

August 21, 2017 - HYSTERIA FREE

Here's a few items not as crazy as what the telly and print media bring us.

Craig Pirrong, The Streetwise Professor, puts context to Charlottesville.

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Right now the ostensible target is the legacy of the Confederacy, but once the battle of the Confederate monuments is won, they will move on to the next target, which will inevitably include sooner or later every person in the American political pantheon, and every political, social, and economic institution that reflects the American past and tradition. ...

... Trump's calling out of Antifa as well as Nazis has led supposedly conservative establishment figures like Mitt Romney, Lindsey Graham, Marco Rubio, and Charles Krauthammer to differentiate the indistinguishable, and to defend Antifa because of their opposition to Nazis and racists.

What Romney et al don't get is who the hard-core left identifies as racists: it's pretty much everybody who doesn't agree with them in totality. It includes most whites (which is ironic, given the pastiness of most of the cheekbones and foreheads visible between black hats and masks). I guarantee it includes Mitt Romney, Lindsey Graham, Marco Rubio, and Charles Krauthammer. By vouching for them now, and validating their claim of authority in establishing who is and who is not a racist, Romney et al are putting a target on a lot of people who are by no stretch of the imagination white supremacists or Nazis.

But of course the left has always benefitted from useful idiots. Romney et al are playing that role to perfection. ...

... White supremacism and even Nazism are not new to American life, of course. In a way, what is amazing now is how marginalized these things are today. In the 1920s, the KKK was a major political force throughout the US—not just the South. (Indiana was a Klan hotbed.) In February, 1939—almost 6 years after Roosevelt's inauguration and 6 months before German tanks rolled into Poland—the American Bund (basically the American Nazi Party) held a rally in Madison Square Garden attended by an estimated 22,000. Yet Eleanor Roosevelt, an extremely liberal political figure whose husband was savaged by the Bund, defended its right to exist, organize, and speak: she also defended America Firsters, Father Coughlin, and others with whom she disagreed violently on basically every political and social issue.

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Trump also correctly pointed to the role played in the Charlottesville tragedy by the totalitarian Left, the vanguard of the would-be American Cultural Revolution. As a pair of astute commenters on the website Just One Minute observed (for brevity's sake, I've combined their exchange): "These antifa thugs are descendants of the Weather Underground, Symbionese Liberation Army and other Left Wing terrorists. And we've reached the point where these communist anarchists are eagerly enabled by a media that become enraged if anyone even suggests they might have played a part in the violence with their piss balloons, mace, 2 x 4s and baseball bats." (To her credit, at least one New York Times reporter, Sheryl Gay Stolberg, acknowledged antifa's role in the mayhem on Twitter, noting that "the hard left seemed as hate-filled as alt-right. I saw club-wielding 'antifa' beating white nationalists being led out of the park.")

Objecting to the tearing down of these monuments does not make one a Nazi, or a racist, or even passingly unreasonable, much as Trump's adversaries wish it were so. "Who's next?" is the right question. ...

Scott Adams with calming words for grown-ups on mass hysteria bubbles.

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I'll teach you what to look for.

A mass hysteria happens when the public gets a wrong idea about something that has strong emotional content and it triggers cognitive dissonance that is often supported by confirmation bias. In other words, people spontaneously hallucinate a whole new (and usually crazy-sounding) reality and believe they see plenty of evidence for it. The Salem Witch Trials are the best-known example of mass hysteria. The McMartin Pre-School case and the Tulip Bulb hysteria are others. The dotcom bubble probably qualifies. We might soon learn that the Russian Collusion story was mass hysteria in hindsight. The curious lack of solid evidence for Russian collusion is a red flag. But we'll see how that plays out.

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... The tricky part here is that any interpretation of what happened could be confirmation bias. But ask yourself which one of these versions sounds less crazy:

1. A sitting president, who is a branding expert, thought it would be a good idea to go easy on murderous Nazis as a way to improve his popularity.

or...

2. The country elected a racist leader who is winking to the KKK and White Supremacists that they have a free pass to start a race war now.

or...

3. A mentally unstable racist clown with conman skills (mostly just lying) eviscerated the Republican primary field and won the presidency. He keeps doing crazy, impulsive racist stuff. But for some reason, the economy is going well, jobs are looking good, North Korea blinked, ISIS is on the ropes, and the Supreme Court got a qualified judge. It was mostly luck.

or...

4. The guy who didn't offer to be your moral leader didn't offer any moral leadership, just law and order, applied equally. His critics cleverly and predictably framed it as being soft on Nazis.

One of those narratives is less crazy-sounding than the others. That doesn't mean the less-crazy one has to be true. But normal stuff happens far more often than crazy stuff. And critics will frame normal stuff as crazy whenever they get a chance. ...

And Rabbi Dov Fischer says "And Yet President Trump, in His Classically Inartful Way, Was Absolutely Right."

