

Common Genius - Selected Paragraphs

How Can We Determine the Historical Factors That Led to Human Advancement ?

There have been innumerable forces that either helped or hindered human advancement. Since we know that all advances were fashioned by individual human action we have only to ask "Did a particular factor help or hinder individual action?" Oppressive religious or philosophical belief systems that stressed obedience, order, or introspection obviously discourage human initiative. Governing systems that deny education or imbue each new generation with destructive or fanatical mind-sets cannot empower a people to progressive actions. Feudal land systems and embedded aristocratic privilege prevented most citizens in such societies from contributing their energy or skills. Male dominated societies that preclude any major contribution from women forfeit half of their most natural resources. Same with those maintaining caste systems that prevent entire segments of society from any hope of upward mobility. Failure to defend one's territory from marauding invaders upsets any ordered development of national infrastructures needed for progress. Bureaucratic controls stifle all enterprise. Conversely, governmental mechanisms that maintain physical safety, the rule of law, and equal opportunity for all will unleash the cumulative power of a people. Thus, any factors that provide security without oppressing freedom of action for all will allow a people to exert their common genius for advancement. And, if that citizenry is empowered and directed by a common moral and cultural framework, their progress will be accelerated.

Hard-Scientists Versus Soft Scientists

The fact that hard-scientists have improved the physical lot of man should be equally obvious and the average citizen clearly has the common sense to understand that without dispute. Just one of these scientists, to anyone growing up in the 1940's and 1950's, proves the point: Jonas Salk ended the crippling scourge of polio. Without his vaccine, thousands of children would still be crippled every year and sentenced to a life in a wheelchair. In marked contrast, Hegel and Heidegger, Plato and Sartre, "soft" geniuses all, can point to nothing they did that ever actually helped any significant situation or group. In fact, as we will see in subsequent chapters, their ideas have mostly done much harm.

On The Different Types of Intelligence

One of history's biggest obstacles to continued progress, and to the dissemination of economic benefits to all people, has been the time lost and wrong paths taken by adherence to the faulty ideas of soft-science intellectuals. If we are to succeed as a people, we must sort out the right ideas from the wrong ideas. So we must, first, clarify what is meant by intelligence and rational thought. Then we will illustrate the difference between intellectuals and ordinary people, in order to distinguish the constructive forces in mankind's advance from the destructive forces.

The Radzewicz Formula

An advantage of the Radzewicz Formula is its ability to simplify a complex question so that it is easily understood. It was explained to me as follows: "History's progress," I was told, "can actually be reduced to a simple equation. It's easy, like simple algebra, or Polish notation." He put it on paper:

$$CM + S - O = EF$$

"CM," the common man, with Security, minus Oppression, equals Economic Freedom, and that leads to Prosperity. It also subsequently leads to Political Freedom."

And there it was—neat and simple. A fundamental principle missed by all the intellectuals. Deliberately missed, perhaps, because there is no "I" in the formula—intellectuals have never had anything to do with progress.

Why Intellectuals Appear Only in Already Successful Societies

In the occasional historical outposts of economic freedom, after the initial creative bursts created flourishing societies, then the philosophers arrived, much like a beautiful hybrid tea rose blooms magnificently in the summer, after the garden has already been laboriously cleaned, planted, watered, weeded and brought to full growth. Then like the hybrid tea rose, the philosophers appear, also blooming radiantly, reflecting and basking in the glory of the well established garden. That could be acceptable, if that's all they did, but, unfortunately, they get to thinking: "We can make this even better. These idiots don't know what they're doing. We should be in charge."

During the rise, decline, and fall of free societies, the intellectuals are always absent in the first period, appear like the Hegelian owl in the second, and become dominant, take flight, in the third. What does this recurring pattern tell you? The conclusion to this question was what Wadji Radzewicz found so obvious after he had analyzed the actual step by step progress in the few

free societies of history. He established the fact that the big names and events came after the success of the society supporting them, that their vast tomes on philosophic theory merely “reported” recent and past events--the doings of ordinary men and women. What’s more startling is his discovery that it was around the time of the intellectuals’ ascension in a society that the decline set in. Their unrealistic ideas on how “to make it better” have always served to undermine the things that actually make it work:

How Can “Joe Six-Pack” Be a Country’s Most Valuable Natural Resource?

Some readers of this book’s first drafts suggested that the author should avoid giving the impression that he is “in love with the common man.” Now, everyone knows the common man can be cantankerous, shallow, aggressive, opinionated, bigoted, and envious. Anyone who has served on a jury of his peers and tried to reach consensus has witnessed the common man in action. Indeed, it is their innumerable failings and undesirable traits that make the science of governance so difficult--and, more importantly, it is the ugly fact that makes utopias completely impossible! But, never the less, from the common people spring the genius that has moved society forward. It is, really, simply a matter of numbers.

There are millions of common men and women, and it is out of that huge resource that a society obtains its prime movers. Societies like the old European monarchies, or chauvinist Islam, or stratified India, waste the potential of the majority of their citizens. The strength of open, upwardly mobile, democratic societies is that they welcome and encourage the potentiality of each person. Most of the great Presidents and Prime Ministers have come from the lower or middle classes. The majority of millionaires in Britain and America are “self-made,” having emerged from lowly economic origins with little help from their families or country. Curiously, most of the self-made millionaires were only average students in school. These open societies are rewarded by being able to draw on the best individuals from every strata of their populace. Since the individual citizenry constitute a society’s most valuable asset, it is simple common sense to draw from as many of them as possible. The future success of every country depends on empowering all such talent to emerge, and yet in the vast majority of those nations sitting and posturing in the United Nations, most citizens are denied this opportunity. The common men and women of this world deserve better.

