COMPASS

Red-Baiting

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https://youtu.be/t2cj6357o_8

Dr. Samuel Baron's Personal Page

After Dr. Baron finished his answer above, total silence.

I had no idea. Our videographer, May-Lily Lee, was speechless, too. Neither of us knew what to ask next.

The interview plan was gone. Out the window.

McCarthyism had nailed Dr. Baron himself. Called on the carpet before the Tennessee Legislature in the early 1950's? What?

Character slammed. Reputation assassinated. Black-listed as a professor?!

Fifteen seconds of silence. Whispering to myself, looking down, "Damn. You're kidding. No one knew." Head shaking, paper shuffling. "Baron . . . wow."

As a college student, I'd admired Sam more than any other UNC professor.

I still do, more than ever.

The critical line in the video above is when he says, "I was Red-baited."

Red-baiting is not a term commonly known today, but it was in the 1950's, 60's, and 70's. It meant slanderously accusing another of being a Communist for the political purpose of character assassination and all that this entails – disgrace, loss of position, loss of job, personal ruin. It meant making public accusations without sufficient good faith based on credible evidence with an intent to produce maximum damage.

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Even when accusations proved true, Americans came to view Red-baiting with disgust. It involved how the accusations were delivered as much as the accusations themselves. As the lists of targets grew, Red-baiting came to mean shoddy investigative workmanship and shaky accusation meant to harm. An aversion to Red-baiting developed because it violated an American inherited, centuries-old, ingrained, and highly developed sense of procedural fairness.

While truth is a defense to slander, it isn't a defense to unnecessary personal attack outside the law. Most recognized that decency required procedural as well as substantive fairness with respect for everyone.

Of course, in order to achieve character assassination, the Red-baiting tactic needs bait, often taking the form of a straw man. Bait or a straw man requires a significant dressing-up period to ensure initial credibility in the public eye. In other words, alarmist, defamatory, and often false accusations need a problem they can solve before they can supply a victim to blame. In order to cause damage, the bait or straw man can be a person, group, movement, country, religion, idea, or just about anything for which a sufficient number of people can have fear or contempt. Often such character assassination requires years of straw man cultivation.

Once the trap is ready with the bait set, sharks smell the blood of public accusation and swarm to the area to attack whatever they find that's tasty. The intended victim who has been smeared – again, whether a person, organization, movement, historical idea, etc. – has no defense. In the Age of Internet and mass media today, the Red-baiting tactic has become a refined, highly effective art form. It's taken down everything from living heroes to statues of the same.

During the so-called Age of McCarthyism, the bait or straw man was ideological in nature – Marxism, Leninism, Bolshevism, Trotskyism, Stalinism, Socialism, and Communism. Each had different legitimate meanings, but each "ism" presented the consistent theme of 1984-like central rule through collective or government ownership.

As mentioned in prior posts, these "isms" also suggested a clear intent to take down governments across Europe and North America believed necessary for Communism's practical and Utopian fulfillment. I know this sounds like Dr. Evil-speak or maybe even Q-speak today, but I hope my prior *A Journey* post described how this was a serious threat through the 1950's. Even today it has legitimate and growing remnants.

So, Red-baiting-like activity doesn't actually need to be false; it just needs to be appetizing to sharks.

Earlier in Dr. Baron's interview, he had explained how he'd graduated from Columbia University, then had served in the Army during World War II. He had been a card-carrying member of the Greatest Generation, not the Communist Party. He'd served in the Army during WW II. I hadn't known about that either. Like others from in the Greatest Generation who had served in the war, he'd never promoted himself. He was always modest. In hindsight, it had been we Boomers who had brought hotdogging and virtue-signalling completely mainstream.

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Of course, most Americans had known almost nothing about Russia prior to World War II. As a result, the U.S. government had decided soon after V-E Day to sponsor Russian history programs, including Soviet Studies, at select universities around the country. Dr. Baron had seized this opportunity in 1946 and enrolled at Columbia University's new Russian graduate studies program.

He had grown up in Brooklyn as a Dodgers fan, his parents were immigrants from Russia and Poland, and Columbia University in uptown NYC was his alma mater. At the time of his interview, Dr. Baron's selected career had seemed the perfect fit. His long and distinguished teaching, research, and writing career had proven this true beyond question. Furthermore, the U.S. government had made a perfect investment in him in helping us "understand our enemy."

