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# MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE<sup>©</sup>

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## IN THIS ISSUE

WE LOOK AT AMERICA AT THREE DIFFERENT TIMES EACH APPROXIMATELY A CENTURY APART – THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY OF ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY OF JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS AND THE PRESENT. WE WILL IDENTIFY SOME OF THE FORCES IN OUR GOVERNMENT, SOCIETY AND CHARACTER THAT, OVER TIME, HAVE MOVED US AWAY FROM OUR ORIGINS.

## IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

WE WILL EXPLORE THE THREAT WE NOW FACE FROM OUR ABUSE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT AND WHETHER THERE EXISTS A PRACTICAL WILL OR WAY TO AVOID A MASSIVE FAILURE ON OUR PART TO EVEN ATTEMPT A REMEDIAL RESPONSE. THE TITLE WILL BE POLES APART: IN SCIENCE, POLITICS AND OUR VIEWS OF EACH OTHER.

## THE MUCKER POSE<sup>1</sup>

LONG LENS: THE VIEW FROM WHO WE WERE TO WHAT WE ARE.

### ALEXIS DETOCQUEVILLE – 19TH CENTURY

THE NEARLY SIMULTANEOUS REVOLUTIONS IN OUR COUNTRY (1775-83) AND FRANCE (1789-99) AND THE SIMILARITIES EXPRESSED IN THEIR PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED AN UNUSUALLY ENDURING AND CLOSE BOND BETWEEN THESE TWO VERY DIFFERENT NATIONS.

WHILE THIS BOND HAS BEEN SORELY TESTED IN RECENT YEARS, IT HAS REMAINED VERY MUCH A PART OF OUR HISTORIES FOR TWO CENTURIES. THERE IS, OF COURSE, OUR “SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP” WITH ENGLAND BASED ON OUR COMMON LANGUAGE AND HERITAGE, BUT IT WAS FRANCE THAT ACTED AS MID-WIFE DURING OUR NATIONAL BIRTH.

ALEXIS DETOCQUEVILLE (1805-59) WAS BORN TO TITLED FRENCH PARENTS WHO MANAGED TO SURVIVE BOTH THE REVOLUTION AND THE DIRECTORY’S REIGN OF TERROR WHICH FOLLOWED. AS A NEW MEMBER OF THE FAMILY OF NATIONS, AMERICA BECAME A MATTER OF CURIOSITY AND INTEREST AMONG THE OLD ORDER IN EUROPE. LOOKING

FOR ANSWERS AND ADVENTURE, DETOCQUEVILLE CAME TO THIS COUNTRY IN THE 1830s, TRAVELED EXTENSIVELY HERE AND WROTE DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA<sup>2</sup>, BY WHICH HE FONDLY INTRODUCED OUR EXPERIMENT AND PEOPLE TO FRENCH AND OTHER EUROPEAN READERS.

WHAT HE FOUND WAS A BRASH, ENERGETIC, FRIENDLY, INDUSTRIOUS, GENEROUS, STRONG AND SOMETIMES ROUGH, PEOPLE WITH AN OPEN AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT WHICH LARGELY REJECTED THE DISTINCTIONS AND PRIVILEGES CONFERRED IN EUROPE BY CLASS AND TITLES. HE WAS WELL AWARE THAT, ALTHOUGH OUR PROGRESS WAS NECESSARILY UNEVEN, WE WERE ENGAGED IN THE PROCESS OF ACTING OUT OUR BIRTH PROCLAMATION OF FIFTY YEARS EARLIER.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, DETOCQUEVILLE WAS IMPRESSED BY WHAT APPEARED TO BE A COMMON AND CIVIL DIALOGUE AT ALL LEVELS OF OUR SOCIETY. THIS OPEN AND FRIENDLY SPIRIT INCREASED AS HE LEFT THE CITIES OF THE ATLANTIC SEABOARD AND TRAVELED TO THE SMALLER TOWNS

AND TRADING POSTS OF OUR ADVANCING FRONTIER. THE PRACTICAL EGALITARIANISM OF LIFE IN RURAL OR FRONTIER AMERICA FAR OUTSHONE THAT WHICH HIS COUNTRY HAD PRODUCED BY ITS OWN REVOLUTION.

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## JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS – 20TH CENTURY

LIKE DE TOCQUEVILLE, JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS WAS OF A PRIVILEGED BACKGROUND. HE WAS A GRADUATE OF YALE UNIVERSITY AND THEN WORKED ON WALL STREET FOR A NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE MEMBER FIRM. IN HIS MID-THIRTIES, HE, TOO, OPTED FOR A LITERARY LIFE AND PRODUCED A SUBSTANTIAL BODY OF HISTORICAL WORK.

ADAMS WAS A DE TOCQUEVILLE IN REVERSE, AS HE MADE FREQUENT AND LENGTHY VISITS TO EUROPE WHICH ENABLED HIM TO VIEW AND WRITE ABOUT AMERICA WITH THE BENEFIT OF A DUAL LENS. IN THE MUCKER POSE (MP) ADAMS IDENTIFIES MP AS A SOCIAL FORM WIDELY EVIDENT IN AMERICA BY WHICH THE MORE FORTUNATE MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY (I.E. GREATER EDUCATION, WEALTH, JOB STATUS, ETC.) IMITATE AND ADOPT THE LANGUAGE, MANNERISMS AND CUSTOMS OF LESS FORTUNATE INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS WHO HAVE NOT SHARED THESE BENEFITS.

MP, ADAMS BELIEVES, DERIVES FROM THREE POWERFUL FACTORS IN AMERICAN LIFE – OUR DEMOCRACY, OUR BUSINESS/COMMERCE AND OUR MOBILITY. IF WE VIEW THE ENGLISH MIDDLE CLASS AS THE VESSEL IN WHICH THESE ELEMENTS OF OUR DEMOCRACY WERE MIXED AND THEN SPREAD OVER A VAST WILDERNESS THAT INVITED RUGGED PEOPLE AND A RUGGED LIFE, WE CAN BEGIN TO SEE ADAMS' POINT.

ADAMS NOTES THAT IN A DEMOCRACY THE PEOPLE HAVE THE POWER AND, THEREFORE, THE POWER TO GRANT POWER. THE LATTER CAN CREATE DISTINCTIONS, BUT THESE DISTINCTIONS MUST BE REVIEWED BY THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS – I.E. BY THE PEOPLE. THEY MAY PRODUCE WEALTH WHICH CAN EXTEND BENEFITS TO THEMSELVES AND TO SOCIETY AT LARGE, BUT THEY DO NOT HARDEN INTO HEREDITARY LINES OF CLASS, TITLES AND HISTORICAL PRIVILEGE.

MP IS A CONSCIOUS CHOICE. IT IS ADOPTED, NOT FORCED UPON ANYONE. IN OUR POLITICS ONE MUST APPEAR AS “OF THE PEOPLE” AND, CONSEQUENTLY, CANDIDATES ADJUST THEIR LANGUAGE, APPEARANCE AND, IN TODAY'S IDIOM, IMAGE DOWNWARD TO THAT LEVEL OF LIFE'S FORTUNE THAT OFFERS THE BROADEST AREA OF CONTACT.

IN BUSINESS, ADAMS STATES, “YOU MUST NEVER APPEAR TO BE SUPERIOR”, AND THEN ADDS A PHRASE THAT REVEALS THE DISTANCE BETWEEN HIS TIME AND OURS, “EVEN IF YOU ARE.” THE SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS MAN WAS CHARGED WITH CONFORMING TO HIS CUSTOMERS IN MATTERS OF STYLE AND LANGUAGE AND TO BE ONE OF THEM.

IN ADAMS' LIFETIME OF THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES SPENT IN THE UPPER SOCIAL CIRCLES OF BOSTON AND NEW YORK THIS WAS MOSTLY A NINE TO FIVE WORKPLACE CONVENTION.

ADAMS EVEN SAW EVIDENCE OF THE MP IN THE REDUCED LITERACY OF THE PRESS OF HIS TIME CAUSED BY EDITORS SEEKING THE LOWER LANGUAGE LEVELS MORE LIKELY TO PRODUCE ADVERTISING. AND, IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES HE SAW MP TAKING THE FORM OF BAD DRINKING, THE USE OF SLOVENLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND PROFANITY AND SMUTTY STORIES TO CREATE THE AURA OF A GOOD MIXER AND TO BECOME POPULAR WITH THOSE OF LESSER ADVANTAGES.

ONE COMMENT, QUITE REVEALING IN RETROSPECT, INVOLVES A FRIEND OF ADAMS WHO DECIDED HE COULD NO LONGER TAKE FOREIGN GUESTS TO HIS CLUB FOR LUNCH OR DINNER BECAUSE THEY MIGHT BE OFFENDED BY THE PROFANITY AND SMUT OF HIS FELLOW AMERICAN MEMBERS.

. . . TODAY'S STANDARDS  
(THE NEW AMERICAN OXYMORON) . . .

TO PUT THIS IN PERSPECTIVE, WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT STEEL MILL, STEVEDORE OR STAFF-SERGEANT STUFF. THE LANGUAGE OF THE GENTLEMAN'S CLUB IN EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY AMERICA WAS PROBABLY HARDLY NOTABLE BY TODAY'S STANDARDS (THE NEW AMERICAN OXYMORON), BUT TO ADAMS AND PROBABLY TO MANY OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES IT WAS FELT AS JUST ANOTHER SURRENDER TO A LESS MANNERED AND DIGNIFIED WAY OF LIFE.

ADAMS, OF COURSE, WAS RIGHT IN VIEWING THE MP AS A CONSCIOUS EFFORT. AS SUCH, WE HAVE TO ASK OURSELVES A QUESTION WHICH IS EQUALLY APPLICABLE TO OUR TIME AS HIS. WHAT WAS (OR IS) THE BENEFIT, OR PROTECTION, TO BE GAINED FROM ADOPTING THE MP?

APART FROM THE OBVIOUS BENEFITS AT THE POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL LEVELS CITED BY ADAMS, ARE THERE OTHER PROTECTIONS OR SAFETY THAT WE SEEK IN THE MP? PROTECTION FROM CONFRONTATION? SUPERIORITY? ANTAGONISM? VIOLENCE? ALIENATION AND/OR OTHERNESS?

THESE ARE ALL REAL THREATS AT OUR PERSONAL AND SOCIAL LEVELS OF BEING, REAL THEN FOR ADAMS AND EVEN MORE REAL FOR US TODAY. THE WIDENING DIVIDE BETWEEN WHO WE WERE IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES WAS SOMETHING THAT JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS COULD FACE AND DESCRIBE, EVEN USING TERMS SUCH AS “GENTLEMAN” AND “SUPERIOR” TO DESCRIBE DIFFERENT SOCIAL STRATA. HE COULD WRITE ABOUT THE ACCELERATING CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CHANGES OF HIS TIME KNOWING THAT, WHILE STANDARDS MAY HAVE SLIPPED A BIT, THEY WERE STILL IMPORTANT TO HIS SOCIAL STRUCTURE.

