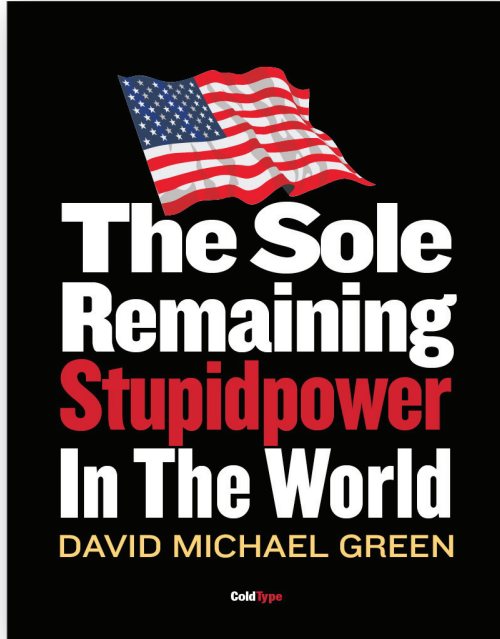


DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

ColdType **The Sole**
Remaining
Stupidpower
In The World





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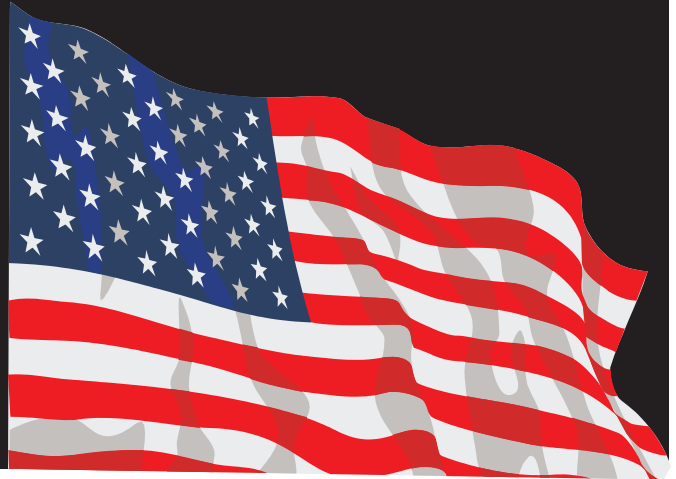
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The Sole Remaining Stupidpower In The World



DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

I guess I really shouldn't be surprised at the human capacity for stupidity. I mean, after all, we live in a world where almost the entire human race believes in all-controlling magic deities from outer space. Even though they manifestly never actually control anything. And they never actually appear.

Better still, every culture has its own particular Master of the Universe, and it never occurs to these six or seven billion souls what the simple fact of this embarrassment of competing divinities might imply for the very concept of believing that their particular one is the real deal.

Best of all, though, we hominids are unsurpassed at finding new and improved ways to murder each other en masse in the name of these very same peace-bringing deities.

If the nearly the whole human race is down for that, why should anything surprise me?

Still.

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ity ever in human history. It's the greatest military power ever to bestride the planet. It has been endlessly innovative on the technological front, from electricity to automobiles, to aircraft, space flight, splitting the atom, sequencing the human genome, to building the first computers then shrinking those room-size behemoths down to fit in your shirt pocket – only a thousand times more powerful (plus you can call your mom with it, too). This is country that, for all its multiple stumbles and bumbles, pioneered for the world crucial advances in democracy, human rights, diversity, tolerance, class relations, social mobility, civil rights and civil liberties (not so much in our treatment of other people, though – but that's another story). This is a country that succeeded in bringing mass prosperity to its people on a scale never seen before, creating a giant middle class where one of that proportion had never remotely existed before. Whatever else one can say about America (and, regrettably, there is a lot), its place in human history is secure. These are remarkable achievements individually, and they are

astonishing collectively.

Which just makes it all the more jaw-dropping to watch such a country commit national suicide, and especially to do so for all the stupidest of reasons. And which makes it hard to imagine that the same country that can rightly boast so many great achievements is capable of such idiocy.

Well, maybe it's not the same country anymore, and that explains it. I dunno.

