

Reply to the *Washington Post*: The Cause of Kerry's Problem

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The Sunday, May 23rd edition of the *Washington Post's* "Outlook" section, featured an article by CSIS associate James Mann on the subject of the spectacle of self-inflicted catastrophe being exhibited by the recent behavior of the Democratic campaign of Senator John Kerry. The concluding six paragraphs of that published piece make an important point; but, it contemplates Kerry's problem, rather than identifying the underlying, correctable cause of Kerry's tragic performance so far.

On the surface, Senator Kerry's obvious problem is that, whatever the nobler qualifications he might have, those qualities are currently being suffocated by the Democratic National Committee's currently reigning financier mafia. The fact of such pressures on him by his current set of managers, might be tolerable in the case of a professional boxer, but are really no excuse for such submissive behavior by a man engaged in a different profession, seeking to become the President of our republic, at a time we are threatened by the onrushing, crucial problems facing us today.

A man proffering himself to become President under the present conditions of both a war and a global monetary-financial collapse now fully in progress, has no moral right to put his personal ambition opportunistically above the welfare of the nation and its people. As the *Post's* contributor Mann argues, Kerry's nitpicking amounts to a refusal to acknowledge, even now, that Vice President Cheney's continuing personal commitment, since 1991–1992, to preventive nuclear wars—that, in one country after another—is already a more ominous disaster than the Vietnam quagmire turned out to be.

So far, Kerry is sometimes all sizzle, and no steak; but, there are long intervals, when even the sizzle can not be heard.

I have written and spoken of this matter in many locations. Here, I capitulate the bare essentials of that argument in language suited to typical readers of the *Post*.

Why, for example, was Kerry dumb enough, in 2002, to join the pack for Dubya's war? That is one of the two key doubts about Kerry's powers of judgment which is just not going to go away when the campaign against Bush-Cheney begins in late Summer.

"Forty-dollar-a-barrel" petroleum is a warning of the way in which the two crucial issues which Kerry ignores are intertwined: onrushing monetary-financial collapse and the realities of how we got into this Iraq war. Yet, once we agree that Kerry's pratfalls on both issues threaten to turn the November 2004 election into a caricature of its 2000 predecessor, we have to look deeper than Kerry's personal shortcomings, if voters are to achieve an adequate understanding of the challenge before them. As Mann gropes toward an inkling of that deeper reality; what does this show us about what is menacing about the present mental and moral condition of our celebrated two-party system?

The Scandal: Ignoring Franklin Roosevelt

The scandal in the Democratic Party's political bedroom, which Mann himself ignores, is the issue of the Party's shameless repudiation of the Franklin Roosevelt legacy. We are in an onrushing global depression, a depression of a systemic, rather than merely cyclical nature, a depression which demands a systemic cure, not the patchwork of "elect me and I will be good to you" promises presently proffered by a desperately flailing Kerry campaign. If Kerry intends to become a serious choice for President sometime between now and November, he must face the challenge represented, in today's world monetary-financial crisis, the need for a new President Franklin Roosevelt, the echo of a Roosevelt whose election proved later to have saved the world from a Synarchist-backed Hitler's Nazi world empire, while rescuing the U.S.A. itself from the kind of fiscal austerity measures which would have produced fascism in the U.S.A. as they did, throughout Europe, over the 1922–1945 interval.

Kerry could never become qualified to actually be President, until he had faced the reality, that, in fact, I am on the record as the only technically and emotionally qualified candidate for that office under present world circumstances. Since I have been not only hated, but feared by relevant elements of our financial establishment, since my 1971 exposure of the notable pro-Schachtian liberal, Prof. Abba Lerner, in a public New York debate—and hated even more fervently since my role in prompting President Ronald Reagan's proffer of a Strategic Defense Initiative—things which would have been previously considered morally inconceivable, have been done, to exclude me from public candidates' debates. These immoral actions have included an implicitly racist Democratic National Committee's success in nullifying the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Kerry became the presumptive candidate because he was presumed to be incapable of taking the type of anti-Schachtian measures which

Franklin Roosevelt employed to defend the U.S. from the kind of fascist takeover which, in March 1933, had just occurred in Germany. It is not entirely his fault, therefore, that he has shown stubborn incompetence in his campaign since his Iowa and New Hampshire victories; his personal fault was the quality which caused him to be chosen as a person of those attributes which now excite growing despair among those who had hoped to support him.