ADAMS HISTORICAL INSIGHT COULD HAVE NOT KEPT

PACE WITH THE SEPARATION BETWEEN HIS TIME AND OURS. FOR HIM, COMPREHENSION WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE, AS IT MAY ALSO PROVE TO BE FOR US.

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## WHO, WHAT OR WHERE WE ARE TODAY

IN THE ALMOST TWO HUNDRED YEARS SINCE DETOCQUEVILLE'S VISIT OUR COUNTRY HAS PARTICIPATED IN ABOUT A DOZEN WARS OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER, DEVELOPED NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND ACHIEVED A VICTORY OVER WORLD COMMUNISM SPONSORED BY THE SOVIET UNION.

AT THE SAME TIME WE HAVE CREATED A LARGE BODY OF LEGISLATION, SOME GOOD AND SOME NOT, THAT HAS MOVED AND CHANGED OUR COUNTRY IN SOME SURPRISING DIRECTIONS AND WAYS. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTS, WE THINK, WERE THOSE THAT HAD THE CAPABILITY TO TRANSFORM THE WAY WE LIVE TO A FAR GREATER DEGREE THAN ANTICIPATED AT THE TIME OF THEIR PASSAGE.

PRIME EXAMPLES ARE LINCOLN'S HOMESTEAD ACT OF 1862, WILSON'S INCOME TAX OF 1913, FDR'S WW II GI BILL OF RIGHTS, EISENHOWER'S INTERSTATE HIGHWAY ACT OF 1956 AND LYNDON JOHNSON'S CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964. WHAT THEY ALL SHARE IS THE ABILITY TO CREATE VAST, LONG-TERM SOCIAL CHANGE AS WELL AS ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL RESULTS.

BY THE TIME WW II WAS OVER AND WE EMBARKED UPON "THE POST WAR WORLD" WE FOUND OURSELVES ENGAGED IN A NUCLEAR STALEMATE AND A DETERMINED STRUGGLE WITH THE SOVIET UNION FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND MILITARY DOMINANCE. AND, WHILE THE SOVIET UNION NO LONGER EXISTS, THERE ARE TWO ASPECTS OF THIS CONTEST THAT ARE STILL VERY MUCH WITH US THAT INFLUENCE OUR GLOBAL, MILITARY AND/OR DIPLOMATIC CHOICES.

THE FIRST IS THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE GEOGRAPHIC PROTECTION PROVIDED BY THE SEA TO THE ENGLISH SPEAKING WORLD. FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS ENGLAND, AND THEN LATER THE U.S., ENJOYED THE SECURITY OF BEING SURROUNDED, OR MOSTLY SO, BY WATER. THIS MADE A CRITICAL DIFFERENCE IN WW II, BUT WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR MISSILES AND SUBMARINES THAT CAN DESTROY TARGETS THOUSANDS OF MILES DISTANT THIS LINE OF DEFENSE NO LONGER EXISTS.

IT IS A DEMOCRACY OF RISK  
AND PERIL!

WHILE IT WOULD BE A GROSS EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD ARE NOW ALL MILITARILY EQUAL, THE TRUTH IS THAT TECHNOLOGY HAS CREATED THE GREATEST DEMOCRACY IN THE WORLD. UNLIKE OURS, IT IS GLOBAL. IT IS A DEMOCRACY OF RISK AND PERIL!

THE SECOND ASPECT OF THE COLD WAR BETWEEN COMMUNISM AND DEMOCRACY IS THAT, IN SPITE OF OUR TRIUMPH, THE MARXIST/LENIN IDEOLOGY HAS LEFT AN IMPRINT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD THAT WILL NOT DISAPPEAR. IT NOW HAS AN EXISTENCE OF ITS OWN APART FROM CARRYING THE BAGGAGE OF SOVIET COMMUNISM AND SERVES AS A VIOLENT AND ACCEPTABLE MODEL FOR THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WHERE THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION INCLUDES ARMED REBELLION AND/OR CONFLICT.

THE IMAGE OF DEMOCRACY THAT WE ATTEMPT TO PROJECT DOES NOT FALL UPON A BLANK PAGE BUT RATHER ONE ON WHICH MARXIST EXPECTATIONS AND PROMISES HAVE ALREADY BEEN WRITTEN. THE CURRENT MARXIST MESSAGE AND MODEL ARE NOW FLUID ENOUGH TO SERVE LOCAL EMOTIONS, INTERESTS AND POLITICS AND HAVE BECOME A GLOBAL REALITY.

ON ONE LEVEL THEY ADDRESS POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND ON ANOTHER THE YEARS OF SUPPRESSION AND ANGER FOR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION. ADD RADICAL ISLAM AND THE PROBLEM GROWS WORSE. LIFE IS BITTER AND CHEAP ON THE FRINGES OF THE WORLD, AND IT IS A GREAT AND UNJUST VANITY TO THINK OTHERWISE.

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## REUBEN WITH THE EGG MONEY

THE AMERICA THAT DETOCQUEVILLE SAW AND WROTE ABOUT SEEMED TO HIM TO DISPLAY SUCH AN UNFAILING INNOCENCE AND FRIENDLINESS THAT IT MIGHT BE SEEN AS PART OF OUR GENETIC MAKE-UP. CERTAINLY TO HIS EUROPEAN CONTEMPORARIES, WHOSE MANNERS AND CHARACTER DERIVED FROM CENTURIES OF ROYAL COURTS AND CUSTOMS, AMERICA MUST HAVE APPEARED AS "REUBEN WITH THE EGG MONEY".

BUT AMERICA TRANSFORMED ITSELF IN MAJOR WAYS IN THE LATTER PART OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. AS WE NEARED THE CLOSING OF OUR FRONTIER, WHICH HAD SERVED AS THE DOMINANT ELEMENT OF OUR GROWTH AND UNIFICATION DURING OUR FIRST CENTURY OF EXISTENCE, WE COULD BEGIN TO SEE SIGNS OF THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL POLARIZATION THAT GRIPS OUR COUNTRY TODAY.

IRONICALLY, MANY OF THE VALUES AND FORCES THAT HAD PROVIDED UNITY IN SEEKING THE FRONTIER, ONCE IT WAS SETTLED, WERE EITHER ABANDONED OR APPLIED TO LOCAL OR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AS WE MOVED ALONG A

NEW PATH FROM AN AGRARIAN TO AN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY.

OUR INDIAN WARS AND WILDERNESS HAD BEEN BOTH A DRAIN AND WAY OF LIFE FOR OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS IN AMERICA. AS THEY PASSED FROM ITS SCENE, IT SEEMS AS IF WE BEGAN TO FIGHT MORE AMONG OURSELVES.

THIS NEW PATH WAS UNEVEN, AT BEST. IT WOULD LEAD US TO UNDREAMED OF RICHES AND POWER AND, AT THE SAME TIME, FROM THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY'S GREAT AWAKENING TO PROHIBITING PRAYER IN SCHOOLS. IN WALL STREET'S JARGON WE WERE "LONG" ON LOOT AND "SHORT" ON LOGIC. HAVING BECOME MORE INDUSTRIAL AND MORE URBAN, AFTER A ONE YEAR DECISIVE PARTICIPATION IN WWI'S FOUR YEAR ATTEMPT AT MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION, WE BECAME A MAJOR WORLD POWER. IT HARDLY MATTERED THAT THE ALLIES' CONDUCT OF THE PEACE WAS AS INEPT AS THEIR MILITARY MANAGEMENT. EVERYONE WANTED TO GO HOME AND RETURN TO "NORMAL", BUT "NORMAL" NO LONGER EXISTED. WE HAD, HOWEVER, ADDED "POWERFUL" TO OUR RESUME. WE WERE RICH AND STRONG.

BY THE TIME HISTORIAN JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS WROTE THE MUCKER POSE HE WAS DEFINITELY ONTO SOMETHING IMPORTANT IN OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER. IN THE CENTURY BETWEEN DE TOCQUEVILLE'S AND HIS OWN STUDIES OF AMERICANS, ADAMS DISCERNED A TENDENCY TO ADJUST OUR BEHAVIOR TO THE LOWER LEVELS OF OTHERS, TO MEET EVERYONE ON THEIR GROUND, TO MAKE OUR SOCIAL OUTREACH BY SPEECH AND GESTURES AS INCLUSIVE AS OUR EARLY POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

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### MUCKER POSE — LANGUAGE

WE SHOULD CONTRAST ADAMS' CONCERN FOR HIS EUROPEAN GUEST'S EXPOSURE TO COARSE LANGUAGE TO OUR PRESENT STATE, LESS THAN A CENTURY SINCE THE MUCKER POSE FIRST APPEARED, WHEN LEADING HOLLYWOOD ENTERTAINMENT CORPORATIONS ARE PRESSING TO LEGALIZE THE USE OF THE F-WORD AND S-WORD IN TV BROADCASTING.

HOLLYWOOD IS CERTAINLY THE MUCKER METRO-CENTER OF THE COUNTRY, BUT OUR WILLINGNESS, OR EVEN EAGERNESS, TO TRADE IN YESTERDAY'S STANDARDS AND IDENTITY FOR SOMETHING MORE COMMON, MORE "COOL", MORE GLITZY IS WIDESPREAD. IT IS EVIDENT IN OUR POLITICS, IN SPORTS, IN THE ARTS, IN COMMERCE, IN OUR NATIONAL LANGUAGE — IN FACT, IN EVERYTHING.

PERHAPS IN THE MATTER OF LANGUAGE WE CAN SEE THIS CAUSE AND EFFECT MOST CLEARLY. IN EXECUTIVE ORDER #13166 ISSUED BY PRESIDENT CLINTON, AND ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN FORCE BY PRESIDENT BUSH, ALL OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS INVOLVING GOVERNMENT SERVICES,

REGULATIONS OR CONTRACTS ARE TO BE PROVIDED ON DEMAND IN ANY OF 322 LANGUAGES.

AND THE GROWTH OF THE USE OF SPANISH OVER THE PAST THREE DECADES IN STATE AND FEDERAL DOCUMENTS, PACKAGING, BROADCASTING, PUBLISHING, ETC. HAS BEEN ANOTHER PROCESS BY WHICH WE SEEK TO DILUTE OUR IDENTITY BY ACCOMMODATION RATHER THAN TO PUSH FOR ASSIMILATION.

FRANCE, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS TRIED VALIANTLY TO DEFEND ITS LANGUAGE AGAINST THE ENCROACHMENTS OF TIME, SLANG, MULTI-NATIONAL EUROPEAN TV AND THE CHANGES WROUGHT BY DIRECT CONTACT WITH TOURISM AND IMMIGRATION. ALTHOUGH THE RESULT MAY BE INEVITABLE, THERE'S STILL A CERTAIN VALOR TO FRANCE'S EFFORT TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST WHAT MAY TURN OUT TO BE INDEFENSIBLE.

LANGUAGE IS A TARGET UNDER CONSTANT ATTACK BY ETHNIC AND POPULATION CHANGES IN WHICH RACE PLAYS AN ACTIVE ROLE. THIS IS TRUER TODAY IN AMERICA THAN EVER BEFORE, AS WE ADMIT AN INCREASINGLY LARGE AND MORE VARIOUS MIX OF IMMIGRANTS.

