

Forcing Change



The August Anniversaries

By Carl Teichrib (www.forcingchange.org)

I enjoyed “History” in school, and have always been interested in different aspects of it. But my approach at the time was common to our Western mind-set: Fictionalized it made for interesting reading, dramatized it made for entertaining television. Otherwise, what was the point?

It wasn’t until 1993 when I started down the road of trying to understand the forces and faces shaping our world, that I found history to be of immeasurable value. Indeed, the process of wrestling with our shifting culture compels a person to explore history with a more intense set of lenses. History isn’t a dry “school subject.” It’s the ebb and flow of humanity, and you cannot understand today without diving into yesteryear. Likewise, in order to fathom tomorrow, you must recognize the tidal forces of the past.

This reminds me of a saying: “History doesn’t unfold, it piles up.”



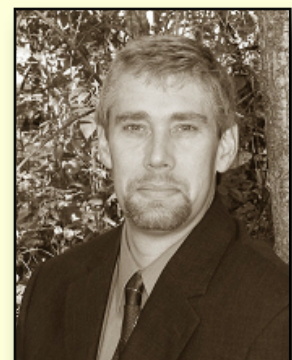
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Carl Teichrib, Editor.

And it's been said that if we don't learn from history, we're bound to repeat it. I would clarify; as a society we rarely learn from it, and we do repeat it. Not in the sense of an old TV re-run, rather it's like a poem, adding line after line - diverse but related - until we reach the finality of an epoch.

On a *personal level*, many of the lessons from *our own history* unfold far after the fact. My brother's death is a case in point. He died at the age of 17 in a vehicle accident less than a mile from the family farm, August 8th, 1995. Grief enveloped us as a family, and a host of life lessons emerged through the tears; some obvious, others developing long afterwards. We can't change history, but if we're willing to see the reality of it - both the blessings and the challenges - new perspectives and life applications do follow.

Speaking from a larger, cultural perspective, historical reflection can be a strange thing. Some events are commemorated, some mythologized, and others which should be remembered have been forgotten, or ignored. Those marginalized elements are a cause of concern, for the lessons are lost - or worse, considered irrelevant. Nevertheless, the consequences have a way of sneaking up on civilization. Ironies abound on many levels.

All of this said, August is a month of historical milestones. Three events stick out.

I Have A Dream

It's the 48th anniversary of "I Have a Dream," that famous speech delivered by Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial. It was a call that resonated deep in America's soul; a call to end racial discrimination. To commemorate this event, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial in Washington D.C. will be officially dedicated on the 28th of August. The focal point of this National Memorial is a 30 foot tall statue of Mr. King. But there's a catch.

Instead of carving this monument from granite quarried in the United States, and rather than contracting with an American artist to do the work, the stone and sculptor were "outsourced."

The sculptor was Lei Yixin, the avowed Chinese-communist artist famous for his statues of Mao Zedong (aka Mao Tse-tung). And who could forget Chairman Mao? After all, his policies lead to the killing of more people than Adolf Hitler. Here's something to consider: The total death figure for World War II was approximately 60 million, and this number includes soldiers, civilians, the victims of genocide campaigns, and loss of life through the deliberate destruction of major cities. Yet, Mao's authoritarian regime killed between 45 to 70 million of his own countrymen.

Ann Lau, the chairperson of the Visual Arts Guild, recognized the contradiction; "By turning a blind eye to China's human-rights record by bestowing the honor of sculpting King's statue on a regime propagandist, what kind of world perspective would we be projecting? King would have denounced China's miserable human rights records." [1]



Lei Yixin at work on Martin Luther King, Jr. for the National Monument.

According to Gilbert Young, a respected black American artist who has been at the forefront of trying to keep the monument American, the granite block used for the King statue was carved out of Chinese stone by slave labour. [2] Moreover, Chinese craftsmen were brought over to work on the project. Some of this came to light last November when the *Washington Post* covered the story of Francis Jacobberger, a union investigator representing stonemasons in the capital district, who, by presenting a six-pack of beer, managed with the aid of an interpreter to interview one of the Chinese laborers. It was discovered that “they work for a sculpting company in Hunan province and have no idea what they will be paid for their work on the King memorial. They expect to be paid when they get home.”

Asked, “why are the workers okay with not being paid until they return to China?” The response was “national honor... to bring glory to the Chinese people.” The *Washington Post* also reported that, “the workers get free room and board, and lunch delivered at the job site. Their work breaks last only as long as it takes them to eat. When they had been in the United States for one month, they were treated to dinner at a restaurant. Like any good tourists, they planned to go to New York City over Thanksgiving and maybe Niagara Falls.” [3]

To top it off, the monument has an authoritarian feel to it. The US Commission of Fine Arts, the official agency that advises on public art in relationship to government, was critical of the style after reviewing the design. “In general, the Commission members found that the colossal scale and Social Realist style of the proposed statue recalls a genre of political sculpture that has recently been pulled down in other countries.” [4]

In other words, Mr. King is stylized after the manner of the world’s historic socialist leaders; Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Hussein, etc.

What an anniversary.



Russian August Coup

Sunday, August 21, marked the twentieth anniversary of the failed August Coup, when hard-liners attempted to usurp Gorbachev and retain the old Soviet system. I remember seeing the images on television during the summer of 1991; crowds in Red Square and at KGB headquarters, tanks in the streets, denouncements by Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin, statues toppled in the Balkans, and smoke from government buildings as documents were being burned. It was the *dramatic* end of the USSR.

Questions of historical proportions were being pondered; The Soviet Union was birthed in a bloody revolution, would mass death mark its ending too? What would the future bring? How would the past return? The world seemed to be holding its collective breath as the stage actors shuffled in circles.

Yeltsin “played himself” as the hero, rallying the people while riding on top of a tank. Gorbachev, vacationing in the Crimea, was visited by coup members and a soap-opera attempt at *negotiation* took place between Gorby and representatives of the “State Emergency Committee” (the hardline committee). In the streets, citizens verbally convinced tank commanders to switch sides and support reform.

How surreal! The Soviet era, which birthed and nurtured Gorbachev and Yeltsin, dealt with political threats by crushing them; the hardline approach consisted of snatches, imprisonments, purges, and executions. Richard Ebeling, who was in Moscow during that strange summer, notes that the hard-liners were prepared to launch massive arrests after gaining control of the government, and that Siberian prison camps “had been clandestinely reopened.” According to Ebeling, arrest warrants for 500,000 Moscow residents had been prepared, and up to four million people were poised to enter the Gulag system had the Coup succeeded. [5] Moreover, the Committee had ringed the city with tanks and troops.

This is more in tune with the history of Communist repression. And yet, equipped with these tools and readiness to smash opposition, the Committee waffled when it came to Gorbachev and got queazy when Yeltsin showed up on a tank with a bullhorn. Finally, troops loyal to the Committee refused to seize the Parliament, ending the coup. After all these years, the affair still doesn’t make sense - a poorly orchestrated soft-core coup? One where if everyone plays along, everyone will get along?

