Thomas Paine's Forgotten Paper Money Takedown

"Money is Money, and Paper is Paper. All the invention of man cannot make them otherwise."

With those words, Thomas Paine went after what he saw as one of the greatest scams in history: governments claiming that paper **is** money.

Through a series of devastating critiques, Paine delivered one of the most brutal takedowns of paper money ever written, systematically exposing every aspect of this fundamental fraud.

PROPERTIES OF MONEY

Paine started with a simple truth that cuts through centuries of propaganda.

"Gold and silver are the emissions of nature: paper is the emission of art."

He then explained the key properties of money. First, real money's value must come from a source outside of human control, making it stable and trustworthy.

"The value of gold and silver is ascertained by the quantity which nature has made in the earth. We cannot make that quantity more or less than it is, and therefore the value being dependent upon the quantity, depends not on man.

Man has no share in making gold or silver; all that his labours and ingenuity can accomplish is, to collect it from the mine, refine it for use and give it an impression, or stamp it into coin."

Next, its value must be intrinsic. Even a government stamp on a coin doesn't create value – only convenience.

"Its being stamped into coin adds considerably to its convenience but nothing to its value. It has then no more value than it had before. Its value is not in the impression but in itself. Take away the impression and still the same value remains."

Finally, money has to be lasting and durable:

"Alter it as you will, or expose it to any misfortune that can happen, still the value is not diminished. It has a capacity to resist the accidents that destroy other things."

WHY PAPER FAILS

Paine couldn't be more clear. All those properties are **required** for something to be money.

"Nothing which has not all those properties, can be fit for the purpose of money."

Paper has none of those qualities, which is why it fails as money.

"PAPER, considered as a material whereof to make money, has none of the requisite qualities in it. It is too plentiful, and too easily come at. It can be had anywhere, and for a trifle."

Because of this foundation, Paine held that it was pure fantasy to call paper money, or use it as such.

"The alchemist may cease his labours, and the hunter after the philosopher's stone go to rest, if paper can be metamorphosed into gold and silver, or made to answer the same purpose in all cases."

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THE EVILS OF PAPER MONEY

Paine also described some of the litany of evils that arise in a paper money system. First, it's just an illusion – it looks real but has no substance. In reality, it's a scam.

"BUT when an Assembly undertake to issue paper as money, the whole system of safety and certainty is overturned, and property set afloat. It is like putting an apparition in the place of a man; it vanishes with looking at it, and nothing remains but the air."

Second, it turns everyone into speculators and gamblers.

"It turns the whole country into stock-jobbers. The precariousness of its value and the uncertainty of its fate continually operate, night and day, to produce this destructive effect."

Lacking real value, paper becomes a tool for faction and manipulation – eating away at the morals of the people.

"Having no real value in itself it depends for support upon accident, caprice and party, and as it is the interest of some to depreciate and of others to raise its value, there is a continual invention going on that destroys the morals of the country."

That same uncertainty breeds constant deceit, tearing apart justice and destroying the fabric of the society itself.

"Its uncertain and fluctuating value is continually awakening or creating new schemes of deceit. Every principle of justice is put to the rack, and the bond of society dissolved: The suppression, therefore, of paper money might very properly have been put into the Act for preventing vice and immorality."

And it just keeps getting worse.

One of the most immoral things that happens in this kind of situation is there always ends up being powerful people demanding more and more money printing. It's the scammers playbook they still use today.

"There are a set of men who go about making purchases upon credit, and buying estates they have not wherewithal to pay for; and having done this, their next step is to fill the news-papers with paragraphs of the scarcity of money and the necessity of a paper-emission, then to have a legal tender under the pretense of supporting its credit, and when out, to depreciate it as fast as they can, get a deal of it for a little price, and cheat their creditors; and this is the concise history of Paper-money schemes."

For the rest of us, though, the whole system is smoke and mirrors.
"Paper-money is like dram-drinking, it relieves for a moment by deceitful sensation, but gradually diminishes the natural heat, and leaves the body worse than it found it."

And in the end, it's all just a big bubble.

"It is a bubble and the attempt vanity."

THE BUBBLE ECONOMY

What happens in a paper money bubble? Paine and the rest of the founding generation called it **depreciation** – what most people call *inflation* today. The more money they print, the less purchasing power it has, which is represented by an increase in prices for products and services.

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"This gives the appearance of things being dear when they are not so in fact, for in the same proportion that any kind of money falls in value articles rise in price."

Paine explained how that played out during the War for Independence, which also birthed the phrase, "not worth a Continental" due to the Continental dollars that quickly lost their value.

"The paper money, though issued from Congress under the name of dollars, did not come from that body always at that value. Those which were issued the first year, were equal to gold and silver. The second year less, the third still less, and so on, for nearly the space of five years."

The situation got pretty dire for many Americans. Paine described an example of how he experienced it first-hand.

"Paper money in America fell so much in value from this excessive quantity of it, that in the year 1781 I gave three hundred Paper dollars for one pair of worsted stockings. What I write you upon the subject is experience, and not merely opinion."

To make matters worse, paper money depreciation doesn't just cause price inflation, it also creates an endless cycle – a negative feedback loop that drives out real money – what's known as Gresham's Law today.

"The natural effect of encreasing and continuing to increase paper currencies is that of banishing the real money. The shadow takes place of the substance till the country is left with only shadows in its hands."

In other words, it's all just smoke and mirrors. Eventually, it leads to bankruptcy:

"Every new emission, until the delusion bursts, will appear to the nation an increase of wealth. Every merchant's coffers will appear a treasury, and he will swell with paper riches till he becomes a bankrupt."

THE FINAL VERDICT

Here's the twist. Paine wasn't against paper itself. In fact, he argued that it could be quite useful, when done properly.

"The only proper use for paper, in the room of money, is to write promissory notes and obligations of payment in specie upon. A piece of paper, thus written and signed, is worth the sum it is given for. The value, therefore, of such a note, is not in the note itself, for that is but paper and promise, but in the man who is obliged to redeem it with gold or silver."

Paine's greatest issue was that paper money only survives with the threat of government violence – through tender laws.