Intellectuals versus Reason

Intellectuals outside the fields of hard science have consistently failed to live up to the need for rationality based on observation and a rigorous evaluation of results. By not applying the fundamental requirements of a scientific approach, they violate the very definition of their being. This lack of reasoned thought is most clearly evidenced by the 70 year support for communism

given by a large number of Western intellectuals--it can truly be said that communism was the opiate of the intellectuals--three generations of them!. This lack of rationality is also evidenced by the willingness in academic circles to rewrite history to accommodate current fads on diversity, economics, geography, history, and the environment. Indeed, many of today's intellectual leaders appear to have reversed the definition--they act based on emotions, hope, peer pressure, and feelings more than on reason--the exact opposite of how intelligent life is supposed to function. For those students in Western colleges and universities, who must cope on a daily basis with the obvious inadequacies of today's favored textbooks and curricula, it can only be hoped that they will recall Captain Kirk's famous request, "Beam me up, Scotty, . .

The Proper Use of Dates in Understanding History

Throughout this book there has been an underlying emphasis on historical dates--not the multitudinous calendar facts to be idiotically memorized--but the comparison of one event as compared to another, designed to measure progress and attribute credit--and blame. For example, it is easily demonstrated that the famous philosophers' treatises on Government always followed actual accomplishments by Ordinary Citizens--often by centuries! In fact, they were merely "reporting" what common people had already done and passing it off as original work. In "Common Genius" we use comparative dates to determine who did what first.

Those who are currently pushing an anti-Western civilization agenda seem to enjoy pointing the finger at past failings of Western civilization. Thus they have attempted to make Columbus a villain because some of his men killed Indians, or to castigate Western Europe for the Crusades, or condemn America for its past tolerance of slavery, or the Founding Fathers who wrote the Constitution without giving women the vote. Any weight given to such criticism relies on and shows an appalling ignorance of historical progression. Those were past sins, like how Jews crucified Christ--2,000 years ago. Let's get over it! The important point is that the Western democracies have shown steady progress. Indeed, the Western democracies stand out for having slowly but surely broadened the principle of human rights and put those past sins behind them. Later in this chapter we will look at nine grossly abusive practices, many of which are still currently in effect in Oriental and Middle Eastern cultures. They are perhaps roughly comparable to some Christian abuses of yore. But the Christians ended those abuses long ago, while the Islamic and Eastern leaders still encourage them. Simple knowledge of chronology allows proper evaluation of who is getting better and who is lagging behind.

Did Christian Preaching Encourage Freedom ?

In the mid-sixteenth century, a revolution had upset the rigid structure of Scottish society. John Knox arrived "and single-handedly inspired, intimidated, and bullied Scotland's nobility and

urban classes into overthrowing the Catholic Church.” (Herman, p. 15) Knox came out of nothing--he had spent his early years “in exile, imprisonment and even penal servitude chained to a rowing bench in the King’s galleys.” He arrived in 1559 and preached the new Protestantism to the people of Scotland and they bought it. They accepted its harsh rules because it provided direct access to God for every congregation, and created a united community, with each individual honored and bound together in its sense of closeness. “‘God loveth us,’ John Knox had written, ‘because we are His own handiwork.’” (Herman, p. 17) This dedication to the Almighty served very well to subordinate obedience to other authority, whether of the King, the nobles or the established Churches. This was the common men and women with attitude, demanding their rights. There were bloody battles and massive protests, but Knox’s demands prevailed.

In the 1570’s Knox spoke of how all political power was vested in the common people, not in Kings, nobles, or even the clergy. This was just a few years prior to the Dutch “Oath of Abjuration;” and two hundred years before America’s founding fathers wrote the Declaration of Independence; and well before Locke, Hume and Kant were born. Although Scotland’s people never gained a widespread electorate, Knox had made another baby step that led eventually in the United States to a vote for everyone. He said that it was the necessary duty of every man to defend their rights and power against tyranny from any source. The citizenry did just that, and forced their leaders to sign a National Covenant in 1638, ensuring democratic elections and legal protections for the citizens. Scotland became another stepping stone, anticipating the Glorious Revolution in England some thirty years later. Subsequent philosophers wrote complex treatises about such rights, but typically gave no attribution to Knox, who “had been there--done that,” in the 1500’s.

