

less to abandon it ourselves, but to practice it in a way that is winsome and not threatening and makes the press look like fools for trying to portray us as book burners. When conservatives discover how to do that again, as Reagan did, we will be able to forge winning majorities.

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RABBI DANIEL LAPIN

John Kurzweil bats .500 in his analysis of two recent tracts meant to advise GOP leaders on political tactics. He rightly dismisses Bernd Schwieren's "The Emerging Republican Minority" as yet another bit of suicidal propaganda from yet another Reagan-hating "moderate." However, Kurzweil then proceeds to forget many of President Reagan's most important lessons by bashing David Horowitz's brilliant new pamphlet, *The Art of Political War*. Why, oh why, must we conservatives attack one another so remorselessly?

The question becomes especially poignant when a careful reading of the article shows that Kurzweil himself uses *Horowitz's* principles in his criticism of Schwieren. Kurzweil demonstrates the inanity of Schwieren's arguments by showing the importance of crafting clear, simple political messages; projecting an image of caring about the concerns of the common voter; and demonstrating trust in the ultimate wisdom of the electorate. But these are exactly the techniques Horowitz recommends!

Furthermore, Kurzweil's criticisms of Schwieren make sense, because there he correctly engages on the tactical level, refuting the latter's claims with references to polls, focus groups, the history of recent of intra-party conflicts, voter registration levels, etc. Unfortunately, however, when he turns to Horowitz, Kurzweil switches the discussion to one of abstract political philosophy. (When a conservative quotes *A Man for All Seasons*, Whittaker Chambers, de Tocqueville, Lincoln, and Solzhenytsin, he's not talking about *tactics* anymore.) And thus, the criticisms become hard to follow.

David Horowitz can probe the depths of political philosophy as well as any living writer, but the pamphlet in question was about tactics, not philosophy. Indeed, if we are to respect philosophy, let us recall what its greatest practitioner said on this issue: Aristotle declared that statements made when discussing one discipline must not be evaluated according to the rules and standards of another discipline.

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The engineering techniques needed to design an automobile are worlds different from the marketing techniques needed to sell the finished product. Kurzweil is trying to judge the practices of a salesman by the standards of an engineer. One doesn't need to be as wise as Aristotle to see that this is a fundamentally unsound endeavor.

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DANIEL J. GRIMM

In *The Prince*, Nicolo Machiavelli laid out the formula for modern politics: winning is everything, so don't be kept from doing so by any fastidious notions of truth and justice. As Mr. Kurzweil relates, Messrs. Schwieren and Horowitz see in this a blueprint for Republican success. As noxious as this doctrine is in its raw form, it's all the same very common to find pundits doubting the validity of just causes simply because they happen at a given time to be losing in opinion polls. Prevailing is the goal for a fungus, but for an intellect the goal is truth and right.

If our society is presently absorbed with fungus politics, the remaining intellects should not join in the rotting but try to fix that problem with the means at our disposal.

As for the working-class allergy to Republicans, I suspect it is due not to keen analysis of Party positions but to a keen sense of smell: they catch from afar the air of superiority. Republicans need a big examination of conscience about clubbiness, the need to affirm ourselves by excluding someone.

Reagan talked down to no one. Having something to say, he didn't need to. Voters sensed in him a brotherhood based on true ideas, and responded.

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ARNOLD STEINBERG

Pundits take politics far more seriously than most people. For many political junkies, ideas don't matter as much as winning. Often it's the chase that counts: frenetic campaigning that brings an adrenaline rush. This helps explain why conservatives encourage unlikely candidates — divorced or unfaithful — who embrace family values. This raises the question of the propriety and efficacy of "holier than thou" politics. The commoners are not stupid. They see the disconnect. Republican meet-

ings seem like religious revivals, but GOP elected officials act just as Democrats do. To be sure, there are differences (on issues like abortion between Democrats and Republicans). But many differences are increasingly blurred by the common preoccupation with power and influence.

Mr. Kurzweil asks for much: he asks for more. He raises the matter of God. First, we must ask, what is the relationship between God and religion, morality and politics. We cannot answer quickly, because outside of a consensus involving, say, the Ten Commandments, the relationship becomes elusive. That the West is based on the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition is undeniable. But are we asking government to fill the church's role? Of course, many of us would be content if government would stop undoing what the church should do.

Mr. Kurzweil wants a moral GOP, but how can we decide how to apply that religious tradition to public policy? Good Christians or good Jews can honestly differ on Proposition 13. In every election, at nearly every level, all sorts of religious groups of different denominations, and different divisions within each denomination, offer conflicting resolutions on government policies. Some are patently absurd, others are reasonably different views of moral conduct. Did Catholic Cardinal Roger Mahony speak with authority for Catholics when he opposed Proposition 209, which would end race and gender preferences, or Proposition 227, which would end bilingual education? Would the answer be different if the next cardinal were a political conservative? If the GOP is to be a moral party, is it to do so in the way it adopts positions or in the way it conducts itself? Kurzweil talks about the "success" of CCRI, the anti-bilingual initiative, and poll numbers for parental consent for minors abortion or education choice or DOMA. But moral ideas, for political success, require credible messengers. Many Republicans seem to adopt these positions opportunistically and sporadically and so are not taken seriously. Political benefits come from taking a moral course *if people believe you are taking a moral course*. Once your motivation is suspect, forget it.

Kurzweil sees politics as a means, and many of our friends see it as an end. The great David Horowitz is more a tactician than a strategist. Motivated by ideals and ideas, he is deep in the trenches, where he cannot readily see the forest from the trees. As for Kurzweil's customary citation of Ronald Reagan, Reagan was successful partly on account of his ideas. But let's not forget people thought he was a nice guy.

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JOHN MCGRAW

How should we define "victory"? — when our candidate wins a debate? a primary election? Is, in fact, the ultimate success election to public office? I submit these all are means to the end of affecting and shaping public policy and opinion. Republican victory is seeing our policy positions implemented.

In reading Republican Berndt Schwieren's extensive report, his main conclusion is clear: that the Republican Party must change its core principles and values to be a majority party. Absent is an appreciation that political parties form in the first place around shared ideas. Were the GOP to follow Schwieren's recipe — what would we achieve? Not only would the core Party membership become disenfranchised. In the end, if we became the majority, the leftward tilt he advocates would leave us unable to enact policies necessary to limit the size and scope of government. Isn't that why we are Republican?

But Schwieren raises an important question: how do we market our Party to win policy victories through electro-

ral success? Clearly David Horowitz's *The Art of Political War* reflects a lot of thought about this question. It is a good read. I strongly recommend it. (See www.noleft.com for a copy.) Horowitz's analysis of our Democrat opponents is sobering, and his all-too-accurate observations about Republican missed opportunities are largely on point.

While the Schwieren report is based on the untenable premise that Republicans will fail as long as we continue to believe what we do, Horowitz's essay is less a critique of Party beliefs than a "blueprint" to achieve a majority within the framework of GOP principles. I read with interest *CPR* Editor John Kurzweil's critique of Horowitz's "battle plan." I leave it to fellow readers to comment on Kurzweil's observations, except to say that Democrat strategists seem to have more "flexibility" in their work — free from the constraints of morality and ethics. In fact, by and large, their core beliefs as a Party seem centered around cultural relativism and situational ethics. We Republicans are a Party of core values, instilled by our Creator. So while I agree we must learn from the Democrats, we must develop strategies using a "filter," choosing methods consistent with our principles and beliefs.

Alexis de Toqueville wrote that "America is great because she is good. When America ceases to be good, she will cease to be great." As we engage our Democrat opponents, our message of hope and opportunity will resonate only if the

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