

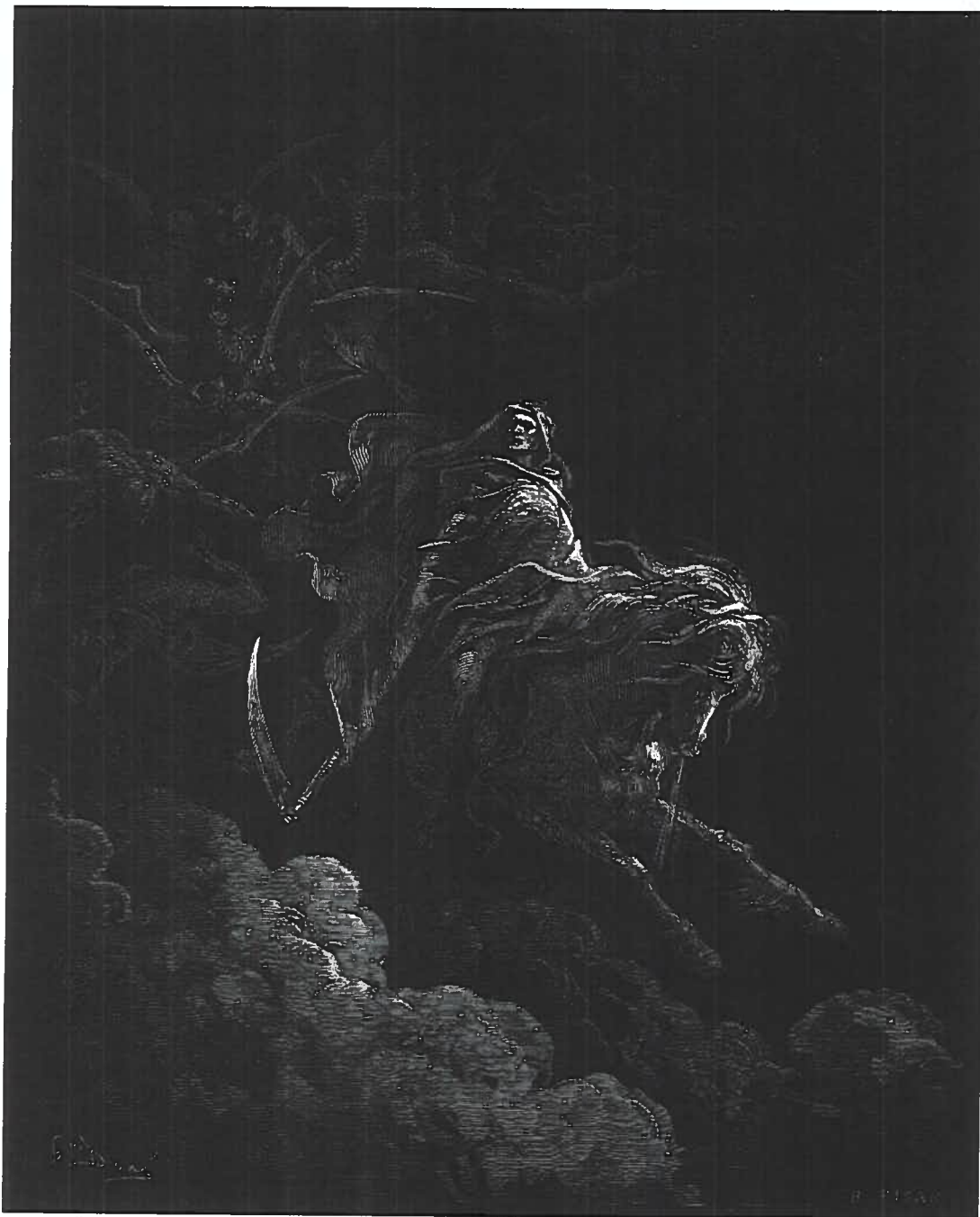
# The End Game for Gaza

BILL ASTORE

SEP 12

## Using Old Tools of War

I've taught military history "from Plato to Nato," as we used to joke, but my expertise focused on technology and warfare. Along with "revolutions" and "transformations" in weaponry, I probably spent too much time focusing on "decisive battles" and "great captains" in history. When you look at the course of military history, most deaths from war didn't come in battle. They came from hunger and disease, from famine and pestilence. Sometimes, mass starvation and pandemics were unintentional byproducts of chaos and societal disruption caused by war, and sometimes starvation and disease were intentional weapons and products of war.



And behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death

You might call this apocalyptic war, from the Bible and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, which included famine and pestilence among the death riders.

An apocalyptic fate seemingly awaits Palestinians in Gaza. I've written about Gaza as a genocide, the mass bombing by Israel, the mass killing, with the apparent goal of forcing Palestinians out of Gaza, but I haven't given enough thought to the use of mass starvation and diseases as weapons in this genocide.

JCRmc PACKET SEPTEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

A reader, Dan White, brought this lesson home to me, and I'd like to quote his message to me at length:

I can't think of a better word than the *etiology* of starvation. It hasn't been adequately addressed by the snoozemedia. Starvation death rates have a funny shaped curve. During the first stages of starvation--can't give any figures on a time period for this or any other part of the process/curve, due to there being varying levels of food deprivation--there are few deaths, generally (but not always) those persons with compromised health/preexisting health problems that make them more susceptible to death than others in the population. After some (varying length) period of starvation, people start to die in larger numbers, and then all of a sudden, everyone is dying, and then everyone is dead. This period of death is fairly short compared to the period of starvation. Again, due to varying levels of starvation and varying levels of preexisting health and varying levels of surplus consumable body tissue in the starved group, this period has no fixed length, but it happens all of a sudden, and it doesn't take long for everyone to die once it starts--couple of weeks seems common.

The starving residents of Gaza haven't reached the mass-death stage of starvation, but it could well start happening tomorrow. I can't say because I don't know the food reserves preexisting, the food delivery figures since the 'war' started, and nobody in the news biz has bothered to look for them, either. There really should have been some government or multistate agency who has looked for them and published them, but nobody has.

When the mass-death stage hits, people in Gaza will be dying by the tens of thousands a week. Stopping the mass-death by all of a sudden providing food isn't going to work very well, on account of logistical delivery problems and the medical problems of alleviating starvation at this advanced stage--folks' digestive tracts may well not work well enough even if they get food. That will be the real genocide, and I'd bet money it happens, and bet more money that this is the real objective of Israel's 'war' in Gaza. The notion of Israel's war objective is displacement of Gazans is an absurdity--you want someone to leave, well they have to be able to walk, right? And they have to have a place to go. Israel is counting on the rest of the world to all of a sudden do a mass-evacuation of Gazans combined with a mass feeding and mass medical intervention all at the same time in order to prevent this mass death of Gazans from occurring? NFW--Israel's leaders have accepted mass killing as an official state policy, and have commenced doing it, and do it as we speak. And Israeli hasbara [propaganda] will blame us for it, and a whole lot of whored-out American and European politicians, as well as Israel-worshipping American Jews, will go along with it.

