

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW: HOWARD DEAN'S GRAND PLAN

THE AMERICAN Prospect

LIBERAL INTELLIGENCE

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Wallis v. Jacoby:
Democrats and God

Has NY Publishing
Sold Its Soul?



Rove
THE PLAME
SCANDAL

Former President Bush says those who expose intelligence sources are "the most insidious of traitors."

Well, Mr. President?

BY JOE CONASON

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ACKERMAN: SUPREME STAKES ■ GOP MODERATES, A MYTH

"Dissent is the highest form
of patriotism."

— THOMAS JEFFERSON

DISPATCHES

- 13 **Bubblehead** by *Robert Kuttner*
The post-Harvey Pitt sec was making some real progress toward reform. But now Bush wants Chris Cox to head the commission. Goodbye reform.
- 14 **Judge-Ment Day** by *Jeffrey Dubner*
Robert Bork got—and deserved—his “borking.” But with the balance of the Senate exactly the opposite of 1987, it won’t be easy to bork again.
- 15 **Downsizing, Iraq-Style** by *Tara McKelvey*
Don’t look now, but the “coalition of the willing” is quickly becoming the coalition of the shrinking. And it’s not because of the London bombings.

FEATURES

- 17 **Rove on the Ropes** by *Joe Conason*
What used to be the Plame Scandal is now the Rove Scandal, with all the hallmarks of the guru’s odious MO. This time, he may finally pay the price.
- 20 **Howard’s Beginning** by *Jodi Enda*
Dean has been DNC chair for six months now. How’s he doing? Yes, he has a big mouth. But the media haven’t noticed that he also has some big ideas.
- 26 **London Bawling** by *Matthew Yglesias*
The neocon pundits’ reactions to the London bombings are as pathetic as they are predictable. Plus Samuel Loewenberg reports that London keeps its cool.
- 31 **The Fraud Caucus** by *Matthew Yglesias and Mark Leon Goldberg*
The Republican moderates get the best press in Washington—all while they stand for nothing and cave when it matters. It’s time the myth was exploded.
- 35 **High Court, High Stakes** by *Bruce Ackerman*
Finally, the right has its opportunity for a wholesale revolution on the Supreme Court. This *will* be war—and it requires a bipartisan response.
- 39 **Dreamers Without Borders** by *Benjamin R. Barber*
The dramatic failure of the EU treaty is not so different from what happened in America last November. It’s up to leaders in both places to grasp the similarity.
- 43 **With God on Our Side?** By *Jim Wallis and Susan Jacoby*
Should the Democrats invoke religion to buttress progressive values? A leading progressive evangelical and an unrepentant secularist have at it—and each other.

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 **Correspondence**
- 6 **Devil in the Details:** John McCain, not so maverick; Nan Aron, back in action; Al Gore gets wired

COLUMNS

- 3 **Prospects:** Exit With Honor
by *Robert Kuttner*
- 9 **The Taxonomist:** Down Is Up
(or So Some Say)
by *Robert S. McIntyre*
- 56 **The Last Word:**
The Wrong Litmus Test
by *Robert B. Reich*

CULTURE & BOOKS

- 49 **PUBLISHING:**
Vast Write-Wing Conspiracy
by *Christopher Dreher*
Ed Klein’s “truth” about Hillary augurs ill for mainstream New York publishing.
- 51 **BOOKS:** How paradise was found—and lost—in Pat Brown’s California, according to *Harold Meyerson*; So Richard Haass of Colin Powell’s State Department thinks Iraq wasn’t worth it? Now he tells, says *Anatol Lieven*.

Cover design by *Aaron Morales*

Dreamers Without Borders

What happened to the EU treaty looks a lot like what happened in America last year. Leaders in both places should think about that.

BY BENJAMIN R. BARBER

EUROPE IS IN SHAMBLES: FRANCE SLEEPWALKING, Germany in a tailspin, the euro falling, the left in disarray. Now, just weeks after the defeat in France and Holland of the innovative new treaty that was supposed to usher in a new constitutional era for an enlarged Europe of 25 nations, terrorist bombings in London are reinforcing the politics of fear and lending fuel to the contention that individual nations should reclaim control of their borders from a porous European Union.