"IF any thing had, or could have, a value equal to gold and silver, it would require no tender-law; and if it had not that value it ought not to have such a law; and, therefore, all tender laws are tyrannical and unjust, and calculated to support fraud and oppression."

In his view, people who support such laws are criminals, or maybe they're delusional because they appear to believe *"a nation cannot be exhausted while there is paper and ink enough to print paper money."*

In a republic – or in any free society, however – government should never have that power. It's total tyranny.

"AS to the assumed authority of any Assembly in making paper money, or paper of

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any kind, a legal tender, or in other language, a compulsive payment, it is a most presumptuous attempt at arbitrary power. There can be no such power in a Republican government: The people have no freedom, and property no security where this practice can be acted."

This flips the entire reason to have a government in the first place.

"Tender-laws, of any kind, operate to destroy morality, and to dissolve, by the pretence of law, what ought to be the principle of law to support, reciprocal justice between man and man"

For Paine – politicians who violate this foundational principle by pursuing paper as money anyway – deserve the ultimate punishment.

"And the punishment of a member who should move for such a law ought to be DEATH."

Thomas Paine's final verdict?

No matter the excuse, no matter the scheme, no matter the reason given: paper money always ends the same way.

"The evils of paper-money have no end."

- PaulCraigRoberts.org - https://www.paulcraigroberts.org -

Israel Is So Powerful That Israel Can Determine Who Is Permitted to Graduate from MIT

Posted By *pcr3* On June 4, 2025 @ 6:09 am In Guest Contributions | Comments Disabled

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Israel Is So Powerful That Israel Can Prevent MIT Class President from Attending Graduation Ceremony

https://www.theguardian.com/education/2025/jun/02/mit-commencement-speech-gaza?CMP=share_btn_url [1]

Comment by PCR:

Israel also determines who is allowed tenure in US universities. Remember the case of Steven Salaita. Salaita, a tenured professor at Virginia Tech, was hired away by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Salaita resigned from Virginia Tech and moved to Illinois. The Israel Lobby objected, and apparently on Israel's orders, the University of Illinois chancellor cancelled the appointment of Salaita, who, last I heard, was employed driving a school bus.

The is also the case of Norman Finkelstein. Israel was able to reach inside a US Catholic University and rescind Finkelstein's tenure. The Israel Lobby's power has prevented Finkelstein, an acknowledged scholar, from obtaining another university appointment.

Israel's power over what Americans are permitted to say has grown under the Trump regime. American students who dare to criticize Israel's genocide of the Palestinian people are expelled from their universities, and foreign students who object to Israel's genocide are branded "terrorists" and deported.

What more evidence do you need that America is the punk two-bit puppet of Israel? When Israel gives the order to its punk puppet: "Cancel Free Speech and Academic Freedom," the American puppet does as it is ordered.

An Unhailed Holy Queen

Joseph Pearce

September 20, 2025

What do we know of Catherine of Aragon, the first to suffer the pains of the so-called Reformation?

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All Catholics know the Salve Regina, the "Hail, Holy Queen," the Marian antiphon sung in praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of Heaven, who is without doubt and without question the most sung of all the heroes of Christendom. It is, therefore, in the light of her heroism that we should view other holy queens who are heroines of Christendom. We think of those holy queens who have been canonized by the Church, such as St. Elizabeth of Portugal or St. Margaret of Scotland, but it is not likely that we should think of those who have not been canonized, such as Catherine of Aragon or Mary, Queen of Scots. It is to the first of these unhailed holy queens that we will now turn our attention.

It is truly astonishing how little most people know about Catherine of Aragon, apart from the fact that she was the first wife of Henry VIII, whom he divorced following his ill-fated infatuation with Anne Boleyn. Yet whereas Anne was truly a femme fatale, whose seductive charms would lead both the king and his realm into apostasy, Catherine was a femme formidable, a woman of faith and fortitude, who remained true to her wedding vows and to the sacrosanct dignity of holy matrimony.

While Queen of England, she was known for her virtue. After the riots in London, known as the Evil May Day, she successfully appealed for the lives of the rioters, for the sake of their families. She was admired for her pioneering labors for the relief of the poor and was known as a patron of Renaissance humanism, forming friendships with the great scholars Erasmus and Thomas More. She would bear six children, only one of whom survived, before Henry deserted her for Anne Boleyn. She was banished from court, and Anne moved into her old rooms.

Catherine wrote in 1531,

> *My tribulations are so great, my life so disturbed by the plans daily invented to further the King's wicked intention, the surprises which the King gives me, with certain persons of his council, are so mortal, and my treatment is what God knows, that it is enough to shorten ten lives, much more mine.*

Henry was determined to have his marriage to Catherine annulled in spite of papal opposition. Intriguingly, the annulment was also condemned by the Protestant leaders Martin Luther and William Tyndale, as well as by the prominent English Catholics John Fisher and Thomas More, both of whom would be martyred for their opposition to the king's tyrannical pursuit of his own monomaniacal will.

Following the king's illegitimate marriage to Anne Boleyn, Catherine was placed under house arrest. She was confined in various castles and palaces, finally ending up at Kimbolton Castle in Cambridgeshire. She confined herself to one room, leaving only to attend Mass, and she fasted continuously. She was forbidden to see her daughter, Mary, or even to write to her. Henry offered both mother and daughter more comfortable living arrangements and permission to see each other if they would acknowledge his marriage to Anne Boleyn, but both refused.

As for Catherine's piety and faith, she was a member of the Third Order of St. Francis and followed devoutly her religious obligations as a Franciscan, integrating her duties as queen with her personal piety. "I would rather be a poor beggar's wife and be sure of heaven," she said after her banishment, "than queen of all the world and stand in doubt thereof by reason of my own consent." She died at Kimbolton Castle in January 1536, dearly loved by the English people and admired by all, even by her enemies. "If not for her sex," wrote Thomas Cromwell, her adversary, "she could have defied all the heroes of History."

"For the gentle, simple and dignified Queen Catherine all men felt sympathy," wrote Hilaire Belloc. "They were familiar through portraiture and report with her broad smiling presence, her fair features…her admitted goodness." In addition, Belloc continued,

[Editor's Note: This is the forty-seventh in a multi-part series on the unsung heroes of Christendom.]

