

June 16, 2015

We have Paul Greenberg today because of this delightful quote he brings us from Tom Lehrer.

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... Today, to quote Joseph Epstein in a recent issue of the Weekly Standard:

*"Owing to the spread of victimhood, we have today a large aristocracy of the suffering, the put-upon and the unlucky. Blacks, gays, women, American Indians, Hispanics, the obese, Vietnam veterans, illegal immigrants, the handicapped, single parents, fast-food workers, the homeless, poets and anyone else able to establish underdog bona fides can now claim to be victims. Many years ago, I watched a show on television that invited us to consider the plight of unwed fathers. We are, it sometimes seems, a nation of victims."*

*Victimhood is no longer something to be overcome but celebrated. And the can-do American spirit has become the can't-do, which is not a good sign for any country.*

Roger Simon says Hillary Clinton might be America's most boring speaker.

*Forget that she lies incessantly and stands for virtually nothing that's discernible other than her own self-interest, Hillary Clinton is one of the most boring public speakers extant. I have heard better speeches at high school, maybe even grammar school, graduations than HRC gave in New York Saturday in the second — or is it the third — debut speech of her campaign.*

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*... But best of all she nattered on about "secret unaccountable money that is distorting our elections." What a howler. From the woman behind the Clinton Foundation? Were we listening to Saturday Night Live or was it The Onion? ...*

Daily Beast also posted on Clinton's relaunch.

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Since that time, Clinton has not been heard from much as she has traveled around, talking to some voters and ignoring questions from the media and trying to seem as normal as possible despite being anything but. Saturday's event was designed to highlight her champion-ness by contrasting her with the New Deal Democrat, whose Four Freedoms she has attempted to mimic with her own "Four Fights," the economy, families, campaign finance and national security.

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Roosevelt Island, transformed by architects in the 1930s to serve as a "living memorial," looks like a cross between something out of Grand Theft Auto and a ghost town. It has a fake forest, and brutalist apartment complexes. Its abandoned insane asylum was turned into a luxury highrise.

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Jonathan Tobin posts on HRC's reintroduction.

... Like past attempts by politicians to re-imagine themselves ("new Nixon"), Hillary's second start to her campaign was to a large degree a sleight of hand maneuver. Her problems stemmed from blows to her reputation from revelations about her bizarre use of private emails and the ethical questions that arose once the press began scrutinizing the Clinton Family Foundation. Clinton's inability or unwillingness to candidly address these issues dovetailed with her refusal to speak to the press after she began her campaign to give her the impression of a woman trying to run for president in a bubble.

Clinton is supposed to start giving interviews to local press outlets this week while still shunning more aggressive national reporters. But the problem goes deeper than whether she's dodging the press altogether as opposed to giving canned and evasive answers to questions. If Clinton's trust and favorability ratings are under water, it's not because she hasn't given interviews. It's because the public understands that she is a chameleon who will change her positions as often as she changes her accent. Her willingness to adopt a southern drawl in the south and then drop it when north of the Mason-Dixon line is one of the most obvious and shameless bits of pandering by a politician since Thomas Edison first recorded sound. But while that might be forgiven, the country has also noticed that Clinton has made a hard left turn on both foreign and domestic issues that gives the lie to her pose as a "fighter."

The most obvious instance this past week was her steadfast refusal to take a stand one way or the other on the trade bill that failed in the House last Friday because rank and file Democrats opposed President Obama. Clinton had been on record supporting this concept throughout her time as secretary of state and before that in the Senate. But she stayed silent as Obama went down to a humiliating defeat and then said nothing about it the next day in her speech. ...

Jennifer Rubin takes her turn.

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*Karen Finney and John Podesta both stumbled as they tried to explain why Clinton could not say now precisely what her position on trade authority is. Jake Tapper cracked, "I had Karen Finney on the show yesterday, and I thought I was going to have an aneurysm trying to get a position from her." In telling us Clinton needs to see the deal first, her aides are in essence saying she has no position of her own, no vision of what a trade deal should look like. Chris Wallace admonished Finney that Clinton didn't need to know what was in the deal to take a position on trade authority. ("Karen, we're not talking about the trade deal here. We're talking about giving President Obama the same authority that President Clinton had on NAFTA so that when he finally does negotiate a deal, he can give it to Congress and they can either vote it up-or-down but they can't amend it.") Following Finney, Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) told Wallace, "That was one of the most painful interviews I think I have watched in a long time. I just — I can't believe that — pick a position. I mean, I — that's what leaders do."*