What Dan White posits here is horrifying—and increasingly likely. Of course, as people are weakened through starvation, they become more susceptible to various diseases associated with famine and unsanitary conditions.

These “old” weapons of war—starvation and disease—will serve as the grimmest of reapers among the Palestinians in Gaza.

The “mass-death stage” of starvation is nearing, unless the U.S. and other countries intervene to force Israel to allow adequate food and medical supplies into Gaza. A failure to act will only spur the pale horse on whose back Death sits.

- **PaulCraigRoberts.org** - <https://www.paulcraigroberts.org> -

## **Exactly How Does One Survive Absurdity**

Posted By *pcr3* On September 3, 2025 @ 6:26 am In Articles & Columns | [Comments Disabled](#)

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Exactly How Does One Survive Absurdity

Paul Craig Roberts

We live in absurd times. We are surrounded by violence, both real and virtual—the Israeli slaughter of Palestinians, the deaths in Ukraine, the violent movies and video games, the violence on the streets in America’s blue cities—but the press attaches warnings to news reports of much smaller incidences of violence. We are supposed to be horrified by the beating that one individual receives but not by the genocide of the Palestinian people. American universities have banned protests in support of the Palestinian people, and in England you can be arrested.

We are supposed to be horrified by the “sexual abuse” of a male propositioning a female, but not by men’s access to women’s spaces and women’s sports, or by the plethora of young women’s porn sites or by their competitions to see who can have sex with the most men in a 24 hour time period.

As for Epstein, readers inform me that the Jews who operate the porn industry, are preparing the legality of adult sex with children. The Democrat school boards in the US are helping the advancement of pedophilia by teaching pre-puberty kids how to copulate and have oral sex. Pedophilia is today euphemized in the term “minor-directed persons.” Apparently, AI is an enabler of the legitimization of pedophilia, along with the grooming of young children by Democrat school boards. AI creates images of sex between adults and females with children’s faces and bodies that present young females as lascivious persons. As the images are not real people, they apparently escape the restrictions on child porn.

The American media has never been an honest, truthful one. But the large number of independent organizations meant that at least on occasion the truth found its way out. No more. Thanks to President Clinton, six mega-corporations owned or controlled by Jews control 90% of the American media. You hear what Israel wants you to hear.

You, dear superpower indispensable American are nothing but an Israeli puppet, indoctrinated and brainwashed to serve Jewish interests, or so say those who are not totally insouciant.

The plethora of virtual violence has numbed us to the real thing. American generals speak of winning nuclear war with only 30,000,000 American casualties, and the Zionist neoconservatives together with Netanyahu push for war with Iran, a war that would likely involve Russia and China.

Unless you are extremely dense, you can see where this is going to lead.

# The Unz Review • An Alternative Media Selection

*A Collection of Interesting, Important, and Controversial Perspectives Largely Excluded from the American Mainstream Media*

## Making Corporatism Great Again

RON PAUL • SEPTEMBER 8, 2025 • 600 WORDS • 6 COMMENTS

President Trump has recently endorsed a policy that is arguably as socialist as anything proposed by New York mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani or Sen. Bernie Sanders — partial government ownership of private corporations.

Earlier this year, as a condition of approving Nippon Steel's purchase of US Steel, President Trump demanded Nippon give the US government a "golden share" in US Steel. This golden share allows the US government to overrule Nippon's management if the government determines Nippon is acting against US "national security," which means the government can overrule many decisions made by Nippon's management.

Unfortunately, Nippon was not a "one-and-done" excursion into corporatism. President Trump recently struck a deal with computer chip manufacturer Intel to give the company 8.9 billion dollars in government subsidies in exchange for ten percent of Intel's stock. This deal makes the US government Intel's largest stockholder!

The Trump administration has promised that it will not use its position to undermine Intel's board. However, the administration is reserving the right to counter Intel's board if the administration determines the board is taking an action that would adversely impact the relationship of the company or its subsidiaries with the US government. So, the Trump administration is yet again giving itself power to manage a nominally private company.

Enabling the government to control a private company (even if the government does not actually exercise its power) means the company's management will base its decisions on what will please those currently in power, rather than on the desires of consumers.

Government investment in corporations will cause politicians to make decisions based on what will profit the companies the government has "invested" in while those companies' competitors will seek to attract government investment in order to win special privileges for themselves.

A corporation partially owned by government will be considered "too big to fail" since its failure would cause the government to lose the money "invested" in the businesses. So, the argument will be that a bailout will save the taxpayers money.

According to a 2024 analysis by the World Bank — an organization not known as a supporter of free-market economics, companies of which government owns ten percent or more are six percent less profitable and have workforces that are 32 percent less productive.

Some members of the Trump administration have suggested that the federal government take a partial ownership interest in defense contractors like Lockheed Martin and Boeing. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick has pointed out that big defense contractor Lockheed Martin, for example, is "basically an arm of the US government" since almost all its revenue comes from the US government. Secretary Lutnick has a point, but the closeness between the Pentagon and big corporations is an argument for restoring a noninterventionist foreign policy. Giving the government an ownership interest in defense contractors would allow the war party to argue that militarism is good for the taxpayer because it boosts the value of the government's "investments"!

Government "investment" in private businesses will only worsen the twin plagues of corporatism and cronyism that afflict our political and economic systems. Instead of further entangling government and business, those seeking to make America great again should work to end the welfare-warfare-regulatory state and the fiat money system that makes it possible. The only path to prosperity is through a true free market, limited government, and a foreign policy of peace and free trade.



At its core, evil in humans manifests as a deliberate desire to transgress, taking pleasure in defying what is good, often reflecting an inner rejection of or hostility toward God.

**I**t is the fateful morning when Satan will tempt Eve with the fruit that is supposed to make her like the gods. He beholds the beautiful earth around him, but he can take no delight in it—because it is good and he is not. He knows very well that if he corrupts the first human couple, the world that God has made for them must likewise suffer change; and he knows that his own state will be worse than it is now. But he cannot help himself. He is driven from within by the compulsion to evil:

*But neither here seek I, no, nor in Heaven  
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme,  
Nor hope to be myself less miserable  
By what I seek, but others to make such  
As I, though thereby worse to me redound  
For only in destroying I find ease  
To my relentless thoughts.*

The poet, John Milton, has well expressed the restlessness of evil, quite compatible with sloth, the sin of spiritual torpor, the willed incapacity to rejoice in the good and to celebrate it, to rest in it. Good has an aim; it is going somewhere. As the Psalmist so splendidly puts it, “I shall go in unto the altar of God, of God, who brings joy to my youth.” It also rests in the action of celebration, of feasting. So when God reveals to the angels his only-begotten Son, under whom they will be “united as one individual soul / Forever happy,” the angels engage in action which is its own joyful end: “That day, as other solemn days, they spend / In song and dance about the sacred throne.”

