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David Paul Morris/Getty Images

In February, California mosques discovered the FBI had hired a con man to infiltrate their communities.

Remembering the New Right

Political Strategy and the Building of the GOP Coalition

By Richard J. Meagher

When the *Washington Post* ran an obituary for Paul Weyrich on its front page last December, the casual reader could be forgiven for not recognizing the name. But those who followed conservative politics inside Washington probably approved of the significant placement. Weyrich was the creator or co-creator of a dozen prominent conservative institutions over the past 35 years, and hosted weekly meetings over that span where conservative activists and government officials shared ideas and strategies with each other. While no single person is responsible for the striking success of conservative policies and politics since the 1970s, Weyrich probably comes closest to deserving that credit.

Weyrich was at the center of what in the Reagan era was called the “New Right.” This moniker, typically contrasted with the “Old Right” of Robert Taft and Barry Goldwater, is often misunderstood. Many journalists and scholars have misused the

Remembering the New Right continues on page 5

From Movements to Mosques, Informants Endanger Democracy

By Thomas Cincotta

In February, 2009, members of the Islamic Center of Irvine learned that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had hired Craig Monteilh, a 46-year-old fitness instructor and convicted con man, to infiltrate their mosque and keep it under surveillance. Members had wondered about

Monteilh for a while. Back in 2007, the local chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), alarmed by his talk of *jihad* and plans for a terrorist attack, reported him to Irvine police and secured a three-year restraining order against him.

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— LETTER —

To the Editor,

You are and have been doing a wonderful job with *The Public Eye*; it always informs/horrifies me. I really appreciate the time and effort it takes to publish. I've been there...

However, in the spring issue, the editorial says, "The magazine was founded in the 1970's by the National Lawyers Guild to publish the latest news..." Actually, the magazine was cofounded by me and Harvey Kahn; we published for a few years (1975-80?) and then, after floundering, asked Chip Berlet to take it on via the National Lawyers Guild Civil Liberties Committee. It then migrated to Political Research Associates.

Founded by mid-1970's sounds right; I believe it went to NLG by the end of the 1979, surely by 1980. My copies are in storage at the moment but I do have a 1991 edition that was sponsored by the NLG Civil Liberties Committee and published by Investigative News Features.

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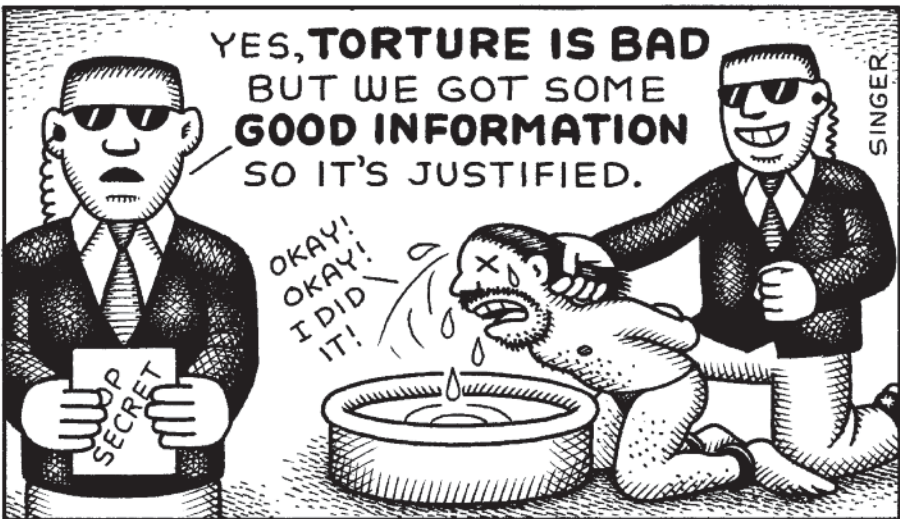
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ISSUE 64

NO EXIT © Andy Singer



Andy Singer

Battle over Labor Law Reform Shows True Power of the Right

By Abby Scher

Some people may enjoy watching the Right thrash around trying to find its way in the Obama Age, but I take the election results and their aftermath as a sign of a country dangerously divided. There really was a stark difference in the major party candidates, and 46 percent voted for the guy who lost. 59,946,378 is a lot of people. This political force isn't going away.

During the McCarthy Era of the early 1950s, the anticommunist movement fed off of disgruntled Republicans who could not accept that huge influential chunks of their party accepted the New Deal and the role of the government in regulating capitalism. They saw America's new regulations and modest aid for people tossed by harsh business cycles as outright property theft and communism. That the New Deal asserted federal power over the states could mean only a loss of political sovereignty and American liberty. Feeling disenfranchised not just by Washington but parts of their own party, the Republican Right created an alternative universe of betrayal, suspicion, and conspiracy.

This spring's tea party protestors revealed in the language of the Old Right, the same language warning of incipient socialism that Republican operatives rolled out in their attempt to defeat Obama in 2008 and that television and radio pundit Sean Hannity channels from some strange archaic source. The news stories and photos told the story:

The audience, which was quite large despite a heavy rain, was told that Obama was leading the country toward "dictatorship." The government, we were told, was creating a

crisis "100 times as grim as 9/11," the people were being "brainwashed" into complacency by the media and soon "the face of big brother will be exposed and the slogans of a classless one party system are revealed to us."¹

In a desperate search for relevance to its shrinking electoral base, the Republican Party embraced the language of suspicion, conspiracy, and betrayal. Far from pushing the conspiracy-minded away in hopes of finding a vital center, Newt Gingrich and other GOP beltway heavies threw their weight behind the anti-Obama, anti-tax "tea parties," and Republican congressmen, mayoral candidates and the like lined up to speak even though many protestors despised them as much as the Democrats.

In their scramble, neither the Republican Party nor Christian Right organizations like Focus on the Family have a pretty face to put on their politics. No Ronald Reagan, not even a George W. Bush with folksy mannerisms disarming the nation. But the question is not who will be the next Republican savior or the new Ralph Reed deploying marketing intelligence and beltway connections for his Christian Coalition. The question is whether the Right's institutions are strong enough even in the wake of electoral defeat for them to win key victories in such areas as health and workers' rights that ensure reactionary dominance of the sectors progressives need to move the country closer to justice. The answer to that question is clearly yes. Don't be distracted by the tea parties and think that only Fox News zealots are left to fight on core issues.

To see the huge economic and ideological resources at the Right's disposal, you need only look at the wavering chances of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which would make it easier to organize a union and actually get a contract. The bill



Source: Liberty Counsel website.

would let workers form a union if a majority sign cards saying they want one, taking away the power of employers to ignore the cards and demand secret ballot elections instead. It also pushes the contract negotiations into binding arbitration after 90 days if talks are fruitless, since companies that don't beat unions at the ballot box often do by stalling at the negotiating table. Now they would have incentive to close the bargain.

But one by one, the business lobby has peeled back crucial support from Democrats so that the heart of the bill, "card check," is in jeopardy. To counter both union donations to Congress and the overwhelming support of Americans for unions, they pump ready money at southern Democrats like Senator Blanche Lincoln of WalMart's home state of Arkansas and insinuate with \$20 million worth of propaganda that union thugs will become Americans' new slavemasters and take away their freedoms.²

The corporations opposing EFCA had no trouble getting Republicans to vote against it since the White men who tend to vote Democratic also tend to be union members. White men in unions went for Obama by 18 points, when White men in general went for his opponent by 16 points.³ You don't need donations from WalMart or Home Depot to convince you to get on board, if you are a Republican counting votes.

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Nor do you want to give unions the ideological advantage in a downturn when people wonder, maybe for the first time, whether companies really have their best interests at heart and whether they as individuals really have the economic power to control their own lives.

So here, at least, the bickering Republicans are in lockstep. They are backed by the smears and power politics of venerable union busters like WalMart and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—not as warm and fuzzy as you might think from your local Chamber dinners—and outright front groups like lobbyist Richard Berman's propaganda mills with names like Center for Union Facts and Employee Freedom Action Committee.⁴

"We need to make sure every worker has the freedom to choose what's best for themselves and their families," is a typical line. EFCA will "take away free and fair democratic elections," charge Berman and the Chamber of Commerce.⁵ You would think they were labor's champions from all the patriotic red blooded language they use.

But the faux populist language works its charm, even though corporate funded PR men created it in the first place. When Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter announced he would no longer back the labor legislation, he used language lifted right out of their press releases, saying giving workers not their employers the right

LETTER *continued from page 2*

We actually founded it to raise the spectre of the rise of the Right (surprise!) and the public/private collaboration of the intelligence agencies during the heady days of the Watergate break-ins, the CIA hearings, COINTELPRO, etc. We were watching Phyllis Schlafly, Anita Bryant, LaRouche, Rees, etc. It seems the FBI was watching us—our first stranger/volunteer was an old FBI informant who created our back page advertisement. Precocious as we were, we were told that we were "hysterical, the Right was no threat."

Sorry to raise this, but one hates to see history lost.

*Sheila O'Donnell
Stinson Beach, CA*

to decide whether to have secret ballot elections or card check violates "the cornerstone of our democracy."

The news that almost a third of companies being organized fire workers trying to unionize, and almost half threaten to close the plant—all undemocratic violations of the secret balloting process—must not have reached him. And is it democracy for companies to drag out the election process so long that 40 percent of elections never take place? But Specter is now right where he likes to be, the powerbroker negotiating with Iowa Senator Tom Harkin on a watered down alternative to EFCA that won't take away workers' supposed freedom.⁶

Tying together the tea parties and the anti-EFCA battle are not just the Republicans and their donors but the new group Americans for Prosperity, a rabid free market outfit launched in 2003 with the help of Kansas billionaire David Koch. His family's Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation joins with corporate and other longtime funders of right-wing institutions like the Bradley Foundation to support 24 national staff in Washington, and 41 regional staff working in 19 states.⁷ Together they managed to summon 400,000 signatures on a petition opposing Obama's stimulus package, so the group has some heft.

Along with sponsoring local tea parties, Americans for Prosperity created a "Save My Secret Ballot" tour of the states that will probably feed into a ballot campaign to bar card check through changes in state constitutions. Its "Hot Air" tour opposes "climate alarmists" and regulation trying to limit harmful emissions, including cap and trade legislation backed by Obama. "Families in South Bend were happy to bring their children out to see the seventy-foot tall hot air balloon emblazoned with the message 'Cap and Trade Means: Higher Taxes. Lost Jobs. Less Freedom.'"⁸

Between the petition drive and the tea parties, it seems they are a group to watch, and may become home to a reliable right-wing voting base while being utterly silent on the "family" issues energizing conservative churchgoers. That certainly seems to be the goal given all the people in the field.

They can give organization to the exurban and suburban base of the Right—the more privatized areas of the country, where you socialize in private clubs or churches, support school vouchers, drive in your own cars, and ignore the home foreclosures that give lie to an easy belief in personal responsibility and individual freedom that undergird your identity in the marketplace.

But if the tea parties are earthy, deriding Obama's policies as "white slavery," for instance, the group's official leadership still seems to lack the right-wing populist touch in formulating their rhetoric. While they glibly target union taskmasters and greedy government bureaucrats, so far their official materials ignore other familiar scapegoats that could give their politics more zing—like undocumented immigrants, certainly a popular foil for those with economic grievance. The 1300 immigrant-related bills submitted by local and state legislators last year testify to that.

In the 1950s, William F. Buckley, Jr., tried to groom the language of the Old Right, removing ugly anti-Semitism and name calling while retaining its glorification of a free market, the White race and anti-democratic sentiments. It seems outlandish that Americans for Prosperity and the rest of today's Right will be able to groom their vision of a nation that derides the idea of climate change, keeps the free market a humming (though the notion is rank mythology), and dissolves the separation of church and state so your favorite religious group could discriminate in the delivery of government services. But the EFCA struggle shows we should not underestimate the enduring conservative combination of front groups generating lies for the media and corporate lobbyists. Let us hope their old magic does not keep unions weak when we need them most.