How Sophism Leads to War

The "beast-man" characteristics which typified the Nazi system, as echoed in the Abu Ghraib scandal, as should have been foreseen in the case of Guantanamo, are warning of what the re-election of a Bush-Cheney ticket would represent, come about January 2005.

To give credit where credit is due, a German associate of mine took me aside one evening, to review his study of work of the 19th-Century German historian of Ancient Greek history, Ernst Curtius. The relevant passages from Curtius on the Peloponnesian War, which my associate cited, were new, to me, and a valuable addition to my knowledge; but, the point my associate made was, by no means, new. Curtius's account is useful, but it leaves the deeper, systemic roots of the matter to be found elsewhere, as in the dialogues of Plato. The fate of Athens remains a good textbook illustration of the kind of doom which the Bush-Cheney Administration threatens for the U.S.A. of the coming months.

Pericles' Athens, then the leading nation of the alliance which had defeated the Persian Empire's aggression, had turned upon its allies, attempting to establish an Athenian Empire. These crimes against humanity perpetrated by that Athens then, led to the Peloponnesian War which destroyed the power of Athens, and led to the process of cultural and moral decadence in European Civilization, from which the evil which was the Roman Empire later emerged.

My associate's reference to Curtius had merely illustrated the point which was overlooked by historians sympathetic to the cause of Ancient Rome, a point long clear for me from my own decades-long studies of the Pythagoreans and the work of Plato. It was, as Plato presented this in his dialogues, those Sophists of Athens who perpetrated the judicial murder of Socrates, who expressed that moral corruption of the Athens under Pericles and Thrasymachus, the Sophists' corruption which had made the Peloponnesian War possible. It was the Thrasymachus who led the most calamitous phase of that war, who is typified today by the policies of the U.S. under Cheney puppet George W. Bush, Jr. Ironically, for those in the Democratic Party who are soft on Cheney today, the descriptive name of that sophist political party was "The Democratic Party of Athens."

However, my associate was mistaken in the narrow emphasis on Curtius's attention to the Sophists. The same reductionism was the essential quality of the Eleatics earlier, and also,

essentially, the rhetorical method of Aristotle later. The Sophists who are the chief target of Plato's dialogues, were only one guise under a succession of corrupting influences which led Ancient Greek civilization into the ruinous effects of the Peloponnesian War and its aftermath. It is that same quality of reductionists' sophistry, typified in the worst extreme by the implicitly pro-fascist legacy of the Congress of Cultural Freedom. It is the Sophists' method, as otherwise known by the Apollo cult of Delphi and the Eleatics, which is expressed in the extreme by existentialist cults popularized in universities today. It is that crooked, "spin-doctor's" method of argument, which provides the philosophical impetus for that corruption of U.S. political life under the rule of the high priesthood of mass-media populism.

The root of Sophistry today is typified by the attitude of creating a commentary adopted as a guide to following an apparent trend in events, rather than acting to bring a truthfully defined outcome into being. It is searching for an explanation for preparing oneself to submit to what is presented as "inevitable," rather than acting to cause what is needed to happen, which is the form in which the negligent crimes of sophistry are widespread in the U.S., and elsewhere, today. Sophistry is merely a way of rationalizing that particularly disgusting sort of opportunism.

The Sophists who perpetrated the judicial murder of Socrates were only typical of the same tradition which has dominated the U.S. political culture increasingly, since the launching of the official, post-Kennedy U.S. war in Indo-China, and Richard Nixon's ominous 1966 meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi. Cheney's war will become our own reliving of the Peloponnesian War, unless we choose a President who will rid us of that reincarnate Thrasymachus which the tradition of Professor Leo Strauss and the Cheney-dominated Bush regime represent today.

The only hope is either that I am nominated, or that Kerry, if nominated, accepts my guidance in respect to improving his behavior in a degree which would be, otherwise, manifestly beyond his present capacity.