

THE ANTI-AMERICAN LEFT

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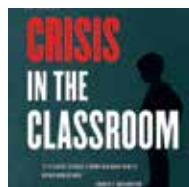
Publisher, Scott Walter

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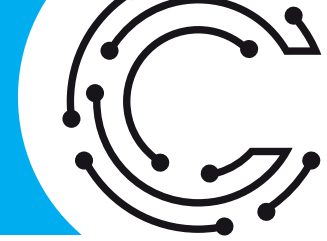


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CHINA, CHINA, CHINA (AND BIDEN)

By Sarah Lee

One of the more interesting aspects of the Biden classified documents drama is the appearance of a university-affiliated think tank, named for the president, that received millions as a “gift” from China while looking on paper like little more than an accounting code.

The Penn Biden Center, located in Washington, DC, but part of the University of Pennsylvania, is where the first classified documents were found and tells only one part of a larger story of years-long Chinese infiltration of American institutions.

On that front, China has been busy. They’ve been involved in setting up secret police stations in New York and LA, engaging in massive land buys in rural states, purchasing defunct and failing American college campuses, rolling out Confucius Institutes in colleges and K–12 schools, collecting user data on pervasive social media apps, seeking telecom dominance, moving fentanyl across the Southern border, and “gifting” millions to universities and policy-oriented think tanks. These things are documented, and are only what we know now. There could be—and likely will be—more to come.

Less understood is the Biden family’s role in helping China succeed in some of their endeavors, although that part of the story promises to play out over the next couple of years as the Oversight Committee begins its investigation. Rep James Comer (R-KY), new head of the committee, had been busy on this front even before his party won the House.

So while the jury is still out as to what the Biden family was *actually* up to as it relates to China, reports indicate Joe Biden’s son, Hunter, may have had access to some of these newly-discovered classified documents while working for a Chinese energy firm (and behaving like a deranged diletante). And, most importantly, that his father was in on the game. As Jonathan Turley put it:



Credit: Salma Bashir Motiualla. License: Shutterstock

Chinese President Xi Jinping (R) shakes hands with then U.S. Vice President Joe Biden (L) inside the Great Hall of the People on December 4, 2013, in Beijing, China.

“Emails on Hunter’s laptop make repeated reference to not only Joe’s knowledge but efforts to hide his involvement. ... Emails used code names for Joe Biden such as ‘Celtic’ or ‘the big guy.’ In one, ‘the big guy’ is mentioned as possibly receiving a 10% cut on a deal with a Chinese energy firm. There are also references to Hunter paying off his father’s bills from shared accounts.

Sarah Lee is director of communications and external affairs at CRC.



As Newt Gingrich laments, it all looks a lot like what many already assume happens all the time in DC: unfettered and shameless corruption.

The Biden family's relationship to China's influence operations is something Comer and House Oversight have firmly in their sights, but the information will no doubt be difficult to dislodge. Perhaps that's because, as Newt Gingrich laments, it all looks a lot like what many already assume happens all the time in DC: unfettered and shameless corruption:

[T]here is virtually no public accountability or transparency about the money trail. It's a given that Chinese sources aren't going to share any information. And the University of Pennsylvania is simply refusing to obey the law and report the foreign donations.

I worked with the Trump administration's Department of Education on this for several years, and we simply could not get the University of Pennsylvania to open its books and explain where all the Chinese money was coming from.

Consider that now-Secretary of State Antony Blinken was the manager of the Penn Biden Center. Several other Biden team members were paid by the University of Pennsylvania in the period between Joe Biden's vice presidency and presidency.

Meanwhile, in apparent appreciation for setting him up at the center, Joe Biden appointed former University President Amy Gutmann to be U.S. Ambassador to Germany. Similarly,

David Cohen, the former chairman of the university's board of trustees, is now the U.S. Ambassador to Canada.

It's disappointing that the apathy about what the current President of the United States and his family have been doing to help China succeed to the potential national security detriment of the United States is this pronounced.

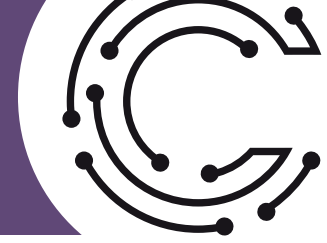
As Jim Geraghty writes in *National Review*, it's remarkable on a national scale.

If I said to you that a company that was effectively controlled by the Chinese government paid Hunter Biden almost \$5 million for vaguely defined 'consulting' and legal work, wouldn't that bother you? Even if you're a loyal Democrat—even if you were so progressive you're to the left of Bernie Sanders—do you *want* members of president's family to get in bed with the Chinese government?

Another way to put that is to ask if it's reasonable to take progressives' silence and lack of outrage—from their legislators, media mouthpieces, and voters—as an answer to those questions. ■

This article originally appeared in Townhall on January 23, 2023. Reprinted with permission.

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THE CRISIS OF EXPLOITATION IN THE CLASSROOM

By Armstrong Williams

Summary: *In school districts across the country, we are seeing a shift in priorities from student to administrator—not even to the educator. This shift in priorities is destroying neighborhoods and creating a generation of leaders that will be less educated and more corruptible. Without an educated and engaged public, the United States will not long endure. Education must be our number one priority. It creates the human capital more valuable than all the gadgets or creature comforts in the world.*

Education is the secret to happiness, comfort, and prosperity. Ignorance is the bedfellow of misery, poverty, and hardship. But education is missing in too many communities. Why? A combination of race and cultural exaltation of juvenile amusements over learning and wisdom.

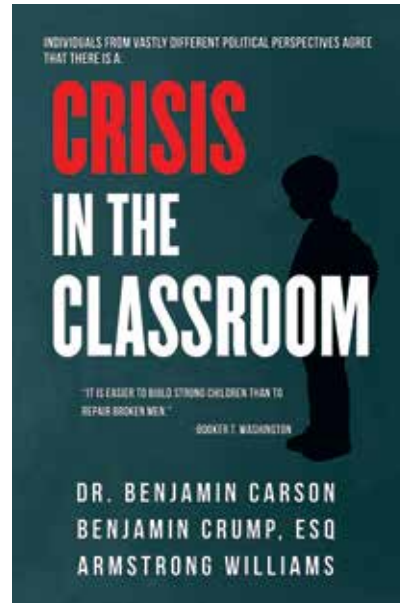
The weakest are the most vulnerable to exploitation. Minorities are like putty in the hands of politicians and industry—a version of “No minority need apply.” Exploitation has no penalties or downsides.

Capital is needed to create more capital. With no resources, minorities find it difficult to gain economic traction. Their influence is diminished in proportion to their inability to make handsome political donations to obtain political access.

The current income disparity between average white and Black households is stark: \$75,000 for whites and \$45,000 for Blacks. With nearly twice as much money as Blacks and a third more than Hispanics (\$55,000), it becomes increasingly clear that minorities have missed out on the opportunities enjoyed by their white counterparts. They have been marginalized in the political arena.

Regressive policies by policymakers and the economic and social abuse of minorities have made them perfect targets for exploitation, cheap labor, and the other plentiful resources they have to offer. Race and impoverishment invite school administrators to exploit minorities for their own gain.

This cycle of poverty has become a generational—a seemingly insurmountable—problem because so many have been lost with no way out. An educator from Maryland, in



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Crisis in the Classroom: Crisis in Education by Benjamin Carson, Benjamin Crump, and Armstrong Williams (Skyhorse Publishing, 2023).

discussing the faults of the Maryland school systems, told me that during her time as a high school teacher, the administration in her school was asking both her and the faculty to do things that were “criminal.” As she stated, “we were asked to pass kids ... that had not learned ... a concept, not a skill.”

After all, if there is a consistent stream of issues to be solved, and there is a consistent stream of deep-pocketed higher authorities willing to give you money in purporting to solve them, wouldn't you continue to let the

problem fester as a profit center? The massive influx of billions upon billions of dollars into failing educational systems has caused administrators to get rich at the expense of those who they were tasked to make succeed.

No archaeological expedition is required to discover these facts. High school dropout rates are public. Illiteracy rates are public. Crime rates are public. Funding is public. Salaries are public. The biggest controversy of the century is wide out in the open and ready to be told, yet nobody seems to have the courage—or inclination—to tell it.

Armstrong Williams is a political commentator, entrepreneur, author, syndicated columnist, and talk show host.



When good men come to power, they can often be easily corrupted and led astray by the opportunity that lies before them.

When good men come to power, they can often be easily corrupted and led astray by the opportunity that lies before them. Money and power can lead any good man down evil paths.

Instead, we require brave men to seek office and do what must be done for the betterment of our communities. Yet, even those who grow up in these communities who grew up seeing the pain and suffering of their neighbors and who rise to power almost invariably do more harm than good. It is easy to blame these people for their misdeeds. But their intentions may be good. The road to hell, however, is paved with good intentions.

Think about it: From a young age, marginalized youth are put into a pipeline that treats the law as against their people. With this idea of inferiority, they easily eat up and regurgitate propaganda from the media and government figures that teach them that their impoverishment is a result of inferiority to a superior race. It gives them excuses and the opportunity to turn those excuses into a justification for indolence and continued failure.

This vicious cycle of wrongful belief in inferiority makes powerful politicians and community leaders merely parrot the ideas of the people who came before them. Those despicable individuals who divided us by race instead of unifying us by our common ancestry under God have had their views recycled and remade into mainstream ideals hidden beneath unobjectionable ones.

The past is a prologue. We are ruled by our past and we will continue to be ruled by it until we end this cycle of abhorrent ideals that serve only those who propagate them.

Throughout my travels both inside and outside the United States, I have witnessed first-hand the effects of malfeasance by school administrators. I have seen the humans, not the statistics, behind failed policies that caused bad education. I have spoken to the children who, despite being in their younger years, are already counting down to their final days, awaiting death by a botched robbery, a stray bullet, a petty dispute, or a gang-style killing.

What I have come to realize throughout my time traveling the United States and seeing those handicapped by a lack of education, is that much deeper strife has been created within people and throughout society. With a climbing number of uneducated paired with nearly boundless methods of earning a living, many have come to believe that education is not necessary for a successful life—that what matters most is one's ability to make money. This has led students who cannot read or write to pursue careers divorced from education.

Many turn to the internet to make a living through jobs requiring no skills. This is enticing for some, as studies show that there are millions of influencers in the United States—persons whose job it is to entertain others on social media and influence others. While there are certainly influencers who are intelligent and who are subject matter experts, the proliferation of this trade has caused many in the younger generation who view influencing as a viable future profession, absent any education.

Education is not necessarily a college degree. It is not learning mathematics or mastering complex, specific subjects such as biochemistry or neurology. Instead, education is the critical thinking that is the taproot of success in any line of work irrespective of complexity. A person who has difficulty reading will be unable to pursue a career in law and a career in vehicle maintenance equally. If he cannot read, then he certainly cannot comprehend legal textbooks much less repair guides and manuals. Without that ability to read he cannot



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Education is the critical thinking that is the taproot of success in any line of work irrespective of complexity.

even undertake general life activities, such as purchasing a home, as he would be unable to read or understand the contract or undertake any employment that requires him to read and comprehend words critical to his job.

That is why education involves a broad spectrum of things that enable people to do other things. We have failed to realize that a good education is not just a college degree but also learning a trade. If a person who completes high school knows how to read, he does not necessarily have to spend tens of thousands of dollars to obtain a degree at a university, he could be just as well off if he were to undertake the process of learning a trade such as plumbing. As I was told during a Crisis in the Classroom town hall by a criminal lawyer about his brother repairing his pipes, he looked at the bill after the family and friends discount and, as a lawyer, second-guessed whether the countless hours he spent obtaining a legal degree and concurrently the pile of advanced degrees that come with the promise of high pay, really were all that worth pursuing if one only pursued them for monetary gain.

In other words, money can be made without a college degree by acquiring skills for which there is a high demand but a slender supply. The law of supply and demand at work. We are all born with different aptitudes.

It is the role of schools and our teachers to inculcate critical thinking and eschew indoctrination. Unfortunately, our teachers are underpaid and overworked and overstressed and underappreciated. Administrators often look to teachers as scapegoats for criminal activity to enrich themselves through deceit and cover-up.

Money, whether we like it or not, is the great equalizer. It incentivizes individuals to work harder and be more efficient in the furtherance of a future filled with the comfort and pleasures that money provides. Certainly, teachers should become teachers because they want to teach the next generation of leaders; however, internal morality and motivation can only take a person so far when they are destitute.

Teachers should be paid like CEOs; we should take advantage of their desire to do good for their students and motivate them further by providing them with pay incentives based on their students' performances. We can be sure that there will be those who will cut corners and fudge numbers for extra pay, but we can be equally sure that those people will represent an infinitesimally small minority and that, with the proper safeguards put in place, the government can create a structure that holds those bad actors accountable.



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It is the role of schools and our teachers to inculcate critical thinking and eschew indoctrination.

One would think that with billions of dollars and yearly funding each school system would be able to pay their teachers not just a livable wage but a wage that allows them to live comfortably and will enable them to teach their students without stress. However, when speaking to a guest during one of my town halls, she concluded that although much money is given to school systems, far too much is squandered within their bureaucracies. In her eyes, there are generally far too many levels of bureaucracy in educational systems that force them to spend more and more money as more of it continues to be wasted every year.

Teachers' unions are to the education of students what a ball and chain are to a swimmer. Their counter-educational mission is the collective maximization of pay and benefits coupled with a collective minimization of work. Whether students learn is an afterthought, like an extra in a Cecilie B. DeMille cinematic extravaganza.

Unionized teachers deplore excellence and extra effort because tacit aspersion is cast upon mediocrity or worse, which characteristically earmark all large organizations. The lowest common denominator prevails. The growth of teachers' unions corresponds to a decline in student learning. Although there are multiple causes of the vertical fall, teachers' unions are a prime culprit by removing monetary incentives for teaching excellence demonstrated by student achievement.

These unions have turned the profession of teaching from one of superior morality to one of profit-seeking. Union leaders have sued to prevent the opening of charter schools so that their union power is not threatened. The New York State United Teachers and the United Federation of Teachers sued to block a charter school from opening. While the teachers' unions spent thousands of dollars—if not hundreds of thousands—to prevent what is considered in this case to be an extremely prestigious school, New York City public schools continue to be plagued with high crime filled with below-the-poverty line students. In sum, money from the teacher's union is being used to block children's opportunities for a superior education compared to what is obtainable in public schools.

The National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) are the chain and ball of education. The NEA sports a teacher membership of three million, assets approximating \$370 million, and annual income and expenditures approximating \$390 million. The corresponding figures for the AFT are 1.7 million teacher members, \$100 million in assets, and annual income and expenditures approximating \$200 million. Approximately 90 percent of public-school teachers belong to unions.

The pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment of public-school teachers are set by elected public officials—typically in collective bargaining agreements with teachers' unions. It is thus unsurprising that the latter seek to curry favor with the former with handsome campaign contributions or lobbying. According to Open Secrets, the NEA's annual political contributions



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Teachers' unions are to the education of students what a ball and chain are to a swimmer.

approximate \$10 million, whereas the corresponding AFT figure approximates \$4 million. The NEA's annual lobbying expenses exceed \$2.5 million.

The self-dealing here is egregious. Public officials are inclined to generosity with taxpayer dollars to compensate unionized teachers in exchange for political support in the form of donations and votes. Student achievement be damned. Compulsory school attendance laws shield public officials and unions from accountability by guaranteeing a captive audience.