We have already featured the final draft of Dr. Baron's Profile video (3:27) shown on the Home page, offering an overview of who he is. An interesting contrast is the first draft of this video presented below. You might find it helpful because it zeroes in on the Red-baiting theme. Ultimately, we took a different approach because we didn't believe his experience with McCarthyism should characterize an admirable life.

https://youtu.be/7SBjJpX5BQQ?list=TLGGlrD2p5MZ33kyMzAzMjAyMg

The next clip below from Dr. Baron's interview is equally remarkable. Please note how he characterizes McCarthyism. He does so with a cool head and even an undercurrent of forgiveness.

https://youtu.be/VKBWVG3JAiM?list=TLGGvgl0KE9fm8oyMzAzMjAyMg

Of course, "the Other" out there that Dr. Baron mentions was a serious threat. Nonetheless, it is hard to believe Dr. Baron could have been invited into the profession of Russian studies by the U.S. government, then almost been ruined for doing so. Again, this came as a total shock to me.

In hindsight, it might help explain why he was so careful never to bring politics into the classroom. In any case, I don't think he thought politics in the classroom was appropriate since many other professors were doing it at the time. What was more an exception then has become the rule now. In my three years of experience with Dr. Baron, he always struck me as a dedicated American.

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In this fourth in a series of five tributes to Sam Baron, I'd like to mention briefly a few observations about the original Bolsheviks, the old Soviet Union, and McCarthyism in the U.S. and explain why this is still relevant to what's happening in America now.

As mentioned last time, the Russian Bolsheviks who founded the USSR never really understood the importance of rule of law. Originally, their Leninist-Trotskyist idea was to do whatever necessary to make the Russian Revolution happen and then to survive until World Revolution bailed Russia out as an underdeveloped country. This would be the permanent or international revolution. They might have hoped they could get to some type of socialist rule of law when the situation settled down, but their true focus was to destroy and bypass liberal democracy's law. True Marxists see it as a bourgeois construct favoring wealthy individuals and their property over everything else.

With world revolution nowhere to be seen after WW I in the mid-1920's, Stalin changed Russia's revolutionary focus to "Socialism in One Country." Nonetheless, to maintain legitimacy, he still had to rationalize the Revolution and his dictatorship in Marxist terms, even as an absolute thug and megalomaniac. "Socialism in One Country" was a good example of how important theory is in maintaining individual and group focus on reality. Even the Godfather must articulate "family" to his mob.

Ever since, aspiring Communists and Socialists have rationalized their social fictions within their sovereign nations because no one wants to be dependent for success on the actions of groups or classes in other nations. Building socialism and then communism yourself is a lot more controllable. Even for Dr. Evil, it's easier to dominate a defined space than the world. This is China's strategy today. Keep world domination local first.

In sum, concerning the 1920's in the Soviet Union, that's when the heads of Stalin's fellow countrymen really started to roll. Again, to Stalin and the CPSU, the law was something for the future when all was done and well. Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* was an early cornerstone to *by any means necessary*. Again, in China today, law is purely a tool of rule.

Where are we seeing such nonsense in America today?

Every time Stalin's socialist laws abolishing private ownership were declared and implemented, the people resisted because they were inhuman, unworkable, and stupid. When Communists themselves resisted, the Stalinist show trials began. Joseph Stalin cornered the market on Red-baiting!

Some today try to compare McCarthyism to Stalin's trials. While the optics appear similar, there is no comparison whatsoever in degree. In the Soviet Union, millions were murdered in waves. During the McCarthy era broadly defined as the later 1940's through the 1950's, only a few hundred went to jail and a few thousand lost their jobs. Around 1954-55 paranoia concerning Communism declined steadily due to America's sense of decency and the rule of law.

If interested, you should watch a few more of Dr. Baron's clips at the bottom of his Personal Page linked at top. He mentions the attorney for the U.S. Army, Joseph Welch, credited with turning national sentiment against Senator McCarthy in 1954. Mr. Welch was a graduate of

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Grinnell College, a small university in Iowa. Grinnell was the college that offered Dr. Baron the teaching job that saved his career as a university professor.

In any case, few deny today that the Soviet Union's external and internal threats to the United States were real. Many Communist Party members and sympathizers were operating in high and important places with an intent to harm the country. Had Americans not resisted Communism, we might not be the same nation today. While Senator McCarthy and many others went way too far, the Communist threat to the rule of law in the United States was real and had existed since the 1800's. We do not appreciate how different the Marxist worldview is than the one that created America.

In the last *A Journey* post, I mention near the end wanting to highlight two issues concerning the 1917 Russian Revolution. To quote:

> Next time I will develop more carefully through Dr. Baron's life story the theme that not one Bolshevik understood these two basics: (1) the importance of the difference between the rule of man or mob rule and the rule of law, (2) how to build a prosperous and free society from the ground up. #1 involves political construct, and #2 involves social, economic, and cultural constructs. Ultimately, the reigning power's position on #1 is dispositive on #2.

While today's post touches on Point #2 above, what I will finish with today is Point #1. I'll describe the basic elements of the rule of law distinguishing it from mob rule, which can involve the rule of one person or the rule of many. The difference is that the rule of law doesn't emphasize rule of persons, it emphasizes rule of law. Of course, the distinction can grow situationally nebulous. It can become difficult to distinguish and maintain. Successful Judeo-Christian societies and cultures do it; unsuccessful ones don't. It's just that simple.

