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201025 OBITER DICTA: 20/20 EARLY AUTUMN 2010 RETROSPECTIVE

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**201025 OBITER DICTA: 20/20 EARLY AUTUMN 2010 RETROSPECTIVE
Steven Alan Samson**

Monday, September 20, 2010

<http://www.debka.com/article/9033/>

This tale from DEBKA is far more byzantine than the old Spy v. Spy cartoon strip in *Mad* magazine. Cold War satire is no match for the audacity of today's Middle East reality.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703466704575489774021664514.html>

Edward Lucas, the author of *The New Cold War*, reveals more about the new *nomenklatura*, "the New Nobility," that enjoys favor in Russia today.

Tuesday 21

http://townhall.com/columnists/ThomasSowell/2010/09/21/the_politics_of_resentment/page/full/

Thomas Sowell comments on the recent primary defeat of Mayor Adrian Fenty, who was tackling failing educational and criminal justice systems in DC, and the more than four decades "whole government-supported industry of race hustling" that resulted in losing LBJ's War on Poverty.

http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2010/09/new_records_show_doj_lied_abou.html

DOJ officials have been perjuring themselves about the Black Panther case.

<http://visiontoamerica.org/story/andrew-breitbart-forces-president-obama's-protesters-to-fold-up-shop.html>

Andrew Breitbart asked protestors to put up or shut up about Glenn Beck. Guess what? One by one they began acting like clams. See the video.

Wednesday 22

<http://www.debka.com/article/9036/>

David Ignatius had a column in today's *Washington Post* questioning our government's silence about terrorist threats in Europe, particularly France. He gave no real details in his column, but there is an ample supply elsewhere.

Thursday 23

<http://pajamasmedia.com/blog/is-barney-frank-nervous-bill-clinton-coming-to-rescue-in-ma/?singlepage=true>

In this piece about Barney Frank's vulnerability to a Republican challenge, Bill Snider raises an interesting question: "Do we live in a time when Democrats are competent campaigners but destructive managers of the nation, while Republicans would be competent managers of the nation's affairs but incompetent campaigners?"

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2010/09/22/citizens_for_the_republic_mourning_in_america.html

"Mourning in America:" another shot heard 'round the world.

<http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/2010/09/defecation-torah-new-testament#continued>

TP or Not TP? A fatwa permits using pages of the Torah or the New Testament as toilet paper.

Friday 24

http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/Chris-Coons-is-wackier-than-Christine-O_Donnell-975963-103658309.html

Delaware's Chris Coons, who once described himself as a "bearded Marxist" and who never met a tax he wouldn't spot and raise.

http://www.selu.edu/acad_research/programs/csls/west_florida/index.html

Who knew? The little-known Republic of West Florida was launched near Baton Rouge two hundred years ago this week. It was annexed by the United States before the end of the year, 1810.

http://sports.yahoo.com/mlb/blog/big_league_stew/post/Bing-Crosby-s-wine-cellar-produces-vintage-1960-?urn=mlb-272117

FYI. 1960 World Series.

Saturday 25

<http://www.debka.com/article/9044/>

Hamas and Fatah appear to be playing a game of "Paint Hillary into the Corner."

<http://sayanythingblog.com/entry/video-chris-christie-on-oprah/>

Oprah performed a real public service in this interview with Gov. Chris Christie, Mayor Booker, and Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, who have committed to a major educational initiative in the City of Newark. If the teachers' unions can be brought down to earth and be willing to cooperate with this initiative, and if real educational alternatives are allowed to compete in a free market, this country might have a chance to turn public education around. Christian schools and home schools should not be shut out of the process. Neither should they be compelled to submit to government regulation in order to participate.

