

First published in *The Washington Post* on Sunday, April 30, 1995

## **"Militant Musings: From Nightmare 1995 to My Utopian 2050"**

By William S. Lind

*Editors' Note: The investigation of the Oklahoma City bombing has focused attention on the political thinking of militant groups scattered around the country, some of whom advocate armed resistance to the federal government and all it represents.*

*In the writings of some leaders of this movement, America is a country already in the grip of a civil war. Polemicists for the militia movement, while varying widely in their favorite causes, have a common denominator: They portray an illegitimate federal government dominated by special interest groups in mortal struggle with patriots representing traditional American values.*

*These apocalyptic visions are not restricted to isolated pockets of rural America but are also found in Washington. William Lind, a military writer and former adviser to Democratic presidential candidate Gary Hart, is now a center director at the conservative Free Congress Foundation.*

*Lind wrote the following futuristic fantasy - intended as a look back from the 21st century - long before the Oklahoma City bombing. He did so, he said recently, "to show how high a price we may pay for a government that has become a 'new class' - contemptuous of the common culture, unwilling or unable to make things work and concerned primarily with maintaining its own privileged status."*

The triumph of the Recovery was marked most clearly by the burning of the Episcopal bishop of Maine.

She was not a particularly bad bishop. She was, in fact, quite typical of Episcopal bishops of the first quarter of the 21st century: agnostic, compulsively political and radical, and given to placing a small idol of Isis on the altar when she said the Communion service. By 2037, when she was tried for heresy, convicted and burned, she had outlived her era. By that time only a handful of Episcopalians still recognized female clergy, and it would have been easy enough to let the old fool rant out her final years in obscurity. But we are a people who do our duty.

I well remember the crowd that gathered for the execution, solemn but not sad, relieved that at last, after so many years of humiliation, the majority had taken back the culture. Civilization had recovered its nerve. The flames that soared about the lawn before the Maine statehouse that August afternoon were, as the bishopess herself might have said, liberating.

In this Year of Our Lord 2050 we Victorians have the blessed good fortune to live once again in an age of accomplishment and decency. Most of the nations that cover the territory of the former United States are starting to get things working again. The cultural revival we began is spreading outward from our rocky New England soil, displacing savagery with civilization a second time.

I am writing this down so you never forget, not you, nor your children nor their children. You did not go through the war, though you have suffered its consequences. Your children will have grown up in a well-ordered and prosperous country, and that can

be dangerously comforting. Here, they will at least read what happens when a people forget who they are.

Was the dissolution of the United States inevitable? Probably. Right up to the end the coins carried the motto *E Pluribus Unum*, just as the last dreadnought of the Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian navy was the *Viribus Unitis*. But the reality for both empires was *Ex Uno, Plura*.

You see, some time around the middle of the 18th century we men of the West struck Faust's bargain with the Devil. We could do anything, say anything, think anything, with one exception: *Verweile doch, du bist so schoen* (Stay, you are so beautiful). We could not rest; we could not get it right and then keep it that way. Always we must have novelty – that was the bargain.

It's funny how clearly the American century is marked: 1865 to 1965. The first Civil War made us one nation. After 1965 and another war, we disunited – deconstructed – with equal speed into blacks, whites, Hispanics, womyn, gays, victims, oppressors, left-handed albinos, you name it. In three decades we covered the distance that had taken Rome three centuries. As recently as the early 1960s – God, it's hard to believe – America was still the greatest nation on earth, the most powerful, the most productive, the freest, a place of safe homes, dutiful children in good schools, strong families, and a hot lunch for orphans. By the 1990s the place had the stench of a Third World country. The cities were ravaged by punks, beggars and bums. Laws applied only to the law-abiding. Schools had become daytime holding pens for illiterate young savages. Television brought the decadence of Weimar Berlin into every home.

Didn't anyone realize that when the culture goes it takes everything else with it? Of course, some people knew. But going back to a culture that worked, to traditional Western Judeo-Christian culture, meant breaking the Faustian bargain.

By the 1990s, too late of course, people were willing to do even that. Rummaging among old papers – Maine winters give you time for rummaging – I ran across a January 1992 poll by Lawrence Research: 59 percent said the nation's leaders should be taking the country back toward the way it had been; 61 percent thought life in the 1950s was better than it was in the 1990s; 47 percent said their grandparents' lives were happier than their own – and the margin was 15 percent higher among blacks, whose grandparents had lived under segregation.