> *[h]er misfortunes [had] endeared her to the English people. She had borne child after child to her husband and had suffered disappointments, for all those children save one had died in infancy or had come still-born, and her miscarriages were known.*

William Cobbett was as effusive in his praise of her as he was withering in his condemnation of her abusive husband:

> *She had been banished from court. She had seen her marriage annulled by Cranmer, and her daughter and only surviving child bastardized by act of parliament; and the husband, who had had five children by her…had had the barbarity to keep her separated from, and never to suffer her, after her banishment, to set her eyes on that only child! She died, as she had lived, beloved and revered by every good man and woman in the kingdom, and was buried, amidst the sobbings and tears of a vast assemblage of the people, in the Abbey-church of Peterborough.*

Today, almost five hundred years after Catherine of Aragon's death, England is still living with the disastrous consequences of her husband's betrayal of her. Although she has not been canonized by Holy Mother Church, the pilgrim can still pray at the tomb of England's brokenhearted queen. Time heals all wounds and eternity enshrines the holy. Long after the temporal temples of contemporary-secular England have passed away—the gloss, the glass, the mock-marble, and the stainless steel—one will remain beneath the stones of Peterborough Cathedral, unhailed but ever glorious and stainless still.

CRISIS
MAGAZINE

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Pro-Israel Palantir Endangers our Liberties

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The firms executives misled the public as they create a mass surveilance system

THE American Conservative

Harrison Berger
Sep 15, 2025

Despite over a decade of leaks and exposures, the U.S. security state and its private contractors still pretend that mass surveillance of the American people is a conspiracy theory.

At the All-In Summit this past week, Palantir CEO Alex Karp insisted his company has never spied on Americans, even claiming Palantir was turned away by the FBI and NSA because it "defends privacy and civil liberties" too strongly. That narrative—of Palantir as a quirky, libertarian outfit that checks government power—has always been part of the company's branding and has always been a ruse designed only to trick the most gullible people.

As disclosures by the whistleblower Edward Snowden proved in 2017, Palantir's Gotham operating system filtered the National Security Agency's XKEYSCORE data, vacuuming up the private communications of millions of Americans into the ultimate system for turnkey tyranny. Those embarrassing revelations did not help the public image of a company whose reputation had already tanked in 2011 after reports of their corporate conspiracy to surveil and disrupt the Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist Glenn Greenwald.

While Americans remain deeply skeptical of the federal government's surveillance powers, Palantir has nonetheless become one of the country's most profitable firms, winning billion-dollar contracts off its supposedly "unmatched" technology and collecting endorsements from self-styled anti-establishment pundits like Bari Weiss.

Weiss's outlet *The Free Press*—and even her non-accredited "University" in Austin—count Palantir executives as founding donors. He is "one of the most important builders in America and in the West," Weiss gushed in a glowing interview with Karp, adding that Palantir's central mission is "stopping terror attacks around the world."

But far from being a "counter-elite" defending freedom against the establishment, Alex Karp and Palantir embody the establishment itself, having built its ultimate apparatus for surveillance and control.

Palantir is merely the resurrection of Total Information Awareness, the deep-state project conceived by disgraced national security adviser and Iran-Contra criminal John Poindexter in 2002—a program Congress deemed too authoritarian to exist. Poindexter, like his Iran-Contra co-conspirator Oliver North, was a lifelong operative of the U.S. security state; both believed that the greatest threats to American hegemony abroad came not from foreign enemies but from antiwar activists at home. As North bluntly explained to the Iran-Contra Select Committee: "We didn't lose the war in Vietnam, we lost the war right here" in America.

Their worldview did not die with the Cold War; it merely migrated into Silicon Valley, where executives like Karp disguise it in pseudo-libertarian branding but repeat the same security-state dogmas, receiving millions from the CIA's arm In-Q-Tel to accomplish the deep state's goals.

Alex Karp is a natural successor to deep state bureaucrats like North and Pointdexter, adopting their skepticism toward democratic forces and believing that the "central danger," to national security "comes from universities," and students "who are not believers in our principles as a nation," i.e., students who oppose unconditional support for Israel's wars. Palantir, which has the ability to

monitor and make "dossiers," on those activists, is the wet dream of any deep state official looking to control and police the first-amendment-protected activities of American citizens, a Constitutional safeguard which has always been a nuisance for foreign policy hawks.

If it were just that, Palantir's vast spying power would already be concerning. But Palantir is not merely another U.S.-based contractor; it is fused with the priorities of Israel's own security state and functions as part of the Israel lobby inside the United States. Its chief executives—Karp, Joe Lonsdale, and former Rep. Mike Gallagher—have more than just an affinity for Israel. They are ideological fanatics who openly conflate Israel's enemies with our own.

To that effect, Karp—who, like this author, was inculcated since birth to support the foreign government of Israel—has described college protesters on U.S. campuses as an "infection inside society." Given the vast surveillance powers Palantir now wields, Americans should be asking how Karp and his colleagues plan to "cure" the supposed "infection" of young people using too much free speech to criticize Israel's genocide in Gaza.

Palantir, which supplies Israel with AI targeting tools to mass murder Palestinian women, children, and even some Americans in Gaza, has demonstrated near total deference to their Israeli clients. When asked about Israel's use of Palantir's products to target innocents in Gaza (which includes American citizens), Palantir executive Peter Thiel explained that his preference is to "defer to Israel."

Palantir's troubling loyalty to Israel is not an isolated case but part of a broader pattern linking Silicon Valley's surveillance infrastructure to the Israeli state.

Another behemoth of the surveillance industry is Oracle, led by the world's richest man and a major donor to pro-Israel causes, Larry Ellison. The Ellisons—who own their own island in Hawaii to ensure the ultimate form of privacy—are among the NSA's largest mass surveillance contractors. In a 2013 CBS interview, Ellison scoffed, "Who's ever heard of this information being misused by the government," calling the agency's unconstitutional mass data collection programs "essential." He added that he would oppose them only "if the government used it to do political targeting. If the Democrats used it to go after Republicans. If the Republicans used it to go after Democrats. In other words, if we stop looking for terrorists and we started looking for people, on the other side of the aisle," precisely what happened under President Joe Biden. Yet Oracle has not hesitated to keep cashing in on lucrative surveillance contracts.

