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THEY SAID IT

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon highlight the tragic relevance not just of [Samuel] Huntington's ideas about a clash of civilizations but of his entire life's work. Since the 1950s he has argued that American society requires military and intelligence services that think in the most tragic, pessimistic terms. He has worried for decades about how American security has mostly been the result of sheer luck—the luck of geography – and may one day have to be truly earned. He has written that liberalism thrives only when security can be taken for granted – and that in the future we may not have that luxury. And he has warned that the West may one day have to fight for its most cherished values and, indeed, physical survival against extremists from other cultures who despise our country and who will embroil us in a civilizational war that is real, even if political leaders and polite punditry must call it by another name.

Robert D. Kaplan, "Looking the World in the Eye," *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 2001.

REPRIMITIVIZATION AND THE WAR ON TERROR.

It is difficult to find much difference between the two Democratic presidential hopefuls on the issues. Yes, their styles differ dramatically. But, except for a few piddling details, their respective positions on almost every issue are nearly identical. Obama wants universal health care. So does Hillary. Hillary wants to roll back the Bush tax cuts. So does Obama. And both promise to "end this war in Iraq" and "to bring our troops home" immediately, if not sooner.

Fortunately, for a variety of reasons, this last promise is one that the next president – be it Obama, Hillary, or John McCain – will be unable to keep. As we have noted before, no matter what any of these candidates or anyone else, for that matter, says during this campaign, withdrawal from Iraq any time in the foreseeable future will be impossible. Clinton says she'll withdraw troops within two months of being inaugurated. Obama claims he'll have *everyone* out before summer 2009. Both are, to be polite, straying from the truth, and we suspect that they know it. *The Washington Post's* Jim Hoagland put it this way yesterday:

Obama and Clinton pretend they can implement neat solutions to that torn country's complex problems. That is, to borrow a phrase from this campaign, a fairy tale....

Even though U.S. counterinsurgency successes have not brought significant political change in Iraq, they have changed American politics, at least temporarily. Clear majorities in the earlier primaries turned away from candidates who urged immediate and unconditional withdrawal.

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Congressional attempts to legislate withdrawal dates and penalties for Iraqi government failures have subsided.

More to the point, immediate withdrawal – cutting and running, as it is called – would be a humanitarian nightmare and an unmitigated disaster for the United States, particularly with regard to the broader war on terror. It is easy for Hillary and Obama to talk tough while trying to round up angry primary voters, but it would be remarkably more difficult for either to maintain that bravado should he or she be elected. Nixon should serve as the ultimate reminder that it's one thing to promise to end a war, and it's something altogether different to actually do it. And this is made all the more problematical by the fact that the safety of some 300 million Americans and 27 million Iraqis rests upon whatever decision is made.

For these reasons and numerous others, we remain confident that a Democratic victory in November will not automatically result in defeat in Iraq. Al Qaeda in Iraq is a spent force, to put it mildly, as even al Qaeda's leaders are willing to concede. The United States is winning, and winning handily.

Now, don't get us wrong. We are not saying that the United States has *won*. And we fully understand that there is still a great deal that the next president could do to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Still, we suspect that the terrible consequences attendant on an ignominious and intentional defeat will preclude the next president from doing anything truly stupid regarding Iraq.

That's the good news.

Unfortunately, in the long run, the bad news may dwarf the good. You see, Iraq is hardly the only front in the war on terror. In fact, as we noted in the first half of our annual forecast piece last month, by the end of the year, Iraq will likely not even be the central front in the war. Our guess is that the war's focus will shift to the disintegrating region of Central Asia, and specifically the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, which has provided safe haven for the reconstruction of the

Taliban and al Qaeda. But even as sights are shifted onto targets in Waziristan and the Northwest Frontier Province, the real struggle for the future of the West and indeed for the entire "global community" will continue to take place on a far more mundane front. And it is on this front that true courage in leadership will be necessary and that Americans may have the most to fear from November's balloting.

It is easy sometimes to imagine that that the threat posed by radical Islamists has receded and will continue to do so. After all, it's been six-and-half years since there was an attack on American soil, and most of the plots foiled in the meantime have been amateurish at best. Sure, a few people are professionally obligated to worry about the threat, folks like Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, Director of Central Intelligence Michael McConnell, and CIA Director Michael Hayden, the latter of whom last week told the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that al Qaeda continues to try to "acquire chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials (CBRN), and would not hesitate to use them in attacks." But as the Democratic strategists and liberal pundits tell us, these people are extremists, whose jobs depend on stoking fear but who have no real expectation of imminent danger.

