

Liberty University

From the Selected Works of Steven Alan Samson

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201003 OBITER DICTA: MID-JANUARY 2010

Steven Alan Samson, *Liberty University*



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Monday, January 11, 2010

http://townhall.com/columnists/CarolineGlick/2010/01/11/israels_opening_to_china?page=full&comments=true

Caroline Glick's critique of "universal jurisdiction" and the dangers it poses to Israel, in particular, is followed by an interesting proposal for Israel's foreign minister to reach out to China on the basis of common interests. Given the dangers of the push toward universal jurisdiction, her reasoning is worth careful attention. As she notes in the body of the article:

"The new - and false - interpretation of international law gives every General Assembly resolution the weight of binding Security Council resolutions and international treaties. Among this new 'legal' regime's most dangerous features is its bid to overturn state sovereignty by subjecting leading citizens of weak states to politically-motivated criminal prosecutions under the rubric of universal jurisdiction.

"With Israel's right to exist - let alone to defend itself - being denied in an avalanche of General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions, the acceptance of universal jurisdiction is a short step away from turning every Jewish citizen of Israel into an international outlaw."

Of course, it is not just the citizens of "weak states," like Israel, who are vulnerable to "politically-motivated criminal prosecutions." In the past, the United States has opposed or refused to join several manifestations of the international political-correctness regime, such as the International Criminal Court. But, like Gulliver, even citizens of the United States and the country itself can become entangled by such "invisible strings" (I wrote a dissertation and a Ph.D. paper on similar domestic "entanglements" and "strings") unless we tread carefully.

An early step in this direction was actually spearheaded by an American secretary of state, as related by Dore Gold in *Tower of Babel*. Specifically, I am thinking of the "United for Peace" resolution offered by Dean Acheson, which was designed to empower the General Assembly at a time when the United States was frustrated over Soviet vetoes. It belongs in the category of "be careful what you wish for" -- much like the proposed use of the "nuclear option" by Republicans to break the appointments logjam a few years ago.

In the early 1950s the Cold War had created a complete Soviet-American deadlock in the Security Council. The Soviets had walked out early in 1950s because the West refused to recognize the new Communist government on the Chinese mainland and allow it to take the Chinese seat on the Security Council. It was the Soviet absence that made it possible the United States to push for a United States role in the Korean War.

Then, a few months after the UN "police action" was launched, Dean Acheson conceived of a way of skirting the Security Council and the prospect of a Soviet veto. Acheson's Uniting for Peace resolution (November 3, 1950) stated: "If the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of the permanent members, fails to exercise . . . its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in any case where there appears to be a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or an act of aggression, the General Assembly shall consider the matter immediately." The resolution specified that the General Assembly could be convened in an Emergency Special Session and could recommend the use of armed force.

From one viewpoint, Acheson had pulled off a brilliant tactical move. But its strategic implications were not well-considered. The resolution served American interests only as long as the majority of UN members remained pro-Western.

Much changed during the decade that followed. The Bandung Conference of 1955 signaled the ideological realignment of the colonial empires and former colonies. As the process of decolonization gained momentum in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the number of new anti-Western states in the UN grew. By the late 1960s the UN General Assembly had already begun evolving into an instrument for the USSR and its allies to bypass the US veto in the Security Council, leaving the US and Israel in helpless opposition in June 1967 when Israel's Arab neighbors massed troops along the entire length of her borders.

Tuesday 12

http://townhall.com/columnists/ChuckNorris/2010/01/12/obamas_secret_vault?page=full&comments=true

As I noted last month, the president has issued an executive order, which modifies President Reagan's executive order of 1983, extending once again "privileges, exemptions, and immunities" to the organization. This is obviously designed to protect Interpol and its records from the Freedom of Information Act as well as search and seizure. But now an Interpol spokesman has been quoted as saying that the order is designed to apply only to the New York office, where a trial of the terrorists is planned. So what is afoot? Evidently nothing good for our constitutional liberties. Government by executive order (and by the use of executive agreements in place of treaties) has already superseded so many of our Constitution's protections and limitations.

