself, although unintentionally, a few paragraphs later, when he insists:

Progressive Americans will not accept a conservative settlement of moral questions imposed by Court and bureaucracy upon the blue states any more than conservatives have accepted Roe and Obergefell.

What I mean is that conservatives *did* accept *Roe* and *Obergefell*. It could very well be argued that we didn't have a choice to say "no!", as indeed, that's why the courts exist in the first place. But it could also be argued that conservatives, particularly in the case of *Obergefell*, heard the court's ruling and said, "yep, well, that's that." There has been no resistance whatsoever on the *Obergefell* front in the five years since its ruling from any major conservative figure. The closest thing to a victory we've seen was the vindication of that Washington baker who refused to bake a cake. It wasn't a stand against same-sex marriage, it was a defensive maneuver couched in religious liberty. That isn't the same as a strategy grounded in the natural law.

We all know what would happen to a political or media figure if he came out with a definitive statement against same-sex marriage. It'd be political suicide. He may gain support of those faithful in the country who remain committed to the proper definition of family, but he wouldn't get a seat in the Senate, or that Fox News show, or whatever he was gunning for. He'd be relegated to the livestreams and podcasts of the internet, a fate which we all know means he'd be facing imminent and arbitrary deplatforming every time he went live.

And this isn't even getting to the absurdity we see today, where homosexuals and drag queens force their way into right wing cadres on the basis of easily-sold libertarian talking points and gusto. Ben Shapiro, who is unfortunately a leading conservative pundit based on the numbers, wouldn't even defend a coherent definition of marriage at the time of *Obergefell*'s ruling, opting instead to meaninglessly declare that the government should be ["completely out of the business of marriage."](#)

So conservatism is a complete mess. FitzGerald argues not simply for an American conservatism in which subsidiarity is alive and well, but from the position that it *still is*. We can admit that at the time of Orestes Brownson, it was. Despite the centralizing reforms enacted by Lincoln in order to combat the complete disintegration of the Union, the county and state—and more importantly, the home parish, regardless of particular denomination—remained the foundation of the American polity. We didn't have massive government overreach in the forms of federal agencies, nor did we have federal highway funds being used as leverage to force federal programs on unwilling localities. To give you an idea of the extent of government after the Civil War, we can remember that most counties in the country didn't even have an organized police department.

Needless to say, things are different now. The federal government is utterly unrecognizable today compared to what it was just fifty years ago, much less a hundred and fifty. States, while still wielding a fair amount of power, have time and again been brought to heel when there is sufficient motivation in DC to do so. And DC doesn't require a militant force to do so anymore; it has federal highway funds for that.

But this isn't really about government overreach, is it? Brownson's beliefs in Catholic republicanism were admirable, and perhaps even feasible—were this country's constitution (lowercase "c") not what it is. At the time Brownson was living, so little was legislated into the books that the social pressure of strong communities had to fulfill a role of moral arbitration that we now just rely on cops for. Imperfect

and imprecise as it was, frontiersman justice, or even that of the small town, required a sense of community that today is hard to come by. Tocqueville even noted this in *Democracy in America*.

All of this indicates a social order utterly alien to our own, where too many of us live isolated, humanist, anti-social lives divorced from any particular neighborly cohesion. The internet has played a big part in the breakdown, of course, but it'd be a mistake to call it the prime suspect in this decline. We can look for that to the secularizing forces of public school, the sexual revolution, and, loathe as I am to sound like a rebellious teenager, the consumerist tendencies of late-stage capitalism. Thirty years ago, Americans populated malls instead of churches. Now we can't even be bothered to do that.

I'm generalizing, of course, since America still has, among Western nations, a remarkably high rate of church attendance, despite the figure being in decline. But the Americans who are attending church every Sunday, who lament the fact that Waffle House has replaced the old diner on the corner, and who use their free time helping their neighbor replace the transmission in their twenty-year-old Chevrolet aren't exactly the same Americans who are running the country. Aside from the ones who post Q-anon memes on Facebook, they're not even included in the national discourse. And not just that, their entire way of life is steadily being phased out; the younger generations that may want to pick up their rustic lifestyle are either trapped in cities or suburbs and have none of the practical skills necessary to live in rural America. The country has been hollowed out, and for those of you following the demographic and birthrate decline, much of it has simply been replaced.

To be fair to FitzGerald, he honestly believes in an American population that strongly believes in the relevancy and importance of the Constitution:

...experience has proven that America's providential unwritten constitution includes a strong felt opposition to being governed by any "living" constitution, be it secularist or integralist. Originalism is the instinctive interpretive theory most Americans bring to public debates about our Constitution—not merely something Robert Bork cooked up in a "defensive crouch" in response to the excesses of the Warren Court, but the authentic American tradition of constitutionalism, with deep, ancient roots in the English common law's canons of statutory construction.

This population of people, *experience has proven*, are the same people lampooned by every major media outlet except (and periodically, even including) Fox News. He is right that *some* Americans will never accept a parlance removed from stringent originalism talk. That's definitely true. And to be perfectly honest, there is something about the image of hot-blooded Americanism that such originalism fits right into. But I question how many of these Americans still exist or are going to exist in the next ten or twenty years. The country has already changed so drastically in the last twenty that fears of its complete abrogation, if not disintegration, are becoming increasingly sound.

Conclusions: Benedict's Option or Pelayo's?

FitzGerald nears the end of his piece by invoking his own version of the Benedict Option:

[Originalism] allows us to create thick moral communities that treat statecraft as soulcraft at the state level. Unlike an agrarian commune or an urban parish, the red states, allied with originalist judges and a substantial bloc of culturally conservative legislators in Congress, would be sufficient to protect their own statewide Benedict Options writ large, their own revived blue laws and perhaps even ecumenically Christian (or Judeo-Christian) establishments of religion. And doing determination of the natural law into positive legislation at the state level accords with our providential constitution of territorial democracy.

The Benedict Option, like integralism (in a much broader sense) are reactions to what attentive conservatives have been aware of for decades: that America is split across irreconcilable moral differences, and compromise is not an option. You can't meet in the middle and agree to disagree over what defines human life, and whether innocents should be killed. That sort of belief should have no place in civilized society. The left believes the opposite just as strongly.

What FitzGerald here seems to be suggesting, however, is to retreat to the red states, where in many cases they're merely less-liberal rather than more-conservative, and wait. Prepare. Defend the castle. But leave the blue states to their ghettos and abortion clinics. But we know that's impossible. Texas already has to deal with Californians coming to places like Houston and wrecking their social order. New Hampshire deals with Bostonians moving in and demanding curbside trash collection. Joe Rogan apparently wants to move to Idaho.

Since the election of 2016, and even prior to that, conservatives should have realized by now that those who attack our way of life and our beliefs are not simply going to leave us alone. A regroup may be in order, as the integralists are doing presently with the volumes of material coming out in recent years defending it as a viable alternative. But a retreat on the scale of what Dreher and here FitzGerald suggest is a premature surrender. You won't be left alone. The federal government under Obama pushed common core on every state unwilling to implement it by using federal highway funds as leverage. Trump has used similar tactics regarding immigration enforcement. Every president does. In this regard, every strata of government must be considered an option for "integration from within".

As a final note, if we're going to be using high-minded historical terms to describe speculative strategies going forward, then I suggest we dispense with the Benedict Option. I mean no disrespect to the Benedictines nor their venerable founder. But where someone like FitzGerald, channeling Dreher, may suggest a retreat from the culture behind the walls of a figurative monastery, I can only respond that there is no such thing as a figurative monastery. There are places where you can speak out loud reasonable opinions, like "I don't think men are actually women," and not get fired, and then there's everywhere else. These aren't monasteries in the culture war; they're turning into figurative fortresses. And if the culture that the left has cultivated keeps up its assault, its lawsuits, its intimidation and thuggery, then there won't be many of them left.

The current crisis of the culture isn't some dark age where something once-great simply collapsed. It's the result of an ideological invasion and should be treated as such. The culture should be reconquered,

not abandoned to the hellish liberal modernity that rots so many souls. Thanks Dreher, but I'll take the Pelayo Option, who, once routed by the Umayyads to the remote mountains of Picos de Europa, started the long, grueling, seven hundred year long Reconquista. That means taking back the institutions that hate normalcy and regular old-fashioned Americanism, and especially those that are decidedly anti-Catholic (like Hollywood). It means taking back the government, before the government decides to take you.

MASK OFF

June 20th, 2020

It's another election year, which means, as per the example set last time, the cold civil war in this country heats up yet again. Each time is worse than the last, and with two weeks of riots leaving the downtown region of Minneapolis looking like Falujiah in 2005, we can rest assured that Minneapolis probably won't be coming back from this. Seattle has a comically titled Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone (CHAZ) which is currently under the dominion of an abrasive, belligerent soundcloud rapper, because he's the only one who thought to bring a gun. And, the icing on the cake: Pelosi spearheaded an effort to rip down, by congressional authority, more statues of Confederate figures.

In 2015, the Freddie Gray riots stripped Baltimore of businesses and shops, burned a CVS to the ground, and provided cover for a looting operation in the range of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Baltimore, to date, still hasn't recovered from then-Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's order to the police to give the rioters some space to destroy. Two weeks ago, we watched mayors all across the country take her lead. The result is mind-numbing: trails of destruction cloven through downtown Minneapolis, Brooklyn, Santa Monica, Portland, Philadelphia, Washington, and now, Seattle—among many more. And at the time of this writing, the situation in places like Portland, Oregon and Atlanta are getting much, much worse.

There are three issues to address here: the violence, the attacks against our history by tearing down monuments, and how these fit into current events. We'll start with the monuments.

Arguments

We can understand the rage against the Confederate monuments in two ways: the theoretical and the practical. Normally, the practical is simply a matter of implementing the theoretical, but in this case—and in the case of all left wing narratives of the last couple decades—the reverse is true. The theoretical is deployed as a weapon against their opposition in order to justify the practical. It's not necessarily a lie to them, but the ideology they espouse isn't really the point of their unrest. This is crucial to understanding what's really going on here, and we'll address that in a moment.

Theoretically, we're told that statues are stand-ins for the ideas espoused by the people they depict. In the cases of figures known more for their ideology than their life, for instance, such as maybe Kant or Descartes, that could be true. In the cases of others, such as Robert E. Lee, whose guiding principles

amounted to common sense Americanism—defend hearth & home, fulfill your station to your best ability, remain faithful to God, etc.—there isn't any unique ideology there to enshrine. Most the American legends, including our founding fathers, are men such as these; even Jefferson, perhaps the most ideological of the founders, lived a life worthy of national memory regardless of whether he deserves to be vilified or glorified. For these figures, the statues are memorials to what they did, not what they believed.

Reasonable people understand this. Unfortunately, reasonableness is not the trait that our universities are charged with cultivating in the impressionable minds of our youth, as most of us now should be well aware. For the arts & humanities graduates, narrative is more important than reality—indeed becoming synonymous with it. Whatever Robert E. Lee or Jefferson Davis actually believed is irrelevant; their participation as losers in a war that determined the fate of the Peculiar Institution is all that matters. Their particular brand of post-structuralism inflicts upon the historical figures ideologies that exist purely in retrospect, and they forcibly reject any counterpoints. The actual causes of the war don't matter to them. This applies also to Churchill, despite winning his war, and Christopher Columbus, despite not having fought one, because of the greater racial conflict purported by subscribers to racial ideology.

So theoretically speaking, tearing down statues of racists is an improvement to the public square. Who wants to live in the shadow of a villain, after all? Any self-respecting conservative (I assume there are still a few out there) wouldn't be able to help a pang of disgust if he had to see a towering bronze effigy of Karl Marx every time he left his house in the morning. Same goes for these vanguard-activists on the left when they spot an image of Columbus. Or George Washington. Or so they claim.

But what's really going on here?

Take the image of a statue getting pulled off of its pedestal and cracking into several chunks as it hits the ground. Take another image: a man with his fist raised high, standing atop an overturned car with a burning shop at his rear casting him in silhouette. Or take another image: a man advancing on helmet-clad anonymous police officers demanding, angrily, to be arrested.

These are images of power. They evoke a revolutionary spirit, but only because they evoke first the indication of power against authority—the authority of history, of community, of law. Any front-page worthy image from the riots these past weeks is front-page worthy because it is powerful, and we respect power. And so do they; in fact, it's the only thing they respect.

Reasonable people, however, also respect *reason*. Reason is the means by which the world is made knowable and sensible. Reasonable people recognize that, even if it's not always immediately apparent, things are supposed to make sense. Argumentation, logic, and analysis all presuppose this, and reasonable people are at least willing to take for granted the fact that somebody, somewhere, is drawing reasonable conclusions from reasonable claims. So when someone appeals to a particular argument, most of us are willing to go along with it so long as it carries with it the auspices of reason.

Nowadays, of course, those auspices of reason tend to be couched in certain buzzwords and phrases, which themselves carry weight due to their origination: the various academic institutions that dot the

West like pox on a diseased cow. Most self-respecting Americans would naturally assume that a university professor, tasked with shaping the intellectual framework of our academic superiors, would act responsibly in continuing the tradition of reasonable thinking so characteristic of the West. Or at least, most self-respecting Americans could be forgiven for believing this about thirty years ago. Now, with entire faculties of liberal arts departments openly endorsing the values of socialism, the evils of whiteness, and giving platforms to anti-white extremists, no American with an ounce of self-respect should delude themselves into thinking that universities are anything other than machines of indoctrination.