The problem is that while the danger *from terrorists* may or may not be imminent, depending on what plans have been laid and what schemes have been hatched, the danger *from Islamists* is nevertheless omnipresent, creeping and plodding, slowly but surely undermining and unnerving modern civilization. It is important to remember in any discussion of the war on terror and the battle against the Islamists that contrary to the proclamations of the naysayers and the anti-warriors in the West, the jihadists do, in fact, believe that this is an existential battle for control of the world, an opportunity for them to extend the influence of Salafist Islam and to do their duty and bring Sharia law to every corner of the earth.

When Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, declared last week that some particulars of Sharia law are unavoidable in Britain and that "judicial pluralism"

makes a certain amount of rational sense, he touched a raw nerve. It's not that what he said was necessarily ridiculous. As many commentators have noted, there are aspects of Sharia and Judaic law incorporated into various legal traditions in the West, including in the United States and Great Britain, where such conditions are treated as any other form of arbitration. But the manner in which Williams said what he did and the timing of his statement were far more controversial and far more troubling.

The Archbishop's defenders claim that he was in no way, shape, or form condoning Islamic law's treatment of women or other family relationships. But it's hard to believe him, given the revelation only a couple of days prior to that, in fact, the British government has already agreed to consider some aspects of Islamic family law. As London's *Sunday Telegraph* reported:

Husbands with multiple wives have been given the go-ahead to claim extra welfare benefits following a year-long Government review, *The Sunday Telegraph* can reveal.

Even though bigamy is a crime in Britain, the decision by ministers means that polygamous marriages can now be recognised formally by the state, so long as the weddings took place in countries where the arrangement is legal.

The outcome will chiefly benefit Muslim men with more than one wife, as is permitted under Islamic law. Ministers estimate that up to a thousand polygamous partnerships exist in Britain, although they admit there is no exact record.

In and of itself, this might not be cause for concern. But of course, this ruling doesn't stand by itself. Over the weekend, police in London arrested Mohamed Boudjenane and charged him with the beheading of Algerian national Lakhdar Ouyahia. This is not London's only recent brush with Islam-related beheadings; two weeks ago, jurors began hearing the

case of Parviz Khan, the ringleader in a plot to kidnap and behead a British soldier and to fund and support terrorists in Pakistan. Much to Archbishop Williams' approval, we're sure, much of Muslim Great Britain is slowly but surely giving in to Sharia and to Islamic extremists. As the Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali recently argued, Islamic extremism has fostered large "no-go" areas throughout Britain that non-Muslims enter at their own risk.

And it's hardly just the U.K. Throughout the West, the Islamification or Sharia-fication of society is a very real and very serious concern. As in Britain, it was revealed last week that, at the very least, hundreds of Muslim men living in Canada are receiving welfare benefits for all of their multiple wives and are doing so under legal protections granted them by the Ontario Family Law Act. Elsewhere in the West, the expanse of Sharia is, sadly, not limited to such unexciting episodes as welfare fraud. Consider, for example, the following, written last month by Bruce Bawer, a gay American journalist living in Amsterdam:

One day last month, I gave a talk in Rome about how the supposedly liberal ideology of multiculturalism has made possible the spread in Europe of the highly illiberal ideology of fundamentalist Islam, with all its brutality and – among other things – violent homophobia. When I returned to my hotel, I phoned my partner back home in Oslo only to learn that moments earlier he had been confronted at a bus stop by two Muslim youths, one of whom had asked if he was gay, started to pull out a knife, then kicked him as he got on the bus, which had pulled up at just the right moment. If the bus hadn't come when it did, the encounter could have been much worse.

Not very long ago, Oslo was an icy Shangri-la of Scandinavian self-discipline, governability, and respect for the law. But in recent years, there have been grim changes, including a rise in

gay-bashings. The summer of 2006 saw an unprecedented wave of them. The culprits, very disproportionately, are young Muslim men.

It's not just Oslo, of course. The problem afflicts most of Western Europe. And anecdotal evidence suggests that such crimes are dramatically underreported. My own partner chose not to report his assault. I urged him to, but he protested that it wouldn't make any difference. He was probably right.

