

## RUDY AWAKENING

Michael C. Desch helps to sound a much needed alarm to ensure that the war-loving Giuliani does not get to the White House (Jan. 14). Giuliani has the idiotic notion, voiced here in Seattle, that the war in Iraq will be “over” when it is ready to serve as a stable ally of Israel in confronting Iran. To Giuliani, any country trying to demand minimum justice for the Palestinians is an “enemy” of the United States. This formulation would take the Republic to catastrophe. Great cover!

JAMES CANNING

*Seattle, Wash.*

## RED STATE WHITEWASH

With regret I called the business office of *The American Conservative* to cancel my subscription. I regret it because I have thoroughly enjoyed and agreed with your positions almost 100 percent. But “Castro’s Enabler” by Fred Reed (Dec. 17) is so bigoted and insulting that I must question the ethics of the publisher and editor in allowing such a collection of lies, distortions, and vitriol all packaged in one cheap article.

Not only is Reed wrong about attributing the blockade mainly to political pressures from the “false Cubans” in Miami he so clearly hates, but in the same article he ends up promoting the very propaganda that he claims to debunk: that the American embargo is solely responsible for the economic and social failure in Cuba. Those who argue like this never tell you that commerce with the rest of the world, including societies like Canada and France, has not helped Cuba’s situation. Usually those who refuse to address that issue are the socialists and liberals who do not care about truth or self-evident reality but only ideology.

Reed whitewashes the 45-year regime of hellish cruelty that has caused a large segment of the population to migrate,

often at the risk of their lives. The Gulag-style prisons that await those who even mildly disagree with the regime mean nothing to Reed, who cares more about the improbability of eating shrimp with mayonnaise. He is too busy noting the absence of cyber cafés in Cuba to note the plight of a tortured people he callously pretends to care about. No, in his fantasy, it is the “rude and arrogant” Miami Cubans who do not care about the victims of the embargo.

You should not have printed an article that parrots the liberal, soft-on-communism line that one usually finds on the Left. It is sheer propaganda and utopian nonsense mixed with anti-Hispanic bigotry—and, yes, I know Reed is married to a Mexican lady, which means nothing in this context.

Shame on you for publishing such malodorous trash.

ROBERT CARBALLO

*Via e-mail*

## TEAR DOWN THIS EMBARGO

Fred Reed’s article is heretical. It also is correct. Nothing has served to prolong the shelf life of the Castro government in Cuba more than the continued American embargo. If anything, the embargo represents the continued specter of “Yanqui Imperialismo,” thus providing a central rallying cry for the Castro revolution in the eyes of the Cuban people: their privations are the result of American imperialism, and only by sacrifice and serving the revolution will the Cuban people advance. That, trade with everyone else, and generous subsidies from the Chavez government in Venezuela.

When the floodgates of American trade and tourism are opened to Cuba, the Castro revolution will become as much of an anachronism as the embargo is now. As the Cuban people embrace American goods, services, and opportu-

nities, posters of Che will be replaced by Nike and Coca-Cola ads.

We’ve witnessed a similar phenomenon in Vietnam, where 30 years after North Vietnamese troops rolled into Saigon under the banner of Soviet-style communism, the government is communist in name only, while free enterprise increasingly flourishes in both southern and northern Vietnam.

By perpetuating the embargo, the United States is simply cutting off its nose to spite the face of a Communist invalid. It all seems silly considering the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War supposedly ended nearly 20 years ago.

ERIC J. SMITH

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## IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WARD

In his review of *Twilight at Monticello* (Jan 14), Bill Kauffman mentioned in some detail the ward republics that Thomas Jefferson believed were necessary to preserve our liberties. Those ward republics do actually exist, though in various degrees of dormancy. As the key elements of the Public Land Survey System, which Jefferson helped devise in 1785, they are called townships and cover six miles square, more or less. Usually associated with land measure in terms of section, town, and range, they are completely inactive here in California, but in the Midwest the township governments are quite active and might provide a basis for a township revival.