Nonetheless, a common thread of respecting reason prevails among those average, common Americans who vote on either side of the aisle. Conservatives do not have a monopoly over it any more than liberals have a monopoly over extremism; we know this because what a person believes isn't always congruent with how he acts or what his priorities are. A retiree paying lip service to Black Lives Matter from the comfort of a wooded suburban Connecticut home carries little practical weight, so far removed from the violence taking place miles away in Brooklyn. It's a virtue signal, and—even if he's the type to rave against Trump supporters on Facebook—a practically harmless one.

But what if you don't care about reason? What if reason was just another piece of the architecture that had systematized the oppression of your people?—or, say, maybe that's what you were told in order to pander to your own life of hardship. What if you were told that reason was just a means of justifying a system of power, and that in itself, reason had no meaning and didn't actually explain anything? You can see where this takes us.

What we're talking about is the use of arguments as weapons. The appointed spokespeople for these radicals are not reasonable people. They claim to be open to dialogue as they shout in your face, silence opposition, and sic mobs on the nation. They do not care about whether they win the argument, because the argument is just part of their battle plan. They care if they win the fight, be it by dishing out a rhetorical flex or sending a brick through a window. At the end of the day, what conservatives in particular must recognize, is that you might be right about your reasons for opposing them, but if all you're going to do is argue, you'll be the one bleeding out on the pavement while they stand on top of your body and proclaim victory.

I say conservatives here specifically because conservatives—or more accurately, right-liberals—are far more likely to oppose what's going on in an open and vocal environment than their left-of-center peers. Yes, our government is completely compromised and all of our GOP representatives, Justices, and administrators have, by all appearances, sold us up the river. But the left-liberal Americans will take a lot of this sitting down. They want appeasement, because they may sympathize with the arguments being made even if they don't agree with the cities being burned. Just by listening to the arguments, however, they're subjecting themselves to the abuse and allowing themselves to be cowed by a mob who does not care about them.

The anti-white, anti-American, “anti-racist” rhetoric isn't designed around a pursuit of truth in order to make the world a better place. The whole ideology exists to undermine and depose the social order

representative of the American quasi-liberal status quo. It doesn't matter how it's accomplished and it doesn't matter if it makes no sense. A population cowed by consumerism, near-instant gratification, and pornography, a population already enslaved by its passions, is not difficult to herd into a rhetorical pen that feeds into an actual slaughterhouse. And if you believe that it's worth even engaging with an argument put forward by the likes of Antifa or BLM spokespeople, you're already in that pen.

The fight here isn't over racism, or intersectionalism, or Marxism. The fight is about power. Liberalism provided the avenue for the naked fight over political power to take place. Before that, a wholesale rejection of the struggle would have been provided by every level of government and social order. Now? Not so much. Liberalism, which espouses a relativity of truths, obscures reason and forces the issue of power over all, because by rejecting a singular truth from which is ordered the architecture of reason, liberalism's only enforcer is whichever man is holding the sword at the end of the day. As we see playing out farcically in the Seattle autonomous zone, that man will either be a cop or it'll be a self-appointed vigilante with a gun.

Humiliation

Bending the knee is a sign of submission, fealty, agreement and endorsement, and humility before a social better. When we bend the knee before the altar, we're acknowledging God and His Real Presence in the tabernacle, we're acknowledging ourselves as His subjects, and in humbling ourselves, acknowledging how little we are before His majesty. When we bend the knee before our king—if we had one—there would be congruent acknowledgments of respecting the earthly authority of the nation's living regent.

Learned as we are as secular modernists, we have no need for kings and, gradually, we have come to find little need also for God. Absent truth and absent reason, the best a civilization can do is wrestle for the control levers of power, while those who have it will wield it with impassioned abandon. Good secular rulers will rule according to the rough approximations of reason that is possible for authority bound to his passions; the worst rulers will ignore any pretenses of reason altogether and embrace despotism. This applies not only to the rule of single dictators but of oligarchies the likes of which the United States has operated as for the last fifty years.

The dispensation of justice and the rule of law become the arbitrary marks of the ruling party's decisions. This is the modern political framework, and those who behave this way cannot conceive of a moral order independent of the shackles that bind them to their passions. This is why all modern attempts at explaining justice, law, and authority are built on the premises that no one is actually right in any objective sense, and that justice is achievable only with relation to certain in-group preferences. Of course this makes no sense at all, but that's what we're told to believe according to the social justice narrative.

So when they incite the mobs to tear down our history, they aren't doing it in order to usher in regime change. The regime already changed. Keep in mind that the people tearing down monuments already have the sympathies of one of the two ruling parties in the country. House majority leader Pelosi even had the portraits of Confederate sympathizers removed from the Capitol building as a sign of solidarity,

and she drafted legislation that would remove Confederate statues from cemeteries and public land in an official capacity. The vanguard in the streets behaving like even less-classy Bolsheviks aren't rebels, they're just the radical faction of the ruling party. They get to do what the ruling party wants done but without the pretenses of jumping through legal hoops.

And you might wonder what the goal of tearing down statues is if it isn't regime change and if they don't really believe their own rhetoric. The answer is simple humiliation. Just like using bad arguments to bully reasonable people into supporting their fight, they tear down the statues purely because they know that a) it will elicit a vocal response and b) their opposition isn't going to put up a fight over it. The enemy thinks they've already won, and that the bulk of Americans are just going to roll over and accept whatever brave new hellish world they plan on implementing.

Maybe they're right, I don't know. Six decades of the government actively harassing, infiltrating, and outright purging organized right wing movements has left whatever remains of the right as little more than a collection of peaceful pro-life activists, demoralized NRA members, and Knights of Columbus-adjacent cookout fans. When large groups of people who self-identify with the right come together to organize, they're smeared by the media, at best, and at worst, funneled by cops toward Antifa specifically so a fight can break out and the state has an excuse to arrest them. There's no question that if the riots two weeks ago were predominately right-wing inspired, and they were burning down abortion clinics while demanding the dismantling of DACA, there'd be boots on the ground the same day and there'd be a clean-up operation that'd have made Nixon raise his eyebrows.

With this in mind, it's clear that the government is going to let this continue for as long as it wants until it gets whatever it's goals are. That masks didn't slip off this time, the perpetrators just took them off themselves and the rest of us, shocked that they'd do such a thing, still seem to pretend like they're wearing them. The opposition is openly flaunting a definite, literal hatred of white people—and whether you believe that's a legitimate category or not doesn't even matter at this point. They'll know you're white enough when they see you.

Conclusion

I won't pretend to know the answer to all of this. A fight of this size comes in waves, on a predictable cycle of every four years, because that's our election cycle. At least for now. This year it's bad; next time it will be worse.

On a practical level, the one thing we must all remember is to cling as close as possible to the Sacraments, maintain if not further deepen our devotions and our interior lives, and do whatever is in our power to be better Catholics. This should always take priority, especially now as all the signs are on the wall: this violence is distinctly anti-Christian and especially anti-Catholic. In the time it took to write this piece, the mob went from tearing down confederate statues to tearing down statues of saints and even of Our Lady of Fatima. The Enemy is at work here.

On a wider level, organization will be key, but I don't know how much to trust efforts of organization for the reasons I mentioned before. We already know that our elected officials don't have our backs, as

American citizens, and we've been watching Trump *literally do nothing* while the country burns, so we know his administration doesn't have our backs either. After the recent passages of *Bostock v. Clayton County* and *Department of Homeland Security v. Regents of the University of California* through the Supreme Court, we know that the judges don't have our backs, either. If there was ever a time when the U.S. Government so thoroughly and so obviously resented, dismissed, and ignored its own people, we're living through it now.

All I know is that when we're watching mobs of rioters, profiled by fires, tear down statues of national heroes like George Washington, it isn't alarmist to draw parallels to the disastrous revolutions of 1789, 1848, and 1914, to mention just a few. When members of the mob are shouting, on video, "shoot the white folks," and "kill whitey," and are so emboldened as to take over city blocks and point weaponry at cops, it isn't alarmist to call this the beginnings of a race war. And when the government ignores the violence when it isn't outright endorsing it, it isn't alarmist to consider the fact that you don't have a country anymore.

It's just a few words. It's just a slogan. It's just pronouns. It's just airing legitimate grievances. It's just some statues. It's just some names. It's just reparations. It's just relocation. It's just workplace reassignment. You will be made complicit by our demands to fall in line. Shut up, get in the camp. Shut up, you don't deserve to see your family. Shut up, you lost the war. Shut up, do what we tell you. Shut up, dig the graves.

The Politics of Humiliation

July 15th, 2020

If we have learned anything in the last four months, it's that nearly every element of American society is run, at its highest levels, by people who hate you. This isn't exactly news to readers of this blog, as I've been harping on this point for quite a long time. The difference is, as I mentioned in my last post on the subject, the masks are off and they aren't even bothering to hide their disdain.

The ultimate question here, as always, is how to win. Can America be turned back into a country conducive to the needs of what should be considered normal for ordinary Americans? Is it possible to scale back the extent that the sexual revolution has perverted morality? Can immigration be walked back? Can Free Trade and the corporatization of American industries be brought under control? Can we at least prevent the United States from turning into the sort of left-wing totalitarian hell-state that the Anti-Racism narrative heralds?

In order to answer some of these questions, we'll review the last four months as a microcosm of their tactics in order to properly discern the enemy's motive.

Review

In March, we witnessed the spread of an unpredictable virus that had experts drawing up one wildly incorrect model of deaths and catastrophe after another, which facilitated a nationwide lock down. The lock down cost millions of Americans their jobs, and thousands of them their lives. After just four or five weeks of lock down, the prolonged psychological stresses of abandoning careers, livelihoods, and bread-winning jobs left many Americans out in the rain. Their tech- and service-working peers, spoiled but fortunate that the lock downs only cut their commute times to zero, were all-too willing to fold into the hysterical narrative. Business owners, menial workers, and laborers, however, were not so lucky.

When it became clear that this virus was not the plague it was billed as, figures in our government and media—rather than walking back their rhetoric—doubled down, predictably, and insisted that more lock downs were necessary. Someone like Governor Andrew Cuomo could get away with an absurd statement claiming domestic abuse was preferable to “death”, live on national television, and nobody batted an eye. He authorized the use of elderly care homes as virus clinics, which exacerbated his already miserable handling of the pandemic by sending thousands of old people into premature graves. When asked about it, he claimed questioning that order was politicizing a tragedy and in the same

breath condemned people who didn't vote for him. When Florida's testing efforts started to bear fruit and it turned out more people had been infected—but didn't suffer serious symptoms—than was previously known, Cuomo was eager to claim that Governor DeSantis has blood on his hands. DeSantis' state has had, so far, 3,731 COVID-related deaths in the last four months; Cuomo's 32,188. New York's population is 19.5 million; Florida's is 21.5.

In April, we witnessed countless videos of two different colors. The first was a terrible deluge of Tik Tok footage featuring precise, choreographed dance routines of nurses and doctors in hospitals around the country. Ostensibly, this was done to celebrate the efforts of medical professionals. Some people took the bait, but those of us with an IQ above room temperature recognized that they were dancing in empty hallways, empty rooms, and empty wings, and that the deluge of this idiocy indicated a mounting problem with the narrative. In China, footage had leaked of bodies piling up in corridors and nurses dropping from exhaustion, but in the USA, they had enough free time, extra energy and spare room to perfect superfluous choreography that made them look like fools.

The other videos were those of parents being dragged away in handcuffs by neighborhood cops for bringing their children to wide open parks. We got to watch policemen harass normal people for going outside, under the pretenses that they were defying lock down orders. Of course, it didn't matter that these parents were alone with their children, or in small groups. What mattered was that they dared to leave their houses in the middle of an undeclared quarantine. These instances, coupled with the cop who lost his job for publicly speaking out against this sort of unreasonable behavior, drove a thin blue nail through the idea that there are any good cops who would defend the American way of life if a totalitarian regime ever commandeered the auspices of power. Instead of seeing cops acting with common sense and defending their local communities, our timelines were flooded with officers harassing people they know won't fight back for the crime of walking around outside.

In May, we were told that every preventative measure that we were supposed to use to combat this virus and its spread was wrong. We were told that the virus couldn't actually live for weeks at a time on surfaces. We were told that it was far more likely to spread by coughing. We were told that rather making no difference at all, and in fact opening you up to respiratory and oxygenation problems, masks would be mandated by government fiat by nearly every governor of every state. Meanwhile, investigations had revealed hospitals were a little overenthusiastic in their zeal to attribute deaths to the virus, due in part to unintended federal funding incentives. This contorted the actual death stats to the point of illegibility, but nonetheless, the New York Times would celebrate reaching the coveted 100,000 fatality figure by the end of the month with a front page deluge of names. Although its celebration was shrouded in doom and panic, it was only two months beforehand that the common media consensus indicated a body count should have by then been in the millions.