I just did something fascinating. I just watched the President's entire 14-minute impromptu news conference at Trump Tower on Monday that sparked all the latest barrage of anti-Trump screeds from the left media that will criticize him every day, no matter what he does, augmented by the "Never Trump" Republicans and neo-conservatives who will not rest until they can reconquer the political party they lost because of three terms of two failed Bush presidencies, followed by the two failed Presidential candidacies of Sen. John McCain and of Gov. Mitt Romney.

Not the reportage about the conference, but the entire 14 minutes unedited, uninterrupted. I found myself agreeing with his every word. I did not find his tone or demeanor "unpresidential" in the least. He sharply and explicitly condemned the Nazis and White Supremacists unequivocally. He also condemned the extreme leftists who premeditatedly came armed with weapons to smash up a demonstration that, rightly or wrongly, had been granted a legal permit. (I personally wish that ACLU liberals were not so proactive in advancing the right of Nazis to get permits to rally at public venues, but the demonstration had a permit. Meanwhile, the Antifa Alt-Left thugs came with flame-throwers, bats, and shields, and they came to fight.) All the while, the police did nothing for much too long. Chaos and violence ensued.

The media get exercised when President Trump does not parrot their scripts, but they never minded that Barack Obama would not call out leftist rioters and violent leftist organizations by name. As inner cities would burn, with innocents watching their life savings go aflame as mobs would burn down their inner-city stores in cities from Baltimore to Ferguson, the Obama Administration avoided planting blame or naming hate groups. When a Jihadist murdered Americans serving our nation faithfully at Fort Hood, Obama attributed the murders to "workplace violence." Obama never could articulate the term "Radical Islamist terrorist," ...

In Humor, Forrest Gump says, "And just like that, they stopped talking about Russia."

Streetwise Professor
First They Came For Lee . . .
by Craig Pirrong

The battle over the monuments is not really about the monuments. It's not even really about the legacy of the Civil War. It is about the left's vision of what America was, is, and will be. Here's the most important thing to remember. The hard-core left that is the driving force behind extirpating the icons of the Confederacy does not see it, or the Old South, as an exception, a deviation from an otherwise laudable and righteous history: they see it as just one manifestation of the fundamental evil of America, evil that is writ on every page of history from 1607 on down. In this worldview, the United States has been, from even before its formal beginning, characterized by racism, sexism, and oppressive capitalism. It is not something that is basically good, but which has fallen short of achieving its lofty ideals: it is something that is fundamentally rotten, and which must be transformed by any means necessary.

It should not be surprising how the left conducts its march through institutions. It is really rather brilliant in conception and execution, although malign in effect and intent. There is a long term objective—in this case, the transformation of the US. But there is a coherent operational plan that concentrates force on a specific objective, and once that objective is taken, moves on to the next one.

Right now the ostensible target is the legacy of the Confederacy, but once the battle of the Confederate monuments is won, they will move on to the next target, which will inevitably include sooner or later every person in the American political pantheon, and every political, social, and economic institution that reflects the American past and tradition.

The left also masterfully personalizes the conflict, and ruthlessly presents the false choice between being on the side of the angels, or the side of the devils. In the current case, Nazis and white supremacists have been made the face of the anti-left. And now the left—with the assistance of many useful idiots, to whom I will turn in a moment—presents the false choice: if you are anti-left, well, that means that you are a Nazi or a fellow traveler thereof.

This is what's happening here, and it's as plain as day. Today it's Robert E. Lee. Tomorrow it will be Lincoln and Washington and the Constitution and the Founding. The ultimate objective is the delegitimization of the American creed.

What is particularly sickening about this is that the most militant—and violent—of the leftists are being sanitized, and indeed lionized, because of their alleged anti-racist cred: anti-racism has become a license for vandalism and violence.

This is unbelievably stupid, and unbelievably dangerous. Antifa and the like are just the mirror image of the most retrograde white supremacists. Black bandanas=White hoods. Hammer and Sickle (which is displayed prominently at many Antifa and leftist actions)=Swastika. Both are anti-American. Both are anti-liberty. Both are committed to use violence in order to achieve their maximalist objectives. Nazis on the one side, Bolsheviks on the other. And it's not as if either is hiding it: their regalia and flags advertise it.

And crucially, both are the twisted spawn of identity politics, the bane of modern society. Both define everything in crude terms of race and ethnicity and religion. Both are collectivists—a point too often overlooked, even though it is of decisive importance. Both reject the Western individualist revolution that began with Christianity and then humanism, and advanced through the Reformation and the enlightenment. To them, you are defined by your race, religion, ethnicity and class. The only difference between them is the perfect negative correlation between which race, religion, ethnicity, and class they demonize, and which they deify.

And, of course, this creates a sick symbiosis: neither can really exist without the other, and the rise of one contributes to the rise of the other.