What I do know is that we've spent the last generation or so hell-bent to self-destruct. And what I do know is that the deeper we get into our self-inflicted pit of national devastation, the more – not less – we turn to the same ideas, brought to us by the same discredited monsters, and inquire, “Thank you sir, may I have another?” The tea party troglodytes are only the most recent manifestation of that peculiar American addiction to global and self-destruction. After McCarthy we went for Nixon. After Nixon we went for Reagan. After Reagan we stooped so low we put the Caligula Kid in the White House. Twice. That little dry-drunk planetary-scale disaster of rampant personal insecurity spent almost the entirety of his last term in office with job approval ratings down around twenty-five or thirty percent. But since he didn't commit the grave crime of getting a blow job from someone other than his wife, no one even talked about removing him from office. No, he only was asleep at the wheel for 9/11, lied us into a disastrous war, shredded the Constitution, allowed one of our major cities to drown, plunged us into debt, made the whole world hate us, polarized the country, and then left us the goodbye gift of the worst global economic catastrophe since the Great Depression. But here we are, a mere two years later, having brought back the same



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crowd in record-setting droves, only this time they're even worse, as unimaginable as that seems, like a tribe of political crackhead vampire zombies, locked in mindless unrelenting pursuit of sucking dry the national blood supply.

Who votes for that, man? Huh? Who says to the wife on election day, “Honey, be sure to pull the lever for the guys who want to rape our family and leave us in the ditch, naked, jobless, impoverished and homeless!”? Who thinks to himself, “Why should I have a tiny little suburban house and a ten year-old rusted Chevy when thousands of millionaires each day suffer the humiliating stigma of not being billionaires? Let me vote for the nice people who will hand my meager earnings up to the overclass.” Who sits there and thinks, “Those guys sure messed up bad last time, but maybe if they double down on their plans it'll get a lot better for people like me!”? Who thinks, “My unemployed, uneducated, Walmart worker 30 year-old kids are so spoiled! I want a government that won't pamper them so much.”?

For that matter, who thinks at all? Evidently, no one in America. This country's problem is that it continues to believe that lazy detachment is the surest way to solve our national problems. It's the Deadbeat Dad model of politics. You spend twenty years raising your kid by maybe – maybe – checking in with him for about fifteen minutes every two or four years. You show up, tick a few boxes, sign a form, pat the kid on the head, and then disappear til the next time. “Hey man, how you been, little dude?! Yer lookin' good. Hey, sorry, gotta run now.” Next thing you know, your child is a young adult, sitting on death row, busted for committing some heinous capital offense. What a surprise, eh? You worked

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so hard to raise him right. You invested so much energy in doing everything you could to watch out for his interests. How could it possibly have all gone so wrong?

That's how we owners of American democracy treat our charge.

If you think I'm joking about how out to lunch the voting public is in this country, consider this recent revelation: Gallup just got done asking Americans to name the greatest president in American history. Guess who won? Ronald Reagan. Yeah, that Ronald Reagan. For the third time in the eight fieldings of this poll question over the last twelve years, too. He got 19 percent, to Abraham Lincoln's 14 percent. And Old Abe just barely nudged out Bill Clinton, who pulled down 13 percent of the vote. Then came Kennedy, with George Washington fifth on the list. After him is FDR, then Barack Obama, with 5 percent of the vote. George W. Bush tied with Thomas Jefferson. Which makes perfect sense, of course, both being of such similar character, intellect and historical stature.

I think we can learn, ahem, many things from these simple data. First of all, loads of people are so ignorant of history that they can't really even think of the names of any presidents besides the last couple clowns, and the others they see on dollar bills and the pennies they no longer throw away. That's real ignorant. That's just the kind of voter you want to have if you're trying to steal somebody's country from them.

Second, that old adage about there being no such thing as bad publicity would appear to be true. Bill Clinton, third greatest American president? Sorry, I get them all mixed up, but isn't that the dude we just got through impeaching? George W. Bush, tenth best? Wait a sec, isn't that the guy we just got done hating? Could



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he have won even thirty percent of the vote if he had run again in 2008? Now he's ranked above Jefferson, Jackson and Eisenhower, not to mention all the cats who didn't get named at all?!

