

POLITICS

Eastern Europe's Suicide Pact

by Tomislav Sunic

Eastern Europeans are plagued by provincialism: they believe that everything coming from the West must intrinsically be good. Yesterday, the intellectual fashion, spreading from Berkeley to the University of Vincennes in France, consisted of regurgitating the dogma of Yugoslav "self-management" and learning the catechism of "socialism with a human face." Today, times have changed in the opposite direction; fashionable liberal ideas like the "free market," "globalism," and "videopolitics" have blanketed Eastern Europe, and venturing critical thoughts to the contrary means being tagged a politically incorrect idiot.

This carnival of mimicry should not be surprising. For hundreds of years Eastern Europeans were obliged to dance to a foreign tune, whether piped in from Vienna, Venice, or the Vatican. For decades they had to prove that they were more papal than the Pope. Small wonder, that their century-long rites of wannabe Western passage resulted in a servile mindset, which rejected everything homegrown and embraced anything coming from the West.

Naturally, many good things come from the West: civic responsibility, courtesy, and the work ethic. Western Europeans, unlike their Eastern counterparts, did not suffer under communist barbarism or from a chronic identity crisis. Yet the very same West, particularly over the last 20 years, has been beset by crime, lurid sects, and drug abuse.

This fascination with Western liberalism is destroying the Eastern Europeans' new sense of nationhood more effectively than the bygone communist terror ever did. It disarms their logic and renders them incapable of reading between liberal lines. For example, few of them real-

ize that liberalism can only function by turning people into commodities, or that before it destroys itself, liberalism will likely destroy dozens of newly emerged nations in Eastern Europe.

Liberalism preaches equality; permanent economic growth; unrestrained individualism; the end of history—although these golden clichés barely hold water. The Rousseauistic myth that all people are born equal is absurd. One person has an attractive face, another has an ugly pizza-face; someone is born smart, someone else is born a smart-ass. This myth has had a devastating effect on postcommunist Eastern Europe, whose citizens naively assume that everybody is cut out to be a president, a movie star, a tennis pro—in short, anything imaginable. In other words, liberalism has, paradoxically, been better than communism in achieving the utopian goal of equality. It has created dreams more resilient to critical thought than the Eastern European communist nightmare. Liberal global illusions of "equal rights" trigger today great neurosis among the youth of Eastern Europe, leading many to believe that they can be as handsome as Mel Gibson, as rich as Billy Gates, and as intelligent as a Nobel prize winner. Small wonder that many youngsters in Eastern Europe freak out and get hooked on drugs—as large segments of Western youth have done. As a result, it is now Eastern Europe's turn to battle liberalism's permissiveness.

What does it mean that people must have equal rights? Does it mean they must use the same condoms or drive the same Porsches? Curiously, those who constantly bemoan the intrusion of the state in private life are usually the first to stretch out their hand to the welfare state when they are in serious financial trouble. The welfare state in America, the *Etat-providence* in France, has over the last 20 years become a dangerous illusion, which while dishing out great money has also destroyed any genuine sense of individualism and self-initiative among the intelligent youth. True individuals were the American heroes from Jack London's novels, early Boors from South Africa, early Crocodile Dundees from Down Under, and early gauchos from Argentina. Those individuals were

always willing to make their own destiny with their own hands. Never did they ask for help—always were they willing to help those in distress.

The much-vaunted liberal sermon about human rights is also a trap of sorts. Liberal clerics in the East and West love to talk about human rights, but never about human duties. The dynamics of "human rights" naturally leads many Eastern Europeans to believe that everybody must be entitled to a Mercedes, a mansion on Santa Monica beach, and an awesome blonde bimbo from Monaco. Right-wing intellectuals such as Hans Eysenck, Konrad Lorenz, Claude Polin, and many others have persuasively argued that it is far easier to establish equality in communist poverty than equality in liberal affluence. It is far easier to establish equality in stupidity than equality of IQ. Hence the rise of the communist specter in this century; hence the communist degenerates who came to power in 1917 and 1945 in Eastern Europe and who have by no means disappeared today. It is a deadly illusion among many modern conservatives, both in America and in Europe, that communism is dead and gone, or that it can be shrugged off with free market rhetoric. As a result of a widening gap between rich and poor, one must not rule out that communism may reappear again—albeit in a different garb and by resorting to a different vernacular—aided and abetted by a new class of politically correct hagiographers.

Liberals are born liars who do not lie deliberately, but by default. They talk about equality, yet they cherish their own monetary aristocracy in a new waste society, where the masses are becoming poorer and where only a chosen few live high on the hog. Small wonder that the excessive legalism of liberalism eventually signs its own death warrant, paving the way for the communist ghost. Antiliberal guerillas—the so-called wretched of the earth, such as Tupamaros, Monteneros, Zapatistas, Peronistas, Sandinistas, Tupac-Amarus, Prima linea, RAF, etc.—are always around to respond with violence to the vulgar and self-destructive rhetoric of the liberal class.

The advantage of communism lay in its own transparency. Who could not

decipher a communist hack, his ugly physical morphology, and his repulsive verbal mendacity? Communist and paleocommunist myths have always attracted frustrated would-be intellectuals of repulsive physique and mediocre intelligence. As Friedrich Nietzsche used to call them, "*Monstrum in animo, monstrum in fronte.*" Thus communist primitivism, early on, wrote its own obituary, with consequences now known to everybody. By contrast, modern liberal pontiffs are much more difficult to detect. Liberal theology pontificates about human rights, while ripping nations apart; it promises wealth, while impoverishing society; it sings the praises of the global market, while producing global disasters.

