

The Beginning of the End

by Prof. Revilo P. Oliver

THOMAS WOLFE was the last great master of English prose, and the greatest as well as the last writer to describe contemporary American life and portray its disorganized and fractured culture, undistorted by the astigmatism and illusions that are charitably called ‘ideology.’ His first book, *Look Homeward, Angel*, published in 1929, was surpassed only by his masterpiece, *Of Time and the River* (1935). His third major work, *The Web and the Rock*, published posthumously after his death at the age of thirty-eight in 1938, marks a certain decline, its brilliance marred by intrusive incongruities, and probably reflects the mistake he made when he left Scribner’s and the editorship of Maxwell Perkins, whose critical sagacity had made the first two books possible, as Wolfe freely admitted.

Of Time and the River reports his observation of life in the period 1920–1925, and his original plan, abandoned not long before his death, had been to continue the series to 1933, which he instinctively selected as a terminal point. He probably knew, consciously or subconsciously, that that year began the end of the America he had known.

Wolfe was both a passionate man and an observer of unequalled powers of discernment and memory, but he was not an historian. He respected the past and antiquity, but did not study it intensively and analytically. He was therefore estopped from perceiving the clandestine forces that shape historical events and, like the geologic faults that produce earthquakes, lie far underground, unsuspected by their future victims.

He never guessed the significance of the work conspiratorially done by our enemies when the great Jewish bankers produced the first great breach in the surviving fabric of the Constitution by procuring the enactment of both the Income Tax and the Federal Reserve swindle and then, so to speak, activated those ruptures of our social strata by having “Barney” Baruch’s trained poodle, a crackpot named Woodrow Wilson, bark the United States into the disastrous war that had been contrived in Europe. And although Wolfe, like other men

who reached maturity before 1933, must occasionally have been inconvenienced by the national folly called Prohibition, he never guessed that, whatever the intentions of the “do-gooders” and silly women¹ who foisted that un-Constitutional Amendment on the nation, they created a precedent for the subjection of their country to the Communism of which they felt such horror when they saw it at work in Russia.

We cannot expect Wolfe to have perceived why 1933 was the logical termination of his observations of American life or to have comprehended that his America was doomed in that year. But, with an artist’s sensitivity, he did discern something of what had so fatally gone wrong.

Professional historians today, their interest in facts always strictly subordinated to their interest in jobs, distort their accounts of what is called “the Depression,” which was supposedly begun by the partial collapse of the stock market in November of 1929. It is understandable that they keep their eyes resolutely averted from the real causes of that “economic depression,” but one does not see why they ignore the phenomenon when it repeatedly occurred on a smaller scale and locally before the allegedly fatal autumn of 1929.

In the 1920s, in diverse parts of the country, there occurred “land booms,” better described as bubbles in the financial sense of that word, since they, on a smaller scale, were comparable to the famous South Sea Bubble, which almost ruined England when it broke in 1720, and to John Law’s “Mississippi Scheme,” which ruined France in the same year. Men who esteemed themselves shrewd businessmen, drunk on a hootch they had not obtained from their bootleggers, mortgaged their future to pay preposterous prices for building sites in the “fastest growing town in the foothills [of Cali-

¹ While the constitutionality of the law permitting women to vote in Illinois was still in doubt, it was necessary to segregate ballots by the sex of the voters. The records show that in local elections, the great majority of women voted for local prohibition, while the majority of men, less subject to sentimentality and Christian intolerance, did not.

fornia]” or “the fastest growing town in the Mississippi Valley” or the “fastest growing town on the East Coast [of Florida].”

There was a kind of mania, prevalent in “Chambers of Commerce” and business clubs, which regarded increase of population as a blessing *per se*, because the slap-happy promoters foresaw an increase of sales in their drug store or barber shop or other business—and to Hell with the consequences. If one went into Los Angeles on the Pacific Electric (which was more expeditious than even fast driving over the highways of the time) to attend the opera or a theatre, when the train was going into the terminal at Sixth and Main on the elevated tracks, there blazed in one’s face a huge sign on the roof of a then prosperous newspaper. The sign said, “The First Million is Here; the Second is On The Way.” A rational man could only wonder why the fools so wanted an influx into Southern California, a region that was still largely fit for civilized men, although already showing manifest symptoms of overpopulation and the deterioration that always goes with it.