Philosophers, Plagiarism, and Tardy “Reporting” by Intellectuals

Calvinism, one of the most fiercely independent offshoots of the Reformation, found a ready home with the Dutch. This spirit of rebellion for freedom, both political and religious, led to the Resolution in 1581, out of the Hague’s only local assembly, called the “Oath of Abjuration.” This declaration stated that Philip II, King of Spain, had violated the obligation of a ruler to be fair to his subjects and it claimed for the subjects the fundamental right “. . .to withdraw their allegiance and to depose an oppressive and tyrannical sovereign, since no other means remained to them of preserving their liberties.” (See Barbara W. Tuchman, “The First Salute,” Knopf-Borzoi, 1988, p.36)

Those delegates in the Hague thus anticipated Jefferson’s words and argument, and they did it two hundred years earlier. This declaration of every man’s fundamental rights also provided material for Hobbes, Montesquieu, and Locke, (none of whom had even been born yet) to use in their “reports” about freedom many years later. Thus, these delegates in the Hague, an assemblage of ordinary burghers, without any guidance from intellectuals, simply stated their

seemingly obvious and fundamental rights and demanded liberty--they didn't write five hundred page treatises, nor did they analyze and debate abstract theories; they just demanded freedom--it really was no more complicated than that. And they were only iterating arguments used centuries before in Italy's cities to claim freedom as everyman's right. And yet, Locke and Hobbes who wrote voluminously on the pros and cons of freedom and democracy hundreds of years later gave little or no attribution to these ordinary mortals in Holland who actually "wrote the book."

How Intellectuals Stand Logic on its Head

Intellectuals of the last few centuries have gradually escalated their war on religion in the name of "reason." They pride themselves on being rational and scientific--demanding the purest proof and the strongest evidence to support Holy Scriptures and the numerous doctrines of religions. Naturally, as every ordinary soul knows, such proof is not to be had. The common people, however, do apply scientific logic and the use of controlled tests and observation in the secular world to develop and maintain the best practical applications in government, business, agriculture, production, etc. Common people have the wisdom to reserve faith, hopes and dreams for their religious lives. It will not surprise most ordinary souls to see that intellectuals don't get it--they have it ass-backward. They demand proof for their religious lives and yet cheerfully make the leap of faith in their secular lives. In the latter "leap" many landed in the arms of Joe Stalin, Che Guevera, or Mao Tse Tung. And, many still believe, or at least hope, that if they could just rule from on high they could make life perfect for everyone!

On Immigration and The Decline of Europe

Millions of common ordinary people happily bid goodbye to pompous aristocracies, the closed economies, and the rigid religious orthodoxies of their mother countries. The word spread fast, and people came from every continent, eager to join the Great Experiment in America. They sacrificed security to gain a fresh start in a New World of freedom and opportunity. And they loved what they found; they settled in, learned the language, got jobs, and together they built a great nation. There is still a waiting list and many just pour in illegally.

These people packed up their belongings and left to go where opportunity was greater. And they did not go to the Middle East, Africa or to Asian nations. For the past four hundred years the vast majority of people throughout the world demonstrated this "common wisdom" by voting with their feet that America was the place to be. The United States became richly endowed by this influx--a growing pool of human talent that dwarfed even its vast natural resources. Ben Franklin's grandfather was a blacksmith in England, but feeling restricted by its socio-economic rigor mortis, he moved to America. George Washington's ancestors were common laborers in

England. When these plain people left, England lost a few laborers, but America gained a great scientist, a great general and its first President. These ordinary families were held down in England, unable to fully exert their talent for themselves or their country. They were empowered to greatness in America. Those two families provide clear evidence of how important ordinary people can be and how the unfettered actions of free people determine national and economic outcomes.

The Stepping Stones To Freedom -- The Erratic Trail of Liberty

The transfer of world authority to the United States was consistent with the past record of a "multi-stepped" progression which shows specific communities growing, then thriving, and finally declining, but passing on their innovations to another free locale. As the torch of freedom and prosperity was passed from Florentine Italy to Holland to England to Scotland, to America, there was a significant advance for each new recipient nation, and a decline in the strength and fortunes of the one most recently passed. Individual European nations grew sporadically but successfully until, reaching a certain point of affluence and maturity, intellectuals arrived. The latter retarded the growth of freedom for ordinary people, undermined useful cultural supports, promoted policies that added to bureaucracies and centrist-socialist controls, and many of them, for good measure, spewed out philosophies of hate and rage that spread the horrors of war throughout their lands. These suicidal tendencies were brought on by the flawed vision of Europe's elites. That vision exerted such an unfortunate and negative influence that it brought on the decline of old Europe, and almost by default, handed the lead to America.

The Secret Weapon of The West -- Separating Faith from Reason

Ever since the Greek and Roman pantheon was replaced by Christ, the men and women of the West have fought and argued with their God, pleaded with Him and railed at Him, criticized Him and denounced Him, and when necessary, established wholly new religions. Like the rebellious teen-agers of a strict but loving family, Western men and women in this way became adults. They accepted the burden of free will, the attendant personal responsibility, and the obligation to lead constructive purposeful lives. And, in spite of their piety, they retained their rights to explore science rationally, to better their material lives, to improve their laws and governing structures, and to develop their individual potentialities to the fullest. They found a way to separate their secular lives from their spiritual lives, to separate Church and State, to avoid the suffocating theocracies that have held down almost all other peoples. Creating this mental separation was a major turning point in man's history because it retained the comfort and support of Faith while freeing the secular world from the oppression of dogmatic thinking. Every man's mind was freed to explore, manipulate, and improve the world he lived in--Unfortunately, this happened only in a few Western nations.

