

BACKWARD INTO TOMORROW

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The New Class and How It Benefits From Its Own Rules

By Andrew M. Greeley

One of the secrets of the bourgeoisie has been its ability to convert its own selfish goals into the moral imperatives of a society.

Thus the temperance movement of the 19th century was largely the result of the bourgeoisie's need for a stable and sober work force to sustain profit margins. The universal, state-supported, higher education of the last three decades enabled the upper middle class to educate its children free of charge while the rich and the poor picked up the tab. More recently the draft laws of the 1960s let the children of the upper middle class protest against the Vietnam war on the college campus while the children of the working class fought the war in Southeast Asia.

That was really very nice; because the sons of the workers not only fought the war but were made to feel guilty because they did so. Thus the upper middle class didn't have to worry about a heavy burden of veterans' programs when the soldiers came home.

So one should develop the habit of asking what benefits of the upper middle class—particularly the technical and intellectual elite—are served by the currently fashionable causes and crusades. It is especially helpful to examine the causes that the middle-class clergy are enthusiastically supporting: Since the clergy are drawn from the New Class and supported by it, they are apt to be particularly zealous in promoting its welfare.

New York's intellectual elites, for example, are giving—through their official journal, the New York Times—stern lectures to the unionized workers of the city on how they must tighten their belts to protect the city from bankruptcy. No journalist is offering to take a pay cut.

Busing is a strategy devised by the haute bourgeoisie to force the working class to pay the price for racial integration while their kids bask in lily-white suburban or private schools (with, of course, a few upper-middle-class blacks around to make it look good). Ask the Harvard professors who are so critical of Jim Coleman where their children go to school.

The political "reforms" in the Democratic party provided members of the New Class with political power that they could never win in an election. By a curious coincidence, the power was taken from the working-class unions and the work-class urban political leaders ("bosses"—just to make their defeat sound deliciously moral).

The feminist movement means jobs for bourgeoisie women, who do not need the money to support fam-

ilies, at the expense of upwardly-mobile working-class men who do.

The environmental movement means you protect whales and the Alaskan tundra for your own happy contemplation—at the cost, in the latter case, of substantially higher gasoline prices for the energy pigs of the country.

The antigrowth movement means that having made it economically we tell those who have not that we're very sorry but the world simply cannot sustain the kind of growth necessary for them to make it (a lie, by the way, but that's another matter).

The antichildren movement means that, having been spoiled by their parents, the offspring of the haute bourgeoisie need take on no obligations to provide for children of their own.

The antiautomobile movement means the rural countryside is going to be protected from vulgar ethnics and their hotdog stands so that the well-to-do may backpack through uncluttered forests, past crystal-pure springs (hopefully lacking in cholera germs that were there a hundred years ago), and swim in lovely blue lakes that they have all to themselves. The antinoise movement means no street parades for the poor to drown out the modern dissonance on the expensive stereos of the New Class.

A man once referred to an earlier version of such righteous crusaders as whitened sepulchres.

Greeley, priest and sociologist, is program director of the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago.

Lost Artifacts (?)

Jim "Rockhammer" Ruckheim wants to know whatever happened to:

- 1) The world's largest potato chip
- 2) The twinkie without any filling
- 3) The bone

Carlin's Corner

A pro baseball team from the Cities
Played baseball that was none too pretties.
When asked "What's the reason
For your dismal season?"
They confessed that the team was just shitties.

LETTERS

Dear Editor:

Enclosed please find Form ABC 123 (Revised Feb. 30, 1898) and provide the indicated information pursuant to the "Registration of Quasi-Alumni Newsletters Acts of 1903" (as amended). Federal law requires that we notify you that violation of the law or the obstruction of the intent of Congress thereof could put you in our doghouse and/or result in a black line drawn through Backward Into Tomorrow on our list.

Closing,
Bureaucrat
Quasi-Alumni Affairs
Investigation Quasi-Agency
Department of Education
(as reorganized)

Dear Editor:

Thank you very much for your recent submission of material drawn from the February 1980 issue of Backward Into Tomorrow for insertion by our organ. We regret to inform you that we have determined that said material is below the bounds of taste dictated by our readership.