End Notes

¹ "Annapolis Tea Party: U.S. Government Creating Crisis '100 Times As Grim As 9/11'" Legum's New Line, April 15, 2009. <http://www.juddlegum.com/blog/2009/04/annapolis-tea-party-us-government-creating-crisis-100-times-as-grim-as-911/>

² Jordan Green, "Labor and business battle for soul of Southern Democrats," *Facing South*, Institute for Southern Stud-

BATTLE OVER LABOR LAW *continues on page 22*

REMEMBERING THE NEW RIGHT *cont'd from page 1*

term to refer to conservatism in general, or included as part of it conservative leaders who are wholly unrelated.¹ But the “New Right” refers to a force that is both smaller and of greater scope than conservatism as a whole. Eagle Forum founder Phyllis Schlafly, herself often placed under the New Right umbrella, called the phrase “a term of art for the Weyrich group,”² demarcating a handful of conservative operatives. But it also indicates something greater than just a group of individuals. The New Right not only helped bring conservatives to national power in the late 1970s, but changed the nature of the Republican Party and partisan politics in Washington for decades to follow.

Republican politics today, at least at the domestic level, centers on an alliance between free market economics and Christian cultural conservatism. It was the New Right that opened the door to the social issue activists and Christian evangelicals who now make up the Republican voter base. Just as significantly, these operatives harnessed the energy of the new wave of conservatism during the 1970s to propel the GOP back into national governing power. Without Reagan, of course, there was no Reagan Revolution; but it is hard to see how the revolution happened without Weyrich and his colleagues, either.

Today in the apparent age of Obama, conservative forces may seem headed back to the 1950s, a time when free market, small government standard bearers were marginalized except when hunting Communists. (Even GOP victories during that period were led by establishment moderates like Eisenhower, who basically accepted New Deal economic reforms such as Social Security, corporate regulation, and a stronger federal role in governance.) But the Republicans now seem determined to stick with the New Right playbook, no matter

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the cost. With Weyrich gone, and the rest of his colleagues also dead or marginalized, it is a good time to look back and see exactly what the New Right accomplished—and what their legacy might mean for today’s Republican politics.

What Was the New Right?

The “New Right” refers both to a movement and a group of like-minded conservative activists who came together in the 1970s and built an effective political

**By arguing for political
action on issues like
abortion, school prayer,
and creationism, the
New Right helped make
activist traditionalism
a reality.**

force for the Republican Party out of existing networks. There were five key strategists: Weyrich, the institution-builder; Richard Viguerie, the direct-mail fundraising guru; Morton Blackwell, a Republican insider who worked for Viguerie; grassroots organizer Howard Phillips; and Terry Dolan, who headed the group’s political action committee. Almost all had cut their political teeth during Barry Goldwater’s presidential run of the previous decade. As Blackwell later recounted, “All of us had something to do with the Goldwater campaign. We weren’t high enough in the campaign to know each other, but our involvement with Goldwater credentialed us for each other.”³ Blackwell had been a 1964 GOP delegate for Goldwater from his native Louisiana—in fact, the youngest delegate at the San Francisco convention—and later became executive director of the

College Republicans. Youth organizations, in fact, were where many New Right figures learned the art of politics; Viguerie had gotten his start fundraising for the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), a conservative youth group shepherded by William F. Buckley, Jr.⁴ Viguerie later started raising money for conservative candidates for Congress.

In 1972, the key moment for the New Right happened when fellow YAF member Lee Edwards—later unofficial historian of the conservative movement—introduced Viguerie to Blackwell. Viguerie had already developed a reputation as a prodigious fundraiser, building a bedrock conservative mailing list from the federal election records of Goldwater donors.⁵ As Blackwell noted later, “It was rumored that he had behind his desk a large faucet that he could turn on, and money would come out for whatever campaign he worked for.” But by the early 1970s, Viguerie’s agenda had broadened: he told Blackwell, “Morton, I want you to come help me build the conservative movement.”⁶

Blackwell introduced Viguerie to Terry Dolan, who was then active in the Young Republicans, and Paul Weyrich. While he had served as a staffer for prominent Senate Republicans, Weyrich also made a second career out of developing conservative counters to liberal institutions. For example, he helped launch the Heritage Foundation think tank in the early 1970s to provide a conservative counterpoint to the then-liberal Brookings Institution, and the conservative Republican Study Committee in Congress to offset a similar liberal caucusing organization on the Democratic side.

The group began to meet regularly and develop ways of promoting conservative ideas and causes. Perhaps the chief distinction between them and previous “Old Right” constellations was what scholar Gillian Peele called a “new mood” that included a “determination to succeed.”⁷ Their predecessors seemed more concerned about being right than winning political battles, said Blackwell. Conservatives seemed to think that “we just needed to

logically prove that we were right, to logically prove that our people were better than them. But that's not the real nature of politics; winners are determined by the number and effectiveness of the activists over time," he said.⁸ In this regard, Blackwell and his colleagues were clearly influenced by the successes of the different liberal social movements and causes of the 1960s. As Viguerie later noted, "all the New Right has done is copy the success of the Old Left."⁹ So the New Right began to teach themselves "how to market your ideas," as Viguerie wrote in a 1978 newsletter. "Successful politicians do not bore the voters."¹⁰

The New Right began to make themselves known during the early to mid-1970s. Weyrich began hosting official coalition meetings in 1973, and Viguerie held his own strategy sessions as well. Viguerie and Blackwell also restarted the national Conservative Political Action Conference that lay dormant after the Goldwater defeat, creating a more formal venue for conservatives to strategize and make political connections. The group's efforts at building a national coalition brought them into contact with former Nixon administration official Howard Phillips, whose Conservative Caucus acted as a grassroots conduit from Washington to conservatives across the nation.

By 1977, a *Newsweek* article grouped the New Right crew in with Anita Bryant and Phyllis Schlafly as forces that were stirring up grassroots conservative action. In the article, Weyrich noted that "Conservatives have been led by an intellectual movement but not a practical movement up to now." He and other conservatives, he argued, were moving aggressively to correct that deficit.¹¹ Schlafly's talent, in part, was her ability to translate conservative ideas to grassroots activists and motivate them to achieve political goals. She mobilized women from outside of the Republican Party structure while brokering a peace with the stalwart conservative women loyalists she knew from her days as vice president of the National Federation of Republican Women.¹²



After losing the GOP Presidential nomination in 1968, Ronald Reagan swept to victory in 1980 with the help of rightwing strategists who helped create a new coalition of economic and religious conservatives.

To supplement their networking and grassroots organizing, the New Right also issued a number of publications for both grassroots conservatives and Washington elites, including Viguerie's *New Right Report* newsletter and *Conservative Digest* magazine, as well as Phillips' voting guides and newsletters.

More importantly, the New Right began to seek out alliances with sympathetic Republicans. Some observers felt that the New Right intended from the beginning to form a conservative political organization outside of the two-party system.¹³ Such an urge would have been understandable. Phillips, for example, had earned his conservative *bona fides* by resigning his post as head of Nixon's Office of Economic Opportunity when the President failed to veto Democratic social programs. (In the 1990s, Phillips finally abandoned the GOP when he founded the U.S. Taxpayers, now Constitution, Party.) Still, the New Right had too many ties to the Republican Party to forsake their best chance to overturn liberal, New Deal programs. Weyrich and Blackwell were long-time Republican operatives, and the New Right

used their connections to help GOP conservatives. For instance, Viguerie had assisted Jesse Helms in building the National Congressional Club, which distributed money to GOP candidates. Toward the end of the 1970s, Representative Phil Crane hosted weekly meetings of conservative activists, including New Right figures,¹⁴ and Nevada Senator Paul Laxalt sponsored New Right-approved "pro-family" legislation in the House.¹⁵

The New Right's ties to the GOP became manifest in 1978, when they threw all of their resources into defeating entrenched liberal Democrats in the midterm Congressional elections. Dolan's National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC) money was fed by Viguerie's direct mail operation. These funds combined with Viguerie's and Phillips' ability to communicate with grassroots conservative voters, as well as Weyrich's and Blackwell's organizing in Washington, to promote conservative GOP candidates. As a result, the 1978 elections brought 30 new Congressional representatives to Washington, many of them self-identified conservatives. (The

new class included a former history professor from Georgia with the unlikely name of Newt Gingrich.) This conservative victory was further cemented two years later by the election of former California Governor Ronald Reagan, whom the New Right wholeheartedly supported as a fellow traveler.

By knocking the Democratic establishment on its ear, the New Right changed the tenor of politics in Washington, especially for long-suffering conservatives. Weyrich and his colleagues helped remind the right wing of something that seems obvious in retrospect, but was somewhat lost at the time. As Viguerie noted a few months before the 1978 election,

Conservatives can win. Two generations of defeat conditioned many conservatives to accept defeat as inevitable.... But the nearly frantic liberal reaction to the New Right phenomenon has changed many conservatives' expectations. Most New Right leaders have cheerful, optimistic attitudes.... They look for ways to win rather than excuses for losing. Your opposition isn't superhuman. You can win.¹⁶

Viguerie, never one to play down his own role, often hinted that he and his colleagues deserved credit for the Reagan victory. He wrote in 1981 that "America is basically a conservative country. The potential for conservative revolt has always been there, under the most favorable conditions. But those conditions have to be made. That's where the New Right [came] in."¹⁷ Still, while his claims might be overblown, it is clear in hindsight that the New Right—at the very least—helped make the "Reagan Revolution" possible.

But beyond their contributions to GOP electoral victories in 1978 and 1980, two other key accomplishments of the crew changed the nature of the Republican Party, and American politics, even more dramatically. Nixon had heartily mobilized racial grievances of White Americans for the GOP; since Reagan, conservative politics has also built on appeals to social issues like abortion and gay

rights. It was the New Right who put these social issues on the GOP agenda, and it was they who brought the chief targets of these policies—the Religious Right—into the Republican coalition, thus ushering in almost thirty years of conservative dominance over American politics.

Social Conservatism

Another way the New Right differed from their Old Right predecessors was in their recognition of the power and importance of grassroots voters and issues. As Lee Edwards later recalled, "there was a populist element—a very strong ele-

The New Right electoral strategy—paying attention to single issues, especially social ones—became standard operating procedure for the GOP.

ment—that was not present in the traditional conservatives. The New Right was much more consciously populist."¹⁸ But the New Right was only taking advantage of a national trend, again inspired by the 1960s Left, of grassroots action. A host of "single-issue" groups, only some of which identified as conservative, rose up across the country to address a number of issues, from taxes to abortion. The Democratic Party's growing identification with the liberal social movements of the era made it hard for them to be responsive to many of these issues, but successive Republican administrations were not much help, either. The New Right harnessed this part of the "populist revolt" after Nixon and Ford ignored the needs of grassroots anti-tax and other single issue conservatives.¹⁹

Weyrich and his colleagues organized a

diverse array of interests into a conservative coalition during the 1970s. For example, foreign policy issues were very much on conservatives' minds in the middle of the decade: these included the Panama Canal treaties, opposition to which Viguerie had helped organize, and the fight against global communism. In a recent interview, Phillips recalled that the Canal, the SALT arms accord, and the development of a nuclear missile defense system (the Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars," program that Reagan eventually funded) were major concerns of the New Right during the period.²⁰ This foreign policy component helped the New Right forge alliances with neoconservative intellectuals who eventually developed Reagan's hard-line anticommunism into a coherent foreign policy.²¹

Still, foreign policy was not the chief concern of the New Right. Instead, Weyrich and his colleagues aggressively sought to add so-called "social" issues to the Republican agenda, hoping to bind related "pro-family" and socially motivated voters to the Party. The social component of the New Right was so prominent that Virginia Armstrong, later head of the CourtWatch program for Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum, actually defined the group in terms of their social conservatism in 1981. The New Right coalition, she wrote, was "a loose, voluntary coalition of groups... united in their objective of reasserting traditional Judeo-Christian principles as the underpinning of American government and politics."²² Writing for the journal of the Christian Legal Society, Armstrong recognized the importance of economic and foreign policy issues to the group, but argued that moral issues were the most prominent in the 1980 election, in part because of the New Right's efforts. Weyrich in particular recognized that an expanded agenda that included such issues would not only mobilize new groups, but could help the Republican Party retain support while the economy it was managing was mired in a severe recession.²³

The New Right's socially conservative bent was reinforced by Reagan's seeming

reluctance to act on social issues at the beginning of his Presidency. Just a few months after Reagan took office, Viguierie publicly warned that conservatives would not back Reagan in a battle over tax cuts for the wealthy that would supposedly promote economic growth—not because they disagreed with the President’s “supply side” tax plan, but because they had other priorities.²⁴ It appeared to Viguierie that their chief concerns—abortion, opposition to gay rights and the Equal Rights Amendment, abstinence education, and other family issues—were starting to be pushed from the GOP agenda. The New Right saw themselves as spokesmen for pro-family groups in Washington, and accordingly tried to hold the GOP’s feet to the fire.