One such bubble occurred in Wolfe’s home town, Asheville, North Carolina, and is described in memorable chapters of *You Can’t Go Home Again* (assembled by editors, with some errors in taste and internal congruity, for posthumous publication in 1940). And when he tried to ascertain the causes, he perceptively identified a cardinal one that no one mentioned:

What happened in Libya Hill [= Asheville] and elsewhere has been described in the learned tomes of the overnight economists as a breakdown of “the system, the capitalist system.” Yes, it was that. But it was also much more than that. In Libya Hill it was the total disintegration of what, in so many different ways, the lives of all these people had come to be. It went much deeper than the mere obliteration of bank accounts, the extinction of paper profits, and the loss of property. It was the ruin of men who found out, as soon as these symbols of their outward success had been destroyed, that they had nothing left—no inner equivalent from which they might now draw new strength. It was the ruin of men who, discovering not only that their values were false but that they never had any substance whatsoever, now saw at last the emptiness and hollowness of their lives. Therefore they killed themselves; and those who did not die by their own hands died by the knowledge that they were already dead.

You have there a statement of one of the fundamental causes of the economic collapse, the cause without which the more conspicuous causes could not have operated. In the brilliantly written pages that follow, Wolfe further describes the aftermath of the broken bubble in splendid prose of which I cannot refrain from quoting at least one paragraph:

In his eternal vigil the worm stirs, but many men are rotting in their graves tonight, and sixty-four have bullet fractures in their skulls. Ten thousand more are lying in their beds tonight, living as shells live. They, too, are dead, though yet unburied. They have been dead so long they can’t remember how it was to live. And many weary nights must pass before they can join the buried dead, down where the worm keeps vigil.

When he comes to the collapse of the stock market in November 1929, Wolfe, reflecting “like a man who gropes his way in darkness over an unfamiliar road,” reaches the conclusion that

America went off the track somewhere—back around the time of the Civil War. . . . Instead of going ahead and developing along the line in which the country started out, it got shunted off in another direction—and now we look around and see we’ve gone places we didn’t mean to go. Suddenly we realize that America has turned into something ugly—and vicious—and corroded at the heart of its power with easy wealth and graft and special privilege. . . . And the worst of it is the intellectual dishonesty which all this corruption has bred. People are *afraid* to think straight—*afraid* to face themselves—*afraid* to look at things and see them as they are.

Wolfe is certainly right: it was a cardinal flaw in American culture and character that made possible the economic débâcle. Mice die in traps because they do not control their appetite for cheese, but anthropoids of the genus that is sardonically called *sapiens* are theoretically believed to be endowed with reason. The collapse, as Wolfe never suspects, was, of course, cunningly engineered by our enemies, primarily through the Federal Reserve and the tainted press, but it was designed to exploit precisely that cardinal fissure in the American mentality and could not have succeeded without it.

Wolfe is also right in dating the beginning of the national hypocrisy and schizophrenia to the election of Abraham Lincoln, who was obliged by his sponsors to contrive a war of aggression against half of the nation, and who naturally formed his

cabinet from the first great aggregation of madmen and thieves to occupy Washington. Before his time, corruption in the Federal government had been the merely normal practice of favoring one's friends and associates with jobs and contracts. Lincoln was the first to adorn his cabinet with one member of whom it was said that he would steal anything but a red hot stove; another, who cynically defined an honest politician as one who "stays bought" and does not betray the man who has bribed him in order to get a second and larger bribe from his opponent; and a slippery Secretary of the Treasury, who piously had "In God We Trust" illegally inscribed on our currency and was supposed to mean that he trusted his god to prevent disclosure of the looting of the Treasury over which he presided. And it was Lincoln who appointed the Secretary of War who seems to have been the principal manager of the assassination by which Lincoln was removed after he had served the purposes of his masters and could be killed to excite rancors that would cover their further crimes.