Sincerely,
Larry Flynt
Hustler Magazine

Dear Editor:

Everything I say is a lie. Even what I just said.

Sincerely,
Ronald Reagan

Gentle fellows:

If this newsletter don't beat all! I ain't seen nothing like it since me and Bernie Stinker caught Sater in a state of self-flagilation in the bathtub in the apartment above McRobert's Grocery. All the time the Bear was wailing-out a respectable version of "Puppy-Love"—a scene neither of us will soon forget.

Brent (Kent) and Laura (Boom-Boom)

People of Earth:

We have been observing your planet for sixty-seven kolobs now and we believe the time has come to reveal ourselves. Already people of our race have begun to infiltrate your society by becoming social workers and union organizers. We have so far caused minor disruptions by producing bogus newsletters and supporting third party candidates. We will have overthrown your world by the time McDonald's invents its next hamburger. You cannot stop us. The Earth will make a nice dumping place for our solid nuclear waste.

Unpronouncable
Venus

Hey!

My name is Ty Westlie and I've been kidnapped by the Venusians. They look and act like Earthlings in every respect but one. They hate disco.

Ty Westlie
Mars

One Year From Today

The Canadian government stated today that it will no longer accept U.S. boat people landing in Canada. Ever since Ronald Reagan was inaugurated President in January, there has been a growing influx of refugees into Canada via Lakes Superior and Erie. Calling themselves "Hounded liberals," the Americans (almost exclusively from Minnesota and the Eastern Establishment), have sought asylum in our "friendly neighbor to the north" hoping for a better life there. They may be disappointed, however. Canadian officials confess that they are at a loss as to what to do with the new immigrants. At this time most of the Americans are being held temporarily in camps that are province fairgrounds, and, as one official put it, "When the fair season starts our people aren't going to stand for a bunch of mush-minded American bleeding hearts selling preservative-filled cotton candy to our children." The Americans as well are anxious to be released from the camps. "The T.V. reception is lousy here," commented one refugee. Anyone having ideas on how to resolve the American "boat people" problem is invited to write the Canadian government, Ottawa, Canada.

In sports, the Minnesota Twins today clinched the American League West Division with over fifty games remaining in the season. The Twins, 107-2 accomplished the feat by defeating New York 37-1 in the newly finished Halsey Hall domed stadium. Accounting for the team's phenomenal success, Owner Calvin Griffith said, "Well, getting back some of our old players helped a lot. I finally decided to pay them what they were worth." The former ex-Twins now playing for Minnesota again include Rod Carew, Larry Hise, Eric Soderholm, Jim and Craig Nettles, Luis Tiant, Bill Campbell, Bert Blyleven, Harmon Killebrew, Bob Allison, and Rich Rollins. Manager Billy Martin commented "The younger guys are playing their hearts out because they are enthused to be on a winning team, and the older guys like Killebrew and Rollins just can't get a job anywhere else, so they have to perform for us or else go on welfare." Referring to his nervous breakdown and subsequent lobotomy, Martin said, "Ever since I got out of the hospital I've had a new perspective on life. I know now that winning isn't everything. Being a good sport is the most important. I think the fact that we're all homosexuals has done a lot for team unity."

The Rumor Mill

JIM, BARB and **LEAH MOORE** have left us. Jim is now a union organizer in Marshall, for AFSCME. New cars and new houses are all part of the new image. Jim hopes to get new union members by showing them how well he's done working for the union.

TOM MAHONEY is somewhere, doing something.

Congratulations to bowling champs **JEFF WUJEK, LINDA POWERS, MATT MOORE** and **PAM HENGY**. They, like everyone else, can't wait for the new season to start. Rumor has it that in order to even things up, the winners will have to bowl on roller skates next year.

NANCY ROBERTS is in the bike repair business. She claims that she can fix any bike with any number of speeds. Her speciality is attaching a playing card to the spokes and teaching people to go "Vroom, vroom."

