

BOOKS

Can Newt Tell Fact from Fiction?

Newt Gingrich's *To Renew America* outlines the political agenda of the "Contract on America." It substantiates over and over again that Gingrich doesn't have any understanding of the historical or philosophical significance of his own nation, much less any other.

"American civilization" is the principle which Gingrich puts forward as the ideal. But what is that? This alleged history professor describes it as composed of five basic elements:

"1. The common understanding we share about who we are and how we came to be.

"2. The ethic of individual responsibility.

"3. The spirit of entrepreneurial free enterprise.

"4. The spirit of invention and discovery.

"5. Pragmatism and the concern for craft and excellence as expressed most recently in the teachings of Edwards Deming."

Now, you might think that American civilization should be defined with some reference to our revolutionary break with Great Britain, but that is not something which Gingrich puts any emphasis on. In fact, the source he refers to as his favorite American historian—Gordon S. Wood—sees the American Revolution as being totally within the British radical empiricist tradition.

Wood is the author of *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* and *The Creation of the American Republic*. In *The Radicalism*, Wood states in the introduction: "There should no longer be any doubt about it: The white American colonists were not an oppressed people, they had no crushing imperial chains to throw off." That statement alone shows he doesn't understand the difference between imperialism and republicanism.

Wood describes Eighteenth-century England as a "republicanized monarchy," and sees the American Revolution as continuous with it. Specifically, he defines republicanism as the tradition of

the Enlightenment ideas of John Locke, who, in his view, is the quintessential representative of "freedom."

Wood describes the phenomenon of American republicanism as coming into its own in the Jacksonian era—the era of populist democracy, which, in fact, led to the destruction of the American System of political-economy for some decades. At that time, he says, Locke's ideas were more fully dominant. Locke's idea of the mind being a *tabula rasa*, a blank sheet, meant that, in Wood's words, "minds can be molded and manipulated by controlling people's sensations." Thus, people can be defined by their experiences, with no moral inhibitions whatsoever. A perfect description of British liberal radicalism of the Adam Smith type.

In fact, Gingrich positively refers to Adam Smith's view of liberty in his speeches, praising *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the work in which Smith says that people don't have to be concerned with the moral consequences of their actions, but should concentrate on fulfilling their desires, and leave the result to God. This is as anti-American as Adam Smith's theory of free trade, a policy which the American Revolution was specifically fought against.

Now, take a look at Gingrich's "principles." Our "common understanding" of where we came from, is a vacuous concept—especially when divorced from our historical struggle against British imperialism. "Individual responsibility" is a value of all western civilization, in the positive sense of the individual's being made in the image of the Creator, and responsible for history. But Gingrich doesn't mean it that way. For him it means, if you don't make it in society, it's your fault.

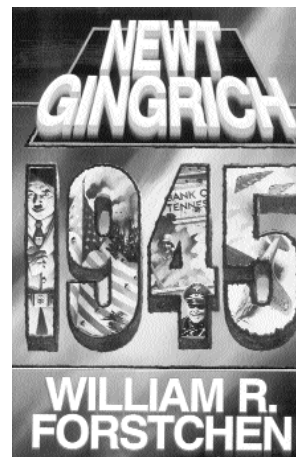
"The spirit of entrepreneurial free enterprise" is the British free-trade ideology Gingrich loves. "Pragmatism and the concern for craft and excellence" is an apology for the same amorality of Adam Smith. For Gingrich, "the spirit of invention and discovery" refers to

Newt Gingrich



To Renew America

To Renew America
by Newt Gingrich
HarperCollins, New York, 1995
260 pages, hardbound, \$14.40



1945
by Newt Gingrich and
William R. Forstchen
Baen Publishing Enterprises,
Riverdale, N.Y., 1995
382 pages, hardbound, \$24.00

Third Wave, post-industrial virtual reality.

In effect, what Gingrich describes as "American civilization" is British free trade chauvinism.

The Novel

Gingrich's novel, *1945*, has been the subject of a great deal of ethical discussion. The scenario—which has Hitler's Germany surviving World War II and embarked upon a nuclear

race with the United States, and upon the beginnings of World War III—is just a cynical cover for his own futurological agenda.

It is notable that the novel includes a fair number of historical characters, despite its disclaimer that “any resemblance to real people or incidents is purely coincidental.” The evil hero is Otto Skorzeny, and the British prime minister is Winston Churchill.

