



Nativism Needs Fake History

Posted on August 14, 2017 by Mark Lause

Stephen Miller is the latest clone of Ann Coulter offered the public by the administration of President Donald J. Trump. The 31- year old senior advisor of the president is seen as an ideological protégé of Steve Bannon and has long been associated with such luminaries of the Right as David Horowitz and Richard B. Spencer, the unapologetic promoter of White Nationalism. Although lacking their experience and smarts, Miller is something of a master of talking loudly over people, misrepresenting them, and fueling it all with that phony anger that his generation of “conservatives” learned on TV.

The *Washington Post* located [a video of Miller’s campaign for high student government](#), complaining that students were being asked to pick up after themselves when he were paying janitors to pick up after them. In defending their sense of entitlement to unearned privileges, such characters love to describe what other people have earned as “entitlements.” Or to talk about “reverse racism.” Or to complain about how Christians are persecuted in the U.S. Or to defend the “old boy networks” against “political correctness.” While common among the “conservative” punditry, governments have usually had the good sense to keep such figures under a rock.



Trump Advisor Stephen Miller

Trump's election represents something of a cultural victory for such views. So Miller's description of an "American carnage" became a cornerstone of the president's inaugural address in January. Insiders also suggest that he may have been behind Trump's threat to rain down on North Korea a "fire and fury like the world has never seen."

On August 2, Miller introduced the proposals of the Trump clique to restrict legal immigration into the U.S. Not the "illegals," but the people who've been coming into the country quite legally. The new proposals will require skills of particular use to American companies. And fluency in English.

In the course of this Jim Acosta of CNN asked Miller to reconcile the stance with the Emma Lazarus poem "[The New Colossus](#)" [1883], inspired by the imminent arrival of "Liberty Enlightening the World"—popularly known as the Statue of Liberty. In 1903, the park service placed a plaque bearing the words before the statue.

Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me the tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!!

Miller went into a rant fueled by faux rage against Acosta's deplorable "cosmopolitan bias"

... most charitably understood as meaning the bias of someone able to look at a question from various sides. The government spokesman saw a monument to the liberty of the few self-designated “job creators” to continue and deepen policies that created the greatest polarization of wealth that ever plagued any society at any point. Rightly, they believe, it has nothing to offer the tired, the poor, the huddled masses ... anyone that can’t pay their own fees at the country club.

Apparently, Emma Lazarus and a bunch of her sneaky New York Jewish socialist friends snuck out there on a rowboat one night and defaced the grounds with their poem.

Trump, America’s Couch potato-in-Chief enjoyed Miller’s performance so much that anti-cosmopolitan is now in the running to be the White House communications director-the new main purveyor of “alternative facts.”

The simple fact is that people associated the Lazarus poem with the Statue of Liberty, virtually from its near simultaneous appearance, was because it expressed so well the spirit behind the status.



The French sculptor behind the statue, Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, initially envisioned the statue to stand at the entrance to the Suez Canal.

What inspired the sculptor, Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi was his hope in the radical

internationalization of republicanism. He developed his skills in his workshop at Colmar in Alsace and moved his operations to Paris as his work became increasingly monumental in their scale. By the time he designed “Liberty Enlightening the World,” it required the scaffolding engineered by Alexandre Gustave Eiffel, more famous for his tower.

Bartholdi’s original version of that statue—a colossal woman in traditional Islamic garb to be placed near the mouth of the Suez Canal—would never have been allowed into a country run by the Trumps and Millers.

And there has never been any mystery about why Bartholdi turned to America. Édouard René de Laboulaye, the leader of the French antislavery movement and an ardent supporter of the Union during the Civil War suggested such a project would mark a fitting end to slavery in the U.S. Bartholdi apparently determined to work on such a project in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War.

Bartholdi fought alongside Giuseppe Garibaldi and other internationalist volunteers for what they called a “Universal Social Republic.” At the close of that war, a newly unified Germany seized Alsace and Bartholdi returned to his workshop in Paris, arrived in the wake of the French government’s bloody repression of the Commune. In disgust, he left for the U.S., taking solace in the closest thing to a victory for republican liberty in his line of view.



Eugene Debs (left)
and Seymour
Stedman (right)

Then, too, Bartholdi remained a lifelong friend of Jean Daniel and Marguerite Debs, who had left Colmar for America around 1850. When he came over with his statue, the Debs family went to New York for a reunion with him. In later life, Bartholdi wrote about his admiration for their son. Eugene Victor Debs—named for the French writers Eugene Sue and Victor Hugo—cherished Bartholdi’s letters.

If you visit Debs home today in Terre Haute , Indiana, you will see a large model of the Statue of Liberty Bartholdi gave them when he met him in New York.

Still, I'm sure Miller and his lot would dismiss all this as a kind of "fake history." And he'd shout about it. And, of course, have a complete monopoly over the mass media in doing so.

But talk is cheap.

And the dumber the talk the cheaper it is.

In the end, the tired, the poor, the huddled masses will get to render their judgements on the more than a century of experience.

When they do so, a professional jingoist con-artist such as Miller will be as so much dust in the wind.

Author



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