The vicious cycle of a broken system must itself be broken – plugged and planted – so that this country has a future. As a college professor, I know that our students bring problems with them – in math, English, history, and the fundamentals of constitutional government – that we can do little more than begin to repair in the handful of courses we teach. Thomas Sowell's column on Monday is just as eloquent about the need and some of the causes. The deterioration we see required decades to bring about. It will take decades of commitment to intellectual, moral, spiritual, and educational discipline to reverse the damage. John Dewey downgraded the intellectual aspects of education in favor of socialization. Big money was channeled into Progressive educational reform a century ago. By the 1950s Rudolph Flesch was already observing *Why Johnny Can't Read*.

Literacy is declining and it is not the fault of television or the Internet. It is due to a moral and political failure to allow an educational free market to thrive instead of the regimented, one-size-fits-all, standardized approach that too often is still the norm. There is a place for regimentation. There is also a place for the individuality and creative learning that encourages students to "think outside the box."

The National Defense Education Act of 1958 was intended to better equip American children in the sciences and math. Fifty years later we must still ask ourselves: What happened?

<http://www.debka.com/article/9045/>

DEBKAFile profiles American/Israeli cyber-attacks against Iran.

<http://www.steynonline.com/content/view/3505/26/>

Mark Steyn is in his usual good form after returning from Denmark and Sweden.

Sunday 26

<http://pajamasmedia.com/rogerlsimon/2010/09/25/cyber-war-on-iran-the-siemens-connection/?singlepage=true>

The continuing saga of the Stuxnet worm is the stuff of high comedy. By the way, the original article reported that 30,000 Iranian computers are infected. Perhaps it is time to admit that Microsoft Windows was designed to bring enemy states to their knees.

<http://pajamasmedia.com/claudiarosett/at-the-un-america-pays-ahmadinejad-plays/?singlepage=true>

Claudia Rosett states the obvious in the opening paragraph: "As long as America provides such toys as the United Nations, Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad might as well play with them – and this week, again, play he did." She points out that the various budgets of the United Nations and its agencies have now swollen to more than \$20 billion.

Nearly three decades ago, when New York and New Jersey refused to permit Andrei Gromyko to land at their airports following the shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007. When the United States government offered landing privileges at a military base, the Soviets raised the question of whether the United Nations should be in the United States at all. To which Charles Lichenstein replied that, if the member states believed "they are not being treated with the hostly consideration that is their due," they should consider "removing themselves and this organization from the soil of the United States. We will put no impediment in your way. The members of the U.S. mission to the United Nations will be down at the dockside waving you a fond farewell as you sail off into the sunset."

I later met Lichenstein and Jeane Kirkpatrick on separate occasions and thanked them for their service. I believe it is time to renew Lichenstein's offer. Even more, let us work to elect a president and a Congress that will make an offer the United Nations cannot refuse. Let us take back New York back from that Islamist Entity at Turtle Bay.

<http://www.debka.com/article/9046/>

The odds in favor of any deal at all between Israel and the Palestinians were long at the outset. Failure is what happens every time ineptitude in Washington makes it seem to be the weak horse. Seeking to dictate terms, Washington's weakness is instead driving bitter enemies into making the best deal they can get from each other before the house of straw implodes. How long until the shooting resumes in earnest?

Monday 27

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/LI24Ad02.html>

This article discusses research by two American students on tardigrades, microorganisms they harvested in China. Tardigrades are proving to be adaptable to the harsh outer space environment. This research may have bearing on future manned space missions,

"Tardigrades have an amazing ability to dry out completely, get exposed to conditions that would kill any normal animal, and then 'come back to life' as soon as they get wet again."

<http://www.debka.com/article/9048/>

Iran is reacting further to the voracious Stuxnet spy worm. It reminds me of the worm that withered Jonah's kikayon plant.

Tuesday 28

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100928/ap_on_re/us_rel_religious_literacy_poll

A Pew survey discloses a high level of religious illiteracy in America.

<http://vodpod.com/watch/2153180-pjtv-the-power-danger-of-iconography>

Here is an eight-minute video clip by Bill Whittle on Obama's iconography. On a not unrelated note, today's *Wall Street Journal* has a piece entitled "What Ahmadinejad Knows," which deals with his skillful demagoguery and how well he knows his audience.