And then, in June, we watched the country burn. We watched statues topple. We watched people get shot, run over, maced, set on fire. We watched business get trashed, drivers harassed, monuments defaced. We saw what carried with it every outward indication of a revolution, and it had the complete backing of the major media establishments, big corporate enterprises, and—considering the embarrassing degree of non-resistance by so many local authorities—regional governments. When

white business owners stormed the Michigan statehouse with guns in May to protest the lock down measures, they were smeared as violent extremists, but they all went back home that night, no one was injured, and not a single round was fired. A month later, leftist college-age students and their TAs took over Seattle's Capitol Hill and, for about six weeks, turned the region into an anarchic zone with open-air drug markets, prostitution, and a four people dead from gun violence. The mayor, Jenny Durkan, sat back and let it happen. It wasn't until they marched on her house and threatened her personal safety that she decided to take action; the next day the police walked in and calmly dismantled their little project and arrested about twenty people. The anticlimax was matched only by the absurdity that it had happened at all.

But their protest was legitimate. It was legitimate because it was violent. It was legitimate because it supported the backstage regime.

While mobs paraded in the streets, breaking windows and setting fires at night, the media again tried desperately to gaslight their viewers into defending Black Lives Matter protests while simultaneously attacking the anti-lock down protests. It didn't really work, for the most part, but enough of the country still believed in the legitimacy of the BLM narrative that it didn't matter. The mere attempt, however, should be enough to prove the extent to which the media wants to humiliate you. And I mean you, personally, reading this. Even if you agree with BLM, they don't agree with you. They don't even care about you. The media, backing BLM's offensive, was so lazy in their gaslighting that they didn't believe anyone deserved the weakest attempt at a con.

This also extends to the BLM movement itself, of course. They will tell you that the phrase "Black Lives Matter" just means that blacks should be allowed to play on an equal playing field as whites and every other ethnic group in the country. Meanwhile, the man with the gun and the megaphone next to them will make open threats against white people, promise violence if they don't get what they want, and be found spray painting "Kill Whitey" on the ruins of statues they've torn down.

It's now July. The autonomous zones have been dismantled and most of the country has settled down. Portland remains a scene of unmitigated unrest every night, and Brooklyn still groans under the weight of frequent riots, but the violence in Minneapolis, Seattle, DC and the rest has all returned to pre-May levels of peace. In their wake, of course, are hundreds, if not thousands of burnt husks of businesses. Many of them won't reopen.

Governors have, however, capitulated to demands of tearing down statues. Richmond's mayor decided, with the unanimous backing of its city council, to remove its historic monument to Stonewall Jackson; the decision remains the most vivid act of bending an overenthusiastic knee to a belligerent mob of uneducated college students. The Coronavirus narrative has returned in full force, as testing has been made more available and known cases receive a sharp uptick—even as virus-related deaths have cratered to the point of being almost irrelevant statistics.

Between these two issues sits a trend common to left wing yarns: normalize the absurd. A decade ago, you could have been forgiven if you believed that the left still had valid, reasonable points to make. The Occupy movement that had been the immediate reaction to the financial crisis was a good

example, until it was taken over by the absurd less than two weeks into its existence. Even if their ideology was mistaken, you could have still dismissed elements of the absurd as irrelevant; at the time, the third offensive of the sexual revolution was still in its infancy, and Obama's disastrous administration hadn't had a chance to utterly decimate race relations yet. The young girls clamoring for media attention as they pushed dialogues of oppression hierarchy were recognized by most people following Occupy to be provocateurs unrelated to the general desire to lynch bankers. They were fringe. In retrospect, they were the future. At the time, the left, although emboldened by sweeping political victories, still presented itself as a respectable political ideology—not a lifestyle.

As Obama's term drew to a close, however, it became apparent to everyone how deeply the political divide had penetrated into the culture. Eight years of a race-baiting president who openly and unashamedly gaslit the American public with the assistance of a complicit, fawning media empire had turned media-savvy liberals into uninformed, self-righteous morons. On the other hand, the triumph of Fox News and the ascendancy of alt-media online transformed conservatives into apocalyptic and reactionary libertarians. This galvanization of political discourse made it easier to push more radical, revolutionary ideas; it's how we got from *Obergfell* to glorifying child drag queens in less than four years.

It's easy to assume that these people think you're stupid, but that isn't quite the case. It's worse than that. They know that the things they do and the things they say are in direct opposition to one another. When someone like Nancy Pelosi excuses the destruction of public and private property in the name of equality, she knows she's giving a certain amount of public support to the media-stylized revolutionaries who have run roughshod over Portland, Seattle, and Minneapolis. When Fauci says things like we'll have to abolish the handshake or does total about-faces on his medical opinions on a weekly basis, he knows that what he's talking about doesn't make any sense. When Obama still claims that his administration had zero scandals and lacked even a smidgen of corruption, he knows that most of the American public doesn't believe him.

What puts all of this in perspective is what they do believe: that you're docile. That you are, in fact, smart enough to know when you're being lied to. That maybe twenty years ago, you weren't, but you most definitely are now. That you know when they're trying to gaslight you, ruse you, pull fast ones, etcetera. But that you also won't do anything, because they've already rigged every system in the government, culture, and judicial structure that you could appeal to. That not only *won't* you do anything, you *can't* do anything.

This is what humiliation politics means. It's the one thread that binds every aspect of modernity together, from the sexual revolution to the race riots, from the legal divorce away from common good jurisprudence to the secularization of the public square, from the infantilization of entertainment to the consolidation of consumer culture; Big Tech, Big Pharma, Big Finance, the Media-Activist Complex, the universities, public schooling curricula, all of it boils down not merely to control, but to humiliation. It isn't enough to have systems of control, because even they recognize that the human will cannot be completely extinguished. But to humiliate you into either being a self-shamed guilt drone that marches along with their absurd remarks, or otherwise to make yourself an easy target for

the mob—that's enough to keep the control they want. It is a war against reason waged by people who already know they've won and are doing it to spite you.

Humiliation

I say they've already won, but when you look around, it's clear that America is not some Amazon-Google-Facebook-ized version of the Soviet Union. Yet. If you move to the right state, it's still not too difficult to legally obtain firearms. You still have a choice not to engage with social media, though not carrying any form of cellular device can be difficult in today's world. The COVID efforts have moved us much closer to a cashless society, but credit-only policies in stores may lift if given enough time. And, as pornographed as our culture is, we've yet to see legitimate, actual pornography pasted on billboards to an extent where you simply have no choice in whether you view it or not—although in a world with dopamine-addled smartphone users, you could make the argument that such efforts aren't even necessary anymore.

Now, these issues are all big-picture issues, far beyond the purview of what we're looking at with the virus and rioting of the last four months, but the big picture should be kept in mind. Notice as well that each element of the modern world began life as a tool of social control, but within that control apparatus was a means of inflicting humiliation. Indeed, as the control became standardized enough, and as the social engineering matured, the humiliation became the point. The sexual revolution's first offensive was to legitimize fornication, to enslave a people to their desires. But that's just control. The recently-completed third offensive, having wrapped up with *Bostock v Clayton County*, wasn't about control anymore, but rather rubbing the American people's noses in the dirt of the incomprehensible.

What's clear is the laziness of the lies. In the last four months, the media has done nothing to even attempt convincing the average American of their sincerity. Instead, they bully and ridicule anyone who questions the narrative they shamelessly peddle on national television. And the governors who permitted their states to burn and the mayors who permitted literal anarchy in their cities are even worse.

But what purpose does this humiliation really serve? The immediate deduction is the one drawn above: the vindictive spite of victorious revolutionaries. It's the sort of behavior you could extrapolate two or three years down the road to see paralleling the abhorrent behavior of the Spanish Republicans during their civil war. The desecration of churches began during the riots, the demolition of monuments, the gleeful and willful ignorance of the pathetic revolutionaries—if you think it's alarmist to call these the early signs of a revolution, you're either historically illiterate or an outright liar. The fact that the revolution is heralded at a time when every major corporation, more than half of the federal government, a major plurality of elected officials, and most of the media apparatus is championing the revolutionaries' alleged values just goes to show how closely this parallels Spain's upheaval a century ago. Back then, as today, the revolutionaries thought they'd already won, and that their acts of desecration were victory laps around a demoralized public.

But before we get to Spain, let's study humiliation in a deeper sense. For this, we have to analyze the archetypal act of humiliation around which all of history turns: Our Lord's Passion. There is no greater

series of acts that better characterize the nature of humiliation than the Passion endured by Our Lord on the very precipice of His victory—specifically the scourging, crowning with thorns, and carrying of His cross to Golgotha. Scripture tells us relatively little of these events, save that they happened; Pilate ordered Him scourged by soldiers, and with attitudes of mockery they fashioned a circlet of thorns and pushed it into His head, spitting and jeering Him all the while. He was given a reed and a purple cloak to complete the farce.

The visions of Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich, however, offer what is likely greater insight into the sufferings of Our Lord's Passion. Best known today for having been a direct source for the writing of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*, Blessed Anne's visions comprise a lengthy corpus that covers the lives of Our Lord and Our Lady, with special attention given to His Passion and Resurrection.

The scourging is particularly highlighted in *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, comprising six or seven chapters, depending on how they're counted. I'll quote at length here, as the full detail of the scourging is important for our purposes.

Blessed Anne writes:

The pillar where criminals were scourged stood to the north of Pilate's palace, near the guard-house, and the executioners soon arrived, carrying whips, rods, and ropes, which they tossed down at its base. They were six in number, dark, swarthy men, somewhat shorter than Jesus; their chests were covered with a piece of leather, or with some dirty stuff; their loins were girded, and their hairy, sinewy arms bare. They were malefactors from the frontiers of Egypt, who had been condemned for their crimes to hard labour, and were employed principally in making canals, and in erecting public buildings, the most criminal being selected to act as executioners in the Praetorium.

These cruel men had many times scourged poor criminals to death at this pillar. They resembled wild beasts or demons, and appeared to be half drunk. They struck our Lord with their fists, and dragged him by the cords with which he was pinioned, although he followed them without offering the least resistance, and, finally, they barbarously knocked him down against the pillar. This pillar, placed in the centre of the court, stood alone, and did not serve to sustain any part of the building; it was not very high, for a tall man could touch the summit by stretching out his arm; there was a large iron ring at the top, and both rings and hooks a little lower down. It is quite impossible to describe the cruelty shown by these ruffians towards Jesus: they tore off the mantle with which he had been clothed in derision at the court of Herod, and almost threw him prostrate again.

Jesus trembled and shuddered as he stood before the pillar, and took off his garments as quickly as he could, but his hands were bloody and swollen. The only return he made when his brutal executioners struck and abused him was to pray for them in the most touching manner: he turned his face once towards his Mother, who was standing overcome with grief; this look quite unnerved her: she fainted, and would have fallen,

had not the holy women who were there supported her. Jesus put his arms round the pillar, and when his hands were thus raised, the archers fastened them to the iron ring which was at the top of the pillar; they then dragged his arms to such a height that his feet, which were tightly bound to the base of the pillar, scarcely touched the ground. Thus was the Holy of holies violently stretched, without a particle of clothing, on a pillar used for the punishment of the greatest criminals; and then did two furious ruffians who were thirsting for his blood begin in the most barbarous manner to scourge his sacred body from head to foot. The whips or scourges which they first made use of appeared to me to be made of a species of flexible white wood, but perhaps they were composed of the sinews of the ox, or of strips of leather.

And slightly further on:

The two fresh executioners commenced scourging Jesus with the greatest possible fury; they made use of a different kind of rod,—a species of thorny stick, covered with knots and splinters. The blows from these sticks tore his flesh to pieces; his blood spouted out so as to stain their arms, and he groaned, prayed, and shuddered. At this moment, some strangers mounted on camels passed through the forum; they stopped for a moment, and were quite overcome with pity and horror at the scene before them, upon which some of the bystanders explained the cause of what they witnessed. Some of these travellers had been baptised by John, and others had heard the sermon of Jesus on the mountain. The noise and the tumult of the mob was even more deafening near the house of Pilate.

Two fresh executioners took the places of the last mentioned, who were beginning to flag; their scourges were composed of small chains, or straps covered with iron hooks, which penetrated to the bone, and tore off large pieces of flesh at every blow. What word, alas! could describe this terrible—this heartrending scene!

The cruelty of these barbarians was nevertheless not yet satiated; they untied Jesus, and again fastened him up with his back turned towards the pillar. As he was totally unable to support himself in an upright position, they passed cords round his waist, under his arms, and above his knees, and having bound his hands tightly into the rings which were placed at the upper part of the pillar, they recommenced scourging him with even greater fury than before; and one among them struck him constantly on the face with a new rod. The body of our Lord was perfectly torn to shreds,—it was but one wound. He looked at his torturers with his eyes filled with blood, as if entreating mercy; but their brutality appeared to increase, and his moans each moment became more feeble.

Of course, it should go without saying that Blessed Anne's private revelations do not carry the weight of Scripture, dogma, or even doctrine of magisterial teaching. Nonetheless, her *Dolores Passion* does carry both a nihil obstat and an imprimatur from the Holy See, indicating that no part of it is incongruous with the Catholic faith and, more importantly, that it is reasonable and acceptable for Catholics to use it in their spiritual development.