Evil is a warped, frustrated, meager, disappointing parody of good. Its congregation is a mob. Its dance is the spasms. Its songs are shouts through a bullhorn. Its Sabbath is a day of restlessness, filled up with things to get done, and with much noise, lest the truth come to the fore, that there is in fact *nothing to do*. Its aspiration is ambition, literally to go round and round; the Latin word described the unseemly act of canvassing for votes. Evil fouls its nest, then complains of the smell. It is like an old woman bedridden with sores, tossing and turning, and finding no comfort.

You cannot compromise in principle with evil and hope to settle in at a certain bad state of affairs, because the floor will not hold. It is an ever-opening and devouring crater. Let the latest attack on a Christian baker stand for an example—a woman in California who won't take orders that are pornographic, or that celebrate paganism, divorce, or homosexuality. Why can she not be left alone? Why must she face years of headache to keep her small business her own, doing something pleasant, without committing herself to wicked things? Why must the juggernaut of government come lumbering down the road, spreading ruin? You might as well call up the United Federation of Planets to adjudge a dispute at a lemonade stand.

In my book *Defending Marriage*, I predicted that there would be no end to the unraveling, not until people reject the false premises: that masculine and feminine are trivial or unreal; that men and women are not made for one another; that marriage is not, by its physical nature and cultural dynamism, a reality that transcends the generations, but rather may be whatever we like, according to our romantic or sentimental feelings. The conclusion from such premises is that, outside of coercion or deceit, *there is no right and wrong in sexual matters*. That conclusion is absurd and poisonous to human society.

But we err if we assume that acceptance of any *particular* aberration from sexual morality was ever the goal of the revolutionaries. That, I said, is because the principal desire was *to transgress*, to gain the thrill of the forbidden, to scandalize others, to make them squirm, or to enjoy their enjoying a vicarious

pleasure in seeing, if not performing, the forbidden action. Such transgressors find allies in those who also transgress but not so far or so flagrantly. They run interference for them; they make them feel better about themselves. The fornicator can say, "At least I act according to nature."

**No rest, then.** No matter where you draw that line, the temptation to transgress will assert itself, instigating the transgressor to venture out even farther to gain the same thrill. Sure enough, we have collapsed into what anyone two minutes ago would have considered bizarre, monstrous, and insane—not only *permitting* children to mutilate themselves, rendering them sterile for life, gelding boys and spaying girls, caught up in the howling lie that you *can* change your sex, but *demanding* that you approve it, lest the state enter with all its brainless and irresponsible power to seize such children from the custody of the sane, especially when one estranged parent leverages the state against the other, for revenge, couched in terms of loving care for the child.

We are making the polygamous Mormons of the late 19th century seem like paragons of sanity and responsibility. We once demanded that Mormons repudiate polygamy as a condition for Utah's statehood. Now we demand acceptance of, connivance at, and participation in evil. Off with your sanity, or else.

I have used the example of spiraling madness in one area of the moral life, but for other people in other times, it might be money, bloodshed, the thirst for power, or blasphemy that sets its evil tentacles in the brain. Nor must the evil always assume the form of excess. There is a certain pride in the bold transgressor. Envy is his sickly twin. No rest here, either, but the destruction is wrought by smothering and stifling. Whenever something wholesome and lively appears, whenever our God-given nature reasserts itself, the envious must kill it.

I am reminded of a woman at Providence College who taught a course in folktales. She hated them. Just when she thought that they were buried for good, she said to us in the English department, taking for granted that we would all see things her way, up would pop some Beauty and the Beast, or Cinderella, and that would set her again at work, to kill them off, to ruin them for students who took an innocent pleasure in them.

Or I think of the animus that certain clergy have against the faithful whose piety disturbs them. We err in supposing that every man of the cloth desires that people should think *more about God*, that they should spend *more time in prayer*, that they should feel *more devotion to the Sacrament*. Many wish rather to dampen, to bring everyone down to their own half-faith; it is why they derive satisfaction in managing decay and closing parishes.

I am not saying that *all* or even *most* clerics in such situations are motivated by envy. But some are. Whenever there is a public controversy involving those supposedly too pious, or, in our time, too masculine or too feminine, these poor envy-ridden priests rush to judgment *against* the members of their own flock. As for some practice of the faith that succeeds, avoid it, slander it, or squelch it.

**So one** of the bands of fallen angels, trying to find some place in Hell that is not as bad as what they've seen and waiting for Satan to return from his venture to earth, "With shuddering horror pale and eyes aghast, / Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found / No rest." How can they, when the restlessness is as much within them as without? So it is with Satan, venturing toward the new world he aims to ruin:

*Horror and doubt distract  
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir  
The Hell within him, for within him Hell  
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell  
One step no more than from himself can fly  
By change of place.*

No rest. Learn the lesson, fellow believers.

Written by **John and Nisha Whitehead** on September 10, 2025

## How Tyranny Becomes Entrenched: 9/11 and the Police State's Endless Power Grabs

They said it was for safety.

They said it was for order.

They said it was for the good of the nation.

They always say it's for something good... until it isn't.

Nearly a quarter-century after 9/11, we are still living with the consequences of fear-driven government power grabs. What began as "temporary" measures for our security have hardened into a permanent architecture of control.

The bipartisan police-state architecture that began with 9/11 has been passed from president to president and party to party, each recycling the same justifications — safety, security, patriotism — to expand its powers at the expense of the citizenry.

So they locked down the country "for our safety."

They expanded surveillance "for our security."

They rounded up anyone who challenged the narrative "for the common good."

They erased names, ideas, and histories "to prevent offense."

They forced schools to teach only what was politically correct "for the children."

They censored speech "for our protection."

They targeted dissenters "to preserve peace."

They militarized the streets and called it "law and order."

These very abuses — once denounced when carried out by the Left — are now cheered, defended, and excused when carried out by the Right.

People who once spoke passionately about truth, freedom, and faith have now fallen silent in the face of injustice, or worse, convinced themselves that nothing is wrong. The very voices that should be warning against tyranny are instead excusing it or looking away.

This is the danger of double standards in politics: every tyranny is rationalized in the moment by its chorus of defenders.

But history teaches that what goes around comes around. If you justify it now, you'll have no defense when the tables turn.

And yet, time and again, the lies we tell ourselves make it possible. The cult of personality. The blind loyalty to party. The belief that "our side" can't be the villain.

It never ceases to amaze how far people will go to excuse the actions of their favorite tyrant, even when those actions are the very things they once swore to oppose.

The pattern of justifying tyranny is as old as power itself. Every abuse comes wrapped in the same excuse: *we had to do it*.

After 9/11, Americans were told the Patriot Act and mass surveillance were "necessary to prevent terrorism." The result was a sprawling security state that tracks every phone call, every online search, every purchase. *The justification was security. The cost was freedom.*

Under Obama, drone warfare and the prosecution of whistleblowers were defended as "keeping America safe." The president even claimed the power to assassinate U.S. citizens abroad without trial. The result was an unaccountable government acting as judge, jury and executioner. *The justification was safety. The cost was due process.*



John Whitehead  
John Whitehead

During the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdowns and mandates were imposed in the name of “public health,” laying the groundwork for a Nanny State empowered to micromanage every aspect of our lives — where we go, what we buy, who we see. The result was government claiming control over every aspect of daily life. *The justification was saving lives. The cost was the right to govern our bodies.*

Under Trump, the script is familiar.