Further, both are totalitarian and absolutist, and this is what leads to such virulent attacks on a past which does not conform with their absolutist vision. The iconoclasm we see now almost daily is redolent of other absolutist movements in the past, be it the Year One insanity of the French Revolution or the shrieking violence of the Cultural Revolution in China.

Both must be condemned. More than that, both must be opposed forcefully by duly constituted civil authority whenever they act out their violent ideologies.

But saying this is apparently beyond the pale in current American discourse, which just shows how degraded that discourse has become. Antifa—again, an avowedly communist, anti-liberty, anti-American movement—is not just not criticized, it is defended, because its self-proclaimed anti-racism (which in fact includes a healthy dose of anti-white racism) absolves it from any taint. Trump's calling out of Antifa as well as Nazis has led supposedly conservative establishment figures like Mitt Romney, Lindsey Graham, Marco Rubio, and Charles Krauthammer to differentiate the indistinguishable, and to defend Antifa because of their opposition to Nazis and racists.

What Romney et al don't get is who the hard-core left identifies as racists: it's pretty much everybody who doesn't agree with them in totality. It includes most whites (which is ironic, given the pastiness of most of the cheekbones and foreheads visible between black hats and masks). I guarantee it includes Mitt Romney, Lindsey Graham, Marco Rubio, and Charles Krauthammer. By vouching for them now, and validating their claim of authority in establishing who is and who is not a racist, Romney et al are putting a target on a lot of people who are by no stretch of the imagination white supremacists or Nazis.

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History will not be the only casualty. Free speech will be as well. Free speech has already largely died on college campuses, which are merely the laboratory and hot house of leftism. Coming soon to, well, pretty much everyplace you might consider speaking your mind.

This too illustrates the devolution of American civil society. White supremacism and even Nazism are not new to American life, of course. In a way, what is amazing now is how marginalized these things are today. In the 1920s, the KKK was a major political force throughout the US—not just the South. (Indiana was a Klan hotbed.) In February, 1939—almost 6 years after Roosevelt's inauguration and 6 months before German tanks rolled into Poland—the American Bund (basically the American Nazi Party) held a rally in Madison Square Garden attended by an estimated 22,000. Yet Eleanor Roosevelt, an extremely liberal political figure whose husband was savaged by the Bund, defended its right to exist, organize, and speak: she also defended America Firsters, Father Coughlin, and others with whom she disagreed violently on basically every political and social issue.

But if she did that today, she would be savaged. Because the left has gone from being believers in and defenders of civil liberties and individual freedom to their avowed enemies. The American liberal tradition, rooted in the enlightenment and classical liberal values, is being eclipsed, and replaced on the left by an alien political mindset. A mindset, ironically, that also spawned the fascist and Nazi movements in Europe as well as the leftist movements they battled in the streets: to understand the symbiosis between left and right in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s, read Paul Johnson's *Modern Times*. It is that intellectual tradition (rooted in Germany) that gave rise to the tragedy of Weimar, and it is that intellectual tradition that has the United States slouching towards its own Weimarization today.

Both far left and far right are collectivist and anti-rational, and hence at odds with the American political tradition which was individualist and rooted in the rationalism of the enlightenment. That is why Robert E. Lee might be the first historical casualty, but he will not be the last. All of American history is in the dock, and staring at the gallows.

City Journal

Who's Next, George Washington?

What Trump got right in the press conference

by Harry Stein

My first job, in 1972, was with a small weekly in Richmond, Virginia. Like my fellow writer/editors, I was a proud veteran of the sixties campus wars, and our left-of-center politics were strongly represented throughout the paper; which is to say, we were far from a neat ideological fit with the deeply conservative town Richmond still was back then. I joked with my friends up north that, the morning after Richard Nixon's landslide victory in November, I could actually see my McGovern vote in the paper. The politics weren't all that I disliked about Richmond. It was sleepy, ghastly hot in the summer, and in general far from what I then thought of as "the action."

But there was one thing that I loved about the place: it was steeped in history. On Clay Street, just a few blocks from our office on Broad, was the Confederate White House. Not far off loomed the magnificent, Jefferson-designed state capitol. Over on Franklin, the Jefferson Hotel boasted the staircase said to be the model for the one in *Gone With the Wind*. But above all there was Monument Avenue, with its imposing statues of the generals whose prowess had sustained hope in this capital of a doomed nation a century earlier: Stonewall Jackson, J.E.B. Stuart, Robert E. Lee.

As a Northerner and a lefty, I'd grown up thinking of the South as the bad guys. Nonetheless, there was an undeniable grandeur to these stone figures, and I felt it every day driving past them on my way home. They were men of surpassing courage and nobility, rightly enshrined in national myth: "There stands Jackson like a Stone Wall." And the image of Lee, wearily arriving at Appomattox aboard Traveller, having resisted calls from diehards that he continue the fight, saving the nation from yet more bloodshed. I wasn't the only one who felt this way. One of my colleagues, Richmond-born and recently graduated from Harvard (and now a left-wing commentator of some note), would tear up every time he heard "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down."