The Mechanics of Successful Societies

The relative success of different societies prior to 3,000 B. C. had different causes than those affecting the Phoenician and subsequent civilizations. The tribal and early agricultural societies that preceded the Phoenicians were heavily influenced by availability of good soil, water, regular seasons and navigable waterways. However, those assets were all common to the huge empires that flourished in Egypt, Greece, Rome, India, and China during the millennia before Christ. At that point, all those major civilizations were more than adequately endowed with favorable physical advantages. By 1,000 BC there were a number of civilizations where such physical and environmental differences had little effect on their relative subsequent performance. After the days of Homer and Abraham, different success modes involved the use of alphabets, coins, arithmetic, religion, social organization, trade, education, literature, scientific inquiry, and communication, and these were all known and available throughout the major cultures of the world. The question then is why didn't the Industrial Revolution occur in one of those empires instead of North-eastern Europe?

Biology--Overcoming Nature by Nurture

There are those who have attributed the continual lack of success by some societies over the millennia to built-in, permanent racial inferiority. Thus, it has been argued that American Indians, or the Aborigines of Australia, or remote tribes in the heart of Africa, had less intelligence, or less gumption and initiative, or less something vital, than the people of China or Greece. However, it has been fairly well established in the last century that there are few such genetic or racial differences. Thomas Sowell analyzes many of the measurements and tests that have been made to determine such differences in "Conquests and Cultures" and it is clear that while there are differences, sometimes big differences in knowledge between racial and ethnic groups, there are no significant differences of innate intelligence or native abilities.

Differences in accomplishment only arise when one society over an extended period of time has provided basic safety, better training, constructive discipline, an enabling government, ennobling values, and sufficient individual freedom for its citizens to capitalize on these advantages.

What constitutes Progress?

In earlier chapters we have reviewed how the most clearly discernible pattern in history has been one of oppression. Throughout the past 3,000 years, societies have persisted in every part of the world that allowed privilege and luxury only to the few, and virtual slavery and poverty to the many. Historians have mistakenly lavished praise on the high cultural achievements of Imperial China, the French royalty at Versailles, Tsarist Russia, the Egyptian Dynasties, and the rich lifestyle of Islamic Sultans. These autocratic regimes accumulated great wealth by subjecting their people to lives of virtual slavery--the Egyptian pyramids and the Great Wall of China were massive governmental projects, and their foundations contain the bodies of countless common men and women who perished on the job.

The opulence of totalitarian "civilizations" was enjoyed by only a small circle of a favored elite within their Imperial Courts. The "success" of such cultures never went much beyond spectacular culinary feats, formal accouterments and elaborate dress, the splendor of their palaces and gardens, the extravagance of their leaders' burial vaults, and the adoring poetry and drawings of their favored artists. Their harems and concubines were without equal. Bureaucrats scoured the countryside and invaded neighboring regions to procure the prettiest girls. Although those "high" cultures of the Orient and the Middle East have impressed many an intellectual scholar, such examples of "cultural progress" are more apt to disgust a sensible and modest common man.

The shallow opulence of court life in Imperial China and the luxurious sultanates of Islam had what most modern intellectuals worship-- fancy clothes, formal dinners, on fancy china, fawning literature, erotic practices, and a leisurely and indulgent life style for a select few at the top. That is why we so often read or hear that such civilizations were as meritorious as Western societies--that they attained equally lofty pinnacles of human development. Granted, there have been periods of social stability within such societies and some of these periods provided peace and at least minimum rations for the populace, but all such eras operated only by holding the people in a suffocating system of controlled behavior that restricted personal achievement, prevented technical progress, and denied their people freedom of action and any expression of their individuality. Real progress occurred in the West because that was the only place that recognized the Rights and Dignity of each individual person.

The Failure Of Macro-Economics Dictated From Above --

A recent report on world hunger was issued by the Rome-based U. N. Food and Agriculture Organization, and predictably, the report reveals the failure of U. N. efforts. The headline summary reads: "hunger, malnutrition kill 6 million kids a year." It also reports that the numbers

dying and starving have increased over the last decade. A member of the intelligentsia would conclude: "Let's have some Hollywood celebrities run a benefit concert to send over more food." Then they would feel real good. On the other hand, a reader of average IQ would conclude: "Whatever the U. N. and Hollywood celebrities have been doing these past fifty years has failed. Let's do something different."

In fact, there has been an emergency situation for fifty years and the U. N. has failed to alleviate it after trillions (not mere billions) of dollars of aid and fifty years of failed programs. It is important to note the time period--the tragic parents we currently see in the photos from sub-Saharan Africa, clutching their dying babies, are the now grown children that survived from the pictures we saw twenty years ago, and the grandchildren of the survivors of dying babies photographed forty years ago, and so forth. None of the hand-outs and none of the Hollywood fundraisers have helped. Neither have the World Bank and IMF programs, nor the CARE packages, or the adopt a child programs. Everything that has been tried has failed.

The U. N. has been dealing with African hunger for three generations with no progress. The cause of hunger is a society that does not allow its citizens to earn a living, live in safety, or go to school. Hunger is caused when the society allows looting and genocide and regulates economic activity so that only the elites can participate and get rich. Dysfunctional societies cause hunger. A society that enables free economic activity will soon put an end to hunger. People will work for food--if they can. But they need basic "S"ecurity and minimal "O"ppression. The people of Africa would only need one generation of effort to emerge from poverty if provided those two essential conditions.

