

March 26, 2015

A couple of our favorites comment on the passing of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew.

**Max Boot** is first.

*There are many reasons to judge Lee Kuan Yew a genius. Not the least of them is the fact that he attended Cambridge University—the alma mater of Stanley Baldwin (the do-nothing British prime minister of the 1920s-1930s), the Cambridge 5 spy ring (Kim Philby et al.), and Jawaharlal Nehru, among others—and managed to emerge not only a sensible person but also one of distinctly free-market views. He had the advantage, of course, of having been raised in the Crown Colony of Singapore, which, like Hong Kong, continued to practice unfettered capitalism long after it had become unfashionable in the Home Islands. Thus Lee fashioned in Singapore, the city state he ruled from 1959 to 1990, one of the most dynamic free-market societies on earth—one that has remarkably enough gone from per capita GDP of \$512 a head in the 1965 to over \$56,000 a head today, making it richer than Japan or Germany.*

*He was seemingly immune to the Fabian Socialist nostrums taught at Cambridge and other British universities in the first half of the twentieth century—misguided ideas which did so much to mess up developing countries in Africa and Asia where they were dutifully imported by credulous Oxbridge and London School of Economics graduates. Lee harked back to earlier British ideas—the ideas associated with free market apostles of the 19th century such as Richard Cobden and John Bright of Anti-Corn Law League fame—and his tiny state greatly benefitted from his iconoclasm. ...*

*... Neither a democracy nor a dictatorship is likely to produce a leader of Lee Kuan Yew's caliber very often. But the saving grace in democracy is that there are limits on what the chief executive can do. Indeed the genius of America's Constitution is that it has allowed the United States to survive presidents such as James Buchanan, Millard Fillmore, Herbert Hoover, and Jimmy Carter. Singapore and its many imitators would be well advised to stop trying to replicate Lee Kuan Yew and instead institutionalize systems that are robust enough to flourish under leaders of lesser caliber.*

**Thomas Sowell** also had thoughts.

*... Today Singapore has a per capita Gross Domestic Product more than 50 percent higher than that of the United Kingdom and a crime rate a small fraction of that in England. A 2010 study showed more patents and patent applications from the small city-state of Singapore than from Russia. Few places in the world can match Singapore for cleanliness and orderliness.*

*This remarkable transformation of Singapore took place under the authoritarian rule of Lee Kuan Yew for two decades as prime minister. And it happened despite some very serious handicaps that led to chaos and self-destruction in other countries.*

*Singapore had little in the way of natural resources. It even had to import drinking water from neighboring Malaysia. Its population consisted of people of different races, languages and religions — the Chinese majority and the sizable Malay and Indian minorities.*

*At a time when other Third World countries were setting up government-controlled economies and blaming their poverty on "exploitation" by more advanced industrial nations, Lee Kuan Yew promoted a market economy, welcomed foreign investments, and made Singapore's children*

*learn English, to maximize the benefits from Singapore's position as a major port for international commerce.*

*Singapore's schools also taught the separate native languages of its Chinese, Malay and Indian Tamil peoples. But everyone had to learn English, because it was the language of international commerce, on which the country's economic prosperity depended.*

*In short, Lee Kuan Yew was pragmatic, rather than ideological. ...*

And this appeared in a piece by Henry Kissinger.

*... The great tragedy of Lee's life was that his beloved wife was felled by a stroke that left her a prisoner in her body, unable to communicate or receive communication. Through all that time, Lee sat by her bedside in the evening reading to her. He had faith that she understood despite the evidence to the contrary.*

*Perhaps this was Lee Kuan Yew's role in his era. He had the same hope for our world. He fought for its better instincts even when the evidence was ambiguous. ....*

We return to Mr. Sowell who after writing about the accomplishments of Lee Kuan Yew turns his attention to someone who has been a nothingburger. He writes on Hillary Clinton's lackluster record.