The degree of barbarity present in the scourging isn't something solely attested to by Blessed Anne, either. We know from Scripture that He was beaten and bloodied so terribly that he could not even carry His Cross without assistance. We know from the Shroud of Turin, which by all reliable accounts and studies is exactly what it is purported to be, that the wounds He suffered during the scourging would have left strips of flesh hanging from His body. The brutality of this event is beyond measure. Ironically, based on all of this, if anything negative can be said about Gibson's graphic depiction of the Passion, it would be that it wasn't violent enough.

But let's focus on His oppressors: Blessed Anne describes them as half-drunk swarthy men from the southern frontiers of the empire. This puts into perspective the sort of torment that Our Lord suffered at their hands. These were men beyond the scope of reason—something indicated already by their unflinching and literal assault on the incarnate Word, the Second Person of the Trinity. What Blessed Anne's insights into their demeanor suggests, however, is men possessed by unthinking malice—free, of course, to act as they will, but nonetheless enslaved by a particularly wrathful ignorance that drives them away from sanity. Men enslaved by their passions lose all reason.

As Christ suffered under their torments, Blessed Anne says that he prayed unceasingly for mercy upon their souls. What greater mercy could have befallen them at that point than the clarity of thought to cease in their abuse? And yet, clearly, that did not come. We know that God dispenses upon us what is asked, as Our Lord taught while He was on Earth. This can only indicate that the wills of these cruel men were galvanized—their hearts were hardened—such that no act of God, while respecting their agency, could turn them away from their excesses.

When we reach the age of reason, each of us recognizes the tension between what is good and what is desired. Taken to its extreme, this tension manifests in an ultimatum one way or another: you must abandon yourself for God, or you must abandon yourself for your desires. Become a religious fanatic, or become a junkie, a drunk, an addict of some sort—throw yourself into your passions so severely that you lose sight of reason and, in doing so, lose sight of what agency you had over your will. By throwing yourself toward God, regardless of how you may stumble along the way, you are embracing what is good and fleeing from sin. By throwing your lot in with your passions, you do the opposite. In this sense, we can understand how damnation is an option chosen freely—or as freely as a will shackled to his passions can be—and not merely a just punishment for transgressions handed down from the Most High.

What we see in the actions of Our Lord's aggressors are men who have clearly chosen the latter ultimatum. But why did they abandon themselves so thoroughly to violence? Did they love violence for its own sake? Perhaps, but a direct encounter with the incarnate Word indicates a unique moment in anyone's life where that ultimatum becomes an unavoidable binary. When confronted with God, you either fall to the ground at His feet and cry out in love and beg for mercy, or you flee. In their own way, these men fled. And while it is sinful to flee, what's more important is that it is sin that *causes* them to flee. There is the sin of an habitually enslaved will, corroded by indulgence in wrath and malice, certainly. But dig deeper, and where does that passionate malice have its root?

We return to fear. They were fleeing from Him when they were born, and each passionate embrace of sin is another frightful journey away from Him. And then, at that moment when He is there in the flesh, they were given that perfect option in no uncertain terms. But for men who have engaged so thoroughly with sin, and fled so far from Him, who could abandon that journey and return to Him? You could say it's pride that darkens that option, as it is pride that hardens our hearts. Pride makes it impossible to give up what we believe to be ours. Since we know, ultimately, that we can take nothing with us into the grave except what we hold inside of ourselves, it is pride that allows us to clench our beings around our sufferings, and make us unwilling to offer them to God. Because our sufferings are our shames.

If we are ashamed, how can we go to God? If we suffer, how can we not be ashamed?

Man ought to be strong, but instead, he is weak.

The men that stood above Our Lord and scourged him could not be called victorious. Our Lord's sacrifice on the Cross fulfilled the victory over sin that was preordained by Adam's transgression. All who engage in sin, particularly with such recklessness, are throwing in their lot with those that have already lost. Satan fell like lightning from Heaven, and men such as these run to catch up with him.

So with all this in mind, did they scourge Our Lord, beat Him, humiliate Him, and curse Him because they believed they had won? If they did, they knew that this was a meaningless victory. If they really believed they had won, they were engaging in the sort of nihilism that so characterizes the modern world today—and nihilism itself is just a defeatist attitude too deluded to call a proper philosophy. If they believed they had won, they were believing a lie. They had already lost before they'd even had the opportunity to win, so great was their sin. Only by Christ's sacrifice is winning even an option.

The Enemy

For the Enemy, of course, there is no option to win. Christ's victory over sin meant also victory over the world and over the Devil—and the evil in the world is made worse by the Devil. But the Devil's behavior in the world follows the same pattern as those oppressors at the Scourging; humiliation, violence, mocking, all to present an outward appearance of victory—a lie. By rejecting God, that's all he knows.

Christ's scourging is the archetype of humiliation played out in history; it followed a ritual, great suffering, great violence, and great mockery. We focused on the motives of his oppressors because by understanding those, we can come to know the method of he who guides them. By glimpsing his method, we can understand the sort of humiliation playing out on the world scale today.

When we see the mob dismantling our public square, lying to our faces, and setting buildings on fire, when we politicians pushing revolutionary narratives and stabbing the people of this country—sometimes literally—in the back, when we see faceless corporations push for divisiveness, stoke public outrage, and throw their own employees under the bus, we know we're witnessing a ritualized humiliation procession on a massive scale, and the average American mind is the victim. If you bend the knee, you're complicit. If you engage with them, you're complicit. If you believe them acting in good faith, you're complicit. If you think they are reasonable, you're complicit. It's understandable

being duped, but at this point, the writing is on the wall: dialogue is not possible with people who do not believe that reason exists. It is the denial of God taken to its rational extreme. You can't talk to people like that. Christ did not beg to them for mercy when he was scourged. He prayed to God to have mercy on *them*.

And this extends far past the recent rituals of humiliation. This extends into the realm of the sexual revolution, where pornography addiction and sex with strangers is considered normal, where homosexuality is considered a superior form of copulation, and where children are told that mutilation constitutes a transmogrification of sexes. It extends to the absurd manner in which our economy is set up. It extends into the education system, into our architecture, our city planning, demographic distributions. It extends into our entertainment, media, and art, into our music, into the very way we're told to interpret information.

When you see the countless girls who have been poisoned by a liberal arts education, who entered university bright-eyed and beaming, only to be subjected to four years of ideological abuse and emerge, bleary-eyed and insane, with shaved heads and nose rings, angry, embittered and raving—you see the Enemy's humiliation hard at work. He is humiliating the girls, but he is humiliating you, as well, because the Enemy knows that these are your daughters, your once-crushes, your future-fiances. These girls are the future of a nation that has bent the knee to the Enemy's dominion, and he is exacting every ounce of humiliation he can get out of you. The Enemy hates you not for who you are, but because you can still win when he has already lost.

Try not to trivialize this analysis as a way of saying “bad people are bad,” or “those rioters tearing down statues are sinners.” That's missing the point. We're all sinners and, by the only metric that matters, we're all bad. Within the context of social cohesion, some of us are certainly worse than others, but when you're standing before God at your private judgment, He probably isn't going to shrug His shoulders and say, “well, at least you weren't Jeffrey Dahmer.”

Looking ahead, it goes without saying that things are going to get bad. We can all see the writing on the wall. The current regime is sympathetic to those who hate the faith. Presently, there are still enough at least nominally Christian people in the country to make wide-scale totalitarian-style persecution somewhat difficult to pull off without anyone noticing, but that doesn't give us cause to be lax. Be prepared for it when it comes, because it's going to come, either in your lifetime or in your kid's.

The solution to the current crisis will manifest itself through the combined wills of those who do not give up hope. In St. Louis, hundreds of Catholics convened to pray before the statue of King St. Louis IX in order to deter the so-called protesters who wanted it torn down. They succeeded, and have made the effort, assisted by local clergy, to defend their monument. It took prayer and devotion. Going forward, remember their example, because pretty soon, that's all we'll have at our disposal.

Fili redemptor mundi Deus, miserere nobis.

Two Americas

October 25th, 2020

In the last nine months, Americans have watched this country rip itself apart in the interests of health considerations and burn itself down over race relations. Misplaced efforts to curb infection rates of an ostensible super-flu resulted in local governments implementing soft-quarantines that decimated the economy and has resulted in staggering unemployment rates country-wide. Most place still have not returned to normal, and mask-wearing is considered mandatory in most indoor public areas. Meanwhile, Black Lives Matter—coupled with Antifa—threw their regularly-scheduled election year tantrums, but this time it resulted in months of violence, several dead, and estimates of property damage in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

These two issues polarized the American public, and this polarization split largely across political party lines. It has not turned out to be a perfect correlation, however, anymore than correlations of graduate degree holders, salaries, or IQ stats fall across the divide of political parties. There's a rough fit in some cases, and a much rougher fit in others. The real divide is between the urban elite and, essentially, everybody else.

How bad, exactly, is this divide? Casual political opinions have, at least since the Clinton days, been used as certain tokens that adorn a larger cultural costume. If you held a particular opinion on politics, chances were that you held others that ran in the same sphere of influence. This has gotten so strong in the last four years that, taking the current crises as examples, a young woman with dyed hair complaining about how much her birth control costs can immediately—and most oftentimes, accurately—be presumed to be a card-carrying Democrat who believes the COVID narrative, supports BLM (if not also Antifa), identifies as some renegade sexual orientation other than “normal”, and harbors some amount of disdain for Christians despite identifying as non-denominational (or worse, Episcopalian) herself. You can do the same sort of generalization for white guy who happens to own a Blue Lives Matter flag or wears a red MAGA hat.

The problem, however, is when such a divergence, facilitated no doubt by this political tokenism, affects a people's fundamental beliefs about reality and moral obligation. A country doesn't need much to hold itself together, but it's imperative that it maintains a common consensus of what it actually *is*. This divide, visible on the ground level between people who have zero stake in the offices of actual power, marks the problem that Americans must contend with today.

That is, of course, if we could define what America is, since there are two of them now. And they occupy the same territory, and claim legitimacy to the same seats of power, and answer to the same name. They just believe diametrically opposite things.

“Old” America

There was a time in this country, lest it be forgotten, when Archbishop Fulton Sheen’s catechetical television program dominated the ratings for its time slot. There was a time when Glenn Gould, international and somewhat notorious pianist, could book TV specials on major networks, and indulge in a [satirical expose of high culture](#), riddled with musical theory and the sort of vocabulary you’d expect to hear out of a contemporaneous English professor. There was a time when these sorts of programs weren’t just tolerated, weren’t just used to spice up conversation at the water cooler, weren’t just issued as status symbols. There was a time when Americans actually engaged with matters of the mind, the soul, the aesthetic.

This was, of course, before we went to the moon. It was, admittedly, before and during the period in which the Jim Crow laws were dismantled. It was at a time when [roughly ten percent](#) of the American population had graduated from college, although that figure would be doubled by the end of the 70s. It was a time plagued by fears of nuclear war, invigorated with a new religious optimism, and lit by the predawn glow of the impending sexual revolution.

This America was divided, to a certain extent, but there remained a general American consensus: you can be a bit weird and you don’t have to agree with me, but so long as we respect each other’s property and don’t slander each other, we haven’t got any problems. There was an American ideology, though most Americans probably couldn’t articulate it. But they didn’t have to; nobody inside the country’s borders offered a compelling enough challenge to the nation’s lifestyle to warrant a response.

Property and face, rather than fundamental beliefs, were larger forces of social cohesion. Beliefs, for better or worse, were strikingly secondary to what was supposed to be respected in the public square. And this isn’t to say that there were public professions, either; to a degree, the counter-signalling against Soviet propaganda highlighted exactly that. We had no creed that we had to emptily recite before federal apparatchiks and commissars. For most Americans, trying to claim that the pledge of allegiance—much less the Star Spangled Banner—filled the same roles as their Soviet counterparts would have had you laughed out of the room. There were plenty of Americans who had their grievances with the government, but very few who would attempt characterizing American patriotism as a lock-and-step sham done in the totalitarian spirit of our Soviet rivals.

But then came the pill. Then came the Hart-Cellar act. Then came Vietnam. Then came the assembly of the Hollywood complex, the solidifying of the record companies, the cementing of the music industry, [the wholesale rejection of the Hayes Code](#) by film studios, the introduction of poisonous countercultural elements into television programming. Then came Watergate and *Deep Throat*, pornography, the race riots, MOVE. The government rewarded its citizenry’s legislative efforts with a litany of judicial fiats: *Griswold*, *Miller*, *Roe*. It rewarded its citizenry’s diligence with the implementation of a massive welfare state that still has no definable limits. It rewarded its citizenry’s

patriotism and responsible sexual choices with a demographic replacement now recognized as the largest, quickest migration of people in the history of the world.

For American nationalists, the demographic hole left by the sixty-one million abortions since 1973—to say nothing of the children never even conceived due to the revolution inflicted upon sexual relations thanks to the pill—is uncomfortably filled by the nearly hundred million people who moved here from third world countries. The elites of the country that foisted Bacchus and Moloch upon it decided, perhaps preemptively, that if they couldn't properly pillage the nation, they'd simply replace it right where it stood—or so the nationalist claim goes. We'll look at that more later.