National Guard deployments in American cities are justified as “restoring order.” Sweeping surveillance is framed as “protecting communities.” Crackdowns on dissent are defended as “stopping criminals.” Mental health round-ups of the homeless are justified as “helping the vulnerable.” Militarized patrols on city streets are justified as “cleaning up the streets.” Turning ICE into a roving army of lawless thugs is justified as “protecting citizenship.” Censorship and efforts to sanitize American history are now being lauded by the same voices that railed against “cancel culture.”

That same logic has taken a deadly turn abroad. At Trump’s direction, the U.S. carried out a series of preemptive military strikes this year — against Iran’s nuclear sites, against the Houthis in Yemen, and most recently against what the administration claimed was a drug-trafficking boat off the coast of Venezuela. The White House has justified these deadly attacks — carried out without congressional approval or constitutional authorization — as part of the president’s unilateral war-making authority.

This, too, is part of the bipartisan police-state architecture built after 9/11, when presidents claimed open-ended authority to wage preemptive war without meaningful congressional oversight.

As always, the justification is order, safety, and patriotism. The cost is truth, justice and freedom.

What makes Trump and those who came before him especially dangerous is not merely their willingness to wield power but the eagerness of their enablers to excuse and defend it at every turn.

History shows that bullies and strongmen can only rise when mobs rally to their side. A tyrant’s greatest weapon is not his fist, but the crowd that cheers him on, intimidates his critics, and convinces itself that might makes right.

The machinery of authoritarianism always needs a chorus of defenders, and today that chorus is louder, more organized, and more dismissive of constitutional limits than ever before.

People imagine tyranny is only tyranny when the other side does it. When their side does it, they call it leadership. They call it patriotism. They call it protection. But the abuse doesn’t change when the party label does. Wrong is wrong.

Every new regime that seizes power promises it will use extraordinary authority only for good. And every regime — without exception — uses it to entrench itself at the expense of liberty.

Every generation tells itself the same lies to excuse the same abuses.

The double standard is breathtaking.

Tyranny doesn’t change depending on who carries it out. Yet partisans convince themselves it does. They say: *It’s different this time. It’s necessary. It’s for us.*

In truth, the only difference is who holds the whip.

You cannot defend freedom by defending tyranny when your side is in power. You cannot preserve liberty by cheering for its destruction. You cannot expect constitutional limits to shield you tomorrow if you discard them today.

If you want liberty, you must defend it consistently — even when it restrains your own party, your own leader, your own side. *Especially then.*

What you excuse today will be used against you tomorrow.

As I make clear in my book *Battlefield America: The War on the American People* and in its fictional counterpart *The Erik Blair Diaries*, it does not matter whether the abuse comes draped in red or blue. It does not matter whether it is cheered by the Right or justified by the Left.

Tyranny, once excused, becomes entrenched.

## About John & Nisha Whitehead:

Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead is founder and president of The Rutherford Institute. His latest books *The Erik Blair Diaries* and *Battlefield America: The War on the American People* are available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). Whitehead can be contacted at [johnw@rutherford.org](mailto:johnw@rutherford.org). Nisha Whitehead is the Executive Director of The Rutherford Institute. Information about The Rutherford Institute is available at [www.rutherford.org](http://www.rutherford.org).

# HOLY PLACES

## A Pillar of Strength

Anthony Esolen

THERE WAS A MAN IN THE REGION OF ANTIOCH, the leader of a band of thieves, who was so powerful that for a long time he terrorized the people and did as he pleased. Finally, some soldiers caught him drinking wine in a wayside inn. He leapt on his mare, commanding it, as you would a human being, to take him to the middle of a river, where he dismounted and dared any of the men to come and get him. "I'll butcher you all!" he cried. When they held back, he mounted again and raced to a tall pillar erected atop a dry and rocky hill. Standing on that pillar was a man in his middle age, named Simeon. By then he had been there, exposed to sun and rain, sleet and snow, for many years, and he was known throughout all the surrounding lands. That was why the thief went there.

"Servant of God, save a soul that is perishing!" he cried, hugging the column with his arms.

"Fellow, what do you wish?" the saint asked.

"I'm that prince of thieves everyone knows of, and I've fled here to be saved."

"Can you muster up sorrow for your sins?"

"That's why I came here." Just then the soldiers arrived and found the thief speaking with the saint. "Holy Father," they said, "it isn't right for you to welcome this evildoer. Let him go to suffer his punishment."

"My sons, I didn't call him here. He who knows what the man has done and what he has in mind to do has shown him this mercy. I cannot pursue him. Know indeed that the kingdom of heaven is made up of the penitent. Indeed, two thieves were crucified beside our Lord Jesus Christ. One of them took the kingdom of heaven by force; the other took it as if he deserved it. If there's anyone who can stand against Him who sent this man here, let him come on up and take him away." So saying, he dismissed them.

The thief did not return to his wicked ways. Instead, he spent that night bemoaning his sins, and crying out, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, receive my spirit!" He wept for two hours, moving to tears the saint and the bystanders. When the soldiers returned the next day, they found that the thief had died, and that the people had buried him beside the cattle stall.

"Brothers," said the saint, "He who sent the man here is more powerful than us all."

### ■ TOO BUSY FOR HOLINESS? ■

That was an account (translated by yours truly) of an event in the life of Saint Simeon Stylites (388–459), that is, Saint Simeon of the Pillar. Simeon had long been an eremite, a "hermit" in the strict sense of one who lives in a desert place, but his extraordinary acts of asceticism had drawn to him people from far and wide. So he erected a pillar to put a little distance between himself and the crowds who interrupted his prayers. The last of these pillars was sixty feet high.

His was a form of devotion so far from modern sensibility, I doubt that any of us can fathom why someone would engage in it, pillar or no; for Simeon was known to make a total fast through the whole of Lent, not to mention his other privations and strictures. We will ask, what was the point of it? What good did it do?

I'll come to that shortly. First, let's all remember that *doing* is subordinate to *seeing*. Why should we do anything at all, but that we see first some good we wish to attain for ourselves or to confer on others? God in his glory had no need of creation to enjoy perfect and infinite bliss. We might as well ask what is the point of contemplative prayer, or of contemplation in any form at all.

"You were always a good man of business," says Scrooge

to the ghost of his old partner in the bill-buying and collecting trade, Jacob Marley. To which Marley replies, "Business? Mankind was my business!" We have inherited from the Victorians of Charles Dickens' day the sense that if you're not busy, you're not alive; their sounder moral sentiments we have rejected. Alfred Tennyson, whom otherwise I admire as much as I admire Dickens, wrote a poem on our saint this month, casting him not only as half-mad, but as a kind of hypocrite in reverse, magnifying his sinfulness so as to show himself more humble than anyone: "Pontius and Iscariot by my side/ Showed like fair seraphs," says Tennyson's saint to the people below, who have come to pay their homage as he departs from this world. The poet does show some mercy, but in general he sees the behavior as a dereliction of duty, and a strange manifestation of pride.