*... For someone who has spent her entire adult life in politics, including being a Senator and then a Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton has nothing to show for all those years — no significant legislation of hers that she got passed in the Senate, and only an unbroken series of international setbacks for the United States during her time as Secretary of State.*

*Before Barack Obama entered the White House and appointed Mrs. Clinton Secretary of State, Al Qaeda operatives in Iraq had notified their higher ups, stationed in Pakistan, that their cause was lost in Iraq and that there was no point sending more men there.*

*Hosni Mubarak was in charge in Egypt. He posed no threat to American or Western interests in the Middle East or to Christians within Egypt or to Israel. But the Obama administration threw its weight behind the Muslim Brotherhood, which took over and began terrorizing Christians in Egypt and promoting hostility to Israel.*

*In Libya next door, the Qaddafi regime had already given up its weapons of mass destruction, after they saw what happened to Saddam Hussein in Iraq. But President Obama's foreign policy, carried out by Secretary of State Clinton, got Qaddafi removed, after which Libya became a terrorist haven where an American ambassador was killed, for the first time in decades.*

*The rationale for getting rid of Middle East leaders who posed no threat to American interests was that they were undemocratic and their people were restless. But there are no democracies in the Middle East, except for Israel. ...*

**Joel Kotkin** posts on the tension arising between tech companies and some of their allies on the left.

*The rise of today's progressive-dominated Democratic Party stemmed from a brilliant melding of minorities, the poor, the intelligentsia and, quite surprising, the new ultrarich of Silicon Valley. For the past decade, this alliance has worked for both sides, giving the tech titans politically correct cover while suggesting their support for the progressives' message can work with business.*

*Not only did tech overwhelmingly favor President Obama with campaign contributions but Obama also overwhelming won the Silicon Valley electorate, taking the once GOP-leaning Santa Clara County with 70 percent of the vote. After the 2012 election, a host of former top Obama aides – including former campaign manager David Plouffe (Uber) and press spokesman Jay Carney (Amazon) – have signed up to work for tech giants. Perhaps even more revealing was the politically inspired firing last year of former Mozilla CEO Brendan Eich for contributing to California's Proposition 8, which banned gay marriage.*

*Yet, despite these ties and PC eruptions, this alliance between the ideologically and the technically advanced shows signs of unraveling. This reflects, over time, what Marxists might have referred to as “contradictions” between two very different worldviews: the disruptive, acquisitive, aggressive spirit inherent in entrepreneurial capitalism and the increasingly egalitarian, property-controlling instincts of the progressive Left. To many progressives, the Silicon Valley elite are no longer scrappy up-and-comers, but increasingly resemble a new oligarchy.*

*Like the nobles of the Middle Ages or the corporate hegemony of the industrial era, Silicon Valley billionaires are increasingly asked to take responsibility for many of society's ills. These include a wide range of issues, from feminism and race to privacy and, most critically, class inequality. Supporting gay marriage or measures to fight climate change may no longer be enough to win over progressives.*

*Arguably the most widely acknowledged conflict – at least the raciest – involves sex discrimination. From its inception as a cradle of technology, the Valley's culture has been highly masculine. Indeed, roughly 26 percent of tech industry workers are women, well below their 47 percent share of the total workforce. ...*

**John Steele Gordon** says Cruz, with his lack of experience is a right-wing version of you know who.

*Barack Obama was spectacularly unprepared to be president and, except for the true believers, his presidency has been a disaster because of it. He had no executive experience whatever but was supposed to be the chief executive officer of the largest organization on earth, the federal government. He had no political leadership experience, having been a backbencher in both the Illinois Senate and the United States Senate, with no legislative accomplishments to his credit. He had no foreign affairs experience. He has proved to be a terrible negotiator, ideologically rigid and contemptuous of any opinion but his own, although negotiating—getting to yes—is the very essence of politics. Today Senator Ted Cruz is announcing his candidacy for the Republican nomination for president. Is he qualified? ...*

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## Contentions

### Lee Kuan Yew's Genius and Democracy

by Max Boot

There are many reasons to judge Lee Kuan Yew a genius. Not the least of them is the fact that he attended Cambridge University—the alma mater of Stanley Baldwin (the do-nothing British prime minister of the 1920s-1930s), the Cambridge 5 spy ring (Kim Philby et al.), and Jawaharlal Nehru, among others—and managed to emerge not only a sensible person but also one of distinctly free-market views. He had the advantage, of course, of having been raised in the Crown Colony of Singapore, which, like Hong Kong, continued to practice unfettered capitalism long after it had become unfashionable in the Home Islands. Thus Lee fashioned in Singapore, the city state he ruled from 1959 to 1990, one of the most dynamic free-market societies on earth—one that has remarkably enough gone from [per capita GDP of \\$512 a head in the 1965 to over \\$56,000 a head today](#), making it richer than Japan or Germany.