BUT THE GREATEST IMPACT ON OUR SPOKEN LANGUAGE COMES FROM OUR AFRICAN-AMERICAN POPULATION WHOSE SPEECH PATTERNS ARE OFTEN QUICKLY ADOPTED BY WHITES OF ALL CLASSES.

CONSIDER PRESIDENT BUSH'S ADDRESSING TONY BLAIR AT THE RECENT G8 SUMMIT MEETING BY USING "YO", A CURRENTLY POPULAR FORM OF BLACK STREET SPEECH. ADAMS WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO FIND A CLEARER EXAMPLE OF MP THAN THIS APPROPRIATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN SLANG BY OUR PRESIDENT WITH HIS NEW ENGLAND PREP SCHOOL, YALE & HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL EDUCATION.

HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.<sup>3</sup>, COMMENTING ON TODAY'S BLACK VERNACULAR, QUOTES THE POET AMIRI BARAKA — "IT BECOMES PART OF THE MAINSTREAM IN A MINUTE. WE HEAR THE RAPPER SAY "I'M OUTTA HERE" — THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW, CLINTON'S SAYING "I'M OUTTA HERE".

. . . WHITE FOLK HAVE COME TO SPEAK 'BLACK' FAR BETTER THAN BLACKS SPEAK 'WHITE'.

PROFESSOR GATES GOES ON TO POINT OUT THE CONTINUING LANGUAGE TRANSFER BETWEEN WHITES AND BLACKS — "TALK ABOUT CHANGING PLACES. EVEN AS LARGE NUMBERS OF BLACK CHILDREN STRUGGLE WITH STANDARD ENGLISH, HIP-HOP HAS BECOME THE RECREATIONAL LINGUA FRANCA OF WHITE SUBURBAN YOUTH. . . . IS IT POSSIBLE, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, THAT WHITE FOLK HAVE COME TO SPEAK 'BLACK' FAR BETTER THAN BLACKS SPEAK 'WHITE'?"

THESE WIDESPREAD AND RAPID LANGUAGE CHANGES ARE ONLY POSSIBLE TODAY BECAUSE OF OUR PRESENT

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, ESPECIALLY TV, WHICH GIVES MP AN IMPETUS THAT ADAMS COULD NEVER HAVE FORESEEN.

AND LET'S NOT FORGET THAT OTHER LANGUAGE — BODY LANGUAGE. WE SHOULD NOTE THE “HIGH FIVE” WHICH TRAVELED FROM THE URBAN STREET SCENE TO PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL, THEN TO OTHER SPORTS AND NOW CAN BE SEEN ON THE TENNIS COURTS AND FAIRWAYS OF WHITE SUBURBAN COUNTRY CLUBS, AS WELL AS ALL LEVELS OF OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM.

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## MUCKER POSE — THE PC CONNECTION

THERE IS NO CLEARER EXAMPLE OF WHAT ADAMS TERMED MP THAN OUR RECENT ADOPTION OF “POLITICAL CORRECTNESS”, OR PC, AND ITS CURRENT EXPANSION INTO EVERY CORNER OF LIFE. THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN PRECISELY LOCATE THE TIME OR PLACE OF PC'S BIRTH. IT MIGHT WELL HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN ONE OF THE DETERMINEDLY SOCIAL AND POLITICAL GLOBAL PARLIAMENTS SUCH AS THE UN OR EU; OR THE REGIONAL GROUPS OF COOPERATING GOVERNMENTS THAT HAVE DEVELOPED IN AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA; OR IN SOME SMALLER, LOCAL CONTEXT SUCH AS STATE OR COMMUNITY SCHOOL, HEALTH, ELECTORAL OR OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES.

WHATEVER ITS SOURCE, IT HAS NOW EXTENDED FAR BEYOND THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF ITS ORIGIN. WE CANNOT CLAIM THAT PC IS A DIRECT DESCENDENT OF MP, BUT THE LATTER HELPED TO PROVIDE A FERTILE FIELD AND CULTURE IN WHICH PC COULD FIND NOURISHMENT.

WHAT ADAMS SAW AS AN EFFORT BY THOSE OF PRIVILEGE TO ERASE THEIR DISTINCTION, TO BE A JOINER AND GOOD FELLOW AND TO REACH OUT IN SOME MINOR, BUT SYMBOLIC, WAY, AND THEREBY TO COMPENSATE FOR THEIR ADVANTAGE BY LEVELING THE SOCIAL FIELD, HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO A POLITICAL PROCESS THAT COUNTS FOLLOWERS IN CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, BUREAUCRACIES, LEGISLATURES AND BUSINESSES AND, OVER TIME, HAS ACQUIRED THE POWER TO INTIMIDATE.

PC CLAIMS TO REPRESENT UNITY AND FAIRNESS. IT DOES NOT. IT SEPARATES A PART, OR PARTS, FROM THE WHOLE, REDUCING THE POWER OF THE LATTER AND AMPLIFYING THAT OF THE FORMER. IT BECOMES SUCCESSIVELY EASIER AS MORE PARTS ARE REMOVED TO CREATE A MATHEMATICAL REVERSAL OF THE OUTCOME OF ANY VOTE.

THE PACKAGING INDUSTRY WAS ONE OF THE GREAT ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL SUCCESSES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. BY LABEL, LOGO OR TEXT APPLIED TO THE OUTER PACKAGE THE CONSUMER WAS UNABASHEDLY AND REGULARLY OFFERED HAPPINESS, HEALTH, WEALTH,

CONFIDENCE, ROMANCE, SUCCESS; IN SHORT, ALL THE A-LIST IMPERATIVES FOR MODERN LIFE. THE MARKETING OF GRATIFICATION IS A MIRACLE OF OUR TIME AND PC IS AS SLICK A PIECE OF PACKAGING AS ANY CAR, COSMETIC, OR CANDY BAR, BUT LACKS, HOWEVER, ANY WARNING TO THE CONSUMER OF POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS OR DANGERS FROM ITS USE.

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## THE TECHNOLOGY TORNADO

TORNADOES ARE PERHAPS NATURE'S MOST TERRIFYING EVENTS. WE KNOW WHAT CAUSES THEM, BUT, ONCE LOCATED, HAVE NO ABILITY TO CONTROL THEM OR TO PREDICT THEIR COURSES. THEIR VORTEX ON THE GROUND CAN BE SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS IN DIAMETER AND CAN REACH SPEEDS OF 300 MILES PER HOUR. THE GREAT DAMAGE THEY CAN CAUSE IS TOTALLY RANDOM AND INDISCRIMINATE, OFTEN DIVIDING COMMUNITIES, OR EVEN INDIVIDUAL HOUSES, INTO AREAS OF GREAT OR NO DAMAGE.

THE PROCESS OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT SHARES SOME OF THIS UNPREDICTABILITY, ALTHOUGH ON A MUCH LESSER SCALE AS IT IS SUBJECT TO MAN'S MENTALITY AND HIS ABILITY TO EXTRACT MEANING AND ORDER FROM NATURE.

IN A TIME AS TECHNOLOGICALLY DETERMINED AS OURS, THE PATH NOT CHOSEN CAN BE AS SIGNIFICANT AS THE ONE THAT IS. FOR EXAMPLE, HENRY FORD ORIGINALLY DESIGNED HIS CAR WITH AN IGNITION SYSTEM THAT COULD USE EITHER GASOLINE OR ALCOHOL SUBJECT TO A SWITCH UNDER THE DRIVER'S CONTROL.

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, WHO HAD ENORMOUS INVESTMENTS IN PETROLEUM BUT NONE IN ALCOHOL, PERSUADED FORD TO REMOVE THE ALCOHOL OPTION, MUCH TO THE DETRIMENT OF OUR ENVIRONMENT, AS ALCOHOL MIXTURES CAN BE BIODEGRADABLE AND CLEANER, CHEAPER, SAFER AND MORE EFFICIENT THAN PETROLEUM-BASED FUELS. WHAT MUST HAVE SEEMED LIKE A RELATIVELY SIMPLE DECISION TO HENRY FORD AT THE TIME RESULTED IN A CENTURY OF AUTOMOTIVE EMISSIONS' POLLUTION THAT HAS HAD AN ENORMOUS IMPACT ON OUR ENVIRONMENT AND HOPEFULLY, NOW, ON THE WAY WE TREAT IT.

... THE HUMAN SENSE OF VOGUE  
INEVITABLY APPEARS.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT, LIKE A TORNADO, BUILDS UP ENORMOUS MOMENTUM SUCKING IN AND FUELING ITSELF WITH MORE AND MORE INFORMATION AS, VEERING

ONE WAY AND THEN ANOTHER, IT EXERTS ITSELF FROM LABORATORY TO FINISHED PRODUCT. IT IS NOT PURE SCIENCE, HOWEVER, AS IN ITS FUNDING, TESTING, MANUFACTURING AND MARKETING PHASES THE HUMAN SENSE OF VOGUE INEVITABLY APPEARS.

IN OUR GREAT INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION OF THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY MAJOR EFFORT AND INVESTMENT WAS DIRECTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC INDUSTRIES SUCH AS STEEL, CATTLE, MINERAL EXTRACTION (COAL, GOLD, SILVER, COPPER, IRON ORE, OIL) FOOD PROCESSING, SHIPPING, RAILROADS AND OTHERS WHICH PROVIDED THE BASIC TOOLS FOR AN ECONOMY BASED ON BOTH AGRICULTURE AND MANUFACTURING.

AND YET THERE WERE THREE OTHER TECHNOLOGIES, ORIENTED DIRECTLY TOWARDS THE CONSUMER, WHICH CHANGED THE WAY WE THOUGHT – THE TELEPHONE, THE ELECTRIC LIGHT AND THE SEWING MACHINE – ALL OF WHICH PROVIDED LARGE SAVINGS OF TIME FOR THEIR USERS. THE ELECTRICAL TRIUMPHS OF BELL AND EDISON SERVED AS AN INTRODUCTION TO WHAT WOULD FOLLOW IN THE NEXT CENTURY IN WHICH OUR EXPANDING ECONOMY AND PROSPERITY TURNED TOWARDS THE CONSUMER.

CARS, AIRPLANES, RADIOS, MAGAZINES, HOME APPLIANCES ALL SAVED TIME OR MONEY, OR BOTH, BUT MOSTLY TIME. THE WORLD WAS SPEEDING UP IN ALL KINDS OF WAYS AND WE HAD TO KEEP UP. THIS PROCESS HAD TWO ENORMOUS STEPS FORWARD (WWs I & II) AND ONE BACK (THE GREAT DEPRESSION), BUT WE WERE ABLE, MOSTLY BY GOOD FORTUNE, TO SURVIVE ALL THREE, AND BY THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY LIFE IN AMERICA HAD BEEN VASTLY AND PERMANENTLY ALTERED.

PROUD OF OUR VICTORY IN WW II AND, CONSISTENT WITH DE TOCQUEVILLE’S AND ADAMS’ OBSERVATIONS, SEEKING RECOGNITION FOR IT, WE FAILED TO IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZE TWO EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES THAT WOULD MOVE AND CHANGE THE WHOLE WORLD AND DOMINATE ITS POLITICS TO THIS DAY, AND BEYOND.