Haven't we had enough, by now, of being too busy to long for holiness? Remember what Jesus said to the busy Martha, while Mary sat at his feet, listening to his words.

### ■ WHAT RESULTS DO WE WANT? ■

But precisely here we encounter something most strange—strange to us, that is. Saint Simeon, who for thirty-six years lived within a physical radius of a few feet, exposed to the elements, eating and drinking little, mostly bread and goat's milk that small boys would bring him in baskets and skins, became a spiritual light for countless people, a worker of miracles, and an advisor to bishops, governors, and princes, including the long-ruling emperor Theodosius II (r. 408–450) and his wife, the empress Eudocia. That is, the pillar became a tremendous magnet. Indeed, that was why Simeon had to get up higher and higher. But there was always a ladder nearby, so that people could climb up and give him letters and take back his replies, or ask him questions in private. In this way, Simeon was like the great Anthony of Egypt. They retired from the world, not in scorn but in thirst for holiness, and thus they became spiritual guides for the world. The holy man on the pillar spoke, and the emperor took his advice.

That is why the thief whose story I've told went racing to the pillar, there to change his life utterly and to beg God to bring it to a swift and glorious end. It is also why, in the midst of an earthquake and the aftershocks, common enough in that part of the world, people came thronging to Simeon's pillar, which, says his disciple Anthony, "was itself shaking like a leaf in the wind." Simeon began to weep and pray with the crowd, uttering the words of the Psalmist, that among them there was not one who had done good, no, not one, so full he and they were with their fornications and their avarice. The earth continued to tremble; buildings were in ruins everywhere. Simeon told them to cry out, "Lord, have mercy!" At last the earth fell still, and Simeon said that the prayer of *one man* among them all had been heard. Simeon pointed the man out—he had heard a voice from heaven telling him which one it was—and told him to come forward.

"What have you done that was good?" he asked.

"Pardon me, Father," he replied to the saint, "I am but a sinful man." But finally, pressed by Simeon, he said, "I am only an ignorant fellow. Whatever I earn each day, I divide into three parts. The biggest part I set aside for the poor. The next I devote as tribute to the state. The third goes for my daily bread. I've never swerved from this rule of life."

When they heard that, the crowd embraced him, they cheered him, they pressed forward to get a look at such a man. Who knows how many then became more charitable in their giving, more modest in their ways?

### ■ RUINS AND RUINS ■

Though for all those years he never had a covering for his head, Simeon lived to be an old man, and his disciple Anthony wept like a little child when after three days of silence he climbed the ladder and found that his master had gone. Simeon had determined, when he was a boy of

thirteen, tending the sheep, that he would devote his life to prayer; even monastic life was too easy for him. We'd do well to remember that *ascesis*, in Greek, signifies military exercise, to train body and soul to be fit for war. Are we at war? It's the New Testament, not the Old, that tells us we are fighting against powers and principalities, and wickedness in high places.

When he died, the cities fought—for the honor of his relics. The people of Antioch prevailed. They built *four* adjoining basilicas surrounded by an octagonal court, and in the center they placed Simeon's pillar. Over the years, pilgrims would chisel out a shard of the pillar to take home. What with their pious vandalism, and the ravages of Turks and

others at war, all that is left of the pillar now is a big shapeless boulder. The rest of the edifice is in ruins.

But if we think of the connection between the mighty basilicas and the straight stone needle of Saint Simeon's asceticism, maybe we can take a hint, just a little, that it was no coincidence that the people of Antioch would have built such a glorious place to honor God and the saintly athlete. It's the building that is in ruins there. But among us, maybe, it's the asceticism that is in ruins.

(Anthony Esolen is translator of Augustine's *Confessions* (TAN), translator and editor of Dante's *Divine Comedy* (Random House), and author of four volumes of essays, *How the Church Has Changed the World* (MAGNIFICAT).

The  
Cradle.co

## US lawmakers introduce 'thought police' bill to strip citizens of passports over Israel criticism

SEP 13, 2025

Secretary of State Marco Rubio has revoked visas and green cards of foreign nationals for opposing Israel's genocide of Palestinians in Gaza

A US congressman is introducing a bill that could potentially be used to deny US citizens the right to travel based solely on their speech, including for criticism of Israel, the *Intercept* reported on 13 September.

Introduced by Florida Congressman Brian Mast, chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the bill would grant Secretary of State Marco Rubio the power to revoke the passports of US citizens in the same way he has revoked the green cards and visas of foreign nationals in the US for criticizing Israel.

In March, Secretary of State Rubio revoked the visa of Turkish doctoral student Rumeysa Ozturk after she wrote an opinion piece critical of Israel in the Tufts University student newspaper in 2024.

The op-ed did not mention Hamas, but called for boycotting and divesting from Israel.

One section of the bill grants the Secretary of State the ability to deny passports to people determined to have "knowingly aided, assisted, abetted, or otherwise provided material support to an organization the Secretary has designated as a foreign terrorist organization."

The reference to "material support" disturbs civil liberties advocates because it is vague and can be interpreted to include speech and anti-war activism.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which functions as a front for Israeli intelligence in the US, and the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law suggested in a letter last year that Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) was providing "material support" for Hamas by organizing campus protests against Israel's genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

The provision regarding material support to terrorism poses a threat specifically to journalists, *The Intercept* noted.

In 2023, Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas demanded a Justice Department "national security investigation" of AP, CNN, *The New York Times*, and *Reuters* after they published photos taken by freelance photographers during the Hamas attack on Israeli settlements and military bases on 7 October 2023.

The news that the Reconciliation Monument will be restored to the Arlington National Cemetery should be welcomed as an opportunity to reiterate the importance of peace, and to set aside historical grievances. The monument signifies steps towards reconciliation between North and South that were taken at the turn of the twentieth century, when both sides set out to move beyond the previous era of sectional hatred and fratricidal war. It explicitly invokes peace in the words of Isaiah inscribed upon it: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks." It was intended, after a troubled and violent Reconstruction Era, to embrace the new spirit of fraternity that was reflected in the "reunions of the Blue and the Grey." Writing in 1948, Major C. A. Phillips, of the US Marine Corps describes the location of the memorial, and the poetic words of a Confederate chaplain—the Reverend Randolph Harrison McKim—which pay tribute to the fallen:

Still inside the wall, the visitor continues through the well kept grounds to Jackson Circle where stands the magnificent bronze monument erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Surrounded by the headstones of nearly five hundred graves of Confederate veterans as well as some of their wives, the inscription on the base of the monument attests the simple creed of soldier dead everywhere:

Not for fame or reward,  
Not for place or rank,  
Not lured by ambition or goaded by necessity, But in simple obedience to duty,  
As they understood it,  
These men suffered all,  
Sacrificed all,  
Dared all—and died.