He was seemingly immune to the Fabian Socialist nostrums taught at Cambridge and other British universities in the first half of the twentieth century—misguided ideas which did so much to mess up developing countries in Africa and Asia where they were dutifully imported by credulous Oxbridge and London School of Economics graduates. Lee harked back to earlier British ideas—the ideas associated with free market apostles of the 19th century such as Richard Cobden and John Bright of Anti-Corn Law League fame—and his tiny state greatly benefitted from his iconoclasm.

Lee was more resistant to another British tradition—one of political liberty. He often said that Singapore could not afford the messiness of true democracy because it was only big enough to field one A Team—it couldn't keep rotating politicians. There may or may not have been something to this. It is undoubtedly true that Lee made Singapore into one of the best-run societies on the planet, which remained for the most part free of the nepotism and corruption that are such a big problem in other Confucian societies where family ties mean so much. But Lee went further and often argued that democracy simply would not work in Asia—that Asia had to find its own way based on “Asian values.”

This is demonstrably false. Countries such as Taiwan and South Korea have evolved into vibrant multiparty democracies. Even Singapore appears to be headed in that direction, with Lee's People's Action Party, now led by his son the current prime minister, having lost 40% of the seats in parliament to opposition candidates in the last general election in 2011. If this trend continues—and let's hope it does—it is not inconceivable to imagine a different party taking power in Singapore, one that might even be inclined to lift the stifling restrictions on the press that Lee imposed in order to defend social order.

Admittedly Singapore flourished without the normal checks and balances of liberal democracy but it is a unique case, not only because it is a tiny city state, but also because it was run by Lee Kuan Yew, the greatest dictator of the 20th century. Not only was he foresighted in his economic policies but also he was remarkably restrained in taking advantage of the absolute power that

he wielded. He did not become a megalomaniacal tyrant like Vladimir Putin, Saddam Hussein, Mobutu Sese Seko, Robert Mugabe, Kim Il Sung, Mao Zedong, "Papa Doc" Duvalier, Fidel Castro, or countless others. Only a few other dictators—Park Chun Hee, the founder of modern South Korea, comes to mind—deserve to be mentioned in the same breath with him.

If there were more Lee Kuan Yews, the case for democracy would be a lot weaker. But there was only one Lee, and it is impossible to imagine any political system, even one as advanced as Singapore's, replicating his greatness for generation after generation, absent considerable advances in genetic cloning, without running the risks that come from handing absolute power to someone who is not fit to exercise it.

Many countries in Asia have sought to emulate what they saw as Singapore's example—free market economics combined with autocratic politics. Few have managed it. Indeed the People's Republic of China is now seeing how difficult of a juggling act that is to pull off: China has been experiencing breakneck economic growth but also extreme corruption, pollution, and other ills associated with an undemocratic system in which insiders rig the game to their benefit without having to experience any outside scrutiny from a free press, opposition parties, or an independent judiciary.

Neither a democracy nor a dictatorship is likely to produce a leader of Lee Kuan Yew's caliber very often. But the saving grace in democracy is that there are limits on what the chief executive can do. Indeed the genius of America's Constitution is that it has allowed the United States to survive presidents such as James Buchanan, Millard Fillmore, Herbert Hoover, and Jimmy Carter. Singapore and its many imitators would be well advised to stop trying to replicate Lee Kuan Yew and instead institutionalize systems that are robust enough to flourish under leaders of lesser caliber.

## **Jewish World Review**

### **[Western advocates of 'nation-building' should master recently deceased statesman's legacy of lessons](#)**

by Thomas Sowell

It is not often that the leader of a small city-state — in this case, Singapore — gets an international reputation. But no one deserved it more than Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of Singapore as an independent country in 1959, and its prime minister from 1959 to 1990. With his death, he leaves behind a legacy valuable not only to Singapore but to the world.

Born in Singapore in 1923, when it was a British colony, Lee Kuan Yew studied at Cambridge University after World War II, and was much impressed by the orderly, law-abiding England of that day. It was a great contrast with the poverty-stricken and crime-ridden Singapore of that era.

Today Singapore has a per capita Gross Domestic Product more than 50 percent higher than that of the United Kingdom and a crime rate a small fraction of that in England. A 2010 study showed more patents and patent applications from the small city-state of Singapore than from Russia. Few places in the world can match Singapore for cleanliness and orderliness.

This remarkable transformation of Singapore took place under the authoritarian rule of Lee Kuan Yew for two decades as prime minister. And it happened despite some very serious handicaps that led to chaos and self-destruction in other countries.

Singapore had little in the way of natural resources. It even had to import drinking water from neighboring Malaysia. Its population consisted of people of different races, languages and religions — the Chinese majority and the sizable Malay and Indian minorities.