Chuck Norris here provides a wider context for last month's Interpol story. "ThreatsWatch hit the nail on the head: Immunity from search and seizure 'cannot be understated, because this immunity and protection — and elevation above the US Constitution — afforded INTERPOL is likely a precursor to the White House subjecting the United States under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC). INTERPOL provides a significant enforcement function for the ICC, just as our FBI provides a significant function for our Department of Justice.'"

In "The Revolution Was" (1938), the journalist Garet Garrett addressed the whole range of revolutionary changes that had been launched with the New Deal and preceded by similar

threats to constitutional order during the First World War, the Spanish–American War, and, of course, the Civil War. We have the constitutional means to begin reversing this revolution but lack the political resolve to do so. We focus on the issues of the day (and what Edmund Burke called the insects of the hour) but miss the significance and consistency of what the authors of the Declaration called “a long train of abuses and usurpations.”

If we wish our Constitution to be completely superseded and our republic, the United States of America, to be “comfortably merged” with a world government of some sort, we can have our wish simply by doing nothing. With our tacit consent, others are already doing the driving. And regarding the political wedding to which we are being driven: If we do not speak up now, we will be obliged to forever hold our peace.

http://townhall.com/columnists/MonaCharen/2010/01/12/your_negro,_my_macaca

What Mona Charen says is fair enough. It is time for a policy of “zero tolerance” for both race baiting and race pandering.

http://townhall.com/columnists/PhyllisSchlafly/2010/01/12/the_marriage_penalty_in_health_care?page=full&comments=true

Phyllis Schlafly reminds us that, concerning the marriage penalty, “The Revolution Was.” Long after having seized what Lenin called “the commanding heights,” what keeps Democrats from larding on additional political payoffs? Our Tidal Basin kitchen does not keep kosher.

http://townhall.com/columnists/FrankGaffney/2010/01/11/death_by_1000_cuts

The chief domestic beneficiaries of the president’s executive order are what John Fonte has called the “transnational progressives.” Frank Gaffney examines this order in light of these progressives’ desire to diminish our country’s freedom to act independently upon the world stage. I have appended Fonte’s lengthy and nearly decade-old piece, which I have used in the classroom: http://www.hudson.org/files/publications/idealogical_war.pdf

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100112/ap_on_re_us/us_democracy_report

Yes, we can, said the candidate. No, we didn’t, said Freedom House in its report on a fourth straight year of decline in freedom and rights.

http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2010/01/its_not_the_kennedys_seat_its.html

Here is a clip of Scott Brown’s Ronald Reagan moment. Perhaps he is not so polished in his delivery but, like Reagan during the critical debate prior to his nomination, he appears to be in command. A question worth pondering: Does Scott Brown appear “presidential”? If so, the citizens of Massachusetts may very well elect him to the Senate next week.

<http://pajamasmedia.com/blog/beware-our-rousseauian-imaginer-in-chief/?print=1>

Kim Holmes of the Heritage Foundation gives us a good summary of the character of this president and the challenge that his "progressivism" poses. The term "imagined communities" is one introduced by Benedict Anderson, who wrote a book on the subject. But Holmes is correct in seeing Obama as another Rousseau: this time, a Rousseau who holds the reins of power. And, yes, the constitutional restraints and protections once promoted by Montesquieu and Madison are now at considerable risk under this Rousseauian regime. In the name of a transnational "general will," we are being shorn like sheep. People, wake up! before we are left "eyeless in Gaza."