WE REFER TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROCKET SCIENCE AND UNMANNED VEHICLES FOR BOTH EXPLORATION AND WEAPONRY, THEREBY ELIMINATING ALL GEOGRAPHIC SANCTUARIES.

THE OTHER ABSOLUTELY MIND-BENDING AGENCY FOR CHANGE WAS THE APPEARANCE OF TELEVISION, ITS RAPID IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION AND ITS TOTAL CAPTIVATION OF EVERY LEVEL OF COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY – PRODUCTION, MARKETING AND THE ULTIMATE CONSUMER. EVEN WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT, THE DEGREE TO WHICH TV CHANGED OUR WAYS OF LIVING AND THINKING IS DAZZLING.

ITS IMPACT, AS GREAT AS IT WAS COMMERCIALY, WAS EQUAL, OR EVEN GREATER, ON OUR POLITICS, OUR CULTURE AND OUR CHARACTER. IT WAS, IN ITS WAY, A “PERFECT STORM” OF CHANGE.

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BELL’S TELEPHONE, EDISON’S LIGHT AND SINGER’S SEWING MACHINE RESPECTIVELY CHANGED THE WAY WE HEARD, SAW AND MADE THINGS. THEIR USE SPREAD RAPIDLY, BRINGING PROFITS TO THEIR CREATORS AND REDUCING THE DIFFERENCES AND DISTANCES BETWEEN THE MORE AND LESS DEVELOPED POPULATIONS AROUND THE WORLD.

IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING WW II, TECHNOLOGY WAS ABLE TO CHANGE NOT ONLY THE WAY WE LIVE, BUT ALSO THE WAY WE VIEW OURSELVES AND OTHERS, THE WAY WE GOVERN AND OUR ABILITY TO EXTRACT INFORMATION FROM THE ENORMOUS BASE OF KNOWLEDGE OF EVERY KIND THAT SURROUNDS US – HISTORY, RELIGION, COMMERCE, SCIENCE, MEDICINE, GOVERNMENT, THE ENVIRONMENT AND WHATEVER ELSE MIGHT SUIT OUR PURPOSE.

TELEVISION HAD THIS CAPABILITY AND IN THE SPAN OF ONE GENERATION TRANSFORMED ITSELF FROM A NEW ARRIVAL TO OUR DOMINANT ACCESS TO NEWS, ENTERTAINMENT, ART AND POLITICS.

TV WAS FOLLOWED BY THE COMPUTER, WHICH HAS CHANGED OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OUR PLANET, AS WELL AS OURSELVES, AND EVEN REACHES INTO OUTER SPACE TO PRY LOOSE AND RETRIEVE THOSE SECRETS, CLOSELY GUARDED BY TIME AND DISTANCE, THAT ONLY A FEW DECADES AGO WE REFERRED TO AS “MYSTERIES OF THE AGES” OR “THE GREAT UNKNOWN”.

THE APPEARANCE OF EVEN ONE NEW TECHNOLOGY OF SUCH MAGNITUDE IN A LIFETIME CREATES REAL CHALLENGES AS TO HOW BEST TO INCREASE ITS USE AND APPLY ITS BENEFITS. A “TRIPLE WHAMMY” SUCH AS WHAT WE HAVE RECENTLY EXPERIENCED SUGGESTS THAT AS A NATION WE ARE NOW, AND ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO BE, OVERWHELMED BY WHAT WE HAVE CREATED.

IN OUR TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY WE MAY BE LIVING OUT SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICAL QUESTIONS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY POSED BY DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER AND THE PORTRAIT OF DORIAN GRAY. NO LONGER JUST THE SUBJECT OF NOVELS, THE MATTER OF EVIL CONSEQUENCES, AND HUMANITY’S ACCOUNTABILITY OR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEM, PLAYS OUT ON A GLOBAL STAGE TO A LARGELY UNCOMPREHENDING AUDIENCE.

IN THIS ISSUE WE WILL EXPLORE SOME OF THE WAYS IN WHICH THESE TECHNOLOGIES HAVE CHANGED OUR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, POLITICS AND CHARACTER.

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## THE GREAT DIVIDE

FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE PURITANS’

ARRIVAL IN THE NEW WORLD THE THIRTEEN COLONIES THAT FORMED THE BASIS OF OUR POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTER ATTRACTED A VARIETY OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.

TO EUROPEANS, AMERICA OFFERED A RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT FREE OF THE ENTRENCHED CORRUPTION AND PRIVILEGE THAT HAD ACCUMULATED OVER CENTURIES IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. AS A NEW SOCIETY THAT REJECTED MANY OF EUROPE'S RESTRICTIONS, AMERICA FOUND ITSELF HOME AND HOST TO ANGLICANS, DUTCH REFORMERS, CATHOLICS, PURITANS, PRESBYTERIANS AND OTHERS. AND, EVEN AS WE GREW AND DECLARED OUR INDEPENDENCE AND BECAME A NATION, THERE WAS A STRONG MORAL AND ETHICAL TONE TO OUR NEW GOVERNMENT AND THE PROCESS BY WHICH IT CAME INTO BEING.

. . . A NEW LIFE FOR THE FAITHFUL  
FREE OF HUMANITY'S PAST ERRORS.

MANY OF THOSE WHO CAME TO THE "NEW WORLD" AND PRACTICED A VARIETY OF RELIGIONS SAW THIS VAST, CONTINENT AS THE "NEW EDEN" WHERE PEOPLE COULD LIVE BY GOD'S LAW AS STATED IN THE BIBLE AND WHERE HE COULD DECREE AND DIRECT A NEW LIFE FOR THE FAITHFUL FREE OF HUMANITY'S PAST ERRORS.

IN EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY NEW ENGLAND, REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS, WHO REGULARLY PREACHED THREE TO FOUR HOUR SERMONS WITH NO CUSHIONS IN THE PEWS, LED A MOVEMENT CALLED THE GREAT AWAKENING TO CONVINCe SETTLErs THAT AMERICA WAS, INDEED, THE NEW GARDEN OF EDEN, AND THAT BOTH IT AND THEY, AS ITS INHABITANTS, HAD A SPECIAL CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT AND EXPAND IT.

THE GREAT AWAKENING WAS A VERY REAL AND POWERFUL FORCE IN EARLY NEW ENGLAND. AS THE THIRTEEN COLONIES GREW, BECAME MORE POLITICALLY INVOLVED AND MOVED TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE AND THEN REVOLUTION, IT LOST SOME OF ITS STRENGTH AND CURRENCY, BUT WAS REBORN IN THE FIRST TWO DECADES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AS THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING, WHEN IT SPREAD THE CONCEPT OF AMERICA AS THE NEW POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND NATURAL EDEN TO OUR EXPANDING POPULATION IN THE THEN WESTERN STATES OF WV, OH, TN, IN, IL.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AMERICA AS THE SPECIALLY ANOINTED AND APPOINTED "NEW EDEN" OF THE GREAT AWAKENING THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO AND WHAT PRESENTLY INFORMS OUR POLITICS AND CULTURE IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF THE DEGREE TO WHICH OUR PEOPLE, OUR CHARACTER AND OUR INSTITUTIONS HAVE BEEN ALTERED. FAR FROM BEING THE "NEW EDEN" WHAT WE SEE IN AMERICA TODAY IS MORE LIKELY TO SUGGEST THE "NEW SODOM AND GOMORRAH".

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CHANGE IS CONSTANT, EITHER SUBTLE OR DRASTIC, AND ALWAYS UNAVOIDABLE, WITH THE ABILITY OF SOCIETIES TO MANAGE IT IN PEACEFUL AND MODERATE WAYS DEPENDENT UPON THE FORCES THAT GENERATE IT. THESE MAY BE RELIGION, TECHNOLOGY, POLITICS, WAR, COMMERCE, POPULATION, TERRITORY, CLIMATE, NATURAL RESOURCES OR ANY COMBINATION THEREOF.

IN EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICA THE DOMINANT FORCE IN OUR NATIONAL LIFE WAS THE PHYSICAL CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER AND SETTLING THE OPEN SPACE BETWEEN THE OCEANS. WE THEN TURNED TO DEVELOPING THE ALMOST UNLIMITED WEALTH THAT OUR "NEW EDEN" HAD PROVIDED.

AS THE NINETEENTH CENTURY DREW TO A CLOSE WE WERE EDGING TOWARDS FAME IN A NEW AND UNFAMILIAR ROLE AT THE CENTER OF THE WORLD STAGE. THAT ROLE BECAME MORE CLEARLY PERCEIVED BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND ABROAD BY OUR DECISIVE PARTICIPATION IN WW I AFTER WHICH WE EXPERIENCED THE EXTREME HIGHS OF THE 20S AND THE LOWS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE 30S.

THE TECHNOLOGIES THAT BROUGHT BROAD CHANGE TO OUR LIVES IN THESE TWO DECADES PRODUCED HOLLYWOOD'S FILMS, DETROIT'S CARS AND NEW YORK'S RADIO BROADCASTS, EACH OF WHICH IN THEIR WAY TOUCHED MILLIONS OF LIVES AND OFFERED RELIEF TO THE EXTRAORDINARY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PAIN OF THE DEPRESSION.

COMING OUT OF IT AND INTO WW II, HOWEVER, MUCH OF OUR STRUCTURE WAS PRETTY MUCH AS IT HAD BEEN. PRINT DOMINATED OUR NATIONAL MEDIA. THERE WERE TEN DAILY NEWSPAPERS IN NYC AND ALMOST THAT MANY NATIONAL WEEKLY MAGAZINES WITH CIRCULATIONS IN THE MILLIONS.

THE CONTENT OF OUR ENTERTAINMENT AND MEDIA PRODUCTS WAS GENERALLY REGULATED BY MUTUAL CONSENT TO CONFORM TO COMMON DECENCY STANDARDS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HOLLYWOOD WHICH REQUIRED SOME HELP FROM ITS SELF-DESIGNATED CENSOR, THE HAYS OFFICE.

IN 1940, STILL REELING FROM THE DEPRESSION AND FACING THE PROBABILITY OF ANOTHER WORLD WAR, AMERICA COULD HAVE MUSTERED THE IMAGE OF BEING THE NEW EDEN ONLY WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY. IT WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO DO SO AGAIN.

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COMMERCIAL TELEVISION, FIRST OFFERED BY THE MAJOR RADIO BROADCASTERS AND A FEW INDEPENDENTS, MADE ITS DEBUT SHORTLY AFTER WW II. INITIAL PROGRAMMING CONSISTED MOSTLY OF SPORTS EVENTS, NEWS

AND DRAMA AND VIEWING HOURS WERE LIMITED. THE REST IS HISTORY, AS TV RECEPTION AND PROGRAM PRODUCTION QUICKLY INCREASED. IT SOON REACHED OUT TO ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY AND INTO ALL AREAS OF OUR LIVES WITH A 24/7 VIEWING CAPABILITY.