Wednesday 29

<http://www.debka.com/article/9050/>

DEBKA provides more insight into the scope and severity of the attack on Iran of the Stuxnet worm.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/yblog_upshot/20100928/el_yblog_upshot/grayson-receives-pushback-for-taliban-dan-attack

Here is a perfectly awful campaign ad by a Left-wing congressman. It is time to derail "Grand Inquisitor" Alan Grayson's reelection campaign. He is Florida's answer to Cynthia McKinney.

http://www.americanthinker.com/printpage/?url=http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/09/oic_and_the_modern_caliphate.html

Bat Ye'or: "The Organization of the Islamic Conference ([OIC](#)) is a religious and political organization. Close to the Muslim World League of the Muslim Brotherhood, it shares the Brotherhood's strategic and cultural vision: that of a universal religious community, the Ummah, based upon the Koran, the Sunna, and the canonical orthodoxy of *shari'a*. The OIC represents 56 countries and the Palestinian Authority (considered a state), the whole constituting the universal Ummah with a community of more than one billion three to six hundred million Muslims."

Thursday 30

<http://pajamasmedia.com/phyllischesler/2010/09/27/goodbye-au-revoir-adios-lhitraot-maa-al-salama-chesler-chronicles-leaves-pjm/>

Phyllis Chesler says good-bye to her three-year, full-time blogging stint at Pajamas Media and shares her thoughts about the challenges we face.

<http://www.newsrealblog.com/2010/09/27/red-guard-harvard-students-%e2%80%9ceducate%e2%80%9d-dr-martin-peretz/>

Harvard is stuck in a 1960s-style time warp. Demonstrators nearly shut down an event honoring Dr. Martin Peretz, editor-in-chief of the liberal *New Republic*, and compelled him to walk the gauntlet of taunting students. Phyllis Chesler likens the students - who chanted (Jesse Jackson-style) "Hey hey, ho ho, Marty Peretz has got to go" - to the Red Guard shock troops of the 1960s, who pre-dated the New Left demonstrators that disrupted hundreds of campuses in the late 60s and early 70s. What goes around, comes around.

<http://www.newsrealblog.com/2010/09/22/female-troubles-on-the-west-bank/print/>

Here is another dimension of human trafficking that has been overlooked. Phyllis Chesler, who shares some of her own experience three decades ago with sexual harassment by her boss at the United Nations, discusses the plight of "young, white, Jewish, and Arab women who travel to the West Bank to 'protect' Palestinians from Israeli soldiers" and who are "who are being routinely raped, harassed, and even forced into marriage by the very Palestinians whom they have come to 'rescue.'" One may wonder how the Eloi-like Harvard women who chanted and demonstrated against the old-fashioned liberal Martin Peretz would fare if they were transported en masse to the West Bank to be fare/prey for the Palestinian equivalent of H. G. Wells's Morlocks.

<http://www.nationalreview.com/>

Here is a hilarious one-minute anime video that summarizes Bob Woodward on *Obama's Wars*.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100930/ap_on_re_as/as_india_ayodhya_verdict

An Indian Solomon has divided the mosque/temple birth site of Rama.

Saturday, October 2

<http://victorclaar.blogspot.com/search?q=Steven+Alan+Samson>

This morning I encountered site that carries a number of pictures under my name, most of which have nothing to do with me, but I opened this one when I realized it probably did have something to do with my work. Victor Claar is the coauthor of an economics book with Robin Klay, for whom we essentially house-sat for a year while I was teaching as an adjunct professor at Hope College during the 1990-1991 school year. It is nice to see that some of my postings on the Digital Commons are circulating.

Sunday 3

http://townhall.com/columnists/MarvinOlasky/2010/10/03/thorns_and_thistles/page/full/

Marvin Olasky's column on thorns and thistles is the perfect complement to Douglas Wilson's sermon this morning on the Great Commission. In both cases the message is that we must think long-term and strategically.