Oracle, like Palantir, aligns itself outright with the priorities of the Israeli government. Its Israeli-born CEO Safra Catz even told employees, "if you're not for America or Israel, don't work here." But America and Israel do not always share the same interests. Sometimes they overlap, like during the Cold War, but often and increasingly, they do not, illustrated by Israel's recent bombing of U.S. ally and host of the largest U.S. forward base in the Middle East, Qatar. Oracle erases that difference and pretends American and Israeli interests are one and the same.

The Ellisons have not been shy about their plans to harness their vast wealth and technological empire toward advancing the interests of a foreign government. As researcher Jack Poulson revealed just yesterday, the Ellisons helped coordinate an Israeli cybersabotage campaign and fund anti-BDS blacklists that target American activists, working closely with Israeli intelligence officials and private intelligence firms like Black Cube—the same Israeli company used to harass Harvey Weinstein's accusers and critics of Israel—to do it. Meanwhile, the family has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into an overt effort to bend American mass media into a more reliably pro-Israel posture.

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Despite their denials and deceptions, Palantir and Oracle form the backbone of an unconstitutional mass surveillance regime that collapses the line between American and Israeli power. The danger of dual loyalty would only be hypothetical if their executives did not openly profess fealty to a foreign government. That Alex Karp and Larry Ellison are now embedded in the American security state should raise the question of why the public tolerates big tech elites, arguably as loyal to Israel as to the United States, holding the keys to the most powerful spying systems ever built.

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Self-Possession In The Face Of Adversity

By DR. DONALD DEMARCO

There are no safe havens in this world. No matter where we are, trouble will find us. Ironically it is often the most innocent that receive the most trouble. Jesus Christ offers us the prime example of this. We seek peace and find distress. We seek truth and find mendacity. We seek justice and find betrayal. Some of us give up. Others conform. But the best will not surrender.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn was not allowed to receive his Nobel Prize for literature. His literary excellence was not respected by his own country. Subsequent to his address at Harvard, he became a non-person. Novelist Marion Montgomery comments that, "Solzhenitsyn, now long silent, must, in that silence shake his head in pained disappointment at having been apparently heard, but not understood." William Faulkner was allowed to receive his Nobel Prize, but he warned that there is no room in the writer's workshop "for anything but the old verities and truths of the heart, the old universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed." Otherwise, Faulkner went on to say, he labors "under a curse."

Dante was persecuted and found himself in exile. Aristotle fled Athens because he did not want his country to sin a second time against philosophy. Socrates was the first Athenian to be sacrificed on the altar of philosophy, being the initial victim of a student evaluation. He is remembered and revered, and wears the mantle of, "*The Father of Moral Philosophy*." The names of his accusers have not survived.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca was an important philosopher, dramatist, and statesman in ancient Rome. He is said to have had an influence on Shakespeare. As a tutor to Nero, he was a faithful and competent advisor. In the year 65 AD, on the basis of dubious charges, Nero demanded his forced suicide. *Thyestes* is considered his masterpiece. Contemporary Catholic scholar, Dana Gioia, has referred to it as "one of the most influential plays ever written."

Anicius Boethius was a 16th century Roman Senator and philosopher. He penned his most important work, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, while imprisoned and awaiting trial. This work has been called, "By far the most interesting example of prison literature the world has ever seen." In his conversation with "Lady Philosophy" he realizes the transitory nature of wealth, fame, and power. His project in translating and commentating on the complete works of Aristotle was interrupted. He was dispossessed of his library and executed on false charges. Despite being a victim of injustice, he found consolation in what could not be taken away from him—his "self-possession in the face of adversity." He retained a lofty sense of justice, holding that criminals should not be abused, but rather treated with sympathy and respect, using the analogy of doctor and patient to illustrate the ideal relationship between a prosecutor and a criminal.

Let us now imagine a contemporary situation where a person teaches candidates for the priesthood for decades has done everything right way. How should he react when he is fired by his own bishop for no apparent reason? Such a person, who, indeed has accomplished much good, follows in the footsteps of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Socrates, Aristotle, Dante, Seneca, Boethius, and above all, Jesus Christ. He should hold fast to three things, self-possession, fidelity to God, and love of neighbor, things that cannot be taken from him. He should not descend to the level of injustice that renders him a victim.

When trouble arrives, it is always a good idea to find comfort and inspiration by reading the Bible. In *Acts of the Apostles* 20:28-31 we read a passage that gives us strength. Christ advises His disciples to, "Take heed to your selves and to the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as bishops, to rule the Church of God." He has informed them that they "will see My face no longer." His parting message is dire, but not without hope: "I know that after My departure fierce wolves will get in among you, and will not spare the flock. And from among your own selves men will rise speaking perverse things, to draw the disciples after them. Watch, therefore, and remember that for three years night and day I did not cease with tears to admonish every one of you."

The adjective preceding "wolves" has been alternatively translated as "savage," "grievous," "vicious," ravening," and "cruel." "Wolves" is the consistent they all modify. The picture is clear. There will be those who, like wolves, will want to tear the Church to pieces. Be forewarned and be prepared. It might be edifying to note that St. Francis of Assis was able to tame the wolf of Gubbio.

Christ had foreseen this and it caused Him to shed many tears. How does one respond to wolves? Three things cannot be compromised: personal integrity, fidelity to Christ, and orthodoxy in one's teaching. Loving one's enemy implies that there are enemies, people who are doing the wrong thing even though this indictment might sting. We cannot approve all actions.

Scholarly research indicates that 27 of the first 31 popes died as martyrs. The Church is built on the blood of those whose very lives were sacrificed. Martyrdom comes in many ways. It may visit any of us in various forms, some lighter than others. Yet the Church goes on and will continue to go until the last day. We pray that we will persevere and not capitulate to the untruths that are currently masquerading as truth.

Who Killed Charlie Kirk?

By Ron Paul, MD
The Ron Paul Institute

September 17, 2025

(10)

I had the pleasure of appearing on Charlie Kirk's program a few times over the years and I always found him to be polite, respectful, and genuinely interested in ideas. Even in areas where we might not have agreed, he listened carefully. He was a strong advocate of free speech and he made a career of trying to convince the youth of the value of free speech and dialogue regardless of political differences.