Concerning the Protestant Reformation

The Reformation created a massive change in the structure of governments and religious belief during the sixteenth century and represented a tipping point in history that supported a burst of creative energy born out of increased freedom of thought. It was a new era, marked by expanding commerce in Holland and England. It was the time of Marlowe and Shakespeare and the common people who attended the plays in Stratford-on-Avon were independent and boisterous, with few illusions and a lessened awe of their leaders and clergy. They were enjoying their heady victory over established authorities, a victory arising from the foundations of the Italian cities and the Renaissance of economic freedom and free thought that had occurred in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The Reformation illustrates the complexity and subtlety of any analysis of religion and progress. Common people have had the ability to benefit from their faith, in spite of their clergy's frequent failings and shortcomings, and to separate it from their secular lives. Intellectuals lack this subtlety, and frequently attempt, simply because established religions aren't perfect, to seek their destruction. It's the same lack of understanding that makes them want to destroy free

enterprise--because it isn't as perfect as their utopian dreams want it to be. Talk about throwing out the baby with the bathwater! Only the best and brightest would do that!

Does Christianity Underlie Western Supremacy?

Professor Rodney Stark argues in "The Victory of Reason" that Christianity was directly responsible for the political, scientific, and economic breakthroughs of the past millennium. Starting with the monastic orders of medieval days, certain segments and policies of the church supported rational inquiry--while the world's other great religions stressed mystery, obedience, introspection, and resignation. Stark argues that Christianity alone embraced logic and reason as a means to enlightenment and the advancement of the human condition. And it did so well before the Protestant reformation which then magnified this increasingly independent view of man and his institutions.

Now, while the Radzewicz Rule suggests Christianity may not have caused Western progress, it does seem clear that, at least compared to the other major religions, Christianity was a positive force--a faith that encouraged individuals to act and to act responsibly. However, the Radzewicz Rule forces one to go further back to uncover the fundamental causative factor for the progress of freedom and prosperity--and we now know that the actual creators of progress were the common people, human initiative, and individual human action. If you want to look back and find the underlying creators of the modern world, look no further than the common people. The role of religions can only be gauged by the effect they had on the masses.

As Professor Stark claims, the monastic orders in the 12th century Italian city states brought a message of freedom and hope to the poorest people and helped empower them, and this long before Luther came on the scene. Sadly, Christianity alone was not sufficient to empower those European people locked in feudal serfdom under the oppression of landed aristocracies. Progress in Europe was not a uniform thing but occurred primarily in just a few locales where individual freedom happened to prevail. And it was sporadic, occurring only as long as a relatively high level of freedom lasted. For example, when Renaissance Italy was subjugated by neighboring kingdoms, progress moved to Holland and Scotland. And, progress was almost continually limited in those Christian areas like Poland and Spain that never attained a widespread dispersion of individual freedom. Those clearly evident distinctions within continental Europe are what confirm the Radzewicz Rule.

Even in the most backward and despotic realms, however, the Christian doctrine of hope and personal human dignity lay in the hearts of those subjugated and was ever ready, given half a chance, to help them claim their rights. When Pope John Paul brought his Christian message to Warsaw near the close of the Cold War he strengthened the bodies and souls of hundreds of thousands of the faithful, strengthened their resolve to gain freedom, and drove a coffin nail into seventy years of Russian Communist oppression. The case method is the best way to study

almost any subject, and the role of religion in history is well illustrated by that real case history in Poland: the positive impact of the Pope's message to Solidarity--the workers union that helped topple Communism. It gives evidence that religion can play a positive role. Wouldn't it be extraordinary to see some cleric, or anyone within the Islamic faith play an equally positive role for their citizens' well-being by taking a stand against the most radical terrorists who foster the suicide bombing of civilians, keep women suppressed, and fail to educate their youth except in hate and fanaticism?

On Atheism and European Diplomacy

While atheism may have contributed to the modern European's aimlessness, its prevalence does not provide the whole answer. It is highly probable that even if the elites in Europe were to stop trying to eradicate all Christian observances from public life, even if they were to treat it equally with other faiths, indeed, even if they were to fervently embrace Christianity as born again Christians, that would not fully protect Europe from the destructiveness of their remaining bad ideas.

The European elites would still pursue international answers, bureaucratic controls, a world court ruled by dictators, an expanded welfare system on the brink of bankruptcy--there is no end to their bad ideas--eliminating atheism would not significantly reduce the threat of their faulty visions. They would still seek a continuation of their failed record of agreements and treaties that for hundreds of years have never accomplished their stated objectives. As famed TV comic and commentator Jon Stewart warns, "in the interest of presenting the complete picture and reasserting America's superiority, the rest of the world . . ." is much worse. (See "America," chapter 9, and p. 183) He provides serious warnings about Europe: "These are the people that brought you 'the 100 years war.'" Their history has been constant, recurring wars, all over the continent, virtually uninterrupted for centuries.

Stewart refers to "Old Europe, . . . now reduced to sucking at the geopolitical teat of the American hegemon." (p. 194) Their leaders are in no position to recommend policy concerning sound international relations between nations. Better to ask a drunk about responsible social drinking. And yet, many leaders on the Continent stagger around from one crisis to the next deploring America's "legitimacy," ridiculing Americans' moral convictions, and subverting the war on terrorism.

Why Intellectuals Show More Sympathy for Islam than for the West

The animosity that intellectuals hold for the West has filtered down to many and created a false but widespread view of Western civilization as racist, imperialistic and corrupt. The most

extreme critics are dedicated to tearing down the structure of Western civilization so they can plant their new system with themselves at the top. They are so dedicated to their fanatical resentment that they are constitutionally unable to oppose anyone who shares their beliefs. The perennial role of the intellectual as a negator-- to be against -- will generally cast him or her on the same side as external enemies. To have opposed Communist doctrine, and now to condemn and fully combat Islamic terrorists, would be to deny their own ideological positions. Their flawed vision forces them to become bed-fellows of every enemy of the West.