The treaty that seemed a sure thing eight months ago went down hard. Its advocates claimed it was at once more pro-business and more progressive than the old one. With its new declaration of rights and social measures, it supposedly embodied a social-democratic vision for Europe such that most left elites had embraced it, just as the libertarian *Economist* had often ridiculed it. But at the same time, it promised a free-market Europe that business approved of and conservatives like Jacques Chirac could campaign for.

Yet among the voters the treaty was supposed to benefit, it evoked disdain. It was defeated in France (by 55 percent) and annihilated a few days later in Holland (by 62 percent). Tony Blair quickly bailed on a planned British referendum, and the polls on the upcoming vote in Poland (now delayed) dropped 20 points. Gerhard Schröder took the defeat in May of his red-green

coalition in North Rhine Westphalia (where the Social Democratic Party had ruled for 40 years) so hard that he moved up elections by a year and is in danger of being displaced by Angela Merkel, the Christian Democrats' new and untested leader who hopes to become Germany's Margaret Thatcher. "No" is Europe's mood today.

Of course no one really said "no" to the proposed constitu-

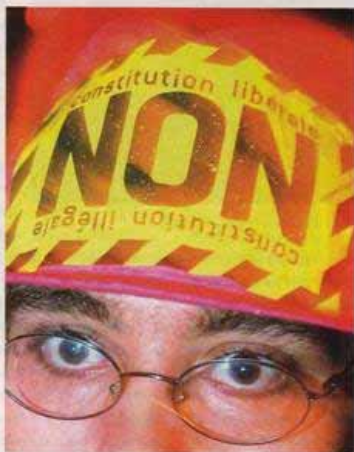
tion. Who had even read it, with its 4-inch thick compendium of technocratic legalese and opaque compromises? It was as long as Proust and far less engaging. Ordinary citizens said "no" to the elites on the left and the right who had dumped this incomprehensible but vaguely threatening mess on them (Chirac could have had a safe parliamentary vote on it but opted for the popular referendum).

Voters said "no" less to the new treaty than to their fears of what it seemed to stand for. After all, in the early decades of the EU they had been enthusiastic supporters of what in America

would have seemed radical ideals of pooled sovereignty, European-wide social policies, and open borders. Led by great socialist statesmen like Jacques Delors, the French stood at the forefront of a new Europe.

So when, in June, so many socialists voted against their leaders (including Delors) and said "no" to an enlarged and seemingly unaccountable Europe—despite the new declaration of rights, a new focus on participation, and new institutions intended to enhance democracy—they seemed to be turning their backs on their own idealism. When they said "no" to a feared onslaught of "Polish plumbers" (newly enfranchised eastern European workers who would steal their jobs), they seemed to turn from hope to despair. When they said "no" to Turkish membership in Europe that would dilute their national identities

with Islamism (even though Turkish membership is at least a decade away and uncertain, even had the treaty been affirmed), they seemed to react to new forces that have emerged only since the fall of the Berlin Wall. And when they said "no" to lying elites—*Le Nouvel Observateur* put Chirac on the cover with the headline "The Last Crook"—they announced a crisis of faith in their own leadership.



French Kiss-Off: France's EU "no" was multifaceted.

TO SOME EXTENT, MUCH THE SAME THING HAPPENED last year in the United States. The left, faced with globalization, marketization, and the challenges of a malevolent interdependence, blinked, divided, and stumbled. The failure of American progressives to stop George W. Bush's unilateralist politics of fear is the same story of the French and European left's failure to stop the populist right's anti-European politics of fear. Although the European left had once staunchly supported a strong, integrated Europe, whereas the American left had been more ambivalent about international cooperation and more willing to advance the military option (think of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson), progressives today on both sides of the Atlantic seem baffled, if not actually paralyzed, by the new realities of a malevolent interdependence.

In the face of economic globalization, the left everywhere is suffering from schizophrenia, torn between its egalitarian eco-

Supreme Court decision won't help much) or in the (re-)excising of the word "God" from the Pledge of Allegiance.

