

Revolution Within the Form

BOOK REVIEW BY MICHAEL W. MASTERS

More than 2,000 years ago [Aristotle] wrote of what can happen within the form, when “one thing takes the place of another, so that the ancient laws will remain, while the power will be in the hands of those who have brought about revolution in the state.

—Garet Garrett, *The Revolution Was*

In his early years as political analyst and nationally syndicated columnist the late Samuel Todd Francis (1947-2005) was greatly influenced by the political philosophy of James Burnham, a reformed Trotskyite whose insight into liberalism’s lethal failings mirrored Dr. Francis’ own perceptions. In *The Suicide of the West*, Burnham predicted America’s decay from a society of personal liberty, individuality, and self-reliance into a soft-core socialist nanny state. The West, Burnham said, had ceded control of its future to “managerial elites,” highly intelligent men and women not only skilled in directing large enterprises but also imbued with the secular humanist holy writ that man is perfectible and therefore that all problems are subject to amelioration with sufficient behavior modification—compulsory modification if need be.

As a consequence freedoms once taken for

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granted in the West were being curtailed because they overly constrained the elites’ ability to reeducate the unwashed masses to the joys of the collective.

Eventually, Dr. Francis came to see that while Burnham was correct his analysis was incomplete—something altogether more sinister was afoot. It wasn’t just a question of how large the social safety net was or how many petty vagaries might be repressed by the nannies in Washington. The organic culture of the West, a civilization with roots at least as ancient as classical Greece, was being assailed from within by liberals, big business leaders, academics, media figures, racial minorities, and more. Western peoples themselves might be in danger.

In fact, Dr. Francis realized, the consequences might be fatal; not only were freedoms that Western people had worked a thousand years to secure imperiled but their very existence as a culturally distinct people might be in question—largely because of a flood tide of Third World immigration, an invasion forced on them

by leaders who had long since abandoned any semblance of acting on their behalf.

Today, what remains of the real West and the real America face extinction, not because the barbarians invading them bring a superior culture or technology, but because *the very fabric of beliefs and institutions that could keep the invaders out has been rotted away by the forces that purported to want to ‘conserve’ them.* [Emphasis added.]

Many of Dr. Francis’ finest columns, essays and speeches have been collected in a new book, *Shots Fired: Sam Francis on America’s Culture War*, an

Shots Fired
Sam Francis on America’s Culture War
 edited by Peter Gemma
 Vienna, VA.: FGF Books, 2006
 364 pages, \$18.95



excellent compilation edited by Peter Gemma and published by FGF Books. Topic areas include: the Culture War, the Iraq War, conservative movement failings, the “Grand Old Stupid Party,” religion and politics, social issues & ills, education, rewriting history, the Second Amendment, Lincoln’s legacy, equality as a political weapon, the sanctuary movement, populism, Southern symbols, “Why Good Ideas Don’t Always Win,” and the war on Christmas—a broad list indeed. In this review, we focus on the methods by which America has been brought to the state described in the above passage.

A Community of Shared Interest

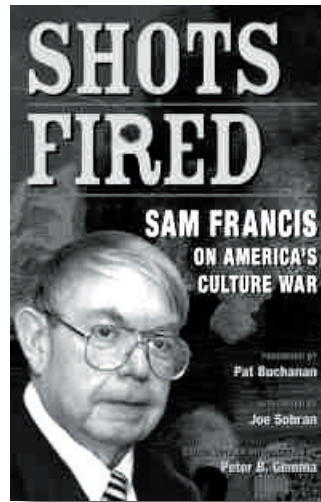
If everyone is my brother, I have no brothers.

—Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

Politically, Dr. Francis has been described as a paleo-conservative¹—a description he never chose for himself but one that he accepted given the options permitted in national political discourse.² Distinguishing him from libertarians—and linking him with American beliefs from the era of the Founders until the War Between the States, and to a lesser extent until the civil rights revolution of the 1960s—Dr. Francis believed that an enduring social order can be sustained only by those who, in the words of Mel Bradford, a Southern conservative whom Dr. Francis admired, are “bound by blood, place and history.”

One of the cornerstones of free and harmonious societies is that members are united by familial bonds of mutually shared interests. Again citing Bradford, Dr. Francis writes that human society is “a contract between the dead, the living, and the yet unborn, and its proper ordering, its government as well as its social arrangements, should reflect its concrete, historical institutions, manners, and memories.” These bonds form the basis of a social contract that sustains the society despite pressures from without and strains within. In such societies freedom may exist; there is little reason for a minority to seize power or for government to exercise more than the minimum constraint needed to arbitrate disputes and punish transgressors.