The power of teachers' unions finds expression in recurring illegal teacher strikes with impunity in New York, Chicago, Seattle, and elsewhere. Public officials are too intimidated to enforce the law. What a deplorable example for students who are the biggest losers and witness their teachers profiting from illegal activity.

Teachers' unions are implacably opposed to any measure that would hold members accountable for their success in teaching, for example, pay for improving student performance whether on standardized tests or otherwise. It is altogether understandable that the NEA and AFT would do this. Their purpose is to hike teacher compensation and diminish teaching demands. But it is incomprehensible that elected officials would permit such a rip-off at the expense of hapless students. Can you imagine the owner of the New York Yankees paying the same salary to Babe Ruth and the bat boy? Elected officials tolerate teacher union maleducation to elicit campaign contributions. This must stop. Federal government contractors are prohibited from making contributions or expenditures, or promising to make any such contribution or expenditure, to any political party, committee, or candidate for federal office, or to any person for any political purpose or use. Corresponding prohibitions should be enacted by state and local governments for teachers' unions representing public school teachers.

The abysmal state of public-school education controlled by teachers' unions has given birth to private and charter schools as competitive alternatives for ambitious and industrious parents and students. That is all for the good. Monopoly is a narcotic and competition is a stimulant to learning. School voucher programs enabling parents to enroll their children in private schools and escape from public school captivity with no additional expense are wildly popular but are predictably fiercely opposed by teachers' unions.

In Washington, D.C. approximately 1,600 students receive vouchers of \$8,000 for grades K-8 and \$12,000 for high school. They graduate at higher rates than do their pub-

lic-school counterparts, although per pupil expenditures for them per school year is substantially higher, soaring past \$20,000. The mere existence of voucher programs is positive. Public schools are incentivized to improve performance to retain students.

The growth of voucher programs is stunted, however, because of political opposition ignited by teachers' unions and their campaign and voting clout. They are available to only a small percent of the 50 million public school students nationwide.

Publicly funded, privately operated charter schools also compete with the teachers' union-dominated public school system. Charter schools with various restrictions are authorized in forty-five states and the District of Columbia. They enroll 3.4 million students nationwide in more than 7,500 charter schools, compared with 100,000 public schools attended by 50 million students nationally. Teachers' unions implacably oppose charter schools to kill educational competition in the bud, which explains the substantial financial handicap under which the latter operates. Charter schools receive fewer dollars per pupil than district public schools.

Though there are year-to-year fluctuations, the average charter school receives 75 cents for every dollar the average district school receives.

Notwithstanding the limited availability of unsubsidized private schools, vouchers, and charter schools, the NEA and AFT through political clout guarantee public schools a more than 90 percent share of student enrollment—an educational monopoly by any measure that fosters indolence and stagnation.

Teachers' unions implacably oppose charter schools to kill educational competition in the bud.



Credit: Charles M. Conlon. License: <https://bit.ly/3JGjUN0>.

Can you imagine the owner of the New York Yankees paying the same salary to Babe Ruth and the bat boy?

There is a better way. State or local laws should authorize learners' unions to bargain with teachers' unions and elected officials over the school budget, curriculum, and terms and conditions of learning and teaching. In cases of impasse, an impartial arbitrator should be empowered to decide between competing alternatives proposed by the three parties. Learners' unions should receive public funds to retain necessary experts and legal advice. This concept of learner representation in education is no novelty. At least twenty-five states have students who sit on local school boards. But a student member is readily outnumbered. Learners' unions are necessary to rectify that imbalance.

Despite my disparagement of teachers' unions, it would be wrong to conclude that they are the serpent in an educational garden of Eden. Education is a complex undertaking and is influenced by multiple causes. If teachers' unions were outlawed, students would not turn instantly into Isaac Newtons or William Shakespeares and scale the intellectual heights. As H. L. Mencken observed, "Every complex problem has a solution which is simple, direct, plausible—and wrong."

What we are seeing in school districts across the country is a shift in priorities from student to administrator—not even to the educator. This shift in priorities is destroying neighborhoods and creating a generation of leaders that will be less educated and more corruptible. Our school systems and unions should not be working to profit in the short term, but they should view education as a long-term endeavor and give students access to as many educational opportunities as possible even if it comes at the expense of their bottom lines.

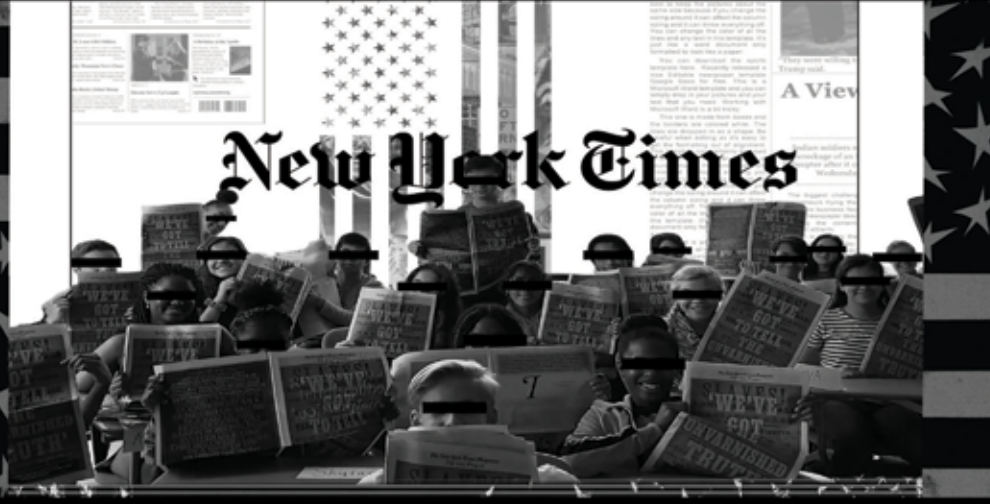
Without an educated and engaged public, the United States will not long endure. Education must be our number one priority. It creates the human capital more valuable than all the gadgets or creature comforts in the world. If we do not all hang together in the educational enterprise—teachers, administrators, parents, students, and public officials alike—then assuredly we will all hang separately. As Thomas Jefferson elaborated, "If a nation expects to be free and ignorant in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." ■

This article was first published as a chapter entitled "The Crisis of Exploitation" in Crisis in the Classroom: Crisis in Education by Benjamin Carson, Benjamin Crump, and Armstrong Williams (Skyhorse Publishing, 2023). Reprinted with permission.

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ARCHITECTS OF WOKE:

The 1619 Project's Fake History



STOKELY CARMICHAEL



& RACISM WITHOUT RACISTS

SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK & THE ROMANCE OF REVOLUTIONARY TERROR



CRC's Architects of Woke series takes aim at far-left post-modernist and Marxist thinkers and activists responsible for the spread of identity politics on college campuses and in society at large.

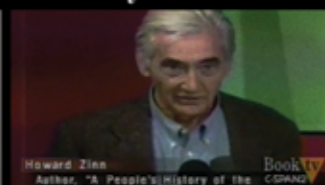
The series is hosted and directed by award-winning filmmaker Rob Montz, whose online documentary work has attracted millions of views and coverage in major outlets, including *The Economist*, *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and The Adam Carolla Podcast.

Subjects of the Architects of Woke include the fake history of the 1619 Project, the wildly popular radical socialist podcast *Chapo Trap House*, far-left political activist Howard Zinn, University of California at Berkeley feminist gender theorist Judith Butler, highly influential Marxist-Leninist philosopher Slavoj Žižek.

Watch the entire series at DangerousDocumentaries.com.

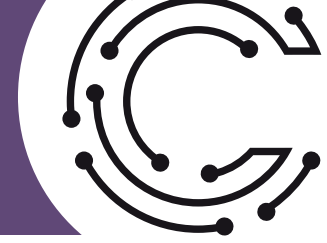


Howard Zinn, Hollywood, & the Fairy Tale of American Evil



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THE ANTI-AMERICAN LEFT

By Robert Stilson

Summary: *The United States of America has arguably been the single most indispensable force for global good over at least the past century. Yet a distinct and longstanding vein of activism on the American Left—the anti-American Left—argues that American influence is harmful and deleterious to the well-being of the rest of the world. The anti-American Left’s fault lies not in its criticism of any given aspect of American foreign or domestic policy—on the contrary, criticism can sometimes be productive. The real harm is in its incessant and dishonest portrayal of the United States as some uniquely malevolent global influence, while brushing aside the brutality of some of the world’s true bad actors and ignoring America’s unparalleled (if imperfect) record of confronting them. What’s more, in many cases the anti-American Left receives substantial funding from mainstream philanthropy—wealthy individuals and foundations that have benefited tremendously from the peace and prosperity engendered by American military power and the global spread of democratic capitalism.*

The conclusion that the United States of America has functioned as the single most indispensable force for global good over at least the past century is rather difficult to escape. While it didn’t come close to doing it alone or doing it perfectly, the list of alternative historical outcomes that the United States can plausibly be credited with preventing is long, cumulative, and scary. Likewise, despite regular setbacks and failures, the broad global trend toward economic prosperity, geopolitical stability, and respect for human rights has been driven largely by the model of capitalist democracy championed by the United States and its allies.

Understanding the opposite perspective—those who not only disagree with this assessment but criticize American influence as harmful and deleterious to the well-being of the rest of the world—can be equally difficult. This is especially true with domestic critics, over whom interstate rivalries, cultural differences, and an allowable degree of historical subjectivity should wield considerably less influence. Indeed, a distinct and longstanding vein of activism on the



Credit: Jmuravchik. License: <https://bit.ly/3HHt88b>.

To Joshua Muravchik, “communophiles” could be distinguished by their virulent criticism of capitalist democracies like the United States, which they considered so flawed that they needed radical transformation, rather than mere reformation.

American Left advocates almost exclusively from this viewpoint—an ideology that might collectively be termed the “anti-American Left.”

It is important to clarify a distinction between “anti-American” and “un-American,” for the latter not only conjures up troubling ghosts of mid-century McCarthyism, but also implies that expressing opinions on matters of public importance, no matter how radical or unpopular, is something less than fully American. The truth is of course precisely the opposite, and reasoned criticism is often constructive.

Robert Stilson is a research specialist at CRC who runs several of CRC’s specialized projects, including a series on federal grants and nonprofits.



Credit: Institute for Policy Studies. License: <https://bit.ly/3X5oLuj>.



Credit: C-SPAN. License: <https://bit.ly/3YsCk0h>.

Founded in 1963, IPS was one of the very first ideological public policy think tanks, and institute personnel that exercised a lasting influence on subsequent thought and activism. This was especially true of the institute’s co-founders Marcus Raskin (l) and Richard Barnet (r), who combined political radicalism with considerable intellectual heft.

Rather, “anti-American Left” refers to those domestic activists and groups that—consistently and almost without exception—depict the international influence of the United States in a negative light. Blanket criticism of American foreign policy is a core tenet of their activism. Put another way, the anti-American Left operates from the basic premise that the less the United States involves itself in world affairs, the better. Classically, such activists tend to espouse strong anti-military and anti-capitalist convictions, and they generally consider the two concepts to be inextricably linked.

Those associated with the anti-American Left are also conspicuous how they often portray foreign authoritarian regimes, in terms ranging from equivocation to qualified support to outright praise. Almost as a rule, poverty, corruption, political repression, human rights violations, and armed violence in such places are minimized or explained away by blaming the United States in some manner. Cuba is probably the paradigmatic example, but Iran, Venezuela, Nicaragua, China, North Korea, Russia, Syria, and other countries are regularly held up as victims of American and/or Western “imperialism.”

Hostility toward Israel is also a defining feature, as is opposition to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other supranational entities in which the United States plays key roles. The pattern often appears to simply follow the inverse of how well-aligned a given foreign government or international institution’s interests are perceived to be with the interests of the United States.

This is not a new phenomenon. Back in 1984, author Joshua Muravchik coined the term “communophilism” to describe a particular form of leftism with distinctive features that didn’t quite fit within existing patterns of liberalism, socialism, or communism. To Muravchik, “communophiles” could be distinguished by their virulent criticism of capitalist democracies like the United States, which they considered so flawed that they needed radical transformation, rather than mere reformation. They were broadly sympathetic toward foreign communist and other far-Left movements without being beholden to any specific one, though they did tend to favor those originating in the Third World over the Soviet model. While noting that there was no “strict consistency,” Muravchik argued that communophiles evidenced “a general attitude that the future of mankind lies, as it should lie, with the communist world.” Although the world looks rather different in 2023 than it did in 1984, much of Muravchik’s “communophilism” analysis remains relevant to understanding contemporary activism.

Plumbing the anti-American Left’s funding is also important. It is one thing for a group of radical activists to form a small nonprofit to promote their fringe views. The barriers to doing so are relatively (and rightly) low. It is another thing entirely for those same radical activists to receive funding from some of the largest and most sophisticated grantmakers in the country. This is a crucial prong to understanding the issue: In many cases the anti-American Left receives substantial funding from mainstream philanthropy—wealthy individuals and foundations that have

benefited tremendously from the peace and prosperity engendered by American military power and the global spread of democratic capitalism.

IPS and the National Lawyers Guild

Although the roots of the Anti-American Left stretch back further, it probably makes sense to begin in the 1960s with the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), if for no other reason than that IPS was the case study through which Muravchik presented his ideas on communophilism. Founded in 1963, IPS was one of the very first ideological public policy think tanks, and institute personnel—generally known as “fellows”—that exercised a lasting influence on subsequent thought and activism. This was especially true of the institute’s co-founders Marcus Raskin and Richard Barnet, who combined political radicalism with considerable intellectual heft. Historian Brian S. Mueller wrote in his 2021 book *Democracy’s Think Tank* that “the story of the American Left cannot be told without discussing the contributions of IPS.”

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, IPS became well known both for its strident opposition to American foreign policy and for its aggressive anti-capitalism. The Vietnam War dominated the institute’s early years, as it did with much of the era’s New Left, and IPS was generally situated within the New Left. Those at IPS not only opposed the war, but they stood in solidarity with the North Vietnamese communists against an American government that they considered to be led by war criminals bent on exporting American imperialism. IPS was also not shy about assigning blame for the Cold War to the United States and NATO. While not necessarily pro-Soviet in their outlook, institute fellows consistently argued that American interventions did far more to destabilize the world than Soviet interventions.

Presaging what remains a core tenant of today’s anti-American Left, Barnet and Raskin wrote in the early 1970s that “Americans believe that the world must be made safe for America, but for the sake of survival itself, America

CC —————
In 1980, IPS fellow Saul Landau argued that Castro was no dictator, but rather “one of the most brilliant politicians in the world today.”

must be made safe for the world.” Mueller explained in *Democracy’s Think Tank* that IPS believed true democracy could only be achieved if “the United States renounced empire and its role as guardian of the liberal capitalist international order.” He also noted that those at IPS “tended to mark off certain regions of the world as more important than others when it came to demanding protection of human rights”—a conspicuous asymmetry that remains a hallmark characteristic of the anti-American Left toward left-wing authoritarian regimes.

