

budget over contraception, which was the cutting edge of social engineering in Pennsylvania at the time. Eventually, Mullen prevailed and the state did not get into the contraception business—not then, at least. But something else began to happen over the summer of 1966: Whites began their ten-year-long exodus out of MBS Parish in earnest. By 1976, the once-Irish neighborhood was almost completely black; the whites had been driven out by increasing racial violence. One of the significant consequences of that migration was that Martin Mullen lost his job as state senator, as his constituency, once concentrated in a densely populated Irish Catholic area, eight blocks by eight blocks, was dispersed into the surrounding suburbs and lost its political power.

The racial situation in Philadelphia was never the same as the situation in the South. To claim it was bespoke ulterior or political motives. Philadelphia was a composite of ethnic neighborhoods and ethnic parishes and churches. When Muhammad Kenyatta, a local shake-down artist who came to be known as a civil-rights activist, walked into St. Anthony's Parish in Chester and announced that there were no black people in the church, he was right. There were no Irish, Germans, Poles, or Hmong, either. St. Anthony's was an Italian parish, built by Italians for Italians. To claim that this was similar to the school segregation practiced in the South (or the neighborhood segregation of upper-middle-class Northern suburbs) is an intentional misreading of the situation. Racial "integration" in Philadelphia is just another way of breaking up Catholic neighborhoods. The same people who promoted the sexual revolution promoted civil-rights activists such as Kenyatta in their efforts to break up Catholic ethnic neighborhoods. Racial politics was a front for sexual revolution, which was, in turn, a front for political control, and Martin Mullen could no longer oppose government funding of contraception when his political constituency in Most Blessed Sacrament Parish in Southwest Philadelphia was dispersed throughout the suburbs.

The sexual revolution and white migration from the cities did not just happen. Both were parts of the liberal project to remake America in the years following World War II. The first label that applied to this campaign of social engineering was "urban renewal"; later, it became the "civil-rights movement";

now, it is known as "Section 8." Behind all of the change in nomenclature, the intention remains constant: Americans are to be denied the right to associate with people like themselves. They are to be denied control over the local community in favor of political control from above. They are allowed to own property, even their own homes, only under certain conditions, all of which are established by the people who control the culture.

People such as Mike Rafferty and Dan Lynch are the exception to the rule, which, in this case, seems to be demoralization. When Dan Lynch ran for state representative for the neighborhood's district, he would have been elected had the neighborhood's 1,900 registered voters gone to the polls, but only 500 people showed up that day. The rest seem content to sit on their bar stools and watch the city's professional sports teams, the modern-day version of bread and circuses.

The last time I was in Grays Ferry, I met with a different group of people. When I said that I wanted to come back after I had finished my book on the destruction of ethnic neighborhoods, *The Slaughter of Cities: Urban Renewal as Ethnic Cleansing* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2002), one of the people attending said, "Hurry up. We may not be here much longer." That man did not attend the second meeting. In spite of assuring me over the phone that he would be there, he was tending bar a block away.

At the end of the meeting, we decided to go ahead with the conference in the fall. Why is such a meeting important? First of all, Grays Ferry may not be especially acute when it comes to fighting the culture wars, but it is a real community, a group of people of common belief who live in one place and know one another. Groups like this are rare now, because the government has destroyed most of them through social engineering. The fact that they are not adept in fighting the culture wars gives some indication that they might profit from people who are, just as the latter, now scattered across the country, might profit from the experiences of an actual community fighting for survival. When each of those culture warriors is part of a community and each local community has some of Grays Ferry's savvy, then we will make some progress away from the current parlous state of affairs, where isolation is the only thing Americans have in common.

Question and Answer

Robert Beum

What makes the liberal historians so gay?
Rob truth, not banks, and live another day.

Food Stamps for Farmers and Other Absurdities

Power, Empire, and the Loss of American Community

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.



A dry snow scouring the Sherman Mountains east of Laramie turned to rain outside Cheyenne and blew in sheets across Interstate 80, from Pine Bluffs to Sidney to Ogalala to North Platte to Kearney to Grand Island to York, Nebraska, and from York south to Geneva, Bruning, and Hebron: 501 miles of deluging rain from a heavy-hanging waterlogged sky. Just north of the state line, the rain stopped, and I drove the last 41 miles across the rolling Kansas plains, gray from drought when now, in early May, they should show vivid green, or yellow-green. In Concordia, just before Ed Detrixhe's shopping center on U.S. 81 came into view, I made a left turn onto Highway 9 and continued 13 miles east toward Ames, following close behind a horse trailer that raised a cloud of dust each time its right wheels drifted into the shoulder. At the grain elevator, I swung right and drove the last two miles south to the Detrixhe farm. Though I hadn't visited Mari and Ed for two years, I had seen the place just 13 days ago—from 37,000 feet on a flight from Denver to Chicago, passing a couple of miles south of the distinctive house fixed indubitably in the rich Kansas soil, which hadn't seen rain since early April. Life is unfair—to farmers, in particular.

Still, Ed's winter wheat grew brave and green toward the June harvest, and Ed himself remained unfazed by drought as well as by the loss of Wal-Mart, which had moved the year before from its 40,000-square-foot lodging in his center to its own quarters, a new superstore three times the size at the south end of town. (Nobody in Concordia, being perfectly content with the smaller version, had particularly *wanted* the larger store—with the exceptions of the local government, the town boosters and economic growth councils, and the developers who offered Wal-Mart a special invitation, plus inducements financed by a

tax assessment through which Ed is compelled to subsidize his business competitor, America's largest corporation.) We drank a couple of beers with Mari in the kitchen, and the three of us finished off two bottles of red wine in the course of one of her fine suppers, while watching meadowlarks, robins, and gold finches fly in and out of the plum thicket behind the house and the cottontail rabbits make their stealthy advance on Ed's springing vegetable garden.

Ed and I killed four rabbits with four shots from a .223 rifle next morning and, after breakfast, went our separate ways, he to the orchard with his grafting basket, Mari to her flower garden, I to Salina 60 miles southwest of the farm for a chat with Wes Jackson at The Land Institute about Matfield Green, the small town (population 56) in the Flint Hills of Kansas that he and the Institute have recently bought up—or, anyway, into. I found Wes in his writing cabin at the edge of the woods above the Smoky Hill River (it used to be Mari Detrixhe's office when she worked for the Institute in the early 80's), sitting over an abstract of a talk he was preparing to deliver to a Ranchers for Profit meeting in Wichita. I removed my Stetson to shake hands, and Wes motioned me graciously into a chair. "Ranchers are in the most favorable position of anyone who wants to return to sustainable agriculture," he remarked as he handed me a copy of his abstract. "The reason is, they're better able than farmers to use a natural ecosystem as a standard."

"That's heresy to environmentalists where I come from," I told him. "But I agree with you."

Wes and his first wife, Dana—both of them native Kansans—founded The Land Institute, "a nonprofit educational research organization, devoted to the subject of sustainable alternatives in agriculture, energy, waste-management, and shelter," in 1976. The original plan was to start a school, but after the school building burned in the fall of the same year and was rebuilt with the help of supporters, the Jacksons expanded their

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