

No Political Fix to America's Death Spiral

The question is not “Is America falling?” but rather “Why is America falling?”

I'm currently writing from the Conservative Political Action Conference, known as CPAC 2014, the nation's largest gathering of conservative political junkies. The event is being held at the beautiful Gaylord National hotel, adjacent to the scenic shoreline of the historic Potomac River. We're just a few short miles from Washington, D.C., which, at least for now, remains the modern-day equivalent of the Roman Empire.

I say “at least for now” because America finds itself skipping along the primrose path to Rome's ill-fated finale. I needn't trouble you with evidence to that effect, as this tragic reality is hopelessly inescapable. It's a self-evident truth. Unless our next generation of leaders—Gen-Y millennials—can successfully turn things around, we're up the Potomac without a paddle.

The day's speeches have ended, and conference-going night revelers are about. The indoor balcony to my 12th-floor room faces, as the hotel website accurately boasts, a “spectacular 18-story glass atrium.” My balcony door is open wide, and the bustling din from several parties across the cavernous vestibule soaks the room.

A chorus has begun. What is this? Have partygoers launched an impromptu rendering of “America, the Beautiful”?

No, this is a chant, joined by scores—100 or more, perhaps—of young conservative bacchanalians on multiple suite balconies and from the open-air bar below. What is that they're chanting? Is that “Amer-i-ca! Amer-i-ca!”?

At first, it's hard to tell. It's a booming echo that reverberates throughout the entire hotel.

And then it becomes clear.

Alas, our next generation of conservative leaders are not chanting "Amer-i-ca! Amer-i-ca!" They are, instead, chanting, "F**k O-bama! F**k O-bama!"

And I hang my head.

So now, children at the hotel, parents, staff, tourists—both foreign and domestic—and every other conceivable variety of guest who happens to be staying at the Gaylord National hotel during CPAC 2014 has a skewed, and likely irreversible, first impression of America's conservative movement.

Or is it skewed?

Now, don't get me wrong. I'm certain that the vast majority of CPAC attendees, both young and old, are as appalled and embarrassed by these drunken yuck monkeys as am I.

But I think the very fact that these blazer-clad, Cro-Magnon morons could even imagine, for a moment, that it's somehow cool to publicly chant "F**k Obama!"—or "F**k" anything, for that matter—speaks to a much larger problem, not just within the conservative movement but, more importantly, within our entire culture.

I'm never going to win a popularity contest. It's not my goal to be liked. I'll probably never be a Fox News contributor or even broadly recognized as a dutifully compliant cog within the greater, GOP-heavy conservative political wheel.

That's because I say things like this: There is no political fix to America's death spiral.

We are drowning in a turgid river of postmodern relativism. This is a spiritual problem, not a political problem. This is

a worldview matter, not a partisan matter.

Hitherto, it has been progressives alone dumping buckets of moral relativist poison into the Potomac. But in the last decade or so, self-styled conservatives have likewise begun drinking the subjectivist Kool-Aid.

Libertine libertarianism has infected the conservative movement like a cancer. Situational ethics, driven by emotional, anecdotal sob stories, are used to justify every moral wrong as an absolute right. "Get off the social issues!" they demand. "Gay marriage? No problem."

These gun-toting, free-market conservatives (of which I'm both) grace us with beauties like this: "I'm a pro-choice, pro-gay conservative," or, "Yeah, I'm shacking up with my girlfriend—big deal."

Relativism blurs the fixed lines of demarcation between right and wrong, which leads to the abolition of absolute truth, which leads to pockets of moral anarchy, which leads to Barack Obama and Eric Holder deciding which laws to ignore and which laws to enforce, which leads to lawlessness, which leads to chaos.

Welcome to chaos.

Yes. The social issues matter.

The battle is not Republican versus Democrat. Neither is it conservative versus liberal. The battle precedes time itself. The battle is right versus wrong. The battle is moral versus immoral. The battle is truth versus the lie.

The battle is between good and evil.

We've been playing political pingpong for decades. We've been, as they say, rearranging the chairs on the *Titanic* while Democrats take the helm for a spell and then Republicans take the helm for a spell.

The reality is that both political parties have driven us into the iceberg and then pranced off together, hand in hand, to play best-of-three racquetball at the congressional bathhouse.

While here at CPAC, I met an interesting fellow by the name of Frank Mitchell. Frank founded the Memphis-based, classically conservative group A Shining City on a Hill. During our discussion, Frank said this: "There is no liberty without justice. Liberty without justice is only license."

Libertine libertarianism.

America cannot survive under a worldview that embraces unrestricted moral license. Such license destroys the individual. And such license destroys the nation.

"Liberty without justice is only license."

There is only one Arbiter of true justice. And justice is defined by Him, not by us. He sets the parameters. As both individuals and as a nation, we are ill-advised to breach those parameters and well-served to maintain them.

America does not need a political fix. America needs a spiritual fix.

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