*Nor could Finney explain why Clinton wasn't a hypocrite for condemning hedge fund managers while taking a quarter of a million dollars in speaking fees. If her message on Saturday was raw meat for the liberal base, her biography can't be forgotten. ...*

*... It is telling that the son of one president and the brother of another is more accessible, more revealing and more direct than Hillary Clinton. In failing to even attempt to speak for herself and stand up to questioning, she repeated the cardinal sin that has defined her first few months as a candidate: She lacks the political courage and skill to expose herself and tell voters what she really thinks. You can't run for president while running from your record, the voters and the media — especially if you have as many flaws as she does.*

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## **Jewish World Review**

### **You can't say that**

by Paul Greenberg

"When I was in college, there were certain words you couldn't say in front of a girl. Now you can say them, but you can't say 'girl.' "

--Tom Lehrer

Another editor here at the newspaper paper has passed on a complaint about one of our editorials, specifically the phrase "red man" as a synonym for American Indians -- excuse me, Native Americans. It's not clear from this email whether it was the "red" or the "man" or both that

raised our reader's hackles. Either could have attracted the attention of today's Language Police these politically correct days.

Our always-on-the-alert verbal monitors may not be aware that man embraces woman, as in the title chairman -- of a House committee or an American corporation. Traditional usage tends to elude our verbal overseers. Why that should be, I gave up trying to figure out long ago.

Besides, the political dos and don'ts that govern these things may change without notice, depending on the target of the moment.

That way, the accused remains subject to the Authorities' always changing verbal whims. As in the old Soviet Union, where dissenters, composers and other politically unreliable types could never be sure they were following the party line. Since no one knew just what it was at any given time. So a Shostakovich or Babel could be hauled before a people's court on any grounds or none at all. The object of the game was not to enforce any clear rule but to make all suspect. And fearful.

Anyone who prefers plain English just doesn't understand the game. Dare stand up against the Language Police and you're subject to being labeled a racist or sexist -- and being bullied into submission. ("Change your ways or we'll boycott your business.") Or maybe just send you an email informing you that you've offended and are In Trouble with the world's right-thinkers, or in this case left-thinkers.

But there are always those stubborn types who refuse to be intimidated. Count me among them. Because here's one old newspaperman who's going to go on using plain English as best he can. The poor old language needs all the help it can get.

There was a different and better time when writers like E.M. Forster wrote of "the aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate, and the plucky." Back then we admired those who rose above whatever physical or social disabilities they might have.

A president like Franklin Roosevelt might be celebrated or detested because of his politics, but not because he was paralyzed.

Some of us grew up scarcely noticing that our president was in a wheelchair or on crutches, and then the fact was only incidental. Which was how he preferred it. It would have been impolite to call attention to it.

But now identity politics has made disability almost all that counts in our politics. Or a history of being discriminated against. Or any other grievance. No wonder it can sometimes seem as if we have become a nation of grievance collectors. Why not? It pays off -- in political power.

Today, to quote Joseph Epstein in a recent issue of the Weekly Standard:

"Owing to the spread of victimhood, we have today a large aristocracy of the suffering, the put-upon and the unlucky. Blacks, gays, women, American Indians, Hispanics, the obese, Vietnam veterans, illegal immigrants, the handicapped, single parents, fast-food workers, the homeless, poets and anyone else able to establish underdog bona fides can now claim to be victims. Many years ago, I watched a show on television that invited us to consider the plight of unwed fathers. We are, it sometimes seems, a nation of victims."

Victimhood is no longer something to be overcome but celebrated. And the can-do American spirit has become the can't-do, which is not a good sign for any country.

**Roger L. Simon**

## **[Hillary Clinton: America's Most Boring Public Speaker](#)**

Forget that she lies incessantly and stands for virtually nothing that's discernible other than her own self-interest, Hillary Clinton is one of the most boring public speakers extant. I have heard better speeches at high school, maybe even grammar school, graduations than HRC gave in New York Saturday in the second — or is it the third — debut speech of her campaign.

It was problem after problem, cliché after cliché until you couldn't listen anymore. Needless to say, there wasn't a fresh idea. No new solutions to these problems on offer, only generalities. (In case you didn't know it, she's for equal pay for women and supports people with disabilities.)

