

CHESTERTON'S PARADOX ■ AIG'S GREAT ESCAPE ■ EUROPEAN DISUNION

MARCH 23, 2009

# The American Conservative

Are you  
now, or  
have you  
ever been,  
an Arabist?

**The hunting of Charles Freeman**

## REVOLT AGAINST THE ELITES

One of the more nauseating aspects of political discourse is when self-annointed elites like John Derbyshire attack the likes of Rush Limbaugh because they're uncomfortable with his tone ("How Radio Wrecks the Right," Feb. 23). Discussing the relative merits of highbrow vs. middlebrow and lowbrow chatter may give him an inflated sense of intellectual and moral superiority, but he's not fooling anyone. So let me make it simple: he is an elitist snob.

Derbyshire may have conservative sympathies, but he's not confident enough in his own ideology to stand up to liberals in his own profession. So he rails against intellectual superiors like Rush Limbaugh, Mark Levin, and to some extent, Sean Hannity because he has convinced himself that they make him look bad.

Their appeal spans the universe of conservatives, from bluebloods in the Hamptons to hayseeds in the Ozarks. But a lightweight like Derbyshire is ill-equipped to account for the least of his Republican brethren in the face of Marxist pseudo-intellectuals. Apparently, they make him look bad in front of Biff, Malibu Ken, and the rest of the Harvard crew team.

But his mimosa-drinking liberal friends have no practical experience operating a business, they have never had to pay taxes and make payroll. They've won life's lottery. They live off the labors of their ancestry and do not have to give the first consideration to what makes an economy work. Those hayseed Limbaugh listeners may not possess Derbyshire's vocabulary, but they run rings around him in the real world. He's looking down his nose at his real superiors. That makes him a coward. Rarely has the combination of ignorance and arrogance been packaged so elegantly as in your self-important article.

VINCENT LOUGHNANE

*Via e-mail*

## LOW BROWBEATING

John Derbyshire, you are not a conservative and have no idea what you are talking about when it comes to conservatism. Just how much did you get in the stimulus bill to lead you to write such dribble? Blaming Limbaugh and Hannity for the mess Republicans are in because they yoked "themselves to the clueless George W. Bush" is absolutely absurd, and only a jealous little twit would say such a thing. Lowbrow? How about this: f--k you, peanut head. Why don't you go shopping for a new sweater or, better yet, buy a new mirror.

JAY AND MICHELLE FOOS

*Via e-mail*

## SPOON FED

Thank you for the recent article by Thomas E. Woods Jr., "Unnatural Disaster" (Feb. 23). I thought it was relevant, cogent, and eloquent and did not require a Ph.D. in economics to understand.

I appreciate his ability to distill and coordinate multiple economic factors often clouded by emotional, political, and personal ignorance and suppression down to fundamental, axiomatic distinctions that left me educated and clear on what actions I can take toward prosperity.

RAY PARADISE

*San Jose, Calif.*

## HURRAH FOR ALHURRA

I am writing regarding Philip Giralaldi's March 9 "Deep Background: Boos for Alhurra." The article misstates several basic facts regarding Alhurra and Radio Sawa, the Arabic-language television and radio networks launched by the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors.

The statement that American international broadcasting was developed to be "propaganda rather than balanced news," is wrong. Alhurra and Radio Sawa are required, by law, to "be conducted in accordance with the highest professional standards of broadcast journalism;" and to broadcast news that is, "accurate, objective and comprehensive."

Mr. Giralaldi references negative incidents from 2006—in the news world these are dusty to say the least.

Here are the facts:

Research conducted by international firms such as ACNielsen, shows that Alhurra and Radio Sawa have an unduplicated weekly audience of 35 million people, a vast majority of whom find the news credible. In Iraq, Alhurra is reaching 56 percent of the audience, exceeding Al-Jazeera's viewership in that country. By any standard of media measurement, these are impressive numbers.

Alhurra is increasing understanding of American society and foreign policy. In Morocco, 68 percent of Alhurra's audience says that Alhurra has increased their understanding of American culture and society. Similar numbers are found in Syria and Kuwait. When asked about understanding of U.S. foreign policy, 58 percent of Iraqi viewers, 70 percent of UAE viewers and 68 percent of Moroccan viewers agreed that Alhurra contributed to their comprehension of U.S. policy.

Alhurra and Radio Sawa are frequently cited in the Arabic and English press as sources of news including recently in the *New York Times*, AFP, the pan-Arab newspaper *Alsharq Alswat*, and *Yemen Times*.

Alhurra is the only Arabic-language network with dedicated correspondents at the White House, Pentagon, State Department, and Congress. No other broadcaster to the Middle East provides this breadth of information about the United States.

LETITIA KING

Broadcasting Board of Governors

*Via e-mail*

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