The point of reconciliation is not to relitigate the war or attempt to glorify it, but to look ahead to peace. As Charles Adams has pointed out in his book *When in the Course of Human Events*, the seeds of war are often sown in the ashes of previous wars. If people fail to learn from history and instead double down on the same claims and counterclaims that previously led to deadly conflict, or if they seek to humiliate and mock the once-vanquished—taunting them and destroying their war memorials—that leads, not to peace, but to what Adams calls "a cold war of bitterness." Adams argues that, "Wars have seldom been justified, and as the years and centuries pass, war looks increasingly foolish." Reconciliation is the commonsense approach—to let bygones be bygones, and to settle disagreement by diplomacy, not by denunciation and diatribe.

It is therefore disconcerting to see some liberals now dismissing the importance of reconciliation. Having removed the Reconciliation Monument from Arlington in 2023, they are now furious that it is to be restored. They reject the idea of reconciliation altogether. Preoccupied as they are with virtue-signaling about the perceived evils of centuries past, they fulminate about the causes of the war using the vitriolic language of nineteenth century Radical Republicans. They glorify the military triumph of North over South, and even celebrate the burning of the South and the suffering of Southern civilians. Britannica reports:

After seizing Atlanta, Union Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman embarked on a scorched-earth campaign intended to cripple the South's war-making capacity and wound the Confederate psyche... Sherman's 37-day campaign is remembered as one of the most successful examples of "total war," and its psychological effects persisted in the postbellum South.

Far from regretting incidents of war crimes or acknowledging post-war reconciliation, Sherman's admirers argue that more should have been done to punish the "traitors" who had the temerity to secede from the Union. One hundred sixty years after the war, they are still angry that Confederates were not, in their opinion, sufficiently punished. An opinion piece in the New York Times laments the fact that Confederate leaders died as free men. The writer seems to be unaware that the causes of this war are contested by historians, and relies entirely on the partisan interpretation advanced by the Marxist historian Eric Foner, whom he cites with approval,

Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy and the commander in chief of forces that killed more than 360,000 American troops, died a free man. Robert E. Lee, the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, died a free man as well. Alexander Stephens, the Confederate vice president, whose "cornerstone" speech defined the secessionist cause, served five terms in Congress after the war and also died a free man. Nor was this trio an exception. Other, less prominent Confederates were also able to escape any real punishment. Most of the leaders of the deadliest insurrection in American history died free men...

The writer contrasts the war to the alleged "insurrection" of January 6, suggesting that contemporary politics can be understood by analogy to the war. He describes President Trump as getting away with insurrection "unchastened and unrestrained," just like the Confederate leaders. But there is nothing to be gained by interminably perpetuating the hostilities of the nineteenth century in this way, especially since many of those who are most determined to invoke the conflict in contemporary political debate seem to know very little about the war and simply use it as a proxy for grievances relating to what they call "systemic racism." It is almost as if the war merely supplies them with convenient ammunition for their political arguments about the need for government interventions designed to crush "white supremacy" by vesting more money and power in the race hustlers. Republicans, too, often invoke the war as a way of criticizing their political opponents, frequently comparing today's communist Democrats to the conservative Southern Democrats of the nineteenth century.

As Ludwig von Mises emphasizes in *Liberalism: The Classical Tradition*, peace is not just a matter of convenience or an optional extra—it is essential to civilization and to human flourishing. This does not mean that war memorials should be torn down and everyone should try to forget that the war ever happened. On the contrary, erasing history only makes future hostilities more likely as people forget the lessons of the past. Further, the memory of ties that bind people together matters. Mises observes that, "Heroic deeds performed in such a war by those fighting for their freedom and their lives are entirely praiseworthy, and one rightly extols the manliness and courage of such fighters." We remember the fallen not in order to endorse the waging of war—with all the attendant loss of life and human suffering—but to remember the courage and sacrifice of those who stood in defense of a just cause. A just war, as Murray Rothbard defined it, is one fought in defense. He regarded both the Revolutionary War and the War for Southern Independence as just wars,

My own view of war can be put simply: a just war exists when a people tries to ward off the threat of coercive domination by another people, or to overthrow an already-existing domination... There have been only two wars in American history that were, in my view, assuredly and unquestionably proper and just; not only that, the opposing side waged a war that was clearly and notably unjust. Why? Because we did not have to question whether a threat against our liberty and property was clear or present; in both of these wars, Americans were trying to rid themselves of an unwanted domination by another people. And in both cases, the other side ferociously tried to maintain their coercive rule over Americans. In each case, one side — "our side" if you will — was notably just, the other side — "their side" — unjust.

Honoring memorials to the fallen is part of history, and history should not be erased. But this does not justify harking back to old wars as a framework for contemporary political discourse. Reconciliation and peace should be the standard.

**Note:** The views expressed on Mises.org are not necessarily those of the Mises Institute



Thomas Gordon saw exactly how this plays out.

*"All ministers, therefore, who were oppressors, or intended to be oppressors, have been loud in their complaints against freedom of speech, and the licence of the press; and always restrained, or endeavoured to restrain, both."*

That suppression isn't about order – it's about fear. The louder the truth, the more violent the reaction.

*"In consequence of this, they have brow-beaten writers, punished them violently, and against law, and burnt their works. By all which they shewed how much truth alarmed them, and how much they were at enmity with truth."*

## THE OLDEST EXCUSE

Fear is the oldest excuse in the tyrant's playbook – and every power grab comes dressed as protection. At the Philadelphia Convention, James Madison exposed the tactic.

*"The means of defence against foreign danger have been always the instruments of tyranny at home."*

This wasn't just theory. The founders had studied what happened when governments ruled by fear. Madison had seen the pattern before – in ancient Rome, and across Europe.

*"Among the Romans it was a standing maxim to excite a war, whenever a revolt was apprehended. Throughout all Europe, the armies kept up under the pretext of defending, have enslaved the people."*

But the script is even older. Plato saw that tyranny doesn't begin with domination – it begins with dependence.

*"The people have some protector whom they nurse into greatness, and from this root the tree of tyranny springs."*

And once the tyrant has power, he can't afford to let up. Aristotle explained the next move.

*"The tyrant is also fond of making war in order that his subjects may have something to do and be always in want of a leader."*

## THE COVER STORY

Tyrants almost never admit they're crushing liberty. They don't **start** with violence – they start with a story. Some emergency. Some threat. Some crisis that makes it all sound reasonable.

*"In how many instances do we see, that things which begin plausibly, end tragically? People have been often enslaved by princes created by themselves for their protection, often butchered by armies raised by themselves for their defence."*

Every act of oppression comes disguised as protection. Gordon gave a brutal example – Louis XIV, who slaughtered his own people while claiming it was for their good.

*"The late French King, whenever he was going to shed the blood of his people in any wanton war, though undertaken to gratify his lust of power, or to exalt his own house, never failed to let them know, in an edict made on purpose, that it was all for their good and prosperity; that is, they were to suffer slaughter abroad, oppression and famine at home, purely for their own advantage and felicity."*

# Fear: The Engine of Power

*"Fear is the foundation of most governments."*

John Adams was right – except for one word.