Monday 4

<http://pajamasmedia.com/blog/is-quebec-the-future-of-the-u-s/?singlepage=true>

David Solway describes Quebec as the California of Canada, although he sees two developments that may temporarily ease some of the pain the Québécois feel. First, Obamacare is driving some doctors north of the border and, second, a Tea Party movement known as the Freedom Quebec Network has appeared. "But the odds

are stacked against a much-needed turn for the better in a province that is determined to live off someone else's checkbook. Indeed, as has been often pointed out, what we might regard as Quebec's 'daycare environment' is largely subsidized by Alberta oil. Rather than recognize what is ultimately an unsustainable situation and put its house in order, the provincial elite has mobilized to resist and denounce any conservative movement fighting for smaller government, fiscal restraint, and intergenerational fairness as outright 'Quebec bashing.'

Tuesday 5

[http://www.americanthinker.com/printpage/?url=http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/06/obama the african colonial.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/printpage/?url=http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/06/obama%20the%20african%20colonial.html)

One of my Kenyan students was critical of the Dinesh D'Souza piece, not because of its portrait of what motivates the president, but because of its portrait of Kenyan attitudes. D'Souza may have been projecting the anti-colonial attitudes that typified the Indian experience. By contrast, this piece by a Nigerian American, published a year before D'Souza's piece, may get closer to the core issue: a young man's Alex Haley-like search for Roots. D'Souza's allegation that our president absorbed a romanticized African socialism from his father's example may be a red herring. What is already evident about the influence of Edward Said and Obama's own Saul Alinsky-style background in community organizing may account for as much or more.

Wednesday 6

[http://www.americanthinker.com/printpage/?url=http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2010/09/president obama removes creato.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/printpage/?url=http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2010/09/president%20obama%20removes%20creato.html)

This is self-explanatory.

Saturday 9

[http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/10/waiting for the superman who w.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/2010/10/waiting_for_the_superman_who_w.html)

"Waiting for the Superman Who Will Never Arrive." When plumbing reformist pipe dreams, Bob Weissberg has a very practical turn of mind. He is a "show me" Missourian from New York City.

Sunday 10

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/jamesdelingpole/100058265/us-physics-professor-global-warming-is-the-greatest-and-most-successful-pseudoscientific-fraud-i-have-seen-in-my-long-life/>

The worm is turning. The climate science house of cards is on the verge of collapse. Perhaps the government-subsidized paradigm is about to shift, a Kuhnian phenomenon that is doubly illustrated by plate tectonics.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/03/AR2010100303819.html>

To a friend:

If the timing her March recital permits, I would love to hear her. I have an old John Ogdon LP of the Hammerklavier that I bought in the 60s, I believe. There are still some sonatas I have not yet heard, but I have been acquiring more chamber music in recent years. When I played a new recording of a Raff quintet, Sally was delighted.

Monday 11

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/eu_russia_anna_chapman

Anna Chapman: Here's the rest of the story.

Tuesday 12

<http://www.gloria-center.org/gloria/2010/10/muslim-brotherhood-declares-war-on-america>

The Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood has declared war on the West, particularly the United States. But despite the usual scoffing reaction, this challenge is something to be taken much more seriously than a declaration of war by the Grand Duchy of Fenwick in *The Mouse That Roared*.

If even 10% (a tithe!) of the Muslim community were to become collaborationist, we would be faced with the prospect of either being slowly hog-tied like Gulliver (observe Europe under the EU!) or having to reopen the internment camps. Neither prospect is a happy one but, having already failed the essay section of the test, all we have left is the forced-choice portion. The only question that remains is how soon or how late we will take the test seriously and start having a national conversation on our political future - and whether we wish to have a political future.