MARK KOENIG bought **BOB SATER'S** old car. So what.

JAY FIER recently had the self-appointed position of Guru of Morris wrested from his grasp by a long time aspirant. Yes, **ROLAND GUYOTTE** has finally completed the work necessary for his Ph.D. He claims that his doctoral thesis was a brilliantly conceived and written paper proving that the Irish are the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. His next work, he says, will show that Jesus was a Marxist-Leninist. In the meantime, don't worry about Roland becoming a snob. He plans to use the title Doctor only when ordering Twins and Guthrie tickets. Friend **BARBARA**, in the great democratic tradition, says that she is as pleased as punch, and hopes that now Roland will be able to get some work done around the house(s).

BRENT and **LINDA NIELSON** are expecting their second child, and like the first one, they have no idea who this one will look like.

KAY SLAGTER WESTLIE has moved to River Falls, Wisconsin, to live with husband **TY**, who had been commuting to the Cities on weekends during his absence. When asked the reason for the move, Kay replied, "biological necessity."

KAREN BURR and **TONY TIGGES** have a very nice house on Lake L'Homme Dieu near Alexandria. They say they would enjoy company practically any time as long as they have enough forwarning to mess the place up a bit for their friends. Karen, who works for a government jobs program, got a bit testy recently when it was suggested that Ronald Reagan might be her man in the fall. "Are you kidding?" she said. "If that bastard gets elected I'll be out of a job!"
Calm down, Karen, we believe you.

Campaign News

The most recent presidential poll goes as follows: Ronald Reagan, 35%; Jimmy Carter, 30%; John Anderson, 25%; Mt. St. Helens, 10%.

The real surprise, of course, is St. Helens, who was virtually unknown a few months ago. Those who chose St. Helens gave some of their reasons as follows:

"At least you know where it stands. It's in Washington somewhere, isn't it?"

"It's not just blowing off steam all the time."

"We need something powerful in government. The Russians wouldn't dare mess around with us if St. Helens were President."

Some of those who did not vote for St. Helens gave their reasons:

"Too unreliable."

"Too unpredictable."

"No experience in government."

"Too inflexible. Never moves from the same position."

If St. Helens runs as an independent in the fall it is expected that Ronald Reagan will be hurt the most.

In Typical Morris...

In typical Morris fashion, this third issue of "Backward Into Tomorrow" is late, or perhaps I should say it's time of arrival was uncertain. Maybe it's untypical in the fact that it showed up at all. What has evolved seems to be a publishing frequency of about once every three months. Four times a year seems to be a reasonable schedule, so let's plan to keep it at that.

What also seems to have developed is a pretty constant cost per issue. The only real costs are those of printing and postage. The writing and layout are done for the fun of it (I hope). The printing and postage for the last two issues have been about \$20 per issue. With 30 to 35 subscribers, a two dollar subscription rate pays for three issues.

So, folks, it's time to resubscribe. And this time when you send in or give me your two bucks, give me something to print as well.

A campaign pitch for Anderson or Carter, your favorite Polack joke or Bernie Wenker story, or reflections about life in the void, anything is welcomed; not just by me but by everybody. As was said in the first issue, this is your newsletter. It's tone and focus changes from issue to issue based on what you send in and what I feel like writing. In time we may perhaps challenge the Morris Alumni News for originality and thought. And since there are a lot of non-Morris readers, we already surpass it in breadth. So send your contributions, monetary and otherwise to Nick Ripperger, 2443 Pillsbury Ave. S., Apt. 26, Minneapolis, MN 55404.

REVIEWS BY FIER

If you liked Hunter S. Thompson's Hell's Angels, Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas or are intrigued with "Duke" the Doonesbury madman, you might be tempted to go to the movie "Where the Buffalo Roam." Beware, do not be too anxious, the books and his recent collected works The Great Shark Hunt are far superior.