Not all single-issue groups were happy to be incorporated in this fashion. A 1981 *Time* article suggested that some prolife groups, for instance, were troubled by their association with the New Right. Roman Catholic groups particularly were uneasy with the new alliance; while opposing abortion, they opposed many other New Right positions, for instance on the economy.²⁵ Thea Rossi Barron, a lobbyist with the Catholic National Right to Life Coalition, left the organization in the late 1970s after it joined the New Right in trying to block the Equal Rights Amendment. The prolife movement needed both conservatives and liberals, Republicans and Democrats, to achieve its goals, Barron argued.²⁶ Still other groups, however, were happy to join up, at least for a time; although she later expressed regrets over the move, Judie Brown’s (also largely Roman Catholic) American Life League was a staunch ally of Weyrich throughout the 1980s.²⁷

Besides incorporating single-issue groups into the Republican coalition, the other key innovation of the New Right was its targeting of Christian evangelicals, who had been relatively quiescent since the Scopes trial early in the 20th century. Still, there had been signs of a political awakening among evangelicals as early as the 1950s, and the New Right again was able to take advantage of existing political

trends. In the postwar decades, the political ties of preachers such as Billy Graham helped remind evangelicals of the world of politics, while Graham’s friend Richard Nixon made early efforts to court White evangelicals, recognizing their importance to his Southern Strategy of wooing Democrats to the GOP.²⁸ The social causes that spurred the New Right’s issue groups also pulled in evangelicals as they became more open to political action. Abortion originally was almost the sole concern of Catholic groups until the anti-abortion book and video production of theologian Francis Schaefer and future Surgeon General C. Everett Koop helped bring the issue to evangelicals in the late 1970s.²⁹

The recent emergence of socially conservative Sarah Palin as one of the faces of the GOP suggests that the influence of the New Right constituency within the Party is only growing.

Another key moment was the Carter administration’s effort to rescind the tax-exempt status of Bob Jones University because of its racially discriminatory admission policy (an effort eventually upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1983). The Internal Revenue Service also pursued Goldsboro Christian School, which was founded in 1963 with the idea that the mixing of races violated God’s plan. These battles helped trigger a revolt among White Southern evangelicals who maintained separate religious schools that were functionally exclusionary even when technically open to all races.³⁰ Equally importantly, evangelicals were enraged by feminism

and its allies in government, as a number of battles over school textbooks, sex education, and the ERA convinced evangelical women and men that feminists were out to dramatically restructure the American family order.³¹

Still, despite all this political commotion, evangelicals were not well organized politically, and nowhere near a solid conservative voting bloc. Many had supported Carter in 1976 due to his avowed evangelical faith and identification as “born again.” The New Right, however, hoped to claim evangelicals for its own. Weyrich had been eyeing them as a significant new Republican constituency, and for years had tried to convince Southern preachers of the importance of political action. In 1977 Howard Phillips and Weyrich associate Ed McAteer, a former toothpaste salesman-turned-conservative activist, traveled around the country visiting Christian leaders and preachers, attempting to recruit them to the conservative cause.³²

But by far the most famous meeting occurred in 1979, when Weyrich led a New Right delegation, including Phillips, McAteer, and another Weyrich associate and preacher, Bob Billings, to the Virginia coast to recruit a well-known Baptist minister to the New Right. Morton Blackwell later described the genesis of the meeting:

We looked at the national politically and theologically conservative leaders, and there were a few of them, and we identified the one most likely to take the lead. We settled on Jerry Falwell. Paul and others went down there. And of course you know the story, that Paul said, “We think there’s a moral majority out there,” and Falwell said, “I like that name.” Paul asked, “What name?” And Falwell said, “‘Moral Majority’—that’s the name we’ll use.”³³

The rest is history: the Moral Majority, McAteer’s own group, the Religious Roundtable, and other religious associations helped deliver the evangelical vote to Reagan and the GOP. Racially inflected social conservatism became a major com-

ponent of the Republican coalition, propelling conservative Presidential and Congressional candidates to victory in subsequent decades, and ensuring a sharp right turn in American policymaking. The New Right electoral strategy—paying attention to single issues, especially social ones—became standard operating procedure for the GOP.

Aftermath and Legacy

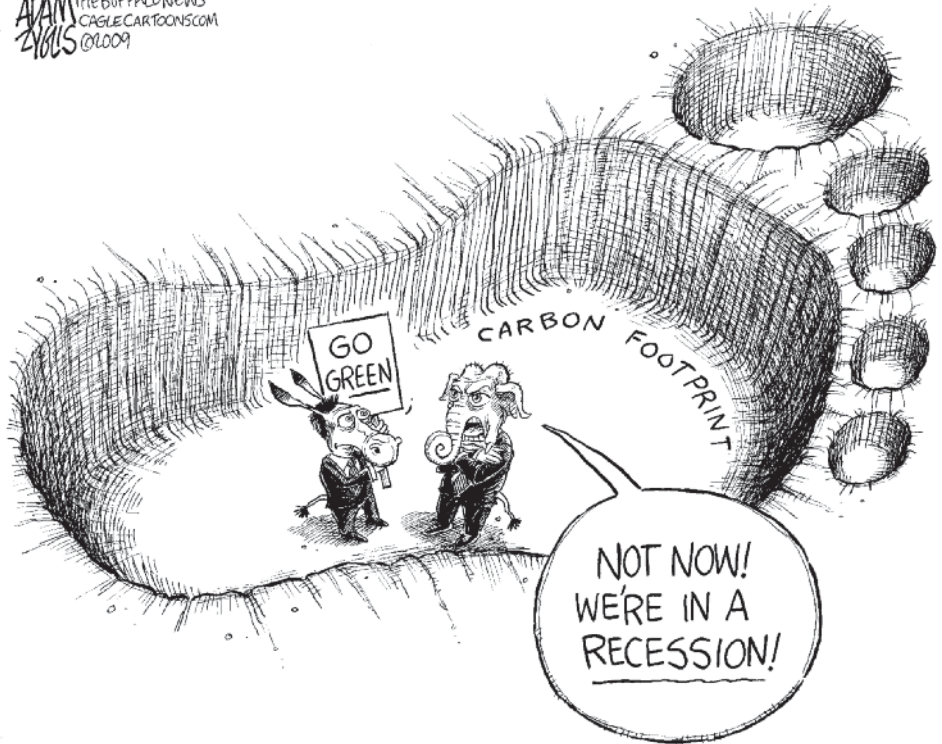
One of the reasons why the New Right is so poorly understood today is that the cofounders fell into obscurity shortly after the Reagan victory. By the end of the 1980s, the leadership group had gone their separate ways; no longer a factor in Republican Party politics, they were eclipsed by their creation, the Religious Right. Their decline was partially a result of individual idiosyncrasies. None of these characteristics were more ironic than Terry Dolan's, as revealed when he died of AIDS in 1986; the fundraiser and PAC organizer who had played a direct role in bringing antigay issues onto the Republican agenda was himself a closeted homosexual. Less dramatic, but no less final, was Howard Phillips' eventual break with the Republican Party. Phillips later referred to the early 1980s as "the first of Bush's three terms" due to the prominent role of moderates like James Baker in the early Reagan administration,³⁴ and used his Taxpayers Party to make his own failed bid for the Presidency in 1996.³⁵

But the seeds of the New Right's decline may have had a more structural origin. Without liberals in government to attack and defeat, what was the point of the New Right? As Lee Edwards later observed,

They were more a political movement than a philosophical movement. Their goal was to elect conservatives to the House and Senate. They did that in 1978, and then again in 1980. They knocked off 10 or 12 prominent liberal Senators. You elect Reagan in 1980. You've achieved your goals: now what's your *raison d'être*? So they become a critic.³⁶

Indeed, Richard Viguerie has become

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one of the Republican Party's most vocal critics on the Right. In response to a 2006 Viguerie op-ed critical of then-President Bush, conservative columnist Bob Novak carped that "Reagan had been president only seven days when Viguerie compared him to Jimmy Carter, based on his Cabinet selections."³⁷ Novak should have done some more research; according to the *Washington Post*, Viguerie and Dolan were complaining even earlier—barely *two weeks* after Reagan's election.³⁸ Viguerie actually foresaw his problematic relationship with the GOP even before the 1980 election. In a *Washington Post* article from October of that year, he warned that conservatives would likely be stronger if Carter won the election: "The New Right couldn't get together when someone whom we perceived to be one of ours—like Nixon or Ford—was in office."³⁹

Some twenty-five years after Reagan's victory, Weyrich took a less belligerent approach to the fading of the New Right, seeing it as a necessary outgrowth of political success. "It is axiomatic," he noted, "that when an administration comes into power, it is going to absorb many of the people who brought it to power."⁴⁰ He may have been

thinking here of Morton Blackwell, who joined the Reagan Administration as a liaison to conservative groups like the New Right's Conservative Caucus and Moral Majority. And even as this particular New Right grouping fell by the wayside, Blackwell and especially Weyrich remained plugged in to conservative and Republican networks, and new groups carried the work forward creating grassroots pressure in the GOP. Weyrich created still more conservative organizations, including the semi-secretive umbrella group, the Council on National Policy, which Blackwell headed for most of the 1990s. As of this writing, Blackwell continues to run the Leadership Institute, a Washington-based training program for conservative student activists and political operatives. And Weyrich's weekly coalition meetings of various activists were almost mandatory for Washington conservatives up until his death last year.⁴¹ Similar leaders may yet emerge.