Wednesday 13

Excerpts from a note to an old friend: I read your piece posted on Classical Beat yesterday. I have often thought of doing a column, which is why I have started collecting my e-mail snippets before they vanish altogether. I have now assembled those from early September forward. *Obiter Dicta* is a new incarnation of my old newsletter from the early 1980s and my journal from the early 1970s. My chief outlet in recent years has been my elaborate study aids and commentaries in the reader/commentaries I have printed up for my classes. My syllabi are always filled with links to on-line readings, including some that are added as I discover new material. This keeps my courses fresh and somewhat unpredictable. But I have a testing system that students find more reassuring

I will try to be careful to be a little less strident in places. Over the years I have developed an elaborate geography (as did Al Capp), historical and literary references, and a bantering style for my comments. All of this has become second nature to me in the classroom, where I let the spirit lead me.

<http://www.pjtv.com/?cmd=video&video-id=2930>

In this 14-minute video, Bill Whittle of PJTV interviews two whistleblowers about the infiltration of radical Islam into our political, law enforcement, and defense establishments. A former defense analyst and a former FBI agent discuss their experiences within an institutional culture that they believe relies heavily upon radical Islamic groups like CAIR and the Muslim Student Association (founded in 1963) for advice on how to deal with the Islamic community. The former FBI agent contends that Muslim Brotherhood- and HAMAS-related have been given carte blanche to advise officials on how to conduct investigations and interrogations within the Muslim community.

<http://frontlinefellowship.net/>

Peter Hammond's work as a missionary to peoples oppressed by Communism and Islamism has brought him into contact with some of my associates over the years. I met him long ago. I will try to get a copy of this book. He is frequently in the country as part of his work. Check out the topics of his lectures.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703652104574652444142619478.html>

Robert Reilly, the former director of Voice of America, puts the Swiss minaret issue into perspective.

<http://www.barnabasaidth.org/>

Here is the website for Barnabas Aid, which is mentioned in the piece by Robert Reilly.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/huffpost/20100112/en_huffpost/420605

This is something to file under the label "Get a Life!" Some moviegoers are now getting depressed, suffering from "Avatar-Induced Depression," because Pandora is not real. Far beyond suspending their disbelief, they appear to be inclining to a cargo-cult mentality. Here is yet another confirmation of what Irving Babbitt called the idyllic imagination: our Rousseauian longings for a paradise of low-hanging fruit.

How many of these victims of "AID" consider the possibility that they might ruin such a world if it ever existed? C. S. Lewis raised this very question in his Space Trilogy. Even if we reject the traditional doctrine of purgatory, Christians should be able to under the necessity of a cleansing.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20100113/pl_nm/us_drugs_security_aviation

This article calls attention to a growing fleet of rogue jet aircraft, connected to al-Qaeda, that are shuttling cocaine from the Andes to West Africa.

Thursday 14

http://townhall.com/columnists/HughHewitt/2010/01/14/poison_pen_pointillism_game_change%e2%80%99s_portrait_of_president_obama?page=full&comments=true

"'Game Change' by Mark Halperin and John Heilmann is an entertaining book. However, it could have been a great one had the authors not decided merely to hint at and tiptoe around the biggest untold stories of President Obama's long march to the presidency." Hugh Hewitt's allusion in the opening paragraph of his book review is to what Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Communist leader and culture warrior, called "the long march through the institutions."

Even a brief review of the latest political bestseller makes it evident that our political-media complex has become radioactive, even malevolent. A friend once served on President Reagan's National Commission on Excellence in Education. Its explosive 1983 report, "A Nation at Risk" (1983), is best remembered for its cutting appraisal of decades of progressive education: "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war." The same could be said with equal accuracy about our political and media establishments. It appears that the reporters who wrote *Game Change* have sent their Roto-Rooter snaking through the nation's highly septic political system.

As my friend David Chilton liked to say: "If this is a culture, it belongs in a Petri dish."

"What is to be done?," as Lenin liked to say. We can find little comfort in the three decades that have followed the commission's indictment of our school system. On the 25th anniversary of the release of "A Nation at Risk," another organization, Strong American Schools, gave its own assessment of our subsequent "progress."