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*The American Conservative* welcomes letters to the editor. Submit by e-mail to [letters@amconmag.com](mailto:letters@amconmag.com), by fax to 703-875-3350, or by mail to 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA 22209. Please include your name, address, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and clarity.



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## Honor Killing

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[ELECTION]

## MOTORIZED MITT

As we go to press, Mitt Romney has won an impressive—and somewhat unexpected—victory in Michigan, routing John McCain and Mike Huckabee. By the time subscribers read this, the race may be reshuffled again. But Romney's success pulls his campaign off life support and may even boost him to the sort of front-runner status he enjoyed before the voting started.

TAC has said comparatively little about Romney, in part because it is not entirely clear who he is and what he stands for. Once a blue-state Republican governor, he has run a campaign pandering to the conservative establishment. On foreign-policy issues, this is not wise. But in some of his posturing—his relative intolerance of illegal immigration for example—he makes good sense.

Romney is the very opposite of a conviction politician, and after eight years of George W. Bush, that begins to seem like an improvement. Would he allow his popularity ratings to sink into the 20s in support of some delusionary policy of using American troops to turn the Middle East into Middlebury, Connecticut? Not likely. Romney strikes us as a Republican Michael Dukakis, also a Massachusetts governor: an intelligent technocrat, able to absorb and synthesize expert advice and act upon it. We have no sense of him as a visionary leader of the conservative movement, or anything else. But that might be a point in his favor.

The other notable thing about the Michigan result is that neocon-favored candidates are not doing well. Rudy Giuliani is floundering at 3 percent in most contests, waiting behind his Florida “firewall.” Norman Podhoretz and Daniel Pipes, counting on Rudy to bomb Iran for them, cannot be pleased. Then the septuagenarian McCain surfaced, bellowing about a hundred-year occupation of Iraq, and the neocons grew

excited again. But a troubled economy does not seem strong electoral ground for the aged Navy pilot. Where will they go next? It's not clear, but the most interesting subplot of the Republican race is which candidate the neocons will hitch their wagon to in order to ensure that the next presidency is marked by war and the quest for empire.

[ALLIES]

## COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

In the week prior to the Michigan primary, an e-mail addressed to “Catholic voters” warned against social conservative, Mike Huckabee, because of his ties to evangelical pastors such as John Hagee who have been critical of the Catholic Church. The “voter alert” mentions darkly that Huckabee has been endorsed by *Left Behind* author, Tim LaHaye “who called Catholicism a ‘false religion.’”

While members of all faiths are free to reject a candidate for any reason (or no reason at all) it would be a shame if Christians embraced the Left's politics of victimology and allowed small offenses to tear apart a productive political alliance. No one can be surprised that evangelicals reject the Catholic Church; acceptance of one set of doctrines is an implicit rejection of another. LaHaye's summation of Catholicism mirrors Pope Benedict's view that non-Catholic religions are “gravely deficient.”

But the pro-life and pro-family movement has relied on the recognition that Christians who disagree on matters of faith can still work together. After all, when Bush nominated Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court, her evangelical co-religionists resisted the pull of identity politics and backed the more accomplished Catholic, Samuel Alito, believing he would better serve their cause. That seems like a better model than refighting the Reformation.

[CULTURE]

## RIGHT TO OFFEND

Ezra Levant's case before Alberta's Human Rights Commission showcases the logical end of political correctness: the death of free speech. Two years ago, Levant, in his capacity as editor of the *Western Standard*, published the infamous Dutch cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad. A Muslim cleric complained to the HRC, and Levant was impelled to appear before a government bureaucrat to explain why he published the cartoons. In effect he was asked to justify his ancient rights as a citizen.

The HRC was originally formed to adjudicate cases of discrimination in housing but has granted itself authority to govern political discourse. More troubling is its efficiency: it has a 100-percent conviction rate in cases that fall under the “hate messages” provisions of its



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