Without shared interest the social contract cannot endure. People cease to care about the common good and soon dissolve into disputing factions, each advancing its own interests against all others. The ensuing disharmony may be manipulated by power seekers for their own advancement—nothing binds the society together except coercion. A society thus



forced together ceases to be free, and those who were once free “will simply become an underclass to be exploited and oppressed” by the new elites and their chosen factions.

Until self-effacement won out over self-preservation the West had a healthy sense of its own identity and the beliefs and values required for its perpetuation. Being an American, Dr. Francis wrote, was “a matter of blood and birth.” He quotes John Jay’s remarkable passage from *The Federalist Papers* concerning the blessings Americans enjoyed as the inheritors of a new nation. We were, Jay wrote, “one united people, a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs.” Absent the character of its founding people, Dr. Francis adds, “a common, let alone a free, government could not have existed.”

The Attack of the Killer Sheep

Your Constitution is all sail and no anchor.

—Thomas Babington Macaulay

Most Americans consider themselves patriotic, and they love their country. They are unaware that, as Garet Garrett predicted, there has been a “revolution in the state,” and that the government to which they give their allegiance no longer serves their interests. The ruling elites have exploited Americans’

loyalty to long-standing forms of government even as they have stolen power from its inheritors. Herds of sanctimonious cowards vilify their kin who publicly dissent from the new status quo—an act that might be called “the attack of the killer sheep.”

Repression of dissent is so pervasive that at the level of national leadership neither of America’s two dominant political parties departs from the approved script in any significant way. As Dr. Francis observes, the leaders of both parties “represent the same people, the same elite or ruling class, rather than the people as a whole or even different elites in competition with each other.” In particular, the rise of the so-called neo-conservatives has hastened the decline of true conservatism, that is, a belief system devoted to the interests of America’s founding people.

This true conservatism has been co-opted by neo-con Republicans, former Democrats who adopted a few inconsequential trappings of conservatism. They redefined conservatism as big government, social universalism, and interventionism abroad. “The effect, if not the actual mission of neo-conservatism ever since its appearance in the late 1960s, has been to muzzle whatever inclinations to an authentic, popular, grassroots radicalism might emerge either within or without the Republican party.” Old beliefs are no longer allowed. “Anyone who thinks the country is moving in the wrong direction becomes ‘Anti-American,’ ‘reactionary,’ ‘extremist’ or some other meaningless epithet intended to delegitimize dissent.” And yet,

Authentic conservatism [draws] a firm and clear distinction between love of or attachment to the country, on the one hand, and deference to the state or the incumbent masters of the state, on the other. Especially



Author James Burnham

in the contemporary world, conservatives distinguish between the people, traditions, norms and institutions that have defined and characterized the country—the nation—throughout its history, and the structure, ideas and groups that embody forces that are inimical to the country but are at present dominant, on the other.

As a result, conservatism as a vehicle for preserving the West’s unique identity is at odds with the new reality of who rules America. “[T]he people and forces now in power in this country—in government, the culture, and Big Business—are the enemies of the real America and the real civilization of the West.”

The Long March to Oblivion

Hey, hey, ho, ho, Western Culture’s got to go.

—Stanford University student chant

Dr. Francis believed that culture is an intrinsic expression of the character of a people, arising in part from their common “genetic endowments” and in part from millennia of shared history and tradition. Culture is not just food, song and verse; it is not just whether a football is round or oval; nor whether marriages are arranged or result from a professed love between a man and a woman; it is the sum of all the things that preserve, protect and sustain a people in the face of forces tending to erosion, dissipation and, ultimately, dissolution. Culture, Dr. Francis wrote,

refers to the whole set of norms by which a people live, by which they define and govern themselves. Such norms include not only moral and legal rules but also the proper way to do things: how to cook food; whether you eat food with knives and forks, fingers, or chopsticks; how to dress; how to conduct yourself in public; what kind of language to use to certain people or on certain occasions.

The same kind of norms also govern

moral relationships: what we consider good or bad, strong or weak, beautiful or ugly, healthy or sick. And there is also a political culture, the set of norms by which a people regulates the proper use of power and how to get it.

Like his politically correct (i.e. cultural Marxist) adversaries, Dr. Francis was acutely aware of the importance of culture at this level. He realized that any contest for control of a society would be political and that,

therefore, culture “necessarily concerns power,” the inevitable domain of politics. He added, “The issue is simple: Who gets to define the norms by which the American people will live?”



National Review's John J. Miller

Dr. Francis believed the left's successes resulted from enactment of imprisoned Italian communist Antonio Gramsci's conception. Despite their bloody overthrow of the Russian aristocracy, Bolshevism's followers could never create the conditions needed for a violent conquest of the West. Thwarted by the spiritual strength of Christendom, which shared not only a sustaining religiosity but also a thousand year history of progress toward applying laws equitably, Gramsci believed that the West would not be vulnerable until its culture ceased to be a unifying force. In Dr. Francis' words, Gramsci believed that

...elites rule through their dominance of culture more than through their control of the means of production and that revolutionaries who seek to overthrow an elite must first make a long march through the institutions of culture before trying to wield political or economic power.