Perhaps most important of all, what these survey results demonstrate is the power of propaganda, something the right in this country understands all too well. They know that if you keep telling people that Ronald Reagan was some sort of saintly figure, lots and lots of folks will believe it. I mean, if people are so tuned out that W can rank this highly on the list, a mere two years after his Oval Office demolition derby routine (the results of which are still hugely with us), what do they really know of that Reagan guy who left office a full generation ago, other than what his hagiographers want them to 'know'?

In fact, Reagan will go down in history as one of the most consequential of all American presidents, but also one of the worst. Indeed, perhaps the worst of all. Not because he tripled the national debt and began the process which has led us to the current fiscal train wreck we're approaching. Not because he absolutely shredded the Constitution in the Iran-Contra Affair. Not because he was at times so out of it that he literally introduced himself to his own cabinet secretaries and even his own children (I'm not kidding). And certainly not because he 'ended the Cold War', one of the most ludicrous historical fantasies ever fabricated. (Imagine this meeting of the Soviet Politburo, circa 1984. Comrade #1: "Reagan is spending like crazy on military hardware he can't use against us and can't afford to buy. What should we do?" All others present, in unison: "Well, of course we'll have to accept our defeat in the Cold War without a single shot being

fired (even while we're sitting on top of 25,000 strategic nuclear warheads), and then we must explode our country into 15 pieces. What else could we possibly do?"

No, Reagan will earn his place in history because his crimes are worse than those of a scandal-plagued Grant administration, or a power-mad Nixon administration. What Reagan did was to begin the process of destroying the American middle class, working class and poor, in order to feed the insatiable greed of the wealthy. He began the process of changing tax and trade and regulation and privatization and labor relations policies, all for the purposes of transferring wealth from non-elites to elites, an effort which continues right down to this moment. Worst of all, he did it through the deepest forms of national deceit, which only served to legitimize his destructive ideas in the minds of far too many people who should know better. His project has been enormously successful. The man who claimed to be restoring America's greatness was in fact facilitating its plunder, and that process is now nearly complete.

The latest chapter in the Age of Reagan is transpiring in Wisconsin right now, where public sector unions, the last vestige of middle and working class prosperity, are under lethal assault.

Somehow, the assailant Scott Walker forgot in his public defense to mention that he and other Republican governors received \$1.2 million dollars from the multi-billionaire Koch brothers – the third richest family in America – to fund their races. Now that patriotic family is spending \$350,000 to run ads supporting Walker's scorched earth campaign to put the peasants back in their rightful place. Of course, the Kochs, whose industries are famous for the environmental dam-



The long-term plan of the oligarchy has been fairly masterful, chipping away simultaneously at all the bulwarks of American prosperity while maintaining a constant narrative that legitimates otherwise ridiculous concepts

age they cause, surely haven't wanted anything in return for their money, like say tax breaks or deregulation of their other great national contributions, those befouling our air, water and lands. No doubt they are just good public citizens, participating in democracy the old-fashioned way – by buying it.

The long-term plan of the oligarchy has been fairly masterful, chipping away simultaneously at all the bulwarks of American prosperity while maintaining a constant narrative that legitimates otherwise ridiculous concepts, at least for those folks who know nothing and find that whole thinking thing altogether onerous.

The same people who brought you McCarthy and Nixon, who exploded the national debt, who have presided over thirty years of transfer of wealth from all of us to the rich, who told us how great and easy the Iraq invasion would be, who blew up the economy, and who have pretended that climate change is a hoax – these same people are now standing before us insisting that public sector unions (about the only kind remaining after they destroyed the others as well) have to go. Apart from the lunacy of the argument itself, my question is why are these people standing before us at all? Why aren't they in jail? Why aren't they at least minimally hated for their crimes? Why did they win huge in the last election cycle?