"While the national conversation about education would never be the same, stunningly few of the Commission's recommendations actually have been enacted. Now is not the time for more educational research or reports or commissions. We have enough commonsense ideas, backed by decades of research, to significantly improve American schools. The missing ingredient isn't even educational at all. It's political. Too often, state and local leaders have tried to enact reforms of the kind recommended in A Nation at Risk only to be stymied by organized special interests and political inertia. Without vigorous national leadership to improve education, states and local school systems simply cannot overcome the obstacles to making the big changes necessary to significantly improve our nation's K-12 schools."

As Francis Schaeffer noted in the opening sentence of *A Christian Manifesto*: "The basic problem of the Christians in this country in the last eighty years or so, in regard to society and in regard to government, is that we have seen things in bits and pieces instead of totals." So let's consider the larger picture for a moment. We Americans have saddled ourselves with a demagogic political/media/educational class that resembles the restored Bourbons monarchy, of which Talleyrand famously quipped that they had "learned nothing and forgotten nothing." With friends like these, who needs enemies?

But let's also look in the mirror. Not only are we "amusing ourselves to death," as Neil Postman put it, but we have squandered our political birthright by sating ourselves on a cornucopia of distractions. We the people seem to have learned nothing and forgotten everything that it takes to be a free people. Have we become the leading ADHD nation? Corruption is now so endemic, so systemic, that it will take something far more powerful than explosives to remove them.

So, again, what is to be done? Let's not follow the lead of the nineteenth-century Democratic faction that came to be known as the Barnburners, who burned the barn to get rid of the rats. For the Christian community, what is required, without delay, is repentance of Biblical proportions. We should not lose heart: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16). Among the things for which to pray is for God to raise up great numbers Josephs, Deborahs, Nehemiahs, Daniels, and Esthers from within the present political class: those with the experience and skills needed to take the helm and guide this ship back to its home port. This is historical background for various Christian and secular theories of resistance to tyranny.

http://townhall.com/columnists/GeorgeWill/2010/01/14/rock_on_the_health_care_road

This piece by George Will is a reminder that the court of public opinion is not the only one that matters or the one that has the last word. This piece was given the title "Time for Judicial Activism" in the *Washington Post*.

By reducing a government-mandated duty to purchase health insurance to constitutional absurdity, Will reminds us that ours is a Constitution of Limitations rather than a Constitution of Powers, to use Edward S. Corwin's distinction. If the Administration wishes to treat health care as a national emergency, while denying that we are at war, what can we assume except that this legislation a naked and tyrannical grab for power over the citizenry?

The Supreme Court has flirted with commerce clause absolutism for the better part of a century now, but Will returns the issue back to first principles: "More truly conservative conservatives take their bearings from the proposition that government's primary purpose is not to organize the fulfillment of majority preferences but to protect pre-existing rights of the individual -- basically, liberty. These conservatives favor judicial activism understood as unflinching performance of the courts' role in that protection."

"That role includes disapproving congressional encroachments on liberty that are not exercises of enumerated powers. This obligatory engagement with the Constitution's text and logic supersedes any obligation to be deferential toward the actions of government merely because they reflect popular sovereignty."

Friday 15

http://townhall.com/columnists/CharlesKrauthammer/2010/01/15/one_year_out_the_fall?page=full&comments=true

We Americans are resisting our socialistic philanthropists but are not anywhere near to getting "out of the woods" yet. Like Porthos in a sequel to *The Three Musketeers*, we are faltering under a crushing burden: our public and private debt. We were led to this pass long ago in the aftermath of the Great Depression through tools that had been put into place by the Progressives. Since the advent of Social Security in 1935, we have added layers of new debt through new social programs. But despite major new programs launched by RMN and GW, it has not been since LBJ's Great Society that a president has promoted such a far-reaching agenda. And, of course, that is the problem, especially during a major recession.

It now appears that ideological liberalism may be moving into a terminal phase: the "overreaching" phase. In *The Politics Presidents Make*, Stephen Skowronek, who notes that presidents are "a blunt disruptive force," treats presidents as change agents who must respond to the legacy of their predecessors. Skowronek analyzes long-term regimes -- Jeffersonian, Jacksonian, Republican, and liberal -- by examining, first, the president who constructed the regime, then the orthodox-innovator "who rearticulated the old formulas in the greatest leap forward on received commitments," and finally "the

affiliate who had to cope with the collapse of the old formulas as solutions to the governing problems of the day.”