I won't pretend like I lived through it. This characterization surely reeks of the romanticism of those who didn't have to deal with growing up at a time when divorce began to skyrocket and when your choice in television news was limited to ABC, NBC, and CBS. I didn't have to deal with higher mortality rates, harder access to medical service, a still-infantile understanding of pharmaceuticals. But I also don't know what it's like living in a country where hard drugs aren't more ubiquitous than crooked doctors, or where I can walk down streets in major cities without having to sidestep broken needles and strung-out addicts on benches. I don't even know what it's like growing up in a country where most of our major metropolitan areas aren't so crime- and poverty-ridden that they're unfavorably compared to third world countries.

Libraries of books have been written on the subject of how we got from there to here. Quite a good one came out [earlier this year](#). The purpose of this illustration is to highlight not just the scale and extent of the revolution in 1968, it's to highlight that in 1968, America was still one single country. It remained one, for a while, despite a cultural schism that has lasted for half a century, but the revolution succeeded. The question is whether it's still just one country is now, after fifty years of revolutionary fervor so normalized that it defines the status quo.

“New” America

The revolution of 1968 redefined the identities of the right and the left in America. For the right, the revolution fragmented its efforts as a reactionary movement due to the sheer number of attack avenues it opened up. The Evangelicals, the far-right (and seemingly without exception, federally compromised) racist groups, the small government types, etc. found it difficult to get along after Nixon's resignation. It wasn't until Reagan adopted a libertarian ethos that the Republican party found its footing again—not too difficult, admittedly, when we remember the context of the Carter administration.

But Reagan's coalition of the right, if you could call it that, was one that could only exist by making a deal with the revolution's own devil: sexual liberation. Libertarian identity required it. Evangelicals, and anyone socially to the right of them, found themselves begrudgingly supporting candidate after candidate on a GOP ticket on the hope that the country would revoke the free pass for infanticide it gave to women. *Roe*, however, remains the law of the land even to this day, and despite the current controversy surrounding Amy Coney Barrett's impending nomination, there's good reason to believe that it will remain the law of the land for a very long time to come. Despite the left's talk of the

Evangelical threat to democracy, there never really was one; every GOP administration since Reagan's, including George W. Bush's, was staffed largely by secular-minded, vaguely-Randian or Rand-adjacent fellows, many of whom embraced neoconservatism. As a result, despite having their hands a few levers of power, the cultural consensus of America never found itself regaining the sort of cohesion it had before the revolution.

On the left, too, the revolution wiped out any sense of reasoned disagreement at the ground level. E. Michael Jones somewhat famously relates Michel Foucault selling off the left's economic arguments while debasing himself in San Francisco's bathhouses; the sexual revolution had consumed the left, and talk of Marxism, socialism, class war, and the rest of it necessarily had their vocabulary reworked to reflect that. Committed socialists, the sort that Bernie Sanders claimed to be the poster boy of, found themselves without a backing.

It is important to remember that the distinction we're looking at here isn't necessarily represented by affiliation to political parties. Some examples: the GOP, despite generally and ostensibly being anti-abortion, has at the federal level proven itself to be tacitly complicit in the continued legality of the procedure. Conservative, if—again, ostensibly—bipartisan Supreme Court justices have continually sided with liberals on the issue whenever *Roe* has come up on the chopping block. On the other side, Democrats, despite ostensibly serving an anti-corporate agenda and favoring labor unions over big business, have become the party defending tech censorship and providing cover for the veritable monopolies that Silicon Valley has birthed. And let us not forget the bank bailouts done by Obama at a time when Occupy Wall Street was demanding bankers be dragged out into the streets and hanged.

Yes, our duly-elected public servants had their disagreements. Plenty of politicians likely even hate each other personally. And we can see the obvious presence of unfriendly clans and actors within our parties as they vie for power—the Clinton machine, and currently the Biden family, are two good recent examples. But at the end of the day, they all played ball in the same stadium. Winning the game is wholly secondary to the purpose of playing ball—for the MLB, the point is to entertain people, which sells the tickets and merchandise that pay the athletes and their entourages.

For the federal government, the partisanship is also secondary to a greater, similar cause: to maintain the cohesiveness of the elite apparatus. That apparatus isn't, however, the government itself, although it certainly comprises elements of it; it's the total union of the largest media, entertainment, tech, and financial conglomerates of the country. For the federal government's part, its involvement is conspiratorially referred to as the Deep State.

The presence of this entire apparatus is what we're talking about when we speak of the country having been invaded. These people don't represent America, and they certainly don't seem to serve it, either. Some of these corporations aren't even majority owned by Americans despite their overwhelming influence.

With this in mind, it's tempting, even sensible, to consider ourselves [living under an occupational regime](#). The language of the term "Deep State" implies this already, and it certainly seems like an accurate way of comprehending the incongruity between the American elite and the rest of us. People

with interests contrary to those of middle-Americans influence the flow of information, manage or decide what's considered public opinion or socially appropriate, and set the limits of acceptable ideology in schools and on social media. And to make the term "occupational government" an even more apt label, the sheer number of powerful figures in these institutions who hold dual citizenship with, say, a certain greatest ally of ours should give us pause.

But an occupational government suggests guards on street corners, a demoralized populace holding to a general anti-occupational consensus, and a conflict line drawn between those who have invaded and those who have been conquered. Speaking allegorically, of course, but the situation in America is much different from this. There isn't a singular general consensus on the part of those who have been invaded. There aren't ideological watchdogs under the direct employ of the occupational regime. The line between the invaded and the invaders isn't even entirely clear. And to make it more complicated, the regime is split across major sectors of American life and coordinated so each element acts in tandem with the rest; it has no monolithic public face like the Communist Party had in the USSR. Instead of a face, it has tokens: BLM, a rainbow flag, a coat hanger.

So we can tell the country's been occupied. But we're going a step further with this thesis, because the occupation's success has created a second country all of its own. The success of the public schooling option, the gradual transformation of universities into ideology factories, and the campaign to create an uninterrupted high school to college pipeline succeeded in generating new people for the elite. Although self-styled revolutionaries churned out of humanities departments proclaim an open antipathy for "the establishment", it's worth remembering that the establishment they claim to be fighting is one resisted by almost every global corporation that runs visible ads. Antifa's platform is identical to the ones found in the HR departments of Wells Fargo, Simon & Schuster, Coca-Cola Company, and Google. And if Portland's arrest records are anything to go off of, it's because that's where they're employed.

This isn't a particularly recent phenomenon, either. The instructors they had in school, and in some cases, their own parents, belong to a generation that first considered themselves home-grown revolutionaries. The influence of the Cold War and the Reds certainly played a part, as did the subtle (and to some degree, arguably unintentional) subversion by domestic CIA efforts. But those hippies staging protests in the seventies, and who joined cults, embraced the pill, fought for abortion, and who churned out veritable libraries of unlistenable music: they have it in their heads that their revolution represents the true America.

It's not that some "old" America birthed a "new" one that stands in stark contradistinction to it. It's that "old" America was immolated as a sacrifice, and two new countries emerged from its charred remains like conjoined twins. But the last two decades, and the last five years in particular, have led to these twins fighting so vehemently that they've ripped apart from each other. One twin romanticizes a set of values that sit halfway between the libertarian neoconservatism of Reagan's advisors and the old-style American politeness of their grandfathers. The other twin romanticizes a revolutionary spirit of progress and human betterment characterized by the adoration of technology, science, and fraternity.

We live now in separate countries. The recent COVID mask hysteria has made this plain as day. If you're part of the country that sympathizes with the elite's ends, you truly and honestly believe the COVID hysteria. If you're not part of that country, if you're part of the other America, you see the people wearing masks while they sit alone in their cars at stoplights and think they're deranged. Accusations of insanity fly in both directions, of course, because when the value sets are this far removed from each other, the only way to make sense of the other's behavior is to rationalize it as a mental illness.

The War We Didn't Know Was Happening

There were some who saw this split already occurring forty years ago, in their own ways, though how detailed and nuanced their understanding of what was going on is up for some debate. These were the types who recognized the toxicity of liberal ideology, both at its face value (proliferation of sexual liberation) and what lurked under its feel-good surface (the eventual expulsion of all competing "conservative ideologies"; i.e. religion).

They were relegated to the fringes of society, however, partly by choice, and this came with the unfortunate side-effect of bringing along various indefensible extremist beliefs or methodologies. The bombing campaign of Ted Kaczynski, Timothy McVeigh's infamous attack on the federal building in Oklahoma City, and the various crime-streaks of the hardened white supremacist organizations—and I'm not talking about the Proud Boys, here—come to mind. Alternatively, there were groups like the Branch Davidians, holdovers from an era of the Pax Americana when it seemed like a third of the population was part of a sandals-and-togas styled cult. They secluded themselves in communes and tried to bother nobody, following an obscure and heretical doomsday sect of fundamentalist Christianity, and the feds still came for them.

The pattern here is one of extremism. Those prone to violence either acted alone to target specific people in anonymous raids (Kaczynski), or degenerated into gangs more interested in criminal activity than ideological counter-revolution (pick any one of the many Rockwell-inspired neo-Nazi groups). Those smart, jaded, or average enough to avoid this sort of questionable political activism found themselves at the wrong end of federal sniper rifles at Ruby Ridge.

No matter what you did, if you were convinced of your beliefs as a right winger—even insofar as you just wanted to be left alone—the administration of the 1990s made the writing on the wall as clear as day: you won't be left alone. You were slandered as bedfellows of criminals whether you wanted to be or not.

The left, for the record, experienced a similar crackdown in the seventies, but it's worth remembering that the left had ideological allies at that point in the country's major institutions. While the criminal activity of groups like the Weather Underground targeted offices for bombing campaigns, and while black bloc groups participated in the racial anarchy of the time, these events were, to a degree, legitimized by the unfolding of Civil Rights and the deescalation efforts of Vietnam in the decade before. Extremism on the left became something popular enough to organize around, even as it was

hunted down and eventually put away by the FBI. But the leader of the Weather Underground went on to hold a university position as a tenured academic. Ted Kaczynski is in prison for life.

I'm not offering these words here as a defense of right wing violence. Far from it. The point here is to highlight the fact that violence on the extreme left has a history of being tolerated when it isn't outright celebrated. Violence that doesn't happen in the name of approved left wing narratives gets shoved into the bag labeled "right wing terrorism", regardless of the ideology or reasons for which it is committed. This intentional use of disinformation serves only to maintain a low key, gut-level hysteria around all things to the right of the Wall Street Journal's opinion page, which in turn further radicalizes those young men prone to extremism on the right. It can't be called a very big cycle, but it can't be said that one doesn't exist, either.

The solution isn't an intuitive one. What's important is to recognize the field, first, and then to recognize yourself and the opposition. Recognize that when a token-carrying, motto-professing member of the left-liberal America speaks of American patriotism, he's not talking about what you understand American patriotism to mean. Intuitively, there's no doubt that you already understand this, after eight years of having their buzzwords shoved in your face. But now it must be stated openly: they can change definitions and pretend like that's just how language works (it isn't), but you don't have to play along.

Taken to its logical end, this will make communication downright impenetrable, but those of us in the other America, the right-conservative America, already recognize that you can't really talk to the other side. The other side, to their credit, not-infrequently insists that it's long past the time for conversations, even as self-professed allies of the right converse endlessly about outdated ideologies. Conversation isn't really part of the picture anymore, at least in any meaningful sense.

Don't play the game. Take each day and each situation as it comes, but be aware that the country now consists of a patchwork of foreign soils all intermingling and overlapping, with territorial lines sometimes running down the middle of hallways in your corporate office. It's a postmodern experience, to say the least, but it's a postmodern world, and the only way to make sense of it is with a reasoned practicality that rejects—even though it notices—the postmodern landscape. And, of course, as always, keep the Faith.

Nice Election You Have There... Would Be a Shame if Something Happened to It

November 6th, 2020

There are two Americas. I keep saying it because it's true. What started as [ruminations on the audacity of the elites](#) back in June has turned into a series of posts on the divergence and separation of the American polity. What's been surprising, however, isn't so much that there's a separation occurring—but rather that it already occurred, that it did so quite some time ago, and that it's only now becoming impossible to ignore. If the old American consensus had held—that you keep to yourself your own backwards opinions and I'll keep to myself my own—then this would never have happened; but as we know, such a consensus is impossible in a society that embraces the sexual revolution.

We're not on about that today, however. Today, we're on about what the future looks like for the American Empire. We're on about a president that is contesting an election. We're on about a candidate prematurely accusing the incumbent of refusing to relinquish power. We're on about extremely questionable and in cases outright fraudulent ballot-counting procedures in key battleground states.

A Fraudulent Narrative

If you were on the right, you didn't have to call that there'd be voter fraud this season. It was such a foregone conclusion that even the President said it would happen. The opposition, of course, would call this a way of planting the seeds of contesting the election when he lost, as if he was a wildly unpopular president that needed to sew distension in order to unite his base. The reality, of course, is that Trump is an absurdly popular president, all things considered, and the liberal-America that denies this tend to all congregate in spheres that openly ostracize those that merely drop a favorable word about the guy.