Roger Scruton reminds us that the past century's nihilist terrorists that were famously portrayed by Turgenev, Conrad and Dostoevsky were all bitter outsiders, fueled by a rage born of alienation and envy. He deplors "The transformation of human character that ensues when resentment gains the upper hand." He compares those past fanatics to modern day Islamic terrorists, "directed as before against the carefree and the successful and with only one goal, which is mass destruction. That is how we should understand al-Qa'eda: not as a religious movement but as a new kind of stateless terrorism, which has only the vaguest idea of what it wants to create, and a clear conception of what it wants to destroy." (A Political Philosophy, p. 160) Destroying things in pursuit of an abstraction is a common psychosis among those with an exalted belief in their raw intelligence. Such alienation and angst is, of course, much less common among ordinary working people.

Europe -- A Discredited Role Model

Many Americans give too much credit and respect to the old European nations. They are so infatuated with the museums, fine cuisine, aged wines, and bohemian artistes of the Continent, so bound by mutual resentment of American success, that they won't accept the reality--European nations never adopted sufficient democracy and a sufficiently open society to embrace the common people, they never provided the same degree of upward economic mobility available in America, and millions of the more enterprising Europeans went to America never to return. Even America's Europhiles only go there for brief vacations. And you can bet that Hollywood's celebrities and America's intellectuals, unfortunately, will not be leaving the States to return to their homelands.

There is a good reason for this--Europe as well as much of Asia has been wracked by war and the slaughter of millions of their people almost continuously for centuries. Communist Russia, Nazi Germany, and Imperial Japan, on all sides of the world, the ideas of the leaders, intellectuals, academics and philosophers enabled the ruthless, expansionist and destructive forces to set back the forces of liberty. Those elites were not working for a known reality, but seeking to fulfill a fantasy constructed from theory. Relying on the complex ideas of Marx and Lenin, Communist tyranny held sway in Russia where Stalin's regime was responsible for the murder of millions of its own citizens and in the neighboring nations it seized and occupied. For two centuries, the "stepping stones" of historical progress took second place to the horrors of

enslavement and butchery. And yet, for some inexplicable reason, the storied diplomats of Europe's past and present are respected and their conduct of "diplomacy" is praised--even though it has never prevented wars, genocides, and the wholesale enslavement of innocent people.

Of course, their failures resulted in the undeniable end of the European hegemony and the onset of its decline--the torch of individualism and liberty was passed to the United States. After all, America had to rescue the Continental nations from themselves three times in one century. According to the rules of America's favorite sport, after three strikes, "You're Out." Knowing this historical record, how can anyone in their right mind look to Europe for guidance on international affairs, politics, economics, or judicial and legal wisdom--it's almost like seeking out Bill Buckner on how to scoop up a ground ball! And he only erred once, not regularly and consistently for over three centuries as did the European leaders.

The Impact of Differing Religions

Differences in religious precepts and ethical beliefs could well have contributed to the extraordinary success of the West. As a final example, the positive influence of women in some societies has to be considered in any analysis of economic history. They are half the population. And if the common people are a society's "ultimate resource," any system that forfeits the potential contribution of fifty percent of its assets has to suffer the consequences! Critics of women's rights in the West show a marked ignorance of not only history but also about current practices around the world. There were no Florence Nightingales, no Helen Kellers, no Rosa Parks or anyone like them in Oriental or Middle Eastern societies--such magnificent women as those and millions of others who contributed in the West, would still be stoned to death in many parts of the world for their insolence in leaving their home or exposing their heads or ankles. To the extent that the priests of Islam did not allow concepts of mercy, individual rights, respect for life, and rational debate, they may be blamed for the failure of the Islamic world to keep pace, and for the obvious misery and unhappiness of their people.

On The Decline of America

America's success has gone on for almost four hundred years, comparable roughly in time to the pinnacles of Greek and Roman society. The question may well be asked whether the decline has set in. Is there another "stepping stone" elsewhere on earth that will be the next step? Will America's ascension to an all-time peak of prosperity be reversed and the nation relegated to a peripheral role in the world? Has an even worse decline reached a critical point in Europe?

The answers reside in the attitude of each nation's citizens--does he and she still have a pro-active, common sense approach to problem-solving, or have they lost the independence, the self-reliance, and the grit to carry on the miracle of freedom? It will not be determined by natural resources, nor environmental issues. Barring a meteor strike, it will not be determined by climate or luck. Just as all past historical progress was carved out by individuals at the bottom, the maintenance of a society's vigor can only come from the actions and beliefs of those ordinary citizens who make the system work. The common wisdom of a people can only be maintained by retention of their total independence from central government and on their unwavering self reliance. Joseph Johnston states it this way: "In the last analysis, society's attitude toward the relation between man and state is more important than any set of constitutional or political principles. . .the task is hopeless if the preferred relation is one of gratification and dependence." (The Limits of Government, p. 317)

On Campaign Finance Reform and The Right To Free Speech

Americans have always been willing to criticize "special interests," those lobbyists who seek special favors. This has been a healthy concern; unfortunately it has been unsuccessful. One of the greatest challenges for the future is how to reduce this constant pressure for special favors demanded, not by citizens, but by large well funded "single issue" organizations; they represent a perversion of democracy, by-passing the voter, and exacting legislation and regulations for their exclusive agendas. The injustice is that the common men and women, who are busy working to earn a living, are excluded from much of what goes on in government. A solution is needed to end these abusive practices that have survived numerous campaign finance "reforms" that were carefully crafted by Congress to avoid any real reform.