For a moment let's consider insights may be gleaned from this model. Skowronek divides each regime into three phases: reconstruction, articulation, and disjunction. Applying this model to the liberal regime launched under the New Deal rubric and reenergized under the Great Society, we can recognize FDR as the founding father of the liberal regime who adopted or grew into his ideological Leftism as a strategy of governance. LBJ, the true believe, stretched FDR's liberalism virtually to the breaking point. The allegedly more conservative political unknown, Jimmy Carter, presided over what may prove to be only the temporary decline of the liberal regime.

Following the failure of HillaryCare, Bill Clinton, another political unknown, ran for the presidency as a New Democrat. Although Clinton may have wished to be a transformative leader, political realities compelled him pragmatically to settle for a rebranding of American liberalism. In the event the White House pulled in its horns and focused on controlling the political margins.

In the meantime, the so-called Reagan Revolution launched a somewhat weaker counteroffensive against the prevailing liberal orthodoxy. Lacking a true conservative successor to Reagan, Republicans offered a series of moderates until it got a “great leap forward on received commitments” in George W. Bush. Unfortunately, in the process, much of the conservative agenda was lost in the mobilization for the War on Terror that strengthened the national security apparatus. Just as DDR's reorganization of the bureaucracy gave us a permanent liberal establishment, the creation of a Department of Homeland Security may be used by Democrats and Republicans alike to choke out our liberties in the name of security. But under a barrage of political attacks over the Iraq War, the disjunction phase followed quickly and the Republicans were sacked: first from Congress, then from the White House.

But perhaps it is here that the disjunction phase of the liberal regime has been followed by a nemesis phase that has hit us like a tidal wave. Obama brought his prepackaged New Left ideology to the White House with him. He was elected as the anti-Bush but quickly revealed himself to be the new McGovern. His liberal predecessors had been far more cautious. FDR dropped the radical Henry Wallace from his ticket in 1944. LBJ could not have been reelected in 1968 and, subsequently, the electorate repudiated a series of ideological Leftists — Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, Al Gore, John Kerry —only to embrace Barack Obama on the rebound. As Charles Krauthammer notes in his column, it was only a matter of a month or two before buyers' remorse set in. One morning last Spring the electorate began to awake to a new reality: “Behold, it was Leah!”

Marriages-on-the-rebound have consequences. The political half-measures of the most recent Republican era may have slowed but truly failed to reverse our country's fatal slide into socialism. Chicago-style machine politics has now gone national and is quickly going global. The Democrats in Congress can be counted on to deepen the morass into which we have collectively fallen, the better to keep Gulliver under control. Short

of dismantling FDR's liberal political regime, America will continue to coast down the Road to Serfdom.

Any good magician knows he must keep his audience distracted. As Krauthammer notes: "The public option was a sideshow. As many on the right have long been arguing, and as the more astute on the left (such as The New Yorker's James Surowiecki) understand, Obamacare is government health care by proxy, single-payer through a facade of nominally "private" insurers." The packaging is the shell's come-on. The proof of this pudding is in the addiction.

Let us hope that the bottom line is that Obama "vastly overread his mandate." But in this day of "quickie divorces," the process -- even if it succeeds -- will seem to last an eternity.

<http://pajamasmedia.com/rogerlsimon/2010/01/14/massachusetts-shocker-brown-up-15-in-pajamas-mediacrosstarget-poll/>

I hope these remarkable poll results presage a comparable electoral result. The Democrats' magic may be wearing off. Consider how much of our literature and music of the past century or so has had magic and magicians at its thematic center: Paul Dukas' *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Antonín Dvořák's *The Middy Witch*, Thomas Mann's *Mario and the Magician*, Ernst Juenger's *On the Marble Cliffs* -- not to mention others of more recent vintage.