We know this because [Trump's approval ratings](#) aren't that far removed from Obama's for the same term. His approval/disapproval has a greater gap, but that's explained by two things: polling methods and Trump's polarizing personality. Despite what the mainstream news tries to tell us, there is the presence of a massive grassroots effort on Trump's side that the Democrats can't compete with this time around. Biden's support, as evidenced by his rallies and the pathetic attempt to drag Obama out to campaign for him, is entirely astroturfed and inflicted from the top down.

So when the angle is that Trump's opinions on voter fraud were a calculated move to delegitimize election results like some third world dictator, we have to remember what's really being said here. Fascist or third world dictators don't have to delegitimize election results because they always come out in their favor anyway. Trump, on the other hand, is just echoing what's on the mind of any average, even slightly-engaged conservative-leaning citizen. Voter fraud, from busing in out-of-staters to getting the absentee ballots of the not-so-recently deceased, is something every conservative circle knows happens in every single election. And it's not new—just look up how Chicago worked to get JFK into the White House in 1960. The illegitimacy of the process is, ironically, a feature of a liberal democracy rather than a bug, but that's an argument for another time.

Accusing the opposition of what you're already doing is, of course, a typical leftist play, and there's merit to that interpretation here. But there's more to it than that. Why would they have to form this narrative in the first place, if the citizens of right-America won't believe it anyway? The answer is because the citizens of liberal-America do believe it; the facade of liberalism, despite its cracks and clear holes that reveal the machinery behind it, is still a complete if flawed whole. They do believe that the democratic process, as advertised and billed, works. Some of them, if they believe in voter fraud at all, consider it such an inconsequential issue that it's in the noise. The hundreds of thousands of ballots that show up at polling centers in Michigan, at 3am, unloaded out of unmarked cars and delivered by plain-clothed operatives, of course, is all fake news. Even though it happens, and it's recognized as happening, there's no possible way it's indicative of fraud. It just means they found more ballots stashed away in some undisclosed location. That it's [only happening in battleground states](#) is completely irrelevant to the conversation.

The narrative here does not exist to keep right-America in line, it's just there to bully them by humiliation. It's a constant stream of agitprop thrown in right's face, the equivalent of a punk trying to start a fight with a parolee by taunting him: "do something!" But the narrative serves a second purpose, and that's to galvanize its own audiences, to maintain a confirmation bias and consensus, and to self-validate the existence of the liberal-American ideology. It's as if the media wing of the opposition is telling right-America, "You idiots won't believe this anyway, but ours will, and there's nothing you can do about it."

Contested Elections

The media will tell us Joe Biden won the election. Don't believe them. There will be recounts. Voter fraud will be investigated, and probably even dragged out into the open—even more than to the extent it already has. Pennsylvania, Georgia, Michigan, Wisconsin, and probably even Arizona and Nevada will all be contested. The courts will get involved. Procedurally, we'll be following the road to the White House laid in 2000 by the Bush/Gore disputes, except this time there will be some other buzzword instead of "hanging chads". The process is going to take us through the end of the year, assuming the Republican legislatures of some of these states don't simply choose their own electors and swing the College back in Trump's favor. That's still an option, but it'll take balls on the part of elected officials that I'm too pessimistic to believe they have.

Don't be fooled: this isn't the 2000 election all over again. Trump and Biden are not Bush and Gore. This is a race to unseat an incumbent who, narratively speaking, should never have been elected in the first place. If there was ever any doubt as to how far off the playbook 2016 got, the clearest evidence is what's going on right now. This isn't typical political theater for the American experiment. And to his credit, Gore also was not, at least by degree, the same re-animated puppet of a politician that Joe Biden's demeanor suggests. Trump isn't taking on Joe Biden, and most of us know this; he's taking on the entire Democratic apparatus and the globalist cabal that's behind him. Some of the GOP is on board with that, even if there are questionable motives or uneasy alliances. That's how it is. But this political conflict is between one unorthodox machine versus a much larger, better financed, but apparently more obtuse one. The same most definitely cannot be said about 2000.

They didn't necessarily want the disorder, originally, but after the votes started coming in on November 3rd, they knew it was coming anyway. So they banked on it. The more the media can tell a narrative that, right now, is against what the facts are on the ground, the better. Their next best option, since stealth wasn't one, is to fill the field with so many signals that nobody can discern what exactly is going on anymore. The only reason it's appropriate for them to do is because so far, for now at least, they still control most of the means by which information is disseminated.

They're betting that they can come out on top with enough gaslighting and censorship, and Trump, to their credit, did not fight them enough on this. The trust-busting litigation against Big Tech is still only in the early stages of the pipeline. Results, if any even come from it, won't be seen for years. This election will be called before the end of January. Barring some openly authoritarian hijinks that Trump, quite simply, is not the kind of guy to pull, there's a good reason to bet on the same side as the media for this.

On the other hand, the right has maintained a presence in spite of the censorship and deplatforming. It's most certainly going to get worse, of course, there's no doubt about that, and there's still no feasible way to build alternative online networks that don't rely on some major infrastructural component from Big Tech to make work. On top of this, we should all remember what happened to that old leader of the Proud Boys after McInnis stepped down; the banks, should they choose to intervene, can and will unperson you from the system.

But this sort of playing only happens to people who get big enough, and the left is presently ensuring that there are so many disenfranchised, unheard, and angry Americans that the right isn't going to simply run out of them. And the ones who do get unpersoned? Well, now they're radicalized, which isn't necessarily good for the right, but not good for the left, either.

Backing Trump out of a civic loyalty is presently the best thing a right-American can do. We could pretend like a second Trump term will unfold like the first one, and that he'll continue to do nothing to strengthen the populist-conservative wing he effectively built within the GOP, and that he'll do nothing about tech censorship. But this election has already proven that Trump's second term will never be allowed to function like his first one. The first time was openly called illegitimate by the opposition, but there was a de facto understanding at the top that the impeachment and Russian allegations were all

political theater done in the interests of obstruction. His regime was accepted, but it was fought. That won't happen this time. Even when Trump's team wins the court battles and recounts, the media has already ensured that liberal-America will openly condemn the administration as illegitimate. How the political apparatus takes this, especially after the opposition loses power in the House, we don't know yet. The citizens of liberal-America, however, will be incensed.

We're rapidly approaching the foggy veil beyond which predictions cease being comprehensible. If you wanted to sound full of yourself, you could call it the neoliberal eschaton. For my part, I'm satisfied to view it as a particular zero hour that reorients American politics in a way we had presumed 2016's election night did. How naive! This is going to make 2016 look like business as usual, when in reality it was anything but.

Understanding the Present War

There isn't going to be a civil war. At least, not the sort that has militias storming the White House or the Star Spangled Banner sung by partisans wielding 3D-printed automatics. The fantasies of urban combat in the streets of Baltimore or Philadelphia might have some merit as the country further destabilizes, but it isn't going to become something that people are willing to call a war. If you look at the violent crime rates in those places, you could almost argue that it's been happening for the last thirty years, though it's not exactly ideological. But the riots this summer, and the media's coverage of them, already showed us a future that liberal-America is willing to live with. The self-styled antifa revolutionaries tend to skedaddle the moment they reach unanticipated resistance.

The truth is, the country is already at war. It's an informational war, the likes of which hasn't been seen before. Modernites go to war for one of two reasons: either to defend what they already have, or in order to get something that they want. If the elites and the denizens of liberal-America can try to get what they want without firing a shot, and if we can defend ourselves appropriately, then all the better. So far this engagement has played out predominately through the use of social conditioning, propaganda, and humiliation tactics, and while some may find this an unsatisfying method of combat, I, for one, would prefer it stay this way. Subjecting my family to the horrors of a chaotic, highly partisan and internecine conflict in this country is not on the list of preferred eventualities. And that's to say nothing of the plethora of simulations that shed some light on what the civil war would look like if it went hot. It'd be another world war, and following the pattern established by the last one, there'd be no good guy. I don't think the elites even want that.

Then again, in twenty years, after the Sino-Hebraic peace accords are finalized and the United States is left a smoldering waste still polyped with unexploded Guangzhou neutron bombs, someone can dig up this forecast and have a good laugh. If I'm alive, I'll own up to it. I don't mind being wrong, but on this count I'd rather not be.

If you're looking for a blackpill, read someone else's blog. If you're looking for a white one, it's right here: Trump really is a threat to the system. He is going to win. What happens afterward isn't within our sight to understand, yet. Remember that politics aren't the ends here; politics are only ever means. Remember why we supported the Bad Orange Man in the first place, even in 2020, after four years of

what could only be called a somewhat pathetic display. We know he's got what it takes to fight these people. Nobody else in the government, at least in the public's eye, has the backbone to stand up and call them out, but there are plenty who will stand behind Trump when he does it. That's good enough.

Anarcho-Tyrannical Normalcy

December 1st, 2020

“Do you have a mask, sir? Sir, you need a mask in order to be in here.”

This is the new normal, I was reminded, when I picked up my takeout order from the locally-run pizza place on the corner. I know the owners, at least by face, as we’ve ordered pizza from their small establishment on a fairly regular basis for years. Even when these lockdowns started in March, flaunting the indoor mask order was pretty easy to do there, since I was never in the store for longer than the minute it took to pay and grab the grub.

Other people, of course, would wear a mask. I could tell some of them saw my general disregard and wondered to themselves what exactly they were doing with those silly scraps of fabric covering their faces. Others were probably annoyed. The employees of the shop, understandably, had to be masked up under threat of fines from our local government—and this being a very blue county in a very blue state, there was no hope of our ostensibly Republican governor pulling [what DeSantis did in Florida](#): if you got fined by local authorities here, you’d better cough up the money or they’d put you out of business.

Prohibition-era mobsters used to grandstand and compliment your shop before they threatened to trash it for shakedown money. We’ve all seen the movies, which as we know, were just like real life. The mafia that runs our government can’t be bothered to do that. Instead, they effete posture about getting old people sick before vindictively turning the population against itself, and as the riots this year proved, sometimes in more literal and drastic ways than we’re willing to admit. The horrible reality about these COVID lockdowns is that there’s no one face to attach to any of them. The psychos like Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, or Kate Brown of Oregon, are all symptoms of a greater ailment, and we all know it.

On the one hand, it’s easy to condemn the people who voted lunatics like this into power. But it isn’t that simple; democracy, even in the fraud-free liberal fantasies that exist only the minds of Boomers, offers neither freedom of choice nor an adequate selection of the best people for the job. Liberals, both left and right, emptily signal about how politicians are supposed to be pleasing us, how their campaigns are their job interviews, and how voters are like their bosses. We all know now, I hope, how monumentally stupid that belief is.

Anthony Cuomo was elected governor of New York a decade ago, and this year, he looked his electorate square in their faces and impetuously declared COVID to be their fault. You guys weren't wearing the masks. You guys weren't social distancing. You guys weren't doing enough. And this was after he found that COVID turned out to be a gift that really gave: he managed to cut down on the state's pension obligations by sending Doctor Coronavirus to do checkups at nursing homes. Forty-some thousand grandparents, great-uncles, and aging mentors later, Cuomo is held up as the shining example of good COVID management by the Regime. [They gave him an Emmy for it](#). He's even writing a book. He'll probably do a tour.

Sure, he was elected. Sure, he was re-elected. And sure, maybe we couldn't tell beforehand that he and his ilk would behave this way. But if I was a gambling man, I'd bet on his reelection again, even despite—or, perhaps now because of—his decision to help the elderly along on their journey out of life. Like Whitmer, like Brown, like Newsom, there's no accountability, here. There's no one to appeal to when things don't work out. Michigan's Republicans are at least trying to [impeach Whitmer](#) for her efforts to systematically destroy the state's working class, but we'll have to see whether that actually goes anywhere. No such talk will be found from Oregonians, New Yorkers, or Californians, that's for sure.

These officials aren't employees painstakingly vetted by The People™ in order to serve our interests, and they know it. They're part of the exclusive club of the ruling elite; they can and will flaunt their power as they see fit. Campaigning? Job interview? Who do you think works for whom, here?

Mask On/Mask Off

When I went in to get my pizza, I wasn't neglecting my mask out of a misplaced sense of social arrogance. I didn't think I was special. I thought I was normal. I still think I'm normal, by the way, even when the rest of the people around me seem to believe that a bad flu is worth destroying our social cohesion over. And I don't say this lightly, either. I'm aware of extended family who was briefly hospitalized by the virus. I'm two degrees removed from people who apparently died from it. But people die from bad flues, too, especially the elderly and the infirm. The talking point that this is much worse than the average flu is certainly true; the fact that flu seasons regularly and habitually lead to hospital bed shortages and ICU overcrowding is, on the other hand, not given its due airtime.

On that note, the fact that [the flu doesn't seem to be a thing this year](#) should have been a tell. This is all political; the guise of health and wellness is there as one last effort to coerce those liberals still willing to believe that the system works. Its insidiousness lies in how it's ostensibly voluntary; after all, most of us don't want to think that our actions might inadvertently kill someone's grandmother. We're not all Andrew Cuomo. So you put on the mask, and you urge others to, and if you're liberal, you do so with an expletive thrown in for good measure.

But that mask has turned into a token. It's possible it was always intended to be one, but that's hard to prove. Early in this circus, wearing masks was recognized for what it was: useless at best, harmful at worst. Then we all had to get M-95 masks one day because an expert suggested it. When those sold out,

we were told “anything would work.” But if we actually cared about masks, then we should care about getting the one that actually works, right? Apparently not. Apparently a bandanna is good enough.