This whole event is a playbook on how *not to engage in a coup*: Don’t execute or imprison current government leaders (Gorby was allowed to remain in his dacha), pick military supporters who will capitulate under public pressure, and try to negotiate with the head of state - while he’s on vacation. Apparently the Committee hadn’t forward planned either, for food distribution wasn’t factored in, leaving some historians to comment on the rashness of the Committee. But if Ebeling is correct regarding pre-planning for arrests, and given that

Yeltsin gives a speech on a tank in Moscow.



military leaders had strategically cut off access to the city, the idea of exuberant incompetence doesn't sit well. Seizing a city and attempting to overthrow a government isn't a trick you pull out of a hat.

Then, at the stroke of midnight, all the Communists became democrats, and everybody lived happily ever after.

- The Losers:

Although two of the conspirators allegedly committed suicide after the failure, the rest of the Committee were granted amnesty and/or acquitted for their crimes of high treason. Furthermore, those of the elite who were opposed to Gorbachev made out handsomely in the end. Louise Shelley explains, "The political losers of the Soviet era were the financial winners of post-Soviet Russia, a rare case in history in which the discredited elite of the old political system enhanced their financial power after the collapse of the system they had run." [6] Rare indeed.

- The Winners:

A) Yeltsin, himself a member of the nomenklatura - the old party elite - played the role of reformer at home by banning the Communist Party and opening Russian markets. Vast sums of wealth were maneuvered under the guise of "restructuring" as elites jockeyed for power. Stephen F. Cohen, author of *Failed Crusade*, reminds us; "The record... shows that the Union [USSR] did not so much 'collapse' as it was disassembled by a small group of ranking Soviet officials, Yeltsin foremost among them, in a struggle over power and property." [7]

B) Gorbachev, displaced from Russian politics, founded the Gorbachev Foundation. It was granted housing in a former US military installation, The Presidio at San Francisco, where it launched an impressive campaign for a new international restructuring - a *global perestroika* advancing "the Leninist concept of socialist construction." [8] The Gorbachev Foundation is an important piece to the puzzle. It was hailed

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as a post-August Coup development, yet the *Soviet Analyst* reprinted documents showing that the Foundation had been pre-planned well ahead of the Coup. [9]

All of this raises an interesting point; There are former Soviet officers/officials, and a small but important body of material, speaking to the strong possibility that the August Coup was part of a larger deception operation. *New Lies For Old*, written by controversial KGB defector Anatoliy Golitsyn, is one example. Published in 1984, his book warned of historic disinformation operations and a coming “reform” deception. Later, before and after the Coup, he sent memos to the US intelligence community in an attempt to warn the West about Russia’s long-term strategy. Interestingly, both the Russian and American intelligence communities downplay Golitsyn. But other names emerge that raise eyebrows.

On March 24, 2005, *Kommersant* interviewed Dmitry Yazov, Minister of Defense under Gorbachev. When asked if his boss knew about the putsch in advance, Yazov replied; “Of course. We went to see him in the Crimea beforehand.” Then, less than a month later, *Kommersant* interviewed Valentin Falin, who was part of Gorbachev’s team and head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. When asked “What was the reason for staging the coup in 1991 and who needed it?” Falin responded by saying,

“There was no coup, it was a feint. Before leaving for holidays Gorbachev gave instructions for preparing extraordinary measures and working out models. These questions were discussed for a very long time. In December 1990 I spoke at a politburo meeting of the need to adopt extraordinary measures to cope with the grave economic situation in the country. It was necessary to introduce price control and demonopolization.” [10]

The saying, “*hide order behind a cloak of disorder*” comes to mind.

That the August Coup could be a deception operation, *successful or not*, raises some uncomfortable questions. Although this article doesn’t grant us the opportunity to explore the ramifications in detail, two points must be noted regarding Western responses.

1. After the coup, the United States in particular assisted Russia’s “emerging markets” to develop. This was a failure of colossal proportions, due to the fact that America’s economic leadership couldn’t grasp the Russian reality: “The whole political struggle in Russia between 1992 and 1998 was between different groups trying to take control of state assets. It was not about democracy or market reforms.” [11] Russia’s new economy, with voucher ownership schemes, radical transitional policies (“shock therapy”), massive capital flight and banking debacles, devastated the lives of millions of ordinary men and women. Russia’s Great Depression of the 1990s cost dearly. Meanwhile, the “discredited elite of the old political system enhanced their financial power...” [12]

Sergei Glazyev, Minister of Foreign Economic Relations in Yeltsin’s government, described this as,

“...the most gigantic swindle of the century, organized in Russia in the guise of ‘reform.’ In fact, it was the illegal appropriation (plunder) of the largest lot of property that ever fell into the hands of a criminal community in the history of the world.” [13]

Three things occurred:

- A) Russia's elites gained vast amounts of power and wealth domestically.
- B) Russia exported and internationalized its organized crime.
- C) The IMF, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Union and the United States of America all poured billions into the Russian economy. Not only did Russian elites gain through domestic and international appropriations, but they tapped into funding from abroad. One estimate through to 1998 was \$66 billion; "excluding food aid loans, trade credits, and debt rollovers." [14]

2. The West fell asleep. No longer viewed as a threat, only as a whipped-bully turned friend, the West exhibited collective amnesia regarding long-term Soviet deception tactics. (See Jeff Nyquist interview with Col. Victor Kalashnikov, "The New Russian Threat Out of the Old Soviet Collapse," March 27, 2011, listed under the *Commentary* section of The Inter-American Institute website; www.theinteramerican.org). Meanwhile, Russia never de-Communized; The new Russia is managed by former KGB players, Soviet-era intelligence officers are today's leading business men, and many in the bureaucracies are directly linked to the old system. "Former" Communists still run much of the show in Russia and the former satellite countries. Intelligence operations against the West have never ceased, and Russian intelligence officers still defect! (When was the last time you heard of a defection from a democracy to another friendly democracy?) And extrajudicial executions still take place - ask the widow of Alexander Litvinenko.

Geo-politically, what has transpired since the August Coup is amazing. Here are a few examples:

- The Soviet Union dissolved. However, twenty years after the coup, new strategic alignments are forming between Russia and her former satellites.
- Internationalism and global governance agendas have exploded across the spectrum, thanks in no small part to the work of the Gorbachev Foundation. Perestroika has been infused globally, while America's leadership has steadily flirted with a new Leftism. Today, the world is embracing international socialism while American citizens are openly dividing along class lines.
- European unification opened to include Eastern Bloc nations. The relationship between Russia and its European counterparts is still taking shape.
- Internal war in the Chechnya region; tensions over the breakup of Yugoslavia and the Kosovo conflict; military engagements in the Southern Caucasus; and strategic involvement in the Caspian Sea district.
- Shifts in NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (formerly the CSCE); Not all NATO and OSCE challenges are a result of the Soviet changeover, but certain foundational aspects have been in flux. Today, boundary lines are still being determined, and former Warsaw Pact countries are now involved in the NATO environment.
- The development of the Shanghai Five, now known as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
- The formation of BRIC (now BRICS); a grouping of five major nations that some analysts believe will recast the international system. BRICS nations are: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

Gold Be Gone

The final August Anniversary event is the ending of the gold standard by Richard Nixon. Before August 15, 1971, the United States - as the cornerstone nation in the Bretton Woods system - tied the dollar to a tangible asset: Gold. That day, Nixon closed the gold window and disallowed the conversion of dollars to bullion. Thus we entered our present period of fiat currencies in a floating exchange system, where nothing is anchored to a solid standard.