This was a generic speech out of the last twenty years. I kept wondering who were these automatons waving their flags in the audience. Maybe they were worried about the high cost of Ambien. Elect Hillary and we won't need a sleeping pill ever again.

She began by quoting FDR's Four Freedoms but the only ringing phrases in the entire text came from Roosevelt — and of course he delivered them a hundred times better.

But best of all she nattered on about “secret unaccountable money that is distorting our elections.” What a howler. From the woman behind the Clinton Foundation? Were we listening to Saturday Night Live or was it The Onion?

By the time she got to the inevitable discussion of her mother I was about done in, desperately multi-tasking on my computer. I have Hillary to thank for finally getting out a couple of overdue thank you notes.

The sad part is this. Hillary well could get elected. If that happens, America will have chosen someone that majority of its citizen correctly believe to be dishonest. And that is *before* she takes office. That more than anything may destroy the country we know. We will have gone from George Washington and the cherry tree to Hilary Clinton and the thirty thousand erased emails. What is left of America's moral standing in the world — and it isn't much after Obama — will be in tatters.

A standard issue affair from the get go, this speech did nothing.

UPDATE: Media are reporting attendance to have been “moderate.” The planned overflow area was empty. Hey, it was a hot day.

**Daily Beast**

## **[Welcome to Hillary Island, a Pleasant Little Police State](#)**

by Oliva Nuzzi

For the first big speech of her 2016 campaign, Hillary Clinton turned a little-known strip of New York into a serene summertime autocracy, pleasant and creepy at the same time.

It's an odd sensation to be sitting on the back of a golf cart, holding on for dear life, as a member of Hillary Clinton's security team—bald and meat-headed, his blazer straining to remain stitched around his bulky arms—speeds like O.J. Simpson in order to deliver you to a secure location. This can happen, I now know, if you happen to make the mistake of walking down the wrong pathway—of a public park—on your way to a Clinton speech.

"Get in!" he barked. Then, a sigh: "Not your fault." That's just the way things are around here.

Here would be Hillary Island—formerly Roosevelt Island—a strip of land located in the middle of the East River between Manhattan and Queens that some 10,000 New Yorkers call home. More specifically, *here* is Four Freedoms Park—a grassy island enclave named for the Four Freedoms FDR spelled out in his 1941 State of the Union speech: Freedom of speech, of worship, from want, and from fear—where the Clinton team has assembled a red and blue stage, in the shape of an H, for her to pace on as she delivers [her first major campaign speech](#).

Clinton formally declared her candidacy for the Democratic nomination almost exactly a month ago, in April, with a 2:15 video. "Everyday Americans need a champion," she said then. "And I wanna be that champion."

Since that time, Clinton has not been heard from much as she has traveled around, talking to some voters and [ignoring questions from the media](#) and trying to seem as normal as possible despite being anything but. Saturday's event was designed to highlight her champion-ness by contrasting her with the New Deal Democrat, whose Four Freedoms she has attempted to mimic with her own "Four Fights," the economy, families, campaign finance and national security.

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And Four Freedoms Park, located partially beneath the 59<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, is lush and green, and houses a decaying, vine-covered Smallpox Hospital, abandoned in the 1950s. The Hillary campaign installed a forest of port-a-potties and lined the walkways with arrow signs (Hillary's logo) pointing in the direction of her speech, which could be accessed by ascending a glimmering white staircase. In the distance, you could see the "Pepsi-Cola" sign in Queens.



The park feels divorced from Manhattan, whose skyscrapers loom from across the water, not just geographically, but spiritually. With the bomb-sniffing dogs, security guards, metal detectors, police officers, Men In Black-looking security guards and campaign staff speeding around on golf-carts, Hillary Island felt like its own world with its own rule. It's a serene summertime police state—wherein campaign staffers told reporters to stay in their designated area, away from attendees—pleasant and creepy at the same time.

Which might be the best way to describe Clinton herself during Saturday's launch.

In a royal blue blazer and glowing blonde hair, Clinton took to the stage to deliver her Four Fights speech. At times she sounded robotic, like the pol who won't take a position without poll testing it as she has been [accused](#) at others some humanity crept through. All the while, though, it was hard to shake the feeling that she was already president—of this island.