It was Lincoln who coined the lie that his outrageous invasion of the South was a civil war—a lie that was made canonical by unscrupulous historians and so generally accepted that Wolfe, although a Southerner by birth, unthinkingly accepted it. It was Lincoln (who, of course, was merely the agent of the criminals who arranged his election) who destroyed the American Republic and ripped up the American Constitution, for which he had little respect,² although pieces of it were put together later for political purposes to enforce a fiction that has persisted to our time—a fiction that deceived no judicious historian, but was a gospel truth to the indoctrinated public until a mulatto (!) who is a Justice of the so-called Supreme Court in Washington finally told them the truth.³

² See the analysis of Lincoln's performance as a basically dishonest politician by Sam Dickson in the *Journal of Historical Review*, Fall 1986, pp. 319–344; on p. 329 he notes Lincoln's evidently earnest dislike of the Constitution and wish to destroy and replace it.

³ Thurgood Marshall, on 6 May 1987, told a San Francisco Law Association at its annual "seminar" on Maui, Hawaii, that the Constitution had been effectively revoked and canceled by the Fourteenth Amendment: "While the Union survived the civil war [!], the Constitution did not. In its place arose a new and more promising basis for justice and equality, the 14th Amendment." The mulatto was naturally interested in the power of Congoids and half-breeds over White Americans, but he should have noted that when the Fourteenth Amendment was enacted at gunpoint, the Consti-

Lincoln presided over the terrible end of the American Republic, but his election had been made possible by the previous creeping "democracy," which, as the wiser among the Framers of the Constitution had feared,⁴ had weakened the fabric, as does water in the crevices of stone when it freezes. They had reluctantly left to the several states the limitation of the franchise that is indispensable to a stable government in a society that gives to its citizens the maximum of personal freedom. And the states, one by one, under pressure from factions that sacrificed principle to their own immediate and ephemeral advantage and so ensured their eventual defeat by even more unscrupulous factions, came to permit persons who owned little or no property to vote. That was in itself sufficient to doom the nation, for the process was irreversible. A class to which the folly of its betters has given the right to vote (and to sell its votes to the highest bidder) can never be persuaded to relinquish what it should never have been given.

Even when the franchise is limited to males, its extension to the poor, the ignorant, the stupid, and the feckless is ineluctably disastrous and no class suffers more than the one that has been enfranchised. They become at once the tools and the victims of gangs of predatory criminals, prosperous criminals who have no fear of the laws they themselves enact. Even in Hawthorne's time, government by "free elections" had become a mockery, a fiction that permitted the depredations of what he rightly described as "subtle schemers," who were "the practiced politicians, skilled to adjust those preliminary measures which steal from the people, without its knowledge, the power of choosing its own rulers. The popular voice, at the next gubernatorial election, though loud as thunder, will really be but an echo of what these gentlemen shall speak under their breath."

What Hawthorne described in 1851 was the rapid decline of the United States into the majority rule that the Framers of their Federal Constitution had hoped to avert; almost all of the federated states, especially in the North, were already sick with "democracy," the syphilis of nations. That

tution had already been canceled. Armed aggression by a league of states against other states to rob them of their property marked the effective end of a compact between the several states.

⁴ See "Why the Constitution Failed," in *Liberty Bell*, January 1987.

made it possible for the howling Abolitionists, most of whom were doubtless only wittlings inspired by envy and malice they mistook for righteousness, to incite to homicidal fury ignorant masses, whose minds had been rotted by a Christianity that was partly an imposture by knavish holy men.⁵ And that made possible Lincoln's ghastly war against the South, which startled Europe by its bloody barbarity, so outrageous that Lord Palmerston for some time refused to believe the news from the United States, saying that such savagery was impossible for civilized men.

And when the war that had appalled civilized mankind was over and the bandits who brazenly called themselves a "Republican Party" imposed on the conquered and prostrate South the vengeance for their own crimes that they called "Reconstruction," there were many Americans who still had a conscience and some sense of human decency, but they were obliged to acquiesce, at least by silence, in the national hypocrisy that disguised as righteousness a ferocity worthy of the Jews described in the tales about a conquest of Canaan in the Jew-Book.

Thus was the American character permanently polluted by official lying, endorsed by feckless or venal historians, and by a pervasive hypocrisy of which men of discernment were painfully aware. And it is not astonishing that the thieves' morality of Lincoln's administration was emulated by unscrupulous adventurers and arrant swindlers in business and, of course, by the lords of finance who had promoted it in the first place. It became accepted as normal in many operations.⁶ But one important fact was, naturally enough, overlooked by Wolfe, so far as we know from his later published works.