Writing for *Forbes*, Ralph Benko reveals: "The dollar has fallen in value by more than 80% from the day when Richard Nixon took the world off the tattered remnants of the gold standard." [15]

This monetary poison is revealed in the fact that a fiat currency is a type of *fiction*. Yes, we use it because it's imposed as legal tender, but it contains no value in and of itself. Rather, it's a *symbol of perceived value*. In the past our faith in paper currencies was anchored to precious metals - a tangible. Today, our faith in fiat currencies fluctuates with the financial and economic tides, and the subsequent emotions of the mob. And now, 40 years after the fact, the fiat system is drowning under the waves.

Jeff Nyquist's article "Gold and Freedom," found on page 9, explores an interesting angle regarding gold, fiat money, and freedom.

In this issue of *Forcing Change* we will examine three related aspects of these August Anniversaries. The first article by Jeff Nyquist pulls together aspects of gold and money. The second article expands on the Soviet-side, not by exploring the August Coup *per se*, but the curious disinterest the West has in understanding the history of Soviet strategic actions. Lastly, a fascinating piece by Discover the Networks examines the Cloward-Piven Strategy, which King endorsed (see Thomas F. Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Struggle for Economic Justice*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007, p.303). **FC**

Endnotes:

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2. Gilbert Young, "The King Monument: The Illusion of Inclusion," February 22, 2010, www.gilbertyoungart.com.
3. Annys Shin, "As Chinese workers build the Martin Luther King memorial, a union investigates," *Washington Post*, November 23, 2010, online edition.
4. Letter regarding the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, 25 April 2008. Posted on the website of the US Commission of Fine Arts.
5. Richard M. Ebeling, "When Soviet Power Crumbled: The Failed Hard-Line Coup Attempt of August 1991," posted on Ebeling's blog: *In Defense of Capitalism & Human Progress*, August 18, 2011.
6. See Louise Shelley's academic paper, *International Dimensions of Corruption: The Russian Case* (Princeton University WP Russia Series), p.1.
7. Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade: America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia* (W.W. Norton, 2000), p.24.
8. Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (Harper and Row, 1987), p.35.
9. See, *Soviet Analyst: An Intelligence Commentary*, Volume 22, Numbers 9 & 10, June 1994.
10. For the interview with Yazov, see "Nobody Assigned Me Anything," *Kommersant* online, March 24, 2005. For the interview with Falin, see "Reagan Provoked Us to Slam the Door," *Kommersant* online, April 20, 2005.
11. This was quoted in Stephen F. Cohen's book, *Failed Crusade: America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia* (W.W. Norton, 2000), p.17.
12. Louise Shelley, p.1.
13. Sergei Glazьев, *Genocide: Russia and the New World Order* (Executive Intelligence Review, 1999), p.43.
14. US General Accounting Office, *Foreign Assistance: International Efforts to Aid Russia's Transition Have Had Mixed Results* (GAO-01-8, November 2000), p.9
15. Ralph Benko, "Fiat Money: The Root Cause of our Financial Disaster," *Forbes* online, August 15, 2011.

Gold and Freedom



By Jeff Nyquist

NOTE: This article was used by permission. Mr. Nyquist is an author, analyst, and communicator on world change issues. His essays appear on sites such as *Financial Sense*, and his informative websites include; jrnyquist.com and the Strategic Crisis Center (strategiccrisis.com).

On 13 July Congressman Ron Paul of the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Monetary Policy had an interesting exchange with Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke. “When you wake up in the morning, do you care about the price of gold?” asked Paul.

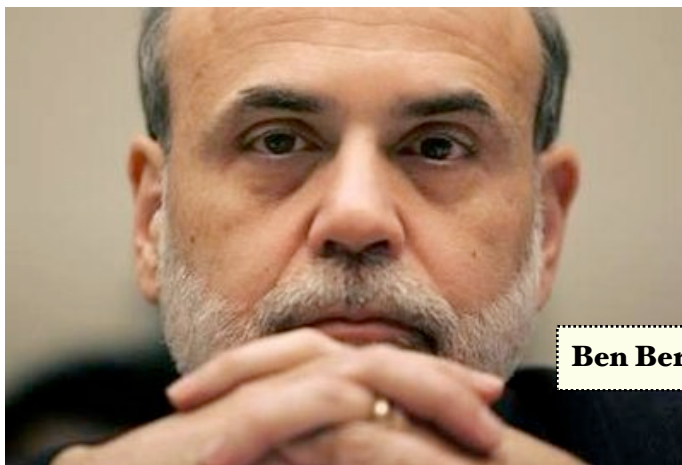
“I pay attention to the price of gold,” Bernanke replied. “The reason people hold gold is as protection against tail risk, really... bad outcomes. And to the extent the last few years have made people more worried about the potential of a major crisis, then they have gold as a protection.”

Paul then asked, “Do you think gold is money?” The Fed Chairman stared blankly for a moment, blinked, looked up and said, “No. It’s a precious metal.”

Paul interjected, “Even if it’s been money for six thousand years?” Bernanke then admitted that gold was an “asset” like Treasury bills. “I don’t think they’re money either.”

Paul then asked, “Why do central banks hold it?” Bernanke answered, “It’s a form of reserves.” Well, in that case, continued Paul, why don’t they hold diamonds? Bernanke stared blankly again, then said, “Well, it’s tradition. Long term tradition.”

Bernanke made the point that people are turning to gold out of fear. They use gold, he said, “as a protection.” This last comment was something of an admission about the state of the economy and the hazards of inflation. More and more people are losing faith in the existing currency (and the stock market), which means they are preparing for



Ben Bernanke & Ron Paul

the worst. It might be said that the price of gold is a barometer that may be used to forecast an impending storm.

The Italian sociologist Vilfredo Pareto noted in Vol. III of his *Mind and Society*, “Money is an instrument of exchange... But it is also an instrument for levying taxes without suspicion on the part of the public at large that it is being taxed...”

If we were on a gold standard, the government could not debase the currency. There would be an absolute limit on expenditures because the country could not export its inflation, as the U.S. has done. For as it stands now, the United States can create dollars – as Ron Paul said, “out of thin air.” This is not something you can do with gold.

After World War II the global economy was constructed around the dollar. Trade relationships were built in dollars. Dollars had to be used in transactions around the world, which amounted to a hidden global tax, which other nations accepted because America guaranteed their security and their markets. In consequence of this, America has flooded the world with dollars. And only when the world becomes suspicious of the dollar, when prosperity is no longer associated with the American way, will the dollars come flooding back.

Everything now depends on the severity of the global downturn. If the economy continues to weaken, the dollar may lose its position. The United States could be blamed for a sick global economy. How much does the world believe in the dollar and the current global system? The system of international trade and security has long been justified on the grounds that it successfully delivered a degree of security and economic growth. What if it ceases to deliver?

The crisis has been coming for a long time, and involves a number of factors. Most obvious, of course, is what has happened throughout the developed world; namely, governments have spent too much money on social benefits and have run

up enormous debts. A kind of addiction to deficit spending has taken hold on all sides – in Europe, Japan and the United States.

“Such procedure occasions no serious difficulties in periods of rapidly mounting economic prosperity,” noted Pareto. “Natural increases in budget revenues cover the manipulations of the past... The difficulties come in periods of depression, and they would be far worse if a depression at all protracted were to supervene.”