As a Red Diaper baby, I came from a different tradition. My parents never saw *Gone With the Wind*—they were outside the theater, picketing. But I, too, felt the pull of that history, in all its messiness and grandeur. It was *our* history, as Americans.

Maybe that's all over now. Maybe, as my colleague Kay Hymowitz once observed, for kids today American history runs from the oppression of the Indians to the oppression of blacks to the oppression of women, with nothing ennobling in between. Not long ago, talking with several people in their twenties, I was startled to learn that, until the movie came out, none of them had heard of Dunkirk. How, then, could we expect them to know about figures like Richard Kirkland, "the Angel of Marye's Heights," the Confederate soldier who, during the abattoir that was Fredericksburg, emerged from the safety of the commanding Southern lines to tend to dying Union soldiers on the killing field below?

Our history is rife with moral complexity. My wife and children exist only as a result of two near-misses. One ancestor, on her mother's side, whose descendants would include several prominent abolitionists, nearly drowned after falling overboard on *The Mayflower*, while her great-grandfather on her father's side, at 12, was nearly shot down from a rooftop in Fort Smith, Arkansas, by an occupying Union soldier after shouting "Long live Jeff Davis!"

All of which is a preamble to saying that, in his exchange with the churlish and ignorant press corps in the aftermath of Charlottesville, Donald Trump got it right when he said: "This week it's Robert E. Lee. I noticed that Stonewall Jackson is coming down. I wonder is it George Washington next week and is it Thomas Jefferson the week after? You know, you really do have to ask yourself, where does it stop?" He may not have been the ideal messenger—with his combative style, manic egotism, and casual relationship with facts, he never is—but he laid out a case that for months has cried out to be made, and he did it so clearly that the refusal of the media and the elites of both parties, not just to credit it, but even to acknowledge it, speaks volumes. Though Trump has never quite defined what his notion of making America great again actually means, preserving that which needs no fixing—including the history that is our common legacy—is a key part of it.

Trump also correctly pointed to the role played in the Charlottesville tragedy by the totalitarian Left, the vanguard of the would-be American Cultural Revolution. As a pair of astute commenters on the website Just One Minute observed (for brevity's sake, I've combined their

exchange): "These antifa thugs are descendants of the Weather Underground, Symbionese Liberation Army and other Left Wing terrorists. And we've reached the point where these communist anarchists are eagerly enabled by a media that become enraged if anyone even suggests they might have played a part in the violence with their piss balloons, mace, 2 x 4s and baseball bats." (To her credit, at least one *New York Times* reporter, Sheryl Gay Stolberg, acknowledged antifa's role in the mayhem on Twitter, noting that "the hard left seemed as hate-filled as alt-right. I saw club-wielding 'antifa' beating white nationalists being led out of the park.")

Objecting to the tearing down of these monuments does not make one a Nazi, or a racist, or even passingly unreasonable, much as Trump's adversaries wish it were so. "Who's next?" is the right question. Is it so unthinkable, in this climate, that the mob will soon descend on Monticello? Is that scenario any less plausible than it would have seemed five years ago that objecting to transgender bathrooms would be broadly regarded as evidence of moral depravity? This is the way America changes these days—rapidly and thoughtlessly.

And the media is the key to it all, as was never clearer than at yesterday's Trump press conference and in commentators' reactions to even the most reasonable public statements. For CNN vice president and assistant general counsel Johnita Due, Virginia governor Terry McAuliffe's remarks condemning white nationalists were not enough, for they also included kind words for Washington and Jefferson. "I felt punched in the stomach," she wrote. "At a time when it is important to condemn white nationalists and supremacists unequivocally, invoking Thomas Jefferson is a mistake."

Twenty years ago, my wife and I were at a dinner party with a married couple, both *New York Times* reporters, who'd recently returned from a trip down South with their kids. They told seeing an exhibit at the Virginia Military Institute honoring the cadets, some as young as 15, who, pressed into emergency service, distinguished themselves in the 1864 Battle of New Market. The exhibit was disturbing enough, they said, but what was worse was that their 15-year old son had been moved that kids his age had performed so heroically. They'd had to sit him down and explain that, yes, these boys may have been brave, but by definition they were immoral people, fighting for a bad cause. Twenty years later, the media at last feels emboldened to deliver that lecture to the nation. Trump called them on it, and in doing so, he has surely expressed what millions of Americans feel.

According to the latest reports, security has now been increased around the statues on Monument Avenue.

Harry Stein is a contributing editor of City Journal and the author of No Matter What . . . They'll Call This Book Racist and the comic novel Will Tripp, Pissed-Off Attorney-at-Law.

Dilbert's Blog

How to Know You're In a Mass Hysteria Bubble

by Scott Adams

History is full of examples of Mass Hysterias. They happen fairly often. The cool thing about mass hysterias is that you don't know when you are in one. But sometimes the people who are

not experiencing the mass hysteria can recognize when others are experiencing one, if they know what to look for.

