Collected Works of Phillip W. Weiss

Part 1

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Communications to a friend

by Phillip W. Weiss

Below is a series of emails sent to a friend on a variety of subjects

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
I watched the Trump-Putin news conference. Although I favor a policy of engagement instead of confrontation with Russia, I believe that Trump committed a major gaffe when he publicly placed blame on the United States for the current tensions between the US and Russia. No head of state should ever publicly invite blame on their own country for anything. It reminded me of our last meeting at the restaurant when I was trying to make conversation with you. I said something that obviously bothered you and made you defensive. In turn, not wanting to offend you, I went so far as to describe my own words as trite, when in fact I had done and said nothing wrong. What actually happened was that, for reasons unknown to me, you copped an attitude and I did not call you on it. The same thing can be said about Trump and Russia. The Russian government has an attitude problem. Why they have that problem is anyone's guess. Nevertheless, Trump did everything he could to avoid dealing with it because he did not want to make a scene. Now Putin is back in the Kremlin having a good laugh with his cronies, knowing that he got the POTUS to admit that the United States is the problem, not Russia.

By the way, Putin impressed me. He was calm and in control and his comments were clear and concise. In contrast, Trump seemed to have forgotten what had gotten him elected - a bombastic style that overwhelmed his opponents - instead opting for a conventional approach that seemed to more in line with "low energy" Jeb Bush.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:dmgordon Details
Dave,

Greetings. I do not know what you're up to and won't ask. If u wanted me to know, you would tell me. Anyway, since 2016 Mr. Trump has been putting out the word that the Russian investigation is part of an elaborate hoax concocted by the Democratic Party to discredit him personally and delegitimize his election and presidency. I believed Trump, until I took the time to peruse the Mueller indictment and the DNI report. These reports chronicle Russian interference in the U.S. election process. These reports are about an elaborate conspiracy by a foreign country to meddle in the internal affairs of the United States.

According to the Mueller Indictment, Russian foreign nationals entered the U.S. under false pretenses, posed as Americans, stole identities, collected intelligence, failed to register as foreign agents, made campaign contributions without filing the proper disclosure forms, and "obtained visas through false and fraudulent statements." "The conspiracy had as its object impairing, obstructing,

and defeating the lawful governmental functions of the United States by dishonest means in order to enable the Defendants to interfere with U.S. political and electoral processes, including the 2016 U.S. presidential election."

source: https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/02/rosenstein-mueller-indictment-russia/553601/

The DNI report asserts that Vladimir Putin ordered the "influence campaign" for the 2016 election. "Moscow's influence campaign followed a Russian messaging strategy that blends covert intelligence operations—such as cyber activity—with overt efforts by Russian Government agencies, state-funded media, third-party intermediaries, and paid social media users or "trolls." "

"We assess with high confidence that Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US presidential election, the consistent goals of which were to undermine public faith in the US democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency. We further assess Putin and the Russian Government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump. When it appeared to Moscow that Secretary Clinton was likely to win the election, the Russian influence campaign then focused on undermining her expected presidency."

source: https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf

During his meeting with Mr. Putin, Trump had a tremendous opportunity to take the moral high ground and leave that meeting a winner and return to the United States as a hero. He had an opportunity to express his outrage and righteous indignation over Russia's meddling in the internal affairs of the United States and demand that all parties named in the Mueller indictment be turned over to the United States immediately and that refusal to do so would be interpreted as an attempt to protect criminals from American justice. Of course, that did not happen. Instead, Trump provided cover for Putin, and now Mr. Trump, and not Mr. Putin, is paying the price for what was, to me, the worst political gaffe since 1976 when, during the presidential debate, Gerald Ford said that Eastern Europe was not under Soviet domination, and 1988 when, during the vice-presidential debate, Dan Quayle tried to equate himself with President Kennedy.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
Dave,

I watched vids of Ronald Reagan's visit to Moscow in May/June 1988. They showed Pres. Reagan at his best. During the visit he met with Mikhail Gorbachev. During the meeting he directly raised the issue of the treatment of Soviet dissidents. The whole world expected Reagan to bring up the issue and he did not fail. That took courage. Upon his return to the U.S., Americans greeted with Reagan with cheers. He had done his job well. Donald Trump would have done well to have followed Reagan's example at his meeting with Mr. Putin. Instead, he demurred, refused to deal forthrightly the issue of Russian meddling, and lost a tremendous opportunity to take the high moral ground and amass huge political capital. That would have been like Reagan raising the issue of Soviet mistreatment of dissidents, and Gorbachev denying that that they were being mistreated, and Reagan saying "I believe him." In fact, Trump's failure was so complete that it brought both parties together in unanimous opposition to him. That is a situation that the POTUS must carefully avoid creating. If the Republicans lose control of Congress in 2018, they will blame Trump and his meeting with Putin.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
Dave,

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Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details

Based upon your lectures, I am convinced that Britain was responsible 4 creating the conditions to have a WW1. Britain could not compete with Germany. Knowing that, Britain did everything it could to isolate Germany & deny Germany a level playing field. That all but guaranteed geopolitical instability.

Also. I hope that during the semester u cover the topic of anti-Semitism as it relates to geopolitical developments on the European continent and drive home the point that antisemitism was not exclusively a German problem & that Jews were well on there way to becoming fully integrated into mainstream European culture.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To: [redacted] **Details**
Re: yesterday's lecture.

European society transforming from feudalistic to modern unleashes the forces of nationalism across the continent. Entire peoples who were once subjects to autocratic rule now literally demand to be heard. Autocrats are taken aback, act to contain this direct challenge to their power and the existing social order, one that is rooted in feudalism, but can do nothing to reverse it. Even the Jews get into the act with their talk about re-creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The forces of nationalism re-stimulate the forces of anti-Semitism which perceives the Jews as a foreign element that has no place in the nationalistic aspirations of indigenous groups now demanding power. For them, the Jews must go. There is no compromising on this point. These changes heighten tensions as new political forces emerge that threaten the stability of a woefully outdated social order that can no longer govern but still wants to retain its power. Slovaks, Poles, Bohemians, Bosnians, Croats, Slovenes, Serbs, Ukrainians, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Albanians, Montenegrins, Irish, Norwegians, and Hungarians, all following the examples of other ethnic groups - English, Germans, Italians, French, Spanish, Russians, Greeks, Danish, Dutch - who had achieved independence and many of whom dominate Europe, now want their independence too.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To: [redacted] **Details**
Re: lectures.

Your lectures demonstrate that prior to WW1, European society had already undergone massive transformation. Yet the political structures lagged behind in the rate and degree of change. Perhaps the same can be said for the United States today. The USA of today bears virtually no resemblance to the USA of 1787, the year when the USA adopted the Constitution. Today the USA political system, still based on that same 1787 Constitution, is founded on concepts and structures that predate to the 18th century and even earlier. Now, in Europe it took a world war to finally eliminate the outmoded political structures that were impeding progress and which brought European politics more in line with the economic and social changes. The czar, the Kaiser and the emperor were gone, along with the political institutions that had propped them up. Even so, the results were deeply flawed. What followed was in many ways much worse. Hopefully, the USA can avoid what happened in Europe and update its political structures in a way that will avoid the pitfalls brought on by violent change.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To: [redacted] Details
The problem with studying history is that what seems obvious to us today, such as the existence of political institutions that seem so rooted in the past, at that time when they existed was not understood as such. The kaiser was as relevant to Germany as the President has been relevant to the United States, both bestowed with legitimacy that made their continued existence seem a virtual certainty. There is no evidence that I know of that shows that anybody really believed that the autocracies that ruled most of Europe would soon be gone, and gone quickly and with good riddance. Nobody predicted that. Yet, today we talk about it as if it was inevitable. Well, it wasn't. It just worked out that way. There was no grand plan, no deliberate scheme to demolish entire institutions that had existed for hundreds of years or even longer. For anyone to believe otherwise is wishful thinking generated by a desire to control future events. Today the United States is governed based on institutions that are almost two and half centuries old. Yet, despite their age and the massive transformation of American culture into what it is today, the continuation of these institutions is taken for granted, that they will go on and on and on. The czars and kaisers and emperors and dukes and earls and barons and junkers and all the rest of that clique probably believed that their power would go and on and on as well, and they're gone. There is no question that political institutions evolve. How, when, and why they evolve is another story that can only be told after it happens.