In that event, said Pareto, the social order would be compromised; especially since modern society is particularly volatile, lacking traditional cohesion. Today, under a rationalized bureaucratic order, Pareto argued that “no government could remain unaffected during such a period; and tremendous catastrophes might occur and in magnitudes far greater than any that history has hitherto recorded.” Pareto was writing before the advent of atomic weapons, and before the social fabric succumbed to television and consumerism. Today people are increasingly isolated in a society that



Vilfredo Pareto

tends toward atomization. Decades of prosperity have made us more individualistic and less flexible in our dealings with others. As opportunity dries up, the existing system will find itself face to face with a mob of alienated, angry people.

In his book, *The True Believer*, Eric Hoffer wrote: "Hatred is the most accessible and comprehensive of all unifying agents. It pulls and whirls the individual away from his own self..."

Hoffer argued that the fanatical hatred of a mass movement could "fuse and coalesce" people "into one flaming mass." He warned that such movements "can rise and spread without belief in a God, but never without belief in a devil." In other words, someone is going to be demonized. Hoffer then told the story of a Japanese delegation to Nazi Germany. They were asked what they thought of National Socialism. A Japanese observer replied, "It is magnificent. I wish we could have something like it in Japan, only we can't, because we haven't got any Jews."

The demonization of Jews was the formula of Nazism in the 1930s. There is reason to fear that the demonization of *wealthy* Americans may be developing as the formula for the present decade. If that is the case, the dollar's demise will mark the beginning of a global transformation.

"In human societies," wrote Pareto, "as known in historical times, the producers and holders of savings are continually being robbed of them." He added that this robbery is carried out through a variety of means: "by violence – war, plunder, individual assaults; or by trickery and deceit – special tax laws aimed at holders of savings; issues of fiat money and certificates of public debt that are sooner or later repudiated in whole or in part..."

Historically, this sort of spoliation "takes place either in the form of catastrophes coming at long intervals... or in the form of developments recur-

ring at briefer intervals, such as the losses inflicted on savers during 'economic depressions'." The stealing of vast sums from the wealthy occurs so frequently in history as to be normal. According to Pareto, people imagine that the catastrophes of earlier times cannot be inflicted on them. "That is just an illusion," he wrote. "[because] they are, on the whole, as regular, as normal, as any other development in human society."

Fiat money was specifically mentioned by Pareto as one of the devices by which wealth can be taken away.

The French social thinker, Gustave Le Bon explained the process as far back as 1898. Whether the political banner of the politician is "progressive" or humanitarian, socialist or reformist, "All would have recourse to the state to repair the injustice of destiny, and to proceed to the redistribution of wealth." Measures adopted would include the "confiscation by the state of capital, mines, and property, and the administration and redistribution of the public wealth by an immense army of bureaucrats."

Le Bon further predicted, "The least signs of initiative, individual liberty, or competition would be suppressed."

Many have forgotten the extent to which property rights are linked to freedom. It may also prove the case that commodity money (i.e., gold) is linked to freedom, insofar as the abandonment of the gold standard leaves property rights open to attack. Yet, despite all this, nothing can really be done.

In 1960 Friedrich Hayek reminded his readers that "the functioning of the international gold standard rested on certain attitudes and beliefs which have probably ceased to exist." *FC*

A HIDDEN HISTORY OF EVIL

WHY DOESN'T ANYONE CARE ABOUT THE UNREAD SOVIET ARCHIVES?

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Further NOTE: This article partly discusses the Soviet documents obtained and archived by Vladimir Bukovsky. A percentage of these documents are translated into English, and can be downloaded from his website: bukovsky-archives.net.

By Claire Berlinski. [Claire Berlinski, a contributing editor of *City Journal*, is an American journalist who lives in Istanbul. She is the author of *There Is No Alternative: Why Margaret Thatcher Matters*.]

Though Mikhail Gorbachev is lionized in the West, the untranslated archives suggest a much darker figure.

In the world's collective consciousness, the word "Nazi" is synonymous with evil. It is widely understood that the Nazis' ideology - nationalism, anti-Semitism, the autarkic ethnic state, the Führer principle - led directly to the furnaces of Auschwitz. It is not nearly as well understood that Communism led just as inexorably, everywhere on the globe where it was applied, to starvation, torture, and slave-labor camps. Nor is it widely acknowledged that Communism was responsible for the deaths of some 150 million human beings during the twentieth century. The world remains inexplicably indifferent and uncurious about the deadliest ideology in history.



For evidence of this indifference, consider the unread Soviet archives. Pavel Stroilov, a Russian exile in London, has on his computer 50,000 unpublished, untranslated, top-secret Kremlin documents, mostly dating from the close of the Cold War. He stole them in 2003 and fled Russia. Within living memory, they would have been worth millions to the CIA; they surely tell a story about Communism and its collapse that the world needs to know. Yet he can't get anyone to house them in a reputable library, publish them, or fund their translation. In fact, he can't get anyone to take much interest in them at all.

Then there's Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, who once spent 12 years in the USSR's prisons, labor camps, and *psikhushkas* - political psychiatric hospitals - after being convicted of copying anti-Soviet literature. He, too, possesses a massive collection of stolen and smuggled papers from the archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which, as he writes, "contain the beginnings and the ends of all the tragedies of our bloodstained century." These documents are available online at bukovsky-archives.net, but most are not translated. They are unorganized; there are no summaries; there

is no search or index function [Ed. Note: A percentage now have a basic summary, but the collection is far from fully translated and summarized].

“I offer them free of charge to the most influential newspapers and journals in the world, but nobody wants to print them,” Bukovsky writes. “Editors shrug indifferently: So what? Who cares?”

The originals of most of Stroilov’s documents remain in the Kremlin archives, where, like most of the Soviet Union’s top-secret documents from the post-Stalin era, they remain classified. They include, Stroilov says, transcripts of nearly every conversation between Gorbachev and his foreign counterparts - hundreds of them, a near-complete diplomatic record of the era, available nowhere else. There are notes from the Politburo taken by Georgy Shakhnazarov, an aide of Gorbachev’s, and by Politburo member Vadim Medvedev. There is the diary of Anatoly Chernyaev - Gorbachev’s principal aide and deputy chief of the body formerly known as the Comintern - which dates from 1972 to the collapse of the regime. There are reports, dating from the 1960s, by Vadim Zagladin, deputy chief of the Central Committee’s International Department until 1987 and then Gorbachev’s advisor until 1991. Zagladin was both envoy and spy, charged with gathering secrets, spreading disinformation, and advancing Soviet influence.

When Gorbachev and his aides were ousted from the Kremlin, they took unauthorized copies of these documents with them. The documents were scanned and stored in the archives of the **Gorbachev Foundation**, one of the first independent think tanks in modern Russia, where a handful of friendly and vetted researchers were given limited access to them [Ed. Note: Over the years the Foundation has operated in San Francisco, Moscow, Boston, and Calgary]. Then, in 1999, the foundation opened a small part of the archive to independent researchers, including Stroilov. The key parts of the collection remained restricted; documents could be copied only with the written permission of the author, and Gorbachev refused to authorize any copies whatsoever. But there was a flaw in the foundation’s security, Stroilov explained to me. When things went wrong with the computers, as often they did, he was able to watch the network administrator typing the password that gave access to the foundation’s network. Slowly and secretly, Stroilov copied the archive and sent it to secure locations around the world.