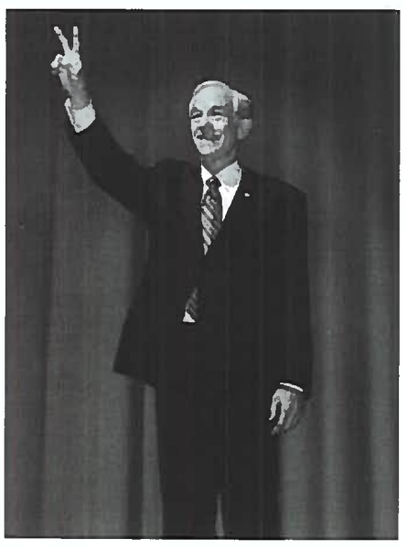
At the young age of 31 years old, he had already founded and ran the largest conservative youth organization in the country and as such he had enormous influence over the future of the conservative movement and even the Republican party. As I discovered during my Republican presidential runs, the youth of this country are truly inspired by the ideas of liberty, peace, and prosperity.

I do not believe we have anything near the real story about the horrific murder of Charlie Kirk last week. The narrative presented by the FBI and other government agencies is wildly contradictory, with an ever-changing plotline that makes little sense.

Some individuals close to Kirk have reported that his foreign policy position was shifting away from the standard neoconservative militarism in favor of a more non-interventionist approach. Tucker Carlson recently recounted that Kirk had even gone personally to the White House to urge President Trump to refuse to take military action against Iran. He was rebuffed by President Trump, Carlson informed us.

Likewise, conservative podcaster Candace Owens, who was a close friend of Charlie Kirk, has stated on her program that Kirk was undergoing a "spiritual crisis" and was turning away from his past embrace of militarism and in favor of America-first non-interventionism, particularly regarding the current unrest in the Middle East.

Was Charlie Kirk murdered – directly or indirectly – by powerful forces who could not tolerate such a shift in views in such an influential leader? We don't know.



If anything, those seeking to prevent the ideas of peace from breaking out would wish to cover it up, as they have done in so many past political killings. As I recounted in my most recent book, The Surreptitious Coup: Who Stole Western Civilization?, the turbulent 1960s saw several killings of major US figures, including JFK, RFK, and Martin Luther King, who were challenging the status quo and pushing for a shift away from the Cold War confrontationist mentality.

The real assassins of these peace leaders from last century were nihilists who did not believe in truth. They only believed in power – the power that comes from the barrel of a gun. Rather than compete in the marketplace of ideas they preferred to snuff out any challenges and therefore decapitate any possibility that our country could take a different course.

More than sixty years after the murder of President Kennedy, the vast majority of the American people do not believe the official story of how he was killed and why. Truth will eventually break through even when the wall of lies seems impenetrable.

If it is true that Charlie Kirk was preparing to shift his organization toward a foreign policy embraced by our Founders, the killing was even more tragic. But no army – or assassin – can stop an idea whose time has come. That may be his most important legacy. Rest in peace.

Trump Administration Rushes to Kill Free Speech In Response to Kirk Assassination

CAITLIN JOHNSTONE • SEPTEMBER 15, 2025 •

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US Attorney General Pam Bondi just said on **a podcast** that "hate speech" directed at conservatives was responsible for Charlie Kirk's assassination, and that people responsible for such speech will be prosecuted by the Trump administration.

Bondi's comments came after the podcast's host Katie Miller (wife of Trump henchman Stephen Miller) bizarrely **suggested** that Kirk's murder at a university was a symptom of university campuses being too tolerant of mistreatment of people with conservative views.

Here's a transcript:

> Miller: "These universities are complicit in allowing conservatives to be harassed on campus. And what happens when you allow a university to harass conservatives and don't expel or don't take action is what happened last week."
>
> Bondi: "It is, and you know, on a broader level, the antisemitism that's been happening at college campuses around this country is disgusting. It's despicable. And we've been fighting that. We've been fighting these universities left and right, and we're not going to stop. There's free speech, and then there's hate speech, and there is no place—especially now, especially after what happened to Charlie—in our society."
>
> Miller: "Do you see more law enforcement going after these groups who are using hate speech and putting cuffs on people so we show them that some action is better than no action?"
>
> Bondi: "We will absolutely target you, go after you if you are targeting anyone with hate speech, anything. And that's across the aisle."

At the same time, Miller's husband Stephen **circulated the baseless claim** that an "organized campaign" by left wing "terrorist networks" led to Kirk's murder, and that the Trump administration is going to "dismantle and destroy" these networks.

Appearing on the late Kirk's podcast which was being guest hosted by Vice President JD Vance, Miller **stated the following**:

> "We are going to channel all the anger we have over the organized campaign that led to this assassination to uproot and dismantle these terrorist networks ... The organized doxxing campaigns. The organized riots. The organized street violence. The organized campaigns of of dehumanization, vilification, posting people's addresses. Combining that with messaging designed to trigger and incite violence and the actual organized cells that carry out and facilitate the violence. It is a vast domestic terror movement. With God as my witness, we are going to use every resource we have at the Department of Justice, Homeland Security and throughout this government to identify, disrupt, dismantle and destroy these networks, and make America safe again for the American people. It will happen, and we will do it in Charlie's name."

On the same show, Vance **urged** American conservatives to report anyone who celebrated the killing of Charlie Kirk to their employer in order to get them fired.

"When you see someone celebrating Charlie's murder, call them out, and hell, call their employer," Vance **said**, adding, "We don't believe in political violence, but we do believe in civility."

If the Biden administration had been saying these things about right wingers, Trump supporters would've shrieked their lungs out. But because Trump supporters are mindless unprincipled NPCs, they're perfectly fine with using authoritarian speech suppression and cancel culture against the other side.

One of the many naive mistakes I made when I first started this commentary gig was taking Trump supporters at their word when they said they support things like free speech, ending wars, and dismantling the deep state. I thought they can't be all bad, because they're saying they're on the same side as me with many important issues that I care about.