The reason for the rise in gay bashings in Europe is clear – and it's the same reason for the rise in rape. As the number of Muslims in Europe grows, and as the proportion of those Muslims who were born and bred in Europe also grows, many Muslim men are more inclined to see Europe as a part of the umma (or Muslim world), to believe that they have the right and duty to enforce sharia law in the cities where they live, and to recognize that any aggression on their part will likely go unpunished. Such men need not be actively religious in order to feel that they have carte blanche to assault openly gay men and non-submissive women, whose freedom to live their lives as they wish is among the most conspicuous symbols of the West's defiance of holy law.

What's going on here, though no one seems all that willing to discuss it, is the attempted reprimativization of Western society. Islamists favor 7th Century religious sensibilities. They want to establish a global community based on Islamic law as it was interpreted nearly 1,500 years ago. And they are well aware that the more progress they make in primitivizing otherwise modern societies – be it by eradicating the bedrock right to free speech or infringing upon and weakening the traditional Western legal status of family structure or even denying to specific classes of

people the very basic human rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness – the closer they can come to achieving their dreams.

It is worth noting here, we think, that the reprimativization of various cultures is, in fact, a global phenomenon. The following, which was written by the inimitable Mark Steyn and published in Canada by *Maclean's*, gives a sense of the “progress” in the world outside of the West:

This week, my eye fell on a striking headline in Britain's *Daily Telegraph*: “General Butt Naked Confesses To Nude Killings.” General Butt Naked is a Liberian warlord so called because of his preference for charging into battle wearing only his boots at the head of a similarly *deshabille* contingent known as the Butt Naked Battalion. As I said, the story happened to catch my eye, and when anything from Liberia catches your eye you're best to grab it back before someone eats it. And so it was with this tale. As the *Telegraph's* West Africa editor, Mike Pflanz, wrote:

“The nude gunmen became known for terrorizing villagers and sacrificing children whose hearts they would eat before going into battle during Liberia's 14-year on-off civil war which ended in 2003.”

Did they do a lot of this? Child-sacrifice and heart-eating and so forth? Well, General Butt Naked confesses to killing some 20,000 people before finding himself standing nude in battle on a bridge outside Monrovia and hearing the voice of God tell him he was Satan's slave and should repent immediately. Since then he's been an evangelical preacher in Ghana.

And we shrug and move on. Hey, it's Liberia. Back in 2000, the country's Ministry of Information had hailed

President Charles Taylor for the ease of access he offered to his people “so that everyone will at least have the opportunity to have the ears of the Chief Executive, instead of a select few.” By contrast, only a select few got the opportunity to have the ears of the previous Chief Executive, Samuel Doe. He’d fallen into the hands of Prince Johnson, one of Charles Taylor’s allies in the battle to unseat him. “That man won’t talk!” barked Johnson. “Bring me his ear!” So the boys sliced off his left ear, and then the right, and made the president eat them.

But the lads kept the best bits for themselves. They removed His Excellency’s genitals and chowed down in the belief that the “powers” and “manhood” of the person whose parts you’re eating are transferred to the eater. A New York returned to a Hobbesian state of nature is a delicious fantasy because it’s so remote, but in Liberia who needs the movies? They’re living it — right down to the whole Quentin Tarantino “Stuck In The Middle With You” menu options. And when it turns up on page 37 of the newspaper we give it nary a thought because who expects anything of West Africa anyway?

Liberia’s not a “victim” of European colonization. Founded by freed American slaves, its first republic lasted from 1847 until Samuel Doe’s coup in 1980. In the seventies, before nude warlords came a-rampaging, Monrovia bigwigs didn’t merely pull their pants on before swaggering forth, they favoured morning dress of an anachronistic gentility reminiscent of the antebellum South.

In other words, Liberia went backwards.

The story, sadly, is the same throughout much of the developing world. In Somalia, a once promising British colony that fought alongside the Allies in World War II has devolved into a lawless and perpetually violent shadow of a state in which Islamic terrorists find succor and support. Kenya, a once “exemplary” African democracy has been torn apart by sectarian violence and ethnic and religious hatred. And need we say any more about the Sudan, where mass slaughter and slavery have again become a way of life?

Everywhere there is devolution. And nearly everywhere, Islamists are in the thick of it. It should not be forgotten now that the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan was directly related to the lawlessness of that nation’s frontier. From the constant warring of various tribal leaders to the traditional Pashtun penchant for abducting young boys and turning them into concubines, the Afghani people sought protection and order. And the Islamist Talibani delivered that order. In a place in which problems mirror those encountered in the 7th century, a 7th century solution to those problems often appears quite attractive.

What should be obvious here is that the Islamists are waging their war against the West on more than one front. They are waging it on the actual battlefield but also in the streets, mosques, and government offices of much of the (currently) non-Muslim world.