When I first heard about Stroilov’s documents, I wondered if they were forgeries. But in 2006, having assessed the documents with the cooperation of prominent Soviet dissidents and Cold War spies, British judges concluded that Stroilov was credible and granted his asylum request. The Gorbachev Foundation itself has since acknowledged the documents’ authenticity.

Bukovsky’s story is similar. In 1992, President Boris Yeltsin’s government invited him to testify at the Constitutional Court of Russia in a case concerning the constitutionality of the Communist Party. The Russian State Archives granted Bukovsky access to its documents to prepare his testimony. Using a handheld scanner, he copied thousands of documents and smuggled them to the West.



The Russian state cannot sue Stroilov or Bukovsky for breach of copyright, since the material was created by the Communist Party and the Soviet Union, neither of which now exists. Had he remained in Russia, however, Stroilov believes that he could have been prosecuted for disclosure of state secrets or treason. The military historian Igor Sutyagin is now serving 15 years in a hard-labor camp for the crime of collecting newspaper clippings and other open-source materials and sending them to a British consulting firm. The danger that Stroilov and Bukovsky faced was real and grave; they both assumed, one imagines, that the world would take notice of what they had risked so much to acquire.

Stroilov claims that his documents “tell a completely new story about the end of the Cold War. The ‘commonly accepted’ version of history of that period consists of myths almost entirely. These documents are capable of ruining each of those myths.”

Is this so? I couldn’t say. I don’t read Russian. Of Stroilov’s documents, I have seen only the few that have been translated into English. Certainly, they shouldn’t be taken at face value; they were, after all, written by Communists. But the possibility that Stroilov is right should surely compel keen curiosity.

For instance, the documents cast Gorbachev in a far darker light than the one in which he is generally regarded. In one document, he laughs with the Politburo about the USSR’s downing of Korean Airlines flight 007 in 1983 - a crime that was not only monstrous but brought the world very near to nuclear Armageddon. These minutes from a Politburo meeting on October 4, 1989, are similarly disturbing:

“Lukyanov reports that the real number of casualties on Tiananmen Square was 3,000.

Gorbachev: We must be realists. They, like us, have to defend themselves. Three thousands... So what?”

And a transcript of Gorbachev’s conversation with Hans-Jochen Vogel, the leader of West Germany’s Social Democratic Party, shows Gorbachev defending Soviet troops’ April 9, 1989, massacre of peaceful protesters in Tbilisi.

Stroilov’s documents also contain transcripts of Gorbachev’s discussions with many Middle Eastern leaders. These suggest interesting connections between Soviet policy and contemporary trends in Russian foreign policy. Here is a fragment from a conversation reported to have taken place with Syrian president Hafez al-Assad on April 28, 1990:

“H. ASSAD. To put pressure on Israel, Baghdad would need to get closer to Damascus, because Iraq has no common borders with Israel...

M. S. GORBACHEV. I think so, too...

H. ASSAD. Israel’s approach is different, because the Judaic religion itself states: the land of Israel spreads from Nile to Euphrates and its return is a divine predestination.

M. S. GORBACHEV. But this is racism, combined with Messianism!

H. ASSAD. This is the most dangerous form of racism.”

One doesn't need to be a fantasist to wonder whether these discussions might be relevant to our understanding of contemporary Russian policy in a region of some enduring strategic significance.

There are other ways in which the story that Stroilov's and Bukovsky's papers tell isn't over. They suggest, for example, that the architects of the European integration project, as well as many of today's senior leaders in the European Union, were far too close to the USSR for comfort. This raises important questions about the nature of contemporary Europe - questions that might be asked when Americans consider Europe as a model for social policy, or when they seek European diplomatic cooperation on key issues of national security.

According to Zagladin's reports, for example, Kenneth Coates, who from 1989 to 1998 was a British member of the European Parliament, approached Zagladin on January 9, 1990, to discuss what amounted to a gradual merger of the European Parliament and the Supreme Soviet.

Coates, says Zagladin, explained that "creating an infrastructure of cooperation between the two parliament[s] would help... to isolate the rightists in the European Parliament (and in Europe), those who are interested in the USSR's collapse." Coates served as chair of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights from 1992 to 1994. How did it come to pass that Europe was taking advice about human rights from a man who had apparently wished to "isolate" those interested in the USSR's collapse and sought to extend Soviet influence in Europe?

Or consider a report on Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, who led Spain's integration into the European Community as its foreign minister. On March 3, 1989, according to these documents, he explained to Gorbachev that "the success of *perestroika* means only one thing - the success of the socialist revolution in contemporary conditions. And that is exactly what the reactionaries don't accept."

Eighteen months later, Ordóñez told Gorbachev: "I feel intellectual disgust when I have to read, for example, passages in the documents of 'G7' where the problems of democracy, freedom of human personality and ideology of market economy are set on the same level. As a socialist, I cannot accept such an equation."

Perhaps most shockingly, the Eastern European press has reported that Stroilov's documents suggest that François Mitterrand was maneuvering with Gorbachev to ensure that Germany would unite as a neutral, socialist entity under a Franco-Soviet condominium.



Zagladin's records also note that the former leader of the British Labour Party, Neil Kinnock, approached Gorbachev - unauthorized, while Kinnock was leader of the opposition - through a secret envoy to discuss the possibility of halting the United Kingdom's Trident nuclear-missile program. The minutes of the meeting between Gorbachev and the envoy, MP Stuart Holland, read as follows:

"In [Holland's] opinion, Soviet Union should be very interested in liquidation of 'Tridents' because, apart from other things, the West - meaning the US, Britain and France - would have a serious advantage over the Soviet Union after the completion of START treaty. That advantage will need to be eliminated... At the same time Holland noted that, of course, we can seriously think about realisation of that idea only if the Labour comes to power. He said Thatcher... would never agree to any reduction of nuclear armaments."

Kinnock was vice president of the European Commission from 1999 to 2004, and his wife, Glenys, is now Britain's minister for Europe. Gerard Batten, a member of the UK Independence Party, has noted the significance of the episode. "If the report given to Mr. Gorbachev is true, it means that Lord Kinnock approached one of Britain's enemies in order to seek approval regarding his party's defense policy and, had he been elected, Britain's defense policy," Batten said to the European Parliament in 2009. "If this report is true, then Lord Kinnock would be guilty of treason."

Similarly, Baroness Catherine Ashton, who is now the European Union's foreign minister, was treasurer of Britain's Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament from 1980 to 1982. The papers offer evidence that this organization received "unidentified income" from the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Stroilov's papers suggest as well that the government of the current Spanish EU commissioner for economic and monetary affairs, Joaquín Almunia, enthusiastically supported the Soviet project of gradually unifying Germany and Europe into a socialist "common European home" and strongly opposed the independence of the Baltic states and then of Ukraine.

Perhaps it doesn't surprise you to read that prominent European politicians held these views. But why doesn't it? It is impossible to imagine that figures who had enjoyed such close ties to the Nazi Party - or, for that matter, to the Ku Klux Klan or to South Africa's apartheid regime - would enjoy top positions in Europe today. The rules are different, apparently, for Communist fellow travelers.