The answer is to recognize the "ultimate resource" of a country--the individual--and restore their exclusive right to contribute to candidates for office. Such contributions should have a dollar limit to prevent the wealthy from exerting a disproportionate influence. Thus, legislation could outlaw the political activity and contributions of all organized groups. After all, it is the individual citizen alone who is the basis of authority in a democracy. Why should groups and organizations have a right of free speech, and the right to "bribe" and harass elected legislators? Even membership organizations cannot properly represent their individual members as well as the individuals can by acting independently. And most lobbying groups are not even membership organizations, but instead are supported by a small controlling clique, or even by a foreign government, a single billionaire, a private foundation, or some such hidden corporal entity that should not be allowed to insinuate itself between the individual voters and their representatives. In short, Freedom of Speech as guaranteed in the Bill of Rights, should extend only to individuals, acting independently. There is no reason to extend that fundamental freedom to anyone but individual registered voters.

The Danger of “Soft-Sciences” in The Ivory Towers of Academia

Once attaining the prosperity of a mature society, the free population eventually divides into a two layered structure. Instead of having one class of workers, united in building the nation, an insidious group “rises” to the top by virtue of education and ego and by the relative ease and attractiveness of earning a living without “getting one’s hands dirty.” As the major American universities have become increasingly selective--requiring applicants to show a class standing and SAT test score in the top 10-20 percentile--they have increasingly been turning out clones of the intelligentsia that staff the school’s own teaching and administrative posts. The academics’ recent crusade for “diversity” has been a hoax, disguised as a means of helping racial minorities. In fact, they recruit, train, and produce a uniform and uneducated product, a propagandized youth who are endowed with the mental facility to adopt the politically correct abstractions of the radical Left. Intellectuals nourish this new level of converts with ideas and concepts that allow them a lifetime at the top discussing and analyzing what the common people are doing and devising plans about what they should be doing next.

The question on IQ’s may help explain why the admissions people at the prestige universities want their incoming freshman to boast SAT scores over 700--those are the types of minds, at least in the soft-sciences, that are most receptive to the faculty’s destructive abstractions. They can gain adherents by admitting the kinds of students possessing the greatest absorbent capacity for ludicrously abstract social theories. Those of lesser intellect would presumably argue back, contest the professors, and assert, God forgive them, basic values, common sense, and an unyielding grasp on reality. And it isn’t just a matter of IQ. The total number of years in an academic setting, exposed to the mind-think of today’s professorial class, could subvert even an average mind.

The New Faulty Vision of Western Intelligentsias

The split between those who want to expand government programs and those who want to limit them is not always caused by mere self-interest. The expansionist group is buttressed by well meaning individuals who have been conditioned by academia and the media to believe that every condition of life can be made better by an activist central government. This belief is the result of a new and different “vision” of man and society that contradicts everything understood by the framers of the Constitution. It reflects the continuing utopian dreams that lay at the heart of the failed Communist experiment still cherished by intellectuals.

These unrequited dreams of the intelligentsia represent a faulty “vision“--it has been well described in Sowell’s “A Conflict of Visions” and will be examined in subsequent chapters. It is this conflict--simply an ideological split--that has pushed Western societies into the Third and final phase of nationhood--the period when the new elite tirelessly repudiate the nation’s history and push for increased centrist controls. They are the enemy within, militantly against their own government, who seek to destroy what they did not build, what they cannot be elected to rule,

and where their brilliance is ignored. It is a case where suicide encouraged from within preempts the threat of murder from outside.

Why Intellectuals Are Drawn to Totalitarianism--

A number of writers cited in this book explain that the modern intellectual's dislike of Western civilization and capitalism arises from resentment--they see others gaining more power, money and fame than themselves--others who are, in their eyes, less deserving and less brilliant--people like Yogi Berra, John Wayne, or the guy who invented hoola-hoops. Roger Scruton has addressed this topic in "A Political Philosophy" and suggests why intellectuals supported both Nazism and Marxism, and before that, the French Revolution's disastrous ideas of equality--These hateful ideologies were seen as a means to power and a means to recruit resentment: "It is not the truth of Marxism that explains the willingness of intellectuals to believe it, but the power that it confers on intellectuals, in their attempts to control the world." (p. 149)

Those who would gain power by authoritarian control usually dress up their ideology as scientific--a theory that only an elite can understand, because of their big brains. They are descendants of Plato who was ever attempting to claim superior intellect and virtue in order to justify his right to rule from above. Scruton writes, "The Marxian ideology provides the frustrated intellectual with the power that he needs: the power of his own resentment, which echoes and amplifies the resentment of the victim class. It is a well-known fact that revolutions are not conducted from below by the people, but from above, in the name of the people, by an aspiring elite. . .totalitarian ideologies always have that character. They legitimize the resentments of an elite, while recruiting the resentments of those needed to support the elite in its pursuit of hitherto inaccessible advantages." (153-154) To this purpose today's intelligentsias and their followers pander to the electorate, soliciting ever more classes of "victims," and undermining the self-reliance of the citizens.