Through its focus on the Third World (particularly Latin America) in the 1970s and 1980s, IPS pioneered what remains a region of great interest to like-minded activists today. Institute “literature abound[ed] in praise of Ho [Chi Minh] and Mao [Zedong] and Fidel [Castro] and the Sandinistas,” according to Muravchik’s research, alongside Chile’s Salvador Allende and other more obscure leftist revolutionaries. Interviewed in 1980, prominent IPS fellow Saul Landau even argued that Castro was no dictator, but rather “one of the most brilliant politicians in the world today” whose “successes far outnumber his failures.” IPS personnel regularly traveled to Nicaragua during the 1980s to meet with Sandinista leadership and even arranged for Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) and Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) to do so in April 1985.

IPS remains very much active today. While still generally placed at the radical end of the ideological spectrum, the institute has always been particularly adept at bridging the gap between that radicalism and the liberal establishment. And though IPS fellows hold varying opinions on a full spectrum of contemporary issues, their rhetoric toward American foreign policy and global free-market capitalism remains broadly and consistently critical. In 2020, IPS’s Chief of Race, Wealth and Community Dedrick Asante-Muhammad wrote, “The hard truth is that the United States—and its economy—is based on a white supremacist concentration of wealth and resources.” He argued that “the country’s economic system must be turned right side up.”

The institute’s New Internationalism Project explains that it seeks to “change U.S. policies away from militarism and towards the goals of human rights, equality for all, and peace with justice” and to “challenge U.S. domination of the United Nations.” The project’s director, Phyllis Bennis, has been more explicit in the past. In 2003 (in the context of the Iraq War), she wrote alongside former IPS director John Cavanagh of the need to “empower the [United Nations] as the legitimate replacement for the United States empire we seek to disempower.” The institute’s Foreign Policy in Focus

project works “to make the United States a more responsible global partner,” and many at IPS would like to begin with targeting America’s support for Israel.

IPS operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and receives substantial funding from foundations and other philanthropic institutions. Recent major grants have come from the Ford Foundation (\$2,950,000 from 2017 to 2022), the Foundation to Promote Open Society (\$1,165,000 from 2018 to 2021), the Fidelity Investments Charitable Gift Fund (\$1,050,991 from 2017 to 2020), the JPB Foundation (\$850,000 from 2017 to 2019), the NoVo Foundation (\$775,000 from 2017 to 2019), and the Wallace Global Fund (\$445,000 from 2017 to 2019).

Another group that remains active today and has an even longer history of radical leftism is the National Lawyers Guild. To the extent that Americans are familiar with the guild, it is probably due to having seen some of its more than 9,000 members attend leftist demonstrations in order to monitor law enforcement and provide support to protesters. The guild describes itself as a “political organization” and considers the United States government to be “based on and dedicated to preserving white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy and imperialism.” Its overarching objective is to promote “basic change in the structure of our political and economic system.”

Despite its origins as an association for American lawyers, the guild has always had a distinctly internationalist bent. Founded in the mid-1930s, communists held significant sway within the group almost from the beginning, and they generally aligned their positions with the interests of the Soviet Union. Much like IPS, the guild became heavily involved in anti-Vietnam War advocacy during the 1960s, and its then-president Doron Weinberg affirmed the group’s solidarity with the North Vietnamese victory in 1975. William Goodman, Weinberg’s successor, explained that the guild would quickly lose many of its members if it expressed opposition to the Soviet Union or the Communist Party, and in 1978 it declined an invitation to observe judicial proceedings in the USSR out of a reluctance to criticize the Soviets. Historian Guenter Lewy wrote in 1990 that the guild’s “concern with the observance of human rights has always stopped at the borders of the Socialist bloc.”

Today, the goal of the guild’s international committee is to “change U.S. foreign policy that threatens, rather than engages, or is based on a model of domination rather than respect.” It is staunchly pro-Cuba, having affirmed both its unwavering support for the Cuban Revolution “since its

triumph on January 1, 1959” and its belief in the “benefits that socialism has brought to all the people of Cuba.” The guild has declared its “solidarity with the people of Iran and Iraq” against “U.S. imperialism” and called upon the UN Security Council to “take all necessary measures to put an end to all US aggressions and interferences in the Middle East.” It is also vehemently anti-Israel, calling the country “a colonizing project rooted in racist ideology” and arguing that American diplomatic support amounts to encouraging complicity in “Israeli war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

In 2021, guild observers traveled to Venezuela for that country’s regional elections. Although the U.S. Department of State concluded that the Nicolas Maduro regime had hopelessly manipulated the process to predetermine the results, the guild praised the elections and expressed complete confidence in their legitimacy. Guild president Suzanne Adley accused the United States of spreading lies about the lack of political freedom in Venezuela purely to justify continued sanctions, which she characterized as amounting to “economic warfare.”

The National Lawyers Guild operates as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit, with 2020 revenues of \$2,781,518. One of its most important sources of funding is the affiliated National Lawyers Guild Foundation, a 501(c)(3) that in turn receives substantial philanthropic support—much of it through donor-advised funds. In recent years, major funding to the guild’s foundation has come from Greater Horizons (\$2,935,163 from 2017 to 2018), the Tides Foundation (\$1,030,500 from 2018 to 2019), the American Online Giving Foundation (\$265,419 from 2020 to 2021), the Fidelity Investments Charitable Gift Fund (\$204,850 from 2017 to 2020), and the Schwab Charitable Fund (\$172,150 from 2017 to 2021).

Democratic Socialists of America

Recent polling indicates that as many as a third of Americans hold a positive view of socialism, and the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) is the most prominent socialist political group in the country. It has received considerable mainstream media attention in recent years, due in no small part to the visibility of controversial member politicians like Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) and for its association with radical and quixotic legislative proposals like the Green New Deal.

Organized as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit, the DSA claims 92,000 members nationwide, including multiple sitting members

of Congress. While the group's domestic anti-capitalism is widely understood, less attention has been paid to its inveterate hostility toward American international influence and its simultaneous support for some of the most repressive regimes on the planet.

In its official platform, the DSA laments how it “operates in the heart of a global capitalist [American] empire that has wrought untold suffering on billions of people and the environment.” It demands that the United States unilaterally withdraw from NATO and close all foreign military bases, forgive all debts and pay reparations to “colonized peoples” and their descendants, and pursue closer diplomatic relations with those countries currently engaged in “resisting US imperialism.” Sanctions, according to the platform, should be eliminated against countries like Cuba, Venezuela, and Iran, and replaced by new ones against Israel—which it accuses of engaging in “apartheid, colonialism, and military occupation.”

The group's approach toward Cuba is illustrative. According to the DSA, “the primary detriment to quality of life for Cubans, and the primary force of instability on the island” is not the country's own repressive communist government, but the malevolent machinations of the capitalist United States. The DSA declares that it “will not compromise on the virtue of socialist internationalism” and “will not permit American imperialism to violate Cuban autonomy.” The



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The Democratic Socialists of America has received considerable mainstream media attention in recent years, due in no small part to the visibility of controversial member politicians like Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) and for its association with radical and quixotic legislative proposals like the Green New Deal.

DSA is committed to “an independent, socialist Cuba” and even appeared to express support for the Cuban government while its forces were putting down large anti-regime protests in the summer of 2021.

Through its Venezuela Solidarity campaign, the DSA has also affirmed its unqualified support for that country's catastrophic descent into authoritarian socialism, blaming its myriad problems on sanctions and American “interference,” not on profound governmental corruption, abuse, and economic mismanagement. During the summer of 2021, a DSA delegation met with Nicolas Maduro and expressed its admiration for the dictator whose regime has been accused by the United Nations of perpetrating widespread crimes against humanity. Considering the sham elections that the country purports to hold, the DSA's insistence that the United States is preventing Venezuelans from “determin[ing] their own political future” is nothing short of astonishing.

Other examples can be found in the Middle East. The DSA accuses the United States of having “held Iran in its sights since it broke free of despotic rule under the U.S.-backed Shah”—itself a remarkable manner of framing the 1979 revolution that saw an autocratic monarch replaced with an equally autocratic Supreme Leader. In 2020, after President Donald Trump ordered the assassination of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in Iraq, the DSA condemned the assassination as an “act of war against Iran,” perpetrated as part of America's relentless “imperialism and militarism.” General Soleimani was the infamous Quds Force commander whom the Department of Defense has blamed for killing hundreds of American and coalition military personnel and wounding thousands more. The DSA made no corresponding statement condemning Iranian militarism when the regime's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps shot down a civilian airliner just days later, killing scores of innocent people.

Perhaps most astonishing of all is the DSA's Korea Solidarity campaign. It falsely blames the United States for “artificially splitting the peninsula in half,” waging a decades-long “continuous war against the people of Korea,” and playing a “central role in the collective trauma brought onto Korea.” It characterizes economic sanctions as “attacks” on North Korea, which it claims have been leveled purely “to serve US imperialist interests.” Never is the North Korean government faulted for the deprivation and oppression that have made the country's leadership internationally notorious, nor is pro-American South Korea's wildly successful ascension to democratic prosperity ever acknowledged. To read the DSA's statement on Korea is to conclude that the United States alone stands in the way of lasting peace on the peninsula.



The Democratic Socialists of America characterizes economic sanctions as “attacks” on North Korea, which it claims have been leveled purely “to serve US imperialist interests.”

In 2017, the DSA voted to disaffiliate with the Socialist International, a global association of democratic socialist and social democratic parties like the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Mexico), the Socialist Party (France), and the African National Congress (South Africa). Its withdrawal was prompted by concerns among DSA membership that the Socialist International and its constituent parties were not as stridently anti-capitalist as they should be.

This is notable given that Joshua Muravchik’s original 1984 formulation for communophilism specifically identified hostility toward the Socialist International as a defining feature—one that helped serve to distinguish communophiles from more mainstream socialists. According to Muravchik, communophiles did not consider the association’s member parties to be true socialists at all, accusing them of having allegedly “made peace with capitalism.” It seems that today’s DSA—an increasingly visible pillar of the Anti-American Left—has reached a similar conclusion.

Alliance for Global Justice

All told, the Alliance for Global Justice is among the most radically leftist nonprofits in the United States. Its overarching goal is to challenge “the economic and foreign policies of our government and corporations” through four primary areas of “struggle for liberation from Empire”:

1. Opposition to free-market capitalism,
2. Opposition to American “militarism,”
3. Opposition to “US democracy manipulation efforts” in foreign countries, and
4. Opposition to the “consumptive excess of wealthy nations and their constant search for new resources to exploit.”

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit that itself administers dozens of separate projects, the Alliance’s revenues exploded from under \$7 million in 2020 to over \$56 million in 2021. The jump was largely driven by its sponsorship of the Movement for Black Lives (which has since been transferred to the Common Counsel Foundation) and several other groups

associated with the Black Lives Matter movement. As the self-described “accounting department for the movement for social change,” the alliance exercises considerable influence across the anti-American Left.

It also embodies some of its most virulent radicalism. The alliance has posted material calling the United States “the most significant threat to peace in this world,” and until recently, it listed the rejection of “the myth of US exceptionalism” as one of its core principles. It has committed itself to “revolutionary change” in America’s government, calling it “the best gift we could possibly offer ... the world.” The alliance has also not been shy about proclaiming its hostility toward the “sham” of Western-style liberal democracy, which it dismisses as “the governing principle of the US/NATO Empire, which serves global capitalism.” Like much of the rest of the anti-American Left, the alliance favors the various forms of left-wing authoritarianism practiced in places like Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua.

Indeed, it has always been closely linked to Nicaragua. The alliance’s roots date back to the formation of a group called the Nicaragua Network in 1979, established by American activists in order to support the far-left Sandinistas, who reportedly asked the Americans to help them by changing their own government.

That support continues today. After Sandinista strongman Daniel Ortega pulled virtually every trick in the autocratic playbook to secure for himself a fourth consecutive term as the country’s president in 2021—via elections that were described as a “pantomime” by the United States—the alliance celebrated Nicaragua’s “firm commitment to democracy” and published material declaring complete confidence in the electoral results and reminding readers that “every victory against U.S. authoritarianism is significant.”

One main activity of the Alliance for Global Justice is fiscal sponsorship—an arrangement through which it houses “project” groups that have not been granted their own 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the IRS. For an 8 percent fee, the alliance provides a variety of administrative services to its projects and accepts tax-deductible donations on their behalf. Sponsored projects must subscribe to the alliance’s vision and mission statement and be approved by its board



The United National Antiwar Coalition asserts categorically that “the U.S. government, and the corporations it serves, are the major cause of conflict and misery in the world today.”

of directors. As of January 2023, it claims to sponsor over 90 different projects, a number of which are deeply hostile to the United States.

One such project, the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) asserts categorically that “the U.S. government, and the corporations it serves, are the major cause of conflict and misery in the world today.” At the same time, it serves as a virtual apologist for the governments of North Korea, Cuba, Syria, Russia, Venezuela, and Iran—a rogues gallery of state violence and repression. The UNAC has even equivocated on international terrorism. In a statement entitled “We are NOT Charlie Hebdo!” it criticized the innocent victims of the eponymous 2015 terrorist attack in Paris for “their racist, chauvinist and hateful Islamophobic caricatures of oppressed people.” The UNAC also blamed the United States government for bringing about what it called the “unfortunate” 2012 killing of U.S. Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens in Benghazi and accused President Barack Obama of exploiting the “murder” of Osama bin Laden to “re-legitimize U.S. militarism” and bolster his own re-election prospects.

Another alliance project, the Venceremos Brigade, organizes annual trips to Cuba for American activists who wish to demonstrate their solidarity with the country. The first iterations of the Venceremos Brigade were organized in 1969 by radical activists who included members of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Black Panther Party, the Communist Party, and others. Individuals associated with the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), including the notably pro-Castro IPS fellow Saul Landau, were also involved with early trips. Thousands of *brigadistas* have participated since the 1960s, and today the brigade’s “Points of Unity” include an affirmation that “the imperialist policies of the US government which constrain Cuban development and seek to overthrow socialism in Cuba are the foreign arms of a system which at home dehumanizes, criminalizes, exploits, and punishes with impunity masses of oppressed people.”

Other Alliance projects include Refuse Fascism, which was formed in 2016 by various leftists including members of the Revolutionary Communist Party after they supposedly recognized “the fascist character and danger of the looming Trump/Pence Regime.” The mission of the Alliance’s World

Can’t Wait project is to “stand up and stop war on the world, repression and torture carried out by the US government.” The alliance also fiscally sponsors the International People’s Tribunal on U.S. Imperialism, which intends to hold “hearings” in 2023 to “challenge the economic atrocities committed by the United States through the use of the law.” The tribunal will apparently hear “evidence” against America from witnesses claiming to represent the interests of Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, and other countries, with the primary purpose of denouncing “imperialist sanctions” against those governments.

All of this—which is a mere sampling—makes the fact that the Alliance for Global Justice receives substantial philanthropic funding rather remarkable. Tax returns posted on its website reveal that between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021, the alliance received nearly \$6 million from the Tides Center, over \$2 million from the affiliated Tides Foundation, \$3 million from the National Philanthropic Trust, \$2 million from the JPB Foundation, \$500,000 from the Kolibri Foundation, \$500,000 from the Clara Lionel Foundation, \$450,000 from the Marguerite Casey Foundation, and \$450,000 from the Women Donors Network, alongside smaller six-figure contributions from the New Venture Fund, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, the Park Foundation, the Colorado Health Foundation, the Wallace Global Fund, the Raikes Foundation, NEO Philanthropy, the Greater Houston Community Foundation, and others.