"We now have the EU unelected socialist party running Europe," Stroilov said to me. "Bet the KGB can't believe it."

And what of Zagladin's description of his dealings with our own current vice president in 1979?

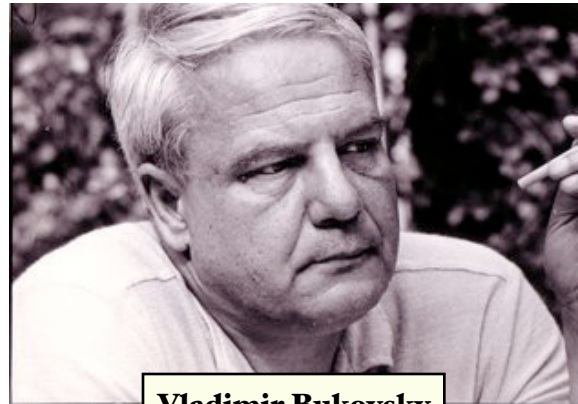
"Unofficially, [Senator Joseph] Biden and [Senator Richard] Lugar said that, in the end of the day, they were not so much concerned with having a problem of this or that citizen solved as with showing to the American public that they do care for 'human rights'... In other words, the collocutors directly admitted that what is happening is a kind of a show, that they absolutely do not care for the fate of most so-called dissidents."

Remarkably, the world has shown little interest in the unread Soviet archives. That paragraph about Biden is a good example. Stroilov and Bukovsky coauthored a piece about it for the online magazine *FrontPage* on October 10, 2008; it passed without remark. Americans considered the episode so uninteresting that even Biden's political opponents didn't try to turn it into political capital. Imagine, if you can, what it must feel like to have spent the prime of your life in a Soviet psychiatric hospital, to know that Joe Biden is now vice president of the United States, and to know that no one gives a damn.

Bukovsky's book about the story that these documents tell, *Jugement à Moscou*, has been published in French, Russian, and a few other Slavic languages, but not in English. Random House bought the manuscript and, in Bukovsky's words, tried "to force me to rewrite the whole book from the liberal left political perspective."

Bukovsky replied that "due to certain peculiarities of my biography I am allergic to political censorship."

The contract was canceled, the book was never published in English, and no other publisher has shown interest in it. Neither has anyone wanted to publish *EUSSR*, a pamphlet by Stroilov and Bukovsky about the Soviet roots of European integration. In 2004, a very small British publisher did print an abbreviated version of the pamphlet; it, too, passed unnoticed.



Vladimir Bukovsky

Stroilov has a long list of complaints about journalists who have initially shown interest in the documents, only to tell him later that their editors have declared the story insignificant. In advance of Gorbachev's visit to Germany for the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Stroilov says, he offered the German press the documents depicting Gorbachev unflatteringly. There were no takers. In France, news about the documents showing Mitterrand's and Gorbachev's plans to turn Germany into a dependent socialist state prompted a few murmurs of curiosity, nothing more. Bukovsky's vast collection about Soviet sponsorship of terrorism, Palestinian and otherwise, remains largely unpublished.

Stroilov says that he and Bukovsky approached Jonathan Brent of Yale University Press, which is leading a publishing project on the history of the Cold War. He claims that initially Brent was enthusiastic and asked him to write a book, based on the documents, about the first Gulf War. Stroilov says that he wrote the first six chapters, sent them off, and never heard from Brent again, despite sending him e-mail after e-mail. "I can only speculate what so much frightened him in that book," Stroilov wrote to me.

I've also asked Brent and received no reply. This doesn't mean anything; people are busy. I am less inclined to believe in complex attempts to suppress the truth than I am in indifference and preoccupation with other things. Stroilov sees in these events "a kind of a taboo, the vague common understanding in the Establishment that it is better to let sleeping dogs lie, not to throw stones in a house of glass, and not to mention a rope in the house of a hanged man." I suspect it is something even more disturbing: no one much cares.

“I know the time will come,” Stroilov says, “when the world has to look at those documents very carefully. We just cannot escape this. We have no way forward until we face the truth about what happened to us in the twentieth century. Even now, no matter how hard we try to ignore history, all these questions come back to us time and again.”

The questions come back time and again, it is true, but few remember that they have been asked before, and few remember what the answer looked like. No one talks much about the victims of Communism. No one erects memorials to the throngs of people murdered by the Soviet state. (In his widely ignored book, *A Century of Violence in Soviet Russia*, Alexander Yakovlev, the architect of *perestroika* under Gorbachev, puts the number at 30 to 35 million.)

Indeed, many still subscribe to the essential tenets of Communist ideology. Politicians, academics, students, even the occasional autodidact taxi driver still stand opposed to private property. Many remain enthralled by schemes for central economic planning. Stalin, according to polls, is one of Russia’s most popular historical figures. No small number of young people in Istanbul, where I live, proudly describe themselves as Communists; I have met such people around the world, from Seattle to Calcutta.

We rightly insisted upon total denazification; we rightly excoriate those who now attempt to revive the Nazis’ ideology. But the world exhibits a perilous failure to acknowledge the monstrous history of Communism. These documents should be translated. They should be housed in a reputable library, properly cataloged, and carefully assessed by scholars. Above all, they should be well-known to a public that seems to have forgotten what the Soviet Union was really about. If they contain what Stroilov and Bukovsky say - and all the evidence I’ve seen suggests that they do - this is the obligation of anyone who gives a damn about history, foreign policy, and the scores of millions dead. [FC](#)

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Collapsing the System:

The Cloward-Piven Strategy

NOTE: This essay, used by permission, details a segment of America's leftist history during the mid-1960s. The importance of this piece is demonstrated in the fact that today, across America and around the world, there is an increasingly hostile and radical brand of social activism. The Cloward-Piven strategy provides an historical clue to our changing social environment.

By Discover the Networks (www.DiscoverTheNetworks.org)

First proposed in 1966 and named after Columbia University sociologists Richard Andrew Cloward and his wife Frances Fox Piven (both longtime members of the Democratic Socialists of America, where Piven today is an honorary chair), the "Cloward-Piven Strategy" seeks to hasten the fall of capitalism by overloading the government bureaucracy with a flood of impossible demands, thus pushing society into crisis and economic collapse.

Inspired by the August 1965 riots in the black district of Watts in Los Angeles (which erupted after police had used batons to subdue a black man suspected of drunk driving), Cloward and Piven published an article titled "The Weight of the Poor: A Strategy to End Poverty" in the May 2, 1966 issue of *The Nation*. Following its publication, *The Nation* sold an unprecedented 30,000 reprints. Activists were abuzz over the so-called "crisis strategy" or "Cloward-Piven Strategy," as it came to be called. Many were eager to put it into effect.

In their 1966 article, Cloward and Piven charged that the ruling classes used welfare to weaken the poor; that by providing a social safety net, the rich doused the fires of rebellion. Poor people can advance only when "the rest of society is afraid of them," Cloward told *The New York Times* on Sep-

tember 27, 1970. Rather than placating the poor with government hand-outs, wrote Cloward and Piven, activists should work to sabotage and destroy the welfare system; the collapse of the welfare state would ignite a political and financial crisis that would rock the nation; poor people would rise in revolt; only then would "the rest of society" accept their demands.