What Wolfe did not perceive was that, true as was his description of the psychic condition that permitted the bubbles, and prevalent as were the "go-getting" business men who were spiritually

⁵ They, unless grotesquely ignorant and virtually illiterate, lied in their throats when they denied that the "New Testament," and hence the religion that was explicitly based on it, specifically sanctioned and authorized the institution of slavery. There were honest clergymen who told the truth, but their voices were drowned out by the yelling of the rabble-rousers.

⁶ In one of Edith Wharton's best short stories, the widow of a great and recently deceased financier questions his secretary about a certain transaction. The man, puzzled by her question, replies, "No, it certainly wasn't honest—but then, it wasn't illegal either. It was, well, it was just business."

dead and had never really lived, there still remained a residue of common sense and some integrity in the populace.

The partial collapse of the economy in 1929 had been engineered, of course, to permit the election of the unspeakably foul tool of the Jews and their accomplices, Franklin Roosevelt, himself partly a Jew and crippled by a disease that may have exacerbated the innate viciousness of his truly satanic character. But what is now generally concealed is the fact that the loathsome creature procured his election by cozening American conservatives. He was elected as an opponent of the socialism of Herbert Hoover, who had involved the country in the unconstitutional expedient of a Reconstruction Finance Corporation to rescue some financial sponsors of the "Republican Party" from the consequences of their own folly, and who had expanded the already swollen bureaucracy.

In the preliminary electioneering, the unspeakable thing called Roosevelt pledged himself to *reduce the Federal budget by one-third within six months*—that is an incontrovertible fact that must never be forgotten. He also pledged himself to end the hypocrisy of the alliance between stupid or malicious "do-gooders" and organized crime that was called Prohibition and was clearly a proto-Communist inauguration of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" that denied the rights of citizens in a state not yet enslaved.

It must never be forgotten that in 1932 it was Herbert Hoover who appeared to represent the forces of subversion, the capitalism that is the obverse of an economic coin of which the reverse is Communism, since both are equally devoted to the destruction of the private property on which an Aryan civilization—perhaps every humane civilization—depends. His opponent, the Communist conspirator, was elected because he professed to be precisely the opposite, a champion of traditional American values, which, of course, once in power, he acted drastically to efface.

Once the unspeakable creature and his horde of loathsome accomplices and associates attained power, he proceeded to *create* most of the "Depression" that Wolfe and most Americans ever since thought a natural phenomenon in economics, triggered in November 1929. But the fact is that, although the Federal Reserve, seconded by governmental intervention, exerted itself to continue, and to magnify the consequences of, the "crash," the

normal forces of economics were already restoring the national economy and the nation, if not *afraid* to face the consequences of its speculative drunkenness, and if willing, as many were, to learn a lesson they should have remembered from the Eighteenth Century, would soon have experienced a reasonable prosperity.

Russell A. Kirk, one of the most distinguished writers of the ineffectual “conservatism” that is today afraid to face realities that have become apparent since 1928, recently contributed to *Imprimis*, a bulletin published by Hillsdale College, his recollections of the “Depression,” through which he lived as a youth, son of a member of the working class, a locomotive engineer. He writes to restore some measure of historical truth. “The circumstances of people with much reduced incomes between 1929 and 1933 were not nearly so desperate as certain school textbooks would have us believe.” This the dwindling number of living persons who remember that era know to be the truth, much as our enemies try to conceal it with downright mendacity.

(Note that Wolfe, near the end of Chapter 16 of *You Can't Go Home Again*, was aware of the fact that Mr. Kirk points out, but slides from 1929 to 1935 without appearing to perceive what had changed in 1933.)

Mr. Kirk reports that the working classes generally would have resisted staunchly any revolutionary activity (although many of them did not recognize it when it was cunningly carried out under specious pretexts and protestations that the covert revolutionists were trying to avert what they were actually doing). And he adds the extremely significant fact that, according to his experience and observation at the time, the “hardest knocks of the Depression” came only after “President Roosevelt, so soon after taking office, proclaimed his national bank moratorium.”

Had Mr. Kirk not been determined to be polite and say nothing that could create a stir at a ladies' tea party, he could have said roundly that the traitor thereby *created* “The Depression.”