While the New Right's Moral Majority was relatively short-lived, lasting only until 1989, it soon gave way to Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, today's Family Research Council, and other Christian political groups, as well as the GOP's

decades-long habit of at least paying lip service to social conservatism (while mostly advancing their economic agenda). And the alliance has even paid some dividends on social policy issues; social conservatives may be unhappy about progress on overturning *Roe v. Wade*, but they have the “partial birth” ban, the Hyde Amendment, and restrictions on international family planning (although the “global gag rule” has been repealed under Democratic administrations, including Obama’s). Plus evangelical and other groups have brought onto their own agenda some of the economic issues dear to Republicans, including tax cuts and social security reform.⁴² Before the New Right brought social issues into Republican politics, traditionalists were much more wary of trying to seize governmental power. By arguing for political action on issues like abortion, school prayer, and creationism, the New Right helped make activist traditionalism a reality. The New Right’s influence helped mold the GOP in other ways. The influx of Christian conservatives helped drive moderates out of the party; prochoice feminists, for example, were still part of the GOP’s “big tent” during the 1990s, but were eventually pushed out or silenced.⁴³

The Christian Right is now firmly entrenched in the GOP coalition, and we have the New Right to thank. The recent emergence of socially conservative Sarah Palin as one of the faces of the GOP suggests that the influence of the New Right constituency within the Party is only growing. Even as prospects for electoral success seem uncertain at best, the New Right’s hold on GOP politics seems secure. The danger for Republicans is that with the New Right leaders gone or marginalized, no one may be left to remind the GOP that more is needed than simply anger and issues; instead, strategy and political savvy will carry the day. Are a new generation of leaders—a “new New Right”—ready to take the lead? So far, no one has stepped forward, but only time will tell. ■

End Notes

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- ³ Morton Blackwell interview with the author, December 13, 2006.
- ⁴ E.J. Dionne, Jr., “Spotlight: The Mail-Order Campaigners,” *New York Times*, September 7, 1980.
- ⁵ *Booknotes*, interview with Richard Viguerie; broadcast September 5, 2004 (transcript available at <http://www.booknotes.org/Transcript/?ProgramID=1796>, accessed March 15, 2009).
- ⁶ Blackwell interview with author.
- ⁷ Gillian Peele, *Revival and Reaction: The Right in Contemporary America* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), p. 54.
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- ⁹ Richard A. Viguerie, *The New Right: We’re Ready to Lead*, revised ed., (Falls Church, VA: The Viguerie Company, 1981).
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- ¹⁵ Leslie Bennetts, “Conservatives Join on Social Concerns,” *New York Times*, July 30, 1980.
- ¹⁶ Viguerie, 1978.
- ¹⁷ Viguerie, 1981.
- ¹⁸ Lee Edwards interview with author, November 28, 2006.
- ¹⁹ Robert Muccigrosso, *Basic History of American Conservatism* (Malabar, Florida: Krieger, 2001).
- ²⁰ Howard Phillips interview with the author, October 2, 2006.
- ²¹ See Greg Grandin, *Empire’s Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan, 2006); Jerome L. Himmelstein, *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
- ²² Virginia Armstrong, “In Defense of the ‘New Right,’” *Christian Legal Society Quarterly* 3, no. 1&2 (1981).
- ²³ Peele, p. 71.
- ²⁴ Richard J. Cattani, “GOP Right Posts Watch on Reagan Orthodoxy,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March 16, 1981.
- ²⁵ Walter Isaacson, “The Battle Over Abortion,” *Time*, April 6, 1981.

- ²⁶ Jon Margolis, “Should it be Called ‘Life for the Right?’”, *Chicago Tribune*, 1979.
- ²⁷ Judie Brown interview with author.
- ²⁸ William Martin, *With God On Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway 1996), p. 99.
- ²⁹ Richard Land, “Francis Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop’s Invaluable Impact on Pro-Life Evangelicalism,” *National Right to Life News*, January 2003.
- ³⁰ When the U.S. Supreme Court found against Bob Jones, it also found against Goldsboro Christian School in a companion case. Also see Randall Balmer, *Thy Kingdom Come: How the Religious Right Distorts the Faith and Threatens America* (New York: Basic, 2006) chapter 1.
- ³¹ See Richard J. Meagher, “Backlash: Race, Sexuality, and American Conservatism,” *Polity* (April 2009), pp. 256–266.
- ³² Phillips interview with author.
- ³³ Blackwell interview with author.
- ³⁴ Craig McMillan, “The Last Honorable Politician?,” *WorldNetDaily*, October 29, 1998 (available at http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=19259, accessed March 15, 2009).
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- ³⁶ Interview with author.
- ³⁷ Robert Novak, “Arnold’s No-New-Taxes Pledge in Jeopardy,” *Human Events*, May 27, 2006 (available at <http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=15188>, accessed March 15, 2009).
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- ³⁹ Marjorie Hyer, “Viguerie Sets a Deadline for the New Right,” *Washington Post*, October 24, 1980.
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MOVEMENTS TO MOSQUES *continued from page 1*

The news that Monteilh not only infiltrated the Irvine mosque but mosques across Orange, Riverside and Los Angeles counties came out during a bail hearing for Ahmadullah Niazi.¹ Niazi, an Afghan native and U.S. citizen, was up on charges that he had lied about ties to terrorist groups on immigration applications, because he did not disclose that his brother-in-law was Osama bin Laden's bodyguard, and that he traveled to Pakistan in 2005 where he allegedly met with a terrorist.

Posing as a new convert, Monteilh arrived at the Irvine Islamic Center in 2006 wearing robes and a long beard, using the name Farouk Aziz. Monteilh had a long rap sheet and had served 16 months in state prison on two grand-theft charges. But he found new friends in government in his new role. FBI Special Agent Thomas J. Ropel III testified that Monteilh recorded Niazi on multiple occasions, talking about blowing up buildings, sending money to the mujahedeen, and acquiring weapons, although the government has not charged Niazi with terrorism. Niazi is said to have refused to become an FBI informant after he complained to the agency about Monteilh.²

We don't yet know if Monteilh's talk of *jihad* egged Niazi on. Was he an *agent provocateur*, like the two well-paid FBI informants in the 2006 Sears Tower terror plot, supposedly concocted by men from Miami's deeply impoverished and predominantly black Liberty City neighborhood? After two hung juries, in May a third jury finally convicted five out of the six defendants for planning to blow up the Chicago landmark. The *New York Times* quoted a law professor as saying, "It goes to show that if you try it enough times, you'll eventually find a jury that will convict on very little evidence." Previous juries viewed the FBI informant posing as a member of al Qaeda as the driving force

behind the plot. Despite paying informants over \$130,000, the FBI produced no evidence of explosives, weapons or blueprints, only a videotape of defendants pledging an "oath" to al Qaeda, recorded in a warehouse wired by the FBI. The defendants are petitioning for a new trial.

Since the government's use of secret informants is increasingly visible, in mosques and in an array of activist networks, so too are questions about whether the spies instigated events and infringed on people's constitutionally protected rights to free speech, association, and privacy.

In a dozen or so cases exposed within the last few years, informants facilitated bomb-

people wonder if any of their colleagues are spies. Their handlers' structure of incentives—raises, promotions, transfers, financial rewards, waived jail time—creates a system where informants consciously or subconsciously create and then destroy terrorist threats that would not otherwise exist. These pressures can push them from passive observer to aggressive actor, with serious consequences for constitutionally protected free speech. Another unplanned result: government loses legitimacy and support in the eyes of targeted communities, if they feel they have been manipulated.

Today's informants carry the same disruptive potential as their counterparts in the FBI's 1960s-era counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO), which aimed "to expose, disrupt, and otherwise neutralize the New Left organizations, their leadership and adherents."³ Today's agents are shrugging off constraints placed on them in 1976, after the program's illegal break-ins, assassinations, and dirty tricks against civil rights, antiwar and other activists were exposed. Following high-profile investigations, Congress limited the Bureau to investigating activists they believed were about to be, or were actually engaged in, criminal activity.⁴

But in the post-9/11 environment, intelligence gathering is driven by a theory of preventive policing: in order to anticipate the next terror attack, authorities need to track legal activities—much like the "pre-crime" units depicted in the film *Minority Report*. Pre-emptive policing dovetails with a police-promoted belief that "radicalization" is a key cause of violent extremism.⁵

This emphasis on prevention and radicalization blurs the distinction between thought and action by specifying ideological orientation as grounds for suspicion. It justifies investigating anyone or any group identified as fostering "subversive" ideas. It focuses not on crime, but on the possibility that a crime might be committed at some future date. This entire approach conflicts with the democratic notion—enshrined in the Constitution and numerous Supreme Court decisions—

Informants don't just observe and collect data. They make things happen.

making, provided logistical support, cajoled others with provocative language, and goaded people to break the law. Not every informant can be blamed for provoking illegal activity, and entrapment is a difficult thing to prove. Targets of surveillance do often plan or commit crimes: witness the five men sentenced to life terms in April 2009 for their role in plotting an armed assault on Fort Dix in New Jersey. Yet, even in that case, informants played key roles in planning those crimes.

By and large, evidence shows informants do not merely observe and collect data. They make things happen. Their mere presence creates distrust and conflict, making them an efficient tool of repression that in recent years has affected broad, predominantly Muslim communities in the United States, as well as left-wing activists. Informants can cause confusion and dissatisfaction among members of groups and communities they infiltrate, discrediting leaders, and fostering factionalism as

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that government may not inquire into or restrict thought and speech.

Attorney General Eric Holder has not stated whether he will revisit lax Bush-era guidelines (see box). Despite the availability of alternative, less constitutionally “iffy” investigative techniques, the use of informants appears to remain a favorite tactic—not only of the FBI, but, as we know from 2008’s political conventions, local police as well.

Agents Provocateurs at the RNC

Few civil liberties advocates were surprised when they learned police had deployed informants before and during the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota. Both the FBI and the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department dispatched informants to spy on protest organizations. Their efforts eventually led to the arrest of eight activists prior to the convention on charges of conspiring to commit illegal acts. While the county prosecutor dropped terrorism charges against them in early April, the RNC 8 still face felony conspiracy charges that they promoted riot and property destruction in an

effort to “shut the city down.” The trial is expected to begin in September 2009.⁶ But activists and civil libertarians have already learned about tactics that cause grave concern about the protection of free speech rights.

The spies filed about a thousand pages of reports for an investigation that cost \$300,000 to the county alone.⁷ The sheriff’s three undercover operatives are notable for their diversity: a female narcotics officer in her 50s, a 20-something female jail guard, and a headstrong muscular guy looking to be pushing 30.

Marilyn Hedstrom, the narcotics officer, introduced herself to anarchists as “Norma Jean Johnson” in August, 2007, telling activists she had issues with Bush and the Iraq war.⁸ She cooked meals, ran errands, worked the security detail, and represented the organization at gatherings. Her reports show no talk of property damage or even protests at meetings she attended, but much discussion of internal strains, gripes, and names of activists.

Informant Rachel Nieting, a guard in the county jail, accompanied Hedstrom posing as her niece, but did not fit in. Com-

plete with a fake Facebook page under the alias “Amanda,” Nieting did not gain the same level of acceptance from the anarchists as Hedstrom had, and dropped out. Hedstrom covered for “Amanda,” explaining that she found a new boyfriend.

In their various roles, undercover agents can seriously distort the life of a social movement, as sociologist Gary Marx has argued.⁹ Hedstrom and Nieting’s participation made the organization seem larger and more inclusive. Nieting wrote that she and Hedstrom were the only two women to join Karen Redleaf at a women’s caucus. Redleaf, a committee member, talked about how disconnected she felt and said was only coming to Sunday meetings because “Norma Jean” was there.¹⁰

The third informant, Chris Dugger, had tattoos and resembled a biker. He portrayed himself as participating in a radical movement for the first time. Still, he was accused by another member of being a cop. Denying the charge that he was an informer, Dugger became visibly emotional, wiping his eyes, blowing his nose, and telling the group how bad he felt. He must have been convincing, since two of the anarchists later told him “a cop would have just walked away and never returned and wouldn’t cry.”

By August, 2008, Dugger reportedly urged one anarchist to suspect another of being an informer. This highly disruptive practice, known as “snitch-jacketing,” was a common tactic of COINTELPRO operatives. Snitch-jacketing not only stirs distrust, but can also provoke violence. For his efforts, Dugger’s handlers won him a job in the county jail.

The FBI’s informant, Andrew Darst, infiltrated the “action faction” having been first seen in anarchist circles three years before. He became active in committee meetings of the RNC Welcoming Committee and reported on events held by other, nonanarchist organizations. Not only did he record meetings, his apartment in Minneapolis was wired for audio and video recording.¹¹ In March, 2009, Darst pled guilty to two counts of misdemeanor assault and one count of property damage

CHANGES IN JUSTICE DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES NEEDED

Today many of the abuses of COINTELPRO are no longer illegal. Break-ins, wiretaps, and mail covers have been supplanted by national security letters and “sneak and peak” searches, authorized under the USA Patriot Act enacted after 9/11. The danger of these intrusions to privacy and free speech is magnified by the expansion of the domestic security apparatus. The fruits of surveillance can flow rapidly through 70 state intelligence fusion centers, channeling information across jurisdictions from local police to national security agencies.