But those people had no voice. The folks who could be heard – politicians, television stars, porn queens – all jigged along in the Faustian dance as the Devil himself tooted out the tune. They looked neither forward nor back.

Then the hammer blows fell. First, the currency collapsed. Inflation had been jerking upward for years because the only way the government could manage its massive debt was to pay it off in inflated dollars. People had adjusted as they did in other Third World countries, opening foreign currency accounts, bartering, burying gold in the back yard. Then, in the spring of 2001, a new administration really opened the valve. By that summer, inflation was running 40 percent per month; by fall, 400 percent. Financial Weimar had followed cultural Weimar. The middle class was wiped out.

By the year 2005, it was obvious that AIDS was spreading fast. Everyone had friends, relatives, neighbors who suddenly were stricken. But the government still

pumped out the same old line. Terrified of the gay lobby, officials conspired to reassure the public that there was no cause for alarm, that "homophobia" was the real problem.

In fact, the government suppressed evidence to the contrary, fearing to cause panic. They were right. When the *Los Angeles Times* broke the story that it was spreading by unknown means, the cities emptied. Most people came back, because they had to go to work or starve, though they left the children in the country if they could. People demanded the quarantine of anyone diagnosed as HIV positive. Instead, the government classified the infected as "disabled," which made any preventive measures illegal discrimination.

In the spring of 2009 the blacks of Newark rose and took over the city. They rebelled not against whites but against their real oppressors: the drug dealers and drug users, gunmen and hit men, car thieves and squatters, and the rest of the scum who made life hell for the majority who wanted to work and walk home safely and not see their kids shot in front of their houses. They knew who the guilty parties were, and they went and got them with ropes and kitchen knives. For the first time in decades, Newark saw peace.

Average people cheered, but the federal government, drooling such pieties as "due process" and "law and order" (in a place where the law had long since ceased protecting anyone but criminals), sent in the National Guard. The people of Newark met the troops and begged for their help, and the soldiers either went over or went home. New York Air Guard painted pine tree insignia on its aircraft and threatened to bomb any federal forces approaching Newark. On May 3, Gov. Ephraim Logan of Vermont told the legislature that the federal government no longer represented the people of his state and asked for a vote of secession. Vermont became a republic the next day.

The first Civil War was, on the whole, a gentlemanly affair; the second one wasn't. Here in northern New England we were lucky. Because we didn't have many ethnic divisions or cults or Deep Greeners, we didn't have militias shelling the cities and ravaging the suburbs. Elsewhere, it was what Lebanon and Yugoslavia and the former Soviet empire saw in the late 20th century. The Reconquista drove the Anglos out of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Southern California; the Anglos drove the Hispanics out of what was left of the American West. Blacks and Hispanics in L.A. turned on each other, but there were a lot more Hispanics. Korean marines landed in Long Beach to get their people out.

The Deep Greeners took over Oregon, and North Americans got their first taste of totalitarianism. If you weren't one of them, you didn't get a Breathing License and they tied a plastic bag over your head. That lasted three years until the rest of the state recaptured Portland with Japanese help (they needed the timber). Both Portland and Washington are doing okay now; recently they got the right of sending non-voting delegates to the Diet in Tokyo.

After the usual series of coups, northern California ended up as the Azanian Republic. It made Oregon seem rational by comparison. The Azanian government in Berkeley was, in its final incarnation, run by a coalition of radical feminists, Maoist guerrillas, and militant vegetarians. The only capital crime was eating meat. The end came after Azania was overrun by animals who, by law, could be neither killed nor neutered.

Elsewhere, it took about 10 years for the hate caused by decades of illegitimate government to work itself out. Not much was left of the cities or the people who had

lived there, but most folks in the countryside at least had been able to eat. By 2017, the South had a second Confederacy going. Southern culture had stayed pretty strong, outside the cities anyway. Florida was a mess, of course, but otherwise Dixie didn't see much fighting.

But it is our New England history that concerns me. We were the luckiest. Maine and New Hampshire quickly followed Vermont into secession, and upstate New York came in too – after ceding New York City to Puerto Rico. We knew we were all in this together, so we formed the Northern Confederation in 2010. Massachusetts was not invited, but in 2011 New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland joined (Canada didn't survive into the 21st century). We had some tough economic times, but nobody starved and we had only one rumpus on our own soil – an attempted putsch by a small band of Deep Greeners in Vermont that was put down by a small band of state cops with a couple of fire hoses.