At the end of 1932 the United States was returning to normal, despite the clandestine manipulations of the Federal Reserve and the crypto-Communist propaganda of “Liberal intellectuals” who wanted to exploit an opportunity to incite a revolution against whatever confirmed their sense of inferiority. The one man who was not deluded by the jeremiads of the “overnight economists” was

H. L. Mencken, who, with the common sense that is always offensive to “do-gooders” and gabbling “intellectuals,” said bluntly, “So some fools have lost a lot of money in foolish speculations. So what?”

From 1929 to 1932, all that had happened was a return to the normal functioning of the economy that had become traditional and dear to the hearts of Americans—the economy of “free enterprise” and opportunities for sudden wealth by commercial sagacity or sheer luck. The nation, like England in 1720, was recovering from a spree of insane speculation, and naturally a man recovering consciousness after a prolonged bout of alcoholic hilarity is apt to have a headache. If intelligent, he will learn something about himself and perhaps about the boon companions who encouraged him to ‘go blotto.’ Americans not afraid to think did learn something about drunken speculation and could have learned something about a centralized banking system that had been foisted on them by their domestic enemies under the mendacious pretense that it would make economic panics impossible. That, of course, had to be averted.

The moratorium of which Mr. Kirk speaks created the very severe economic stringency, affecting large numbers of persons who had not speculated, that was “The Depression.” Under a hypocritical pretense of “restoring confidence,” banks were permitted to reopen after the moratorium (which in itself created panic and hardship) only if they could meet drastic, suddenly imposed, and flagrantly unconstitutional requirements. The purpose was to freeze the current assets of many Americans for long periods of time, force many into bankruptcy, and to inflict heavy losses on most of them.

In one town, for example, there were four banks. All were permanently closed and forced into a liquidation that inevitably destroyed a large part of their assets. None was really insolvent, but none could meet suddenly requirements that forbade them to count as assets real estate that they owned, including their own buildings, many of their mortgages on land, and certain other assets that could not be immediately converted into cash. After the moratorium, no one in the town could use his checking or savings accounts, and Americans had become accustomed to doing business with cheques and keeping their current funds in banks. The local businessmen could not pay their employees, could not pay outstanding debts for supplies, and could not collect what their customers owed them. They had been

made actually insolvent overnight, and many simply discharged their unpaid employees and closed their shops or stores, even if they did not become frankly bankrupt. A moment's reflection will show you how this sudden freezing of assets spread through the entire community and produced economic prostration that was escaped only by the few who had kept on hand large quantities of currency or had incomes from outside the community that were not cut off by the economic *coup d'état*.

The liquidation suddenly forced on the banks *made* them insolvent. The stockholders not only lost their investment but sums equal to twice that investment, as required by state laws, and were temporarily or permanently impoverished. The assets of the banks were sold off at a fraction of their real value, often to Jewish predators, and after years the depositors recovered a percentage of their deposits—sometimes only 10% or less.

In a more fortunate community, there were seven banks. One, owned by a prudent man, could reopen immediately. A second was able to reopen with a little delay because some large stockholders had liquid assets that enabled them to buy the bank's real estate and other assets that had been so suddenly struck from its books, and the bank eventually became highly profitable. The remaining five banks went through liquidation with the same results and great losses to stockholders and depositors, but the community, although largely depressed and impoverished, was not totally paralysed.

Such was the first blow struck by the American Lenin to impose Communism on the United States by pretending to try to avert it. And if you will examine candidly and objectively *all* of the legislation of the so-called "New Deal," you will see that it was actually designed for the same fell purpose, the covert imposition of a revolutionary dictatorship as rapidly as possible—a purpose that was almost openly averred in the conspirators' boast about the success of the basic policy of the "New Deal": "tax to spend to elect to tax to spend to elect."

One of the most flagrant acts of revolutionary despotism was the great Bank Robbery and its concomitant robbery of American citizens. The gold reserves of sound banks were stolen by the Federal government, and private citizens were forbidden to own gold. That act of Bolshevik looting and oppression would in itself have provoked an armed revolt, if Americans had retained even a small part of the spirit of freedom that had found expression in the

Constitution. Even as it was, in a nation as spiritually desiccated as Wolfe perceived, such an outrage would have been impossible, if the populace had not already become accustomed to despotic government by the Prohibition imposed by "do-gooders," holy men, and silly females.