TODAY, IT DOMINATES OUR CULTURE, OUR ENTERTAINMENT AND OUR MEDIA INDUSTRY WITH A PROGRAM CONTENT THAT DRAWS MOSTLY ON SPORTS, SITCOMS, "REALITY" TV'S CELEBRITY CREATION, ROCK/RAP MUSIC, MADE-FOR-TV FILMS AND RERUNS OF OLD FILMS FROM MAJOR STUDIO ARCHIVES. THIS APPALLING MIX IS THE RESULT OF A HALF-CENTURY'S "DUMBING DOWN" PROCESS THAT JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO IMAGINE.

THE GENERATION FROM ROUGHLY 1930 TO 1960 IS NOW SEEN AS A "GOLDEN" AGE OF AMERICAN FILMS WHICH WELL SERVED OUR COUNTRY'S NEEDS AS WE EXPERIENCED, FIRST, THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND, THEN, WW II. WE ENJOYED THE MUSIC OF KERN, GERSHWIN, BERLIN, PORTER, ROGERS AND LOEWE AND THE LYRICS OF HAMMERSTEIN, IRA GERSHWIN, HART AND LERNER, AMONG MANY OTHERS.

PERHAPS IT WAS WHO WE WERE THAT DETERMINED WHAT THEY MADE, WHEREAS THE OPPOSITE SEEMS TO BE AT WORK TODAY. THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY, THE MEDIA AND OUR CULTURE (EMC COMPLEX) HAVE CREATED AN AURA SATURATED WITH SEX FROM WHICH THERE IS NO REFUGE.

AS THE DOMINANT ELEMENT IN OUR EMC COMPLEX BY VIRTUE OF ITS UBIQUITY, TV HAS TOTALLY ALTERED OUR SOCIETY, AND HAS BEEN ABLE TO DO SO BECAUSE OF THE ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF MONEY AND POWER IT HAS BOTH CREATED AND ATTRACTED. THESE TWO FORCES, THE DOUBLE HELIX OF OUR POLITICAL DNA, ENABLE CORPORATE AMERICA TO DIRECT LARGE AND CONSISTENT REWARDS TO BOTH ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCERS AND THE MEDIA.

IN THE EMC COMPLEX POWER FLOWS THROUGH VERY NARROW AND CONTAINED LINES, MUCH LIKE ELECTRIC UTILITY LINES. IT MUST NOT BE CONTAMINATED, DILUTED OR WASTED BY OVEREXPOSURE TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

BEFORE A MOSTLY UNCONCERNED TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AUDIENCE THREE RELATED, BUT DISTINCT, TRAGEDIES ARE AT WORK IN THE AMERICAN CULTURE. THE FIRST IS THE EXPRESSION BY AFRICAN-AMERICANS, ROUGHLY 10% TO 15% OF OUR POPULATION, OF THE VISION OF VIOLENCE, DRUGS, AND HATE THAT IS THE CENTRAL FOCUS OF MUSIC AND LYRICS IN RAP, ROCK AND HIP HOP.

EVEN MORE SERIOUS IS THE EMBRACE BY OTHERS OF THIS AFRICAN-AMERICAN VIEW OF OUR SOCIETY AND THEIR PROMOTION OF IT AS EQUAL OR SUPERIOR TO OTHER CREATIVE DIRECTIONS. SUCH IS THE COMMAND OF MULTICULTURALISM AND THE PROOF THAT MP IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE USA ALMOST A CENTURY SINCE IT WAS IDENTIFIED BY ADAMS.

AS AN EXAMPLE WE CITE A DECISION BY A LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD TO PERMIT ADMISSION CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT ARTS SCHOOLS TO USE RAP MUSIC AS THEIR ART

FORM OF CHOICE FOR THEIR AUDITION MATERIAL. ONE BOARD MEMBER SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO TUPAC SHAKUR'S LYRICS AS "POETRY THAT COULD ENGAGE CHILDREN IN READING", ALTHOUGH THEIR REPETITIVE MESSAGE IS MOSTLY CONCERNED WITH DRUGS, VIOLENCE AND THE DENIGRATION OF WOMEN.<sup>4</sup> SHAKUR DIED VIOLENTLY IN WHAT WAS GENERALLY VIEWED AS A CONFRONTATION WITH ONE OF HIS COMPETITORS.

SOME SUPPORTERS OF RAP CLAIM THAT IT TRANSCENDS ANY PARTICULAR POPULATION GROUP WHICH, GIVEN THE MARKETING EFFORT TO PROMOTE IT TO YOUNG AND UNKNOWING LISTENERS, MAY BE TRUE. STILL, WHAT IS OFFERED IN THE MARKET PLACE TODAY IS STRONG PROOF OF THE MP.

THERE IS PROBABLY ANOTHER IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTING ELEMENT IN THIS SCHOOL BOARD'S ATTITUDE. MANY BOARDS EXIST IN CONSTANT FEAR OF LITIGATION, ESPECIALLY WHERE RACE MIGHT BE A FACTOR, AND FORM THEIR POLICIES ACCORDINGLY. THIS IS A RELATIVELY NEW PHENOMENON IN OUR SOCIETY WHICH WE REFERRED TO IN OUR PREVIOUS ISSUE ON IMMIGRATION AS "FEAR OF THE FEW". IT OFTEN CONFLICTS WITH MAJORITY RULE.

PROBABLY THE MOST RINGING ENDORSEMENT OF THE MP COMES FROM A NATIONALLY SYNDICATED COLUMNIST<sup>5</sup> WHO, REPORTING ON THE MTV VIDEO MUSIC AWARDS, WROTE:

"AND I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY ALMOST EVERYBODY WANTS TO SOUND ILLITERATE, GETTING DOWN "GANGSTA" STYLE. I HAVE SEEN SOME OF THESE MUSICIANS IN MORE OR LESS SERIOUS INTERVIEWS, AND THEY SPEAK JUST FINE. BUT ON STAGE, IN FRONT OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE MOST AFFECTED BY THEIR GRAMMAR AND PRESENTATION, THEY GO ALL SLOPPY AND SLANGY."

... THESE SELLERS HAVE A GOVERNMENTAL PARTNER IN FOREIGN MARKETS ...

AND THE THIRD LEVEL OF THIS ESCALATING CULTURAL TRAGEDY IS THAT WE WILLINGLY AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY EXPORT THE TERRIFYING RAP/ROCK/HIP-HOP VISION TO OTHERS AROUND THE WORLD. THIS IS DONE, OF COURSE, UNDER THE GUISE OF WORLD TRADE, DEMOCRACY AT WORK IN OPEN MARKET COMPETITION AND INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE. BUT THE REALITY IS THAT THE DOMINANT FORCE IN OUR CULTURAL SHOCK TROOPS' INVASION OF OTHER LANDS IS SIMPLY MONEY, THE OLD PROFIT MOTIVE. THE EXTRAORDINARY RANGE OF PRODUCTS OFFERED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETERS, AND THE REVENUES THEY GENERATE, ASSURE US THAT THESE SELLERS HAVE A

GOVERNMENTAL PARTNER IN FOREIGN MARKETS AND THAT MP IS ON GLOBAL DISPLAY.

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## “READING , WRITING AND ‘RITHMETIC ALL TO THE TUNE OF A HICKORY STICK”

THESE WORDS FROM AN EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY POPULAR SONG WOULD INDICATE THAT EDUCATION IN THE US GREW FROM A GROUNDING IN THE BASICS ACHIEVED BY FIRM DISCIPLINE. TODAY’S EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS WOULD DISPEL ANY SUCH THOUGHT. IT ALSO PROVIDES A SHOWCASE FOR THE MP.

EDUCATION IN THE US IS SUBJECT TO A WIDE, AND SOMETIMES CONFLICTING, VARIETY OF REGULATIONS AND CONTROLS, STARTING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL WITH PARENT/TEACHER COMMITTEES AND PROCEEDING UPWARD TO COUNTY AND STATE BOARDS AND THEN TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT’S DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

IT WAS NOT ALWAYS THUS. UNTIL THE TWENTIETH CENTURY PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION HAD BEEN MOSTLY A NO-FRILL EXPERIENCE — NO TEAM SPORTS, STADIUMS, TRAVEL OR CHEERLEADERS. BUILDINGS AND FACULTIES WERE LIMITED, BUT THE CURRICULUM INCLUDED LATIN, GREEK, MATH, HISTORY, ENGLISH, GEOGRAPHY, PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE IN SOME COMBINATION. EDUCATION WAS, QUITE SIMPLY, STUDY INTENSIVE. THERE WERE FEW, OR NO, DISTRACTIONS BY EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

IN THE NEWLY BORN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AMERICA, IT WAS DECREED THAT EDUCATION WAS TO BE FREE AND AVAILABLE TO ALL. THIS WAS, LITERALLY, THE TIME OF THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE AND THE CONCEPT OF “FREE” DID NOT HAVE TO INCLUDE THE MUCH LARGER POPULATIONS AND EXPENSES THAT WOULD FOLLOW AND WOULD POSE THE CLASSIC QUESTION OF MASS VS. CLASS.

ABOUT FIFTY YEARS AGO, JOHN W. GARDNER, JR., FORMER SECRETARY OF HEW AND HEAD OF THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT, WROTE A BOOK ENTITLED EXCELLENCE; CAN WE BE EQUAL AND EXCELLENT TOO?<sup>6</sup>, IN WHICH HE ARGUED THAT THESE WERE TWO MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE GOALS, AND YET FOR YEARS OUR POLITICAL RHETORIC HAS INSISTED OTHERWISE.

ANOTHER ELEMENT, UNKNOWN TO AMERICAN EDUCATION UNTIL THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, WAS THE PRESENCE OF TEACHERS’ UNIONS. TODAY THE UNIONS REPRESENTING TEACHERS ARE THE LARGEST AND WEALTHIEST IN OUR LABOR UNION MOVEMENT. THEY EXERT ENORMOUS POWER AND, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEPT. OF EDUCATION, HAVE A VISE-LIKE GRIP ON THE CREATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF POLICIES THAT BEAR ON EVERY ASPECT OF AMERICAN EDUCATION.

SADLY, IN SPITE OF POLITICIANS’ FREQUENT CLAIMS

THAT, WE HAVE “THE FINEST EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE WORLD”, JUST THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE. OUR SYSTEM IS A DISMAL FAILURE THAT GRADUATES STUDENTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL WITH FOURTH OR FIFTH GRADE READING ABILITY, LITTLE OR NO KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY, INSUFFICIENT MATH/SCIENCE SKILLS AND NOT EVEN A RUDIMENTARY FAMILIARITY WITH GEOGRAPHY (ASK A HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR TO EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ISTHMUS AND A PENINSULA, FOR INSTANCE.)

OVER THE PAST HALF CENTURY, OR MORE, THE “DUMBING DOWN” OF AMERICAN EDUCATION HAS BEEN SEEN BY ITS ARCHITECTS AS A WAY OF BLUNTING THE CLAIMS OF THE MANY SPECIAL INTERESTS AND INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED, AND MINIMIZING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE DIFFERENCES IN STUDENT SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

IT IS THE STUDENTS WHO SUFFER MOST FROM THIS MOST OUTRAGEOUS MP PRACTICE, ORDERED AND ENFORCED AT EVERY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT. ON THIS SCALE, MP IS NO LONGER A QUIANT NATIONAL CHARACTER TRAIT, BUT RATHER A FORCE WITH THE POWER TO SHAPE OUR SOCIETY AND OUR DESTINY.