At a time when other Third World countries were setting up government-controlled economies and blaming their poverty on "exploitation" by more advanced industrial nations, Lee Kuan Yew promoted a market economy, welcomed foreign investments, and made Singapore's children learn English, to maximize the benefits from Singapore's position as a major port for international commerce.

Singapore's schools also taught the separate native languages of its Chinese, Malay and Indian Tamil peoples. But everyone had to learn English, because it was the language of international commerce, on which the country's economic prosperity depended.

In short, Lee Kuan Yew was pragmatic, rather than ideological. Many observers saw a contradiction between Singapore's free markets and its lack of democracy. But its long-serving prime minister did not deem its people ready for democracy. Instead, he offered a decent government with much less corruption than in other countries in that region of the world.

His example was especially striking in view of many in the West who seem to think that democracy is something that can be exported to countries whose history and traditions are wholly different from those of Western nations that evolved democratic institutions over the centuries.

Even such a champion of freedom as John Stuart Mill said in the 19th century: "The ideally best form of government, it is scarcely necessary to say, does not mean one which is practicable or eligible in all states of civilization."

In other words, democracy has prerequisites, and peoples and places without those prerequisites will not necessarily do well when democratic institutions are created.

The most painful recent example of that is Iraq, where a democratically elected government, set up by expenditure of the blood and treasure of the United States, became one of the obstacles to a united people with the military strength to protect itself from international terrorists.

In many parts of the Third World, post-colonial governments set up democratically made sure that there would be no more democracy that could replace its original leaders. This led to the cynical phrase, "one man, one vote — one time."

Democracy can be wonderful as a principle where it is viable, but disastrous as a fetish where it is not.

Lee Kuan Yew understood the pitfalls and steered around them. If our Western advocates of "nation-building" in other countries would learn that lesson, it could be the most valuable legacy of Lee Kuan Yew.

## **Washington Post**

### **The world will miss Lee Kuan Yew**

by Henry Kissinger

... The great tragedy of Lee's life was that his beloved wife was felled by a stroke that left her a prisoner in her body, unable to communicate or receive communication. Through all that time, Lee sat by her bedside in the evening reading to her. He had faith that she understood despite the evidence to the contrary.

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## **Jewish World Review**

### **A Simple Question**

by Thomas Sowell

It is amazing how a simple question can cause a complex lie to collapse like a house of cards. The simple question was asked by Bill O'Reilly of the Fox News Channel, and it was addressed to two Democrats. He asked what has Hillary Clinton ever accomplished.

The two Democrats immediately sidestepped the question and started reciting their talking points in favor of Hillary. But O'Reilly kept coming back to the fact that nothing they were talking about was an accomplishment.

For someone who has spent her entire adult life in politics, including being a Senator and then a Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton has nothing to show for all those years — no significant legislation of hers that she got passed in the Senate, and only an unbroken series of international setbacks for the United States during her time as Secretary of State.

Before Barack Obama entered the White House and appointed Mrs. Clinton Secretary of State, Al Qaeda operatives in Iraq had notified their higher ups, stationed in Pakistan, that their cause was lost in Iraq and that there was no point sending more men there.

Hosni Mubarak was in charge in Egypt. He posed no threat to American or Western interests in the Middle East or to Christians within Egypt or to Israel. But the Obama administration threw its weight behind the Muslim Brotherhood, which took over and began terrorizing Christians in Egypt and promoting hostility to Israel.

In Libya next door, the Qaddafi regime had already given up its weapons of mass destruction, after they saw what happened to Saddam Hussein in Iraq. But President Obama's foreign policy, carried out by Secretary of State Clinton, got Qaddafi removed, after which Libya became a terrorist haven where an American ambassador was killed, for the first time in decades.

The rationale for getting rid of Middle East leaders who posed no threat to American interests was that they were undemocratic and their people were restless. But there are no democracies in the Middle East, except for Israel. Moreover, the people were restless in Iran and Syria, and

the Obama-Clinton foreign policy did nothing to support those who were trying to overthrow these regimes.

It would be only fair to balance this picture with foreign policy triumphs of the Obama-Clinton team. But there are none. Not in the Middle East, not in Europe, where the Russians have invaded the Crimea, and not in Asia, where both China and North Korea are building up threatening military forces, while the Obama administration has been cutting back on American military forces.

Hillary Clinton became an iconic figure by feeding the media and the left the kind of rhetoric they love. Barack Obama did the same and became president. Neither had any concrete accomplishments besides rhetoric beforehand, and both have had the opposite of accomplishments after taking office.