Here's a clue from a recent *New York Times* article: "Rich Hahn worked at the General Motors plant here [in Wisconsin] until it closed about two years ago. He moved to Detroit to take another G.M. job while his wife and children stayed here, but then the automaker cut more jobs. So Mr. Hahn, 50, found himself back in Janesville, collecting unem-

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ployment for a time, and watching as the city's industrial base seemed to crumble away. Among the top five employers here are the county, the schools and the city. And that was enough to make Mr. Hahn, a man who has worked at unionized factories, a supporter of Gov. Scott Walker's sweeping proposal to cut the benefits and collective-bargaining rights of public workers in Wisconsin, a plan that has set off a firestorm of debate and protests at the state Capitol. He says he still believes in unions, but thinks those in the public sector lead to wasteful spending because of what he sees as lavish benefits and endless negotiations. 'Something needs to be done,' he said, 'and quickly.' Across Wisconsin, residents like Mr. Hahn have fumed in recent years as tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs have vanished, and as some of the state's best-known corporations have pressured workers to accept benefit cuts."

So, let me see here. Right-wing trade policies led to Mr. Hahn's jobs going overseas. But left-wing unemployment insurance helped save him from poverty. And now he backs a right-wing plan to crush public sector unions because those are the main jobs left, after corporations exported private sector jobs to Thailand and China??? Brilliant. A true, red-blooded American.

Or take this little vignette, from the same article: "In Palmyra, a small village bounded by farmland and forests, MaryKay Horter remembered how her husband's Chevy dealership had teetered on the brink of closing after General Motors declared bankruptcy, for which she blamed unions. Ms. Horter said she was forced to work more hours as an occupational therapist, but had not seen a raise or any retirement contributions from her employer for the last two years. All



What are you gonna do when people without homes and without food apply that formula to you? What are you going to do when they start saying, "I don't get to eat, or live in a house, why should she?"

told, her family's income has dropped by about a third. 'I don't get to bargain in my job, either,' she said."

Again, the maniacal brilliance of the scheme has been something to behold. Smash private sector unions, export jobs overseas, devastate communities, pin people to the wall economically, and then tell them that somebody else is doing better than they are. Worse, that those people are doing better and being paid for it off of your tax dollars!

But it only works for stupid people, those who cannot recognize the real culprits in this national crime, those who not only don't think several moves ahead in a chess match, but play only checkers instead.

Hey MaryKay Horter (if that isn't the ultimate Wisconsin name, I don't know what is – except maybe if her middle name were Lombardi), just how do you think this ends, Darlin'? No, it's not an episode of a TV show. Where do you think we all wind up? We devastate the public sector unions and then, and then... What? You get rich? You get a tax break? You get bratwurst? Cheese? Jesus Christ.

And what do you think happens next, MaryKay Horter? Your logic seems to be that no one should have anything that you don't have. What are you gonna do when people without homes and without food apply that formula to you? What are you going to do when they start saying, "I don't get to eat, or live in a house, why should she?"

Wisconsin 2011 (or at least that part of it) demonstrates the sheer stupidity of the people living in the world's only superpower, the richest country on the planet. Over and over again, it's Jesus, war, tax cuts, Jesus, war, tax cuts. And when that formula brings us only despair, what then? Jesus, war, tax cuts.

But there is also some sign of (dare I use the term, now so debased by our current regressive president) hope. All of this raping and pillaging of the last three decades has only been possible because there has been no resistance from elites and no resistance from below. The gritty (so far) fourteen Democratic state senators in Wisconsin notwithstanding, Democrats are still as worse-than-hopeless as ever. Of course they are. That's what it means to be a Democrat in our time.

But maybe the public has finally had enough. People are going all freakin' Cairo on poor Scotty Walker, who is surprised to find himself locked in a fight for his political survival, one which he may lose even if he wins. This was supposed to be cake.

The future looks grim, nearly any way you slice it. Consider, to take just the most prominent example, that the 'best'



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case scenario for progressives is another six years of the near-worthless Barack O'Waffle in the White House. That's the best case.

Looking at the Middle East today, it's easy to be filled with hope and delight at the sight of people freeing themselves from repressive regimes. But there is also the sad reminder of how much people will put up with, and for how long, under conditions of repression and elite-induced public stupidity.

America has for some time been driving headlong into precisely the nightmare scenario that the Middle Eastern countries of the world are now desperately fighting to escape.

This moment may be our last chance, our last escape, before the black hole of regressivism sucks us forever into a crushing void from which not even light can escape.

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