Phil

-----Original Message-----
From: pwnycny <pwnycny@aol.com>
To: [redacted] dmgordon@mindspring.com
Sent: Thu, Oct 4, 2018 4:01 pm
Subject: Classroom lectures

Re: lectures.

Your lectures demonstrate that prior to WW1, European society had already undergone massive transformation. Yet the political structures lagged behind in the rate and degree of change. Perhaps the same can be said for the United States today. The USA of today bears virtually no resemblance to the USA of 1787, the year when the USA adopted the Constitution. Today the USA political system, still based on that same 1787 Constitution, is founded on concepts and structures that predate to the 18th century and even earlier. Now, in Europe it took a world war to finally eliminate the outmoded political structures that were impeding progress and which brought European politics more in line with the economic and social changes. The czar, the Kaiser and the emperor were gone, along with the political institutions that had propped them up. Even so, the results were deeply flawed. What followed was in many ways much worse. Hopefully, the USA can avoid what happened in Europe and update its political structures in a way that will avoid the pitfalls brought on by violent change.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To: [redacted] **Details**

Read parts the Tuchman and Hart's books. Tuchman seems to provide a somewhat fair account of the events leading up to the start of the war.while Hart, not surprisingly, is transparently anti-German. he lays all blame on the William, a position which is debatable. Both authors show that the British were doing everything they could to contain an expansionist Germany. The British reached out to the French, to Russia, even to Germany - anything to keep Germany in check. This was diplomacy at its most seedy and dangerous. William did not like it, and some some justification. Germany was now a major, no THE major power on the Continent and wanted to be treated accordingly. Hence, he fired Bismarck who had taken Germany far, but for William not far enough, on the road to super power status. By 1914 Germany was a major power. Then June 28, 1914. That date should rank with September 1, 1939 and December 7, 1941 as dates that will live in infamy. The future head of state of Austria-Hungary - and his wife - are killed by Bosnian Serbs who use politics to justify committing murder. That Austria-Hungary in the July Ultimatum gave Serbia 48 hours to reply to their ultimatum demonstrated tremendous restraint on Austria-Hungary's part. Serbia was inciting people to commit acts of terror against Austria-Hungary. Reason: to expand at Austria-Hungary's expense. For William not to fully back Austria Hungary would have sent unmistakable signal to every fanatic inside and outside of Austria-Hungary that Austria-Hungary was now fair game. To place all blame on William for starting the war is unfair. He didn't assassinate Ferdinand and he didn't ask the British to create a block of nations to encircle Germany. What did the British have in common with Russia or with France? These countries were Britain's main rivals until Germany emerged on the scene. Then all of sudden for Britain, Germany became the "bad guy" and Russia and France friends. What a flip-flop. The British replaced caution with expediency and brinkmanship as they kept doing things to provoke Germany, and William would have none of that.

Another point. Regarding Belgian and its neutrality. some criticize Germany for having invaded Belgium in violation of Belgium's neutrality. Yet, according to Tuchman, the French developed their war plans on the presumption that Germany would invade Belgium. So in a way the French were complicit in the violation of Belgium's status since they apparently knew what was going to happen and did nothing about it. Also, France wanted to recover Alsace-Lorraine, which gave Germany even more of an incentive to re-arm to defeat France again just in case France, which harbored animosity toward Germany, decided to start a war to recover Alsace-Lorraine and then invade Germany proper.

One more point. Russia. After Russia's humiliating defeat by Japan in 1904-1905, there was no reason at all for William to believe that Russia could provide any meaningful support to Serbia in event of war. In addition, Russia had no cause to go to Serbia's defense in a situation in which Serbia was deeply and directly implicated and in which Austria-Hungary was a victim.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
Excellent account of the battles, strategies, successes and blunders by all participants in the war. Germans shaped the way the war played out. The German plan for winning was fatally flawed from the start. it depended on fighting an enemy that would fold under pressure. It also required that they stick to the plan. The Russians were not quite the basket-case originally believed (e.g., Brusilov offensive). That's all due to failure of intelligence and belief in one's own propaganda about the the enemy. There was no way that Germany, bound by treaty with a much weaker Austria-Hungary, could defeat the combined strength of the Allies. That Germany lasted for four years is proof of Germany's strength. The British provoked Germany into war. The Germans could have done better to have ignored the provocations and settled with the British before the situation escalated. But that's easy to conclude in hindsight.

Liddell Hart pays tribute to the Germans. "Finally. whatever be the verdict of history on her policy, unstinted tribute is due to the incomparable endurance and skill with which Germany more than held her own for four years against superior numbers - an epic of military and human achievement." it took a combined effort of the most powerful nations on the planet to defeat Germany. A generation later, that same effort would be needed again, and on a much vaster scale.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
Based upon the readings and discussion in class, I believe that WW1 started on June 28, 1914 and that the Entente, of which Britain was a member, was fully responsible for starting the war. Entente member Russia backed Serbia which backed the fanatics who murdered Ferdinand and his wife, who were the first casualties of the war. That actual fighting did not occur for one month after the fanatics committed their crime is evidence of the restraint shown by the Germans and Austrians, the latter of whom was the aggrieved party. I don't even want to imagine how the US would react if a US head of state was assassinated by a foreign agent. Suffice it to say that the US would not wait 30 days to respond.

That Serbia raised any objections to Austria-Hungary's ultimatum showed the level of contempt the Serbs harbored for the Austrians. If Serbia had any respect for the Austrians and sincerely cared about preserving the peace, they would have agreed, without conditions, to ALL of Austria's demands, all of which were reasonable and legitimate, and would have shown a willingness to cooperate FULLY with the Austrian-Hungarian authorities who were, understandably, in no mood to negotiate.

Wonderful class. Keep up the good work.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
In the class one of the students mentioned the question of the reserves. Too bad that it was not expanded upon. In France, there was a huge debate - should they have a large active army and small reserve or a large reserve and small active army. A lot of this debate had to to with financing of the army. In this matter the French were following the lead of the Prussians who introduced a major innovation - upgrading the reserves into an effective fighting force. Wow, what an innovation. By upgrading the reserves a country could maintain a large army ready to defend the nation at lower costs. Of course, to upgrade the reserves meant to go against conventional military wisdom which considered the reserves little more than logistical branch of the "real" army, and if there was one thing that was certain about the French military, is was that they were adverse to anything that even smelled of innovation. Today the US military is based on the German model. The reserves are an integral component of the US military. They have a primary role in the defense of the United States. Only with great reluctance did the French opt to upgrade their reserves, and they did so only in response to German planning. By the way, I do not for a moment believe that in the years prior to the the start of WW1, on June 28, 1914, that the French and Germans did not fully know each others military plans. If the Germans had succeeded in concealing their military plans from the French, the Germans would have demolished the French army in a week, or even sooner if they really meant business. Any country, such as France and Britain, that would seriously link themselves up with a military basket case like the Russian Empire was already in deep trouble. To do so was an act of sheer desperation based on a gamble that the Russians, who had been defeated in Crimea and throttled by the Japanese, could actually deliver, and that gamble was a long shot. As Liddell Hart points out, it was only with the appearance of the Americans that the Germans were finally turned back and stopped fighting. It took the Americans to close the St. Michel salient that the French could not do in 4 years. General Pershing's decision to resist placing American soldiers under French command was correct. In doing so he saved the American army from destruction and saved a lot of American lives.

Wonderful class. Thought-provoking.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
One correction: Pershing did transfer American soldiers to French command, but not command of the entire army.

PS: Trump's meeting with Kanye West.

Wow! Did that shake up the Dems. Message sent to Dems: do not take the "black vote" for granted.