The key to sparking this rebellion would be to expose the inadequacy of the welfare state. Cloward-Piven's early promoters cited radical organizer Saul Alinsky as their inspiration. "Make the enemy live up to their (sic) own book of rules," Alinsky wrote in his 1972 book *Rules for Radicals*. When pressed to honor every word of every law and statute, every Judaeo-Christian moral tenet, and every implicit promise of the liberal social contract, human agencies inevitably fall short. The system's failure to "live up" to its rule book can then be used to discredit it altogether, and to replace the capitalist "rule book" with a socialist one.

The authors noted that the number of Americans subsisting on welfare - about 8 million, at the time - probably represented less than half the number who were technically eligible for full benefits. They proposed a "massive drive to recruit the poor onto the welfare rolls."

Cloward and Piven calculated that persuading even a fraction of potential welfare recipients to demand their entitlements would bankrupt the system. The result, they predicted, would be “a profound financial and political crisis” that would unleash “powerful forces... for major economic reform at the national level.”

Their article called for “cadres of aggressive organizers” to use “demonstrations to create a climate of militancy.” Intimidated by threats of black violence, politicians would appeal to the federal government for help. Carefully orchestrated media campaigns, carried out by friendly, leftwing journalists, would float the idea of “a federal program of income redistribution,” in the form of a guaranteed living income for all - working and non-working people alike. Local officials would clutch at this idea like drowning men to a lifeline. They would apply pressure on Washington to implement it. With every major city erupting into chaos, Washington would have to act.

This was an example of what are commonly called Trojan Horse movements - mass movements whose outward purpose seems to be providing material help to the downtrodden, but whose real objective is to draft poor people into service as revolutionary foot soldiers; to mobilize poor people *en masse* to overwhelm government agencies with a flood of demands beyond the capacity of those agencies to meet. The flood of demands was calculated to break the budget, jam the bureaucratic gears into gridlock, and bring the system crashing down. Fear, turmoil, violence and economic collapse would accompany such a breakdown - providing perfect conditions for fostering radical change. That was the theory.

Cloward and Piven recruited a militant black organizer named George Wiley to lead their new movement. The three met in January 1966, at a radical organizers’ meeting in Syracuse, New York called the “Poor People’s War Council on Poverty.” Wiley listened to the Cloward-Piven plan

with interest. That same month, he launched his own activist group, the Poverty Rights Action Center, headquartered in Washington DC. In a calculated show of militancy, he sported dashikis, jeans, battered shoes, and a newly grown Afro. Regarding the Cloward-Piven strategy, Wiley told one audience:

“[A] a lot of us have been hampered in our thinking about the potential here by our own middle-class backgrounds – and I think most activists basically come out of middle-class backgrounds – and were oriented toward people having to work, and that we have to get as many people as possible off the welfare rolls... [However] I think that this [Cloward-Piven] strategy is going to catch on and be very important in the time ahead.”

After a series of mass marches and rallies by welfare recipients in June 1966, Wiley declared “the birth of a movement” – the Welfare Rights Movement.

In the summer of 1967, he founded the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). His tactics closely followed the recommendations set out in Cloward and Piven’s article. His followers invaded welfare offices across the United States - often violently - bullying social workers and loudly demanding every penny to which the law “entitled” them. By 1969, NWRO claimed a dues-paying membership of 22,500 families, with 523 chapters across the nation.

Regarding Wiley’s tactics, *The New York Times* commented on September 27, 1970,

“There have been sit-ins in legislative chambers, including a United

States Senate committee hearing, mass demonstrations of several thousand welfare recipients, school boycotts, picket lines, mounted police, tear gas, arrests - and, on occasion, rock-throwing, smashed glass doors, overturned desks, scattered papers and ripped-out phones.”

These methods proved effective. “The flooding succeeded beyond Wiley's wildest dreams,” wrote Sol Stern in the *City Journal*. “From 1965 to 1974, the number of households on welfare soared from 4.3 million to 10.8 million, despite mostly flush economic times. By the early 1970s, one person was on the welfare rolls in New York City for every two working in the city's private economy.”

The National Welfare Rights Organization pushed for a “guaranteed living income,” as prescribed by Cloward and Piven, which it defined, in 1968, as \$5,500 per year for every American family with four children. The following year the NWRO raised its demand to \$6,500. Though Wiley never made headway with his demand for a living income, the tens of billions of dollars in welfare entitlements that he and his followers managed to squeeze from state and local governments came very close to sinking the economy, just as Cloward and Piven had predicted.

In their 1966 article, Cloward and Piven had given special attention to New York City, whose masses of urban poor, leftist intelligentsia and free-spending politicians rendered it uniquely vulnerable to the strategy they proposed. At the time, NYC welfare agencies were paying about \$20 million per year in “special grants.” Cloward and Piven estimated that they could “multiply these expenditures tenfold or more,” draining an additional \$180 million annually from the city coffers.

New York City's arch-liberal mayor John Lindsay, newly elected in November 1966, capitulated

to Wiley's every demand. An appeaser by nature, Lindsay sought to calm racial tensions by taking “walking tours” through Harlem, Bedford Stuyvesant, and other troubled areas of the city. This made for good photo-ops, but failed to mollify Wiley's cadres and the masses they mobilized, who wanted cash.

“The violence of the [welfare rights] movement was frightening,” recalls Lindsay budget aid Charles Morris. Black militants laid siege to City Hall, bearing signs saying “No Money, No Peace.”

Lindsay answered these provocations with ever-more-generous programs of appeasement in the form of welfare dollars. New York's welfare rolls had been growing by 12% per year already before Lindsay took office. The rate jumped to 50% annually in 1966. During Lindsay's first term of office, welfare spending in New York City more than doubled, from \$400 million to \$1 billion annually. Outlays for the poor consumed 28% of the city's budget by 1970.

“By the early 1970s, one person was on the welfare rolls in New York City for every two working in the city's private economy,” Sol Stern wrote in the *City Journal*.

As a direct result of its massive welfare spending, New York City was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1975. The entire state of New York nearly went down with it. The Cloward-Piven strategy had proved its effectiveness.

Crucial to Wiley's success was the cooperation of radical sympathizers inside the federal government, who supplied Wiley's movement with grants, training, and logistical assistance, channeled through federal War on Poverty programs such as VISTA's.

The Cloward-Piven strategy depended on surprise. Once society recovered from the initial shock, the backlash began. New York's welfare crisis horrified America, giving rise to a reform movement which culminated in “the end of wel-

fare as we know it” - the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which imposed time limits on federal welfare, along with strict eligibility and work requirements.

Most Americans to this day have never heard of Cloward and Piven. But New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani attempted to expose them in the late 1990s. As his drive for welfare reform gained momentum, Giuliani accused the militant scholars by name, citing their 1966 manifesto as evidence that they had engaged in deliberate economic sabotage.

“This wasn't an accident,” Giuliani charged in a July 20, 1998 speech. “It wasn't an atmospheric thing, it wasn't supernatural. This is the result of policies and programs designed to have the maximum number of people get on welfare.”

In a January 2011 article in the *Nation* magazine, Frances Fox Piven would reflect upon the elements that had helped make the welfare-rights movement successful in the 1960s:

“[B]efore people can mobilize for collective action, they have to develop a proud and angry identity and a set of claims that go with that identity. They have to go from being hurt and ashamed to being angry and indignant. Welfare moms in the 1960s did this by naming themselves ‘mothers’ instead of ‘recipients’...”