Some of these funders (such as Tides) have funneled substantial sums to the alliance in the past as well. In recent years significant grant money has come from donor-advised fund providers such as the Amalgamated Charitable Foundation and the American Online Giving Foundation. George Soros’s Foundation to Promote Open Society gave \$250,000 in 2020, while Peter Buffett’s NoVo Foundation provided a total of \$275,000 from 2018 to 2019. The Alliance has also received funding from the Proteus Fund (\$247,500 from 2017 to 2019), the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund (\$500,000 from 2018 to 2019), the New World Foundation (\$367,000 from 2015 to 2018), the New York Women’s Foundation (\$310,000 from 2018 to 2020), and Borealis Philanthropy (\$748,700 from 2017 to 2020).

It is not always possible to determine whether a particular grant was made to support the Alliance for Global Justice itself or was earmarked for one of its fiscally sponsored projects. That said, because the alliance accepts projects only if they subscribe to its mission and because that mission is distinctly hostile to the United States and its international influence, any funding routed to or through the alliance may properly be considered direct financial support for the anti-American Left.

The War on Terror and Code Pink

The War on Terror proved to be a major inflection point for the anti-American Left. A group called ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) was formed within days of the September 11 terrorist attacks, and later went on to organize massive antiwar demonstrations. A 2002 profile of one such protest published in *LA Weekly* called it a “pander fest for the hard left,” led by radicals whose only appeal would be to those who considered the United States to be “a force of unequalled imperialist evil.” The article noted that ANSWER was at that time effectively being run by members of the Workers World Party, a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist group whose leadership lodestars included Fidel Castro, Kim Jong-Il, and Slobodan Milosevic and that had editorialized that Saddam Hussein’s Iraq had “done absolutely nothing wrong.”



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A more prominent group that also traces its origins to the early years of the War on Terror is Code Pink, which was co-founded in late 2002 by activists Jodie Evans, Medea Benjamin, and Gael Murphy in order to protest against the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

Today, ANSWER operates as a fiscally sponsored project of the Progress Unity Fund, a small 501(c)(3) nonprofit that typically receives under \$200,000 in annual revenue, but which reported almost \$2 million in 2019. ANSWER’s director is Brian Becker, who is also key figure within the Party for Socialism and Liberation, yet another communist group that split from the Workers World Party in 2004. In its official program, the Party for Socialism and Liberation describes the notion of democracy in the “imperialist” United States as a “façade,” and argues that Americans are really ruled by “a dictatorship of the capitalist class.”

A more prominent group that also traces its origins to the early years of the War on Terror is Code Pink, which was co-founded in late 2002 by activists Jodie Evans, Medea Benjamin, and Gael Murphy in order to protest against the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Twenty years later, it carries on under a mission of attacking “U.S. warfare and imperialism” writ large. Its list of “Most Wanted War Criminals” is populated almost entirely with Americans and includes former Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, Henry Kissinger, John Bolton, Joe Lieberman, Gina Haspel, Karl Rove, and the former CEOs of BP, Lockheed Martin, Royal Dutch Shell, and Exxon Mobil.

Code Pink’s activism largely adheres to the standard anti-American Left template, describing the United States as “a decadent, declining empire stumbling blindly into its agonizing death spiral.” The group attracted considerable negative attention during the spring of 2019 for occupying the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, DC, in support of strongman Nicolas Maduro’s exceedingly suspect re-election as president the year before.

Code Pink is also stridently pro-Cuba, condemning “the U.S. hybrid war” against the communist regime. It uses that same language to fault the United States for its strained relations with China. The group’s China Is Not Our Enemy campaign touts some questionable and oddly specific Chinese government achievements, while blaming the United States for exploiting the plight of the Uyghur Muslims simply to further its own cynical purposes. It has also called American arms sales to Taiwan a “direct violation of China’s sovereignty.”

Truthfully, the language used by Code Pink to characterize U.S.-China relations would not appear out of place if it were published in an official Chinese Communist Party news outlet. It accuses the United States of conjuring up “warmongering lies” about China so that it may “desperately pursu[e] its outdated policy of enforcing global hegemony.” It lauds China for “taking the lead internationally,” com-



Code Pink succinctly condemned the invasion of Ukraine and blamed the United States and NATO for provoking it in the very same paragraph.

menting on how “countries around the world are happy for its support in growing their capacities to be independent of United States hegemony in their regions.” According to Code Pink, while the United States works to maintain an “international order ... rooted in violence and destruction,” China “builds relationships through economic cooperation and good diplomacy.” Perhaps unsurprisingly, their proposed solution to all of this is for the United States to dramatically reduce its military spending.

To the people of Iran, Code Pink has drafted a formal apology on behalf of the United States for trying to provoke a war and for repeatedly acting “against the safety, well-being, and autonomy of the Iranian people”—an astonishing accusation in light of the abuse and repression that the Iranian government currently subjects its citizenry to. While Code Pink has condemned Iran’s violent crackdowns against widespread popular protests, it also simultaneously accused the United States of helping to cause them. This would appear to comport with the group’s suggested talking points on Iran, which include a general reminder that “we should not be talking about Iranian aggression, but about US aggression.” In 2019, a 28-person Code Pink delegation traveled to Iran and met with the country’s foreign minister.

Code Pink operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Among its most important funders is an almost \$40 million private foundation called the Benjamin Fund, which provided \$952,600 from 2017 to 2020. This accounted for close to a quarter of the group’s total revenue across those years. The Benjamin Fund’s president is Code Pink co-founder Medea Benjamin, and the foundation appears to have been largely capitalized through inherited wealth. Major contributions of \$10,863,060 in 2010, \$15,000,000 in 2015, and \$8,803,450 in 2019 were made to the Benjamin Fund from the estates of Medea Benjamin’s late parents.

Other significant funding for Code Pink has come from the donor-advised fund provider Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund (\$710,000 from 2017 to 2019), the Cultures of Resistance Network (\$109,800 from 2018 to 2019), and the Tides Foundation (\$159,000 from 2018 to 2020). The Craigslist Charitable Fund also provided \$75,000 annually for a number of years.

Russian Invasion of Ukraine

A convenient illustration of the sort of framing that is characteristic of the anti-American Left can be found by examining responses to Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine. To most, the reality of the conflict is relatively straightforward: Russia launched a war of aggression on a neighboring country, causing untold thousands of military and civilian casualties. War crimes abound. Military assistance provided by the United States and many other countries has been crucial in thus far preserving Ukrainian independence. It is as clear-cut a case of good versus evil as the complexities of modern state-level geopolitics can reasonably be expected to produce.

Nobody knows how the war will end, and there are always legitimate debates to be had on the specifics of various Western responses to the war, but to obscure or equivocate on these basic truths is to abandon both intellectual honesty and moral authority. Yet this is precisely what many on the anti-American Left have attempted to do, if for no other reason than because their collective worldview does not countenance the possibility that the United States is not somehow ultimately to blame for any given international crisis—particularly one that involves armed conflict.

When the anti-American Left is confronted with a situation in which a rival or adversary of the United States does something that is essentially indefensible, the standard approach is to first register opposition to whatever happened and then immediately pivot to blaming the United States for it. In doing so the actions of the guilty party (in this case, Putin’s Russia) are explained, if not necessarily always justified.

The DSA’s response was typical. After duly condemning the invasion, the group’s official statement made sure to point out how American “imperialist expansionism ... set the stage for this conflict.” The DSA has elsewhere denounced both Western military aid to Ukraine and economic sanctions targeting Russia—another pair of stakes frequently planted by the anti-American Left on the issue and that are the practical equivalent of advocating for a total Russian victory.

The response from Code Pink was basically identical. It succinctly condemned the invasion and blamed the United States and NATO for provoking it in the very same paragraph. Much like the DSA, Code Pink opposes both military aid for Ukraine and economic sanctions against Russia. In doing so, it reveals a hallmark hypocrisy of the Anti-American Left. While Code Pink says that “ultimately, the Ukrainians must decide what is best for their future,” it simultaneously opposes what the Ukrainians have quite reasonably determined to be in their best interest right now, namely the means to defend themselves from a foreign invader.

Those at the Institute for Policy Studies have taken differing approaches, reflecting the Left’s internal debate on the issue. On the one hand, associate fellow and Foreign Policy in Focus director John Feffer has urged Western support for Ukraine and written of the necessity of a Ukrainian military victory. By contrast, New Internationalism Project director Phyllis Bennis has tacked a more-or-less standard anti-American Left line by conceding that the invasion was “unjustified” but disagreeing that it was “unprovoked.” The United States was thoroughly to blame for provoking Russia into starting the war, according to Bennis, so military aid from the U.S. and sanctions against Russia should be opposed. IPS board member Khury Petersen-Smith acknowledged the particular challenge that the invasion posed for American leftists—given the fact that

the Ukrainians were fighting an “aggressor that is not the U.S.”—but nevertheless proceeded both to fault the United States and NATO for “militarizing the region” and to label economic sanctions targeting Russia as “an act of war.”

The Alliance for Global Justice took things much further. Its official position is that the origins of Russia’s invasion lie not in neo-Soviet revanchism, but in American “imperialism” and the effort to “extend US hegemony over the entire world.” In a statement just days after the invasion, the alliance went out of its way to emphasize “the vital role that Russia plays in support of liberation struggles,” specifically those in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua. It also touted Russia’s right “to sovereignty and secure borders” against the ever-present threat of NATO and pointed to what it called “the ongoing threat of fascism in Ukraine”—two talking points that might as well have come straight from the Kremlin.

In fact, the day after Russia invaded the alliance published messages of support for Vladimir Putin from fellow autocrats Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela and Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, highlighting how they would “stand with Russia against US provocations in Ukraine.” It later published official UN pronouncements on the war from Nicaragua, Cuba, and Venezuela—the three most repressive and Russia-friendly regimes in the Western Hemisphere. In its thoroughly pro-Kremlin overview of the conflict, the Marxist-Leninist Workers World Party linked to an alliance petition against “NATO provocations” immediately after a series of official statements from the Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

Some of the alliance’s fiscally sponsored projects have adopted a similarly Russophilic view of the conflict and its origins. In the months prior to the invasion, the United National Antiwar Coalition justified the then-accelerating Russian military buildup as “a defensive move on [Russia’s] part to counter the threat of the US and NATO” and accused the United States of “trying to build a case that Russia is getting ready to invade Ukraine.”

Perhaps nothing better-illustrates the full breadth of mental contortionism necessary to maintain the anti-American Left line in the face of blatant Russian military aggression better than the series of Ukraine-related articles curated and posted by Popular Resistance, another prominent Alliance for Global Justice project. Consider this small sampling of headlines from the months leading up to and following Russia’s February 24 invasion:



Credit: Fundación Ong DE Nicaragua. License: <https://bit.ly/2SRlaeL>.

The day after Russia invaded Ukraine the alliance published messages of support for Vladimir Putin from fellow autocrats Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela (not shown) and Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua (above), highlighting how they would “stand with Russia against US provocations in Ukraine.”

- “The United States Is Using Nazis in Ukraine to Provoke War with Russia” (Margaret Flowers, December 13, 2021)
- “The West Might Deliberately Start a War in Ukraine” (Telesur English, December 27, 2021)
- “A War Only America and Britain Seem to Want” (Joe Lauria, January 29, 2022)
- “Calling Russia’s Attack ‘Unprovoked’ Lets US off the Hook” (Bryce Greene, March 5, 2022)
- “The Focus on Russia Distracts from What the US Government Is Doing” (Margaret Flowers, March 5, 2022)
- “US Sanctions: An Act of War Against Workers” (G. Dunkel, March 10, 2022)
- “Global South Rejects US/NATO Aggression” (Betsey Piette, March 12, 2022)
- “US Imperialism’s Proxy War with Russia in Ukraine” (Jack Rasmus, April 2, 2022)
- “How the US Weaponized Ukraine Against Russia” (TJ Coles, April 10, 2022)
- “The United States and Ukraine Started the War—Not Russia” (Richard Ochs, April 24, 2022)
- “US/NATO Wants War with Russia” (John Rachel, April 27, 2022)

All of this not only serves to absolve the guilty party (Putin’s Russia) of its richly deserved blame, but also exposes a tremendous irony (one that astute observers on the left have also noted and criticized): By blaming the United States for Russia’s invasion, the anti-American Left adopts the very same America-centric worldview that it purportedly exists to oppose. A more extreme one, even. Holding the United States uniquely responsible for NATO’s eastward expansion—as many leftists do when discussing American

“provocations”—is tantamount to arguing that sovereign nations do not have the right or ability to determine their own foreign policy. It is the height of arrogance and simply wrong. Former Warsaw Pact countries are members of NATO because the collective security it offers is in their national interest, not because of the manipulative tentacles of American “imperialism.”

More fundamentally, the anti-American Left’s fault lies not in its criticism of any given aspect of American foreign (or domestic) policy—on the contrary, that can sometimes be productive—but in its criticism of *every* aspect. The real harm is found in its incessant and dishonest portrayal of the United States as some uniquely malevolent global influence, while brushing aside the brutality of some of the world’s true bad actors and ignoring America’s unparalleled (if imperfect) record of confronting them. Who can honestly look at the world in 1917 or 1933 or 1945 or 1962 or 1991 or 2001 and say it would have been better for the United States to have simply withdrawn from global affairs? Who would say the same in 2023?

The single greatest danger to the future of this country is that—despite all evidence to the contrary—we will collectively stop believing that America is exceptional. Whether it is called patriotism or something else, there must be a unifying positive zeitgeist capable of holding a vast and diverse nation together through its problems, missteps, and outright failures. We need to believe that what America represents to itself and to the rest of the world is objectively good, and that belief must form the basis of our actions. By undermining this national pride and self-confidence, the anti-American Left—and those that fund it—undermine the United States itself. ■

Read previous articles from the Organization Trends series online at CapitalResearch.org/category/organization-trends/.

JULY 2021

**EDITED BY
HAYDEN LUDWIG**



RISE OF THE ECO-RIGHT

A few dozen lobbying, litigation, and activist nonprofits that identify themselves as free market or broadly right-of-center are attempting to rebrand environmentalism and global warming ideology as conservative values. The Capital Research Center broke the news that these “eco-Right” groups also are secretly bankrolled by liberal mega-donors.



CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER
AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AGENDA 2030, AND THE GREAT RESET

By James Simpson

The World Economic Forum (WEF) held its annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, on January 16–20 of this year. It is difficult to overestimate the WEF’s influence on the Western world. Attendees included political leaders such as Justin Trudeau, Emanuel Macron, Biden Administration “Climate Czar” John Kerry, Current U.S. Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde, Ukrainian First Lady Olena Zelenska and many others. Corporate leaders included BlackRock’s Larry Fink, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, and some 1,400 more.