The most outrageous “real” fictional character, however, is the evil German nuclear bomb specialist, who is given the name Friedrich von Schiller. Schiller, the German poet of freedom, who fought for the ideas of the American Revolution in Europe and for Classical beauty, is utterly defamed by this reference—and it could not have been by accident.

In the novel, after the Nazis have succeeded in destroying the U.S.

nuclear facility at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the scene shifts to Washington, D.C., where the government leadership is trying to figure out what to do next. And what is the proposal? A new form of systems analysis geared to overcome bureaucracy! It reads like a printout of the gobbledygook from Alvin and Heidi Toffler.

From the mouth of one “General George Catlett Marshall,” comes the following ideological spiel:

“I do have a new model—a new paradigm—on how a modern democratic state should organize itself to make a surge-effort in war. This is radical stuff . . . and I’m going to need a cadre of thinkers, thinkers who can take my ideas and run with them and build on them. . . .

“By that I mean, give them the greatest possible freedom to shape the very goals they pursue. . . . Or to put it yet

another way, to *call* the shots, not just make them. Consider: We won the Great Pacific War as fast as we did by assembling first-rate teams without regard for the organizational provenance of the team members. Then we set them goals and arranged things that they could charge forward full-bore, with no bottlenecks, or bureaucratic jerks, or surprise budgetary constraints allowed to get in the way.”

These are precisely the “industrial-organizational ideas” that Gingrich and his army of destroy-the-government revolutionaries are using today, when they claim that “bureaucracy” is the problem, instead of bad policies.

If we are going to restore ourselves as a sovereign republic, committed to the welfare of our posterity, and all mankind, then his agenda had better be defeated.

—Nancy Spannaus

Pope John Paul II Seen Through a Glass, Darkly

In his *First Letter to the Corinthians* 13, the Apostle Paul wrote that now, we see God “as through a glass, darkly,” but later, we will see Him face to face. By this, he meant that our view of reality is colored by our own faulty axiomatic assumptions.

St. Paul is explicitly referencing Plato’s allegory of the cave in *The Republic*, where man is depicted as taking for real, what are only the shadows or reflections of the real figures cast by firelight onto the cave walls.

As opposed to the Aristotelian interpretation, that man will only know reality “in heaven,” Plato, and St. Paul after him, insist that this is one among man’s principal problems to be overcome during his mortal existence.

It would have been good if Tad Szulc, the former foreign and Washington correspondent of the *New York Times*, had overcome his own *New York Times*, Aristotelian axiomatics before attempting this “definitive”—but not “authorized”—biography.

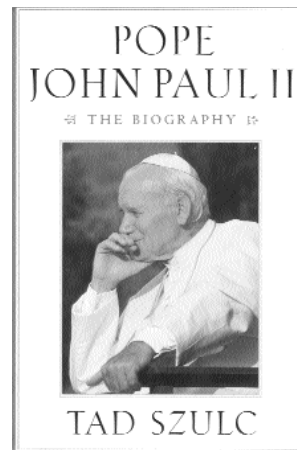
The result of presenting John Paul II’s career from the standpoint of the bias of a *New York Times* liberal-environmen-

talist, is that the Pope is portrayed as *schizophrenic*. For instance, the book’s jacket describes the Pope, Karol Wojtyla, as characterized by a “daunting contradiction between his inexorable conservative stand on contraception, divorce, and an all-male, celibate priesthood, and his powerful advocacy of human rights everywhere and social justice in the Third World and among the poor of the affluent West.”

This alleged schizophrenia is the main, recurring theme of Szulc’s biography. Szulc refers to Wojtyla both as an “absolutist”—which he wildly attributes to Wojtyla’s being influenced by Aquinas (which he is) and Aristotle (which he definitely is not)—and a man of “quintessential human decency.”

Readers of *Fidelio* should recognize the similarity in this view of John Paul II, to the establishment’s view of Lyndon LaRouche. The statesman and economist LaRouche is routinely depicted as a “strange mixture” of “conservative” and “liberal” views, as though the confusion were his, and not that of his accusers.

In reality, in the case of both John Paul II and Lyndon LaRouche, both



John Paul II: The Biography
by Tad Szulc
Scribner, New York, 1995
542 pages, hardbound, \$27.50

men are striving to bring *truth* to the world, each in his own realm, which truth is based on certain fundamental conceptions: (1) That man is created in the living image of God, and therefore has within him the divinity of his Creator, from which his inalienable right to life derives; (2) that modern culture, par-