I'll teach you what to look for.



A mass hysteria happens when the public gets a wrong idea about something that has strong emotional content and it triggers cognitive dissonance that is often supported by confirmation bias. In other words, people spontaneously hallucinate a whole new (and usually crazy-sounding) reality and believe they see plenty of evidence for it. The Salem Witch Trials are the best-known example of mass hysteria. The McMartin Pre-School case and the Tulip Bulb hysteria are others. The dotcom bubble probably qualifies. We might soon learn that the Russian Collusion story was mass hysteria in hindsight. The curious lack of solid evidence for Russian collusion is a red flag. But we'll see how that plays out.

The most visible Mass Hysteria of the moment involves the idea that the United States intentionally elected a racist President. If that statement just triggered you, it might mean you are in the Mass Hysteria bubble. The cool part is that you can't fact-check my claim you are hallucinating if you **are** actually hallucinating. But you can read my description of the signs of mass hysteria and see if you check off the boxes.

If you're in the mass hysteria, recognizing you have all the symptoms of hysteria won't help you be aware you are in it. That's not how hallucinations work. Instead, your hallucination will automatically rewrite itself to expel any new data that conflicts with its illusions.

But if you are **not** experiencing mass hysteria, you might be totally confused by the actions of the people who are. They appear to be irrational, but in ways that are hard to define. You can't tell if they are stupid, unscrupulous, ignorant, mentally ill, emotionally unstable or what. It just looks frickin' crazy.

The reason you can't easily identify what-the-hell is going on in the country right now is that a powerful mass hysteria is in play. If you see the signs after I point them out, you're probably not

in the hysteria bubble. If you read this and do NOT see the signs, it probably means you're trapped inside the mass hysteria bubble.

Here are some signs of mass hysteria. This is my own take on it, but I welcome you to fact-check it with experts on mass hysteria.

1. The trigger event for cognitive dissonance

On November 8th of 2016, half the country learned that everything they believed to be both true and obvious turned out to be wrong. The people who thought Trump had no chance of winning were under the impression they were smart people who understood their country, and politics, and how things work in general. When Trump won, they learned they were wrong. They were so very wrong that they reflexively (because this is how all brains work) rewrote the scripts they were seeing in their minds until it all made sense again. The wrong-about-everything crowd decided that the only way their world made sense, with their egos intact, is that either the Russians helped Trump win or there are far more racists in the country than they imagined, and he is their king. Those were the seeds of the two mass hysterias we witness today.

Trump supporters experienced no trigger event for cognitive dissonance when Trump won. Their worldview was confirmed by observed events.

2. The Ridiculousness of it

One sign of a good mass hysteria is that it sounds bonkers to anyone who is not experiencing it. Imagine your neighbor telling you he thinks the other neighbor is a witch. Or imagine someone saying the local daycare provider is a satanic temple in disguise. Or imagine someone telling you tulip bulbs are more valuable than gold. Crazy stuff.

Compare that to the idea that our president is a Russian puppet. Or that the country accidentally elected a racist who thinks the KKK and Nazis are "fine people." Crazy stuff.

If you think those examples don't **sound** crazy – regardless of the reality – you are probably inside the mass hysteria bubble.

3. The Confirmation Bias

If you are inside the mass hysteria bubble, you probably interpreted President Trump's initial statement on Charlottesville – which was politically imperfect to say the least – as proof-positive he is a damned racist.

If you are outside the mass hysteria bubble you might have noticed that President Trump never campaigned to be our moral leader. He presented himself as – in his own words "no angel" – with a set of skills he offered to use in the public's interest. He was big on law and order, and equal justice under the law. But he never offered moral leadership. Voters elected him with that knowledge. Evidently, Republicans don't depend on politicians for moral leadership. That's probably a good call.

When the horror in Charlottesville shocked the country, citizens instinctively looked to their president for moral leadership. The president instead provided a generic law and order statement. Under pressure, he later named specific groups and disavowed the racists. He was clearly uncomfortable being our moral lighthouse. That's probably why he never described his moral leadership as an asset when running for office. We observe that he has never been shy

about any other skill he brings to the job, so it probably isn't an accident when he avoids mentioning any ambitions for moral leadership. If he wanted us to know he would provide that service, I think he would have mentioned it by now.

If you already believed President Trump is a racist, his weak statement about Charlottesville seems like confirmation. But if you believe he never offered moral leadership, only equal treatment under the law, that's what you saw instead. And you made up your own mind about the morality.

The tricky part here is that any interpretation of what happened could be confirmation bias. But ask yourself which one of these versions sounds less crazy:

1. A sitting president, who is a branding expert, thought it would be a good idea to go easy on murderous Nazis as a way to improve his popularity.

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2. The country elected a racist leader who is winking to the KKK and White Supremacists that they have a free pass to start a race war now.