They have something else in common. They attract the votes of those people who vote for demographic symbolism — "the first black president" to be followed by "the first woman president" — and neither to be criticized, lest you be denounced for racism or sexism.

It is staggering that there are sane adults who can vote for someone to be President of the United States as if they are in school, just voting for "most popular boy" or "most popular girl" — or, worse yet, voting for someone who will give them free stuff.

Whoever holds that office makes decisions involving the life and death of Americans and — especially if Iran gets a nuclear arsenal — the life and death of this nation. It took just two nuclear bombs — neither of them as powerful as those available today — to get a very tough nation like Japan to surrender.

Anyone familiar with World War II battles in the Pacific knows that it was not unusual for 90 percent of the Japanese troops defending Iwo Jima or other islands to fight to the death, even after it was clear that American troops had them beaten.

When people like that surrender after two nuclear bombs, do not imagine that today's soft Americans — led by the likes of Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton — will fight on after New York and Chicago have been reduced to radioactive ashes.

Meanwhile, ISIS and other terrorists are giving us a free demonstration of what surrender would mean. But perhaps we can kick the can down the road, and leave that as a legacy to our children and grandchildren, along with the national debt.

## **Orange County Register**

### **[Race, class issues starting to split Silicon Valley alliance of tech, progressives](#)**

by Joel Kotkin

The rise of today's progressive-dominated Democratic Party stemmed from a brilliant melding of minorities, the poor, the intelligentsia and, quite surprising, the new ultrarich of Silicon Valley. For the past decade, this alliance has worked for both sides, giving the tech titans politically correct cover while suggesting their support for the progressives' message can work with business.

Not only did tech overwhelmingly favor President Obama with campaign contributions but Obama also overwhelmingly won the Silicon Valley electorate, taking the once GOP-leaning Santa Clara County with 70 percent of the vote. After the 2012 election, a host of former top Obama aides – including former campaign manager David Plouffe (Uber) and press spokesman Jay Carney (Amazon) – have signed up to work for tech giants. Perhaps even more revealing was the politically inspired firing last year of former Mozilla CEO Brendan Eich for contributing to California's Proposition 8, which banned gay marriage.

Yet, despite these ties and PC eruptions, this alliance between the ideologically and the technically advanced shows signs of unraveling. This reflects, over time, what Marxists might have referred to as “contradictions” between two very different worldviews: the disruptive, acquisitive, aggressive spirit inherent in entrepreneurial capitalism and the increasingly egalitarian, property-controlling instincts of the progressive Left. To many progressives, the Silicon Valley elite are no longer scrappy up-and-comers, but increasingly resemble a new oligarchy.

Like the nobles of the Middle Ages or the corporate hegemony of the industrial era, Silicon Valley billionaires are increasingly asked to take responsibility for many of society's ills. These include a wide range of issues, from feminism and race to privacy and, most critically, class inequality. Supporting gay marriage or measures to fight climate change may no longer be enough to win over progressives.

Arguably the most widely acknowledged conflict – at least the raciest – involves sex discrimination. From its inception as a cradle of technology, the Valley's culture has been highly masculine. Indeed, roughly 26 percent of tech industry workers are women, well below their 47 percent share of the total workforce. Nor is this likely to change soon: only 18 percent of computer science graduates are women, down from 37 percent in the mid-'80s. Stanford researcher Vivek Wadhwa describes the Valley as still “a boys' club that regarded women as less capable than men and subjected them to negative stereotypes and abuse.”

This pattern of sexual discrimination and outright misogyny has been cited in a recent suit brought by Ellen Pao, a former employee, against one of the Valley's premier venture-capital firms, Kleiner Perkins, which, she alleged, maintained a workplace steeped in sexism and locker room arrogance.

The recent attack by feminists on video games is also roiling that industry, long one of tech's most profitable sectors. Some industry executives, bowing to pressure from feminists, have agreed to tone down and even alter their games' story lines to make them more acceptable to women's groups. But there's also strong blowback among game designers, who feel they may be forced to toe the “party line,” even in their essentially frivolous industry.

Race is another hot spot for oligarch-progressive conflict. Due, in part, to rapid deindustrialization – Silicon Valley has lost 80,000 manufacturing jobs since 2000 – some areas, notably, San Jose, where manufacturing firms were clustered, look more like a Rust Belt relic than an exemplar of tech prosperity. This is particularly true for African Americans and Hispanics, who make up roughly one-third of the Valley's population but barely 5 percent of employees in the valley's top firms.