Hunter Thompson learned early that "when the going gets weird, the weird turns pro." He got on that boat with Richard Nixon and Joe McCarthy at the helm but stayed in the crow's nest with Ken Kesey and the merry pranksters. The movie details the drug and violence crazed outlaw journalist hero trying to mainline his soul into the heart of the American dream. It ostensibly biographs his Chicano friend Acosta as they wheel and deal in the drug bust legal courts, at Super Bowl VII, in a vague revolutionary retreat, in the desert, and on the press plane covering the Nixon campaign. Unfortunately every time the actor playing Acosta appears the movie's comic quality takes a right turn. He is a too-starved and clear-eyed straight man for the actor playing Thompson. The adventures are too slow-moving and the humor too infrequent. What it needs is some of the special effects Thompson is famous for seeing: giant bats mating with gila monsters, Nixon's cronies as man-eating head hunters, or strobe light B-52 sunrises. Not worth more than \$2.00, but if you really do hate Nixon . . .

To write and direct a movie about the details of a portion of one's life must be easier to begin than end. Bob Fosse has just that trouble in his self-indulgent movie All That Jazz. His years as a movie and Broadway theatre choreographer leading up to a heart attack and intensive care are the framework for this movie. We watch him shower, take speed, flatter death, smoke cigarettes, entice women and work on the job in this two-hour movie. Throughout the first hour and one half, the dancing and music are full-bodied, the scenes crisply edited, and the characters shallow but interesting. Unfortunately the post heart attack scenes are tedious and undirected. The repetition is finally overwhelming with the characters mere cardboard and the camera unintelligent. You realize there isn't going to be a plot and the over concern with entertainment for its own sake has cheated you.

Had he developed the characters of the supporting roles perhaps this might have carried the post heart attack scenes. Had he used a better sense of organization in the flow of the final scenes we might be more interested and less confused. Had he ended the movie with the heart attack I'd be writing a more complimentary review. As it stands, I got the feeling he got as bored as I did with his own story and what started with vision and promise wandered off into mere technical trickery.

Marge Percy's sixth novel Vida is a closely written account of the political and emotional details of a group of 1960's and 1970's anti-war activists. Seen through the eyes of Davida Asch, wanted by the FBI for her activities in a group called the "Little Red Wagon" and the "Network," we get a rich and thorough insight into the everyday life of a woman in hiding and on the run.

She and some friends are wanted for a series of fifty some bombings on corporate and government offices they feel have contributed to the slaughter in SE Asia and the oppression of people throughout the world. Vida is always on the move, passed from hand to hand among sympathizers and friends, never allowed to sit still for fear someone will inquire too deeply into her past. The highly detailed account modulates between the present series of events and the past events which led up to Vida's predicament. We meet her family, lovers, friends, and allies and experience the frustrations and doubts of a lonely, desperate, and aging woman caught in the selfishly silent seventies.

She has had two marriages. The first to a brutal Greek and the second to Leigh a left-wing journalist. Having never participated in violence, Leigh is a young radio celebrity basking in public acclaim. While still heavily emotionally attached, their inability to see each other except for rare clandestine encounters has strained the relationship. Leigh has found Susan and she is pregnant. Vida has found Joel, a 26-year old draft evader, 10 years her junior, which threatens her other emotional/sexual relationship with Eva. Vida has not had anything going with a man in years and is unprepared for its complexities and problems. Couple this with the recent capture of former lover/hater Kevin and rumor of his going state's evidence and we have a tense and compelling human drama.

Marge Percy has been an activist since the Civil Rights days. She not only understands the period but also politics, passions, and courage. She writes much like Marilyn French (author of the best-selling Woman's Room) without falling into the male stereotype trap. Her eye is good and the narrative is well-paced. She handles the flashbacks and nightmare scenes gracefully. The occasional metaphor and simile are fresh and provoking, the characters multi-dimensional. My only complaint is her aggravating tendency to overwrite and rare but silly lapses into whininess. I highly recommend reading the book, Vida, published in 1979 by Summit Books and plan on reading her earlier work very soon.

SANDY SEEKS SELF

Los Angeles, Calif.

Sandy Duncan confided, "I'm 34 years old now, and it's taken me this long to find out who I really am."