The liberal facts, after all, speak for themselves: 500 million people live more or less decently, whereas 4.5 billion people exercise the talent of survival. Three hundred and fifty-eight individuals, that is, the famous "100 families," receive over 45 percent of global revenues, which corresponds to the earnings of 2.7 billion of the poorest poor. Multinational criminal organizations (i.e., organized crime) make over 1,000 billion dollars annually, which amounts to the Gross Domestic Product of the three billion poorest citizens of the world. Over 30 billion dollars alone is spent annually in the United States on diverse segments of the narcotics market. Meanwhile, Western Europe, which is viewed as a role model by its neighbors to the East, has approximately 20 million unemployed, which is over 12 percent of its work force. Germany alone, traditionally known as the steamroller of European economic growth, has over 4.6 million unemployed, which is its largest percentage since 1933, the year National Socialists took over. Germany has seven million foreign "guest" workers, and it houses over 300,000 Bosnian-Muslim refugees. Guess how much these refugees are itching to return to their ransacked casbahs?

Apostles of the free market and the "invisible hand" will argue that America's economic model is best. True, the American work force is more dynamic and mobile. America has the lowest unemployment rate in the West: 5.4 percent of the entire work force. Over eight million Americans relocate annually from North to South, from East to West. Moreover, young Americans are less pampered than their European counterparts; they do not necessarily expect the welfare state to dole out free money. But

at what price? The minimal hourly wage in the United States is \$4.25, which has 20 percent less buying power than in 1968, when the hourly wage was only \$1.50. Considering the adjustment for inflation over the last 20 years, Americans clearly live much more tightly today. A single working parent supporting a family of four can barely foot the tab.

Young Eastern Europeans, in a gullible search of Western glitz and glamor, have fallen into a trap of liberal utopia. Often they project themselves as managers and businessmen in a global Eldorado. The Mecca of the shining West is so pervasive that many think the West is indeed the best. True, many Eastern European expatriates, particularly from Poland, Croatia, and Russia, will always locate a job in the West: cleaning dishes at a Kentucky Fried Chicken or picking trash in Berlin. Hardly can they grasp that even highly educated Western Europeans and many cultivated Americans wait for years to land a decent job. Joblessness is no longer relegated to the masses of uneducated individuals; it has become the destiny of liberal globalization. To keep a semblance of "virtual democracy" alive, liberal elites in the West—but also in the East—must increasingly resort to drastic cuts of their fiscal spendings. Undoubtedly, over the last ten years, financial capital has skyrocketed, but this benefits the chosen few in contrast to the middle classes who pay more and more. In order to curb looming inflation and its political fallout, would-be liberal governments must resort to rigid fiscal cuts, which impoverishes the working poor and creates massive unemployment.

Similarly to the West, a new belated folklore has developed in the East. By their simple game of mimicry, many Eastern Europeans assume that if fraud and graft reign in the wild West it must also sooner or later reign in the disenfranchised East. If some high officials in the United States are on the take, if in tiny Belgium, the heartland of much-vaunted Maastricht Europe, some prominent figures are caught in child molestation antics and in a gigantic embezzlement of Eurotaxpayers' money—then, naturally, Eastern Europe will follow suit. According to U.N. statistics, 40 percent of the economy of the basket case Russia is controlled by over 1,000 semicriminal organizations. The official unemployment rate in Eastern Europe is around 15 percent, but considering the

new wave of part-timers, it is actually twice as high as this. Recent events in Albania point to the bankruptcy of the liberal experiment and to the destructive nature of the global market.

After the fall of the Wall, Eastern Europeans naively accepted the liberal credo of itinerant "experts," hoping it would help them reach Brave New Disneyland. Well, liberalism has indeed arrived in the East, and it is bound to provide havoc for years to come. The antiliberal rock group Death in June provided a summary of the liberal future in its song "Death of the West." Hear it out. "They make't the last film. They call it the best. Will ya help make it? It's called the death of the West."

Tomislav Sunic is a cultural counselor at the Croatian Embassy in Brussels.

The Rise of Louis Farrakhan

by Michael Washburn

Louis Farrakhan has become the most important black leader in America, if not the world. He has also become a quasi-mainstream figure, and brought to record levels black participation in political life. While Americans in general are less and less interested in politics—as seen in the 1996 elections—the opposite trend is at work within the black community. According to David A. Bositis in the *Washington Post* (December 8, 1996), "record numbers of black men and Hispanics" voted in the November election, a result of Farrakhan's speech at the Million Man March, in which he urged blacks to atone for their past dissolution by, among other things, voting.

Whereas Farrakhan's mentor Elijah Muhammad had scorned the institution of voting as a white sham, Farrakhan sees it as a tool that blacks should exploit. Before the election, Farrakhan called for the formation of a "Third Political Force" in America, comparing black supporters of the Democratic Party to slaves on a plantation and to a woman who will not dump an abusive husband. Pending the formation of an independent, or third, political movement, Farrakhan admitted to the *Chicago Tribune* that most blacks will vote for Bill Clinton, even though