The election of Barack Obama does not portend a sea change in domestic intelligence policy. There are no signs that his administration is rolling back definitions of terrorism stretched to encompass acts of nonviolent civil disobedience.³⁹ FBI Director Mueller, who serves a ten-year term, worked with former Attorney General Mukasey to issue new Guidelines for Domestic Operations in 2008 that:

- Authorize agents to attend meetings of a religious or political nature without any suspicion of criminal or terrorist activity;
- Decrease internal supervision and coordination at various stages of investigation;
- Expand the scope and duration of preliminary inquiries that turn up nothing;
- Permit agents to misrepresent themselves and conduct “pretext interviews” to elicit information; and
- Encourage the use of more intrusive techniques with no sense of prioritization.⁴⁰

after breaking into a house by ripping the door off its hinges, confronting his wife, and striking two men present.

But this Minnesota-based spy was not the only person the FBI deployed to track people planning to protest the RNC. The example of Brandon Darby, a magnetic, discontented Texas activist, reveals how easily the fuzzy line between informer and instigator can be crossed.

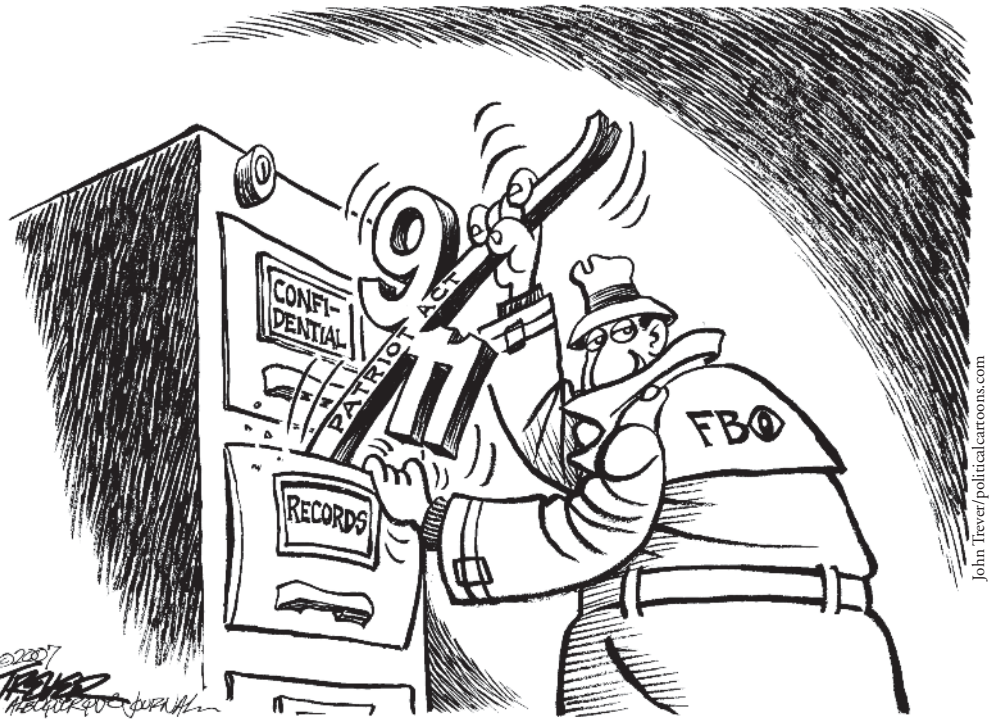
The Darby Case

For eighteen months before the 2008 RNC, the FBI paid more than \$11,000 to Darby, a gun-toting, outspoken Texas radical, to spy on fellow activists in Austin and then St. Paul. Darby was a charismatic leader with a reputation for defying authority who infiltrated the Austin Affinity Group for the FBI after becoming disgruntled with anarchist tactics. Government infiltration by a respected leader, handled by an FBI agent untrained in handling informants, presented the perfect setting for an *agent provocateur* to thrive.

Darby's deep involvement illustrates the pressures inherent in the informant's role. Informants must choose between being passive observers who yield sparse information and wield little influence, or more active participants who produce better information, but also affect what happens more directly—raising the risk of possible complicity and entrapment.

On the eve of the convention, two activists under Darby's surveillance, 22-year-old David McKay and 23-year-old Bradley Crowder, concocted eight Molotov cocktails and stored them in a basement. Crowder pled guilty in the fall of 2008, but McKay's case went to trial. The jury split evenly on the issue of whether Darby, the elder turncoat, had entrapped him. McKay eventually pled guilty before his second trial began, saying he would have made the Molotov cocktails even without Darby's encouragement. But the question remains: Were the two men egged on by the charismatic Darby?

Darby was a self-identified revolutionary who slept with a gun under his pillow, according to friends. In the aftermath of



Hurricane Katrina, he took an AK-47 and a handgun to New Orleans to help rescue an old friend in a neighborhood inundated by muddy water and White militias. He was a leader of the Common Ground relief effort in New Orleans and a member of the Austin activist community for more

The government loses support among targeted communities if they feel they have been manipulated by the use of secret informants.

than ten years. Friends in New Orleans say he openly supported the use of firebombing as a tactic.

Given the need for informants to observe rather than lead, it is curious that the FBI found someone like Darby suitable for the task. Guidelines require the Bureau

to evaluate the potential informer's motivation, dangerousness, and the extent to which the FBI can ensure that the information gathered is related to criminal matters. The guidelines do not address the potential for provocation per se, but FBI Agent Timothy Sellers said he cautioned Darby not to take a leading role.¹²

Sellers charged Darby with spying on a range of Austin-area activists, particularly the Austin Affinity Group.¹³ Darby gathered information on a number of people engaged in lawful activism, including some who had no plans to attend the Republican Convention. He described meetings with his affinity group and people in Austin, Minneapolis, and St. Paul for the FBI. At times he wore recording devices, including a transmitter embedded in his belt. Four months before the RNC, he went to Minnesota and provided detailed narratives to authorities on meetings with activists from New York, San Francisco, Montana, and elsewhere.¹⁴

"The wider net cast by Darby in his information gathering shows that he was part of an FBI campaign to suppress political dissent and activism," said Will Potter, a journalist with the alternative press. "By gathering information on law-abiding

activists and then defending his actions as stopping violence, Darby contributes to the public perception that political dissent is criminal, which has a chilling effect on free speech.”¹⁵

Sociologist Gary T. Marx’s study of *agents provocateurs* and informants suggests that the nature of informing may lead the informer beyond his or her assigned task, particularly when the motivation is personal or ideological. In his study, Marx identifies the potential motives of informants, including patriotism, coercion, financial reward, disaffection with activists, double agents who want to assist the movement, converts who lose their zeal, and provocateurs who find success in the role by exceeding their mandate.¹⁶

After returning from a trip to Venezuela, Darby said, he began to see major problems with “violent elements” of the movement and actions being planned by the RNC Welcoming Committee. Explaining his motivation to work for the FBI, he said he merely wanted to protect the Republicans’ right to participate in the political process.

Ideological motives may produce poor information, says Marx. Disgruntled informants tend to exaggerate or even lie: “There is no limit to which people will go to get even for a real or imagined wrong.”¹⁷ Darby shared his employers’ assumptions that anarchists were determined to use violence. “Such agents may thus feel free to encourage activists to take violent action or to report false information. They may feel that the group poses such a severe threat that any means (even lying to superiors) are necessary to destroy it,” warns Marx.¹⁸

The FBI did not require Darby to shed his revolutionary fervor. Militant language and a reckless temperament remained part of his public persona. According to Lisa Fithian, who worked with Darby for a number of years, “Brandon was always provoking discord and aggression, in the antiwar movement in Austin in 2003, in protests in Houston against Halliburton, and in disaster relief at Common Ground in New Orleans.”¹⁹ At his first meeting with

McKay and Crowder, he said, “I’m going to shut this f..ker down” and “any group I go with will be successful.” Darby lambasted the two for looking like a bunch of “tofu-eaters” who needed to “start eating meat and bulk up” so they could fight.²⁰ In fact, he trained them in martial arts.

There was no reason for Darby to tone down his rhetoric as an informant, although

Disgruntled informants tend to exaggerate or even lie, producing poor information.

such language could inspire illegal action by younger colleagues. The informant’s secret status frees him or her from the constraints with which more prudent activists contend. Just as Monteilh championed violent *jihad*, Darby could express militancy without fear of reprisal. As Frank Donner observed, “the infiltrator’s secret knowledge that he alone in the group is immune from accountability for his acts dissolves all restraints on his zeal.”²¹

One of Darby’s big moments came after the FBI seized shields that the affinity group made to use in blocking streets during the Republican Convention. Darby told McKay, “We’re not going to take this lying down. You’ve got to do something about it.” The next night, McKay and Crowder bought materials for Molotov cocktails. Darby claims that he urged restraint. When McKay considered hurling the Molotov cocktails at police cars parked at a station, Darby texted him, “It’s your call. I support you making whatever choice you are comfortable with. Be proud of yourself for your work and take a chill.” When McKay suggested that there were too many police around, Darby texted, “it’s all good, sometimes it’s best to fight another day ... —it’s ok, I’ll support you.”

Although Darby wore a wire to transmit his conversation with McKay about the Molotov cocktails, FBI agents took notes but made no recording. This raised suspicion among jurors that Darby had crossed the line from surveillance to provocation.

Informers and Muslim Americans

Informers generate suspicion deep into the communities under surveillance. “What these guys have done is create an environment where every person begins to suspect the other and with the infighting and inward suspicion, the community becomes its own victim,” said Shakeel Syed, executive director of the Islamic Shura Council in southern California.

Across the country in New Jersey, two FBI informers helped lead the five Duka brothers down a similar path, ending with their sentencing on April 28, 2009 for conspiracy to commit terrorism.²² Authorities opened the Fort Dix file in 2006 after a Circuit City clerk showed police a video the brothers asked him to convert to DVD.

WHO IS ANNA?

“Anna” was an FBI informant for two years, who came to activists’ attention at a Fort Lauderdale protest of the Organization of American States (OAS) meeting in June, 2005. Ray Del Papa watched her, dressed as a medic with a red cross on her shirt and bag, directing young people to sit down in the street directly in front of a line of police in riot gear, using provocative language even though organizers had decided against sit-ins.⁴¹ They had not counted on an informer in their midst. Anna went on to sleep with a young anarchist who was eventually given a prison sentence of 19 years and seven months for conspiring to sabotage a U.S. Forest Service genetics tree lab and nearby fish hatchery in Rancho Cordova, California. Juror statements that they felt unfairly hemmed in by the judge’s instructions on whether the anarchist, Eric McDavid, was “predisposed” to commit the crime before meeting the informant; that now forms some of the basis of his appeal.⁴²

On the video, camouflaged, bearded men shot semi-automatic weapons at a shooting range in the Poconos, where the defendants played paintball, skied, rode horses, and played videogames with their male buddies. On tape, the men shouted “Allahu Akbar,” meaning “God is Great.” Thinking the weapons were automatic, the clerk phoned police. In the eyes of the FBI, these were gun fanatics taping a training video or training for *jihad*. Had they not been Albanian Americans, the shooters’ bravado might not have raised suspicion. But in the post-9/11 world, the video offered cause for investigation.²³

Rather than interview the brothers, or merely monitor them—investigative options that seem old hat in the informer age—the FBI dispatched two untrained civilians to ingratiate themselves with the men in the video. The first informer, Mahmoud Omar, was a convicted felon who entered the United States illegally in 1992 and faced fraud charges. The FBI told him they would clear his debts and help him obtain legal residence, and paid him \$238,000 for his undercover work. The second informant, Besnik Bakalli, received \$13,000 from the FBI, immigration assistance, and pardon for an old shooting charge from Albania.