But it was what happened on the cultural front that really made the difference for us. The Retroculture Movement had been growing quietly since the mid-1990s. It wasn't political, just individuals and families deciding to live again in the old ways. By the early 2000s there were Retroculture books, magazines, clubs, even special communities for people who wanted to discover how Americans used to live and how to bring back the old ways. Some people liked one period, some another, but gradually more and more found themselves looking to the Victorian era as the model. The Victorians in England and America had been an astoundingly productive bunch, building, inventing, creating, conquering – all the things we needed to do again if we were to be civilized people.

The family was the first Victorian institution to make a comeback. With everything else falling apart, people saw pretty quickly how important a family is. That would have happened without Retroculture, but the Retro Movement helped us see how to make families work. We dug out the many books (most written by women) the Victorians had published on how to make a good home, raise children, and live together happily (the secret was sacrificing the late 20th century's god, the self). The good ladies of the League of Militant Homemakers made sure women put duty to husbands and children first; those who refused so they could pursue a "career" were given a bright embroidered "C" to wear over their left breast.

The schools came next. We tossed out the vast accretion of "professional" educators and found ordinary men and women who knew their subjects and were dedicated to passing on the culture to a new generation. The kids learned to read with Mr. McGuffey's readers. They learned to figure on a chalkboard instead of a computer that did the work for them. They learned the difference between right and wrong, and got their bottoms fanned until they did.

We deconstructed most of the universities. After all, they had started this "multiculturalism" hysteria that ended up with millions of people dead in the wars that followed. The ideologues gone, real scholars emerged from hiding and began offering Greek and Latin and the great books of Western civilization to anyone who wanted to learn.

Christians took back their churches from the agnostic clergy, and the pews filled up again. The church, not the government, became the problem-solver when people were

hungry or sick or old and without family. The government was broke anyway and was busy defending the borders with not much tax base left.

As the Victorian spirit spread, standards were revived. Communities decided that some things were acceptable and some weren't. Crime wasn't; with justice locally controlled and the lawyers digging potatoes, somebody who mugged on Tuesday hanged on Wednesday.

Entertainment was expected to be decent. In a world that had grown ugly enough, there was small desire for ugliness in art and music as well. The Victorian entertainments were revived, and young people in particular went in heavily for choral singing. The last rock concert was held in 2013 in the Cleveland arena. It featured all the big rock bands left in North America and most of the remaining rock fans, too. The Greater Cleveland Garden Club sealed the doors and pumped in an herbal compound, derived largely from Queen Anne's lace and *Viola odorata*, that rectified brain damage in the cranial region connecting hearing to taste. The fans were soon holding their ears and whistling "Dixie," and the ancient Rolling Stones ended up improvising Albinoni on their electrical guitars.

By the mid-2020s, people had started to speak of the Recovery. Things were starting to work again, at least for us up north. And it was obvious why: The Victorian spirit and Victorian practices were making them work. The slogan became, "What worked then will work now" and, of course, it did. That broke the Faustian bargain. We had found where we wanted to settle down and stay – right there in the age of Queen Victoria – and we did.

In gratitude to our Victorian exemplars, the Northern Confederation became, in the year 2035 A.D., the nation of Victoria. It was done by citizen petition and referendum, the way all important questions are decided. In fact, there isn't much other government – nor is it needed, now that we again have a virtuous citizenry. The legislature meets for a couple of months every two years, with citizen legislators who are paid one hundred gold dollars per annum and can't be re-elected. To prevent a government bureaucracy from growing, the federal capital moves every six months from one province to another; at last count it had 76 employees. The president of Victoria is chosen by lot from among the handful of registered voters who offer to serve.

And so it was that in 2037 we burned the bishopess. We knew this act would close the seal of the old book, the book that had seen us go from decay to dissolution to Recovery. The auto-da-fe was symbolic; the Recovery was in fact already on solid ground or we wouldn't have had the moral fiber to torch the old girl.

We are hopeful as we look to the future, and not only here in Victoria. Victorian parties are growing fast in other nations in North America, in the Confederacy, and in Trans-Mississippi. Only in Nueva Espana, where California's old Hispanic Party is locked in bitter warfare with the Indian revivalist Aztec Alliance (their slogan: "You'll leave your heart in Mexico City") does it look hopeless. Elsewhere, there is even talk of some kind of a new union, much looser, of course, built on shared values and culture, not a shared public trough.

But there will never be another Washington. We have learned, after all, some lessons from history.