

We Take Our Stand

TODAY THE UNITED STATES has no shortage of magazines that would call their orientation, and be described by others as, “conservative.” Add the conservative dominance of talk radio, the popularity of several talented right-of-center television commentators, the current Republican majority

in the House, and the Bush presidency, and one could argue that conservative ideas have as much resonance as they have ever had.

And yet there is a great, often unarticulated discomfort in the ranks of many who considered themselves conservative during the past few decades. A friend of ours recently told of an encounter with one of his academic colleagues. “You’re a conservative,” the colleague said—“so you must agree with Paul Wolfowitz that we should attack Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and all those places.”

Well, no. Not all conservatives do agree that the United States should engage—for reasons that hardly touch America’s own vital interests—in an open-ended war against much of the Arab and Muslim world.

A variant of that conversation might be had about immigration—an issue around which genuine debate erupted for a brief time in the mid-1990s—only to be extinguished by the regnant factions of the conservative establishment. “So you’re a conservative” that conversation would run. “You must believe that ‘There shall be open borders’” as the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page habitually puts it.

Well, again, no. We believe that America has gained and still does from new immigrants. But, after two decades of intense immigration, we also believe that the nation needs a slowdown to assimilate those already here.

We are told—by some of the more powerful voices on the Right—that these debates are over. Neoconservatism, that influential and in many ways admirable tendency that emerged during the 1970s and flowered during the 1980s, has triumphed. It is now the dominant, nay, the only American conservatism worth talking about.

And if you look at the array of conservative media outlets, that would almost seem to be the case. The major magazines now compete over which can bray

loudest for the widest war, the most ambitious expansion of an American imperium. More discretely, they vie to articulate their relief that the shock of 9/11 has not, as yet, translated into a decisive political push for serious immigration reform.

We will be different.

Many voices will appear in the pages of *The American Conservative*—often in disagreement with one another. We are of course in considerable part Buchananite—well disposed to the web of ideas that drew millions of voters during three Buchanan presidential bids. But our mission is broader: to reignite the conversation that conservatives ought to have engaged in since the end of the Cold War, but didn’t.

We will question the benefits and point to the pitfalls of the global free trade economy; we will free the immigration debate from the prison to which it has been consigned. And we will discuss, frequently, America’s role in the world, turning a critical eye on those who want to cast aside every relevant American foreign policy tradition—from Robert Taft-style isolationism to prudent Dwight Eisenhower-style internationalism, in favor of go-it-alone militarism, where America threatens and bombs one nation after another, while the world looks on in increasing horror.

We believe conservatism to be the most natural political tendency, rooted in man’s taste for the familiar, for family, for faith in God. We believe that true conservatism has a predisposition for the institutions and mores that exist. So much of what passes for contemporary conservatism is wedded to a kind of radicalism—fantasies of global hegemony, the hubristic notion of America as a universal nation for all the world’s peoples, a hyperglobal economy. In combination with an increasingly unveiled contempt for America’s long-standing allies, it is more a recipe for disaster.

Against it, we take our stand.

—The Editors

[MEDIA]

LET'S INVADE CHILE NEXT!

National Review editor Rich Lowry recently provided a novel justification for invading Iraq: Saddam Hussein is a *fascist!* In a recent column the young editor of the venerable journal laid it out: "Saddam's militaristic, one-party ideology bears a strong resemblance and has direct intellectual connections to fascism... So Saddam is less Che Guevara (a romantic, anti-colonial figure) and more Augusto Pinochet."

Except we remember when Augusto Pinochet, the Chilean authoritarian ruler who ousted Salvador Allende's Marxist government in a bloody 1973 coup, was defended and appreciated by *National Review*—because, among other things, right wing authoritarian governments tended to evolve into democracies, (Chile, Spain, Portugal, Korea, Taiwan, etc....) and more importantly because *they were on our side* in the great struggle of the era, against communism.

Perhaps most of those who now work for the magazine have little recollection of or interest in such arguments and wisdom from the past. (Who was James Burnham anyway?) But someone should.

[GUILT]

SORRY WHITE FOLK

On August 22, the *Philadelphia Daily News* tried to do a good deed for the community. The paper printed the mugshots of 15 suspects wanted for murder, hoping to facilitate their arrests. It worked; one man hiding in North Carolina turned himself in, and police apprehended another on a tip. For its trouble, however, the paper earned not praise but scorn. All of the photos it had run were of minorities. That none of the 41 murder suspects identified by the police was white did not stop race hucksters from demand-



ing the editors' resignations. The editors kept their jobs, but not without groveling, including an Orwellian apology by a *Daily News* editor for printing the "literal truth." Stating what should be obvious, Hiawatha Bray, a black reporter from Boston, summed it up: "No newspaper editor has any business apologizing for writing truthfully about an issue of obvious public concern just because it upsets some members of the public. Get a grip, you guys."

[IMMIGRATION]

TAN MEXICANO COMO GRINGO

"As Mexican as American": that's how publicist Leonel Sosa glowingly described Tony Garza to the Mexico City daily *Reforma* after President Bush nominated his Texas political ally as ambassador to Mexico. Garza's Senate confirmation hearing on September 5th shows Sosa's confidence isn't misplaced. Garza endorsed an immigration deal that ensures an "orderly, secured and legal" influx of

Mexicans "tied to our labor needs" (as defined by employers, not Americans without jobs). While denying support for amnesty, Garza said we need "some sort of earned legalization ... that allows the path to citizenship." He's right—that's no mere amnesty. It's giving away U.S. citizenship to people who break into our country. Who will Tony Garza, the grandson of Mexican immigrants, represent in Mexico City: Americans or a Mexico pushing for open borders? His confirmation performance suggests the answer, and maybe it's significant that his featured picture on tonygarza.com shows him shaking Vicente Fox's hand. Let Bush reward his friend by sending him somewhere else. Why ask for divided loyalty in those who are appointed to advance America's interests? Not for the first time, George W. Bush is Hispandering at the nation's expense.

—Howard Sutherland

[ECONOMICS]

THE CHINA FANTASY (CON'T.)

The marks are in for China's progress toward fair trade since its U.S.-chaperoned admission to the WTO. Apparently the promise of wide open markets was just that—a promise. According to the Chamber of Commerce, which gleefully championed the PRC's bid, "It's too early to issue sweeping judgments." But their new report runs short on gold stars. Agriculture: delay tactics, export subsidies, and various schemes to keep the Chinese market closed to foreign goods. Intellectual property: "rampant" violations. Services: Insurance and commercial banking still closed to foreign investment. Seems our "strategic partner" is slow to convert to the free trade faith—or perhaps just prefers its end of the \$84 billion U.S.-China trade imbalance.