Informant Omar was the apparent leader of any plot against Fort Dix. He organized “reconnaissance missions” in which he drove Mohamed Shnewer around potential targets while he railed against the United States. Omar stoked Shnewer’s fire, although he claimed during the trial that he was just trying to fit in. But Shnewer took the bait. On August 1, Shnewer told Omar, “If you want to do anything here, there is Fort Dix and I don’t want to exaggerate, and I assure you that you can hit an American base very easily... When you go to a military base, you need mortars and RPGs.” Omar offered to turn such fantasies to reality, promising to introduce his comrades to an arms dealer and giving them a list of weapons he could procure.

The recordings stretched out over a month, during which Omar badgered defendant Serdar Tatar to get him a map

of Fort Dix. Tatar eventually did—but not before he called Philadelphia police to report being pressured for the map and voiced concern that it could be terror related.²⁴

Without the FBI’s *agents provocateurs*, there might never have been a plot or weapons. Transcripts record some defendants explicitly rejecting violence. In a conversation recorded in April, 2007, Dritan Duka rebuffed Bakalli’s appeals for violent action. “We are good the way we are,” he tells him. “We are not going to kill anyone. Even if we kill anyone, you can’t run away. They will catch you right away.”

Informants can promote militancy without fear of reprisal from the government.

But this did not deter the informers. At some points, the defendants seemed too scared to do anything. When they were supposedly shopping for weapons, one defendant worried that “as Muslims, if we get caught, we all get sent away to f...ing Guantanamo Bay for ten years with no court date.”²⁵ Nevertheless, several defendants were caught on tape talking callously about killing as many soldiers as they could in a fantastic assault on the Fort. FBI arrested the six after the Duka brothers bought seven high-powered rifles in a deal set up by Omar.

“Many in the Muslim community will see this as a case of entrapment,” said Jim Sues, executive director of the New Jersey chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), who attended the trial. “From what I saw, there was a significant role played by the government informant.”²⁶ Dr. Ian Lustick, political science professor at the University of Pennsylvania, notes that,

Ever since 9/11, national, state and local authorities have tried with enormous resources to find, prosecute, and punish Muslim terrorists inside the United States. The result has been an increasingly embarrassing string of trumped-up charges that trigger much War on Terror warrior chest-pounding, and screaming, terrifying headlines for weeks following the arrests and indictments. Then, months or even years later, when evidence is put before juries and the public, we find that the real “perpetrators” were the paid government informants, seeking profit by inciting and enabling cheap talk and any acts they can produce by gullible, emotional and foolish suckers.²⁷

The Impact on Mosques or Movements

Whether in a mosque or a movement organization, informants achieve the same results: demoralization, helplessness, cynicism, and immobilizing paranoia. After Brandon Darby admitted spying on his friends, Lisa Fithian told *Democracy Now*, “We feel traumatized. We feel as if somebody that we thought actually had good intentions and cared for this community has been a lie.” Conventional invasions of privacy are alienating and even dehumanizing. But government surveillance goes further, tampering with the very group dynamics through which political change is brought about.²⁸

According to a recent study by sociologists Amory Starr and Luis Fernandez, government surveillance causes activists and citizens to fear participation in completely legal events and to be reluctant to donate to organizations, sign petitions, and receive newsletters. Civic participation is cut back. Allies such as churches will abandon groups under surveillance. Perceiving an increase in government repression, some activists quit entirely. Those who remain active find an organizing culture that was once open is replaced with a “security culture,” complete with reduced discussion, less note-taking (since it makes people look

suspicious), and more secretive planning. A broad perception is created that activists' political work is marginal, criminal, or suspicious.²⁹

Inevitably, surveillance and even the fear of surveillance on the part of those not actually monitored produce a pervasive self-censorship. One activist described the effect: "I had to learn not to welcome people and not give out information . . . I'm interested in community building, and then you're taught to be suspicious and not welcome people; it's antithetical to your theory of change."³⁰

When a person's politics come under hostile investigation by a secret police unit in a country like the United States that boasts of its freedom, it is traumatic, to say the least. The undercover character of the investigation, the assumed guilt of the person, the denial of an opportunity to answer any charges and confront the accuser, can all be shattering. People are made even more vulnerable by the secrecy of the probe and the knowledge that government may maintain a file on them for the rest of their lives.³¹ The hallmarks of a security culture are exclusion, wariness, withholding information, and avoiding diversity. As Starr and Fernandez report: "It's hard to build when you're suspicious."³²

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The same is true for Muslim communities—it is harder to organize if you are wary about others. Through the reckless use of informants, the government has actively cultivated distrust in both activist and targeted populations. "It gives you a little bit of apprehension about who you trust," said Omar Turbi of the Islamic Center of Irvine. "Makes you think twice about what you say; what if people misunderstand you?" Hussam Ayloush, Executive Director of CAIR in Anaheim, added, "Some average Muslims interested only in praying are avoiding mosques for fear of somehow

Today many of the abuses
of COINTELPRO are
no longer illegal.

being monitored or profiled. Everybody is afraid, and it is leading to an infringement on the free practice of our religion."³³

Not only is freedom of religion being chilled, but the government's use of informants is alienating Muslim Americans. As recently as this spring, allegations of widespread infiltration of mosques led several Muslim and Arab civil rights and community organizations to call for ending ties with law enforcement.³⁴ David Cole notes that "when law enforcement and intelligence officials treat a wide cross-section of the Arab and Muslim community as suspect largely by virtue of their ethnicity or

religion, Arabs and Muslims will be less likely to cooperate with authorities and provided needed information."³⁵ CAIR, the largest Muslim group in the country, had played an important role as liaison between the agency and Muslim communities.

Do Informants Make People Violent?

A team of behavioral scientists paid by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is studying what turns radicals into violent extremists. But what about the influence of highly motivated informants? Paid informants are highly intrusive, aggressive, and potentially provocative. The ability of informants to neutralize democratic change and disrupt communities should raise concerns about whether pre-emptive policing is worth its social and political costs. As civil rights lawyer Frank Donner said, sizing up the surveillance through the 1970s, "under the warrant of protecting the democratic process from disruption and violence, the intelligence state is seriously jeopardizing it."³⁶

When Maryland activists learned that a state trooper infiltrated dozens of social justice groups over a fourteen-month period, they banded together with the ACLU and Defending Dissent Foundation to urge passage of a state oversight bill.³⁷ Social justice groups, including animal rights and environmental activists, must strengthen ties with Muslim, Arab, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and immigrant groups facing infiltration to demand constraints on how and when informants may be used to spy on Americans. Demands should include the use of less intrusive means of surveillance when a crime is suspected; independent oversight to ensure better supervision and training related to the use of informants for legitimate law enforcement purposes; and a ban on compiling dossiers on individuals and groups based solely upon their political, social or religious activities and beliefs. At a minimum, progressives must insist on re-establishing the protections instituted after the disastrous COINTELPRO programs, requiring suspicion of criminal activity as

Common Sense Security

Political dissidents and groups seen as "internal enemies" have always faced government repression. It is important to take these attacks seriously and object to them. At the same time it is important not to allow fearmongers to scare you away from civic and religious life. Visit <http://www.publiceye.org/liberty/security/activists.html> for useful tip sheets created over the years.

a threshold for government spying.

These are all in the best interests of the government, not just its citizens. In the long run, the government risks losing crucial support and legitimacy when its investigative tactics even appear to cross the line into provocation and unlawful investigation of protected First Amendment activities.

Candidate Obama explicitly invited Americans to mobilize as a counterweight to the “undue influence of the lobbyists” who “stand in our way.”³⁸ “I’m asking you to believe,” he said, “not just in my ability to bring about real change in Washington; I’m asking you to believe in yours.” For that energy and enthusiasm to coalesce into an organized political force, the Obama administration must rein in domestic intelligence practices that disrupt communities and discourage activism. ■

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Book Review

The Taboo Truths of the Conspiracy Minded

The Transparent Cabal: The Neoconservative Agenda, War in the Middle East, and the National Interest of Israel (Washington, D.C.: Enigma Editions, IHS Press, 2008).

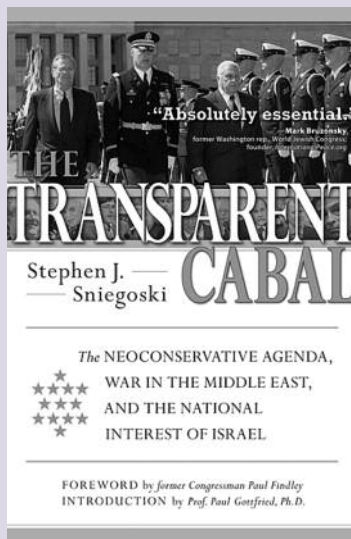
By Stephen J. Sniegoski

Reviewed by Michelle Goldberg

Stephen J. Sniegoski's *The Transparent Cabal* is a disturbing and revealing book, though not for the reasons the author intends. Sniegoski aims to show that U.S. neoconservatives masterminded the Iraq war in the service of Israeli hegemony, a proposition that has plenty of truth to it. In doing so, though, he veers back and forth over the often-fuzzy line separating harsh but legitimate criticism of Israel and Zionism from paranoid conspiracy mongering. His book is an almost textbook illustration of the way far Left anti-Zionism and far Right antisemitism can bend towards each other and begin to overlap.

The antisemitism in *The Transparent Cabal* is quite subtle—so much so that many readers probably won't see it, and will likely dismiss criticism of it as yet another attempt by the Likud lobby to silence its foes. Such attempts exist, of course. The Right has often tried to smear opponents of both American and Israeli foreign policy as bigots. One ironic effect of this is that it offers an alibi to purveyors of prejudice, who can now cloak themselves in martyrdom. Thus Sniegoski adopts the pose of one bravely willing to reveal taboo truths. But the fact that many critics of Israel are unfairly accused of antisemitism does not make all accusations of antisemitism unfair.

There's nothing new in *The Transparent Cabal*—indeed, it's a kind of clip job. Most of its material about the neoconservatives derives from mainstream media reports and well-known books. From these secondary sources, though, Sniegoski has fashioned a monocausal narrative in which Israel and its American supporters are the preeminent drivers of American foreign policy and the sole font of turmoil in the Middle East, which they're said to welcome because it serves Israel's interests. In his telling, George W. Bush, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld are mere supporting players, less culpable for the catastrophe in Iraq than



the editorial staff of the *Weekly Standard*. Sniegoski suggests that Israeli interests drove the first Gulf War as well. He joins the far Left and the far Right in sympathy for Slobodan Milosevic's Serbia, and implies that neoconservatives pushed for NATO's Kosovo campaign in order to weaken international law, thus setting the stage for their war in Iraq.

Sniegoski also throws in some unrelated conspiracy theories for good measure. Though he argues that the second Iraq war had nothing to do with energy supplies, he strongly suggests that the war on Afghanistan was motivated by the United States' desire to build a pipeline through that country. "Instead of serving as a pliable government that could provide requisite stability for American exploitation of energy resources, the Taliban were exporting their revolutionary Islamic fundamentalism to nearby Central Asian countries, thus destabilizing the entire energy-rich region," he writes, citing the French book *Bin Laden: The Forbidden Truth*. He implies that 9/11 may have been a preemptive strike by Osama bin Laden in response to U.S. threats against his host country.

This narrative, which has percolated on the political fringes in recent years, has been thoroughly debunked by Ken Silverstein in *The American Prospect*, Damien Cave in *Salon* and David Corn in *The Nation*, among others. A separate article would be required to recapitulate all their points. That's the problem with conspiracy theories—they tend to jumble truth, distortion, unfalsifiable claims and willful omissions in a way that takes enormous time and energy to untangle. For marginal books, it's often not worth the effort.