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3. A mentally unstable racist clown with conman skills (mostly just lying) eviscerated the Republican primary field and won the presidency. He keeps doing crazy, impulsive racist stuff. But for some reason, the economy is going well, jobs are looking good, North Korea blinked, ISIS is on the ropes, and the Supreme Court got a qualified judge. It was mostly luck.

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4. The guy who didn't offer to be your moral leader didn't offer any moral leadership, just law and order, applied equally. His critics cleverly and predictably framed it as being soft on Nazis.

One of those narratives is less crazy-sounding than the others. That doesn't mean the less-crazy one has to be true. But normal stuff happens far more often than crazy stuff. And critics will frame normal stuff as crazy whenever they get a chance.

4. The Oversized Reaction

It would be hard to **overreact** to a Nazi murder, or to racists marching in the streets with torches. That stuff demands a strong reaction. But if a Republican agrees with you that Nazis are the worst, and you threaten to punch that Republican for not agreeing with you exactly the right way, that might be an oversized reaction.

5. The Insult without supporting argument

When people have actual reasons for disagreeing with you, they offer those reasons without hesitation. Strangers on social media will cheerfully check your facts, your logic, and your assumptions. But when you start seeing ad hominem attacks that offer no reasons at all, that might be a sign that people in the mass hysteria bubble don't understand what is wrong with your point of view except that it sounds more sensible than their own.

For the past two days I have been disavowing Nazis on Twitter. The most common response from the people ***who agree with me*** is that my comic strip sucks and I am ugly.

The mass hysteria signals I described here are not settled science, or anything like it. This is only my take on the topic, based on personal observation and years of experience with hypnosis and other forms of persuasion. I present this filter on the situation as the first step in dissolving the mass hysteria. It isn't enough, but more persuasion is coming. If you are outside the mass hysteria bubble, you might see what I am doing in this blog as a valuable public service. If you are inside the mass hysteria bubble, I look like a Nazi collaborator.

How do I look to you?

American Spectator

And Yet President Trump, in His Classically Inartful Way, Was Absolutely Right

Watch him say what he said, not what others said he said

by Dov Fischer

I just did something fascinating. I just watched the President's entire 14-minute impromptu news conference at Trump Tower on Monday that sparked all the latest barrage of anti-Trump screeds from the left media that will criticize him every day, no matter what he does, augmented by the "Never Trump" Republicans and neo-conservatives who will not rest until they can re-conquer the political party they lost because of three terms of two failed Bush presidencies, followed by the two failed Presidential candidacies of Sen. John McCain and of Gov. Mitt Romney.

Not the *reportage about* the conference, ***but the entire 14 minutes unedited, uninterrupted.*** I found myself agreeing with his every word. I did *not* find his tone or demeanor "unpresidential" in the least. He sharply and explicitly condemned the Nazis and White Supremacists *unequivocally*. He also condemned the extreme leftists who premeditatedly came armed with weapons to smash up a demonstration that, rightly or wrongly, had been granted a legal permit. (I personally wish that ACLU liberals were not so proactive in advancing the right of Nazis to get permits to rally at public venues, but the demonstration had a permit. Meanwhile, the Antifa Alt-Left thugs came with flame-throwers, bats, and shields, and they came to fight.) All the while, the police did nothing for much too long. Chaos and violence ensued.

The media get exercised when President Trump does not parrot their scripts, but they never minded that Barack Obama would not call out leftist rioters and violent leftist organizations by name. As inner cities would burn, with innocents watching their life savings go aflame as mobs would burn down their inner-city stores in cities from Baltimore to Ferguson, the Obama Administration avoided planting blame or naming hate groups. When a Jihadist murdered Americans serving our nation faithfully at Fort Hood, Obama attributed the murders to "workplace violence." Obama never could articulate the term "Radical Islamist terrorist," as though he were Lou Costello fearing what would happen to him if he said "Niagara Falls." When Rep. Gabrielle Giffords was shot by her own former supporter, a mentally ill clinger who had backed the Democrat, the media blamed the violence on Republicans like Sarah Palin. When

Rep. Steve Scalise was shot, and others were wounded, by a Bernie Sanders supporter who had set out to kill Republicans, the media avoided pinning blame on a left ideology and overheated rhetoric of leftist hate. But when the President of the United States rightly excoriated law-breakers and thugs on all sides of a street conflagration, he came in for a torrent of media abuse, forcing even level-headed bystanders to take cover.

In archaeology, the Rosetta Stone was an historic find that enabled scholars to decipher ancient writing. For me, the Rosetta Stone in defining Donald Trump's attitudes towards minorities is the meme that dogged him throughout the Republican presidential primaries, and through the presidential general election, alleging that Trump is an anti-Semite, a Jew-hater. I would listen to CNN panelists call him an anti-Semite, read articles in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* calling him an anti-Semite, listen to spokespeople for certain national Jewish organizations that now are in the pocket of the Democrats and hear them call him an anti-Semite. They blamed him and White Supremacists with whom he supposedly sympathizes for a spate of anonymous phone calls threatening violence at Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) around the country.