A 1950s study of a mass movement was entitled *When Prophecy Fails*. Some such discredited movements are merely redirected into other channels and come roaring back like a tidal wave. Earlier classics of mass psychology, Charles Mackay's *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* and Gustave LeBon's *The Crowd*, should be dusted off.

Here is the long-term question: What will happen to those who lately have been in "pursuit of the millennium" at breakneck speed if the promised "harmonic convergence" at "the end of the rainbow" fails to appear? Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn drew the logical conclusion in both versions of his cartoon, "Stupidity Roams the World." So we must ask: What if, instead of sobering up after a drunken binge, the DTs continue? Goya etched out this scenario in pen and ink: "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters."

Our literature and arts have not only anticipated such a grim outcome, but some of it -- Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, Wagner's operas, Ibsen's *The Emperor and the Galilean* and *Enemy of the People*, Futurism, Surrealism, numerous literary and political manifestoes -- even contributed to a new "birth of tragedy" in the 20th century, if the critical literature is to be believed. Steven F. Sage's *Ibsen and Hitler* is especially compelling on this point, but the genre goes back more than a century and helped spawn modern depth psychology, among other things.

<http://www.americanvision.org/article/the-true-essence-of-slavery/>

In "The True Essence of Slavery," Bojidar Marinov cuts to the heart of . . . our telltale hearts. Citing the experience of Moses with people fresh out of slavery, Marinov recognizes that chains and shackles are only an outward sign of an inward spiritual condition. "The former slaves didn't remember the slavery with the taskmasters, the whips, and the forced labor. They remembered it with the things that they 'did eat freely.'"

The theme of dependency and the sense of entitlement it encourages runs like a red thread through so much of history and literature. Whether it is Homer's Lotos Eaters or Huxley's Soma, there are pleasures for which any slave-to-appetite like Esau will sell his birthright. The Biblical Jubilee was instituted to prevent such slavery from being institutionalized, passing from generation to generation. But the Bible testifies that even this safeguard was ignored. At the end of Chronicles, the Chaldean king launched a hostile takeover and placed the people of Israel into receivership: "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."

The Bible repeatedly directs us to choose whom we will serve (Deut. 6:5, 30:19, Josh. 24:15, 1 Kings 18:21, Matt. 22:37). Jack Benny's response to a choice between his money and his life -- "I'm thinking it over!" -- won't do. This, the ultimate question, is a question of giving back to Him from whom we have received all that we are. It applies as much to peoples as it does individuals.

Saturday 16

http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/01/did_communism_fake_its_own_dea.html

This review updates Anatoliy Golitsyn's *New Lies for Old* (1984), a book that I remember from before the Fall of the EUSSR and one that I bought subsequently. Links to several corroborative sources have been added, including Mark Riebling's *Wedge*.

At the end of 1991 I was not convinced that the demise of the USSR was an irreversible fait accompli. The events were puzzling enough, of course. I subsequently read James Billington's account of the coup. But the passage of time has revealed that "lustration" -- the purging of the old Communist class -- never took place. Perhaps it was an opportunity that we squandered. But at the times I judged it to be a feint. So, I believe, did Edward Rozek. Except for some degree of degradation, the Soviet nuclear arsenal is still intact.

It is true that some dreams die hard. But given all of the sacrifices that were made on behalf of Communism's world vision, and the absence of either a full accounting or any real apology, it is not difficult to conjecture the gradual return to the stage of this particular dream -- perhaps re-scripted, like "My Fair Lady."

Given Russia's international role today, the time and even the need for a centrally-managed Soviet empire is clearly behind us. Rebuilding Russia's economy is still a work in progress, but Putin has more than his share of partners in crime at home and trouble-making abroad. For those familiar with the old convergence theory, the country we need to keep an eye on today is the United States. Something that Max Weber once said — about Americans' resistance to the new civil service bureaucracy as "a new house of bondage" — keeps coming to mind as I contemplate the future of the republic. As Jesus observed: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them" (Matt. 20:25).

