

gust onward, the national party organization either sat on its campaign funds, or even sabotaged some of the campaigns. Without that foot-dragging inside leading circles of the Democratic Party organizations, a clear Democratic majority would, almost certainly, have been won in the lower house.

All in all, the voting patterns in the elections show, that it was both the “Third Way” Democrats and Gingrich’s “New Right,” who were administered a set-back, a hard body-check delivered through the intervention into the election by Roosevelt’s “Forgotten Man,” most notably individual African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and trade-unionists.

What does it all mean? Why did it happen as it did? What is really going on in the political process, something which foretells a diminishing role for that assortment which, until most recently, triumphantly bridged both Newt Gingrich and the deviant Democrats of the DLC? What politically fatal oversight had “Third Way” guru “Dick” Morris committed?

A lesson from ancient Rome

We begin to understand the profound changes in political life inside western Europe and the U.S.A. today, the moment it dawns upon us, that, during the recent thirty-odd years, we, in these parts of the world, have undergone a political change comparable to the internal political and moral degeneration of ancient Rome, that over the period from the defeat of the Gracchian reforms, into the first hundred-odd years following the accession of Octavian to the position of Emperor Caesar Augustus.

The politics of “bread and circuses” under the ancient Caesars of Rome, or such lunacy of later Byzantine politics as national political contests between sporting clubs, are, indeed, forerunners of the process of step-by-step, moral degeneration of national political parties, which we have experienced freshly in western Europe and the United States, during the course of slightly more than three recent decades.

“Yes, Mehitabel: If you had gone to school at an earlier time, when history and the Classics were still being taught, you would probably have recognized that Imperial Rome’s politics of ‘bread and circuses,’ was the forerunner of what is called ‘The Third Way’ today. If you had gone to a decent public school system, in a former time, when such schools educated bright pupils to become actually literate, you would have been able to recognize immediately, as soon as you read the first election tallies, on the Wednesday morning after, what has just popped up as an apparent new trend in the most recent, U.S. mid-term election.”

People whose right to such an education has been denied them, are now faced with learning the lesson of Roosevelt’s “Forgotten Man.” They should be told what a famous Harvard sage once said: those who fail to learn the lessons of history, are compelled to repeat them. So, the relevant illiterates of today, Gingrich, the “Third Way” faddists, and the “New Agers” generally, have just relived a bit of the relevant experi-

Franklin Roosevelt: ‘The Forgotten Man’

The following excerpts are from Franklin Roosevelt’s “Radio Address on the National Economic Emergency,” subtitled “The Forgotten Man,” April 7, 1932:

Although I understand that I am talking under the auspices of the Democratic National Committee, I do not want to limit myself to politics. . . . The present condition of our national affairs is too serious to be viewed through partisan eyes for partisan purposes.

Fifteen years ago my public duty called me to an active part in a great national emergency, the World War. Success then was due to a leadership whose vision carried beyond the timorous and futile gesture of sending a tiny army of 150,000 trained soldiers and the regular navy to the aid of our allies. The generalship of that moment conceived of a whole nation mobilized for war: economic, industrial, social, and military resources gathered into a vast unit capable of and actually in the process of throwing into the scales 10 million men equipped with physical needs and sustained by the realization that behind them were the united efforts of 110 million human beings. It was a great plan because it was built from bottom to top and not from top to bottom.

In my calm judgment, the nation faces today a more grave emergency than in 1917.

It is said that Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo because he forgot his infantry—he staked too much upon the more spectacular but less substantial cavalry. The present administration in Washington provides a close parallel. It has either forgotten or it does not want to remember the infantry of our economic army.

These unhappy times call for the building of plans that rest upon the forgotten, the unorganized but the indispensable units of economic power, for plans like those of 1917 that build from the bottom up and not from the top down, that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid. . . .

It is the habit of the unthinking to turn in times like this to the illusions of economic magic. People suggest that a huge expenditure of public funds by the federal government and by state and local governments will completely solve the unemployment problem. But it is clear that even if we could raise many billions of dollars and find definitely useful public works to spend these billions on, even all that money would not give employment to the seven million



Franklin Roosevelt campaigning in 1932.

company. It is a sad fact that even though the local lender in many cases does not want to evict the farmer or homeowner by foreclosure proceedings, he is forced to do so in order to keep his bank or company solvent. Here should be an objective of government itself, to provide at least as much assistance to the little fellow as it is now giving to the large banks and corporations. That is another example of building from the bottom up.

One other objec-

tive closely related to the problem of selling American products is to provide a tariff policy based upon economic common sense. . . . This country during the past few years, culminating with the Hawley-Smoot Tariff in 1929, has compelled the world to build tariff fences so high that world trade is decreasing to the vanishing point. . . .

What we must do is this: revise our tariff on the basis of a reciprocal exchange of goods, allowing other nations to buy and to pay for our goods by sending us such of their goods as will not seriously throw any of our industries out of balance, and incidentally making impossible in this country the continuance of pure monopolies which cause us to pay excessive prices for many of the necessities of life.

Such objectives as these three—restoring farmers' buying power, relief to the small banks and home-owners, and a reconstructed tariff policy—are only a part of ten or a dozen vital factors. But they seem to be beyond the concern of a national administration which can think in terms only of the top of the social and economic structure. It has sought temporary relief from the top down rather than permanent relief from the bottom up. It has totally failed to plan ahead in a comprehensive way. It has waited until something has cracked and then at the last moment has sought to prevent total collapse.

It is high time to get back to fundamentals. It is high time to admit with courage that we are in the midst of an emergency at least equal to that of war. Let us mobilize to meet it.

or ten million people who are out of work. Let us admit frankly that it would be only a stopgap. A real economic cure must go to the killing of the bacteria in the system rather than to the treatment of external symptoms. . . .

[Farmers] have today lost their purchasing power. Why? They are receiving for farm products less than the cost to them of growing these farm products. The result of this loss of purchasing power is that many other millions of people engaged in industry in the cities cannot sell industrial products to the farming half of the nation. This brings home to every city worker that his own employment is directly tied up with the farmer's dollar. No nation can long endure half-bankrupt. Main Street, Broadway, the mills, the mines will close if half the buyers are broke.

I cannot escape the conclusion that one of the essential parts of a national program of restoration must be to restore purchasing power to the farming half of the country. Without this the wheels of railroads and of factories will not turn.

Closely associated with this first objective is the problem of keeping the home-owner and the farm-owner where he is, without being dispossessed through the foreclosure of his mortgage. His relationship to the great banks of Chicago and New York is pretty remote. The \$2 billion fund which President Hoover and the Congress have put at the disposal of the big banks, the railroads, and the corporations of the nation is not for him.

His is a relationship to his little local bank or local loan