This wishful thinking quickly fell apart as I watched them defend every single one of Trump's acts of warmongering and authoritarianism and advancements of longstanding deep state agendas throughout his first term. Even actions which should have gone against their own basic partisan ideological biases like imprisoning Julian Assange were excused, justified, or spun as some kind of 4-D chess maneuver to actually rescue Assange. I stayed in dialogue with them the entire time, and they stood by literally every last bit of Trump's warmongering, authoritarianism, and assaults on free speech.

Every once in a while you'd see one of them go "This is the final straw for me! I don't support Trump anymore!" But then their disdain for Democrats would pull them right back into the fold and they'd be toeing the Republican Party line just the same as before.

And it became clear to me that these people do not actually oppose the terrible abuses they claim to oppose, they just oppose them when the other party is doing them. They don't oppose assaults on free speech, they just oppose assaults on their own speech. They don't oppose war, they just oppose wars that they perceive as being started by Democrats. They don't oppose the unelected power structure which runs the US empire, they just oppose the aspects of that power structure which they perceive as hostile to Trump.

And they've been demonstrating this even more clearly during Trump's second term. They've defended every single one of their president's genocidal, warmongering, tyrannical abuses. They stood by him when he deliberately torched the ceasefire with Hamas and the truce with the Houthis and reignited the bloodshed in Gaza and Yemen. They stood by him as he worked to stomp out free speech in the United States with moves intended to silence criticism of Israel. They stood by him when he announced his ethnic cleansing plans for the Gaza Strip. They stood by him when he bombed Iran. They're standing by him as he expands his warmongering to Venezuela. Whatever authoritarian measures Washington decides to surf on the tide of the Charlie Kirk assassination will surely be complied with too.

They're a bunch of worthless, power-worshipping bootlickers who support everything they claim to oppose. They're garden variety Republican empire simps posing as populist revolutionaries, just as devoted to the imperial murder machine as the Democrats they despise.

Eventually you learn that anyone who aligns themselves with either mainstream party in any way is someone you can just dismiss as a compliant empire stooge. They might say "No no I'm this new special kind of Republican that opposes the war machine and fights for liberty," or "No no I'm this new special kind of Democrat who opposes the oligarchy and works for peace," but they're lying. It's a play. A performance. They're just trying to herd people into the two mainstream imperial parties whose entire purpose is to protect and promote the interests of the empire.

They're all part of the swamp, and you cannot use the swamp to drain the swamp.

> If you favor federal intervention at home, you're a "liberal." If you favor federal intervention abroad, you're a "conservative." If you favor both, you're a "moderate." If you favor neither, you're an "extremist.
>
> – Joseph Sobran

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The Detached Cruelty of Air Power

Mass Killers Have Been Above It All

by Norman Solomon and Tom Engelhardt | Aug 29, 2025 | 0 Comments

The one thing you can say about Donald Trump in his second term in office is that, whatever he may be doing at home, he's not fighting any wars abroad, right? Well, actually, wrong! Yes, American ground troops are no longer actively fighting wars around the world, but when it comes to air power, think again. And I don't just have in mind his brief but devastating recent air assault on Iran (in conjunction with Israel) in which he dispatched B-2 stealth bombers to use (for the very first time) 30,000-pound bunker-busting bombs on that country's nuclear facilities. After all, in the two months of this year in which he ordered the U.S. Air Force to bomb Yemen (yes, Yemen!), as the *Guardian* reported, the result would be "the deaths of almost as many civilians... as in the previous 23 years of U.S. attacks on Islamists and militants in the country."

Of course, you're right that, while the attack on Iran got major media attention, there's next to no news about the other bombing campaigns he's ordered. Since he took office in January 2025, his administration has launched air strikes in Somalia — yes, Somalia! — at least 68 (yes, 68!) times to almost no coverage whatsoever in this country (unless you happen to be reading Dave DeCamp's work at the website Antiwar.com). That beats Trump's previous record there of 63 set in 2019.

It's true that, in his first term, he withdrew U.S. ground troops from Somalia, but the ongoing air war there has been brutal. Of course, air wars always are, though these days that's something that's seldom thought about, which is why, especially given the ongoing nightmare in Gaza, *TomDispatch* regular Norman Solomon's piece today is so painfully appropriate. ~ *Tom Engelhardt*

From Guernica to Gaza

by Norman Solomon

Killing from the sky has long offered the sort of detachment that warfare on the ground can't match. Far from its victims, air power remains the height of modernity. And yet, as the monk Thomas Merton concluded in a poem, using the voice of a Nazi commandant, "Do not think yourself better because you burn up friends and enemies with long-range missiles without ever seeing what you have done."

Nine decades have passed since aerial technology first began notably assisting warmakers. Midway through the 1930s, when Benito Mussolini sent Italy's air force into action during the invasion of Ethiopia, hospitals were among its main targets. Soon afterward, in April 1937, the fascist militaries of Germany and Italy dropped bombs on a Spanish town with a name that quickly became a synonym for the slaughter of civilians: Guernica.

Within weeks, Pablo Picasso's painting "Guernica" was on public display, boosting global revulsion at such barbarism. When World War Two began in September 1939, the default assumption was that bombing population centers — terrorizing and killing civilians — was beyond the pale. But during the next several years, such bombing became standard operating procedure.

Dispensed from the air, systematic cruelty only escalated with time. The blitz by Germany's Luftwaffe took more than 43,500 civilian lives in Britain. As the Allies gained the upper hand, the names of certain cities went into history for their bomb-generated firestorms and then radioactive infernos. In Germany: Hamburg, Cologne, and Dresden. In Japan: Tokyo, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.

"Between 300,000-600,000 German civilians and over 200,000 Japanese civilians were killed by allied bombing during the Second World War, most as a result of raids intentionally targeted against civilians themselves," according to the documentation of scholar Alex J. Bellamy. Contrary to traditional narratives, "the British and American governments were clearly intent on targeting civilians," but "they refused to admit that this was their purpose and devised elaborate arguments to claim that they were not targeting civilians."