As a result, many minorities, including some whose roots in the area go back generations, are not participating in the Valley's boom. From 2009-11, earnings dropped 18 percent for blacks and 5 percent for Latinos, according to a 2013 Joint Venture Silicon Valley report. As Russell

Hancock, president of the group, conceded, “Silicon Valley is two valleys. There is a valley of haves, and a valley of have-nots.”

This class divide is increasingly central to progressive politics, which is bad news, indeed, for the tech oligarchs. Among the perceptive parts of the Left, the dissonance between the progressive-tilted techies and the economic reality they are creating is too obvious to ignore. “Silicon Valley,” the leftist British newspaper the Guardian wryly suggests, “offers us a new social net: We might be forced to sell our cars and default on our mortgages, but we would never lose access to Spotify and Google. Death of starvation is still a possibility but death of content starvation is no longer in the cards.”

Recently, a progressive-focused newsletter, Capital and Main, has launched a direct assault on some of Silicon Valley’s most prominent companies, accusing them of “driving inequality” in California. Among the five firms targeted by the group have been some top California-based corporations, including four tech firms – Cisco, Intel, Oracle and Hewlett-Packard. The fifth company, Chevron, appears to be somewhat tacked on, and, in any case, is irrelevant as California seems determined to chase its last long-standing energy giant out of the state.

Ultimately, the Capital and Main assault reflects the fundamental contradiction between the tech industry and the progressive fringe that now defines much of Democratic politics, particularly in California. The biggest protests against Google, for example, have been against that company’s fleet of luxury buses for its employees in San Francisco, ground zero for the modern American Left. Opposition to Uber, Airbnb and other “sharing” companies has come primarily from progressives concerned with effects on professional taxi drivers or renters. What much of the Right, and free market economists, celebrate turns out to be antithetical to today’s progressive movement.

Other conflicts are brewing. Some may involve environmental laws, for example, to force densification of the state’s housing, particularly in the Bay Area. Although tech firms may be publicly in support of such policies, in practice, these ideas run counter to an industry that continues to locate headquarters in primarily car-oriented suburban locales.

Apple’s new headquarters in Cupertino already has come under attack by smart-growth advocates who deride it as “sprawl-tastic.” Certainly, newly announced plans by Google and Linked In to expand in suburban Mountain View could also offend the retro-urbanist sentiments of the state’s planning officials, as well as their allies in the pundit class.

Further down the road, the use of environmental laws to force densification and restrict peripheral growth seems certain to boost housing prices – already among the highest in the nation – and will make it ever harder to attract middle-age managers and technologists to the Bay Area, particularly if they have families. This will become more of an issue as the tech industry moves from youth-oriented apps to the “Internet of things,” which will need to attract more experienced employees, including experts in heating and cooling systems, automobiles and medical devices.

The immediate response from the oligarchs, and their swelling ranks of highly paid public-relations consultants, will likely be symbolic, mouthing the politically correct stance on climate change, even as they take off in their private jets. Also expect them to put more money into charitable activities, which could turn displaced cab drivers or factory assemblers into future wards of the tech elite. In the end, it seems little different from a glossy form of the Gilded Age – or feudalism.

In the long run, rising inequality poses an existential threat to the tech industry, across California and the nation. Tech firms ultimately will not be able to address this merely with *noblesse oblige*, political cover or PR stunts. And the stakes are large: If the negative impacts of tech are not addressed, the population will seek to tax more of the oligarchs' holdings and restrict their freedom of operation.

Early signs can be seen in some left-tilting cities – San Francisco, Portland, Ore., Los Angeles and even Madison, Wis. – where progressives have opposed Uber's rise in favor of licensed cab drivers, a working-class group that still aspires to make a decent living. Further on, the Valley's increasing interest in "robotization" threatens many workers, particularly in restaurants, medical offices, warehouses and truck driving, as well as many who still labor in factories.

Class warfare, inevitably, will come to the tech industry, which has been slow to acknowledge its existence. It is also already undermining tech's alliance with progressives. In the process, tech executives may be forced to forge new links to moderate Democrats as well as even the most disdained Republicans. In coming years, this could alter the now one-sided nature of California politics, and perhaps spark a serious debate nationally about how to make technological progress more of a benefit to society as a whole without slowing beneficial innovation.