Clinton borrowed from [Elizabeth Warren](#) and her primary competitor Bernie Sanders in her tough-talk about no-good corporations and the need for campaign finance reform. About the latter, she said, "If necessary, I will support a Constitutional amendment to undo the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United."

She repeatedly called for equal rights for the LGBT community, going as far as to criticize the GOP for "turn[ing] their backs on gay people who love each other." (Something Clinton was doing herself just a few years ago.)

Some of Clinton's notes were sour, however. In her criticism of the Republican field of candidates, Clinton alleged, "Now, there may be some new voices in the presidential Republican choir, but they're all singing the same old song—a song called 'Yesterday.'" She continued, "You know the one—all our troubles look as though they're here to stay, and we

need a place to hide away. They believe in yesterday.” Clinton tried to crack a joke, “You’re lucky I didn’t try singing that, too, I’ll tell you!”

At another point, Clinton said, “I may not be the youngest candidate in this race, but I will be the youngest woman President in the history of the United States! And the first grandmother as well.” She followed it up with another attempted joke. “And one additional advantage: You won’t see my hair turn white in the White House. I’ve been coloring it for years!”

## Contentions

### The “New Hillary” Reboot Changes Nothing

by Jonathan S. Tobin

Saturday’s rally for Hillary Clinton was supposed to re-launch her presidential candidacy and if the goal of [the Roosevelt Island event](#) was to garner massive media coverage, it was a great success. Though she had previously announced her intention to run, the first months of her campaign have been so disastrous that a reboot was clearly necessary. But though she didn’t stumble in her remarks, Clinton’s sharp left turn on virtually every issue in a speech that was more a laundry list of concerns for focus groups than anything else reinforces the impression of inauthenticity that has already caused so much trouble. Clinton has flipped on a host of issues from the more centrist stances she adopted in the Senate and before that as a key player in her husband’s administration. Emphasizing the “new Hillary Clinton” who will “fight” for left-wing causes may seem like the smart play to Clinton and her handlers who are now acting as if the Democratic nomination is up for grabs. But while they may think they can reboot again next summer once the general election campaign begins, this strategy not only diminishes her chances of being elected, it is exactly [why polls tell us most Americans don’t trust her](#).

Like past attempts by politicians to re-imagine themselves (“new Nixon”), Hillary’s second start to her campaign was to a large degree a sleight of hand maneuver. Her problems stemmed from blows to her reputation from revelations about her bizarre use of private emails and the ethical questions that arose once the press began scrutinizing the Clinton Family Foundation. Clinton’s inability or unwillingness to candidly address these issues dovetailed with her refusal to speak to the press after she began her campaign to give her the impression of a woman trying to run for president in a bubble.

Clinton is supposed to start giving interviews to local press outlets this week while still shunning more aggressive national reporters. But the problem goes deeper than whether she’s dodging the press altogether as opposed to giving canned and evasive answers to questions. If Clinton’s trust and favorability ratings are under water, it’s not because she hasn’t given interviews. It’s because the public understands that she is a chameleon who will change her positions as often as she changes her accent. Her willingness [to adopt a southern drawl in the south](#) and then drop it when north of the Mason-Dixon line is one of the most obvious and shameless bits of pandering by a politician since Thomas Edison first recorded sound. But while that might be forgiven, the country has also noticed that Clinton has made a hard left turn on both foreign and domestic issues that gives the lie to her pose as a “fighter.”

The most obvious instance this past week was her steadfast refusal to take a stand one way or the other on the trade bill that failed in the House last Friday because rank and file Democrats opposed President Obama. Clinton had been on record supporting this concept throughout her

time as secretary of state and before that in the Senate. But she stayed silent as Obama went down to a humiliating defeat and then said nothing about it the next day in her speech. Subsequently, [she tried to play both ends against the middle](#) by saying she wanted a modified trade bill. This does nothing to further the cause she once supported and also fails to satisfy the unions that flexed their muscles last week on the vote.

That her reboot that aims to show her as a “fighter” happened on the very days that her backers were busy rather fruitlessly trying to spin her cowardice as principle on the cable news shows was bad luck. But the new emphasis on personal biography isn’t likely to help her overcome that setback.