Scruton observes that with "normal people" resentment rarely builds to such a degree. It is those with "an exaggerated sense of their own entitlements" who resent "the system in which they have failed to advance. Intellectuals, it seems, are particularly prone to this generalized resentment. . . Hence we should not be surprised to find intellectuals in the forefront of radical movements, or to discover that they are more disposed than ordinary mortals to adopt theories and ideologies that have nothing to recommend them apart from the power that they promise." (p. 159)

Why Intellectuals Oppose The Concept of Free Will and Personal Responsibility

Many post-modern philosophers and intellectuals have doubted the freedom of individuals. B. F. Skinner and Sigmund Freud were among the intellectuals whose theories brought doubt about the independent man. Their harmful concepts suggest that man is a helpless puppet whose actions are predetermined by biological and environmental conditions. This is another bad idea that intellectuals love. It gives them a purpose (and often, a job) to help the supposedly helpless and inferior beings. Again, we see that intellectuals, constitutionally unable to participate in the real world, are compelled to create a meaningful, superior role for themselves. And some of them have even baser motives : They know that undermining personal responsibility undermines the foundations of freedom and will help topple democracy and capitalism. They have been very effective in their self appointed tasks--so much so that the cost and adverse consequences of the superstructures they have concocted impose a large burden on those beneath who pay for it all.

On Illegal Immigration

Many current day observers are concerned about the Mexican immigrants. After all, they are law breakers. However, history has a long record of showing that the illegals, the smugglers, and members of underground economies are symptomatic of a societal malaise that requires their presence. Many are flooding into America because the American lower income groups are choosing to use the welfare programs rather than work. The welfare establishment has made hand-outs so easy to get and so generous that only a fool would do otherwise. As Professor George Reisman has written, the fault does not lie with the immigrants--the fault is in the welfare programs. The prime danger to America's future is not those hard working immigrants at the bottom but the easy availability of government largesse that lures them here in the first place and ends by sapping their initiative.

The Rise and Fall of Nations --

The stepping stones of progress always arose in new and vital enclaves where the ordinary people were able to carve out effective systems that worked. The reason this progress was dynamic, hopping from one such enclave to another, was that each "new" locale offered freedom from those who accumulated with time at the top. The self-serving and impractical ideas of the intelligentsias that grow in mature societies, gaining control over the foundations, colleges, media, and other dominant interest groups of a society, are united in preventing any "rebirth."

If a failure of the West does occur in the near future, it will not be attributable to a lack of power, or money, or resources; and it will not be due to pollution, the failure to sign some treaty, or a refusal to negotiate with autocrats. Internally the nation can only be defeated by intellectual and

moral weakness. It is no coincidence that these are the twin failings of Intellectual elites--a lack of common sense, rationality, and moral certainty. The vision of modern liberal ideology encourages and justifies the decline of Western society. It tries to adjust our children's attitudes to accept a status comparable to the least developed nations, it ridicules the middle class mores that strengthen the nation, and it denies the superiority of Western values. And it undermines the prosperity and success handed down by their ancestors who created the modern world.

On The Failure of Both Parties -- Republicans and Democrats

Neither the Republican nor Democratic Party appears to have the will and determination to make the adaptations necessary to move America forward and to adapt to the new Information Age. That is why the ordinary people, a grassroots movement from the bottom, is required--from those who have the common wisdom and knowledge to see the way forward. A first step would be to restrict free speech and political action to individuals acting alone, and outlaw political activity and contributions by any group or entity of any kind. A true democracy must never dilute the exclusive power of each individual voter. Once those lobbies are pushed aside, the common wisdom of the individual voters might be able to direct their representatives to saner policies.

If the decline in America's future is to be averted it will be done by reliance on the common genius of its ordinary citizens. They can find the way to balance the Security and Safety of each person so they can work in freedom, but not live free of work. They can find the balance between vast bureaucracies in government that Oppress the people, and enlightened and lean public agencies that enable the free enterprise of the people. By testing each policy as to whether it increases the freedom and motivation of individuals toward constructive activity, the common people can choose the direction that has historically led to advances in freedom and prosperity. By observing the Radzewicz rule, they will be following the proven lessons of history, relying on the genius and practical good sense of common men and women. .

Is There Another Stepping Stone Americans Can Migrate To ?

The intelligentsia have often before created the doubts and confusion that led to a nation's decline. The only option for freedom seeking people has been to go somewhere else, get a fresh start, free of those accumulated burdens. It can only be hoped that with the improved communication derived from the internet and the activity of bloggers that the common people will finally have an opportunity to negate these destructive forces and reverse the decline of their homelands. A possible alternative is that the internet may disclose where the next stepping stone will be so enterprising individuals can get there first. Europeans that lived during the first half of the twentieth century and could foresee the bleakness and horror of World War I and II were lucky--they could emigrate to such safer locales as Canada, Australia, and America.

However, that form of escape by relocation is no longer an option. It is sobering to realize that the last time this situation occurred was when Rome fell and there was no place to go--with no new stepping stone yet in place, there ensued the infamous 500 years of the Dark Ages. The same problem faces us today--even the most alienated American intellectual can't find a better nation any where on earth to abscond to.