Past Atrocities Excusing New Ones

As the *New York Times* reported in October 2023, three weeks into the war in Gaza, "It became evident to U.S. officials that Israeli leaders believed mass civilian casualties were an acceptable price in the military campaign. In private conversations with American counterparts, Israeli officials referred to how the United States and other allied powers resorted to devastating bombings in Germany and Japan during World War II — including the dropping of the two atomic warheads in Hiroshima and Nagasaki — to try to defeat those countries."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told President Joe Biden much the same thing, while shrugging off concerns about Israel's merciless killing of civilians in Gaza. "Well," Biden recalled him saying, "you carpet-bombed Germany. You dropped the atom bomb. A lot of civilians died."

Apologists for Israel's genocide in Gaza have continued to invoke just such a rationale. Weeks ago, for instance, Mike Huckabee, the American ambassador to Israel, responded derisively to a statement by British Prime Minister Keir Starmer that "the Israeli government's decision to further escalate its offensive in Gaza is wrong." Citing the U.S.-British air onslaught on Dresden in February 1945 that set off a huge firestorm, Huckabee tweeted: "Ever heard of Dresden, PM Starmer?"

Appearing on *Fox & Friends*, Huckabee said: "You have got the Brits out there complaining about humanitarian aid and the fact that they don't like the way Israel is prosecuting the war. I would remind the British to go back and look at their own history. At the end of World War II they weren't dropping food into Germany, they were dropping massive bombs. Just remember Dresden — over 25,000 civilians were killed in that bombing alone."

The United Nations has reported that women and children account for nearly 70% of the verified deaths of Palestinians in Gaza. The capacity to keep massacring civilians there mainly depends on the Israeli Air Force (well supplied with planes and weaponry by the United States), which proudly declares that "it is often due to the IAF's aerial superiority and advancement that its squadrons are able to conduct a large portion" of the Israeli military's "operational activities."

The "Grace and Panache" of the "Indispensable Nation"

The benefactor making possible Israel's military prowess, the U.S. government, has compiled a gruesome record of its own in this century. An ominous undertone, foreshadowing the unchecked slaughter to come, could be heard on October 8, 2023, the day after the Hamas attack on Israel resulted in close to 1,200 deaths. "This is Israel's 9/11," the Israeli ambassador to the United Nations said outside the chambers of the Security Council, while the country's ambassador to the United States told PBS viewers that "this is, as someone said, our 9/11."

Loyal to the "war on terror" brand, the American media establishment gave remarkably short shrift to concerns about civilian deaths and suffering. The official pretense was that (of course!) the very latest weaponry meshed with high moral purpose. When the U.S. launched its "shock and awe" air assault on Baghdad to begin the Iraq War in March 2003, "it was a *breathtaking* display of firepower," anchor Tom Brokaw told NBC viewers with unintended irony. Another network correspondent reported "a tremendous light show here, just a tremendous light show."

As the U.S. occupation of Iraq took hold later that year, *New York Times* correspondent Dexter Filkins (who now covers military matters for *The New Yorker*) was laudatory on the newspaper's front page as he reported on the Black Hawk and Apache helicopter gunships flying over Baghdad "with such grace and panache." Routine reverence for America's high-tech arsenal of air power has remained in sync with the assumption that, in the hands of Uncle Sam, the world's greatest aerospace technologies would be used for the greatest good.

In a 2014 commencement speech at West Point, President Barack Obama proclaimed: "The United States is and remains the one indispensable nation. That has been true for the century passed and it will be true for the century to come."

After launching two major invasions and occupations in this century, the United States was hardly on high moral ground when it condemned Russia for its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and frequent bombing of that country's major cities. Seven months after the invasion began, President Vladimir Putin tried to justify his reckless nuclear threats by alarmingly insisting that the atomic bombings of Japan had established a "precedent."

Whoever Doesn't Count Goes Uncounted

Journalist Anand Gopal, author of the brilliant book *No Good Men Among the Living*, spent years in Afghanistan after the U.S. invasion of that country, often venturing into remote rural areas unvisited by Western reporters. While U.S. media outlets were transfixed with debating the wisdom of finally withdrawing troops from that country in August 2021 and the flaws in the execution of the departure, Gopal was rendering a verdict that few in power showed the slightest interest in hearing: the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan had involved the large-scale killing of civilians from the air, and civilian deaths had been "grossly undercounted."

In Helmand Province ("really the epicenter of the violence for the last two decades"), Gopal investigated what had happened to the family of a housewife named Shakira, who lived in the small village of Pan Killay. As he explained during a *Democracy Now!* interview, she had lost 16 members of her family. "What was remarkable or astonishing about this was that this wasn't in one airstrike or in one mass casualty incident," he pointed out. "This was in 14 or 15 different incidents over 20 years." He added:

"So, people were living — reliving tragedy again and again. And it wasn't just Shakira, because I was interested, after interviewing her, to see how representative this was. So, I managed to talk to over a dozen families. I got the names of the people who were killed. I tried to triangulate that information with death certificates and other eyewitnesses. And so, the level of human loss is really extraordinary. And most of these deaths were never recorded. It's usually the big airstrikes that make the media, because in these areas there's not a lot of internet penetration, there's not — there's no media there. And so, a lot of the smaller deaths of ones and twos don't get recorded. And so, I think we've grossly undercounted the number of civilians who died in this war."

Citing a U.N. study of casualties during the first half of 2019, the BBC summed up the findings this way: "Some 717 civilians were killed by Afghan and U.S. forces, compared to 531 by militants... Air strikes, mostly carried out by American warplanes, killed 363 people, including 89 children, in the first six months of the year."

During my brief trip to Afghanistan 10 years earlier, I had visited the Helmand Refugee Camp District 5 on the outskirts of Kabul, where I met a seven-year-old girl named

Guljumma. She told me about what had happened one morning the previous year when she was sleeping at her home in southern Afghanistan's Helmand Valley. At about 5 a.m., the U.S. Air Force dropped bombs. Some people in her family died. She lost an arm.

As Guljumma spoke, several hundred people were living under makeshift tents in the refugee camp. Basics like food arrived only sporadically. Her father, Wakil Tawos Khan, told me that the sparse incoming donations were from Afghan businessmen, while little help came from the government of Afghanistan. And the United States was offering no help whatsoever. The last time Guljumma and her father had meaningful contact with the U.S. government was when its air force bombed them.