The ambivalence about globalization and the populist response to it ended up splitting progressives on both sides of the Atlantic between me-too neoliberals opting for markets without frontiers (but let's have a modest safety net) and fearful union protectionists opting for stronger frontiers (but let's sustain the rhetoric of global fraternity). Obviously the stories in Europe and the United States vary in tone and pitch, and Europe's class politics still exercise a hold on the left's imagination in Europe that has long since vanished (if it ever existed) in America. Moreover, Europe began with an openness to notions of pooling sovereignty and creating new transnational institutions that the American left has never imagined.

But when today Lou Dobbs embraces the Minutemen patrolling the Mexican border as patriotic vigilantes to keep out

the "illegals" drawn into the United States by market forces, he plays on the same fears the Dutch populist right manipulates when it turns once tolerant burghers into critics of what they see as a Dutch "multiculti" disposition run amok. When Jean-Marie LePen in France or Jörg Haider in Austria or the heirs to Pim Fortuyn in Holland castigate freeloading immigrants trying to cash in on the European welfare state even as they disdain its Christian and civic traditions, how like Pat Buchanan they sound. When small businesses in the taxi and plumbing trades complain that they cannot compete with the cheap labor of workers from new EU members in eastern Europe, their cries for higher walls and more subsidies echo the cries heard in America among steelworkers and garment-makers who wonder how long their jobs will survive before the firms employing them simply pick up and move out of the country.

In Europe's referenda, the politics of fear is now trumping the politics of hope with which the treaty's less-than-compelling compromises were hammered out. Yet this was mainly a failure of elites, who put the constitutional cart before the political horse, assuming that a technocratically compelling reform document would commend itself to frightened citizens no longer convinced that "Europe" represented their best interests. Dutch, French, and Danish nationals feel like they are being invited to surrender their national sovereignty, and before a democratic Europe is constituted, one that might popularize and legitimate genuine European popular sovereignty. The elites and their mythmakers reading their own broadsides don't get it. Not here and not there. Citizens are not doing what they are supposed to do. Time, as Bertolt Brecht once wrote with bitter irony, to elect a new citizenry.

French voters took a long, hard look at a Europe being shaped by the forces of neoliberal globalization and shrank back, just as a slender plurality of Americans—confronted with the choice



Udder Insecurity: Potential Turkish EU membership may have been a deal-breaker.

economic instincts and its reactionary cultural fears. Many economic egalitarians are simultaneously cultural separatists. Many progressives endorse democracy "for us" (us French, us Americans) but not "for them" (those Algerian immigrants, those undocumented Latino workers), at least as long as they refuse to play by *our* cultural rules and to live in accord with *our* religious values. For ordinary Americans, globalization is OK when it comes to buying flat-screen TVs, iPods, and SUVs, but not when it comes to bleeding our industries and undermining our way of life. Progressives have not figured out how to turn this conundrum into a convincing affirmative politics.

In Europe, populists on both the left and the right were beset by doubts about hyper-multiculturalism and the treaty's compromise decision to omit any reference to religion or to the Christian origins of Europe. American economic populists were divided about gay marriage and the seeming banishment of religion from the American public square, evident in the removal of the Ten Commandments from courtrooms (the recent

between a world at the mercy of transnational institutions like the United Nations and uncertain allies like Germany and France and a cowboy president willing to use unilateral force—opted for Bush. For potentially progressive rank-and-file voters on both sides of the Atlantic, the choices being offered vis-à-vis globalization are simply not palatable. Embrace market anarchy and let global Darwinism—its successful productivity and its disastrous inequality alike—determine the future; yield to a plundering productivity and hope you can get yours. Or build new walls against global anarchy but shut off the future and pretend away the brute realities of interdependence. Go with the ultraliberals or succumb to ultranationalists.

NO PATH OFFERS PROGRESSIVE OR DEMOCRATIC RESPONSES to the challenges of interdependence. But facing the choice of giving in to a world dominated by market and corporate forces they neither understand nor control or walling themselves inside the old sovereign communities they identify with, many ordinary citizens opt for the latter. After all, the Nazis were “national socialists”—economically progressive socialists whose fears and resentments were shaped by fear-mongers to reactionary ultranationalist purposes.