H. L. MENCKEN, “THE SAGE OF BALTIMORE”, WROTE A WIDELY READ AND GENERALLY CAUSTIC COLUMN FOR THE BALTIMORE SUN IN THE YEARS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS. HE COULD SKEWER WITH THE BEST, AND ONCE SAID “NOBODY EVER WENT BROKE UNDERESTIMATING THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE”. WELL, THAT’S PROBABLY A BIT OVER THE TOP; AFTER ALL, MENCKEN SAW SKEWERING AS AN ART FORM, ENTERTAINMENT AND A WAY TO MAKE A LIVING.

BUT HE MAY HAVE HIT ON THE SAME ASPECT OF OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER AS ADAMS DID WITHOUT IDENTIFYING IT. MENCKEN LIVED AND WROTE BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE HUGE GOVERNMENT AND LABOR UNION BUREAUCRACIES THAT HAVE PRESIDED OVER THE “DUMBING DOWN” OF EDUCATION IN AMERICA. HE WOULD NOT, IT SEEMS, HAVE BEEN SURPRISED.

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## MP AS POLITICAL REFUGE

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT, IF WE LOOK CLOSELY, TO RECOGNIZE MP BENEATH THE SURFACE AND THE RHETORIC OF MANY OF OUR DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES.

IN THE LATTER, IN SPITE OF OUR UNIQUE AND ISOLATING ROLE OF SUPERPOWER, OUR EFFORTS TO EITHER FIND COMMON CAUSE WITH OR OPPOSE OTHERS HAVE RESULTED IN CYNICAL ALLIANCES WHICH, WHATEVER MOMENTARY PURPOSE THEY MAY SERVE, OFTEN SEPARATE US FROM THE DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR ORIGINS.

OUR SUPERPOWER ROLE LEADS US TO VACILLATE BETWEEN BOUTS OF ARROGANCE AND BEING ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE. WE CAN NEVER BE ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE, BUT WE CAN BE STEADFAST IN SEEING THAT WHO WE WERE AND WHO WE ARE RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER.

AT THE TIME OF ITS WRITING, THE MUCKER POSE ADDRESSED MAINLY SOCIAL ELEMENTS IN OUR LIFE SUCH AS MANNERS, LANGUAGE AND PERSONAL INTERACTION.

SINCE THEN MP HAS ADDED INSTITUTIONAL MUSCLE AND NOW EXISTS ON A SCALE THAT INFLUENCES OUR NATIONAL POLICIES AND POLITICS. WHILE IT NEVER APPEARS IN THE FORM OF A DIRECT ISSUE, IT CAN ALTER OUR IDENTITY AND LESSEN OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR PRINCIPLES.

AS AN EXAMPLE OF ITS PRESENCE IN GOVERNMENT, WE HAVE ONLY TO LOOK, AS WE DO WITH MANY OTHER THREATS, AT THE IMMIGRATION ISSUE WHERE OUR LONG-STANDING FAILURE TO ENFORCE OUR LAWS HAS ENCOURAGED AND PERMITTED A LEVEL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION THAT FIRST PUT AT RISK, AND NOW SUBVERTS, OUR NATIONAL CULTURE, CURRENCY, CONSTITUTION AND SECURITY.

THESE ARE FUNDAMENTAL NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. WHY SHOULD THEY BE DIMINISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS? MP SUGGESTS THAT OUR MOTIVE IS TO APPEAR TO BE RECOGNIZED AS “GOOD GUYS” SHARING OUR AFFLUENCE AND GOOD FORTUNE WITH OTHERS. IN TRUTH, WE WILL SLOWLY DISSIPATE THEM.

. . . ONE MORE MANIFESTATION OF THE POLARIZATION THAT GRIPS AMERICA.

THIS IS NOT THE MP OF JAMES ADAMS. IT MAY HAVE STARTED AS SUCH, BUT IT BULKED UP, AS IF ON STEROIDS, WITH POLITICAL MUSCLE AND NOW LOOMS AS ONE MORE MANIFESTATION OF THE POLARIZATION THAT GRIPS AMERICA.

THE YOUNG AMERICA WAS A COUNTRY OF APPEALING IDEALISM. THE NEW AMERICA, IS ONE OF APPALLING CYNICISM AND CORRUPTION. IT INCLUDES MANY INTERESTS WHO BELIEVE THAT THE BEST WAY TO HELP THE THIRD WORLD IS TO BECOME THIRD WORLD, AND THAT SUCH A CONVERSION IS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED EVEN THOUGH IT REQUIRES THE EXTINGUISHMENT OF OUR NATIONAL IDEALS AND THE CORRUPTION OF OUR POLITICAL PURPOSE AND PROCESS.

HARSH WORDS? PERHAPS. TRUE? FOR ALL TO SEE. AS FOR OUR PURPOSE, READ THE CONSTITUTION IN LIGHT OF THE RESULTS OF FOUR DECADES OF UNENFORCED LAWS; AND FOR PROCESS, CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT’S ANNUAL SUPPORT WITH TAXPAYERS’ FUNDS OF PRO-IMMIGRATION INTEREST GROUPS SUCH AS \$4.2 MILLION TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LARAIZA AND ALMOST \$700,000 TO ITS SUBSIDIARY, THE FARMWORKER JUSTICE FUND.<sup>7</sup>

APPROPRIATIONS ARE ALSO MADE TO OTHER SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS MALDEF, LULAC, MECHA, ETC.

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IMMIGRATION IS FAR FROM THE ONLY AREA OF GOVERNMENT TO DISPLAY THE MP. IT IS OFTEN PRESENT, IF YOU LOOK CAREFULLY, IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY AND THE WAY WE CONDUCT IT.

BUT MP IS, WITHOUT DOUBT, MOST EVIDENT IN OUR ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS WHEN CANDIDATES FEEL COMPELLED TO DON THE HATS, JERSEYS, JACKETS, T-SHIRTS, ETC OF SPORTS TEAMS, LABOR UNIONS, MILITARY SERVICE BRANCHES AND OTHER GROUPS WITH WHICH THEY SEEK TO INGRATIATE THEMSELVES BY THE IMAGE OF SHARED IDENTITY OR SOLIDARITY.

THE USE OF THIS CAMPAIGN CONTRIVANCE WAS LIMITED PRIOR TO WW II, BUT WITH TV’S EMERGENCE THEREAFTER IT GAINED REAL MOMENTUM.

TODAY, PRESIDENT BUSH STANDS AS THE MOTHER OF ALL MPs. HE CAREFULLY ROLLS UP THE CUFFS OF HIS SHIRT SLEEVES (LABOR IDENTITY), USES THE S-WORD (TALK TOUGH) AT THE G8 MEETING, AND IN A RECENT SPEECH TO AN HISPANIC AUDIENCE<sup>8</sup>, USED THE PHRASE “THAT AIN’T GONNA WORK” (COMMON MAN IDENTITY) SEVERAL TIMES. IN 2001 HE DELIVERED YALE’S COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS IN WHICH, ATTEMPTING HUMOR, HE MANAGED TO DEPRECATE HIMSELF AS WELL AS ACADEMIC EFFORT AND ACHIEVEMENT.<sup>9</sup>

THE OFFICE OF OUR PRESIDENCY HAS, DURING MOST OF OUR HISTORY, CARRIED WITH IT, AND WAS SEEN BY THE PUBLIC TO HAVE, A CERTAIN INNATE DIGNITY AND POWER WHICH DERIVED MORE FROM OUR IDEALS THAN INDIVIDUALS.

IN OUR SYSTEM AT ANY GIVEN TIME WE HAVE ONLY ONE PRESIDENT WHO, WITH THE RARE EXCEPTION OF IMPEACHMENT, SERVES A TERM OF FOUR YEARS. THIS CAN BE A LIFE-TIME IN POLITICS AND, WHEN COMBINED WITH THE CERTAINTY OF HUMAN ERROR, CAN PRODUCE BOTH UNEXPECTED AND UNEVEN RESULTS.

STILL, BECAUSE OF WHO WE SET OUT TO BE AND WHO WE WANT TO BE, WE INVEST THE OFFICE WITH CONSIDERABLE AWE AND RESPECT. THE DECLINE IN OUR INVESTMENT AND THE “DUMBING DOWN” OF BOTH THE ELECTORAL PURSUIT AND THE ACTUAL OCCUPANCY OF OUR PRESIDENCY IS A NATIONAL DISAPPOINTMENT IN WHICH TV HAS PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE, AND WE ARE NOW AT THE POINT WHERE WE NEED CANDIDATES WHO CAN DOMINATE THE MEDIUM, NOT VICE-VERSA. IT’S THAT SIMPLE. IT’S NOT EASY, BUT IT CAN BE DONE!

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JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS WAS A GREAT AMERICAN, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS NOT MT. RUSHMORE MATERIAL, WHO NEVER SOUGHT OR HELD PUBLIC OFFICE OR WON A BATTLE OR A MEDAL. BUT HE WROTE AN ESSAY, AND WITH UNIQUE VISION BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION A TRAIT IN THE AMERICAN CHARACTER THAT OTHERS HAD NOT IDENTIFIED.

IN HIS TIME, THE MP EXISTED ON A MUCH LOWER SCALE IN OUR SOCIETY WHICH, WHILE IT MIGHT DRAW INTELLECTUAL INTEREST AND CAUSE SOME SOCIAL DISCOMFORT, DID NOT POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE WAY WE, AND OTHERS, VIEW OURSELVES.

TODAY THE MP IS A BROAD PRESENCE IN OUR POLITICAL LIFE WITH THE POWER TO IMPACT OUR POLICIES AND OUR INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT. IT ROBS OUR EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES OF THE DIGNITY TO WHICH THEY SHOULD AND COULD BE, AND ONCE WERE, ENTITLED.

LIKE ANY MAJOR CHANGE OF CONSCIOUSNESS, RIDDING OURSELVES OF MP WILL NOT BE EASY. IT IS OUR COUNTRY AND WE ARE BOTH THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION. UNFORTUNATELY, THE “DUMBING DOWN” PROCESS IS WELL ENTRENCHED AND THE VIEW AHEAD SEEMS ONLY TO BE MORE OF THE SAME.

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## CYNICISM AND CORRUPTION IN POLICY AND GOVERNMENT

... THEY ARE THE CHICKEN/EGG RIDDLE AT ITS BEST.

TODAY AN HONEST EVALUATION OF OURSELVES AND OUR ROLE IN THE WORLD MUST RECOGNIZE THE EXTENT TO WHICH A DAMAGING CYNICISM HAS PENETRATED ALL LEVELS AND BRANCHES OF OUR GOVERNMENT. CYNICISM AND CORRUPTION ARE INSEPARABLE IN GOVERNMENT. WHERE YOU FIND ONE, YOU FIND THE OTHER. THEY ARE THE CHICKEN/EGG RIDDLE AT ITS BEST.