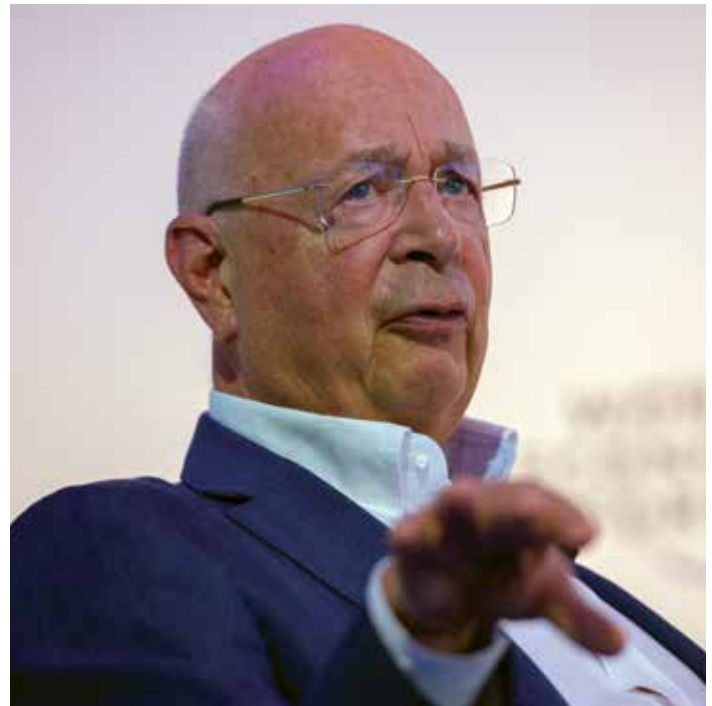
A WEF poll of 1,200 world business and political leaders conducted by Bloomberg prior to the event found that among their top concerns were “energy inflation, food and security crises,” with cost-of-living increases the top immediate concern. Over the next 10 years “climate change” will take precedence.

Despite all this hand-wringing, WEF Chairman Klaus Schwab announced last summer that fuel prices—a major driver of inflation—are nowhere near high enough. He wants to see gasoline prices **higher by multiples** in order to “safeguard democracy.” Schwab claims the answer will require an unprecedented level of “public-private cooperation.”

We had our first big taste of that with President Barack Obama’s “green energy” program, where the only “green” from that list of multi-billion-dollar failures went to Obama’s political allies and supporters. Ironically, given the past two years of endless left-wing name-calling against “fascist” America, public-private “partnerships,” in which private companies are recruited to serve government interests, are the essence of Fascism. And seeded everywhere within the WEF agenda and statements by political and corporate leaders is the term “sustainability.”

Sustainability

Sustainability has become a household word. We see it on product labels and hear it discussed in relation to everything from electrical generation to financial investments.



Credit: World Economic Forum. License: <https://bit.ly/3JUT2dq>.

The World Economic Forum has not suggested the world should collapse, but Klaus Schwab has repeatedly stated his call for global governance in one form or another, using crises to justify its need. In 2020 he used the pandemic to advocate for a “Great Reset” of capitalism.

Most people remain unaware, however, of its origin, true nature, or the goals pursued under this seemingly innocuous word.

“Sustainable development” was first articulated in 1987 in “Our Common Future” a paper produced by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development. What

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came to be called the Brundtland Commission was led by Gro Harlem Brundtland, Socialist International leader and former prime minister of Norway. As derived from the commission report, the UN defines “sustainable development” as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet its own needs.” To accomplish this, Brundtland stated that it constituted, “A global agenda for change.”

Other luminaries on the Brundtland Commission included **UN heavyweight Maurice Strong** (more about him later); William Ruckelshaus, first head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (the only American), and luminaries from such enlightened states as Zimbabwe, Communist China, Russia, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and Cote d’Ivoire.

Sustainable development is found at the intersection of the three “Es” of economy, environment and (social) equity. It implies government restraint of economic growth to limit the depletion of natural resources over time and prevent anthropogenic climate change, while redistributing resources to achieve “equity”—i.e., socialism.

This socialist aspect of “sustainability” was emphasized throughout the Brundtland Report. For example, on page 22, point 70, it states, “Many essential human needs can be met only through goods and services provided by industry, and the shift to sustainable development must be powered by a continuing flow of wealth from industry.”

Origins of Sustainability

Like most, if not all, left-of-center agendas, the sustainable development concept has been with us a long time. Developed slowly, stealthily, and thus largely unnoticed, the ideas began to take shape in the late 1960s, when Sweden proposed a conference to discuss man’s interaction with the environment. The outcome was the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which included 109 recommendations and a three-part action plan. Maurice Strong was asked by UN Secretary-General U Thant to organize and lead this conference.

Later, at the 1976 UN Conference on Human Settlements in Vancouver, British Columbia, participants discussed how humans could and should be redistributed throughout the world. Maurice Strong had a hand in this one too, asking Barbara Ward, whom he had made founding director of the International Institute for Environment and Development, to get involved. She wrote a book titled *Home of Man*, which became the theme for the conference.



Sustainable development is found at the intersection of the three “Es” of economy, environment and (social) equity. It implies government restraint of economic growth to limit the depletion of natural resources over time and prevent anthropogenic climate change, while redistributing resources to achieve “equity”—i.e., socialism.

Ward, who became prominent in her own right, was an early champion of sustainability and spoke openly of redistributing resources from rich to poor nations. She demanded that the wealthy nations donate a minimum of 1 percent of GDP to the poorer nations. This became one of the UN’s asks at the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the “Earth Summit,” held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. The follow-on Millennium Development Project initially called for “developed countries” to donate 0.7 percent of GDP every year. Predictably, now the UN says that’s not enough.

The 1976 Conference envisioned redistributing not only wealth, but also land, resources, and populations worldwide, not as a matter of individual choice, but of UN-crafted pol-



The 1976 Conference envisioned redistributing not only wealth, but also land, resources, and populations worldwide, not as a matter of individual choice, but of UN-crafted policy.

icy. This is also the inspiration for the invasion of the U.S. southern border occurring today, which is being facilitated directly by the UN.

The conference report states, “Human settlement policies can be powerful tools for the more equitable distribution of income and opportunities.” Furthermore:

Human settlements policies should aim to improve the condition of human settlements particularly by promoting a more equitable distribution of the benefits of development among regions; and making such benefits and public services equally accessible to all groups.

The conference discussed the world in terms of “regions” rather than nations, an implicit nod to the notion of world government. Of course, “equity” is one of the three Es of sustainability. Documents from the 1976 Conference make clear that the UN believes the government should be deciding where and how everyone in the country lives. In particular, the section on land use makes explicit that UN planners seek to abolish private property:

Land, because of its unique nature and the crucial role it plays in human settlements, cannot be treated as an ordinary asset, controlled by individuals and subject to the pressures and inefficiencies of the market. Private land ownership is also a principal instrument of accumulation and concentration of wealth and therefore contributes to social injustice; if unchecked, it may become a major obstacle in the planning and implementation of development schemes. **Social justice, urban renewal and development, the provision of decent dwellings—and healthy conditions for the people can only be achieved if land is used in the interests of society as a whole** [emphasis added].

The UN justified these measures based on expectations about population growth, various environmental policies, and of course “social justice.” These three concerns later morphed into the three “pillars” of the UN sustainability concept: environment, economy, and social equity. It is merely socialism repackaged.

Maurice Strong headed the 1992 Earth Summit, where the first set of “sustainability” goals were articulated in a document titled Agenda 21. The document summarized that “Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of



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“Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the United Nations System, Governments, and Major Groups in every area in which human impacts on the environment.”
—Agenda21.

the United Nations System, Governments, and Major Groups in every area in which human impacts on the environment.”

A total of 178 governments signed on, including the United States under President George H.W. Bush’s signature. The Democrat-controlled U.S. House of Representatives passed Concurrent Resolution 353, which states “that the United States should assume a strong leadership role in implementing the decisions made at the Earth Summit by developing a national strategy to implement Agenda 21 and other Earth summit agreements.”

The resolution called for:

Adoption of a national strategy for environmentally sustainable development, based on an extensive process of nationwide consultations with all interested organizations and individuals; (2) the Government encouraging and facilitating means for adopting individual Agenda 21 plans of action, including the establishment of local, county, State, business, and other boards and commissions for achieving sustainable development; (3) the President establishing an effective mechanism to plan, initiate, and coordinate U.S. policy for implementing Agenda 21; and

(4) policies being formulated for foreign policy and assistance to help developing countries and for domestic actions to assure appropriate action to implement Agenda 21.

The U.S. Senate did not ratify Agenda 21 or vote on H.Con. Res. 353, but President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 12852, creating the President's Council on Sustainable Development, which operated until 1999, creating structures throughout government and promoting the same for city, county and state governments throughout the U.S.—where offices of sustainability are now the rule.

Agenda 21 also advanced in the U.S. to a great degree because “sustainability” concepts were insinuated early on into the American Planning Association’s (APA) guidelines—used almost universally by planning and zoning boards throughout the U.S. Today the APA Foundation is committed to “help steward the next generation of planners and help create more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous communities.”

The agenda was rebranded in 2015 as Agenda 2030, with 17 sustainable development goals (SDG). It is an all-encompassing prescription for regulating every aspect of human activity on a global scale in the interest of sustainable development. The WEF openly promotes Agenda 2030 as the ultimate goal of sustainable development.

A few recognizable sustainability concepts are “smart growth,” “walkable communities,” “15-minute neighborhoods,” “20-minute neighborhoods,” “strong communities,” “strong cities,” or “strong towns.” All seek to cram people into housing projects with all amenities within walking distance—dispensing with the need for automobiles. As the WEF now advertises, “You will own nothing and be happy.”

While the supposed benefits of these developments are widely promoted, the true purposes are to abolish private autos, reduce or eliminate private property, and push people back into cities. This is both because cities are losing revenues as people flee high taxes, and because the UN-endorsed Wildlands Project (now called the Wildlands Network) seeks to return major swaths of America now occupied by suburban single-family homes and rural farms to the wild.

It should be mentioned that the Wildlands Network was founded by the late Dave Foreman, co-founder of the ecoterrorist group Earth First! Foreman pioneered using tree spikes to protest logging. Spiking caused deadly accidents, including a young man who had parts of his face ripped off. Foreman paid nothing for his many acts of terrorism,



Credit: Akarut Phasura. License: Shutterstock.

McKinsey Global Institute acknowledges that digital IDs could be abused and that a successful digital ID program must be guided by the rule of law. But whose law? China and many other nations recognize no law and use social credit scores to control and persecute their people.

despite being investigated by the FBI. He was an intimate partner in development of the sustainability agenda until his death in 2022. Foreman has said:

We must make this an insecure and inhospitable place for capitalists and their projects. We must reclaim the roads and plowed land, halt dam constructions, tear down existing dams, free shackled rivers and return to wilderness millions of acres of previously settled land.

And:

Phasing out the human race will solve every problem on earth, social and environmental... The optimum human population of earth is zero.

ESG and Social Credit Scores

The “sustainability” concept was introduced to the investing world in 2006 with the UN publication “Principles for Responsible Investing” (PRI), which advocated investments that incorporated environmental, social and governance (ESG) concepts. Once again, the three Es of sustainability, but government has replaced the E of economy, making the governmental role explicit. This agenda is now explic-

itly tied to Agenda 2030 and as of 2019 included 2,450 PRI signatory companies with assets totaling \$80 trillion under management.

Citing the UN-mandated SDGs, Acuity Knowledge Partners, an investment advisory group, calls “sustainable finance” a “new frontier” toward investment banking that is “environmentally and socially sustainable.”

Numerous organizations now pursue the UN’s notion of sustainability. This includes large and influential organizations explicitly involved in promoting Agenda 2030, such as the WEF, BlackRock, and thousands of smaller ones. BlackRock partners with Climate Action 100, which includes numerous corporations, other investment funds, and nonprofits controlling \$60 trillion in assets.

At the November 2022 G20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia, member countries including the U.S. signed the Bali Declaration, which acknowledges support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

We met in Bali on 15-16 November 2022, at a time of unparalleled multidimensional crises. We have experienced the devastation brought by the Covid-19 pandemic, and other challenges including climate change, which has caused economic downturn, increased poverty, slowed global recovery, **and hindered the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals** [emphasis added].

Like many of the leftist agendas, once it caught on, it grew and metastasized. Sustainability now includes dozens of “social equity” concepts, social credit scores, and the WEF’s “reinventing” capitalism—calling it “stakeholder capitalism.” It is also behind the movement to abolish all carbon fuels and gasoline-powered autos.

First articulated in a 1973 Davos Manifesto, stakeholder capitalism directs corporate profits to underwrite the Left’s wish list of woke agendas. It not only violates corporate responsibilities to shareholders, but also subtly undermines private property rights by providing benefits to many “stakeholders” that have no ownership in the relevant stocks. KPMG has stated:

KPMG ESG solutions are both holistic and practical. We’ll guide your teams to drive sustainable innovation across your business and help you gain a competitive edge. With deep expertise across critical issues—including decarbonization, reporting, sustainable finance and DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion)—we’ll help you create the right blueprint for integrating

ESG. A blueprint that simplifies your strategy, guides its full implementation and lets you take the lead on ESG ... because how you grow matters.

KPMG has an entire department devoted to directing its clients into an ESG model. Its “ESG Maturity Assessment” makes clear that results of that assessment will become public knowledge—an implicit form of social credit scoring that will pressure any company foolish enough to complete the assessment to comply with WEF dictates. Cheryl Crumley of the *Washington Times* writes:

Under a WEF-imagined stakeholder system, banks wouldn’t lend to businesses that don’t comply with, say, climate change policies or, say, vaccination mandates. Investors wouldn’t invest if the WEF didn’t approve. Insurers wouldn’t insure—governments wouldn’t permit—developers wouldn’t develop—builders wouldn’t build—and so forth and so on. The government, through partners and friends in business, would be the behind-the-scenes’ strings puller. And better believe this: The only businesses that would fit into this new government-run system would be the leftists.

Following the 2023 Davos meeting, WEF announced that 137 companies had developed Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics, a way to measure and report nonfinancial disclosures that showed their progress in meeting ESG goals:

Global challenges amplified by the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have made ESG issues even more pressing for policymakers, boards and executives.

To promote alignment among existing metrics and disclosure frameworks, the World Economic Forum, with partners including Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC, has identified a set of universal metrics and disclosures—the Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics.

In 2020, the WEF reported that “120 of the world’s largest companies” had created the Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics. So by 2023, it had actually added only 17 companies, and only 55 of the 137 had been reporting for the past two years. Maybe the enthusiasm for stakeholder capitalism is overrated? BlackRock, the most aggressive promoter of sustainable development, is apparently having second thoughts about its support for stakeholder capitalism at the expense of its investors. Meanwhile CEO Larry Fink is facing pressures to resign.

The World Bank Digital ID for sustainable development is also a component of the Agenda 2030 goals. McKinsey Global Institute calls the digital ID “a key to inclusive growth”:

Digital identification, or “digital ID,” can be authenticated unambiguously through a digital channel, unlocking access to banking, government benefits, education, and many other critical services. The risks and potential for misuse of digital ID are real and deserve careful attention. When well-designed, digital ID not only enables civic and social empowerment, but also makes possible real and inclusive economic gains—a less well understood aspect of the technology.

McKinsey acknowledges that digital IDs could be abused and that a successful digital ID program must be guided by the rule of law. But whose law? China and many other nations recognize no law and use social credit scores to control and persecute their people. To imagine that the UN would respect individual rights would require ignoring practically everything the UN does. The United States appears to be following suit as more and more government corruption and incompetence is discovered at every level. Imposing digital ID on everyone in the world would put everyone under the control of increasingly despotic governments.

The idea of using digital IDs as vaccine passports was also discussed at the G20 meeting. The declaration included a section promoting “digital solutions and non-digital solutions, including proof of vaccinations ... as part of the efforts to strengthen prevention and response to future pandemics, that should capitalize and build on the success of the existing standards and digital COVID-19 certificates.”