Readers of *The American Prospect* know that there are viable civic alternatives to these toxic extremes, but the debates among intellectuals rarely translate to the real choices offered by the political parties or their blinkered, one-issue-at-a-time policy wonks. And even in our progressive journals, as in *El Nouvel Observateur* or *Liberation* in France, *El País* in Spain, or *La Repubblica* in Italy, progressive conversations remain parochial and insular, restricted to the usual suspects.

In Europe and America, then, the defeats for the democratic left are about the democratic deficit that issues from globalization's tough challenges. Democracy, the left's strength, is at stake because the rules of a global market seem to moot national choices to pursue diverse paths, and the left cannot seem to figure out an appropriate democratic response to globalization. For Europeans, this means being forced to choose between embracing Europe as an ultra-market (rather than a civic and democratic entity) or resisting Europe (by falling into the clutches of the neonationalist populist right). For Americans, it means choosing between embracing globalization (at the cost of embracing global inequality and insecurity) or affecting to “stop globalization” (and choosing xenophobia and isolationism). Neither option offers equality and justice for Americans or others. We need an entirely different menu of choices.

The right, of course, has no such democracy problem, for its ideal is liberty, not equality, and the sustaining of productivity and profit, not the securing of justice. It trumpets authority, discipline, and leadership and regards democracy as a formally representative system where citizenship is confined to occasional elections. It privileges private liberty and property over

public equality and justice and prefers to leave their balancing to markets. It equates citizens with consumers and thinks that the latter can do the work of the former.

WHAT IS MISSING IS AN AFFIRMATIVE APPROACH TO globalization that accepts its inevitability but insists on its transformation. If progressives do not find a way either to democratize globalization or to globalize democracy, they will be defeated again and again—either by the neoliberal center or the populist neonationalist right. For starters, American progressives and European leftists need to deepen their all-too-episodic conversations and broaden them from the rhetorically minded World Social Forums to a substance-centered permanent engagement. Michel Rocard and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero need to talk with Eliot Spitzer and Antonio Villaraigosa. François Hollande needs to be in regular conversation with Howard Dean. Jack Lang needs to instant-message Cornel West. And that's just the Atlantic, a narrow Europe-U.S. conversation that should open the way to discussion and collaboration with Latin American, African, and Asian progressives.

Michel Rocard and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero need to talk with Eliot Spitzer and Antonio Villaraigosa. François Hollande needs to be in regular conversation with Howard Dean.

All the challenges progressives face are challenges of a world of interdependence. Corporate elites understand this and, with their client states, have their economic forums and Bretton Woods institutions (the International Monetary Fund, or IMF, and the World Trade Organization, a.k.a. WTO), plus the common agendas to prove it. But the left remains reactive rather than affirmative, parochial rather than cosmopolitan, knowing what it is against (globalization) rather than what it is for. The realities of global interdependence—which include AIDS, weapons proliferation, climate change, technology, inequality, rules for economic markets, and, of course, terrorism—define the politics of nations today. These realities will not be addressed one country at a time, nor will they be kept at bay by raising walls. They demand common strategies, close collaboration, and global cooperation. Until the left starts talking across frontiers, it will remain the party of losers without frontiers, defeated again and again by neoliberals and neonationalists—neither of whom are democrats.

There is no going back. Interdependence is our destiny, though for now it is mostly a malevolent interdependence of AIDS and global warming and predatory markets, of corporate anarchy and nihilistic jihad. Either the left constructs a new politics of benevolent interdependence or it backs itself into the “no” corner, where all it can do is complain about what it can't stop, eventually opening the door to the politics of *ressentiment* and fear.

An affirmative approach to globalization, by definition, cannot be done one party at a time, one nation at a time, one desperate people at a time. The power of anarchic globalization is that it enforces a race to the bottom, setting this nation's worker against that nation's worker. The cost of protectionism is that it allows French farmers to flourish only if African farmers suffer. There can be no justice in one nation, no security in one nation, no prosperity in one nation. Interdependence mandates collaboration.

Why must globalization belong to corporations when interdependence can also belong to civic organizations, people's movements, and citizens without frontiers? But progressive globalization cannot happen without political leadership. Global democracy means access to, and control over, global power.