And of course it’s good enough: now that COVID’s initial shock to the population is over with, we know that these masks aren’t here to combat the virus. Whatever they accomplish to that end is wholly secondary to the mask’s real purpose: tokenism. It’s the bracelet you wore in middle school to show how you were chic and cool, except this time you get to vent your anger on people who aren’t wearing their tokens. Not only do you get to feel good about it, you’ll be supported by your fellow mask-wearing liberals. You’ll be supported by the Regime. Perhaps it’s more appropriate to call it the pin on your lapel that shows your allegiance to the Party.

Mask tokenism has given the liberal-American proles the perfect social outlet for venting their frustration. It’s the same behavior that [we saw at work during the riots](#). Submit. They’re mad because you didn’t submit to the Regime when they did. Some of them are mad because they really support the Regime. Some are mad because they felt they had to capitulate, and flaunting your masklessness reminds them that maybe they were wrong. But all of them carry the weight of the humiliated, as their means of coping with the Regime’s demands manifest as a wholesale embrace of madness rather than categorical rejection of it. It’s the humiliation of people who were defeated because they didn’t have any answers to the problems they faced, so they embraced the ideology of their enemies and became their drones. Those of us mask-less rubes are blaring indictments of their capitulation, and they can’t stand it.

This is all a lot of hypothesizing, of course. As we know, there are a multitude of reasons that one might be buying into the mask hysteria. A lot of people, I’m finding, are doing it in order to go along to get along. The problem is that attitude just goes along to get us along further into tyranny. When the government steps into a sector of society and temporarily restricts or regulates it, it never leaves. Mask mandates are probably here to stay until the Regime is put in its place, and loathe as I am to admit it, trusting in subsidiarity isn’t going to help us here. How these lockdowns have been instituted, state-by-state and city-by-city, has shown us that we’re past the point in trusting the principle of subsidiarity. Our predecessors and elders fell asleep at the wheel. Our localities have been robbed from us.

When governors and local march in lock-step formation with the federal-level and international goons, subsidiarity has failed. Empty posturing to bring it back is just a grift to sell to the dying generation of boomers that haven’t yet realized what’s going on. Maybe when we fix the problems going on in this country, we can talk about subsidiarity again. Maybe once we can all agree on who the president is, and hopefully who the supreme authority of the land is, we can talk about subsidiarity again. The electoral Rubicon has been crossed anyway, even though we still don’t really know what the country looks like in February.

One thing we can know, however, is that the anarcho-tyranny aspect isn’t going away that quickly.

Anarcho-Tyranny

Welcome to the new normal, we were told about nine months ago. Get used to half- or quarter-capacity restaurants and retail chains, at least with whatever time they have left. Get used to sporadic, unpredictable, and haphazardly enforced lockdowns (quarantines). Get used to wearing a mask in public facilities for the rest of your life.

But that's not enough, is it? Get used to not celebrating Thanksgiving. Get used to not having Christmas with your family. Or Easter, the Fourth of July, or any of the rest. Get used to never having social gatherings, or weddings, or funerals. Get used to not being with your loved ones when they're hospitalized, or elderly, or in the maternity ward.

But that won't be enough, either. Get used to working for Amazon. Get used to not going on dates. Get used to having your churches shut down. Get used to having your kids developmentally stunted.

When all of this started in March, those of us who belonged to right-America didn't want to believe what the elite of liberal-America were telling us to our faces: this is the new normal. "There's no way this is the new normal," we told ourselves. Masks? Mass-quarantines of perfectly healthy people? And in the name of a virus that, even at the time, we realized wasn't nearly as deadly as we thought it was back in January? "We don't have to listen to this idiocy." But then [they arrested moms for taking their kids to playgrounds](#) in the middle of nowhere. And our [favorite restaurants](#) didn't come back.

"It's only for two weeks," they told us at first, "in order to flatten the curve." We had experts putting time limits on the lockdowns in order to sell it to those cantankerous right-Americans that remained skeptical. "Oh well," we sort of mumbled, "I guess I can try to take two weeks off of work in order to please these hysterical people." Well, [those of us that could](#), anyway.

But it wasn't two weeks. It wasn't even supposed to be two weeks. Two weeks was never the plan. It was a month, two months, in some places even three. It was workplaces that closed and simply never reopened. It was the destruction not just of Main Street, this time, but even of what replaced it—big box stores and chains started to fold. Jeff Bezos, of course, made out like a bandit. It wasn't about the curve or public safety or finding a vaccine. And when the vaccine comes, as we know, [these restrictions still aren't going away](#). It's about sending a message. You are the property of the elites. You are slaves. You will do what they tell you. If that doesn't work, they'll use the state to arrest you. And if that doesn't work, if that doesn't scare enough of you into compliance, they'll rile up mobs of radicalized millennials and recently-released criminals to burn down your cities and harass your neighborhoods.

Anarcho-tyranny is here. If the term isn't a familiar one, consider this: a State that selectively applies the rule of law to the citizens least likely to resist it, while it lets anarchic mobs run roughshod over the same people in order to badger them into compliance. Does that sound familiar? Does that sound like what we've seen happen for the last half a year?

This has been here since Obama's days, back when BLM was first born and the conservative establishment still had in it some shred of trust from average Republicans. Back then, they could spin the riots as isolated incidents, and they could even pitch that there were legitimate grievances on the

part the BLM organizers. They could assert this even when they were orchestrated, financed, and had the support of people in very high places. They can't say the same thing, now.

Every right-leaning Republican voter knows that the Regime supports the violence. They might not know the details of how or why, but they're aware of the realities. And more troubling than that, they're aware, on some general intuitive level, that the COVID restrictions and the riots aren't unrelated to each other. The voters that showed up in droves for Trump have eyes in their heads: they know that their anti-lockdown protests were dispersed by authorities the same month that the cops sat back watched Minneapolis burn.

Some of us might be wondering, what's the endgame to this? Well, a vaccine for one. What's going to be in it is anyone's guess, however, since [we already know that we don't need one](#). Maybe the long-prophesied RFID chips are finally coming down the line. Maybe it'll just make the rest of us sick, since COVID didn't seem to do it. Maybe, and this is a bit conspiratorial, all of this was done to definitively establish the enemies of the Regime so they can be targeted for removal; [some commentators](#) are practically saying the quiet part out loud. Maybe the vaccine is an immunization to the super-plague that they're saving for that rainy day, and it's going to make all the dystopian stories of the twentieth century seem like so many comfortable bedtime stories.

Or, maybe it's effectively nothing. Maybe this has just been yet another exercise in the stopgap measures needed to demoralize the population and prolong the election. Maybe COVID is exactly what they say it is, and that a vaccine isn't really necessary, but they're rolling it out in order to further cement psychological control over their enemies. To make it easier, they'll coerce compliance out of you by convincing all the major businesses and corporations to demand Proof-of-Vaccination certificates from their clients and employees. Maybe the vaccine is just going to be Masks Mark II: politicized tokens that tell other members of the Regime that you play ball. Again, I'm no gambling man, but if I was, this is where I'd put my money.

This isn't to say it'll be harmless, of course. Anyone who trusts the government to push drugs on medical professionals so some overweight nurse can pump them into your system is insane. I'm not even an anti-vaxxer, but I'm not stupid enough to pretend like the government doesn't routinely abuse, mislead, and bamboozle Americans into getting drugs they don't need, either. The country's prescription drug dependency rates come to mind. So does Gardasil 9. And the less said about Tuskegee, the better.

Maybe this post will age poorly. Maybe, in another year, or even just another few months, we can look back at this 2020 year and laugh to ourselves. Right now, those of us with eyes to see can recognize what's right in front of our faces: globalist oligarchs—from Big Tech and Big Pharma CEOs to the ruling party of the Regime—are finally implementing what they've been screwing around with for thirty years. I remember the days when the Great Reset was called Agenda 21. I also remember when Alex Jones was still on YouTube. Those days aren't coming back.

Be on your guard. Keep the Faith.

Senatus Populusque Americanus

January 11th, 2021

At the time I am writing this, it is January 6th, 2021, and just shy of eleven o'clock at night. Today, I watched a mob of flag-waving, non-violent protesters swarm the steps of the United States Capitol building, force their way inside, terrify those elected officials that we so amusingly call leaders, and then, after meandering about like adventurers on a self-guided tour, they left. In their wake, some hard drives from the bizarrely unguarded, unsecured computers of high-ranking members of the electoral body were confiscated.

An unarmed woman was shot to death by the police, and by what available video evidence suggests, there was no reason for it. Her name was Ashli Babbitt, she had spent fourteen years in the military, and a DC Policeman ended her life with a single bullet fired into her neck. You can try to find the video online, some still exist. What's striking is that the cop only fired once.

Erick Erickson, a mind-numbingly popular radio show host, called for these protesters to be shot. He wasn't alone. And he got his wish, too, though given his rhetoric, one wonders if he feels a shred of disappointment—*what, only one?* The tweet was deleted for, shockingly, violating Twitter rules.

The national guard got called in. It was mobilized without the authorization of the President. The original request had been blocked when the Mayor tried to get our boys in green. Instead, we got to hear it confirmed that it was Pence, Schumer, and Pelosi who gave the order, after convening with the Secretary of Defense. An hour or two later, Twitter locked Trump's account, after censoring several of his tweets. And this was after he released a recorded statement urging the protesters to relax, take it easy, that he understands the frustration, that he recognizes the theft of the election, and that the best we can have right now is peace.

The Mob

Peace.

Need we remind ourselves what that term means after last year? Peaceful. Mostly peaceful. Search our memories, meditate on this, ponder the exactitude of the phrase. Peace. It's supposed to mean something. We've forgotten what.

Of course, I don't need to come out and say it. I don't need to write it down. We all know the double standard. A reporter for CNN can stand in front of a burning building while people break windows beside him and assure his audiences, however pathetically, that these protests over the accidental killing of a felon are mostly peaceful. Chris Cuomo can pontificate emptily about where, exactly, it says protests shouldn't scare people, as images parade across his own show of cars getting torched and retail stores go up in flames.

But put a few thousand people in the colors of our country and waving the stars and stripes on the steps of the Capitol building, and now we're talking about a visible threat to democracy. Let them scuffle with police a bit, and it's an insurrection. Let them into the public building that they pay for, and it's a siege. Question the results of the election and, well, the governor of New York volunteers to send a thousand of his national guardsmen down to the District to "ensure a safe transfer of power". We've seen that happen before, and hopefully, we can all remember where it leads.

The people within the system will not admit that they screwed up. They don't even realize that they have. Their conception of leadership amounts to hiding under desks when the people they answer to walk in for a surprise workplace audit. Congressmen don't know how to deal with unscripted questions. They apparently can't even handle eye contact. The MAGA mob wasn't a marauding mass of molotov-throwing anarchists overcome with a Dionysian spirit of destruction. They pushed into the Capitol building and followed the velvet-roped walkways into its inner chambers and then stood around taking selfies. A couple offices got raided. In the professional world, this is called "the guys from corporate have decided to make an unscheduled visit." In a democracy, it's called a revolt.

They hate you. Every GOP establishmentarian does, too. There are no good senators, here. No good representatives. No good elected officials. When flag-waving self-styled patriots, who have watched their country burn this past year, their relatives die unjustly in seclusion, their friends and parents put in handcuffs for rejecting frivolous mask mandates, their businesses fined out of existence for simply trying to stay open, and who lost the last shred of faith they had in the electoral process when November ballots were invented out of thin air—when they decided they had to talk to the people that *they thought* answered to them, those officials wouldn't even show their faces.

The guilty flea where none pursueth. There was, admittedly a mob. They had no weapons. They had American flags and a rather shameful preponderance of selfie sticks. They were dressed to have a good time. And they looked exactly like the typical crowd of MAGA types that have become something of a staple of local political rallies in the past four years. They were young women and old women, young men and old men. They didn't wear masks, most of them, and were not afraid of being identified. And perhaps most striking were the heart of their aesthetics: they carried high their flags and waved them above their heads: a contrast to the treatment of the flag during the so-called mostly peaceful protests of the past year. Keep in mind, too, that the rioters still 'demonstrating' in Portland, Oregon wave their flags high, too, but they're the flags of communists.

And when this horrifying, unruly mob of peripatetic patriots managed to force their way into the congressional chambers, what did our leaders have to say to them? Most of them had been evacuated,

of course, too terrified or disgusted by their own people to even be in the same room with them. Those few who didn't took the opportunity to cower under desks and behind banisters, perhaps weeping and soiled, for a photo-op. *Please, give us sympathy! Please, we're frightened, feel sorry for us!* There should be nothing but disdain reserved for this display by our sarcastic political betters. Those that the MAGA mob believed that they had elected to lead them now cried crocodile tears when they had merely to breathe the same air as the unwashed proles.

American civics classes have told us for decades that they answer to us. That they're elected by us. That we choose our leaders and legislators because we're a properly-functioning liberal democracy. Sure, the classes will admit, we have our hiccups now and then. It doesn't always work smoothly. There's corruption to be found. It's not perfect. But, all the same, it's the best we've got.