According to Charity Support, for 2023 the top nine non-profits promoting sustainability concepts are:

- Environmental Working Group
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- Earthjustice
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Friends of the Earth
- The Nature Conservancy
- Rainforest Alliance
- Conservation International



To imagine that the UN would respect individual rights would require ignoring practically everything the UN does.

But as we have seen, that is just the tip of the iceberg. The entire society has become infected with this misplaced agenda. MIT even offers a professional certificate program for “sustainability.” Many colleges now offer a bachelor’s degree in sustainability.

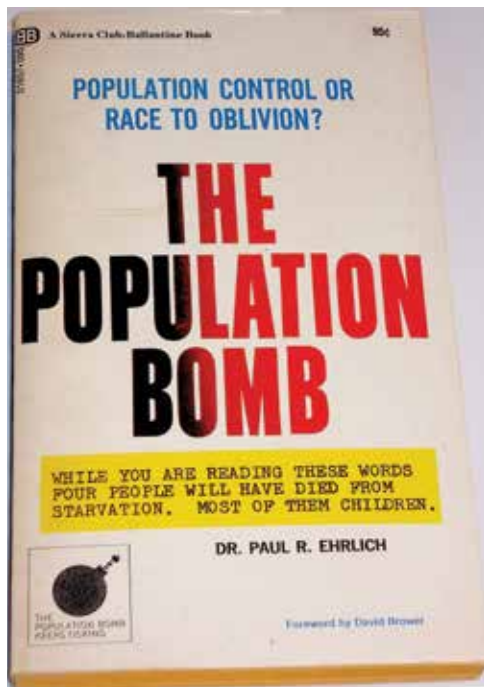
Bad Economics

The New Green Deal advocates would like to see net-zero carbon emissions. This imperils the economy of the world. The baby steps the Biden administration has already taken have pushed the U.S. toward recession and inflation not seen since the early 1980s. These kinds of policies will destroy the economy well before any workable transition to a carbon-free world is developed, if indeed one can be developed.

The UN notion of sustainability displays a profound misunderstanding of elementary economics. The UN’s “sustainable” development concept requires government control over the economy because it assumes that private markets will simply use resources to exhaustion—never bothering to find substitutes when resources become scarce.

This is a common misperception. A good example is the history of whaling. Whales were hunted largely for the oil used in oil lamps and for other purposes. As demand for whale oil grew, some species of whales were pushed to near extinction. Whale oil became increasingly expensive as a result. The whales were saved by the “robber baron” John D. Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil, and those who followed him. Petroleum-produced kerosine rapidly replaced whale oil as a much less expensive, safer, and more versatile substitute. Edison’s electric light later replaced kerosine.

This type of automatic market response happens over and over again, but only because the market can quickly react to shortages to find profitable alternatives. The price mechanism guarantees that as a resource becomes less plentiful, less expensive alternatives are found. Market forces also disrupt monopolies because the price mechanism motivates people to find cheaper alternatives to a monopoly-priced product.



Credit: Amazon. License: <https://amen.013YCaBDa>.

The UN approach to population control is similar, accepting Dr. Paul Ehrlich's doomsday book Population Bomb as gospel. But Ehrlich has been proven wrong over and over again.

The only way monopolies last for any appreciable time is if they are protected or created by government. Yet government control of everything is the UN mantra.

The UN approach to population control is similar, accepting Dr. Paul Ehrlich's doomsday book *Population Bomb* as gospel. But Ehrlich has been proven wrong over and over again. Populations adjust to differing pressures. Western nations have reduced population growth to replacement rates, and some are experiencing negative growth rates. Ironically, while it continues to advocate Ehrlich's prophecies of doom, the UN has proposed in "Replacement Migration" for immigration to *increase the populations* of target countries with a shrinking workforce.

The sustainable development approach also assumes that economics is a zero-sum game. If I get rich, someone else must get poorer, but wealth creation is only limited by imagination and takes nothing from anyone. The creators of Apple and Microsoft, for example, added wealth that did not exist before, creating markets all over the world that

raised the income of many poor nations—and transformed the entire world in the process.

On a global scale, is it "unfair" that the U.S. consumes 20-25 percent of the world's resources but has less than 5 percent of the world population? According to the sustainability crowd, America should cut consumption so the rest of the world can get an equitable share. Yet if the U.S. were foolish enough to follow this policy prescription, what would happen? Would other countries jump in to purchase the goods and materials we didn't? No. The world economy would suddenly see markets for its products vanish, and the global economy would collapse overnight.

The U.S. produces about 25 percent of the world's output. The truth is that the U.S. *exchanges* wealth and other resources with the rest of the world to accomplish this. Reducing U.S. GDP to 5 percent of the world's output would represent an 80 percent contraction. For perspective, U.S. GDP declined 29 percent during the Great Depression, which pushed the world into economic catastrophe and World War II. An 80 percent contraction of GDP would create a worldwide depression of unimaginable proportions.

But the Left sees this as an opportunity. Following the 2009 recession, real GDP fell 4.3 percent. Then-Secretary of State John Kerry claimed that the decline in economic activity reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 6 percent. He wanted to see a 20 percent reduction, which would require a GDP decline of about 15 percent—a recession three times as bad as it was:

Let me emphasize something very strongly as we begin this discussion. The United States has already this year alone achieved a 6 percent reduction in emissions simply because of the downturn in the economy, so we are effectively saying we need to go another 14 percent.

Unemployment went to 10 percent during that recession. If Kerry had his way, unemployment may have exceeded 20 percent—near Great Depression levels.

At the recent WEF Davos meeting, Kerry described what is needed to fight climate change:

Well, the lesson I've learned in the last year—I learned it as secretary of state and it has since been reinforced in spades, is money, money, money, money, money, money, money, money."

An article in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* states, “Estimates of how much money is needed for an energy transition away from fossil fuels over the next three decades range from \$100 trillion to \$150 trillion.” For perspective, the entire world economy is approximately \$94 trillion. Meanwhile, according to Climate Action 100, if nothing is done, and global temperature increases 4°C (one estimate of many, based on the flawed models of the UN International Panel on Climate Change), global economic costs will total \$23 trillion by 2080. Has anyone really been doing his homework?

According to the *Review*, which advocates eliminating the fossil fuel industry entirely, the transition would create “massive dislocations,” including the loss of 8 million jobs in the industry by 2050 with multiples of that in downstream industries. It would also require major adjustments in how business is conducted worldwide. Most of these disruptions would of necessity be handled by government spending to provide retraining and other benefits. Some state economies—such as West Virginia, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, North Dakota and others—would be “devastated” and recovery would require massive government intervention to lessen the impact.

That is a best-case scenario. Spending multiples of the trillions already being spent by the U.S. on the Green New Deal and other wasteful projects with the associated inflation and debt would send the U.S. into Third-World hyperinflation and economic collapse—never mind the massive amounts of graft and corruption likely to accompany the spending.

Who Was Maurice Strong?

Maurice (pronounced “Morris”) Strong, a Canadian who became wealthy in the oil industry, was probably the most influential driver behind the entire sustainability movement. Though his name is not well known outside of UN circles, he practically invented “sustainability” and was behind much of the UN-driven environmental movement. His roles included:

- Secretary-General, UN Conference on the Human Environment (1972 Stockholm conference)
- Founding Executive Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
- Foundation Director, World Economic Forum
- Co-Chairman, Council of the World Economic Forum

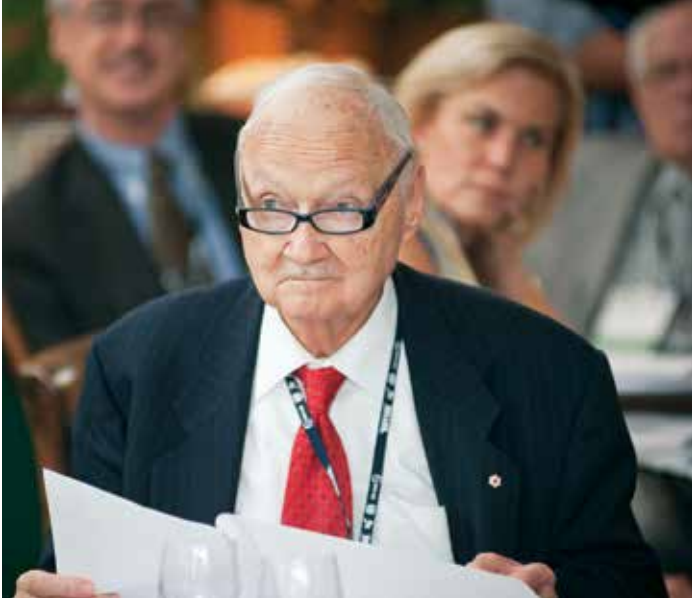
- Senior Advisor to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan
- Senior Advisor to World Bank President James Wolfensohn
- Commissioner, World Commission on Environment and Development
- Secretary-General UN, Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)
- Chairman the Earth Council
- Commissioner, Commission on Global Governance
- Member, Club of Rome
- Board member, United Nations Foundation
- Board member, International Institute for Sustainable Development
- Chairman, World Resources Institute

These are but a few of Strong’s activities. He died in 2015, but his influence remains. In an obituary on the World Economic Forum website, WEF founder Klaus Schwab described Strong as his mentor and credited him with elevating the WEF to the prominence it enjoys today:

He deeply incorporated the World Economic Forum’s mission of improving the state of the world into everything he did. He was a great visionary, always ahead of our times in his thinking. He was my mentor since the creation of the Forum: a great friend; an indispensable advisor; and, for many years, a member of our Foundation Board. Without him, the Forum would not have achieved its present significance.

Another tribute called him, “the founding giant of the global environment movement.” This is important because Strong made no bones about his radicalism. He described himself as “a socialist in ideology, a capitalist in methodology.” And many of his views are becoming mainstream political narratives. For example, Strong explained in a 1991 UNCED report:

Current lifestyles and consumption patterns of the affluent middle class—involving high meat intake, consumption of large amounts of frozen and convenience foods, ownership of motor vehicles, golf courses, small electric appliances, home and work place air-conditioning, and suburban housing are not sustainable. A shift is necessary toward lifestyles less geared to environmentally damaging consumption patterns.



Credit: Stockholm Environment Institute. License: <https://bit.ly/3EEX1b5>.

Maurice Strong, a Canadian who became wealthy in the oil industry, was probably the most influential driver behind the entire sustainability movement. He practically invented “sustainability” and was behind much of the UN-driven environmental movement.

Strong went even further. In the 1992 pamphlet “Stockholm to Rio: A Journey Down a Generation,” he suggested that nations would have to surrender sovereignty to global dictates:

The concept of national sovereignty has been an immutable, indeed sacred, principle of international relations. It is a principle which will yield only slowly and reluctantly to the new imperatives of global environmental cooperation. **It is simply not feasible for sovereignty to be exercised unilaterally by individual nation states, however powerful. The global community must be assured of environmental security** [emphasis added].

In a 1990 interview, Strong discussed an idea for a novel he had. He tells the reporter:

The World Economic Forum convenes in Davos, Switzerland. Over a thousand CEOs, prime ministers, finance ministers, and leading academics gather in February to attend meetings and set economic agendas for the year ahead. With this as a setting, he then asked:

What if a small group of these world leaders were to conclude that the principal risk to the earth comes from the actions of the rich countries? ... **So, in order to save the planet, the group decides: isn't the only hope for the planet that the industrialized civilizations collapse? Isn't it our responsibility to bring that about?** [emphasis added.]

He continued:

This group of world leaders form a secret society to bring about an economic collapse. It's February. They're all at Davos. These aren't terrorists. They're world leaders. They've positioned themselves in the world's commodity and stock markets. They've engineered, using their access to stock exchanges and computers and gold supplies, a panic. Then they prevent the world's stock markets from closing... . The markets can't close. The rich countries ... [Strong makes a slight motion with his fingers as if he were flipping a cigarette out the window.]

The reporter recognizes that this is not mere fantasy, writing: “I sit there spellbound. This is not any ordinary storyteller. This is Maurice Strong. He knows these world leaders. He is, in fact, co-chairman of Council of the World Economic Forum. He sits at the fulcrum of power. He is in a position to *do it*.”

Strong tells him, “I probably shouldn't be saying things like this.”

Strong was instrumental in founding, advising or supporting numerous organizations, and joined the boards of many, among them:

- Aspen Institute
- Bretton Woods Committee
- Commission on Global Governance
- Earth Charter
- International Institute for Environment and Development
- International Institute for Sustainable Development
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature
- Rockefeller Foundation
- University for Peace
- World Wildlife Fund
- World Economic Forum
- World Resources Institute

The Great Reset

The WEF has not suggested the world should collapse, but Klaus Schwab has repeatedly stated his call for global governance in one form or another, using crises to justify its need. In 2020 he used the pandemic to advocate for a “Great Reset” of capitalism. Citing what he claimed was a looming depression following the COVID lockdowns, he said:

To achieve a better outcome, the world must act jointly and swiftly to revamp all aspects of our societies and economies, from education to social contracts and working conditions. Every country, from the United States to China, must participate, and every industry, from oil and gas to tech, must be transformed. In short, we need a “Great Reset” of capitalism.

With that, the WEF launched the “Great Reset Initiative” to guide “the future state of global relations, the direction of national economies, the priorities of societies, the nature of business models and the management of a global commons.”

While they have been working assiduously to achieve the great reset through all the means discussed in this paper, they have not yet succeeded, though they are well on the way. But some form of crisis, be it “climate change,” the pandemic, or whatever, has been the vehicle to urge the UN agenda on the world. This year is no different. In 2023, WEF members have predicted a “catastrophic global cyber attack” likely to occur in the next two years. “This is a global threat, and it calls for a global response and enhanced and coordinated action,” said Jürgen Stock, INTERPOL secretary-general.

Will this be another unforced error or manufactured crisis, like the global COVID shutdown the WEF advocated? A large-scale cyber-attack is indeed a possibility, given the state of world hostilities. But the question is, who would carry it out? It would likely be a UN member nation, and we can probably guess who—e.g., China, Russia, North Korea, or Iran. And yet Klaus Schwab has expressed his admiration for the “Chinese model” as the government of the future.



Sustainability, when seen in the proper light, is the opposite of what it seems. Sustainable development, like everything based on a socialist model, is not sustainable.

Practically everything Maurice Strong stated about our future, both in his fantasy book idea and on his very public platforms, has been incorporated in the WEF agenda one way or another. For example, while Klaus Schwab never actually said we will eat insects and like it or that we’ll own nothing and be happy, the *WEF did post articles saying all these things*. One piece is titled, “Why We Need to Give Insects the Role They Deserve in Our Food Systems.” NPR obliged with an article titled, “Your Ancestors Probably Ate Insects. So What’s Bugging You?” And we will eat less meat if Klaus has his way. In 2016 the WEF posted an article and an embedded Facebook video predicting how life will be in 2030. These are the exact words from the video:

“You will own nothing and be happy.”
“Whatever you want you’ll rent, and it will be delivered by drone.”
“The US won’t be the world’s leading superpower.”
“A handful of countries will dominate.”
“You’ll eat much less meat.”
“A billion people will be displaced by climate change.”
“We’ll have to do a better job of welcoming and integrating refugees.”
“There will be a global price on carbon; This will help make fossil fuels history.”