That was my Rosetta Stone. Donald Trump an anti-Semite? Really? His daughter Ivanka is an Orthodox Jew. She observes the Sabbath on Friday night and Saturday, maintains a kosher home, apparently does not even take phone calls on the Jewish Sabbath. Does the President want to put her into a gas chamber? His son-in-law, Jared Kushner, is Ivanka's husband and an Orthodox Jew. Some fathers-in-law hate their sons-in-law, but President Trump deeply values Jared Kushner, has him in his inner circle, adores the guy. Does Trump want to put him into a concentration camp? The Kushners have two children. Does Donald Trump want to have those Jewish grandchildren of his put into ovens? Indeed, other of President Trump's children are married to Jewish people. Moreover, the President is an incredible friend of Israel. He has stopped the endless calls by the Obama-Kerry-Clinton Administration for Israel to retreat to borders that former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban called "Auschwitz borders." This is an anti-Semite?

If Donald Trump is an anti-Semite, please find more anti-Semites like him, as many as are willing to seek public office, and I will vote for all of them, and so will 90 percent of all American Orthodox Jews, one of the strongest pro-Trump conservative voting demographics in the United States. Orthodox Jews, the fastest-growing community of American Jews whom the Pew Survey now forecasts will comprise a majority of New York's Jews in a few decades, the community who observe Judaism's kosher laws and Sabbath practices and traditions as set forth in the Torah and Talmud, are now among America's most solid Republican conservative constituencies.

So that is my Trump Rosetta Stone. That is the archeological discovery that makes clear how false and defamatory are all the media canards accusing this good, though deeply egotistically flawed, man of unfairness based on social group. Through all his public life, until he became the Republican conservative political leader, he had no meaningful problem with any minority group. No one accused him of racism through scores of years in public life under the microscope to which he willingly subjected himself, even yearned for. Comedians loved him. Talk show hosts loved him. NBC gave him a national weekly television platform for years and years. He was under constant scrutiny, and race identification never was part of his mindset, and no one ever suggested otherwise.

(And, oh yeah, by the way: The spate of threatening telephone calls to Jewish Community Centers around the country? None were perpetrated by White Supremacists or Nazi-wannabes. Rather, the perpetrators ultimately were revealed to be a mentally ill African American who somehow thought that telephoning a threat to a JCC would get his former girlfriend in trouble, and an even more deranged Israeli Jewish millennial who used some computer technology to call in his anti-JCC threats from the Middle East.)

But, wait: Didn't President Trump say that some of the Caucasians at the Charlottesville protest rallies were fine people? What about that?

Unlike many Northeast liberals, I have traveled America's deep South with some intensity, the states of the Confederacy. As an Orthodox Jew with a Brooklyn accent, easily spotted because I wear my yarmulka as my religious convictions require, I traveled throughout the region with some awareness that I stood out as a Jew. Wherever I went, I met many wonderful people. I would talk with people at length about their lives, their hopes, their dreams. I also walked the streets. At the time, I was startled to see so many monuments of Dixie, the Confederacy, the Civil War. I remember wondering about the initials "CSA," evident on monuments everywhere in the South, which I soon learned was the acronym for "Confederate States of America." I came to learn, first-hand, that there are many fine, high quality, decent people in the South who truly recoil from the haters on the Right, who truly despise the bigots of today and are ashamed of the bigotry of the past, but who sincerely honor the memories of fallen war heroes of the South. They peacefully protest removing statues of Confederacy heroes like Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson because they see them as having been true military heroes and patriots who gave their everything to protect Virginia in particular, and the South in general, from being overrun by invading armies that threatened critical aspects of their way of agrarian life. Consider, as one example, the devastation and horror that General Sherman and his army wreaked upon the South, burning and looting Atlanta and burning and looting other Southern cities along their march. Lee and Jackson were not politicians, pushing for a social agenda. Rather, they were men who felt duty-bound to serve their patrimony. Gen. Jackson actually lost his life a result of a terrible incident of friendly fire at Chancellorsville. And Gen. Lee, who had been offered by President Lincoln the opportunity to lead the Union armies, felt obliged to defend his native Virginia; as a result, his wealth and property were confiscated, as the North converted his mansion and land into Arlington National Cemetery.