We’re told we’re going to hear a lot about how Mrs. Clinton’s mother’s humble beginnings and struggles influenced her. But Clinton’s decision to run against the same Wall Street that backed her in 2008 by slamming the chutzpah of hedge fund managers making more than kindergarten teachers also opens the former First Lady up to the same sort of scrutiny. The problem with the *Clinton Cash* scandal is not just that it raised serious conflict-of-interest questions that haven’t been answered. It’s that it reminded voters that the Clintons have grown wealthy by giving speeches and profited handsomely from a foundation that is more a political slush fund than anything else.

The left loves Clinton’s new emphasis on soaking the rich. But this is the same Hillary who claimed to be “dead broke” the year she and her husband received \$18 million in book advances. It’s the same Hillary who made hundreds of thousands of dollars per speech. This marks her as a hypocrite on income inequality. The biography she wants to run on tells us the only operating principle in her political career is opportunism. That’s why she changed positions on foreign policy (Iraq, Cuba); social issues like gay marriage, immigration, abandoning her husband’s stances on crime and, of course, trade.

The new Hillary is talking more like a left-winger to ensure that no one gets to her left in the next year as she waltzes to the Democratic nomination. But she’s still the same politician that voters view with unease even if they’d like a woman to be president and are unsure about her potential GOP rivals. This is a dilemma no amount of repackaging can fix and in fact efforts to do so only remind us of her former stances. Clinton’s shady ethics and shifting positions indelibly mark her as a politician no one outside of her party base can trust. Just as Republicans were rightly chided for forcing Mitt Romney so far to the right that it hurt him in the general election in 2012, the new Hillary is an unforced error that may come back to haunt the candidate in the fall of 2016.

## Right Turn

### [A rotten Sunday cuts short Hillary Clinton’s rollout](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

After a lackluster relaunch speech, Hillary Clinton continued to hide from the media, thereby leaving the stage to her less than capable flacks and her critics, including increasingly frustrated reporters and hostile pundits. The speech was nothing special (“It seemed to me to highlight some of her weaknesses as a campaigner; there was a rote quality to her speeches, a certain leaden quality, even the audience to me looked a little bit rote,” [observed Peggy Noonan](#)), but it was certainly better than what followed.

Karen Finney and [John Podesta](#) both stumbled as they tried to explain why Clinton could not say now precisely what her position on trade authority is. [Jake Tapper cracked](#), “I had Karen Finney on the show yesterday, and I thought I was going to have an aneurysm trying to get a position from her.” In telling us Clinton needs to see the deal first, her aides are in essence saying she has no position of her own, no vision of what a trade deal should look like. [Chris Wallace admonished](#) Finney that Clinton didn’t need to know what was in the deal to take a position on trade *authority*. (“Karen, we’re not talking about the trade deal here. We’re talking about giving President Obama the same authority that President Clinton had on NAFTA so that when he finally does negotiate a deal, he can give it to Congress and they can either vote it up-or-down but they can’t amend it.”) Following Finney, Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) told Wallace, “That was one of the most painful interviews I think I have watched in a long time. I just — I can’t believe that — pick a position. I mean, I — that’s what leaders do.”