The video also mentioned future tech, like 3-D printing of human organs and travel to Mars to keep things upbeat. But the WEF will have no hand in those things. Its role is strictly political and dedicated to UN Agenda 2030. Who will be the “handful of countries who dominate”? If the U.S. loses world dominance, our enemies—those with the military power to do so—will take its place. So we will have China, which gave us the pandemic, and Russia, which gave us the war in Ukraine, and a few more thugs overseeing things. Strong would approve.

Conclusion

Sustainability, when seen in the proper light, is the opposite of what it seems. Sustainable development, like everything based on a socialist model, is *not* sustainable. It creates shortages and other calamities that will indeed force the world into a great reset that could make the Great Depression look trivial by comparison. But the leaders at Davos and the UN seem unfazed by this danger and are determined to move forward regardless. It is the tip of the spear for those advocating a one-world, socialist government—the true endgame. ■

Read previous articles from the Green Watch series online at CapitalResearch.org/category/green-watch/.



MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER, 1957–2022: A BRILLIANT ECCENTRIC WHO BATTLED BIG PHILANTHROPY AND BIG GOVERNMENT

By Scott Walter

Martin Morse Wooster, longtime senior fellow at the Capital Research Center and a friend of mine for decades, was cruelly cut down by a hit-and-run driver at the end of last year. Both his long service to CRC and our personal friendship demand a proper accounting of his many contributions to the country he loved.

Martin was indeed the last WASP eccentric, as his friend Richard Minter of Zenger.news put it (see the assembly of reflections on Martin we published here). To grasp his Old WASP side, consider that he proudly lived in Silver Spring, Maryland, on land his Revolutionary ancestors had owned, and that landmarks near the oldest Ivy League colleges are named for his forebears.

As for Martin's eccentricities, they included an indifference to attire equal to P.G. Wodehouse's famous character Lord Emsworth. I vaguely recall seeing Martin at a formal gala wearing one of those T-shirts whose fronts are printed with a parody of black tie and lasagna ruffles. Another eccentricity was his daily consumption of oceans of books, newspapers, and magazines on every subject imaginable and several beyond the imaginations of most of us. As the wit Thomas Hazlett puts it in a wonderful tribute, an entire library was to Martin but an "after-dinner mint."

This bibliophilia led to two additional eccentricities: First, I and a legion of other friends would regularly receive fat manilla envelopes of clippings from him on anything he associated with us. For example, a friend with Argentine heritage and academic work on Nixon would receive anything Martin saw on Argentina or the 37th president. One named John Miller would receive not only any mentions of his last book but also anything mentioning other John Millers in America. My last two envelopes had 10 clippings from sources like the *Financial Times* and *Washington Post*



Martin Morse Wooster (l) and Scott Walter (r) discussing How Great Philanthropists Failed at the Heritage Foundation, 2018.

Credit: The Heritage Foundation. License: <https://bit.ly/3RFCs6E>.

on such topics as a DC teachers union endorsing a mayoral candidate, climate activists in Uganda, a minimum wage law, my alma mater Georgetown's latest masking idiocy, a Starbucks unionization campaign, an argument for universities to refuse energy companies' largess, and civil society in Ukraine.

The other eccentricity related to Martin's oceanic consumption of the printed word was the fallout produced in his apartment. For more on that, read his article complaining that the fire marshal insisted on annual inspections of his digs to ensure Martin's entire building didn't combust from the kindling he stacked to the ceiling. More touchingly, local children in the not-affluent neighborhood referred to him as "Book Man," because as Minter relates, when a local girl was in need of a dry and warm place to wait for her mom, Martin kindly took her in, and she was awestruck by Martin's mountains of books and paper.

Scott Walter is president of Capital Research Center.



Credit: Thomas Cizauskas. License: <https://bit.ly/3yGKdjo>.

Members of the 4th estate: Mike Horkan (l) and Martin Morse Wooster (r) of Mid-Atlantic Brewing News. 21st annual running of the Multiple Guest Brewmaster Winter Holiday Tasting Extravaganza at the Brickskeller Down Home Saloon, in Washington, DC.

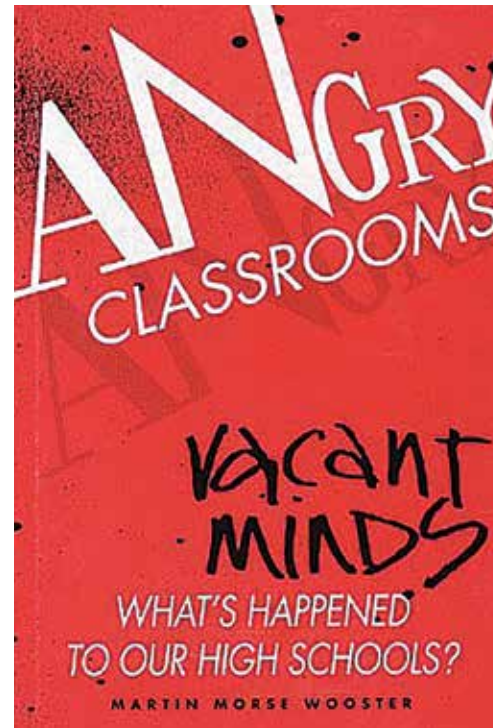
Also like Lord Emsworth, Martin had passionate *interests*—a better word in his case than *hobbies*, because Martin tended to become a public expert in the fields he pursued. For instance, at his death he was attending a conference on Ales Through the Ages in Williamsburg, Virginia, because brewing and its products were one of his great loves, and he had long contributed columns and articles on the ancient art to publications in the field such as *All About Beer* and *Mid-Atlantic Brewing News*. His thirsty interest ranged as far as the antipodes, where Martin once defended brewers Down Under against the greedy taxman in the *Australian Financial Review*, though I’m not sure if this was before or after he visited his friend Tom Switzer, one of the nation’s leading conservative intellectuals, in Sydney. This beery passion helps to explain how Martin could be a mountain of a man—six-foot-four and the opposite of svelte, a “heft-to-American” as he put—and yet remain through his six and a half decades something of an eternal boy, or rather a frat boy, because he loved his fraternity days back at Beloit College in Wisconsin.

Another passion Martin built into expertise was science fiction, and he was mourned at multiple SF publications like *Locus* and *File 770*. I note the International Science Fiction Data Base has compiled his bibliography in the field. The comments on the *File 770* obituary reveal the wide range of friends and readers he had, while the editors of *Locus* observe that he had sent them “news, letters, and corrections for decades.”

Ah, yes, *corrections*. Every publication Martin had relations with would receive regular notes on any mistake he observed in his reading, from a missing letter in a proper name to the fact that in the year being discussed, the company went by the name Exxon not ExxonMobil. This recalls Martin’s cantankerous side, because his manners no less than his dress were not conventional. One never knew when he might burst out singing, say, “Hail to the Redskins.” Although, I treasure the story Bill Kauffman tells of Martin, in a room full of media liberals and RINOs, belting out a Barry Goldwater campaign song in hopes of annoying the assembly.

Martin’s SF expertise led him to review many books in the field for the *Washington Post*, while his expert knowledge of education policy led him to do regular *Washington Times* reviews of books in that field. He also wrote an entire book on schools with the pungent title, *Angry Classrooms, Vacant Minds: What’s Happened to Our High Schools?*

His many magazine connections over the years included an array of editorial positions at publications as diverse as the libertarian *Reason*, the liberal *Harper’s*, the establishment *Wilson Quarterly*, and the conservative *American Enterprise*,



Credit: Amazon. License: <https://amzn.to/3XdlUa8>.

His expert knowledge of education policy led him to do regular Washington Times reviews of books in that field. He also wrote an entire book on schools with the pungent title Angry Classrooms, Vacant Minds: What’s Happened to Our High Schools?

where I first met him in the 1990s. His friendships were similarly ecumenical, which is a tribute to his good nature and sprawling interests.

In the field of philanthropy, where he achieved his greatest prominence, he wrote over the years for the Philanthropy Roundtable; the late, lamented Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal; the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*; and PhilanthropyDaily.com, as well as occasional stinging op-eds for the *Wall Street Journal*. One of my favorites of those was an essay in which he surveyed the many chairs of “free market economics” that naïve businessmen had endowed at our poor institutions of higher learning. Nearly every one of those chairs soon ended up warming the bottoms of socialists, as Martin could have told the foolish donors if they had consulted him, because one of his greatest themes was “the problem of donor intent”—that is, the capture by left-wing activists of philanthropies endowed by conservative donors.

This phenomenon of left-wing greed featured in another superb *Wall Street Journal* op-ed of Martin’s, which dissected then-president Rebecca Rimel’s driving of the Pew Charitable Trusts far from the donors’ staunch conservatism into trendy leftism. Martin described Rimel’s philosophy as “castor-oil liberalism” and concluded that “out of simple fairness,” the trust “should have dropped the name Pew in the same way it has dropped the principles that guided its founders.”

No wonder I recall Martin saying the switchboard at Pew was told to reject his calls. As he knew, Big Philanthropy sails its mega-yachts over waves of pretense. Those pretenses include the laughable claim that billionaires who endowed the Pew Trusts, the Ford Foundation, MacArthur, and so forth have no ideology and no political agenda. Another risible pretense is that Big Philanthropy, first, cares about the little guy, and second, can crunch numbers and exercise its exalted expertise to solve all the little guy’s problems by eliminating their “root causes.”

Martin, by contrast, was a defender of Little Philanthropy, the kind where you know the name of the persons you help and, more radical still, you value the help you receive from your fellow citizens in return. This bedrock of America and her exceptional civil society, extolled by the likes of Alexis de Tocqueville and welfare reformer Marvin Olasky, was central to Martin’s thought and, even more, to his humble life in a nondescript suburb, as we saw with the case of the girl who needed temporary shelter waiting for her mother. Similarly, his death brought deep sadness to his friends in “little platoons” like the Potomac River Science Fiction Society. It also



Martin deplored this kind of “state-funded welfare,” which he knew was far inferior to “morally centered charity.”

brought talk that his colleagues at the Friends of the Library may commemorate his service as steward of one of the little libraries in Takoma Park.

Martin’s Genuine “Civic Participation”

These days, the term “civic participation” is used to describe left-wing schemes in which billionaire foundations pour cash into “nonpartisan” charities that drive targeted demographic groups into absentee voting. But Martin understood what real *civic participation* is—love of your neighbors, your local sports teams, and your local civic festivals. Hazlett recalls how Martin “viewed every parade, and devoured each spectacle.” All of these little platoons really mattered, Martin knew, far more than some overpaid philanthropoid’s gassing on about how he was saving the planet through politics—and an expense account that would shame a *Fortune 500* CEO.

Perhaps Martin’s finest work on the great struggle between true charity and fake philanthropy was his book for Capital Research Center entitled, *Return to Charity? Philanthropy and the Welfare State*. He argued that bad as Big Philanthropy is, the faceless bureaucrats of governments’ pseudo-philanthropy are even worse. Of course, he added, the triumph of the welfare state over America’s local charities occurred in large part due to the early Big Philanthropies like the Russell Sage Foundation. These foundations became intoxicated with fashionable foolishness and helped spread the un-American idea that Big Problems need Big Solutions delivered by Big Government. That is, foundations began to see themselves, not as benefactors of local charities and actual human beings, but as social experimenters who would test out trendy notions in a few locales before handing off the new programs to centralized government and its social engineers.

Martin deplored this kind of “state-funded welfare,” which he knew was far inferior to “morally centered charity.” He often cited the great black advocate of local associations, Bob Woodson, who “wrote that poor people, when they needed help, were far more comfortable dealing with voluntary associations *they* created—churches, families, local groups.”

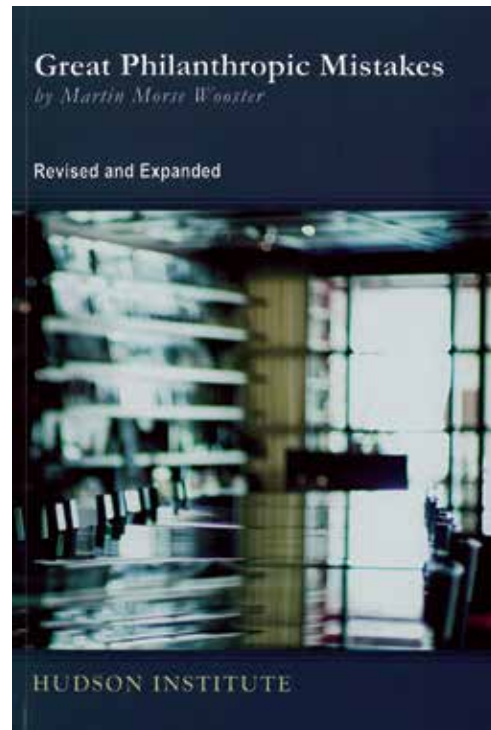
“Government,” Woodson insisted, “doesn’t give you values. There is nothing more important” for struggling kids than “reestablishing a sense of their own self-worth, the value of American institutions, and becoming reacquainted with the spiritual side of life”—none of which will come through “anything governmental.” Yes, in an emergency like a hurricane, some elements of government may be needed to provide temporary help, but most of the time, citizens who come together to help each other and to celebrate their distinct locales and particular passions. Those, Martin insisted, are the little platoons that bring life’s joys. And where neighborhoods and little platoons were concerned, Martin followed SF master Robert Heinlein’s advice: “to enjoy the flavor of life, take big bites.”

Two years after *Return to Charity*, Martin wrote a related volume for the Manhattan Institute, *By Their Bootstraps: The Lives of Twelve Gilded Age Social Entrepreneurs*, which recounted the achievements of notables like Clara Barton, founder of the Red Cross; Father Flanigan, founder of Boys Town; and Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, who flourished between 1850 and 1910. Marvin Olasky kindly contributed an introduction, but perhaps the best summary of the book came from Martin himself:

The consensus of poverty fighters and philanthropists in about 1890 would be this: everyone should give; no one should give indiscriminately; government aid hurts more than it helps. It would be the next generation—who were born between 1860 and 1870, and who began to write and work at the turn of the century, who would argue that charity could not cure poverty and that only professional social workers administering government doles should aid the poor.

Big Martin vs. Big Philanthropy

Martin relentlessly hammered Big Philanthropy. On the one hand, he could write with deep appreciation of titans whose entrepreneurial genius allowed them to amass a fortune that would later be, in effect, stolen by grasping left-wingers like Rimel at Pew. On the other hand, he spared no criticism of those who squandered those titans’ philanthropy. One place to see Martin’s fine historical work on America’s most successful businessmen is *The Foundation Builders: Brief Biographies of Twelve Great Philanthropists*, published by the Philanthropy Roundtable. This concise work includes a chapter on J. Howard Pew, which ends with a quotation from the man that should shame his heirs and the current staff at the Pew Trusts:



Credit: Amazon. License: <https://amen.to/3RDZZKt>.

In his Great Philanthropic Mistakes, Martin skewers such things as the Rockefeller Foundation’s meddling in “population control” and medical education, Carnegie’s jump-starting of “public” television, and the Ford Foundation’s “gray areas” program that aspired, but failed, to help poor people.