-----Original Message-----
From: pwnycny <pwnycny@aol.com>
To: [redacted] dmgordon@mindspring.com
Sent: Fri, Oct 12, 2018 9:42 am
Subject: The Reserves
In the class one of the students mentioned the question of the reserves. Too bad that it was not expanded upon. In France, there was a huge debate - should they have a large active army and small reserve or a large reserve and small active army. A lot of this debate had to to with financing of the army. In this matter the French were following the lead of the Prussians who introduced a major innovation - upgrading the reserves into an effective fighting force. Wow, what an innovation. By upgrading the reserves a country could maintain a large army ready to defend the nation at lower costs. Of course, to upgrade the reserves meant to go against conventional military wisdom which considered the reserves little more than logistical branch of the "real" army, and if there was one thing that was certain about the French military, is was that they were adverse to anything that even smelled of innovation. Today the US military is based on the German model. The reserves are an integral component of the US military. They have a primary role in the defense of the United States. Only with great reluctance did the French opt to upgrade their reserves, and they did so only in response to German planning. By the way, I do not for a moment believe that in the years prior to the the start of WW1, on June 28, 1914, that the French and Germans did not fully know each others military plans. If the Germans had succeeded in concealing their military plans from the French, the Germans would have demolished the French army in a week, or even sooner if they really meant business. Any country, such as France and Britain, that would seriously link themselves up with a military basket case like the Russian Empire was already in deep trouble. To do so was an act of sheer desperation based on a gamble that the Russians, who had been defeated in Crimea and throttled by the Japanese, could actually deliver, and that gamble was a long shot. As Liddell Hart points out, it was only with the appearance of the Americans that the Germans were finally turned back and stopped fighting. It took the Americans to close the St. Michel salient that the French could not do in 4 years. General Pershing's decision to resist placing American soldiers under French command was correct. In doing so he saved the American army from destruction and saved a lot of American lives.

Wonderful class. Thought-provoking.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
France linked up with Russia because France's survival as a nation was at risk. They got beat badly by Prussia in 1870. Another war with a united Germany (which was a member of the Triple Alliance) would be catastrophic for France. So, the French entering into an alliance with Russia is understandable. It was defensive in nature. The same cannot be said for the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. By settling certain matters with Russia as it related to Iran (which in the process turned Iran against the West, the consequences of which the US is dealing with to this day), the British acquired a new ally who was ideally situated to pose a threat to Germany. This alliance also represented a fundamental shift in British foreign policy toward an accommodation with a former adversary. It also re-shaped international relations, producing the Triple Entente, Now two groups, the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance, were contesting for control of Europe. Germany formed the Triple Alliance in 1882 to settle certain issues with Austria-Hungary and smooth over tensions between Austria-Hungary and Italy. Germany wanted to secure its eastern borders. Bismarck went so far as to even try to bring Russia into the German sphere. Britain watched these developments with concern, even with alarm. Not surprisingly, William decided not to renew the German-Russian Reassurance Treaty.

In an era dominated by identity politics and racist ideologies, efforts to keep the peace through competing alliances were doomed to failure. What so sad, however, is that some European leaders sensed that something was wrong, that things were not going to work out. Proof of that is the frantic manner in which European countries were jockeying for position. One does not run for cover for nothing. Neither the Triple Alliance or the Triple Entente would survive WW1. Motivated by sheer expediency, European nations allied themselves with other countries if they thought it would gain them an advantage. That formula proved to be a disaster.

Without even first perusing the readings for next class, I already know that things only got worse, and the US couldn't stop it.

III Peace Making and European Tribalism

Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World*

Bernard M. Watt, *Bitter Glory: Poland and Its Fate, 1918-1939*

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
Regarding the Elizabeth Warren fiasco, let's not forget that based on family lore, Moses (a prince of Egypt) identified himself as a Hebrew and Jesus (who was baptized by his cousin) identified himself as the Messiah, Further, Hitler, an Austrian, identified himself with Germany, Napoleon, an Italian, identified himself with France, Stalin, a Georgian, identified himself with Russia, and Reagan, originally a Democrat, identified himself with the Republicans. My point: in politics, anything can happen, and that goes double for identity-based politics. Those in power are mocking Ms. Warren, but others may take her claims seriously. Trump called her bluff and she did not fold. She put her cards on the table, now she can demand from Trump the same. That she held a weak hand is irrelevant. One does not necessarily have to originate from a certain group to become that group's leader.

Re; the readings. After reading a few pages of the book, it became apparent that Wilson had no business going to Versailles. Reason: he lacked the clout to impose his program. If Trump had been POTUS, he would have blamed all the Europeans for having pulled the US into the war and would have told them to stop bullying Germany because a destabilized Germany could go Communist and Europe does not need another Soviet Union in the middle of Europe. In fact, in 1918 Trump would have found the Europeans at Versailles so incorrigible and fixated on identity politics that he would have bypassed Versailles and dealt directly with Germany and the Soviet Union. That may have curbed Poland's aggression against her immediate neighbors, i.e., Lithuania, the Ukraine and the Soviet Union. Frankly, Poland was lucky to be independent and survive the war with the Soviet Union. In 1939 Stalin partially settled accounts with Poland; in 1944-45, he completed the task.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
There was so much drama associated with the Paris (so-called) Peace Conference. There was so much anger, bitterness, hard feelings and no regrets. All contestants really wanted to keep fighting, and would have under the most flimsiest of pretexts. As evidence of just how badly Europe had regressed, whereas in the past kings, queens, emperors, and their ministers, all aristocrats, people who were BRED to rule, decided the fate of Europe, and the world, by 1919 it was ministers, civil servants, and politicians playing to the crowd, who now were calling the shots, and they kept missing the target. The angry Clemenceau, the shifty Lloyd George, the flighty Woodrow Wilson, and the horde of petty and conniving politicians interested only in settling old scores and creating new ones, a cast of shady characters the likes of which the most imaginative Hollywood screenwriter could have never concocted, now conspired to "make things right." Of course, motivated by ill-will and festering resentments, these sycophants, these dilettantes, these amateurs masquerading as statesmen, got everything wrong. And while these gentlemen, with their mistresses tucked away in some cozy hotel room, conducted business, from the sidelines two men carefully

observed the proceedings: Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. They noted everything, especially regarding Poland. What amazes me is how Poland even managed to survive intact until 1939. With the exception of fascist Italy, no country made more enemies more quickly than Poland (and what is so sad is that the Polish people, who never collaborated with the Nazis and tried their best to stay faithful to the West, deserved better). Placed within a broader historical context of the Versailles Treaty, the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact makes more sense. No matter what else may have set Germany and the Soviet Union against each other, they could agree on one thing: Poland is their enemy. I find it incredible that any country could maneuver to make enemies out of BOTH Hitler and Stalin. No way was Hitler and Stalin going to accept a Poland created at Germany's and Russia's expense, and without their agreement. The Versailles Treaty produced nothing good, only bad.

Glad u like the pics.

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To: [redacted] **Details**
Martin Malia and Robert Conquest's books are further proof of how Europeans were gluttons for self-inflicted punishment. As if WW1 and the Versailles Treaty (or diktat) wasn't enough to satisfy Europe's thirst to fight, the Russian Revolution was like icing on the cake. Instead of countries fighting each other, Russia, now re-cast as the Soviet Union, wanted to incite class warfare AROUND THE WORLD. This just incited other countries to become aggressive too (Malia, page 3). Russia lost millions of people, lost territory, even lost its sense of identity, yet STILL WANTED TO KEEP FIGHTING. Europe certainly was transforming, but not for the better. Russia (that is, the Soviet Union) became the role model for every radical, fanatic, and demagogue who had an axe to grind and was willing to use it. When Russia found that it couldn't ignite a world revolution, then the entire country vented its rage on itself, as Conquest so aptly documents. They engaged in political infighting at a level of violence that today is legendary. This kind of politics became the norm. This leads to a question: what defect or defects did European culture have that made it so prone or vulnerable to this kind of institutionalized self-destructive violence?

Phil

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To: [redacted] **Details**
Derek Alderoft, *From Versailles to Wall Street, 1919-1929*

The author argues that WW1 was not responsible for the bringing on the 1929 downturn. Okay, fair enough. War or no war, the international economy was prone to business cycles. Then the author provides an exhaustive survey of the massive damage caused by the war. Those stats refute the author's thesis. The devastation was so massive that it could not but help create the conditions for a

major economic crisis. It just took ten years happen, and it was not part of any normal business cycle. The war hit Europe hard and Europe never fully recovered, Europe lost 7 percent of its pre-war population. Russia alone lost 26 million persons. There is no way that Europe and the entire world could sustain such losses and avoid serious economic consequences.

Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture*

This book refutes the stereotype of the Germans as a bunch of strutting militarists. Gay argues that the collapse of the Weimar Republic was not inevitable (page 2). Under Weimar, German culture, freed from the restrictive environment of monarchy, flourished. Good for Germany, but it wasn't enough to ensure the regime's survival. To me, Gay sums up why Weimar failed in this sentence: "There were thousands in Weimar - professors, industrialists, politicians - who hated the Nazis but did not love the Republic" (23). These "rational republicans" may have hated the Nazis, but they didn't act on that hatred. Instead they did nothing. They were too rational. They didn't accept the Weimar Republic. Neither did the Nazis, but unlike the rationals, the Nazis built their support through appeals to emotion, and ir worked.

Otto Friedrich, *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s*

First, the inside front jacket of the book contains a great map of central Berlin. It's easy to read and includes all the main attractions. Ditto for the map of Greater Berlin inside the back jacket. Friedrich provides a comprehensive and informative history of life in Berlin in the 1920s. This includes interesting insights into the lives of many of the historical figures associated with that period. For instance, we learn that Joseph Goebbels hated Berlin, that Albert Einstein played the violin (172), that in the 1930 elections, the Nazi representation in the Reichstag increased from 12 to 107, news that was the portent of doom for cellist Emanuel Feuermann (323), that Dr. Henry Lowenfeld, the psychoanalyst noticed that mental patients pretended to be Nazis (371), and that according to a Berlin woman, the inflation wiped out the entire middle class. All this happened in the midst of a spurt of cultural activity in the arts and sciences as the restrictions that existed under Kaiser-Germany disappeared. However, most noteworthy is Friedrich's account of the rise of the Nazi party as a major political force, starting in 1926.

pwnycny (pwnycny@aol.com)To:[redacted] Details
I read the text of an interview that a Soviet journalist conducted with General Vasily Chuikov. This interview is published in a book Stalingrad: the City that Defeated the Third Reich by Jochen Hellbeck (2015). Naturally, much of the interview covers details of the battle. However, Chuikov also devotes a lot of the interview to discussing his impressions people with whom he worked and commanded. The biggest problem was getting accurate information. People lied. He had to assign liaisons to verify the accuracy of reports. He was most

complimentary of the characters of the women who served in the army. He witnessed heroism and cowardice. The ethnic make up of the army was 70 percent Russian. The fighting became most intense in September and October of 1942, especially after Ribbentrop publicly announced the Fuhrer's intention to take the city. For much of the battle, the Germans controlled the sky. Chuikov asserts that the Germans dropped "a million bombs." What Chuikov does not discuss, and which to me is a key question, is: if the Red Army was strong enough to stop and then defeat the Germans at Stalingrad, 1,000 miles inside Russia, then how were the Germans able get to Stalingrad in the first place? Why didn't the Red Army stop the Germans at the border? How could the German Army demolish an entire Soviet army in the Ukraine but not do the same to another Soviet army at Stalingrad? Chuikov had a fourth grade education. He joined the Red Army in 1918, and rose up through the ranks. Before the war, he served in China; he also knew English. Based upon this interview, Chuikov was intelligent, resourceful, and ruthless. In Chuikov, Stalin chose the right person for the job of defending Stalingrad and defeating the Germans. The Germans threw everything they had at the Russians; the Russians held out, and whenever possible counterattacked. Most impressive.

According to Chuikov, the Germans attacked Stalingrad from two directions: west and southwest. They had artillery, tanks, and air support. They bombed the city and Red Army positions practically nonstop. Yet the Russians held on to the west bank of the Volga until reinforcements arrived. Chuikov was there, on the west bank of the Volga River, with his troops. Impressive person. Worthy of respect.

I hope you mention the battle of Stalingrad in your lectures.

Phil

Transcript of text messages to Dave.

July 5, 2018

Donald Trump is the most dominant politician in the US. Beside being the mass media's top star, he is driving the entire political debate. He is the one setting the agenda. Immigration, the economy, the economy, SCOTUS, taxes, national security, Russia, China, NATO, trade, you name it, all driven by Trump. Also, he is remaking the GOP. This from a landlord with no prior political experience.

The Dems r trying to reply to Trump, but in doing so they come off as angry and shrill and disengaged from much of the electorate whose primary concerns are personal security and the economy. Right now Trump owns those issues.

In June the Dems built political capital with the children separation issue. They put Trump on the defensive. However, the Dems soon squandered their advantage when they called for the abolition of ICE which gave Trump a great opportunity to regain the initiative, which is exactly what happened.

Finally, whatever remained of the Dems political capital disappeared with Maxine Water's irresponsible public comments which called into question the legitimacy of the Dem Party as a mainstream political organization.

The only thing that could erode Trump's dominance is a scandal so outrageous that it calls into question his fitness to govern. The Dems have been searching for such a scandal but so far with no success.

Now, with all this established, can the Dems gain control of Congress? In the Senate the GOP may gain 1 or 2 seats. In the House the Dems may gain 4 or 5 seats. However, this prediction is with the disclaimer that between now and election day anything can happen to alter the results.

Further evidence of Trump's political domination can be found in how he is going about selecting a new justice for the SCTUS. He is virtually marginalizing the Dems who can only reply with alarmist rhetoric.

Alarmist rhetoric drives voters away.

With one exception: appealing for law and order. The Dems forfeited that issue to the GOP a long time ago.

But the one factor that is to the Dem's advantage is that the American electorate is so divided along racial, ethnic, economic, gender, and generational lines that many different kinds of winning coalitions are possible.

The Dems have also forfeited the issue of the economy to the GOP. That leaves social issues as the only domestic issue upon which the Dems can build a coalition.

Hence, the 2018 elections may come down to deciding which party owns the issue of immigration.

On this issue, both parties have staked out positions so diametrically opposed that it provides the voters with a clear choice.

July 6, 2018

Choice 1: open borders, meaning letting people enter without visas. Choice 2: closed borders, meaning letting people enter only after being issued a visa.

Immigration has emerged as the main issue for 2018 because of one person: Donald Trump. He is directly challenging the Dems on an issue they have owned for decades. This is giving the Dems huge problems because Trump is forcing them to have to defend their position.

It seems that the Dems' defense of their position can be summarized as follows: we embrace all newcomers to the US, including those who enter without papers. Politically and ideologically this is a position that is not easy to defend, but as I have already mentioned, given the major divisions within the American electorate, that defense could resonate with enough voters to keep the Dems competitive.

The 2018 and 2020 elections with be de facto referendums on where the American voters are on the issue of immigration. Seldom has the American voter been given a clearer choice on an issue. This is because of one person: Donald Trump.

July 8, 2018

Re: SCOTUS. I would advise the POTUS 2 nominate a federal judge who was confirmed by both parties.

July 22, 2018

The Dem Party has the same problem with leftists as did organized labor after WW@. The strategy of the Left is to embed itself into a mass organization, then gain control and then purge all non-Leftists. This is consistent with Marxist ideology. A true Leftist demands ideological orthodoxy and have no interest in forming broad based coalitions.

Now the American Leftists r trying to gain control of the Dem party. That is to be expected.

October 6, 2018

With Judge K, the Dems threw everything they had @ Trump and failed.

October 7, 2018

There is only 1 principle I know of in politics – 2 win. The Dems lost in 2016, saw an opportunity to score political points, went 4 it & botched it up badly.

Just like the French army botched things up with Dreyfus.

Just like with the French army, the fallout 4 the Dems is all negative.

4 a smear campaign to succeed, it has 2 seem credible. The Dems should have found a victim who could produce a police report.

The most astute expert in the use of the smear was Joseph Stalin. His entire career was based on smears. Yet even Stalin knew that 4 a smear 2 succeed he had 2 back it up with lots of evidence, even if it had 2 b fabricated.

The Dems are in trouble. That's y they're making a lot of noise.

The confirmation of Judge K is one of the seminal events in modern American political history. It solidified Trump's position as the leader and shaper of the GOP and earned him a lot of political capital.

October 8, 2018

The news media came off so badly after Trump won not because they were so wring but because they were so certain who would win, which they reported as news. Hence the label Fake News Media.

Whoever believes faithfully in the accuracy of what is reported does so at their own intellectual risk.

October 16, 2018

Re: Sen W. Her claim of being NA based on info given to her by relatives is similar to Moses" claim of being a Hebrew based on info given to him by his family. In the former a white woman believes herself to b a NA, in the latter an Egyptian believes that he is a Hebrew.