Those who control the culture—and especially the means by which culture is presented and interpreted, i.e. the media, art, entertainment, academia, politicians, religious leaders and others—are far more powerful than most people realize. It is they who control the boundaries of what is permissible to discuss, let alone agree or disagree with. Dr. Francis observed that: “By defining some activities as ‘normative’ and others as violating cultural norms” cultural elites can “confer or deny legitimacy to certain kinds of behavior, language, and thought as they please.”



Marxist Antonio Gramsci

Rather than force, modern rulers have perfected mass deception: “[T]he elites that prevail in politics, the economy, and the culture rule and think in terms of manipulation, deception, and sheer fraud rather than force.” The illusion of continuity is preached by authority figures

despite the fact that immigration and social change have turned the West upside down. Maintaining the illusion of normalcy is crucial. After all, if one is not aware that a war is being fought one will never engage in the contest—leaving those who *are* aware in control.

An Incoherent, Distracted Mass

In proportion to their number, [incompatible immigrants] will infuse into [the nation] their spirit, warp or bias its direction, and render it a heterogeneous, incoherent, distracted mass.

—Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on Virginia*

Contravening four centuries of history, America, the new elites claim, has no racial, ethnic, religious, cultural or even linguistic identity. Those not

ready to abandon the America of their forefathers—a nation of predominantly European-descended and nominally Christian people—must be lobotomized and a more suitable belief system grafted into place. Enter the “credal nation” hoax. Dr. Francis cites John J. Miller, writing in *National Review*.

The United States can welcome immigrants and transform them into Americans because it is a “proposition country,” and the very sense of peoplehood derives not from a common language but from their adherence to a set of core principles about equality, liberty and self-government. These ideas...are universal.

Well, no, they’re not. Nowhere else is the brotherhood of mankind a deeply held conviction—in most cases, exactly the opposite is true. Universality gains a following at all only in the West, and that largely confined to true believer liberals. What is universal, among all the disparate peoples on the planet, is devotion to family, hearth and faith.

The deluge of Third World immigrants brings with it Western cultural dispossession. Their cultural divergence as well as their sheer numbers means they can be counted on to never assimilate and will, therefore, be numbered in opposition to Western traditions. To consolidate their own usurpation of power, the elites manipulate this new underclass through long-established Marxist principles of class antagonism applied in new culturally- and ethnically-based modes—a complete reversal of the nation John Jay described. Dr. Francis writes:

The real West and the real America kept the barbarians at their gates, not because

they really adhered to any gabble about being a “credal nation” or a “proposition country” or because they imagined that the barbarians would or could “dedicate themselves to a proposition” but because they and their leaders understood that some people, some institutions, and some beliefs belonged inside the gates and others didn’t, because they knew that all civilization is based ultimately on exclusion and hierarchy and the authority and force that keep them intact.

Diversity as Weapon of Mass Destruction

[S]uch verbal devices as “principles,” “liberty,” and “fairness” can be used as competitive weapons.

—Garrett Hardin

To Dr. Francis, cultural Marxists’ bleatings about the joys of diversity was a deceptive subterfuge hiding a more sinister goal. Westerners are everywhere condemned for putting the interests of their own kin before the interests of others. At the same time, other peoples are urged to retain their own culture, traditions and loyalties. In view of what Third World immigration is doing to the West, reciprocity would seem to demand that the same rules be applied to Western peoples. This, of course, never happens.

But then, fairness isn’t the goal of cultural Marxism and neither is interracial brotherhood. The real reason for demonizing the people of the West is that it is an effective means by which to silence the one group with sufficient ability to thwart

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“Our goal is to establish language that is gender-neutral, ethnic-neutral, and age-neutral while celebrating our spirit of diversity.”

the aspirations of the ruling oligarchy. It is a case of “tolerance for me but not for thee.” Dr. writes: “To the self-proclaimed enemies of Western cultural dominance, they mean: You have to tolerate us so we can destroy you.” He adds:

“Pluralism” and “diversity” are standard code words for those who wage war on American, Western and ‘Eurocentric’ culture. . . Yet for the loudest proponents of ‘pluralism,’ diversity is the last thing they really want. What they want is to delegitimize American, Western and ‘Eurocentric’ traditions and to boost their own anti-Western and anti-American dogmas into the pilot seat.