What of the future? Charity, a work of love, can exist only when it is free. It is freedom that has effected the miracle of America—intellectual freedom, religious freedom, political freedom, industrial freedom, freedom to dream, to think, to experiment, to invent, to match wits in friendly competition, freedom to be an individual. That is our great American heritage. But freedom is indivisible. Thus if we should lose any one of our freedoms, all the rest would certainly fail.

Although Martin did not begrudge a successful tycoon his large fortune, some of his most penetrating work dissected how harmful that fortune could become in the hands of arrogant people working in Big Philanthropy. Another book not to be missed is his *Great Philanthropic Mistakes*, which went through two editions under the helpful eye of William Schambra at the Hudson Institute’s Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal. Here Martin skewers such things as the Rockefeller Foundation’s meddling in “population control” and medical education (which did no favors for the poor or people of color),

Carnegie's jump-starting of "public" television, and the Ford Foundation's "gray areas" program that aspired, but failed, to help poor people. He also criticized Ford's disastrous meddling in New York City schools at the height of the 1960s, a Big Philanthropy mistake so grand that even a *New York Times Magazine* author judged it to have been "arguably the most harmful" of all experiments foisted on Gotham in that era of turmoil and decline.

How arrogant was the 1960s Ford Foundation, you ask? Martin has the answer:

A program officer listening to someone at a staff meeting drone on about how the foundation would do little good because government, business, and labor were inflexible and unwilling to change said, "Let's just buy Rhode Island"—on the grounds that Ford at the time gave away \$250 million a year, whereas Rhode Island's annual budget was only \$188 million.

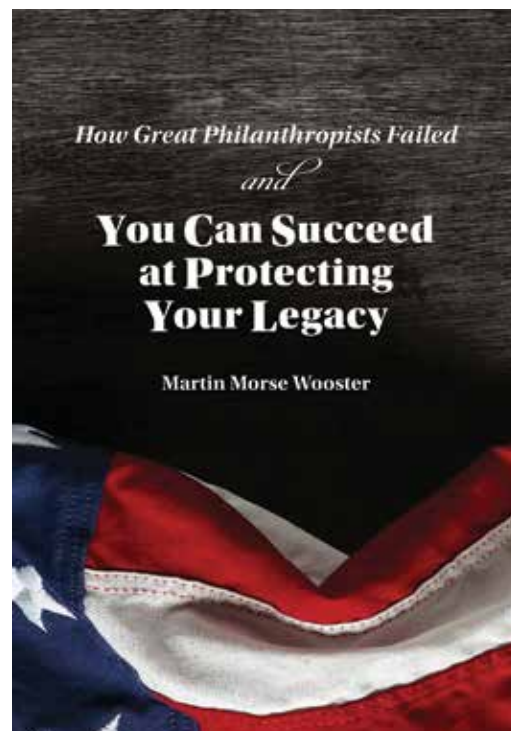
No less arrogantly, Martin recalled how Ford president Paul Ylvisaker thought the foundation "could somehow create organizations that would solve the problems of the poor—a view he retained even as the groups were radicalized or struggled to get off the ground." Similarly, and around the same time, Carnegie proclaimed that commercial television would never produce shows that provided history or art to viewers, so the foundation must government to unleash "public" television. Even as these words were spoken, cable TV was being born.

A major cause of the harms done by "arrogant philanthropists," Martin wrote, involves placing "too much value on expertise." Countless "philanthropic mistakes begin with the premise that a foundation has the one right way to shape the world." Alas, when foundations do manage to escape this error of "expert" conceit, they often retreat into a different error: timidity leading to mediocrity.

For these reasons and more, Martin understood that *it is far easier to earn a fortune than to give it away wisely*. His best book on giving, and I'm confident the book that he considered his magnum opus, was originally entitled *The Problem of 'Donor Intent.'* It was first published by Capital Research Center in 1994 but was revised in 1998 and 2007, and its fourth edition appeared in 2017 as *How Great Philanthropists Failed and How You Can Succeed at Protecting Your Legacy*.

By this edition, the book had grown to nearly 400 pages of main text and another 50 of endnotes, but its structure was simple. Part I, the longest part by far, spun out the horror

stories of great philanthropists who unwisely created permanent foundations, only to have them captured by left-wing bandits who used them not only in ways their benefactors would have abhorred but even attempted to destroy the American arrangement of limited government and free markets that made possible the wealth now being hijacked by philanthropoid activists. This part told the stories of how men like Rockefeller, Ford, MacArthur, Carnegie, the Pew brothers, Albert Barnes, and more had their vast wealth taken over by hostile groups of activists and sometimes by their own descendants. As Henry Ford II, the founder's grandson and the last family member to serve on the Ford Foundation's board, put it in his famous resignation letter of 1976: "The foundation is a creature of capitalism," which is "a statement that, I'm sure, would be shocking to many professional staff people in the field of philanthropy. It is hard to discern recognition of this fact in anything the foundation does. It is even more difficult to find an understanding of this in many of the institutions, particularly the universities, that are the beneficiaries of the foundation's grant programs." Ford



Credit: Amazon. License: <https://amen.103HL6cs>

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In other words, a donor faces very bad odds of having his or her intentions respected after death.

added, “I’m not playing the role of the hard-headed tycoon who thinks all philanthropoids are Socialists and all university professors are Communists. I’m just suggesting to the trustees and the staff that the system that makes the foundation possible very probably is worth preserving.”

Part II of Martin’s book is considerably shorter, because it tells the tales of a handful of foundations who have, thus far, done a good job of preserving their donors’ intent, including the JM Foundation, the Bradley Foundation of Milwaukee, and the Daniels Fund of Colorado. Daniels is in fact one of the even smaller number of foundations who began to swerve from donor intent but was brought back. Now, I’m proud to say, Martin’s book is required reading for Daniels’ board members.

Part III concludes the book and is the shortest of all, giving practical advice to donors on how to avoid the pitfalls so carefully detailed earlier. I had the pleasure of editing this final edition of the book, so added a short Preface, “How to Read This Book,” explaining that “if you’re a scholar of philanthropy, read every word in this book. If you’re a busy donor, let me save you time by spoiling the plot: You lose.”

In other words, a donor faces very bad odds of having his or her intentions respected after death. The phenomenon poses a fascinating paradox: Entrepreneurial geniuses like Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Ford built commercial empires larger than the world had ever seen. They produced astronomical returns on investment and were rarely tricked out of their money in business deals. But when they turned to giving that money away, they failed.

To be fair, these entrepreneurs faced terrible obstacles. Wealthy and prestigious colleges, as Wooster documents, have treated donors shamefully. The donors’ own staff and assistants have betrayed the vision of the men and women who gave them the money they now abuse. Even family members have utterly disregarded how their ancestors wanted the fruits of their labor used.

But some of the blame remains on those donors who did not recognize and prepare for the long-term difficulties of philanthropy. Martin succinctly summarizes his general advice in reference to David Packard, who was the brilliant co-founder of Hewlett-Packard and therefore of Silicon Valley itself, and a major supporter of Ronald Reagan. Packard also, as Martin chronicles, helped keep one of

Herbert Hoover’s main philanthropic projects—the Hoover Institution at Stanford University—from going off the rails, yet Packard’s own multibillion-dollar foundation today funds endless projects at odds with his vision: “The lessons David Packard provides future donors are timeless: Don’t assume that future generations will respect your wishes. Make your intentions as clear as possible, impose as many restrictions as possible—and, if possible, spend your fortunes within your lifetime.”

Martin added, “Two of the most powerful strategies to maintain donor intent are (1) to term-limit your foundation, or (2), even more radically, to do your giving while you’re living, and if you still have a significant estate at the end of your life, leave it not to a foundation but to charities you trust.”

Here I should mention that Martin wrote a separate brief book entirely on term limits for foundations. In 1998, Capital Research Center published *Should Foundations Live Forever? The Question of Perpetuity*. You already know his answer, and this study was later worked into the fourth and final edition of Martin’s donor intent book for CRC. Martin also wrote a special report on the problems of giving to universities for the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal.

Marvin Olasky glowingly endorsed the fourth edition of Martin’s donor intent book, observing “I dislike the term ‘must reading’ when used about anything other than the Bible, but if you are wealthy and creating a foundation,” Martin’s book is “an almost-must.” Many persons of wealth agreed and would call our offices to track down Martin. We also sent the fourth edition to our own donors, only to have two billionaires request extra copies—if they both heed the book’s advice, Martin will have saved around \$25 billion for the team. And more than that, we’ve given away thousands more copies to conservative groups across America, who have used it to spur discussions with their donors about how best to plan their current and future giving.

That means that the eccentric Martin Morse Wooster, though proud of his little platoons at the library, the neighborhood, and the pub, may just end up changing the course of empires of wealth as well as the path of the country he loved and humbly served.

Requiescat in pace.

Martin's Friends and Colleagues Reminisce

Martin Wooster was the indispensable man for many people in Washington. You wanted your manuscript expertly edited? He was your man. You wanted help with a book that didn't quite jell in your own mind? Martin had your back. Research in arcane fields at the microfiche files at the Library of Congress? Martin had mastered that. In addition, Martin was a *mensch*. A kind, always polite soul who never sought the limelight and enjoyed sharing news with friends. Martin had wide interests: he reviewed science fiction books for the *Washington Post*, he wrote about craft beers, he wrote an expert's guide to philanthropy for the Capital Research Center, and he expressed pure joy when he discovered something new that no one else had. I first met him at the National Journalism Center in the 1980s and can't express how much I will miss him. He was a conservative, but had friends across the political spectrum—a sad rarity in some circles today. He brightened the life of everyone he touched.

—*John Fund, a columnist with National Review who graduated from the National Journalism Center with Martin*

I think I met Martin in 1983, when he and John Fund were the Woodward and Bernstein of twenty-something libertarians, but our first lunch was in '86 or '87 in New York City. He was the messiest eater I've ever known. Like many, I regularly received envelopes bearing the Post Office Box 8093 return address. Mine were stuffed with *Washington Post* and *Financial Times* articles about Jack Kerouac, the Buffalo Bills, Frank Norris, and Walt Whitman. How he arrived at that quartet I do not know.

He was a patriot of his place (Silver Spring) with a huge heart and wonderfully catholic interests. I hadn't seen him in quite a while, but about three weeks ago I spoke on a panel in DC and Martin was there in the front row. At the after-event mixer he burst into song, as was his wont—not, as usual, “Hail to the Redskins” but a Barry Goldwater '64 campaign number, which he must have felt fittingly inappropriate in a roomful of moderate Republicans and media liberals. He was a good guy, and I'm sad to think I'll never get another letter from Post Office Box 8093, Silver Spring MD.

—*Bill Kauffman, author and longtime colleague*

Martin Wooster was one of the very last of the WASP eccentrics. He once told me that he was proud to rent an apartment on land in Silver Spring, Maryland, that, at the time of the American Revolution, his family owned. Wooster College at Yale is also, apparently, named for his family.

He had a talent for striking up unusual friendships, which includes us I guess. He used to perform book research for a British Viscountess, who would tell him, “Martin, you are a star,” whenever he found some unusual document. He would repeat this line to me fairly often, in a mock-British accent. He loved it. He was also friends with a *Washington Post* editor who won the Pulitzer Prize; Martin would sometimes house-sit for him, other times they would drink beer and talk about books.

When I first met Martin, in 1987, he was the Washington editor of *Reason* magazine. He was carrying a wicker basket, instead of a briefcase, and wore a tent-like t-shirt in a room of striped Oxford button-downs. He didn't care.

He was at home being himself.

When I drove Martin home a few times, the neighborhood children would taunt him, “book man! book man!”

Apparently, he took one of them in a few years earlier, when she needed a dry, warm place to wait for her mom. She described Martin's apartment as piled floor to ceiling with books and newspapers, so his neighborhood nickname was born.

Just a month ago, I received a letter from Martin, full of clippings from the *Financial Times* and *Washington Post* about retirements or deaths of CIA officers whom I had quoted in my 2003 book. Martin had remembered them and thought I would want to be kept up to date. It was unexpected, thoughtful, and, because my wife often requires explanations, brought forth a series of stories about Martin, including his unlikely kind acts.

When I was done, she said, “He sounds like he stepped out of a novel.”

—*Richard Minitzer, CEO of Zenger.news and author of Mastermind: The Many Faces of the 9/11 Architect, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed and other books*

Martin took time out of his day(s) to scan the news and set aside for *each* of us articles he thought we would appreciate. I only worked about 20 months with him—November 1997 to June 1999—but he did the same for me. I'm still honored. What did he send ME you may ask? Any articles on Richard Nixon or anything on Argentina (politics, sports, the latest IMF loan, you name it).

All his friends recognize the manila envelope coming in the mail, from that Takoma Park, Maryland P.O. Box. Clippings not so neatly folded, but all of them dated! The penmanship

may not have always been clear, and there may have been a few grease stains on some of them, but the immediate thought that always came to mind (just last week for me) was, Wow, Martin, how thoughtful!

He was just an all-around nice guy, funny as all hell, anything but boring, always curious. He seemed to read EVERYTHING. I think his curiosity sustained him, gave him energy, this lust for knowledge and for obscure facts few cared about but were ultimately intrigued by.

Meals with him (the *one* thing I occasionally did with him, about every ten years) were always hilarious. Yes, the coupons he always brought, but also the interesting places he recommended. He didn't care about appearances, especially in a town where sometimes that's all people care about. But this was *his* town, and he lived life a way few do. His hunger (for books, information, food, beer, taunting Cowboys fans like Tom Switzer) was one-of-a-kind, and his disposition was unlike anyone I've *ever* known.

RIP Martin. You're already missed.

—Walter S. Montano, director, Boston University
Washington DC Programs

Martin devoured entire libraries as after-dinner mints, emerging ever more curious about what great work of history, politics, biography, economics, sports, or science fiction (pardon me, "S.F.") to hoist next. He cherished baseball, exhibits, museums, stage plays, conventions, the science of beer making, free market capitalism, and the United States. He was bogged down neither by car payments nor dependents. He lived richly on a tidy budget, zipped about on public transport, viewed every parade, and devoured each spectacle. When he paid for a movie, he would always—

his sister, Ann-Sargent Wooster, informs me—insist on sitting *front row*. This past October, when his Washington Nationals were eliminated from Major League Baseball's postseason, Martin was disappointed but was quick to note the cost-savings. "In 2019 my barber, Ricardo," Martin emailed me, "could afford tickets to the first round of the playoffs. Shail, who owns the apartment building next to mine, could afford the second round. No one could afford World Series tickets." ...

Wooster's most serious long-form contribution is found in his book, *The Great Philanthropists and the Problem of "Donor Intent."* The first edition appeared in 1994, the second in 1998, the third in 2007, and the fourth in 2017. As he explained in the *Weekly Standard*, "Philanthropic history can be entertaining [given] the rise of such heroic entrepreneurs as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, John MacArthur, and Bill Gates [coupled with] ... a profession that attracts the overeducated and underemployed, who often fill their many idle hours with memorably vicious office politics."

The stories are fascinating. Henry Ford was not a perfect man, but "he lived simply and reinvested most of his profits back into his business," writes Wooster. Ford employed blacks (at equal pay scales) and paid "living wages." Ford Motor Co. gave criminals a second chance, hiring 500 ex-convicts between 1914 and 1920, "including one convicted of forging the name 'Henry F. Ford Jr.' on a check."

—Thomas W. Hazett, the Hugh H. Macaulay Endowed
Professor of Economics at Clemson University
on Reason.com ■

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