*Joel Kotkin is the R.C. Hobbs Fellow in Urban Studies at Chapman University in Orange and the executive director of the Houston-based Center for Opportunity Urbanism ([www.opportunityurbanism.org](http://www.opportunityurbanism.org)). His most recent book is "The New Class Conflict."*

## Contentions

### [Ted Cruz is a Right-Wing Barack Obama](#)

by John Steele Gordon

Barack Obama was spectacularly unprepared to be president and, except for the true believers, his presidency has been a disaster because of it. He had no executive experience whatever but was supposed to be the chief executive officer of the largest organization on earth, the federal government. He had no political leadership experience, having been a backbencher in both the Illinois Senate and the United States Senate, with no legislative accomplishments to his credit. He had no foreign affairs experience. He has proved to be a terrible negotiator, ideologically rigid and contemptuous of any opinion but his own, although negotiating—getting to yes—is the very essence of politics. Today Senator Ted Cruz is announcing his candidacy for the Republican nomination for president. Is he qualified?

1) Executive experience. He has very little. He was director of the office of policy planning at the Federal Trade Commission and associate deputy attorney general in the early years of the George W. Bush administration. He served as solicitor general of Texas for five years (2003 to 2008) and thus has more experience than President Obama. But that's not saying much. He was only a cog in the administrative machine. I imagine that the solicitor general of Texas presides over an office small enough for him to know everyone in it. Going from there to the presidency is a bit like going from executive officer of a destroyer to Chief of Naval Operations in one leap.

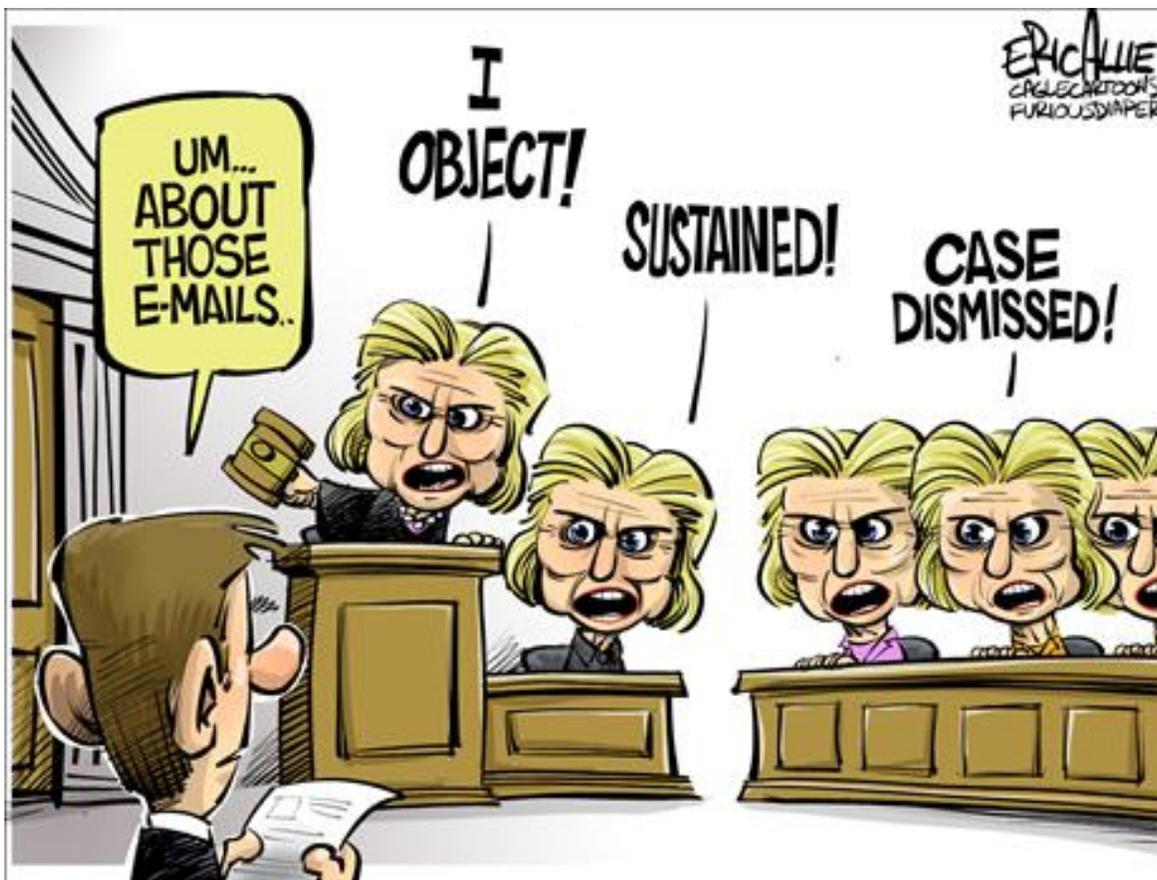
2) Legislative experience. Again, Cruz's experience is very thin. He's been a senator from Texas for a little over two years. He has not been in a leadership position. Indeed he has often defied the leadership of his party.