Lenin asked his fateful question - "What Is to Be Done?" - a mere fifteen years before overthrowing the months-old Kerensky regime in 1917. The Muslim Brotherhood has now made a declaration of its own. It is not only a declaration of war. In the context of the increasingly multicultural (polytheistic!) West, it is a declaration of civil war. We have a very short time frame within which to get smart and get it right. Appeasement has not worked, and, given our heedlessness, it is increasingly evident that it will not work. There comes a time when diplomacy, if it is to succeed at all, requires that a country get onto a war-footing. It is time to recall Ronald Reagan's televised speech of 1964:

"We are at war with the most dangerous enemy that has ever faced mankind in his long climb from the swamp to the stars, and it has been said if we lose that war, and in so doing lose this way of freedom of ours, history will record with the greatest astonishment that those who had the most to lose did the least to prevent its happening."

We did not seek energy independence at a time when true leadership could have made a difference. It is too late even for a crash program to succeed. What this means is that, sooner or later, the war will have to be taken directly to the enemy, just as he has taken it to us. Do we really know who the enemy is - yet?

<http://pajamasmedia.com/blog/the-once-and-future-republic/>

Here is a mighty trumpet blast from Canada: a powerful Chinook that should warm and melt our frozen Tidal Basin. All the links forged at David Solway's armory are well chosen to help gird our loins and prepare us for battle.

Thursday 14

http://townhall.com/columnists/MikeAdams/2010/10/14/allah_my_love/page/full/

This piece by Mike Adams contains an embedded link to a video on the Islamic etiquette of wife-beating. It reminds me of the old joke: "When did you stop beating your wife?" Or as Erich Segal would put it: Love means never having to say you are sorry.

http://www.amazon.com/Muslim-Mafia-Underworld-Conspiring-Islamize/dp/1935071106/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1287060534&sr=1-1

Although this book has been in print since last year, I just got around to reading the introduction and first chapter on-line at this site. It deals with a private counterintelligence operation that uncovered a great deal of information about CAIR operations.

<http://www.debka.com/article/9080/>

DEBKA leaves no doubt about its assessment of Israeli "appeasement" in Lebanon. Neville Chamberlain was mentioned in a couple of places to underscore the point.

Saturday 16

<http://www.azure.org.il/article.php?id=546>

Here is a review of Eric Nelson's *The Hebrew Republic* by Yoram Hazony.

<http://www.azure.org.il/article.php?id=176>

Here is another piece by Hazony on the deplorable state of our textbooks on the history of political philosophy with regard to Biblical influences. I read Sabine's textbook back in the 1960s.

Monday 18

<http://www.lewrockwell.com/orig3/read3.1.1.html>

A reprint of a classic article on economics. Perhaps it can be used in GOVT 200.

<http://lehrman.isi.org/blog/post/view/id/498?duid=1945&drid=467>

This perception is something I should have taken up in my dissertation. I did not then have a sufficient handle on the issue that I could articulate it so precisely as this writer does. But I did grasp what I called the transformation of the Supreme Court from "guardian" to "vanguard."

Tuesday 19

<http://www.economicpolicyjournal.com/2010/10/hillary-supporters-want-to-take-down.html>

I found this on Lew Rockwell's site. It appears that the fissiparous Democrats are more interested in bumping off their enemies than winning.

Wednesday 20

<http://pajamasmedia.com/blog/heh-lefty-bloggers-attack-sarah-palin-impale-themselves/?singlepage=true>

It's like shooting fish in a barrel. Sarah Palin makes it look so easy.

<http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/20-year-old-woman-student-is-police-chief-of-violent-mexican-town-61051>

To a Colleague:

You can tell your criminal justice students that Mexico has a shortage of officers willing to serve as police chiefs.

Paradoxical Thought for the Day:

"Fathom the odd hypocrisy that Obama wants every citizen to prove they are insured, but people don't have to prove they are citizens."

I have seen this quote posted on-line in more than 100 places. I would like to find the original source. It is one of those "This is the last straw!" quotations that may that may turn the Tidal Basin and drown Pharaoh's army once and for all time.