Not "most." From ancient empires to modern regimes, the story never changes. Government power always expands fastest through fear. Fear is the tool, the trigger, the weapon. It's the permanent excuse for crushing liberty.

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF TYRANNY

The warnings didn't start in 1776. Long before the American Revolution and the War for Independence, fear had already been exposed as the lifeblood of tyranny.

Montesquieu went straight to the foundation. A republic needs virtue. A monarchy needs honor. But despotism – only fear.

*"As virtue is necessary in a republic, and, in a monarchy, honour, so fear is necessary in a despotic government: with regard to virtue, there is no occasion for it, and honour would be extremely dangerous."*

And he didn't stop there. He explained why fear is essential – it breaks people down so thoroughly that ambition dies before it can even begin.

*"Persons, capable of setting a value upon themselves, would be likely to create disturbances. Fear must, therefore, depress their spirits, and extinguish even the least sense of ambition."*

That's how the system is built. Machiavelli warned what happens next – when fear takes hold, the powerful write the rules for themselves, and everyone else is too scared to resist.

*"But when the citizens had become corrupt, this system became the worst possible, for then only the powerful proposed laws, not for the common good and the liberty of all, but for the increase of their own power, and fear restrained all the others from speaking against such laws; and thus the people were by force and fraud made to resolve upon their own ruin."*

## HOW FEAR CORRUPTS A NATION

The real poison of government by fear goes much deeper than politics.

Writing in *Cato's Letters*, Thomas Gordon saw how it warps the soul of a people – turning courage into cowardice and silence. He learned this lesson straight from the Roman historian Tacitus.

*"The minds of men, terrified by unjust power, degenerated into all the vileness and methods of servitude: Abject sycophancy and blind submission grew the only means of preferment, and indeed of safety; men durst not open their mouths, but to flatter."*

As Algernon Sidney pointed out, when people are crushed by fear, their silence isn't necessarily agreement or consent. Sometimes, it's survival.

*"And those who are under such governments do no more assent to them, tho they may be silent, than a man approves of being robbed, when, without saying a word, he delivers his purse to a thief that he knows to be too strong for him."*

But not everyone goes quietly into the night. There are always some who continue to speak out – and the fewer they are, the easier it is for government to crush them.

At the height of the American Revolution, John Dickinson exposed the psychological warfare used to wear people down and train submission.

*"Our fears will be excited. Our homes will be awakened. It will be insinuated to us, with a plausible affectation of wisdom and concern, how prudent it is to please the powerful – how dangerous to provoke them."*

With that comes the rule – submit first, then beg.

*"And then comes in the perpetual incantation that freezes up every generous purpose of the soul in cold, inactive expectation – 'that if there is any request to be made, compliance will obtain a favorable attention.'"*

Sometimes real danger isn't enough – so those in power create it. Benjamin Jowett, in his introduction to Book V of Aristotle's *Politics*, described it this way.

*"The cautious ruler will seek to create salutary terrors in the minds of the people: he will also endeavour to restrain the quarrels of the notables. He will need the gift of foresight if he aspires to the character of a statesman."*

### THE UNIVERSAL TRUTH

All the propaganda. All the panic. All the promises of "protection" – the end is always the same.

In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, James Madison dropped one of the coldest truths in American history.

*"Perhaps it is a universal truth that the loss of liberty at home is to be charged to provisions against danger real or pretended from abroad."*

Fear is the foundation of government power. Always has been.

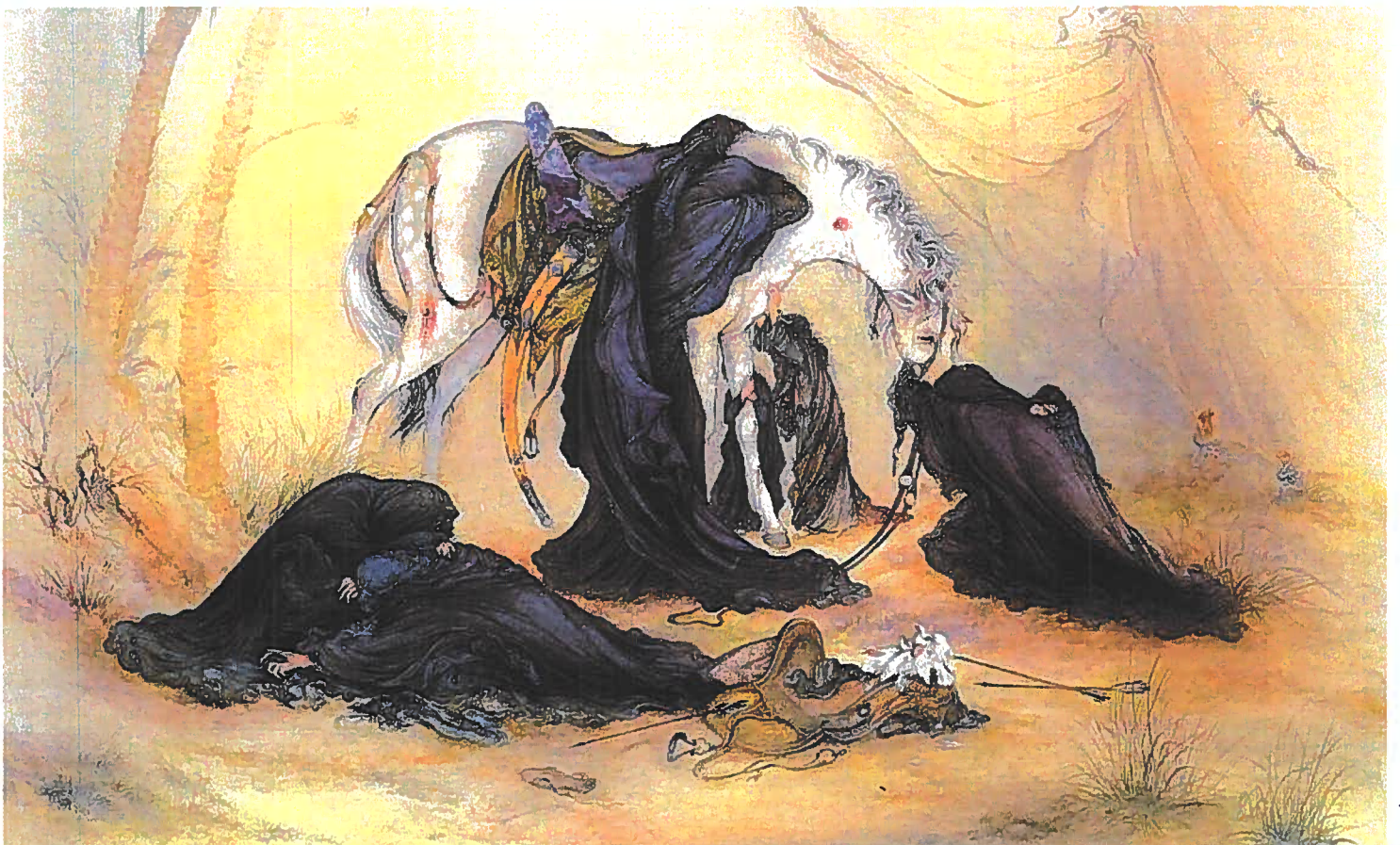
And when people live in fear, limits on government power don't stand a chance. Rights are trampled. Constitutions are erased.