October 17, 2018

When reading the history of Poland during 1919-1939, I am amazed that Poland survived intact.

What especially amazed me was Poland's treaty with Hitler in 1934. That bought Poland 5 years.

October 18, 2018

One need not experience military service 2 appreciate the intellectual desert that is a bureaucratic staff meeting.

The golden rule when attending a staff meeting: speak only when spoken to, and when asked to speak, restrict your vocabulary to two monosyllabic words: yes and no.

October 28, 2018

I never gave czar N2 much, if nay, thought until hyour recent lecture. Lenin should have given the enture family a one way steamship ticket to NYC. Trotsky could have found them a place to stay in the Bronx, maybe near Yankee Stadium.

November 7, 2018

No Blue Wave. A Red wave with Blue ripples.

In the House, anti-Trump GOP reps r gone. GOP now united in support of Trump.

DJT = GOP

November 8, 2018

Because of DJT, the GOP has a majority in the Senate.

The biggest obstacle 2 DJT's program were the anti-Trump Reps. They r gone.

Cruz, Rubio, Graham now pay homage 2 DJT.

DJT cemented his position as GOP leader with the Judge K confirmation.

The Dems have a choice: fight DJT or cooperate with DJT. Their choice.

Yeltsin shaped Russian politics. DJT is re-shaping American politics.

November 9, 2019

If it wasn't 4 DJT, Nov. 6 would have been a debacle 4 the GOP.

The Dems r more aggressive, better organized & more ideologically committed than the GOP. They won control of the House because they earned it.

---Original Message-----
From: pwnycny@aol.com
Sent: Nov 18, 2018 10:00 AM

Dear Dave,

1. **Currently the Republicans hold a 51-seat majority in the US Senate. Their majority could increase to 53. In the House, in the next Congress the Dems will have an approximately 35-seat majority.**

2. **Thoroughbred racing.**

a. It's all about winning. That is the measure of success. E.g. Jockey A wins ten races, all claiming races, and earns $400,000. Jockey B wins one race, a $1 million stakes race, and earns $650,000. Based on number of wins, Jockey A will be ranked ahead of Jockey B.

b. Odds are not predictive of results. Heavily favored horses can and often do lose. Long-shots can and do win. Past performance does not guarantee future outcome. E.g., On Nov 17, 2018, race 3, Sunset Ridge, winner of her last 4 races, finished second; race 7, Holiday Bonus, 45-1 long shot, finished first while the favorite, Uncle Mojo, at 3-2, finished last.

c. Picking a winner is based on two factors: 1. probability and 2. luck. Both are variables. That the contestants are animals makes outcome even more uncertain. There is no way that anyone can predict with absolute certainty how a horse will perform in a race.

d. Betting on a horse race is not the same as casino gambling. Whereas in a casino gambling, e.g., cards, roulette, dice, lottery, odds are fixed, in horse racing, odds are fluid and influenced by an almost infinite set of variables, not least of which is the horse itself.

3. **God. I believe in the existence of a higher power. Period.**

4. **Anger. It causes premature aging, is corrosive and is a waste of energy. Yet it is part of human nature and so cannot be denied. Anyone who denies feelings of anger is denying a part of their self.**

Phil

IS HE MAD?

by Phillip W. Weiss

If a Taiwanese-American went to the floor of the US Senate and called for new elections in Taiwan while Communist China is threatening to invade Taiwan, or if a Ukrainian-American went to the floor of the US Senate and called for new elections in Ukraine while Ukraine is fighting for its survival, or if a Korean-American went to the floor of the US Senate and called for new elections in South Korea while South Korea is under the threat of attack from North Korea, each one of them would be deemed to have gone STARK RAVING MAD, or even worse, have committed an act of treason not only against their respective countries but against the United States.

This is exactly what US Senator Charles Schumer did on March 14, 2024, when Mr. Schumer, a Democrat who is Jewish and claims to support Israel while the Democratic party, in a radical shift away from what has been a bipartisan cornerstone of US foreign policy since 1948, is now anti-Israel, went to the floor of the US Senate and called for new elections in Israel to replace the current Israeli prime minister, Netanyahu, whose country is fighting a war for its survival against terrorist organizations who pose a DIRECT THREAT to the security of the United States.

Mr. Schumer's actions are a stark reminder of the threat to the national security of the United States posed by elected officials who place partisan interests ahead of the interest of the nation. Nowhere is the corrosive impact of

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partisan politics more evident than in New York City where the city government defunded the police and now allows the city to be a repository for people who even the Democratic US president considers "illegal," all to promote a partisan political agenda that places the physical safety of every person in New York City at risk. Is this what New Yorkers want?

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PWW 3/19/2024

An Open Letter to the President of the United States

by Phillip W. Weiss

Joseph Biden, President

United States of America

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue

Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Your decision to end the US involvement in Afghanistan is a disaster. It is a defeat that is reverberating around the world. It is the worst humiliation the US has ever suffered. It immediately eroded trust in the US around the world, has emboldened our enemies (meaning those nations and regimes that we have identified as adversaries), confounded our allies (presuming that we even have allies), and has greatly increased our vulnerability to terrorist attack, both inside and outside of the United States. What makes matters even worse, however, is that our humiliation will not end anytime soon. According to news reports, the spectacle of the US exit, under the auspices of the Taliban, the very same group that the US expended over ONE TRILLION DOLLARS to defeat, is slated to continue for days and even weeks while the US struggles and scrambles to evacuate the thousands of Americans who are now stuck in the country. If they become hostages, this could turn our defeat into an outright nightmare, the proportions of which will dwarf the disaster of the 1979 storming of the American

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Embassy in Teheran, which took the US 444 days to resolve, and expand the scope of the defeat to a magnitude comparable to the fall of Bataan and Corregidor, the fall of Singapore, the British defeat at Tobruk, the fall of France in 1940, the German defeat at Stalingrad, and Russia's defeat in the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War. These are the kind of disasters that no nation experiences without incurring major damage. While you were not wrong in wanting to clean up the mess you inherited in Afghanistan, the way you are cleaning it up is making the mess exponentially worse. Now the dice are cast. Maybe you could have done things differently to produce a less painful outcome. We will never know. One thing, however, is certain: you cannot evade your responsibility for creating this unfolding disaster. This is a burden that you alone must bear. No amount of finger pointing can change that fact. As you yourself said, borrowing a phrase coined by a previous president, the buck stops with you. Frankly, I cannot understand how you can even stay in office. Your own party is turning against you on this matter, just like they turned against the governor of New York when his actions transformed him into a political liability. It is no shame to suffer a defeat if one puts forth their best effort. It is a shame when that defeat is humiliating, when the vanquished is forced to "eat crow" and whine like a bully who has had his nose tweaked. It is obvious that today the United States is much weaker than it was in 1990 when it won a major war in three days and in 2003 when it trounced the Hussein regime and occupied Baghdad. In Afghanistan all of our massive military, political, cultural and financial resources that we poured into that country proved

to be no match for an adversary who, unlike us, refused to give up and now has prevailed. Now after twenty years, we are back to square one. We have moved our token around the game board and now have returned to starting line, discouraged and defeated, but at least we are still in the game. Or are we?

Sincerely,

Phillip W. Weiss

Phillip W. Weiss

PWW 8/18/2021

A Political Question and My Reply

by Phillip W. Weiss

Recently, someone asked me a direct question: Am I Republican? Given the content of some of the emails I send to various persons, including the person who asked me the question, I thought that was a fair question to ask me. However, before I answer that question, I want to preface my reply with a brief comment on how I feel about political parties. I abhor political parties. Their presence, which is not mandated by the United States Constitution, distorts our political system in a way that is toxic to the public. Regrettably, I know of no viable scheme that could replace political parties with something better. Totalitarianism was tried and was a colossal failure and monarchies are obsolete. So, by default, that leaves us with our current partisan-driven system. The best we can do is try to limit the damage caused by partisan politics so that it does not destroy the nation.