THEIR PATH IS BY NO MEANS A FREE RIDE. SPIRITUAL TOLLS ARE COLLECTED FREQUENTLY ALONG THE WAY AND MORAL BANKRUPTCY AWAITS AT THE END. THIS HAS RUNG TRUE FOR MOST OF THE WORLD’S GREAT TERRITORIAL EMPIRES.

OUR COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL GOVERNMENT HAS VARIED FROM TIME TO TIME. TODAY IT STANDS AT AN ALL TIME LOW BECAUSE CYNICISM/CORRUPTION ARE ACCEPTED TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT THEY CONTROL THE CONDUCT, LEGISLATION AND POLICIES OF OUR GOVERNMENT.

ONE REASON WE EMPHASIZE THE IMMIGRATION

ISSUE SO STRONGLY IS THAT IT SERVES AS THE “POSTER BOY” OF BAD GOVERNMENT IN MANY WAYS. THE GOVERNMENT’S CYNICISM IN ITS HANDLING OF IMMIGRATION IS UNRELENTINGLY VISIBLE AND INCLUDES LIES, NON-ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS, DERELICTION OF DUTY BY FEDERAL AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS, FORCED FAILURE TO PROTECT AMERICAN CITIZENS AND PROPERTY AND MORE.

OUR CYNICISM/CORRUPTION IS NOT LIMITED TO OUR DOMESTIC POLICIES BY ANY MEANS. WE HAVE LEFT A TRAIL ACROSS THE WORLD – IN EUROPE, AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA, THE MIDDLE-EAST, ASIA – AS THE RESULT OF WHICH WE HAVE CREATED CONFUSION ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS AND ACTIONS AS SOLE SUPERPOWER. AS AN EXAMPLE, IRAQ STANDS OUT, BUT IT DOES NOT STAND ALONE.

AS WE ARE DRAWN FURTHER (I.E. LEBANON) INTO THE MAELSTROM OF MIDDLE-EEASTERN ISLAMIC POLITICS, THE PERIL TO OUR “PURSE AND PERSON” GROWS EVEN GREATER. FOREIGN POLICY HAS NEVER BEEN A CLEAN GAME, BUT IT SEEMS THAT OUR PRESENT APPROACH HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY CYNICAL, AND THAT ONE OF THE REASONS WE HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IS THAT THE CYNICISM OF OUR POLICY IS EVIDENT TO ALL THOSE WITH WHOM WE DEAL.

WHAT WAS OUR POLICY AND THE TRUE MOTIVATION BEHIND IT THAT SENT US ON THE PATH OF MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE NEAR-EAST?

WE MUST DISREGARD THE RHETORIC ABOUT WMD AND SADDAM HUSSEIN’S TYRANNY. THE MORE RECENT EXPLANATION OF ESTABLISHING A LABORATORY FOR DEMOCRACY, RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND TOLERANCE AND A FREE MARKET ECONOMY BASED ON OUR CAPITALISTIC MODEL COMES CLOSE TO THE ORIGINAL NEOCON<sup>10</sup> POSITION AND PLAN.

WHAT THE NEOCONS PROPOSED FOR AMERICA’S ROLE IN THE MIDDLE-EAST WAS NOTHING LESS THAN BEING THE AGENT OF CHANGE THAT WOULD BRING ABOUT A MASSIVE CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION.

SUCH CHANGE IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED EASILY ANYWHERE; AND ESPECIALLY NOT IN THE MIDDLE-EAST, AND NOT BY ANYONE CARRYING THE HEAVY BAGGAGE OF OUR ALLIANCE WITH ISRAEL. OF COURSE, THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS THAT WE WOULD OBTAIN WERE THOUGHT TO BE FAR MORE THAN THE CONTEMPLATED COSTS, BUT THAT MEASUREMENT IS NO LONGER VALID.

BY LOOKING AT THE MAP ANOTHER POSSIBLE, AND INCREASINGLY PROBABLE, REASON FOR OUR MILITARY ACTIONS CAN BE REVEALED. WE START WITH OUR MILITARY BASE IN TURKEY WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY OUR PRESENCE IN KUWAIT AND SAUDI ARABIA. TURKEY AND KUWAIT SHARE LAND BORDERS WITH IRAN, AND SAUDI ARABIA LIES TO ITS SOUTHWEST JUST ACROSS THE PERSIAN GULF IN WHICH WE MAINTAIN A NAVAL FORCE.

OUR FIRST MILITARY INCURSION INTO AFGHANISTAN PROVIDED US WITH A PRESENCE ON IRAN’S EASTERN BORDER

AND OUR MOVE INTO IRAQ DID THE SAME ON ITS WESTERN BOUNDARY. THE END RESULT IS THAT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A SMALL LAND BORDER TO THE NORTH WITH RUSSIA AND ANOTHER TO THE SOUTHEAST WITH PAKISTAN, WE HAVE COMPLETELY ENCIRCLED IRAN WITH OUR SEA, LAND AND AIR MILITARY CAPABILITY.

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT FOR ANYONE TO VIEW THIS PATTERN AS RESULTING FROM ANYTHING BUT POLICY, AND IMPOSSIBLE FOR IRAN TO DO SO. AND, NOW THAT NEOCONS AND OTHERS HAVE PUBLICLY RAISED THE QUESTION OF OUR TAKING MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAN, WE CAN REALIZE THE EFFECT THAT SUCH SPECULATION MUST HAVE THERE. WE MUST ALSO ASSUME THAT OUR ENCIRCLEMENT HAS HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON TEHRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND NEGOTIATIONS.

BACK TO IRAQ, WHERE OUR MILITARY INTERVENTION AND TRANSFORMATION PROCESS HIT UNEXPECTED INSURGENT RESISTANCE MUCH OF WHICH WAS PROVIDED BY HAMAS. AS THE WAR IN IRAQ RAGED ON AND THE CONCEPT OF A NEW GOLDEN AGE FOR THE NEAR-EAST LOST MUCH OF ITS LUSTER, A STARTLING NEW ELEMENT WAS INTRODUCED WHEN A FREE, DEMOCRATIC ELECTION IN PALESTINE RESULTED IN A VICTORY FOR HAMAS.

. . . DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS ARE NOT  
SUPPOSED TO TURN GOVERNMENT  
OVER TO TERRORIST GROUPS.

WE WERE ABLE TO OFFER A FEW OBLIGATORY CONGRATULATIONS ABOUT PROCESS, BUT IT WAS CLEAR OUR HEART WASN'T IN IT. WE WERE STUNNED. DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO TURN GOVERNMENT OVER TO TERRORIST GROUPS.

THE NEXT BLOW TO THE NEOCON PLAN CAME IN LEBANON WHERE, AFTER MUCH EFFORT ON OUR PART AND THE ASSASSINATION OF A POPULAR LEBANESE LEADER, SYRIAN CONTROL WAS ENDED AND THE LEBANESE WERE ABLE TO FORM THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. THIS WAS NOT A COMPLETE CONVERSION, HOWEVER, AS IT INCLUDED A STRONG BLOCK COMMITTED TO HEZBOLLAH, THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION THAT OPERATED OUT OF SYRIA AND WHICH, LIKE HAMAS, HAS BEEN LARGELY FUNDED BY IRAN.

WHEN HEZBOLLAH MILITIA CAPTURED TWO ISRAELI SOLDIERS, ISRAEL'S RESPONSE WAS SWIFT AND A HEAVY AIR, ARTILLERY AND TANK ATTACK WAS LAUNCHED AGAINST SOUTHERN LEBANON. IT TARGETED CIVILIAN STRUCTURES AS WELL AS MILITARY AND TURNED THE POPULATION THERE INTO A MOVING MASS OF REFUGEES SEEKING A DIFFICULT EXIT EITHER BY LAND TO THE NORTH OR BY SEA TO THE WEST.

WITH THE EXPLOSION IN LEBANON THE NUMBER OF REGIONAL WARS/OCCUPATIONS REACHED FOUR —

AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, LEBANON AND PALESTINE. WE ONLY HAVE TROOPS IN THE FIRST TWO, BUT ARE HEAVILY INVOLVED IN THE OTHERS THROUGH OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL WHICH IS GENERALLY SEEN TO BE OUR PROXY THERE. THIS RELATIONSHIP IS SO INFLAMMATORY TO MUSLIMS THAT IT HAS THREATENED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO THREATEN, WHATEVER POLITICAL INITIATIVES WE UNDERTAKE.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND OUR DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE AND EFFORTS BECOME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT. THE ARMS USED BY ISRAEL IN LEBANON AND PALESTINE ARE MOSTLY PROVIDED BY US; AND IT HAS BEEN OUR POLICY FOR A HALF CENTURY NEVER TO CRITICIZE THE PURPOSE, EXECUTION OR CONSEQUENCE OF ANY ISRAELI ACTION.

IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, WHERE AIR AND ARTILLERY ATTACKS HAVE LEVELLED WHOLE NEIGHBORHOODS AND RENDERED THEIR INHABITANTS HOMELESS, OUR RESPONSE HAS BEEN TO CALL FOR A CEASE-FIRE AND THE PLACEMENT OF A MULTI-NATIONAL PEACE FORCE. OUR HUMANITARIAN NATURE, HOWEVER, IS HELD HOSTAGE BY THE IDEOLOGICAL SUPREMACY OF THE WAR ON TERROR, AS WE HAVE CALLED FOR A DELAY IN IMPLEMENTING THESE PEACE-MAKING EFFORTS UNTIL WE, AND ISRAEL, ARE ASSURED THAT HEZBOLLAH'S MILITARY CAPABILITY HAS BEEN DESTROYED.

SUCH A RESPONSE WOULD RAISE QUESTIONS OF SINCERITY IN MOST CONFRONTATIONS. IN THE NEAR EAST IT IS CONSIDERED A REGIONAL CYNICISM THAT CHALLENGES OUR CREDIBILITY IN EVERY SITUATION. NOT ALL POLICY, ESPECIALLY FOREIGN, CAN BE SUCCESSFUL, AND WE MAY NEVER BRING OFF THE NEAR-EASTERN TRANSFORMATION ENVISAGED BY THE NEOCONS. BUT OUR REAL FAILURE IS THAT OUR MOTIVATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND CLAIMS HAVE FALLEN SO FAR OFF THE MARK OF OUR INTENTIONS THAT THEY NOW LIMIT OUR EFFECTIVENESS THERE AND ELSEWHERE.

AS WE VIEW THE EVENTS AND IMAGES FROM LEBANON THAT DOMINATE OUR NEWS BROADCASTS NOW, WE ARE STRUCK WITH THREE VERY DEMANDING AND DIFFICULT QUESTIONS.

FIRST, MUCH OF THE DESTRUCTION BEING WROUGHT UPON SOUTHERN LEBANON IS BEING DIRECTED AGAINST RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS. IN AN AGE WHEN WE CAN DIRECT LASER-GUIDED BOMBS OR MISSILES INTO DOORWAYS, COURTYARDS AND CHIMNEY STACKS, WHAT CALLS FOR THIS DESTRUCTION OF HUMAN LIFE AND ITS SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT?