Indeed, *The Transparent Cabal* wouldn't be worth bothering with at all if it weren't receiving some notice on the Left, including a glowing review in *Counterpunch*. It is troubling that the book might find an audience among progressives, but probably not surprising. The taboo against criticizing Israel and discussing the power of the conservative Israel lobby has shrouded the whole subject in mystery. That fosters a kind of credulity in which outlandish claims take on the air of samizdat.

It is important to be clear here. Neoconservatives inside and outside the George W. Bush administration deserve tremendous opprobrium. They helped erect the ideological justifications for war with Iraq and seized control of the public discourse, bullying anyone who urged patience and diplomacy. Most importantly, under Vice President Cheney, a group of neoconservatives played a crucial role in distorting American intelligence to make it seem as if Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and ties

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to al Qaeda, creating a fallacious *casus belli*. Neoconservatism is a movement famously founded by ex-leftists — many of them Jewish — who lost their youthful ideals but not their radical (and sometimes rigidly ideological) habits of mind. The revolutionary callousness they displayed in their grandiose plan to reshuffle the Middle East has been catastrophic for people around the world.

Nor is it any secret that the neoconservatives have longstanding ties to the Israeli Right. Despite what Sniegowski seems to think, it is well known that, in 1996, leading neocons prepared a report for then-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu titled “A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm,” which advocated replacing Middle Eastern regimes hostile to Israel with more pliant rulers. Neoconservatives are aggressive American nationalists, but they conflate the interests of the United States and Israeli Right. The policies they’ve pushed have undoubtedly weakened the United States and made a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict more elusive than ever.

It’s a long way from there, however, to the claim that Israel alone inspired the Iraq war and that the catastrophic outcome there was intentional, meant to keep Israel’s enemies fractured and disorganized. By treating George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, and Donald Rumsfeld as mere supporting players in the march to war, co-opted or manipulated by the titular “cabal,” Sniegowski is playing into old stereotypes about covert, omnipresent and almost occult Jewish influence. At one point, he calls Rumsfeld “the fall guy for the war’s failures.” (In fact, as former counterterrorism czar Richard Clark wrote in his book *Against All Enemies*, “By the afternoon [the day after the attack], Secretary Rumsfeld was talking about broadening the objectives of our response and ‘getting Iraq.’”) The former Vice President is barely mentioned.

For the conspiracist, there are no accidents. Thus Sniegowski assumes that since Iraq devolved into an anarchic bloodbath, that must have been the plan all along. “Now one might be tempted to attribute the rejection of the military’s caution to insane hubris on the part of [Richard] Perle and the neoconservative crowd,” he writes, before dispensing with that notion. “Richard Perle may be many things, but stupid is not one of these. Perle undoubtedly thought through the implications of his plan.” Indeed, says Sniegowski, a “complete fiasco” could work to the neocons’ advantage by throwing the region into chaos and preparing the way for a wider war. (He doesn’t bother to address how Perle’s all-seeing brilliance squares with the total discrediting of neoconservatism and the increased strength of Iran that resulted from the Iraq war.)

Likewise, he dismisses the idea that oil was part of the motive for war by arguing that if it had been, the United States would have made more of an effort to secure the country. The notion that the war-planners believed their own propaganda—a self-delusion apparent to almost every reporter who covered Iraq—

is somehow impossible for Sniegowski to accept. His is a Manichean view of the world, the mirror image of the movement he aims to dissect.

Just as the neoconservatives attribute a kind of cosmic evil to many Islamic regimes, and dismiss all efforts at historical understanding as amoral relativism, so Sniegowski sees only the diabolical in Israel. Obviously, that country is in many ways richly deserving of criticism, but there’s something suspect about the reflexive way the author demonizes the Jewish state while downplaying or dismissing the aggression of its enemies. To read this book, one would think Israel started every war it ever fought. Meanwhile, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s Holocaust denial is explained away thusly: “It was not apparent that Ahmadinejad had actually denied the mass murder of the Jews during World War II, though he did, at various times, question various facets of the Holocaust and demanded greater evidential proof.” Here, Sniegowski’s language suggests he finds Holocaust revisionism reasonable.

To be sure, the author goes out of his way to distance himself from antisemitism, and several times he notes that not all Jews support the neoconservative agenda or the Israeli Right. Nevertheless, he quotes openly antisemitic sources as authoritative, at one point citing Kevin MacDonald, who he describes as a “rightist evolutionary biologist.” In fact, MacDonald is a sociobiologist who claims Jews are genetically extremely smart yet clanish, and subversive of whatever society they find themselves in. Among other things, MacDonald has written that eventually universities may have to establish quotas to reduce the number of Jewish students, and that higher taxes on Jews may have to be levied “to counter the Jewish advantage in the possession of wealth.” To quote MacDonald on the subject of dual loyalties in this context is roughly equivalent to appealing to the wisdom of David Duke in an argument over affirmative action.

Sniegowski also has a tendency to identify people’s Jewish heritage whether it’s relevant or not. He notes, for instance, that British Foreign Minister Jack Straw is “of Jewish ancestry.” In fact, Straw is a Christian who had one Jewish grandfather, though both Islamist and White supremacist websites frequently identify him as a Jew.

If Sniegowski has picked up on antisemitic memes, perhaps it’s because he has placed himself in an antisemitic milieu. *The Transparent Cabal* was put out by Enigma Editions, an imprint of IHS press created specifically for this volume. A far-right Catholic press that publishes titles like *Action: A Manual for the Reconstruction of Christendom*, by French fascist Jean Ousset, IHS was described by The Southern Poverty Law Center as one of the “most nakedly antisemitic organizations in the entire radical traditionalist Catholic pantheon.” Sniegowski’s book fits in there nicely. ■

A Longtime Anti-Racism Activist's Take on History

Blood and Politics: The History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream

By Leonard Zeskind

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009, 656 pages, \$37.50 cloth.

Reviewed by Loretta J. Ross

It is so irritating to watch Pat Buchanan on MSNBC. There he was on Morning Joe, blaming the financial crisis on banks lending to people of color. His makeover as a respectable “conservative” pundit—conveniently forgetting his racist, homophobic, and anti-Semitic slippages—is a testament to the power of the mainstream media to shape a Wonderland world Alice would have recognized.

Thank goodness for Leonard Zeskind’s long-awaited book. It has restored my faith in the power of truth to trump travesty.

Thirty years in the making, *Blood and Politics* reads like a political thriller that details intimate knowledge about the origins, history, leaders and activities of the White supremacist groups in the United States. But Zeskind’s book is no laundry list. His analysis helps us make sense of the netherworld of ideas and relationships that populate and bind together denizens of the Far Right, the Religious Right, and the ultra-conservative movements he places under the banner of “White nationalism.”

His argument is straightforward. White nationalists are part of a single movement who embrace one of two strategies: they either work in the mainstream or serve as a vanguard outside the mainstream. This is a classic bullet-or-ballot struggle within the movement, as people oriented one way or the other compete for validity, followers and money. Regardless of their strategic differences, he argues these are two wings of the same movement that share a common goal: to place the “dispossessed majority” of White people permanently in control of the future of our country.

The bullet sector believes it is a vanguard movement, a small set of individuals and organizations who will lead the duped majority of White people into recognizing that their alleged racial identity forms a nation under threat by all who do not share their supposed race, particularly Jews and people of color. Tactics chosen by this vanguard movement often include violence, threats of violence, and intimidation. They are to be found mostly below the mainstream media’s radar until one of their warriors, like

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Timothy McVeigh, blows up a federal building in Oklahoma to commemorate the Waco tragedy.

The ballot wing of the movement believes in mainstreaming by entering the fringes of electoral politics, either as Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, Populists or another third party. They seek to persuade a majority of people to support their views, if not their candidacies. Typified by former Klansman David Duke in the past, and currently by Pat Buchanan, this sector believes that the views of the White nationalist/White supremacist movement can again become the dominant values of our society. Disavowing the violence and gutter epithets of their vigilante cousins, time and repetition are their tactics as they seize upon every opportunity to claim that White people (or Western Civilization) are under attack.

They’ve even won over a few people who are not White to their cause as they target immigrants and gays.

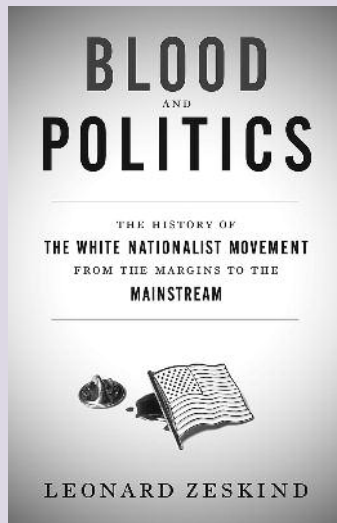
Zeskind debunks several myths often propagated by other researchers. He warns against stereotyping White nationalists as men “with chewing tobacco” in their cheeks. Instead, they could be blue collar and working class, polished business leaders, millionaires, or academics with PhDs. Also, he says the rise and fall of White supremacy cannot be linked simply to economic and business cycles as the victimized look for scapegoats to explain their condition. Their tactics, at least, are shaped by other factors, says Zeskind, such as whether they believe their mainstreaming strategy is working, and whether they expect serious consequences from law enforcement authorities. When they perceive themselves as closer to the levers of power, they tend to favor their mainstreaming strategies.

When they believe they have been relegated to the fringes, they default to vanguardism, and sometimes violence.

Blaming the economy for the actions of White supremacists is like a drunk blaming alcohol when he batters his wife. In each case, it’s an excuse, not a cause.

The serious economic crisis facing this country may lubricate the anger of White supremacists, particularly now that we have an African-American President. However, they would have felt marginalized by any president who did not share their values and speak to them in coded signals. Remember Ronald Reagan making his first speech as the GOP’s 1980 Presidential contender in Philadelphia, Mississippi, the site of the murders of three civil rights activists?

Pat Buchanan is now the sanitized version of White supremacy we have to watch everyday. Like his counterpart on CNN, Lou Dobbs, he stokes the anger of the reputedly dispossessed majority with fear mongering more subtly than Rush Limbaugh or



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REPORT OF THE MONTH

The Other Jackson

Point Man for the Wedge Strategy: Harry Jackson is the Face of the Religious Right's Outreach to African American Christians

by Peter Montgomery, *People For the American Way Foundation, Washington, D.C., 2009.*

The African-American minister Harry Jackson was embraced as a rising star among leaders of the Christian Right in 2004 when he proclaimed that God told him to help reelect George W. Bush. While he tones down his rhetoric to sound reasonable to the mainstream press, he uses warlike imagery in his talks to gatherings of White evangelicals, writes Peter Montgomery, the author of this report.

Outside of the mainstream media's eye, Jackson charges that pro-choice and pro-gay rights advocates will tear apart the family, attack the structure and livelihood of religion and the church, and eventually bring down the entire country due to their Satanic influences.

Montgomery tracks Jackson's efforts to bridge the gap between White and Black Christian evangelicals—a goal shared by his lead champion Tony Perkins, director of the Family Research Council, with whom Jackson authored a book. Decrying abortion as “black genocide,” Jackson appeared in an election season ad with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s niece Alveda King, calling on African Americans not to vote based on

race. He urges evangelicals to join the campaign to defund Planned Parenthood because “they’ve put out a hit on all children, but they’ve set up themselves to put out a hit on Black and Hispanic babies especially. It’s time that we take them out.”

Although he failed to rally African-American churchgoers to oppose Obama's presidential candidacy, he “took part in conference calls designed to rally conservative pastors to support Proposition 8 in California,” which overturned the legalization of gay marriage in the state. Yet it is difficult to track how influential he is among African-American churchgoers beyond members of his Maryland church.