What should also be obvious is that at some point, someone is going to have to confront this reality, and suggest that the multiculti pabulum heaped upon the West by the political left over the last four decades is contributing mightily to the disintegration, the reprimativization, and ultimately the Islamification of both the developed and the developing world. And while we are not entirely confident that a President McCain would have the energy or the good sense to initiate such a confrontation, we know for a fact that neither of the two Democrats would ever even dare to think of such a thing.

Both Hillary and Obama remain entirely in the throes of the liberal-left fascination with political correctness and preference for “diverse” cultures. Neither would

ever dare to challenge the orthodoxy on this matter. Both unreservedly support the United Nations to handle the problems caused by reprimativization throughout the world, despite the fact that time and time again, United Nations forces have been shown to exacerbate rather than ameliorate the problems in their host nations.

As for Obama specifically, while campaigning in New Hampshire, he took a phone call from Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga, whom the Senator had met on a trip to Kenya in 2006 and who is one of the two parties currently in conflict over that nation's disputed election. Odinga, who claims to be Obama's cousin, told the BBC that he and the Senator are "old friends who spoke often on the telephone." Odinga, for his part, has been linked to . . . you guessed it . . . radical Islamists. Many reports claim that Odinga has promised to introduce Sharia law if he becomes president, though Kenya's Muslim leaders vehemently deny those reports. *Jerusalem Post* columnist Caroline Glick reports that "Although Odinga is an Anglican, he referred to Islam as the 'one true religion' and scorned Christians as 'worshippers of the cross.'" In any case, it is hard to imagine that an Obama presidency would do a whole lot of good for the Kenyans seeking to resist the encroachment of Islamism upon their nation.

Of course, it's hard to imagine how an Obama presidency or a Clinton restoration would do much to help those seeking to resist the encroachment of Islamism *anywhere*. We have argued for some time now that surrender by American forces in Iraq would be difficult for even the most ardent anti-warrior president to engineer, regardless of what Hillary and Obama say on the campaign trail. We continue to believe that to be the case, but we worry greatly about their ability to surrender on other fronts. Whether the left will admit it or not, the indefatigable slack cut Islamism in the name of "religious tolerance," is exceptionally dangerous.

One need not think of all Muslims as terrorists – which they most certainly are not – to believe that the more aggressive, more violent, and least honest

factions within the global Islamic community are willing to play upon their co-religionists' fears and their hosts' forbearance to advance their medieval agenda. Unless and until this second front in the war on terror is acknowledged, much less addressed, there is no chance whatsoever that the war can be effectively fought.

And what good will it do the West to win the battle of Iraq, while losing the battles of London, Paris, Amsterdam, and Toronto?

FLORIDA, MICHIGAN, AND CIVIL WAR.

It wasn't supposed to be like this, you know. No one expected the Democratic presidential primary to be so close and so divisive. It was supposed to be easy. Terry McAuliffe said so. Back in the good old days, the days when McAuliffe – Bill Clinton's bagman, fund-raiser-in-chief, and sometimes personal banker – was in charge of the party, he promised that the nominating process would be smoother, cleaner, and more likely to produce an early nominee who could then set his *or her* sights on the Republicans.

Few people remember this, of course, but it was seven years ago, just after George W. Bush replaced Bill Clinton in the White House and just after McAuliffe took over as chairman of the Democratic National committee. The plan McAuliffe set in motion eliminated the traditional buffer period that then existed between the Iowa caucuses/ New Hampshire primary and the rest of the primary contests. In 2000, Iowa held its caucuses on January 24, New Hampshire held its primary on February 1, and no other state was allowed by the Democratic Party to do anything until five weeks later, March 7. Terry McAuliffe eliminated this buffer, accelerated the calendar, condensed the nominating process, all with one goal in mind.

Now, if one were to ask McAuliffe what that one goal was, he would tell you that it was to eliminate extended infighting among the party's presidential hopefuls, to convince all factions in the party to rally around the

eventual nominee early and fervently, and to begin the fight against the real enemy, the Republicans, as early as possible.

But, of course, that wasn't the one reason. By eliminating the buffer, McAuliffe did his very best to ensure that no lesser-known but attractive candidate could capitalize on early surprises to build momentum and undermine the establishment candidate. In short, he set it up for Mrs. Clinton to win.