They call it protection. They call it security. But it's always the same playbook – fear first, power second.

When government says "it's for your safety," it means only one thing – control.

THE EVENING OF ASHURA

MOORNING THE DEATH OF IMAM HUSSAIN AT KAR BLA



# Monument aux morts de Strasbourg

July 19, 2017 by Professor Carol

He caught only a glimpse of the monument. You know how it is, traveling as a tourist by bus. If you sit on the right side, whatever you need to see is on the left. About the time the guide mentions something important, the light changes and you zoom off.

But Anand managed a quick look at the monument through an opening in the trees. Known as *Le Monument aux morts de Strasbourg*, the sculpture by Léon-Ernest Drivier, erected in 1936, sits in the center of Strasbourg's Place de la République. Our guide mentioned it so quickly, some people missed it.

As we rolled along, the guide added that it was modeled on *The Pieta*, but in an unusual form. The mother holds the body of not one son, but two: one representing a French soldier and the other a German.

Strasbourg's geopolitical history is dizzying. This cultured city in a region known as Alsace has bounced so often between the French and the Germans, it's hard to keep up. Plus, just because the Rhine serves as a stable border today between part of France and Germany, borders are never carved in stone.

All the more poignant, therefore, is the portrayal of the sculpted mother grieving over her sons. Think how often this tragedy has occurred, not just in the wars we call World War I, World War II, or the Franco-Prussian War, and not just *here*, on the Rhine.

The tour of Strasbourg came towards the end of our voyage down the Rhine. Booked as a "family cruise," this journey brought together multiple generations. Among the 120 guests on the beautiful *Amadeus Silver III* were 29 kids! The youngest was about seven, while the older kids were experiencing the trip as glorious gifts upon their high-school graduations.

And Anand? He was the quiet one, the observer. Sixteen years old and a football player, he struck me as a gentle giant. His visible deference to his mom and grandparents, indeed all of the adults on the tour, was endearing.

To my surprise he came to my lectures and our discussion groups. He even offered a few comments. But other than that, he was like many teens his age: hard to read.

The evening after Strasbourg he told me about the poem. He wanted to know if I'd like to see it. Of course I did. He handed me his phone. (Is *everything* on a phone these days?)

I had to glance quickly at it, because we were due at an event. My eyes widened. "You wrote this after glimpsing the monument?" "Yes," he said quietly. I asked him if he would send it to me, and he said yes.

We bumped into each other at the Amsterdam airport after leaving the ship, and I reminded him. "OK," he said, with a smile. I added, "If you do, may I share it with people?" He seemed surprised. "I'll be sharing it with good people," I assured him. "People who care about history and the arts. And who care about kids."

The next day he sent it. He asked only that I put his name on it.

Think of all the kids who, if exposed to the arts, would choose to express themselves in poetry, music, dance, painting, or drama! Don't tell me that they are "electives." Don't even breathe the idea that they are frills or unimportant. Arts like music and poetry have the power to open a young person's heart, soul, and mind. They are not artificial add-ons. They are expressions of our deepest reflections, ideas, and ideals, no matter what our age.

Here is Anand Ambrosi's poem (as yet untitled):

*All I want are my two little boys back  
As I scream, I shout, and I cry.  
How could you, how could you weep over them,  
When you sent them off to die?*

*You called on them from your ivory tower.  
Sat upon a throne of bones.  
The blood of your people surrounds you,  
But all you see is the other side's throne  
So you shout and you scream to take their land  
As your throne grows with the bones of the dead.  
Still you can't see the cost of this great war  
Because the blood hasn't come to your bed.  
I held my two boys' cold and limp hands.  
One fought for France the other for Deutschland.  
But underneath they still bleed the same red.*

*I loved them, I loved them, I loved them.  
All you thought of was winning the war  
At the cost of my children's precious lives.  
You sent the devil to knock on my door.*

*All I want are my two little boys back,  
As I scream, I shout, and I cry.  
How could you, how could you weep over them,  
When you sent them off to die?*

*A war will ne'er solve anything,  
When two brothers fight for the other to die.  
This, the great folly of war, can't you see?  
When one problem is solved,  
In return you get three!  
So, consider that war costs more than money  
'Cause you've left two holes in my heart.  
And it hurts, it hurts, it hurts can't you see?*

*To you they were just a pawn piece  
I loved them, I loved them, I loved them  
I miss their sparkling eyes.  
Lives cut too short by needless war.  
Gone before I could say goodbye*

*All I want are my two little boys back  
As I scream, I shout, and I cry  
How could you, how could you weep over them,  
When you sent them off to die?*

## Trump's Barbaric Boat Attack

**Launching additional strikes to murder the survivors of the first attack is monstrous.**

by Daniel Larison | Sep 12, 2025 | News | 0 Comments

The president's murderous attack on the Venezuelan boat last week was even worse than previously known. The Intercept reports:

*People on board the boat off the coast of Venezuela that was destroyed by the U.S. military last Tuesday were said to have survived an initial strike, according to two American officials familiar with the matter. They were then killed shortly after in a follow-up attack.*

*The boat was under U.S. surveillance for a significant period of time. Those on board apparently spotted the U.S. aerial assets and altered the vessel's course. U.S. officials said the boat appeared to have turned back toward shore, after which it was subjected to multiple strikes.*

The boat and the people on it obviously posed no threat to U.S. forces or anyone else in the vicinity. The fact that the boat was also beginning to turn back makes the decision to attack it even more despicable. Launching additional strikes to murder the survivors of the first attack is monstrous. Double- and triple-tapping a defenseless target with drone strikes is an atrocity.

Benjamin Farley condemns the president's illegal attack in a new article at Foreign Policy:

*If the president can dispense with the law and its limits simply by calling one man a "narcoterrorist," then he can proclaim anyone an outlaw. As the U.S. Army recognized a century and a half ago, murders carried out by any authority under this rationale represent "relapses into barbarism."*

The president and his minions are effectively claiming that he has unchecked, unreviewable authority to mete out death to anyone he deems to be a threat. For all intents and purposes, Trump is claiming to be an absolute ruler and he is acting like a barbaric despot. This is the danger that opponents of presidential usurpation and the warfare state have been warning against for decades, and now it is here.

This is lawless tyranny out in the open for everyone to see. The tyrant isn't concealing his abuses of power. He is proud of them.

It is worth adding that there is really no such thing as a "narco-terrorist." This is a label invented for the purpose of justifying the use of the military against drug traffickers. It is also obviously cheap propaganda to sell the public on the idea of murdering foreign civilians with munitions. Drug cartels and gangs are not terrorist organizations for the simple reason that they don't engage in acts of terrorism. Criminals that use violence aren't terrorists; they're just felons. The administration slaps the terrorist label on anyone they wish to deport or kill, but all of it is a lie.

Read the rest of the article at [Eunomia](#)