The task, then, is to offer progressive solutions to the challenges of interdependence that draw citizens out of their parochial identities but do not run afoul of cultural, moral, and value concerns that attach citizens to those identities. How to accept and even embrace diversity without overly diluting identity? How to root cosmopolitanism in a scary world of permanent change? A true conundrum.

Here are a few suggestions about strategies and solutions, at least as a starting point for a transnational progressive conversation:

- Develop a political strategy to make the democratic use of the IMF and the WTO a feature of national political campaigns. These global financial institutions are technically "democratic," subject to the control of their member nations; if those nations choose, they can be used to leverage social justice and, say, develop global labor, consumer, and environmental standards as a condition of loans. The left today tends to vilify these organizations. What if progressive leaders in the major nations demanded that they be turned to progressive purposes? To do this would mean to put them on national political agendas and ensure that a progressive political victory in France, Spain, Japan, or the United States is also a victory for transforming the IMF and the WTO into instruments of global justice, with policies that promote social and labor rights instead of just property rights.

- Develop worker policies that require those who currently benefit from undocumented workers to pay appropriate social costs. It is the market that draws workers across borders, whether legally or not, and it is the market that should bear the costs. Taxpayers rightly complain that they pay for the health, educational, and social services that undocumented workers incur. It is the corporations that benefit from their cheap labor that should be asked to share the burden of these social costs. For too long we have privatized the profits and socialized the costs of labor mobility. That must change by becoming part of a political agenda.

- Develop a framework for transnational unions that recognizes the differing stages of development of different national economies. Many of the race-to-the-bottom problems that confront competitive global markets today once defined the Darwinist competition among the states in America, when nonunion low-wage states (often in the South) drew industries (and hence jobs) away from union states in the North (a problem for the enlarged Europe of 25 today). American unions are, at present, necessarily enemies of workers in Africa and Asia. Wage parity is

not possible, but an international wage scale cognizant of both developmental differences and the costs of compliance with safety, child-labor, and environmental standards would be less Darwinist than the current anarchic system.

- Support the proposal for a "Tobin tax" on international currency transactions, both to discourage destabilizing speculation of the sort that swamped Asian economies in the late 1990s and to raise funds to help pay the costs that developing nations incur when they try to meet environmental and safety standards imposed on them by developed nations that, in their time, never paid such costs.

Redressing North-South inequality would inevitably involve some North-South wealth transfer, whether in the form of debt forgiveness, foreign aid, or other devices. Most current options pit developed-world taxpayers against developing-world workers. The aim should be to tax the companies and shareholders who most benefit from global markets and, by shifting the direct burden off taxpaying workers in the developed countries, turn them into the allies of the developing world.

We need a politics of interdependence that does not pit cosmopolitanism against rooted moral beliefs. The right has prospered by claiming, falsely, that to be tolerant, democratic, and cosmopolitan is also to be a moral relativist, an enemy of individual liberty, and a stranger to patriotism. Religion is not the enemy of democracy but, as Tocqueville showed, the necessary foundation for political liberty and civic diversity. There is a tradition of patriotism—Jürgen Habermas calls it "constitutional patriotism"—that is not only compatible with but absolutely indispensable to democracy. There is no reason for the left to be at war with religion; there is no clash of civilization between democracy and belief. Faith and reason have always been partners in the most stable and tolerant democracies.

These approaches are not easy sound bites. And it is the right that flourishes in times of fear and danger because it favors the simple over the complex, the easy over the hard, the values that divide people over what might bring them together. That is why progressives have such a hard time finding their voice on talk radio, where derision and exclusion work better than deliberation and inclusion, or on the infotainment media outlets, where getting people's attention is much more important than doing something with it.

Yet it is also true that in the ineluctably interdependent world in which we live, neither the anarchy of ultraliberal markets nor the provincialism of ultraconservative nation-states is likely to meet the challenge of surviving inequality, anarchy, and terrorism, let alone of securing justice and comity. In this, the advantage goes to progressive democrats. But only if we learn to do democracy across borders. Only if we can find a way to give a home to others in the world without surrendering our own. Only if we find ways for an engaged citizenship to trump passive fear, and use what we can achieve together across borders to overcome what we do to one another when we are separated by fear's intimidating walls. **TAP**

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