The people in DC today found out, in no uncertain terms, that this isn't true. They aren't answerable to you. If you don't like what they do, who do you appeal to? The same courts who dismissed volumes of evidence for voter fraud completely out of hand without even reviewing it? The executive who seems paralyzed by an unfriendly administration that he, himself appointed? A media who regularly lies, slanders and misleads to bolster the Regime, and is consistently made up of people who openly disdain the people of their own country?

The people in DC have found out that they do not have recourse anymore. The horrifying thought is occurring to some of them that they never had recourse in the first place, that the system of checks and balances, American freedom, and individual liberty haven't really been part of American life for longer than they've even been alive. As the conservative voices they listened to in alternative media and politics one by one reveal themselves to be turncoats sympathetic to the globalist Regime, "where did it all go so wrong?" is a thought not distant from their minds.

Post-liberal radicalization is coming. The GOP has pivoted back to the soft-libertarianism and neoconservatism that characterized its days before Trump. The same legislators that talked big against tech censorship and social values have found their old scripts again, attempting—stupidly—to make the sort of conservatism of 2014 function in 2021. It won't. Today's times are increasingly marked by perversion and governed by social media to such a degree that the old-style libertarian leanings simply can't be believed by most Americans. When half the country is out of work, an election's been stolen, and there's the media buzz of a global pandemic, nobody wants to hear about pulling themselves up by their bootstraps. More Americans have begun to realize that such idle talk gets pushed by their politicians as an excuse to do nothing.

Just Build Your Own Platforms

Meanwhile, the consolidation of so many private media companies under left-wing ideology has led to entire swaths of information management being coordinated by the same handful of people. Five years ago, Andrew Anglin of the *Daily Stormer* fame was completely un-personed in the space of a few days—social media, PayPal, even his bank, all of them had him removed from their platforms on account of his admittedly radical beliefs. But this wasn't a man who had actually done anything except host and publish literature. The conservative establishment, recognizing that he was so fringe, didn't bat an eye.

This happened again, more famously, in 2018, except this time to the most prolific and oft-slandered alternative media personality Alex Jones. It's fortunate that this wasn't his first rodeo, since he had backup platforms to rely on. He'd had them built himself. But the damage was done: YouTube removed everything officially related to InfoWars and Alex Jones, severely limiting his reach. The conservative establishment again did nothing, because Jones was supposed to be their own boogeyman. He had always been branded a conspiracy theorist despite the fact that, once you cut through some of his sensationalism, almost everything he talked about tended to be backed up.

The following year, something similar happened to Enrique Tarrio, the then-leader of the Proud Boys. His bank canceled their services with him and the site that he ran promoting the group's merchandise. The feds didn't freeze his assets. Chase Bank was the one who decided to sever his funding.

It's very important to keep in mind that this isn't the FBI. These weren't cases of law enforcement doing investigations into possible threats of domestic terrorism. It was so-called private companies doing it to their own clients and being so big that could get away with it. There is something to the notion that private companies should have the right to refuse service for any reason, but what happens when there are only a handful of private companies left and they're all bigger and more powerful than your local government? Liberals and Conservatives alike have had decades to formulate responses, but instead, they've sided with big business every single time.

And now they've done it to the President of the United States. He's only President for another week and a half, but he's the President all the same. The story here isn't that mean old Jack Dorsey had it in him to give the Bad Orange Man the boot. The story is the coordinated effort across all of the major social media platforms to do so, the relationship these companies have to other services, and place this event holds as the capstone to a long line of such behavior leveled at people presumed to be on the right.

Private companies that control the information of nearly every single American, firmly integrated into a vast network that includes financial hubs, goods distribution, and infrastructure, have a stranglehold over what the entire country is allowed to believe. The cyberpunk dystopia we're living in won't just be a chip in your head—that's coming soon enough, don't worry. It's worse: imagine *Pravda* having control over your bank account and your phone, and it quietly shows you pictures of your kids the way the mafia would compliment their manners.

Most Americans don't believe such a revolution is coming, but all of us have a vague, unnamed, intuitive fear that it's a real possibility. Those of us extremely-online recognize that this future is almost already here, and with the incoming administration taking its cabinet picks from the pages of 2020's Who's Who in Tech and Finance, it's guaranteed to be cemented into place by the end of the year.

Errors of a Tech Exodus

It's now been a couple of days. We pretend to lurch back toward normalcy and our pundits publish their self-important think pieces to the typical big-brained publications. Some of them haven't been

bad. Most, predictably, have been hysterical. It's called an insurrection, a riot. About a hundred people are on a list to be rounded up by feds for their role in it. More than fifty already have been, including a lawmaker from West Virginia that marched with the mob.

The President, while technically still the President, has as far as we can all tell, been cut off from power. His own Vice President has claimed to be serving the process and the system. We know now, of course, that this is codespeak for serving the same oligarchs that number Pelosi and Schumer among their lackeys. They've spoken with the Defense Secretary and the Pentagon, who has decided to back the administration that isn't supposed to even exist yet. Trump has been accused of staging a coup. By definition, what we're seeing is that he's been the victim of one.

In the mean time, acting as a single unit, Big Tech has enacted sweeping bans on major political and media figures wholesale. Facebook and Twitter have both permanently banned the current President of the United States from their platforms. We can pretend like this isn't that big of a problem, as if social media doesn't poisonously occupy an unwarranted and unprecedented place in our lives as a primary source of information. We can pretend like this doesn't somehow mean that Trump is effectively isolated from speaking directly to his base, which was the only remaining sign of the man's populism. We can pretend it's not a big deal, but we all know that it is.

We could take it in stride that Parler, an openly center-right platform formed specifically as a Twitter alternative, has been removed from Apple and Google app stores and has had their hosting dropped by Amazon Web Services. We can roll over again now that our social media accounts will get more policed and eventually locked. We can go outside, tell ourselves we were too addicted to the internet anyway, and move on with our lives. And we can do that, and when CitiGroup informs us that they will no longer offer us banking services, when Master Card cuts off our line of credit, when PayPal says we're not welcome to use their platform to receive money, our astonishment won't be feigned because we'll have genuinely not seen it coming.

There is value to being online. We should not be consumed by the information cycle, of course, and we should avoid overindulgence. But what's happening in the real world is directly affected by the patterns we're seeing unfold on the internet. Undue retreat from this sphere is a surrender; doing so is a tacit admission that the Enemy is too strong to face even with our gaze, so we would rather turn away and ignore the field. But we are not called to surrender to the world and its champions. We're called live in the world and not of it; we're called to evangelize, when possible, and transform it as best we can into an image of the Truth. This is our moral prerogative, but even speaking in practical terms, abandoning the field now is just asking for the enemy to come and fight us even closer to home.

With this in mind, we must recognize that it is not possible to compare the information-soaked technoworld of 2021 to the days when mail arrived on horseback and news was always three days old. The internet—and our precious sophisticated technology—could very well be wiped off the planet in the blink of an eye. A solar storm of unprecedented strength could probably do it. High-altitude nuclear warfare could do it, too. But barring such extraordinary events, these features of life are here to stay—and be further revolutionized themselves. Grant as we might a certain ethos to Pope Leo XIII's

condemnation of electric streetlamps, we nonetheless cannot pretend as though these inventions simply don't exist.

Our civil war has so far been informational. It will continue to be so. I'm not willing to make so bold a prediction as those made in the wake of the First World War—by which I mean that Americans will never enter into armed conflict with one another ever again. They've done so on a massive scale twice in our short history already. We avoided it a third time in the 1960s only by a narrow margin, and only because the nature of such a war was altered by the people who were interested in waging it at the time. It could be argued that the resolution to that war was a not-so-amiable divorce, at least in terms of values. Where the result of 1775 was separation, and that of 1861 was of centralization, the result of 1968 was pacification; our elites embraced a hedonism made sustainable by advancements in pharmaceuticals and electronic engineering, while those Americans that recognized these as errors passively acknowledged that the world was a fallen place and man a fallen creature. But they made little material effort to stem the tide.

Half a century since that defeat and the American people are now several generations into a drug crises that has no solution, a sexual revolution that demands their children be castrated according to the whims of unimpeachable psychologists, the industrialized murder of the unborn that has left more than sixty million infants killed by their own mothers or by professionals they hired, the demographic displacement of over a hundred million people from the third world into American communities, the replacement of American labor with American service, the hollowing out of its economy in favor of centralized app-based “gigs”, the embrace of investment finance at the expense of goods production, and the permanent proliferation of its military across the planet.

I'll admit it: things look pretty grim. In a certain sense, those of us citizens of an America we remember fondly as the home of the free and the land of the brave—we don't have a country anymore. For Americans, our civic identity is so wrapped up in the functioning of our civic government that when we lose the latter, we find ourselves in crisis. The same thing happened, rightly or wrongly, in 1860. But things aren't as they were in 1860. The flow of information and its content is so radically different than comparisons even to just twenty years ago to today are difficult, much less ones going back that far.

People on the right would do well to remember this. Stay online. But this isn't the only issue. Getting involved in your local community organizations—not necessarily politics, mind you—is vital. Participation and involvement in groups affiliated or related to your church is a good place to start. If I'm risking pessimism for a minute, I'm almost of the opinion that depending on where you live, activity in local politics is a waste of time. It greatly depends on the region, of course, but 2020 has revealed the extent to which even local governments are completely compromised from the top down. But it's hard to say that for sure, I might be jumping the gun on this one. In any case, involvement in groups that are not directly political is key. Know people, network, be a real person.

Conclusion

Peace. Hell blot black for always the thought.

What is peace? What does it mean to these people? Antifa harasses and burns the country. Black Lives Matter embarks upon race crusades marching in lock-step with self-avowed, stars & stripes-burning communists. Were these insurrections? Where they insurrections when they burned and vandalized the city municipal buildings in Philadelphia?

Never forget what was inflicted upon on Minneapolis, upon St. Paul, upon Portland. Don't forget what the then-mayor of Baltimore did during the Freddie Grey riots of 2015. "Give them space." They burned down low-income neighborhoods, destroyed livelihoods, homes, businesses. The mayor suffered no repercussions. She was removed from office on totally unrelated corruption charges—just like, it should be noted, all of the other Baltimore mayors going back fourteen years.

Our cities aren't supposed to be like this. Our elites aren't supposed to be this way. Our country isn't supposed to immolating every election season at the drop of a hat. None of this is right. We can tell ourselves this is normal but we all know—on the left and the right—that it's not. The pattern of the last four elections has been of growing instability, wilder pendulum swings, and greater promises of a return to normalcy. For as long as this system endures, there won't be a return to normalcy. The pendulum will just get worse, because the really insane beliefs will settle into the landscape. We see this happen again and again with the offensives of the sexual revolution. The openly anti-white animosity on display by now center-left groups is becoming that way as well.

If you've been online for long enough, you're probably tired of simply pointing out the double standards of the left. You should be. By now, I should hope, it's obvious that it's a tactic that only galvanizes a certain segment of your own sympathizers. The people on the other end of such accusations either don't consider the hypocrisies you point out to be hypocrisies at all, or they don't care if you point them out. It's not an effective offensive tactic. Five years of doing it may have helped make cohesive a multi-generational right wing coalition, but the steam is running out. We all know of the hypocrisies of the left now. It's gotten to be tedious just listing them.

Keep in mind the purpose of politics. It's power, of course, at least by what we've been watching. But power remains a means. Is it power ordered toward the end of the aggrandizement of someone's ego? It's tempting to collapse our politics into such a ham-fisted portrayal of authoritarianism, especially in this day and age. But to what end is politics supposed to be ordered to? To what end is power supposed to be wielded? The Catholic knows the answer to this question. Popes write about it in every socially-oriented encyclical that gets published.

Politics exist as a service to the law, and the law exists both to keep order and to prevent the worst excesses of man's sinfulness from destroying his society. Our present crisis and angst is over the fact that the current application these things leaves quite a bit to be desired. We're watching the beginning of what could be a wholesale institutional collapse happen in real time. Absent a just law, we are obligated all the more to take care to safeguard our interior dispositions against the scandal of the world. Things are going to get both crazier and dumber. We can't just prepare ourselves mentally for the sort of lunacy that's coming down the pipeline; try as you might, everyone's mental fortitude has its limits. You can only be told to repeat so many obvious falsehoods before you start to break.

What's necessary to weather this isn't just mental fortitude. It's spiritual resilience. The providential nature of history is made more visible the more insane the times seem to get. The more our patience is tested, the more we should recognize God's will, the more we should be seeking Him instead of the false comforts of this fallen world. We should be in prayer, engaging with the Sacraments, keeping a close guard over our proclivities. We should be undertaking at least some (mild) penances, devotions, fasting. These things not only have the temporal benefits of building our discipline, which contributes to our mental fortitude, but when properly ordered, they contribute to God's ability to better heal us of our broken states.

This is a spiritual war, and the Enemy is out in force. Be prudent in the affairs of the world. Organization and information are crucial. If we are to be effective exteriorly, our interior lives must be ordered. That is only possible through the means given to us by God. We are expected to tend this overgrown garden until He decides our time has come. When the consummation of the world is at hand, we'll definitely know. Take comfort: unpleasant as the future will be, that time has not yet come.



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