Normal and Lethal

When Shakira and Guljumma lost relatives to bombs that arrived courtesy of the U.S. taxpayer, their loved ones were not even numbers to the Pentagon. Instead, meticulous estimates have come from the Costs of War project at Brown University, which puts "the number of people killed directly in the violence of the post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere" at upwards of 905,000 — with 45% of them civilians. "Several times as many more have been killed as a reverberating effect of the wars — because, for example, of water loss, sewage and other infrastructural issues, and war-related disease."

The increasing American reliance on air power rather than combat troops has shifted the concept of what it means to be "at war." After three months of leading NATO's bombing of Libya in 2011, for instance, the U.S. government had already spent $1 billion on the effort, with far more to come. But the Obama administration insisted that congressional approval was unnecessary since the United States wasn't actually engaged in military "hostilities" — because no Americans were dying in the process.

The State Department's legal adviser, former Yale Law School dean Harold H. Koh, testified at a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the nation's actions targeting Libya involved "no U.S. ground presence or, to this point, U.S. casualties." Nor was there "a threat of significant U.S. casualties." The idea was that it's not really a war if Americans are above it all and aren't dying. In support of Koh, a former colleague at the Yale Law School, Akhil Reed Amar, claimed that the United States truly wasn't engaged in "hostilities" in Libya because "there are no body bags" of American soldiers.

Ten years later, in a September 2021 speech at the United Nations soon after the last American troops had left Afghanistan, President Biden said: "I stand here today, for the first time in 20 years, with the United States not at war." In other words, American troops weren't dying in noticeable numbers. Costs of War project co-director Catherine Lutz pointed out in the same month that U.S. engagement in military actions "continues in over 80 countries."

Seeking to reassure Americans that the Afghanistan withdrawal was a matter of repositioning rather than a retreat from the use of military might, Biden touted an "over-the-horizon capability that will allow us to keep our eyes firmly fixed on any direct threats to the United States in the region and to act quickly and decisively if needed." During the four years since then, the Biden and Trump administrations have directly sent bombers and missiles over quite a few horizons, including in Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, and Iran.

Less directly, but with horrific ongoing consequences, stepped-up U.S. military aid to Israel has enabled its air power to systematically kill Palestinian children, women, and men with the kind of industrial efficiency that fascist leaders of the 1930s and 1940s might have admired. The daily horrors in Gaza still echo the day when bombs fell on Guernica. But the scale of the carnage is much bigger and unrelenting in Gaza, where atrocities continue without letup, while the world looks on.

Norman Solomon is co-founder of RootsAction and executive director of the Institute for Public Accuracy. His books include *War Made Easy*, *Made Love, Got War*, and most recently

I Am Not Against Wars To Defend the United States But there Has Never Been One in Last 80 Years

By Andrew Wallace

August 4, 2025

(17)

I defy anyone to name one single war in the last 80 years that was fought for the National Security of the United States. All of these wars were fought for money and power promoted by government and media propaganda supported by a false flag or two.

It is impossible to tell an injured veteran or a grieving family that their loss was based on a scam by government and the Military Industrial Complex of the Parasitic Super Rich Ruling Class (PSRRC).The truth is that these veterans did serve the United States honorably but the government sold their services to the highest bidder much like mercenaries with a great deal of subterfuge, propaganda and payoffs..

Our Constitution requires a Declaration of War for every war but there was not one single declaration in the last 80 years. The simple truth is that Congress funded these wars for profit by the Military Industrial Complex and in return got their bribes.

The wars in the last 80 years resulted in the deaths of 105,000 members of our armed forces, millions of innocents killed and entire countries devastated, all for profits and the hatred of people where we fought without justification..

Without the Coup of 1913 the traitors could never have financed these wars.

While it is true that the countries directly involved were major losers from the wars, the citizens of the United States lost more than their sons and daughters, they lost their prosperity, the American dream, the Constitutional Republic, etc.

Wars and Foreign Aid both enrich the Military Industrial Complex of the PSRRC, but at least Foreign Aid does not result in our military being returned in body bags.

I strongly maintain that Wars without a Declaration of War and Foreign Aid of any type is Unconstitutional and those in Congress who vote for it are traitors and should be prosecuted. Those in Congress who vote for wars and Foreign Aid are well aware of the death and destruction they are causing. But don't give a Damn as long as they get their bribes. In addition to the loss of life the American people suffer from increased taxes, inflation, reduction in assets, declining dollar, declining living standard, etc.

It should also be noted that the rest of the world hates us for using our power and resources in the interest of business, power, profits and nothing for humanity or the American people.

We must look at our Foreign Aid to Ukraine of $ 182.8 Billion. Everything reported about Ukraine by Government and Media was mostly a Damn lie. There is ample evidence that the United States was mostly responsible for this war. We have no business defending Europe when they refuse to defend themselves and can't reciprocate. We have drawn down our military stockpiles and further impoverished our citizens for nothing.

Foreign Aid to Israel is as wrong as any Foreign Aid but is complicated by the fact that no one can find fault with Israel without being labeled Anti- Semitic.

We regularly give Israel $3.8 Billion a year, since Oct. 7 attack we gave them an additional $17.9 Billion and we spent $ 4.86 Billion attacking Houthi in defense of Israel and shipping. These expenditures add up to $ 26.56 Billion. We have no reason to be involved in Israel or anywhere else except for our traitors in government and the extraordinary power of the Jewish lobby and media. I leave it to the books and countless articles written on the subject to explain the problem.

We have spent over $ 200 Billion on foreign aid to Israel and Ukraine where in truth we

have no national security interest. Foreign Aid to these two countries equals about 20% of the cost of our armed forces. Our only reason is to satisfy the supporters of both countries and the Military Industrial Complex that is getting rich. The American people are of course suffering to pay for it with all the usual hardships.

Our infrastructure is crumbling and people are living on the streets in tents. We have absolutely no excuse or reason to support any wars or foreign aid as both are unconstitutional. The legislators who support Foreign Aid and Wars should be prosecuted and thrown out of office. The only way this outrage is going to stop is for citizens to vote against the warmongers in Congress and prosecute them.

Simply stated you must inform your Member of Congress that if they vote to approve any war or fund any Foreign Aid program that you will actively campaign against them.

May God Bless You and the Republic.

The Second Coming

BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?