Bastiat's *The Law* addresses the dynamics of the process of "legal plunder" and how it corrupts politics. But as my friend Erik liked to say: "*Alles hat ein Ende, nur die Wurst hat zwei*" ("Everything has an end, only the sausage has two." The Laffer curve gave the idea of tax limits some economic respectability. Margaret Thatcher, who was keen on limited government, is supposed to have remarked: "The trouble with socialism is, sooner or later you run out of other people's money."

Whether the bureaucratization of the American polity and our loss of liberty can be reversed before the government runs out of "other people's money" is the question of the hour. In the early 1970s I read Hilaire Belloc's *The Servile State* while doing research for a master's thesis entitled "The Methodical Conquest: Perceptions of the Impact of Science and Technology on Society." A century on, Belloc's thesis still holds.

<http://phibetacons.nationalreview.com/post/?q=NjUwY2QyZGEyOGJiZjI0NzBiYzlkYmFmNjg5OWJkMGQ>
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Politics and academics alike place a special premium on intellectual arrogance. Each of these professions is represented here in "The Virus Can't Be Contained." Stories like these remind me Harry Truman's putdown of J. William Fulbright — who hailed from both precincts — that he was "educated above his intelligence."

<http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2010/01/15/2010s-5-death-of-the-west/>

This piece by Walter Russell Mead is meant to be provocative, but I always enjoy reading his pieces and used *Power, Terror, Peace, and War* in the past as a textbook. Yes, I agree that the sharp Cold War division of the world into three parts, like "All Gaul," has lately become more amorphous.

Since the Cold War the United States, which once presided over a European "empire by invitation," has been shifting more of its attention to the Pacific Rim and even to Latin America. In retrospect, the depiction of a tectonic plate in *The Yankee and Cowboy War* by Carl Oglesby seems to have been prescient. Two decades ago, it seemed that the day of the caudillo in Latin America was drawing to a close. But the last few years have seen the rise of Lula, the restoration of Chavez and Ortega to power, and a general march to the Left throughout the region. Yet Chile, which has had a leftist regime for two decades, may elect a conservative tomorrow.

As for the "breakup of the West," time will tell. If the Old World West continues its demographic death spiral, "breakup" may be the wrong word. As the saying goes: You can't split rotten wood. Still, I am not ready for the classics to give up the ghost. In fact, I continue to pay my earnest money on a revival of the classics. Just yesterday, I sent off for Andreas Kinning's *The Geography of Good and Evil*.

Let's pray for the continuing "presence of free societies." I believe the West may yet assert itself, especially if the United States, like George Washington (and Cincinnatus before him), is willing to come out of retirement to lead one more battle. As Hilaire Belloc observed at the end of *The Servile State*: "There is a complex knot of forces underlying any nation once Christian; a smoldering of the old fires." But in 1913 Belloc, who understood that Europe was sinking back into its original paganism, assumed that the servile Prussians and British would be kept in check by the freedom-loving French and Irish. But Belloc misjudged his deliverers. Soon enough a general war brought all of Europe to the verge of collapse.

Later, as Lee Harris has more recently noted in *The Suicide of Reason*, this critical restraining role — what Belloc called "the strong reaction which these freer societies upon its flank will perpetually exercise" — was played by the United States, Canada, and Australia during the Second World War. "In short, the success of the modern liberal West is totally derived from the freakish nature of the Protestant libertarian communities of stubborn pioneers who left their homeland in the Old World in search of a place where they could start their lives afresh. What Hegel said of North America could also be said about Australia — the settlers who came there could 'abandon the ground on which world history has hitherto been enacted.' Yet by abandoning the historical past of the Old World, these English-speaking colonies were subsequently able to rescue the Old World from plunging back into the rule of brute force and the Cosmic Process" (page 267).

But nearly seven decades later, where are the free societies that can be counted upon the next time they are needed?