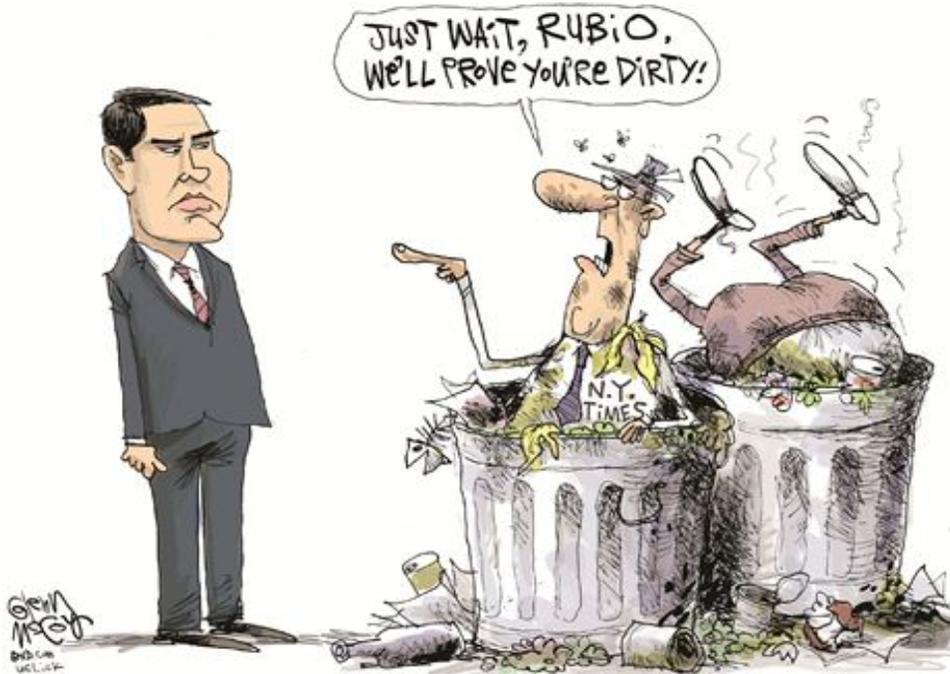
Nor could Finney explain why Clinton wasn’t a hypocrite for condemning hedge fund managers while taking a quarter of a million dollars in speaking fees. If her message on Saturday was raw meat for the liberal base, her biography can’t be forgotten. One by one pundits and Republicans slammed her ethics, her lack of candor and her evasion of the media. [Evan Thomas](#) did not shy from comparing her to Richard Nixon: “Hillary has some Nixon tendencies. She had a sense of grievance, she thinks the press is out to get her, she’s not wrong about that. But that, over the long run, that sense of grievance, and that sort of petulance can get you into trouble.” [On ABC News’s “This Week,”](#) New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie slammed her as well: “I’ve done 146 town hall meetings in the last five years in New Jersey and around the country. Mrs. Clinton doesn’t hear from anybody. She doesn’t talk to anybody. She doesn’t take questions from anybody. How would she know what real Americans are really concerned about?”

Pundits slammed Clinton for her paucity of ideas and her near total avoidance of her own foreign policy record. [Ryan Lizza](#) remarked that in her relaunch speech there was “almost nothing specific about foreign policy, which is surprising for a former secretary of state. . . . What to do about these free trade agreements, what to do about Iran, the Keystone pipeline, these big issues that she needs to explain her position.” As Andrea Mitchell said dryly, “[S]he’s not talking about foreign policy, that’s for sure.” Surely, no one else would with her record and with the international situation as chaotic as is.

It did not help that even Jeb Bush, who is not yet a declared candidate, agreed to an interview for CNN’s State of the Union. For all the comparison between the two as dynastic candidates, the difference in their approach to campaigning is already obvious. As Bush said, “I got to share it — share my passion for service when I was governor and telling that story is going to be part of this. I don’t have to disassociate myself from my family. I love them. But, I know that I’m on — for me to be successful I’m going to have to show my heart and tell my story.” Bob Woodward remarked there was “something authentic about the street car interview.....with the cars going right behind him. Can you imagine? Some of the other candidates, all handlers would say, oh no, they’d be stopping traffic.” And even Democrat and Clinton supporter Donna Brazille acknowledged, “Well, I have got to give Jeb Bush this. He is trying to run as his own person, being authentic and true to himself. And he is owning to his own — the issues that he cared deeply about. And I hope he doesn’t shrink from the conversation on common core, education standards or immigration reform just because he has to run to the far right in order to win. He managed to go to Europe without making a mistake.”

It is telling that the son of one president and the brother of another is more accessible, more revealing and more direct than Hillary Clinton. In failing to even attempt to speak for herself and stand up to questioning, she repeated the cardinal sin that has defined her first few months as a candidate: *She lacks the political courage and skill to expose herself and tell voters what she*

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A SCENE FROM "GALL STREET"



SEVENTY YEARS AGO,  
AMERICA FOUGHT WWII  
AND HELPED  
LIBERATE EUROPE.



WE FACED DOWN  
COMMUNISM WITH THE  
BERLIN AIRLIFT AND WE  
WON THE LONG  
COLD WAR.



AMERICA OFFERED THE  
PEACE CORPS, PUT MEN  
ON THE MOON, AND DID  
BIG THINGS;



NOW, WE'RE TOO BUSY  
WITH SELFIES AND  
TWITTER AND  
FACEBOOK  
TO LEAD THE WORLD  
AND CONFRONT  
THE SCOURGE OF  
ISIS.



THIS ISN'T THE  
GREATEST  
GENERATION.  
IT'S THE  
GREATEST  
**DEGENERATION!**



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