Now to my answer: Officially I am an independent. However, I support and vote Republican. I vote Republican not because I am enamored with or have sentimental feelings for the Republican Party, but because I am completely fed up with the Democratic Party which supports and promotes policies that I not only completely reject but pose a direct threat to the survival of the nation. Those policies include, but are not limited to, defunding police departments, denigrating

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law enforcement, demeaning and demonizing people, and even inciting hatred, based solely on the basis of race (which is outright racism), promoting policies that favor mediocracy over merit, impugning the character of the United States and the American people, revising history to promote a political agenda, supporting programs that erode middle class values, promoting ideological rigidity and intellectual intolerance, providing political cover for organizations that promote political violence, and providing political cover for anti-Semites. Because of these policies, the Democratic Party is practically forcing me to vote Republican. Frankly, I can't understand how anybody who favors law and order, public safety, low taxes, tolerance, unity and inclusivity can vote Democrat, but that is one of those mysteries that may never be solved.

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PWW 5/28/2021

An Open Letter to the Russian People

by Phillip W. Weiss

Recently the United States government imposed new sanctions on Russia. Subsequently the value of the ruble dropped by 3 percent relative to the dollar.

Please understand the following: the actions of the U.S. government do not necessarily conform to my personal feelings as to how the United States should treat Russia. I have the utmost respect and admiration for the Russian people. During my visits to Russia, every Russian with whom I had contact treated me with cordiality, hospitality and respect. That includes at my hotel, in public transportation, in the post office, on the street, in food markets, and in many other venues.

Further, during my visits, I witnessed no evidence of any hostility toward the United States or the American people. Nor did I witness any kind of government propaganda or similar campaigns meant to spread, instill or incite negative feelings about the United States.

In the United States the American media, and especially the film industry, demonizes Russia and Russians. According to them, Russian society is thoroughly corrupt, dominated by oligarchs, and governed by a sham democratic government that in reality is a dictatorship. Once again, that was not the Russia

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I experienced during my visits. I witnessed a society that has a thriving and growing middle class and whose people do not live in fear of their government.

Let me emphasize this point: Russia has totally repudiated its Marxist past. Today, Russia has as much connection to its Marxist/Soviet/Stalinist past as Germany has to its Nazi/Third Reich/Hitler past. To judge the Russian people, and especially to formulate any official policies toward Russia, based upon their Communist past is just plainly unfair. It would be like judging the character of the American people based upon their history of having supported slavery.

In May 1988 President Ronald Reagan visited Moscow. During his visit President Reagan, in Red Square, expressed the wish for friendship between the Russian and American people. He stated, "We want friendship between our two peoples." Let us be guided by President Reagan's words.

Nothing in this letter should be construed as meaning that I condone everything Russia does. Russia has its Issues, and some of her actions, especially in the area of foreign affairs, have raised legitimate concerns in the United States, concerns that I share. However, in no way do I condone or support using these concerns as a pretext to formulate policies that will intentionally inflict or cause material harm to the Russian people. That will do no one any good. Nor is it an appropriate way to treat friends.

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Is the United States a Racist Nation?

by Phillip W. Weiss

Officially, the United States is not a racist nation. Nowhere does the United States Constitution limit or deny legal rights to anyone based on race or ethnicity. Yet, in the United States today, the status of race relations is a far from settled matter. In 1896, in the case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the United States Supreme Court affirmed, by a seven to one majority, the constitutionality of laws designed to achieve racial segregation. Fifty-eight years later in 1954, in the case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, the same Supreme Court, albeit with different justices, ruled, in a unanimous decision, that the segregation of a public school system violated the equal protection clause of the fourteenth amendment of the United States Constitution and therefore was unconstitutional.[1] Thus, the same judicial body adjudicating the same issue governed by the same constitutional amendment arrived at two different conclusions. This is indicative of the confusion that surrounds the question of race.

Racial segregation still exists in the United States today. According to a published report, scores of colleges in the United States have segregated spaces for blacks. A 2019 National Association of Scholars' study stated, "About 46 percent (80 colleges out of 173 surveyed) segregate student orientation

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[1] Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

programs; 43 percent (75 colleges out of the total) offer segregated residential arrangements; and 72 percent (125 colleges out of the total) segregate graduation ceremonies." According to another published report, a prominent Russian politician has called on the United States to employ racial segregation as a solution to the race problem. According to this report,

> **Nationalist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia in the State Duma, or parliament, argued that the United States should resort to racial segregation, splitting up into "Black" and "White" states. Zhirinovsky is known for being outrageous. But, far from being ridiculed, his obscenely racist suggestion garnered coverage in the Kremlin-controlled state media, as well as support from a fellow parliamentarian.**

Thus, despite the *Brown* decision outlawing racial segregation, college campuses are opting for racial segregation and at least one major Russian politician is publicly advocating racial segregation as a legitimate method to solve America's race problem.

Since the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery in 1865, race relations in the United States have been in turmoil. Some have directly accused the United States of being a racist nation that does not afford persons of color fair treatment. The passage of laws that outlaw racial discrimination seems to have had little if any effect on easing the anger or cynicism over perceived racial injustice or improving relations between the races. Indeed, despite these laws the United States has become MORE SEGREGATED. In the United States in 2010, blacks comprised 12.3 percent of the population. However, in 2017, 58 percent of black students were enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools with at least

75 percent minority enrollment; the figure was 60 percent for Hispanic students. In 2010, the populations of ten cities in the United States with 100,000 or more populations were at least 55.4 percent black; the population of Detroit, Michigan, alone was 82.7 percent black. These statistics give cause to consider whether current laws governing race relations need to be revised. Current demographic trends seem to suggest that current policies governing race relations are not working and could be making the situation worse.

Thus, there is a need to consider new methods to bridge the racial divide. One possibility is to hold a national referendum on race. Gauging the wishes of the American people on the question of race would be a critical first act toward crafting a national policy on race relations that has a chance to succeed. In addition to providing evidence to either support or refute claims that the United States is a racist nation, a referendum would provide a clear and unfiltered indication of the public's attitude on the issue of race and the guidance needed to move the nation closer to solving a problem that if allowed to continue unchecked could tear the nation apart.

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PWW 6/29/2020

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2,374 words

An Essay on the History of Bellevue Hospital -

Some Interesting Facts

By PHILLIP W. WEISS

Describing the characteristics of an ideal hospital, Sir Thomas More wrote:

> **They take more care of their sick than of any others;**
> **these are lodged and provided for in public hospitals.[1]**

Sir Thomas's words epitomize the story of Bellevue Hospital. Since colonial times, Bellevue Hospital has provided quality medical care for vast numbers of patients, regardless of their ability to pay. It is a record of service that has made Bellevue Hospital the most famous health care facility in the world.

Bellevue Hospital can trace its beginnings to a six-bed infirmary that was part of "The Publick Work House and Home of Correction of the City of New York," an almshouse that was opened by the City of New York in 1736.[2] In 1826, the facility, by then known as the Bellevue Institution – a complex of buildings

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which included Bellevue Hospital - housed 1,366 inmates in the almshouse and 336 prisoners.[3]

Between 1819 and 1970, Bellevue Hospital[4] was under the control of six different governing bodies: the Board of Commissioners of the Almshouse (1816-1849), the Board of Governors of the Almshouse Department (1849-1860), the Board of Commissioners of Public Charities and Correction (1860-1896), the Department of Public Charities (1896-1902), the Trustees of Bellevue and Allied Hospitals (1902-1929), and the Department of Hospitals (1929-1970). In 1970, Bellevue Hospital became part of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation.[5]

Bellevue Hospital has always provided care for an ethnically diverse patient population. In the early eighteenth century, the infirmary treated patients from Holland, France, Ireland, as well as Native Americans.[6] During the yellow fever epidemic of 1803, only a small portion of the patients admitted to Bellevue were natives and residents of New York; most were immigrants from Ireland and Germany.[7] In 1904, almost 53 percent of the patients admitted to Bellevue Hospital were foreign born. Their countries of origin included Ireland, Germany, Austria, Italy, Russia, France, Sweden, and Wales.[8]

The ethnic diversity reflected the demographic make up of New York City's population. In 1870, over 44 percent of the population of New York City were foreign born. Of the foreign born, their countries of origin included Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bohemia, Canada, China, Cuba, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and Wales.[9] In 1890, Jacob Riis, noting the ethnic diversity of the city's population, wrote:

> A map of the city, colored to designate nationalities, would show more stripes than on the skin of a zebra, and more colors than any rainbow.[10]

Ethnic diversity remained a major feature of New York City's population. In 1935, the population of 10,863,527 in the New York City Metropolitan Area was 30 percent foreign-born, 28 percent Jewish and 27 percent Roman Catholic.[11] In 1960, 20 percent of the white population of New York City was foreign born, and 29 percent of the native born white population had parents who were foreign born.[12]

Substantial numbers of patients treated at Bellevue Hospital were unable to pay for their care. Indeed, Bellevue was known as the "poor man's hospital."[13] In some years, almost no patients paid. For instance, in 1924, the total operating expenses for Bellevue Hospital, General Administration and Allied Hospitals was $3,082,956.48; receipts for the care and board of patients was $68,423.07; in 1925, total expenses were $3,072,639.76; receipts, $58,922.25.[14]

Indigence was widespread. In 1930, 50.4 percent of the hospital patients in New York City did not pay for their care;[15] in 30 government hospitals in New York City (23 municipal, 4 state, and 3 federal}, income from patients was 2.4 percent of total income with tax appropriations accounting for 96.5 percent of total income.[16] In 1934, the number of inpatients unable to pay for their care was 58.6 percent citywide.[17] That year, 332,452 such patients were admitted to municipal and voluntary hospitals.[18] Voluntary hospitals were allocated money from the city to provide medical care for the poor. In 1935, the schedule of rates per diem (unless otherwise stated) were:

Infants under five years of age	$1.15
Medical and surgical patients	3.00

Tuberculosis patients	1.75
Active cancer patients	3.00
Custodial cancer patients	1.75
Orthopedic treatment of children	1.40
Chronic, incurable or infirm patients	1.15
Maternity care, mother and child, per case	35.00[19]

Although miniscule by today's standards, these payments were a major source of income for private sector hospitals. In 75 voluntary general hospitals in New York City, income from government payments increased from 4.9 percent of total income in 1930 to 10.1 percent in 1934, an increase of 136.6 percent. At the same time, for the period 1930-1934, total revenue decreased by 8.5 percent.[20] However, the rates of payment provided by the city for care of public charges were substantially lower than the cost of caring for these patients, thus reducing the financial incentive for private hospitals to care for indigent patients.[21]

At Bellevue Hospital patients were hospitalized for practically every disease and disorder known to medical science. In 1798, patients were admitted for yellow fever.[22] In 1832, Bellevue admitted patients with cholera.[23] In 1843, patients were admitted with delirium tremens, erysipelas, typhoid fever, puerperal fever, phthisis, and pneumonia.[24] Bellevue weathered outbreaks of typhus in 1818, 1825, 1827, and the 1850s,[25] and puerperal fever epidemics in 1857 and 1874.[26] In 1930, conditions treated at Bellevue Hospital on an inpatient basis included abscesses, lobar pneumonia, chronic pulmonary tuberculosis, acute general tuberculosis, cellulitis, syphilis, acute bronchitis, acute appendicitis, vertigo, alcohol poisoning, grippe, acute cocaine poisoning, illuminating gas poisoning, chronic opium poisoning, acute salpingitis, chronic salpingitis, cancer of

the digestive system, abortion, normal parturition, gunshot wounds, stab wounds, automobile injuries, trauma from falls, unclassified violence, senility, pellagra, rickets, scurvy, "gastric neurosis", "anxiety neurosis," "senile psychosis," "arterial cerebral psychosis," "general paralysis of the insane," "alcoholic psychosis," "manic depressive psychosis," "schizophrenia psychosis," "psychosis, unclassified," "mental deficiency," insomnia, hysteria, hypochondriasis, pediculosis, unknown tumors, and unknown diseases.[27] Patients were also admitted for other conditions such as blood donation, normal child infancy, no disease, and malingering.[28] In 1892, a visitor to Bellevue Hospital wrote:

> **The twelve hundred beds are always full. Every form of malady that can afflict mankind is seen in these wards, in which a constant weeding-out process goes on.[29]**

While treating this formidable array of diseases and disorders, Bellevue Hospital maintained a high standard of care. By the late nineteenth century, the antiseptic method was rigorously followed.[30] Commenting on Bellevue's commitment to medical cleanliness, an observer wrote:

> **The drug department at Bellevue annually dispenses for use in this hospital alone about 135,000 yards of surgical gauze, 600 pounds of lint, 3,500 pounds of absorbent cotton, 50 bales of oakum, and vast quantities of drugs, including nearly 1,000 pounds of ether. On the cellar about 75,000 bottles are washed annually.[31]**

At the same time, Bellevue Hospital was able to deliver medical care at low cost. In 1904, the daily per capita cost for inpatient care at Bellevue Hospital was $1.18 *per day*;[32] in 1925, it was $2.97 *per day.* In 1925, the per capita cost of outpatient care per visit was *ten cents per visit*.[33] In 1934, the average cost per inpatient day for ward service

in voluntary general hospitals was $6.34; in the municipal hospitals it was $4.38.[34]

Bellevue Hospital was always crowded. In 1853, Bellevue Hospital treated 5,564 patients, almost double the number treated in 1847.[35] In 1855, Bellevue Hospital had 200 more patients than its proper capacity.[36] In 1892, 16,541 patients were treated at Bellevue Hospital.[37] That same year, 4,539 alcoholic patients, 3,347 who were men, were admitted to Bellevue Hospital (no other general hospital in the city would accept these patients).[38] In 1903, Bellevue Hospital admitted 27,547 patients; in 1904, 28,925.[39] In 1925, there were 46,226 admissions to the medical and surgical wards and 1,926 births in the hospital. That same year, the number of outpatient visits was 308,769 *exclusive* of new cases, which totaled 76,764.[40] In 1930, there were 58,026 admissions. That same year 2,349 children were born in the hospital; the Ambulance Division responded to 13,901 calls; 59,627 treatments were provided by the Physio-Therapy Division; and over 27,813 *tons* of coal was consumed.[41] A staff of 102 interns and 67 doctors, assisted by 692 nurses and attendants, handled a total of 454,552 dispensary visits.[42] Commenting on conditions in the Tuberculosis Service, the Department of Hospitals, in its Second Annual Report, noted that

> There has been a steady increase in the number of patients treated annually…. This increase has, of course, placed an increasing burden on the personnel and facilities of the [Tuberculosis] Service, which are now taxed to their utmost capacity.[43]

The psychiatric department was also crowded. In 1930, 16,036 patients were admitted to the Bellevue Hospital Psychiatric Department.[44] In 1935, 21,056 patients were admitted; of that number, 5,850, or 27.8 percent were subsequently committed to state hospitals.[45] The 1930 annual report of the Department of Hospitals of the City of

New York noted the "tremendous overcrowding, particularly in the Bellevue Hospital Psychiatric Department."[46]

Years later, overcrowding still persisted. In 1965, the average occupancy rate in the Psychiatric Department was 115.3 percent.[47]

Private hospitals had large caseloads, but in the municipal hospitals the caseloads were much larger. In 1934, 134 hospitals in New York City treated a total of 644,729 inpatients; inpatient days totaled 14,160,367. Of these totals, the 24 municipal hospitals, comprising 18 percent of the total number of hospitals, treated over one-third of the inpatient caseload (222,287 patients) and provided over one-third of the inpatient days of care (5,272,635 inpatient days).[48] In 1935, Bellevue Hospital alone admitted 61,920 patients and provided 896,450 inpatient days of care.[49] The United Hospital Fund reported that between 1930 and 1934,

> Service (both the number of patients and patient days) increased in general hospitals under all types of control, all of which has increased their facilities, but very much more in the general hospitals under municipal control than in the voluntary hospitals.[50]

While the municipal hospitals were operating at almost maximum capacity, the voluntary hospitals had thousands of empty beds. The United Hospital Fund reported that

> Throughout 1934, the average number of empty beds in voluntary hospitals in New York City was 6,508.[51]

In the municipal hospitals, the situation was reversed. The United Hospital Fund noted that

> In 1934, ten of the thirteen municipal general hospitals, including those representing over 95 percent of the beds in such hospitals, were occupied to 85 percent of their capacity or more; four of the