In the same 2011 article, Piven noted that “protesters need targets, preferably local and accessible ones capable of making some kind of response to angry demands.”

After the welfare-rights movement had run its course by the mid-1970s, Cloward and Piven never again revealed their intentions as candidly

as they had in their 1966 article. Even so, their activism in subsequent years continued to rely on the tactic of overloading the system. When the public caught on to their welfare scheme, Cloward and Piven simply moved on, applying pressure to other sectors of the bureaucracy, wherever they detected weakness.

In 1982, partisans of the Cloward-Piven strategy founded a new “Voting Rights Movement,” which purported to take up the unfinished work of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Cloward and Piven despised America’s electoral system every bit as much as they despised its welfare system, and for much the same reason. They believed that welfare checks and voting rights were mere bones tossed to the poor to keep them docile. The poor did not need welfare checks and ballots, they argued. The poor needed revolution.

In their 1977 book, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail*, Cloward and Piven asserted that the “electoral process” actually served the interests of the ruling classes, providing a safety valve to drain away the anger of the poor. The authors wrote that “as long as lower-class groups abided by the norms governing the electoral-representative system, they would have little influence. [I]t is usually when unrest among the lower classes breaks out of the confines of electoral procedures that the poor may have some influence,” as when poor people engage in “strikes,” “riots,” “crime,” “incendiarism,” “massive school truancy,” “worker absenteeism,” “rent defaults,” and other forms of “mass defiance” and “institutional disruption.”

In 1981, Cloward and Piven wrote that poor people lose power “when leaders try to turn movements into electoral organizations.” That is because the “capability of the poor” to effect change lies “in the vulnerability of societal institutions to disruption, and not in the susceptibility of these institutions to transformation through the votes of the poor.”

To advance their radical agenda, Cloward and Piven focused more intently on transforming the Democratic Party rather than the Republican Party. Because Democrats professed to represent the lower classes, many poor people believed they could get what they wanted by voting Democrat. Thus their energies would be channeled into useless “voter activity,” rather than strikes, riots, “incendiarism” and the like.

Ten years earlier, when Cloward and Piven determined that the welfare state was acting as a safety valve for the establishment, they resolved to destroy the welfare state. The method of destruction they chose was drawn from the teachings of Saul Alinsky: “Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules.”

And so they did, challenging the welfare state to pay out every penny to every person theoretically entitled to it. Alinsky called this sort of tactic “mass jujitsu” – using “the strength of the enemy against itself. Now Cloward and Piven concluded that the Democratic Party was also acting as a safety valve for the establishment. Thus they would try to force Democrats to “live up to their own book of rules” - i.e., if the Democrats say they represent the poor, let them prove it.

Cloward and Piven presented their plan in a December 1982 article titled, “A Movement Strategy to Transform the Democratic Party,” published in the left-wing journal *Social Policy*. They sought to do to the voting system what they had previously done to the welfare system. They would flood the polls with millions of new voters, drawn from the angry ranks of the underclass, all belligerent and the demanding their voting rights. The result would be a catastrophic disruption of America’s electoral system, the authors predicted.

Cloward and Piven hoped that the flood of new voters would provoke a backlash from Democrats and Republicans alike, who would join forces to disenfranchise the unruly hordes, using such expedients as purging invalid voters from the rolls,

imposing cumbersome registration procedures, stiffening residency requirements, and so forth. This voter-suppression campaign would spark “a political firestorm over democratic rights,” they wrote. Voting-rights activists would descend on America’s election boards and polling stations much as George Wiley’s welfare warriors had flooded social-services offices. Wrote Cloward and Piven:

“By staging rallies, demonstrations, and sit-ins... over every new restriction on registration procedures, a protest movement can dramatize the conflict... Through conflict, the registration movement will convert registering and voting into meaningful acts of collective protest.”

The expected conflict would also expose the hypocrisy of the Democratic Party, which would be “disrupted and transformed,” the authors predicted. A new party would rise from the ashes of the old. Outwardly, it would preserve the forms and symbols of the old Democratic Party, but the new Democrats would be genuine partisans of the poor, dedicated to class struggle. This was the radical vision driving the Voting Rights Movement.

ACORN spearheaded this “voting rights” movement, which was led by veterans of George Wiley’s welfare rights crusade. Also key to the movement were Project Vote and Human SERVE, both founded in 1982. Project Vote is an ACORN front group, launched by former NWRO organizer and ACORN co-founder Zach Polett. Human SERVE was founded by Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, along with a former NWRO organizer named Hulbert James.

All three of these organizations - ACORN, Project Vote and Human SERVE - set to work lobby-

ing energetically for the so-called Motor-Voter law, which President Bill Clinton ultimately signed in 1993. At the White House signing ceremony for this bill, both Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven were in attendance.

The new law eliminated many controls on voter fraud, making it easy for voters to register but difficult to determine the validity of new registrations. Under the new law, states were required to provide opportunities for voter registration to any person who showed up at a government office to renew a driver's license or to apply for welfare or unemployment benefits.

"Examiners were under orders not to ask anyone for identification or proof of citizenship," notes *Wall Street Journal* columnist John Fund in his book, *Stealing Elections*.

"States had to permit mailing voter registrations, which allowed anyone to register without any personal contact with a registrar or election officials. Finally, states were limited in pruning 'deadwood'—people who had died, moved, or been convicted of crimes— from their rolls."

The Motor-Voter bill did indeed cause the voter rolls to be swamped with invalid registrations signed in the name of deceased, ineligible or non-existent people - thus opening the door to the unprecedented levels of voter fraud and "voter disenfranchisement" claims that followed in subsequent elections during the 1990s, and culminating in the Florida recount crisis in the 2000 presidential election. On the eve of the 2000 election, in Indiana alone, state officials discovered that one in five registered voters were duplicates, deceased, or otherwise invalid.

The cloud of confusion hanging over elections serves leftist agitators well. "President Bush came

to office without a clear mandate," the leftwing billionaire George Soros declared. "He was elected president by a single vote on the Supreme Court." Once again, the "flood-the-rolls" strategy had done its work. Cloward, Piven, and their disciples had introduced a level of fear, tension, and foreboding to U.S. elections previously encountered mainly in Third World countries.

In January 2010, journalist John Fund reported that Congressman Barney Frank and U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer were preparing to unveil legislation calling for "universal voter registration," whereby any person whose name was on any federal roll at all - be it a list of welfare recipients, food stamp recipients, unemployment compensation recipients, licensed drivers, convicted felons, property owners, etc. - would automatically be registered to vote in political elections. Without corresponding identity-verification measures at polling places, such a law would vastly expand the pool of eligible voters, thereby multiplying the opportunities for fraudulent voters to cast ballots under other people's names.

Both the Living Wage and Voting Rights movements depend heavily on financial support from George Soros's Open Society Institute and his "Shadow Party," through whose support the Cloward-Piven strategy continues to provide a blueprint for some of the Left's most ambitious campaigns to overload, and cause the collapse of, various American institutions. Leftists such as Barack Obama euphemistically refer to this collapse as a "fundamental transformation," on the theory that society can only be improved by destroying the deeply flawed existing order and replacing it with what they view as a better alternative. *FC*