As a board member of the National Association of Evangelicals, he urged the dismissal of its vice president Richard Cizik based on his politics, and he participates in the Arlington Group, an insider leadership circle that includes James Dobson of Focus on the Family, Perkins and others. Environmentalist concerns over global warming suggests God isn't in charge, he wrote in *Personal Faith, Public Policy*, his book with Perkins. In the book, he also supported denying citizenship to children born in the United States to undocumented parents. Montgomery also tracks his latest campaign against federal hate crimes legislation that covers attacks on gays, which Jackson called “an all-out assault against Christians.”

—Kris Coombs and Abby Scher

Other Reports in Review

Making Green Jobs Good Jobs

High Road or Low Road? Job Quality in the New Green Economy

By Philip Mattera, et. al. *Good Jobs First, Washington, D.C., February 3, 2009.*
http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/pdf/gjfgreen_jobsrpt.pdf

Washington is abuzz with ideas to jumpstart the economy, while investing in “green jobs” that might lessen the damage we do to our environment. President Obama's stimulus bill included funding for green jobs. But green jobs are not always well-paying jobs, according to this report, so any investment—for instance, in manufacturing components for wind and solar energy, modernizing the energy grid, green construction and weather proofing buildings, mass transit, and recycling—should be tied to good wages and not directed toward union-busting firms currently operating in the sector.

State and local governments have promoted good jobs by requiring green businesses

receiving development subsidies to follow labor standards. The federal government uses “prevailing wage” rules, which can be effective in well-paying (though not low-wage) sectors. These practices should become standard, but should also be enforced. The study found that cities dilute labor standards under pressure while continuing to offer subsidies. In one example, “wind blade maker TPI Composites recently took over a former Maytag appliance factory in Newton, Iowa where workers had been paid about \$19 an hour. In 2007, TPI was given \$2 million by the state with a requirement that it pay its workers only \$13.47 an hour. The company sought additional public funds in 2008 from the Iowa Economic Development Board, which agreed to waive pay requirements that would have raised wages closer to Maytag rates.”

Localities also give money to union busting firms like Clipper Windpower, which won more than \$3 million in subsidies for its turbine plant in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The com-

pany hired anti-union consultants after workers contacted the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in January 2008 and more than 70 percent signed cards calling for a union. In the end, the workers voted against the union.

Since much of the “green” economic sector relies on government funding, the government can have a huge impact by making labor standards comprehensive, and giving them teeth by “clawing back” funding from companies that fail to follow the rules.

Racial Profiling at the Border

Unreasonable Intrusions: Investigating the Politics, Faith & Finances of Americans Returning Home

Muslim Advocates, April 20, 2009, San Francisco, Calif., http://www.muslimadvocates.org/documents/Unreasonable_Intrusions_2009.pdf

This report is not the first time Muslim Advocates has challenged the interrogation, searches, and seizures of information on cell

phones and laptops from Muslim Americans traveling back into the country. The *New York Times* wrote an editorial decrying the practice in July 2008, after the group's director Ferhana Khera shared cases in testimony to the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on the Constitution and civil rights, where she once served as counsel.

The impact of this report, documenting racial profiling and privacy intrusions targeting Muslim Americans coming home, was even more dramatic. Within weeks of its release, Khera's former "boss" on the subcommittee, Democratic Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin, won a commitment from Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano to review how border and customs police screen people they perceive to be Muslim American, and look into cases where Muslim citizens said they were harassed while traveling.

Among the dozens of cases documented in the report: Yasir Qadhi, a Yale graduate student with whom U.S. counterterrorism officials have consulted about his research on violent religious movements, was stopped several times by border agents who asked about the content of his lectures, the mosques where he worships, and his circle of acquaintances. They also copied data off his cell phone.

Border agents have the power to search any laptop or phone even without cause for suspicion. They, along with national security agents, are the only police allowed freely to use racial profiling under U.S. Department of Justice guidelines dating to 2003.

Racial and ethnic profiling leads to the equivalent of unwarranted searches and seizures, violations of citizens' Constitutional right to reenter the country unimpeded, and a waste of government resources and time from false leads. This racial profiling generates streams of data that, in the controversial intelligence framework of "mosaic theory" embraced by investigators, is fed into databases so that agents can "connect the dots" and identify national security threats. As Khera asks in the report's preface, "What is the U.S. government doing with the information being seized and amassed? ... Where is the oversight and accountability to protect innocent Americans?" Napolitano committed to undertaking the investigation within 45 days and report back to Congress.

LGB Poverty Revealed

Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community

By Randy Albelda, M.V. Lee Badgett, Alyssa Schmeebaum and Gary J. Gates, The Williams Institute of UCLA, March 2009. <https://www.policyarchive.org/bitstream/handle/10207/16478/LGBPovertyReport.pdf?sequence=1>

While the media and pop culture love to paint the image of the well-off, well dressed, well educated, well-spoken gay man, this study, the first of poverty among lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) Americans, finds the stereotype to be downright false. Looking at three sets of data—the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), the 2003 & 2005 California Health Interview Surveys (CHIS), and the 2000 Census—they discovered that LGB adults and LGB same-sex couples are just as likely, if not more so, to live in poverty as other adults living in the United States.

The various data sets suggest different findings. Using the National Survey of Family Growth, the researchers found that 24 percent of lesbians and bisexual women from 18 to 44 years old are poor, compared with only 19 percent of heterosexual women. At 15 percent, gay men and bisexual men have poverty rates equal to those of heterosexual men (13 percent) in the NSFG. The researchers encountered familiar data: African-American LGB couples are statistically poorer than White couples, as are LGB couples living in rural areas. But children of same-sex parents are twice as likely to be impoverished as children of different-sex parents.

The researchers link these higher poverty rates to discrimination both in the workplace and in access to affordable health insurance, and government health and retirement benefits that require couples to be married. LGB people shunned by their families are also left without an important safety net.

Texas Sex Ed

Just Say Don't Know: Sexuality Education in Texas Public Schools

Dr. David Wiley and Dr. Kelly Wilson with Ryan Valentine, Texas Freedom Network Education Fund, Austin, Texas, February 2009. <http://www.tfn.org/site/PageServer?page-name=SexEdReportIndexPage>

Texas is the flagship state for abstinence education in high schools; a decade ago the

state required school sex ed classes to promote abstinence over other options. But Texas students are more sexually active, and less likely to use a condom, than American students as a whole. This report takes a closer look at sex ed classes in 96 percent of Texas middle and high schools in 990 districts, discovering that more than 94 percent don't offer any information beyond abstinence. Only 4 percent teach how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, modes of contraception, and "responsible pregnancy."

They found that courses used wrong information—for instance, on the failure rate of condoms—and descriptions of sex as dirty and shameful to discourage sexual activity. They also found teachers using negative gender stereotypes and anti-gay statements, and drawing on religious instruction and Bible study.

They also found that more than 80 percent of the School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs), which supposedly offer a forum for community input on sexuality education, ignored the issue.

BATTLE OVER LABOR LAW *continued from page 4*

ies, April 30, 2009. <http://www.southernstudies.org/2009/04/labor-and-business-battle-for-soul-of-southern-democrats.html>

³ Only 12.4 percent of U.S. workers were unionized in 2008 but that is a slight increase from the year before, according the Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://stats.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm> "The Youngstown Election Report: Notes on Unions and White Working-Class Voters," Working Class Perspectives, Center for Working Class Studies at Youngstown State University, November 17, 2008. <http://workingclassstudies.wordpress.com/2008/11/17/the-youngstown-election-report-notes-on-unions-and-white-working-class-voters/>

⁴ American Rights at Work's wonderful investigation of the front groups can be found here: <http://www.american-rightsatwork.org/the-anti-union-network/chamber-of-commerce/coalition-for-a-democratic-workplace-exposed-20080424-557-273.html>

⁵ Friends of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. <http://capwiz.com/friendsofthechamber/issues/alert/?alertid=12426031>

⁶ Kimberly Hefling and Sam Hananel, "Specter raises hopes for deal on major labor bill," *Associated Press*, May 14, 2009. <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ht9x6ENpKbQRwIOEqPynaOYChkpwD9867LD83>

⁷ The Institute for Southern Studies has stayed on top of this group's operations in the south. Sue Sturgis, "Investigation: The oil money behind the anti-stimulus fight," *Facing South*, Institute for Southern Studies, February 16, 2009. <http://www.southernstudies.org/2009/02/the-oil-money-behind-the-anti-stimulus-fight.html>

⁸ <http://www.hotairtour.org/>

Eyes RIGHT

THE DESTRUCTION HOMOSEXUALS WROUGHT

Flip Benham of the militant anti-abortion Operation Rescue/ Operation Save America is doing flips himself over the federal hate crimes bill supported by many LGBT organizations. In a press release, Benham misleadingly claims, "If we do not act decisively at this time, S.909 will make illegal every word in the Bible describing the destruction wrought by [homosexuality], and prepare the way for total censorship of the Gospel of Christ. Our children will pay a horrible price for our cowardice."

"Truth is Hate to Those Who Hate the Truth," Christian Newswire, May 13, 2009. <http://www.christian-newswire.com/news/899310350.html>

WHO CARES IF JESUS WOULDN'T TORTURE

Longtime Christian Right leader Gary Bauer took a stab at defending torture, disagreeing with those who suggest it is un-Christian. "There are a lot of things Jesus wouldn't do because he's the son of God," he said. "I can't imagine Jesus being a Marine or a policeman or a bank president, for that matter. The more appropriate question is, 'What is a follower of Jesus permitted to do?'" The answer is "it

depends." "I think if we believe the person we have can give us information to stop thousands of Americans from being killed, it would be morally suspect to not use harsh tactics to get that information."

Eric Gorski, "Torture debate prompts evangelical soul-searching," Associated Press, May 13, 2009. http://www.mercurynews.com/religion/ci_12359040

OBAMA'S WAR ON CHEERIOS

America's right-leaning commentariat blames Obama for the Food and Drug Administration's demand that General Mills tone down its health claims for Cheerios. The FDA says General Mills' claim that Cheerios can "lower your cholesterol 4 percent in 6 weeks" is one that more properly, and according to federal law, should apply only to drugs designed to cure disease. The claims amount to a "serious violation" of laws governing label claims.

"Washington raised ciggie taxes to pay for SCHIP expansion and are [sic] gearing up to raise soda taxes to pay for Obamacare," writes columnist Michelle Malkin. "No vice is safe from the health police. Dijon mustard and arugula exempted, of course."

Marketing Cheerios as medicine is being defended as a matter of liberty. According to

libertarian think-tanker David Theroux, stopping General Mills from making questionable health claims is just another of the Obama administration's " 'progressive' (i.e., authoritarian) absurdities."

Source: "Defending Cheerios, Cereal of Liberty," Slate's The Big Money, May 13, 2009. <http://www.thebig-money.com/blogs/daily-bread/2009/05/13/defending-cheerios-cereal-liberty>

Eye LASHES

"Playing by the left's rules is a losing strategy. This is why I started Youth for Western Civilization as a movement to confront the cult of diversity and multiculturalism and the repression that inevitably follows. Contrary to the smears of the far-left, we are not 'racist'—we have a multiracial membership united in the belief that America is our home and Western culture is our culture and we will fight to defend them."

—Kevin DeAnna, founder of the new campus group, quoted by front-pagemag.com

BOOK REVIEW *continued from page 20*

Sarah Palin, but he is no less dangerous. The mainstreamers send unambiguous messages to their violent subculture that potentially turns threats into actions.

Zeskind's research demands that we warily watch for an escalation of violence by those feeling disenfranchised and out of power. The book stops short of predicting an all-out White revolution. He does suggest that in about 40 years when the majority of people in this country are no longer classified as White, alienated White people could become more vulnerable to being recruited by the White nationalist movement.

My only disappointment with the book is that it ended rather abruptly. Only a few pages were devoted to predicting where and how the White supremacist movement might resurge in the 21st century. I've learned from Zeskind, both from the book and from our years working together, that they never retreat—just regroup. ■

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