The flaw in McAuliffe's plan is that he had to give up his the job in 2005, and his replacement turned out to be the Howard Dean, the anti-McAuliffe. And while Howard Dean is many things, most of them unpleasant, he is not stupid. And he understood immediately what McAuliffe had done and why he did it, and he set about to do his best to halt the process and thus prevent Mrs. Clinton from walking away with the nomination.

Among other things, what Dean and the DNC did was to lay down the law with regard to states moving their primaries up too far on the calendar. As most political junkies know by now, the DNC was forced this winter to sanction Florida and Michigan for moving their primaries into the *new* buffer zone. As a result, the primaries in those two large, important battleground states – both won not coincidentally by Hillary Clinton – are considered mere “show” votes, as delegates from neither state will be seated or recognized at the Democratic National Convention later this year. And this has created a potentially monumental problem for the party. The *Washington Post* noted the following last Friday:

There is a growing sense of urgency about the need to deal with the Michigan-Florida issue, but no easy resolution. What happens could decide whether Hillary Rodham Clinton or Barack Obama becomes the party's presidential nominee.

The Democratic National Committee sanctioned Michigan and Florida for moving up their nominating contests in

violation of party rules; it declared their primaries unofficial and denied them the right to seat their delegations in Denver. At the time of the sanctions, there was a widespread assumption that the eventual nominee would relent and allow both states full participation at the convention.

That was when it was also assumed that there would be an early outcome to the Clinton-Obama contest and that the winner could appear magnanimous toward two states with pivotal roles in the general election. That was when it was assumed the delegates wouldn't matter in the nomination battle. Today, it's clear they could . . .

“The Florida and Michigan situation is untenable in its current form and unacceptable to go into a nominating convention [where Clinton and Obama] could be separated by the number of delegates in those states,” said Tad Devine, a Democratic strategist and veteran of presidential delegate wars. “If you go into the convention with that kind of cloud hanging over your head, it's a very dangerous situation” . . .

The worst possibility for the Democrats would be failing to resolve the problem before everyone arrives in Denver. That could produce an ugly rules or credentials fight that would leave the loser's supporters bitter and demoralized. The situation cries out for leadership. As one Florida Democratic Party official put it: “Anybody know what George Mitchell's doing?”

As columnist and blogger Jules Crittenden pointed out, “If leadership is what the situation is crying out for, they're screwed.” There is no leadership, or at least no unified leadership in the Democratic Party. Superficially, this is a battle over the nominating process, over the delegates from Florida and Michigan,

and over the eventual party nominee. But it is, in reality, much more than that. It is, in fact, a battle for the soul of the Party.

On the one side of this battlefield, we have the current party leaders, led ostensibly by Dean, who are fighting desperately to push the party back to the left and give it back to the leftist activists who dominated it during the late 1960s and 1970s. On the other side, we have the more centrist, more pragmatic, more unscrupulous former and potentially future party leaders, fronted by Bill, Hill, McAuliffe, and their vast network of cronies, jack-leg political operatives, and plug-uglies, who are fighting desperately to work their way around the 22nd Amendment and win a third term for the Clinton co-presidency.

In an unusually coherent piece over the weekend, *New York Times* columnist and former theater critic, Frank Rich argued that the likely outcome of the current Democratic infighting is full-scale civil war, with this year's national convention providing "a flashback to the Democratic civil war of 1968, a suicide for the party no matter which victor ends up holding the rancid spoils." We can't believe we are about to type these words, but *Rich is right*. The only problem with his expectation is that he believes that this is all about race and identity politics. He has a minor point, but he misses the larger one. This is about the collapse of classic American liberalism, the realignment of the governing political coalitions, and the future of the Democratic Party.

Bill and Hillary Clinton believe the party belongs to them. Howard Dean believes it belongs to the paleo-liberal, anti-war leftists, the kind of people who still don't think of Teddy Kennedy as an embarrassment, and who still believe, despite all evidence to the contrary, that they can achieve their statist paradise here on earth, with St. Barack of Chicago leading the way.

Both sides are wrong, of course. But that won't stop them from fighting. This has the makings of the end of a truly great novel, something that, perhaps Ken Kesey, might write.

Her face was bloated blue and out of shape on one side, closing one eye completely, and she had a heavy bandage around her throat . . . She took a little pad and pencil from the pocket of her uniform and wrote, "He will be back," on it and passed it around. The paper trembled in her hand . . .

The ward door opened, and the boys wheeled in this Gurney with a chart at the bottom that said in heavy black letters, MCMURPHY, RANDLE P. POST-OPERATIVE. And below this was written in ink, LOBOTOMY.

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