3) Foreign affairs experience. Like Obama, Cruz has none.

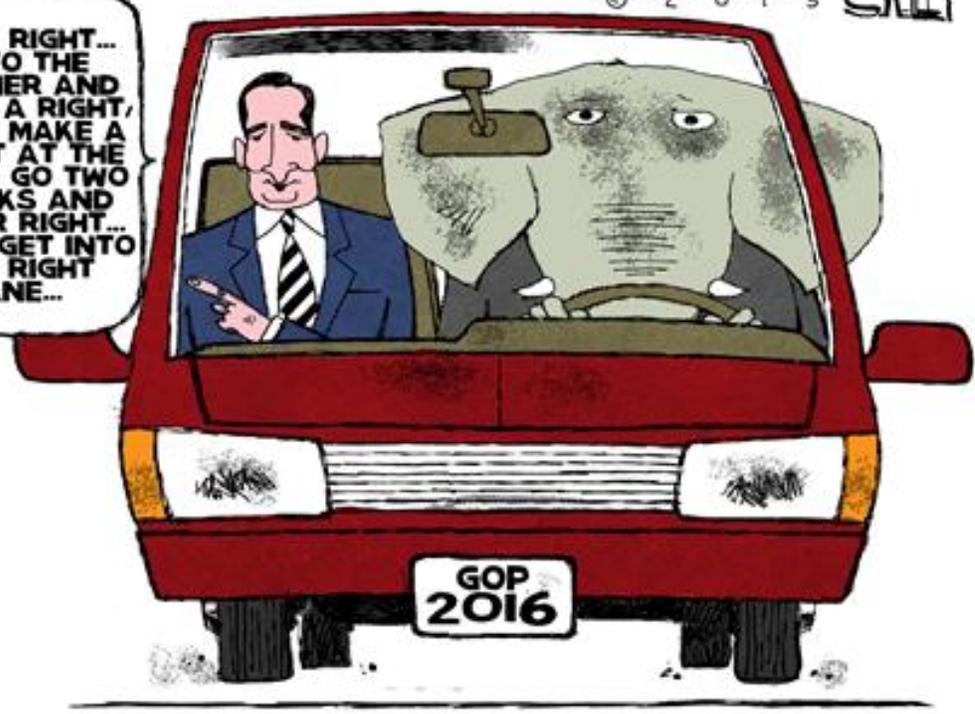
4) Education. Here Cruz has it all over Obama. They both had Ivy League educations, but Cruz graduated cum laude from Princeton and magna cum laude from Harvard Law School. Obama's grades are state secrets, a pretty good indication that they are not impressive, as he is not exactly the type to hide his light under a bushel. We do know he received no honors upon graduation. While Obama was president of the Harvard Law Review, he published nothing in it. Cruz was primary editor there and was executive editor at the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy, and a founding editor of the Harvard Latino Law Review. After graduation, Cruz clerked for Circuit Court Judge J. Michael Luttig, and then for Chief Justice William Rehnquist, a very high honor in the legal profession.

5) Negotiating skills. Like Obama, Cruz doesn't seem to have any and no desire to use them if he did. He's a bomb-thrower and an ideologue, insisting on touchdowns or nothing rather than moving the ball down the field.

In short, Ted Cruz is not, except for his highly distinguished academic career and legal clerkships, dissimilar to the present incumbent of the White House. It seems to me that the last thing this country needs come January 20th, 2017, is a right-wing Barack Obama.



TURN RIGHT...  
GO TO THE  
CORNER AND  
HANG A RIGHT,  
THEN MAKE A  
RIGHT AT THE  
LIGHT, GO TWO  
BLOCKS AND  
VEER RIGHT...  
THEN GET INTO  
THE RIGHT  
LANE...



**CRUZ CONTROL**

I BELIEVE IN THE  
CONSTITUTION, LESS  
REGULATIONS, LOWER  
TAXES AND A SECURE  
BORDER.

**EXTREMIST!**



# BIZ vs GOV'T.