The would-be Lenin ended Prohibition, not to end that tyranny and universal corruption of even local governments, but to release seasoned thugs to take control of labor unions; and most Americans again, with stolid incomprehension, did not even recognize the obviously Bolshevik tactic of the flagrantly illegal occupation, by rioting "workers," of the factories of the major manufacturers of automobiles.

When one speaks of automobiles, one should perceive the calculated manipulation of the economy to concentrate production in the factories of a few enormous corporations. Here is a list, probably not complete, of the excellent, high-quality automobiles that were forced from the market around 1935 (i.e., not by the "crash" of 1929 but by the "New Deal"): Auburn, Cord, Cunningham, Duesenberg, DuPont, Franklin, Hupmobile, Jordan, Marmon, Peerless, Pierce-Arrow, Reo, Stutz.⁷ Some of these companies also produced medium-priced cars, and there was a corresponding mortality among firms that produced only medium and low-priced automobiles. Does this fact tell you something about what was being done to American industry? The record in automobiles could be matched in most other industrial products.

The National Recovery Administration, launched with a clamor of spurious and pseudo-patriotic verbiage, fixed prices in such a way as to force to the wall the smaller factories and other businesses that were in competition with huge corporations.

Something, I believe, is still remembered of the cunning "relief" of agriculture by measures designed simultaneously to bribe and enslave farmers, the social class that it was most urgent to liquidate. Here again Hillsdale College in its *Imprimis* (November 1987) presented an analysis of the situation by a man who lived through it, Don Paarlberg.

The crisis in agriculture was simply the result of a drastic contraction of the currency by the Federal Reserve. The "commodity programs" of the

⁷ Doble, Kissel, and Stearns-Knight had expired earlier; Packard managed to hold on until 1958. Mercer and a few other firms were ruined before they had produced more than a few cars.

“New Deal” were, first of all designed to conceal that fact, and they also created the surpluses they pretended to relieve, and were accepted by American farmers only because they were accompanied by bribes that the farmers in their desperate plight did not have the stamina to refuse. Mr. Paarlberg politely attributes much of the sabotage of agriculture to the stupidity and irresponsibility of bureaucrats, but he should have remembered that the American Lenin himself boasted that everything that happened, happened because it had been “planned that way” by himself and his gang of predators. He does state, however, that the net effect of “voluntary” programs enforced by penalties was the “subversion of formerly independent farmers,” the American kulaks, using that Russian word with its Communist meaning.

It would be tedious to list the many legislative renunciations of individual liberty by which the Judaeo-Communists subverted a befuddled nation. Every measure was designed for what it accomplished: making an ever increasing number of Americans directly dependent on the state and thus, by their short-sighted self-interest, accomplices in subversion, while continuously and enormously multiplying bureaucrats and their satellites, agents of oppression who automatically become the enemies of the citizens who are their victims. (Cf. *Liberty Bell*, June 1987, pp. 5–10.)

Sabotage of the United States was limited only by the need to preserve industrial capacity for the time when the Jews’ war could be started in Europe and Americans eventually herded to fight for the degradation and eventual extermination of their race. After the boobs had served that purpose, the dismantling of American industry and imposition of economic slavery began in earnest.

Meanwhile, organized lying by the captured media of communication and the noise made by “Liberal intellectuals” (too shy to identify themselves as Communist stooges) kept the bovine public from perceiving what was being done to them. An American writer, who gave a partial description of what had happened by his time, entitled his book, *The Revolution Was*.⁸ He was right, of course. If Mi-

⁸ Gareth Garrett’s *The Revolution Was*, published in 1938, was reprinted as part (pp. 15–74) of his *The People’s Potage* (Caldwell, Idaho; Caxton Printers, 1953). Mr. Garrett was one of the very few men who had the political sagacity and acumen to see from the very first that Roosevelt’s “New Deal” was simply a Bolshevik revolution carried out *gradu-*

cromégas were to revisit the earth today and hear the tax-paying serfs of Soviet America chatter about “fighting Communism,” he would roar with laughter and decide that, after all, no bipeds are rational on this god-forsaken planet.

[*Liberty Bell*; August 1988]

ally, instead of suddenly, as in Russia. For a time, he was one of the best known (and most hated) American writers. Recently in conversations with two men of some prominence in organizations that still hope to salvage something for our race, I mentioned his name. Neither had heard of him.