There is no easy answer for the statue issue. I have seen that issue for years and years, long before it became the Issue du Jour. In my travels for several months through the South and at the great Civil War battlefields, I saw the monuments everywhere: in main thoroughfares, along Monument

Avenue in Richmond, at the State Capitol in Nashville, at street corners. At the South Carolina state capitol in Columbia, they have preserved the broken walking stick attached to the monument of George Washington, so as never to forget how Sherman's men ransacked the state and even desecrated the monument of Washington. Similarly, they have refused to repair Union cannonball damage to the building, preferring instead to cover gaping holes with metal patches that starkly remind visitors of the attack that happened there. I have seen the aesthetic beauty and passion that went into sculpting those monuments, and I have read the inscriptions that breathe not a word about slavery nor the social injustices of the Confederacy but of brave young boys, who never owned a slave — the vast majority of Southerners never owned slaves — but who gave their lives for their communities, for their honor, in some cases even for their women.

As a Jew hailing from the North, whose persecuted East European ancestors did not even arrive in this country from Russia and Poland until a quarter century after the Civil War, I also

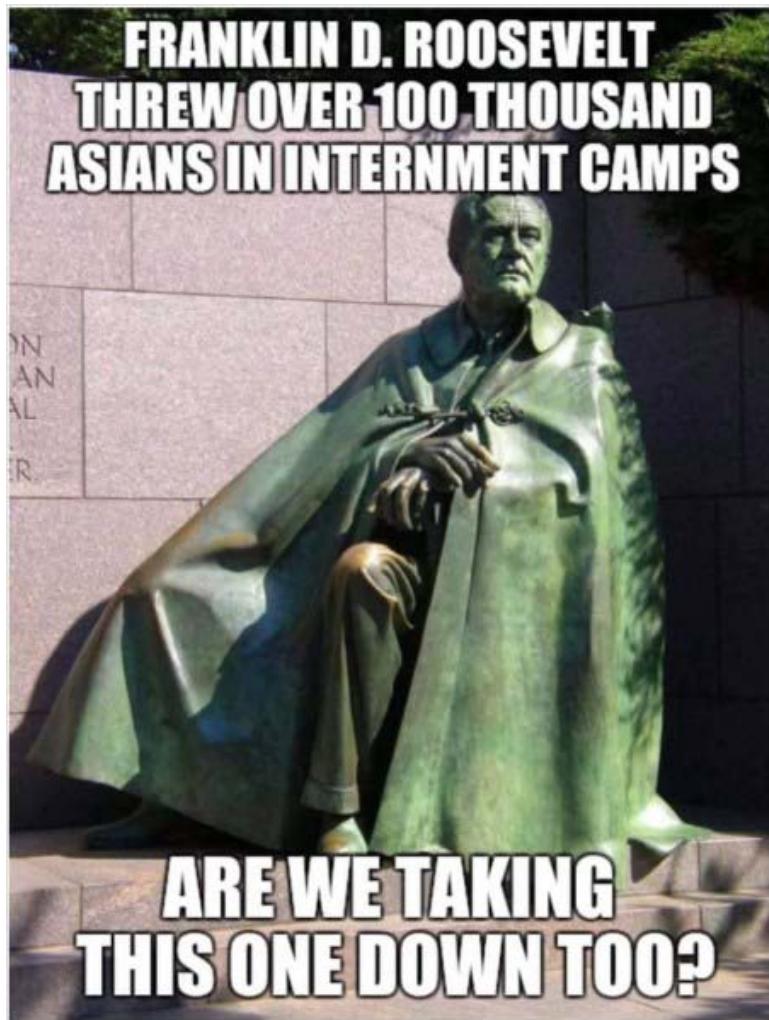
perceived that those monuments constitute a horrible daily insult and vile dishonor to African Americans and, frankly, an incomprehensible curiosity for a country that had defeated the Confederacy and had reunited. What indeed were all those monuments to the losing side doing all over the place? I came to a sense that perhaps those monuments should be moved to Civil War museums, to the great preserved battlefields at Antietam/Sharsburg, Chancellorsville, Bull Run/Manassas, Fredericksburg, The Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Shiloh, Lookout Mountain, Cold Harbor, Vicksburg, and Petersburg. (Gettysburg already has its full complement.) Perhaps move them to cemeteries where Confederates lie buried.

But I do believe, as President Trump tried to say in his way, that many of those at the demonstrations indeed were decent people motivated solely by wanting peacefully to preserve the heroes of their history, oblivious to the ramifications — that, sadly, their history includes much that is shameful, even if Lee solely was motivated by a soldier's rules of honor and service, as taught at West Point; even if Jackson was motivated solely by that same code of a soldier's honor and service, amplified by a religious believer's sense that he had a duty to country.

President Trump sadly is correct. George Washington owned slaves. So did Thomas Jefferson at Monticello and James Madison at Montpelier. So did many who signed the Declaration of Independence. Shall we take down the Washington Monument? Shall we rename the nation's capital and the state where the liberal Democrats of Seattle govern? Should we tear down the Jefferson Memorial? Is there now yet another reason to change the name of the Washington Redskins!

And, while at it: How about encouraging some violent street-fighting in Manhattan, tearing down the Peter Stuyvesant statue in Manhattan and renaming that eponymous public school? He was the most vicious anti-Semite of pre-independence America.





COMING SOON...