> municipal general hospitals were occupied over 100 percent in 1934. Similarly, seven of the eleven special hospitals under municipal auspices were occupied to 85 percent or more of their capacity, including two special tuberculosis hospitals used to more than 100 per cent.[52]

Not only was the inpatient caseload disproportionately higher in municipal hospitals, the patients remained hospitalized longer. In 1934, the average length of stay in voluntary hospitals was 12.2 days; in the municipal hospitals it was 17.8 days.[53] In assessing why paying patients spent fewer days in the hospital than nonpaying patients, the United Hospital Fund concluded "that economic necessity had an influence in determining the length of hospital care of these patients."[54]

At Bellevue Hospital, as well as in other hospitals in the New York City Metropolitan Area, many of the medical house staff provided their services without pay. In 1935, 3.9 percent of the attending physicians and 2 percent of the interns in municipal hospitals were paid.[55]

For the medical profession, charity care was considered a duty. In 1843, assistant physicians at Bellevue Hospital were paid nothing.[56] The United Hospital Fund reported that

> Physicians very generally have held that the practice of medicine is not to be considered as a business undertaking, but as a personal professional service to which the poor and the well-to-do are equally entitled, and for which they should be willing to pay according to their means or not at all.[57]

After his death on December 10, 1930, Dr. Charles B. Bacon, medical superintendent of Kings County Hospital, was praised for his "thirty one years of unselfish devotion to the care of the sick poor of the City of New York."[58]

By the mid-1930s, however, the attitude of physicians on the question of

payment for services was changing. In 1934, the Public Relations Committee of the Medical Society of the State of New York adopted a resolution that stated:

> Physicians are not concerned with the care of indigents for the purpose of gain, but to render needed service in the prevention and treatment of disease. Compensation sufficient to protect physicians against economic loss is rightfully expected and should be provided from public funds.[59]

As in peacetime, in time of war Bellevue Hospital answered the call to duty. During World War One, a unit from Bellevue Hospital, designated by the Army as Base Hospital Unit Number 1, organized and operated a 316-bed hospital in Vichy, France. Base Hospital Unit Number 1 could accommodate five thousand wounded.[60] In World War Two, another unit from Bellevue Hospital, designated United States General Hospital Number 1, was again sent to Europe. General Hospital Number 1 established a hospital outside of London where they treated patients from the Eighth Air Force after bombing missions over the continent and civilian casualties from the buzz bombing of London. Later, as part of the D-Day forces that invaded Europe, General Hospital Number 1 opened a nearly two-thousand bed hospital in France. In April 1945, the surgeons performed 1,142 operations.[61]

Over the years Bellevue Hospital has served the health care needs of the poorest and most disadvantaged people of our society, and has done so with success. Whether in times of peace or war, Bellevue Hospital has provided what the United Hospital Fund has called "an essential public service."[62] By remaining true to its historical responsibility, Bellevue Hospital has set an example for what health care could be, and should be: not just a mere commodity, but a public service to be provided for the benefit of the patients, their families, and society.

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Excerpts from *Karl Marx* by Isaiah Berlin

compiled by Phillip W. Weiss

His father wrote him a long paternal letter, begging him not to waste his time on barren metaphysical speculation when he had a career to think of. (69)

If Marx derived from Hegel his view of the historical structure – that is, of the formal relations between the elements of which human history consists, he obtained his knowledge of the elements themselves from Saint-Simon and his disciples, notably Thierry and Mignet. (89-90)

Saint-Simon was a thinker of bold and original views: he was the first writer to assert that the development of economic relationships is the determining factor in history – and further to analyze the historical process as a continuous conflict between economic classes, between those who, at any given period, are the possessors of the main economic resources of the community, and those who lack this advantage and come to depend upon the former for their subsistence. (90)

Human history is the history of such conflicts: due ultimately to the blindness of both masters and subjects to the coincidence of the best interests of both under a rational distribution of economic resources. (91)

Early in life he [Proudhon] held that all property was misappropriation. (114)

In effect Marx accused Proudhon of wishing to remedy the immediate wrongs of the existing system without destroying the system itself because … he was emotionally attached to it. (119)

The framework of the new theory is undeviatingly Hegelian. It recognizes that the history of humanity is a single, non-repetitive process, which obeys discoverable laws. (124)

This accumulation in its turn creates the possibility of leisure, and so of culture; but thereby also of the use of this accumulation – of these hoarded necessities of life – as a means of withholding benefits from others, and so of bullying them, of forcing them to work for the accumulators of wealth, of coercing, exploiting and thereby dividing men into classes – into controllers and controlled. (129)

But whereas Hegel had declared that what gave its specific character to any given society was its national character … for Marx it was the system of economic relations which governed the society in question. (132)

"It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary their social existence determines their consciousness." (133)

Marx accepted this vision of history as a battlefield of incarnate idea, but translated it into social terms, of the struggle between classes. (137)

Production is a social activity. Any form of cooperative work or division of labor, whatever its origin, creates common purposes and common interests, not analyzable as the mere sum of the individual aims or interests of the human being involved. (138)

The monopoly of the means of production held by a particular group of men, enables it to bind its will on the others and force them to perform tasks alien to their own needs. Thereby the unity of society is destroyed, and the lives of both classes become distorted. (139)

Such ideologies – national, religious, economic and so on, are forms of collective self-deception; the victims of the ruling class – the proletarians and peasants – imbibe it as a part of their normal education, of the general outlook of the unnatural society, and so come to look upon it, and accept it, as objective, just, necessary, a part of the natural order which pseudo-sciences are then created to explain. (139-140)

Alienation – the substitution of imaginary relations between, or respect for, persons – will come to an end only when the final class – the proletariat – defeats the bourgeoisie. (142)

Capitalism, under which the labor of human beings is bought and sold, and the workers are treated merely as sources of labor power, is plainly a system which distorts the truth about what men are and can be, and seeks to subordinate history to a class interest (which is injustice), and is therefore due to be superseded by the gathering power of the indignant victims which it own victories call into existence. (142-143)

Feuerbach is praised for showing that in religion men delude themselves by inventing an imaginary world to redress the balance of misery in real life, - it is a form of escape, a golden dream, or, in a phrase made celebrated by Marx, the opium of the people …. (144)

The real convictions and principles of a man or a society are expressed in their acts, not their words. (145)

Acts – particularly the objective behavior of a group, whatever the subjective motives of its members – those alone counted. (148)

The workers must be made to understand that the modern industrial system, like the feudal system before it, like every other social system, is, so long as the ruling class requires for its continuance as a class, an iron despotism imposed by the capitalist system of production and distribution, from which no individual, whether he be master or slave, can escape. (150)

Hence this end [the abolition of class struggle] can be achieved not by creating equality between classes – a utopian conception – but by the total abolition of classes themselves. (151)

[W]hatever his personal motive for acting as he [Napoleon] did, the demands of his historical environment inevitably made him an instrument of social change; by his agency, as Hegel had indeed perceived, Europe advanced yet another step towards the realization of its destiny. (151)

The proletariat is on the lowest possible ruing of the social scale: there is no class below it; by securing its own emancipation the proletariat will therefore emancipate mankind. (152)

But whereas all other victories placed in power a class itself is doomed to ultimate disappearance, this conflict will be followed by no other, being destined to end the condition of all such struggles, by abolishing classes as such; by dissolving the state itself, hitherto the instrument of a single class, into a free, because classless, society. (153)

The proletariat must be made to understand that no real compromise with the enemy is possible; that, while it may conclude temporary alliances with him in order to defeat some common adversary, it must ultimately turn against him. (153)

He [Marx] rejected any notion of non-empirical, purely contemplative or specifically moral intuition or moral reason. (154)

The only sense in which it is possible to show that something is good or bad, right or wrong, is by demonstrating that it accords or discords with the historical process. (154)

It [communism] is a wide and comprehensive doctrine which derives its structure and basic concepts from Hegel and the Young Hegelians, and its dynamic principles from Saint-Simon, its belief in the primacy of matter from Feuerbach, and its view of the proletariat from the French communist tradition. (157)

In the sharpness and clarity with which this theory formulates its questions, in the rigor of the method by which it proposes to search for answers, in the combination of attention to detail and power of wide comprehensive generalizations, it is without parallel. (158)

Source: Isaiah Berlin, *Karl Marx – third edition* (Oxford University Press: London), 1963