THE BODY LANGUAGE AND THE FACES OF REFUGEES REVEAL THE SAME PAIN AND TERROR AS THOSE WE SAW IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR, WW II, KOREA, VIETNAM, AND THE BALKANS. HOW CAN THIS MOMENT OF NATIONAL AND PERSONAL AGONY BE EXPLAINED TO THE LEBANESE AS THE ONLY WAY TO BRING DEMOCRACY TO THEIR COUNTRY?

WE HAVE BECOME ANAESTHETIZED OVER TIME BY TELEVISION'S VICARIOUS EXPERIENCE OF HUMAN SUFFERING. WE ARE EXPOSED TO IT VISUALLY, BUT THE REAL HORRORS

— THE GROWING CLOSENESS OF EXPLOSIONS, THE SHAKING OF BUILDINGS AND THE PAIN OF BLASTED BODIES — STAY WHERE THEY ARE, THOUSANDS OF MILES FROM US. WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE.

THE SECOND QUESTION THAT WILL NOT BE EASILY ANSWERED IS THAT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL FORCE. CIRCUMSTANCES SUGGEST THAT THE RAISING OF THIS FORCE MUST RELY PRIMARILY ON EUROPEAN SUPPORT, THEREBY POSING ANOTHER QUESTION — ARE WE TALKING OF ACTION BY THE UN, THE EU OR INDIVIDUAL NATIONS? WE COULD PROBABLY EXPECT SOME TOKEN ASSISTANCE ( JUST ENOUGH TO DEFLECT OPINION FROM THEIR HISTORICAL ENMITY WITH ISRAEL) FROM NEIGHBORING ARAB STATES, BUT THE CHANCES OF OTHER AREAS PROVIDING TROOPS ARE SLIM. EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT EVEN UN FORCES TAKE TIME TO ORGANIZE AND DELIVER. MEANWHILE, TIME IS NOTHING LESS THAN UNBEARABLE AGONY FOR THE LEBANESE.

AND THE LAST QUESTION RAISED BY THE MASSIVE DESTRUCTION IN LEBANON IS - “WHO WILL PAY FOR IT?” HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES, AIRFIELDS, UTILITIES, WATER SUPPLIES, SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS, IF NOT DESTROYED, HAVE HAD THEIR FUNCTIONAL CAPABILITY GREATLY DIMINISHED.

... IT IS MOST LIKELY THAT BY ONE WAY OR ANOTHER MAJOR FUNDING WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE US TAX PAYER ...

RESTORATION WILL BE NEITHER EASY NOR QUICK. AND RECONSTRUCTION WILL COME AT A HEAVY PRICE. WHO WILL PAY? AGAIN, MINOR PARTICIPATION CAN BE EXPECTED FROM LEBANON’S ARAB NEIGHBORS, AND PERHAPS FROM ISRAEL, BUT IT IS MOST LIKELY THAT BY ONE WAY OR ANOTHER THE MAJOR FUNDING WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE US TAX PAYER BY SOME PROCESS OVER WHICH HE HAS NO CONTROL.

OUR DECLARED AGENDA IN THE NEAR-EAST IS MADE DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, BY AN ENDURING AND, PERHAPS, INTRACTABLE FACT OF POLITICAL LIFE THERE. IT IS A CENTER OF INTENSE FACTIONALISM WHERE EVERY GOVERNMENT’S STRUCTURE IS LACED WITH RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, TRIBAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS WHICH WEAKEN THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS BY CLAIMING AND DIVIDING STATE POWER.

IF TOO MUCH GOVERNMENT POWER IS LOST OR WASTED IN FACTIONAL BATTLES, GOVERNMENT IS DESTABILIZED AND REPLACED BY THE CHAOS OF CONSTANT FACTIONAL STRIFE. IN SUCH A CIRCUMSTANCE, ONLY A VERY STRONG POWER FIGURE SUCH AS SADDAM HUSSEIN OR AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI CAN PULL THINGS BACK TOGETHER AND RESTORE CENTRAL AUTHORITY. SOMEHOW, OVER GENERATIONS A DELICATE

TENSILE BALANCE HAS COME INTO BEING THAT FOR THE MOST PART ALLOWS BOTH GOVERNMENTS AND FACTIONS TO CO-EXIST.

THERE IS A FASCINATING CATCH-22 HERE WHICH APPLIES TO US AND ANYONE ELSE ATTEMPTING TO REDRAW THE REGION’S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE. IF WE ELIMINATE THE LOCAL STRONG MAN LEADER, SUCH AS HUSSEIN IN IRAQ, THE GOVERNMENT COLLAPSES AND THE COUNTRY IS TURNED OVER TO NAMELESS AND FACELESS INSURGENT FACTIONS.

IF WE CHOOSE, INSTEAD, TO LABEL THE FACTIONS IN A COUNTRY AS “TERRORISTS” AND ATTACK THEM, WE WILL UPSET THE FRAGILE BALANCE AND SIMULTANEOUSLY DESTABLIZE THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WITH WHICH WE HAD HOPED TO COOPERATE IN PLANTING OUR VISION OF REGIONAL DEMOCRACY. DESTABILIZED GOVERNMENTS WOULD CALL FOR GREATER EXPENSE AND EFFORT ON OUR PART AND AT THE SAME TIME CREATE A MOMENTUM TOWARDS INCREASED FACTIONAL UNREST AND AGITATION IN NEIGHBORING STATES FROM WHICH MILITARY OPPORTUNISM MIGHT WELL FOLLOW.

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### LATE BREAKING NEWS ADDITION A FEARFUL PEACE WITH POOR PROSPECTS

THE FIGHTING IN SOUTHERN LEBANON STOPPED ON AUGUST 14, THIRTY-FOUR DAYS AFTER IT BEGAN. THE DAMAGE TO PLACES AND PERSONS IS EXTENSIVE AND OFFERS NO HOPE OF ANY QUICK OR EASY RELIEF.

BOTH SIDES HAVE CLAIMED “VICTORY”. WE THINK THESE CLAIMS ARE HOLLOW RHETORIC AND THAT LIFE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE WILL BE FEARFUL AT BEST.

THE MOST OMINOUS INDICATION OF WHAT WE MIGHT REASONABLY EXPECT CAN BE FOUND IN ISRAELI PRIME MISISTER EHUD OLMERT’S SPEECH TO THE KNESSET ANNOUNCING THE CEASE-FIRE IN WHICH HE ADMITTED MAKING MISTAKES IN THE WAGING OF THE WAR BUT PROMISED THAT THEY WILL BE CORRECTED THE NEXT TIME!

PEACE, IT WOULD SEEM, IS ONLY A LULL BETWEEN WARS. WHILE EFFECTIVE MILITARY DEFENSE IS OFTEN ACHIEVED BY ANTICIPATION, MR. OLMERT’S WORDS SEEM INTENDED ONLY TO ANTICIPATE AND DEFLECT DOSMESTIC POLICITAL CRITICISM, RATHER THAN TO ADDRESS AN URGENT INTERNATIONAL CRISIS.

THIS IS A TOUGH MIND-SET TO DEAL WITH — ESPECIALLY FOR THIRD PARTIES — AND IT CLEARLY REVEALS THE EXTENT TO WHICH HATRED DOMINATES REASON IN THIS REGION.

WE MAY BE WITNESS TO THE NEAR-EASTERN VERSION OF THE HUNDRED YEAR’S WAR AT ITS HALF-WAY POINT.

## QUOTA QUOTES

IN OUR LAST ISSUE, DEVOTED TO IMMIGRATION, WE SAID THAT WE WOULD INCLUDE A COMMENT ON IMMIGRATION BY FAMOUS AMERICANS. HERE IS OUR FIRST:

“THE POLICY...OF ITS (IMMIGRATION) TAKING PLACE IN A BODY (I MEAN SETTLING THEM IN A BODY) MAY BE MUCH QUESTIONED, FOR BY SO DOING, THEY RETAIN THE LANGUAGE, HABITS AND PRINCIPLES (GOOD OR BAD) WHICH THEY BRING WITH THEM. WHEREAS BY AN INTERMIXTURE WITH OUR PEOPLE, THEY, OR THEIR DESCENDANTS, GET ASSIMILATED TO OUR CUSTOMS, MEASURES AND LAWS; IN A WORD SOON BECOME ONE PEOPLE.”

- - - GEORGE WASHINGTON, 1794

## END NOTES

- 1) — THE MUCKER POSE BY JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS, HARPER’S MAGAZINE, 1928. THIS ESSAY SERVED AS BOTH TITLE AND TOPIC OF THE COMMENCEMENT DAY ADDRESS TO THE CLASS OF 1945 AT PHILLIPS ACADEMY, ANDOVER, MA GIVEN BY EMORY S. BASFORD, CHAIRMAN OF ITS ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
- 2) — DETOCQUEVILLE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A FRIEND, GUSTAVE DEBEAUMONT. MUCH OF THE COMMENT AND ANALYSIS IS PROBABLY THE RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THEM, BUT DETOCQUEVILLE IS GENERALLY RECOGNIZED AS THE AUTHOR.
- 3) — NEW YORK TIMES; 9/30/04; HATCHET JOB ON THE KING’S ENGLISH BY HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR., W.E.B. DUBOIS PROFESSOR OF THE HUMANITIES, THE CHAIR OF AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE W.E.B. DUBOIS INSTITUTE FOR AFRO-AMERICAN RESEARCH AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY
- 4) — PALM BEACH POST — 4/23/06
- 5) — IBID — 9/2/04 — LIZ SMITH
- 6) — EXCELLENCE; CAN WE BE EQUAL AND EXCELLENT TOO? BY JOHN W. GARDNER. HARPER & ROW, PUBLISHERS, NYC, NY
- 7) — CITIZENS AGAINST GOVERNMENT WASTE; WASTE WATCH, JULY 2006
- 8) — BEWARE THE STEALTH AMNESTY, BY PAT BUCHANAN. MIDDLE AMERICAN NEWS, JULY 2006
- 9) — PALM BEACH POST, 8/7/04 “AND TO THE ‘C’ STUDENTS, I SAY, “YOU, TOO CAN BE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.”
- 10) — NEOCON REFERS TO A BELIEVER IN A POLITICAL

PHILOSOPHY THAT HAS GROWN LARGELY FROM ORIGINS IN THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS. WITHIN THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION IT COUNTS AMONG ITS SUPPORTERS BUSH, CHENEY, RICE, RUMSFELD, WOLFOWITZ AND PERLE.

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## EDITOR’S BIO

MR. AULT IS RETIRED FROM BUSINESS, A GRADUATE OF YALE UNIVERSITY, AND THE AUTHOR OF A RETAIL FOOD STUDY (LA ROCHE & Co. NYC, NY 1957) WHICH DESCRIBED THE EMERGENCE AND GROWING DOMINANCE OF THE SUPERMARKET IN AMERICAN FOOD RETAILING.

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## IRS 501(C) 3 STATUS

WE HAVE DISSOLVED THE ORIGINAL CORPORATE ENTITY, FORMED A NEW NON-PROFIT CORPORATION AND HAVE REAPPLIED FOR THE ABOVE STATUS.

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