Pluralism is, of course, founded on the supposition that all people on earth—all six billion of them—are pretty much equivalent and therefore must—*must*—reside in one body politic. But, in the words of Vilfredo Pareto, equality “is related to the direct interests of individuals who are bent on escaping certain inequalities not in their favor, and setting up new inequalities that will be in their favor...” Dr. Francis wrote that use of equality as a preemptive political principle represents “the strategic deployment of a weapon for the seizure of power.” He adds:

In the twentieth century, egalitarianism has been used principally as the political formula or ideological rationalization by which one, emerging elite has sought to displace from political, economic, and cultural power another elite, and in not only rationalizing but also disguising the dominance of the new elite.

The problem is that people are not and never will be equal. Biology is not the totality of destiny—no competent behavioral geneticist believes that, although plenty of incompetent sociologists contend that heredity is meaningless—but it certainly sets limits. No amount of sermonizing can create equality. But have-nots do have their uses. Robespierre’s Paris mob fed the guillotine with chants of “*liberté, égalité, fraternité.*” Bolsheviks murdered the Russian aristocracy in the name of the proletariat. And Mao loosed rampaging Red Guards on reluctant converts to his Cultural Revolution.



Red Guards in 1966 helped propagate Mao’s “Cultural Revolution.”

As Lord Acton famously said, “The appalling thing in the French Revolution is not the tumult, but the design. Through all the fire and smoke we perceive the evidence of calculating organization.” The same could be said of the equality revolution in the West. The fact that relatively little blood has been shed this time around does not alter the fact that power has changed hands. Equality, Dr. Francis wrote, produces harmony, all right, “the harmony of the graveyard”—a charnel house in which is to be interred the bones of Western civilization.

In the New World Order, there will be neither national sovereignty nor national identity, and just as the population of the nation is to be replaced by Third World immigrants, so the culture of the nation is to be replaced by one suitable only for rootless and deracinated people—a people that can be deluded that what it is told to think and believe is really “universal” and “culture-neutral” because it has long since ceased to have any real culture of its own.

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The Watchman on the Wall

I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night...

— Isaiah 62:6, King James Bible

It was Dr. Francis’ contrarian beliefs about the nature of America and its people that derailed a highly successful career. After graduating from the University of North Carolina in 1979 with a PhD in history, Dr. Francis worked as a policy analyst with The Heritage Foundation and as a legislative assistant to Senator John P. East (R-NC). In 1986, Dr. Francis joined the editorial staff of *The Washington Times*, where he twice received the American Society of Newspaper Editors’ Distinguished Writing Award for Editorial Writing, in 1989 and 1990.

However, when he publicly uttered the taboo word—race—Dr. Francis was summarily dismissed from *The Washington Times*, thus becoming another casualty in the culture war.

And yet he was right; nations *are* distinct and different—and all distinct peoples have a right to exist and to perpetuate themselves, the people of the West included. Denial of this right borders on genocide—even if the abridgement is less overt than mass murder. Unlimited immigration will secure the same end, albeit more slowly. Garrett Hardin called this *passive genocide*. “It may be that no one is ever killed; but *the genes of one group replace the genes of the other*.” [Emphasis added.] This says nothing negative about anyone else; all are entitled to continued existence and prosperity to the degree that they have the capability to achieve it.



Author Sam Francis

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The fact that, uniquely among all peoples, those of Western descent are not allowed to speak or act in their own interest—and that this denial may ultimately lead to their demise—is a moral evil. That which may not be spoken of—and likewise those about whose role in creating such prohibitions nothing may be said—signifies the greatest evil of all. Escaping this web of deceit is the fundamental existential dilemma of Western civilization and its founding people.

Dr. Francis offered no easy solution, but he believed it is not too late to save the West. He identified resisters as “Middle American Radicals” and urged them to reclaim the culture, government and nation that have been stolen from them; they must make their own “long march through the institutions” just as Gramsci advised. When Dr. Francis passed away, the West lost one of its most formidable and articulate champions. The loss was in many ways irreplaceable. But for those who remain, his legacy is that his works provide the moral and intellectual capital needed to sustain the struggle. ■

End Notes

1. In Dr. Francis’ words, paleo-conservatives are “advocates of an ‘America First,’ national-interest-based foreign policy, economic nationalism, and traditional conservatism—small government, constitutionalism, and cultural traditionalism.” Together with paleo-libertarians, paleo-conservative goals are “influencing America politics in a direction away from the gargantuan state and the state’s alliance with both overclass and underclass against the middle class, or in a direction toward dismantling the warfare-welfare state, controlling immigration, reversing the erosion of national sovereignty, withdrawing from the pursuit of a globalist-imperialistic foreign policy, and restoring a Eurocentric cultural order.”
2. “. . . others still (like myself) accept it only as a label of convenience.”