Our American Founders completely understood this. They established the rule of law. The Russian Founders of the Soviet Union did not understand this. They had no clue what they were doing or what they had established. The fullness of time showed us what "collective consciousness" creates. It always produces mob rule.

The rule of law has six basic elements. Books on this are legion going back thousands of years. The six are:

> **1-** The group in power must believe in ***truth*** and human ***free will***. Law exists outside any one person or group of persons. The rule of law entails what free persons do in truth with their will in power, if you like.

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2- People empowered to do so by the law must approve laws being ***fully conscious of what they're approving***. Voting for or against a law before reading it would violate this requirement. Laws written in incomprehensible language would also violate this requirement. Bills using too many words often violate this requirement today. Our legislative methods in Congress today are a joke, if not criminal.

3- Laws must exist in ***specific enough*** fashion ***without too much detail*** to be discernible and applied to fact situations on an objectively reasonable basis. Bad laws are void (inoperable) "for vagueness" or "too much detail." A law that says "Don't do that" without more is obviously not helpful. On the other hand, too much detail creates conflict in interpretation or impractical, inflexible, or destructive burdens. Anarchy always ends in the rule of person, not law.

4- Laws cannot delegate their authority to people for the obvious reason that this is mob rule. The rule of law only employs people for application and enforcement, if necessary. With large governments and bureaucracies, bright lines between law and people are nearly impossible to maintain. Large governments eliminate the rule of law.

5- Laws must be enforced, or they are worthless. Unenforced laws damage and seriously jeopardize the rule of law itself. There are no rights without corresponding duties of enforcement. Nothing is free in freedom. Nothing.

6- Due process in all its Western forms must exist to protect individuals from abuse or harm and to ensure the establishment of truth in determining what the law is and those facts related to the law itself necessary to adjudicate enforcement. Due process comes in two forms – substantive and procedural – but elaboration now is beyond the scope of this post. (Please see the link provided.)

It's clear the Bolsheviks' theory of party power – where they saw themselves not only as the "vanguard of the Russian proletariat" but also the world's proletariat – had no regard for any of these points. They didn't care at all. They regarded law, if any should ever exist, as just another tool to be used to exercise absolute power and control.

Perhaps the central theme in the thesis Dr. Baron supervised for me in the 1970's was that the Bolsheviks had no concept whatsoever of Point #6 above, due process of law. Rights of process must pre-exist rights of substance or there will be no substance in the long run. Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin didn't get it and didn't care to. During the 1920's, the noose slowly tightened around Trotsky's neck as he remained in the Soviet Union. It would kill him and at least 60 million others.

Eliminate due process a little here, then a little there. Then turn the mighty government machine against anyone who stands in its way. Cook the straw man for a while, then throw in a little Red-baited spice. We've been doing this in America to accelerating degrees over the last 5-6 years. Be assured, the persecuting machine always turns against its Dr. Frankensteins, the persecutors. It will be you next. The history of the Soviet Union is Exhibit A here, but history's notable examples are too numerous to count.

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What we see in America today is the consequence of a breakdown of the rule of law over the last 30-40 years. As the size of all federal, state, and local governments have grown, breakdowns have increased at every level. While Congress and its administration is particularly to blame, all parties and branches of government are guilty. The American people are guilty and have changed since the 1950's. A certain lawlessness pervades us now. A coarseness. We wonder where the adults are.

Such breakdowns occur when people in power and the people as individuals disregard the rule of law's six elements described above. #1 above separates Orthodox Christians today from postmodernists; truth has been under open attack since the late 1980's. #5 is most in our faces today due to the latest series of riots relating to the death of George Floyd. However, it's my opinion that it has been #4 since the 1960's driven by a radical growth in the federal government that has caused the most damage. Straw men have been planted everywhere.

Without the rule of law, mankind has only mob rule. These are the only two possibilities. Vacillation in the middle almost always defaults to mob rule led by a strong man in the long run. Some today are even starting to rationalize mob rule as good and legitimate options.

Mob rule ruined the Soviet Union; is America headed in that direction?

We have a new Red adversary today with Communist China. Russia declares it's no longer Communist while yearning for the good old days, but it's probably just changed its stripes.

Do we want more citizens from outside the U.S. who would subvert the Constitution and the rule of law it represents?

Where is *Red*-baiting today? Who is being _____-baited? What color would you use to fill in the blank? Where are the straw men?

How much time does America and the West have left? What do we need to do to change for the better?

A Journey will explore these issues in detail.

I look forward to my last post in tribute to Dr. Baron next time. No heavy stuff in that one.

We need more wise men and teachers like Dr. Sam Baron today.

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