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Greek Lessons for Americans

by Andrew Levine

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The Debacle

The Greek government's capitulation to its predator-creditors, coming less than a week after Greek voters proudly declared *Oxi* – no way! — illustrates, for the umpteenth time, the essential correctness of a remark of Ralph Waldo Emerson's: that "when you strike at a king, you must kill him."

When capitalists and the politicians and bureaucrats who serve them are challenged, they strike back – and when they can get away with it, they show no mercy. Democracy be damned.

Because their power is immense, they will win – unless an outraged and mobilized citizenry, with bold and capable leaders, stops them.

Despite everything, the Greek people, nearly 62% of them on July 5, did rise up – or at least, by voting No, they began the process. Then their leadership failed them.

It had been plain for a long time that the alternatives were "grexit" or unconditionally surrender. The Syriza leadership evidently had no stomach for the former. Worse still, they had done nothing to prepare for it.

The July 5 referendum marked a great step forward for the dignity and honor of the Greek people, and for victims of neoliberal depredations everywhere. The importance of their achievement will become apparent in time.

But, in the short run, all the referendum did was make Greece's predator-creditors angrier and more determined. For them, and for their class brethren around the world, democracy is fine when it legitimizes their power; otherwise, it is a nuisance at best.

Syriza's negotiators seemed to have believed, naively, that they could prevail on the strength of sound arguments alone. Their arguments were indeed sound; they were hardly even controversial. Everybody who is not a neoliberal ideologue knows that the last thing the Greek government should now do is bleed the Greek economy dry; not, anyway, if the idea is to get the economy to recover enough to pay its creditors off.

But Greece's predator-creditors care no more about that than they care about what the Greek people want.

What they do care about is defeating democratic insurgencies – in Greece and wherever else they break out.

Under capitalism, capital rules. This basic truth can be concealed, but never evaded. Defenders of the capitalist order know this well; they know that they let their guard down at their own peril.

Because the Greek electorate took a stand against austerity by electing a left-wing government last January, and because ours is an era in which national borders no longer count for much and in which politicians servile to the exigencies of global financial capitalism call the shots, all the pretenses fell away during the negotiations in Brussels.

It was not only democracy that counted for nothing; sound economic arguments counted for nothing too!

And so, for the Greeks, it became as clear as can be: banksters run the show: acquiesce or be crushed.

One might think that Germans, especially, would realize how dangerous the situation they brought on is.

After World War I, their creditors bled them dry – though not quite as brutally as they propose to bleed the Greeks. We know how that turned out.

Before long, the world will know how much these latest creditor machinations boost the prospects of later-day fascists in Greece and around Europe today. There is cause for concern. Many of the elements that came together in the thirties – including Islamophobia, the new anti-Semitism – are currently in place.

Fortunately, post-War capitalism has not, so far, taken this route. Even after the neoliberal turn, unconditional surrender and popular humiliation have been rare because, in the normal course of events, zero-sum situations seldom arise. Usually, by ceding a little to popular demands, capitalists make themselves better off too.

There was a lot more of this in the middle decades of the twentieth century, before the neoliberal project took hold. Increased prosperity and diminished inequality resulted. There is much less of both now.

For the most part, though, the setbacks of the past four decades have been by-products of the normal workings of the neoliberal order – regrettable, but unintended, consequences of untrammled and barely regulated business as usual.

But since the Greeks elected a left-wing government last winter, and with the prospects of Spaniards doing the same later this year, events seem to be taking a new turn. There is no specter haunting European capitalism just now; far from it. But its neoliberal phase could soon be falling apart.

This is why ordinary capitalist greed took a back seat in Brussels to a more political imperative: to defeat and humiliate the Greek government. The idea was to make an example of Greece – as a warning to actual and potential enemies of the neoliberal order.

The fear was – and still is — that if Greece were to break free from the neoliberals’ grip, others would soon follow.

This could still happen; the Germans and their allies may soon wake up to find that they destroyed what they were trying to save.

Americans of a certain age will remember Peter Arnett’s famous dispatch, published by the Associated Press on February 7, 1968, from Ben Tré, a provincial capital in South Vietnam. Arnett quoted a United States major who had taken part in bombing and shelling raids that caused countless civilian casualties. The major said: “it became necessary to destroy the town in order to save it.”

Syriza’s negotiating “partners” might have said much the same.

Indeed, the architects of the Vietnam War were of one mind with the European politicians now bringing disaster down upon the Greeks.

Defense intellectuals in the sixties gave a name to this way of thinking; they called it the “the domino theory.” Lose Vietnam and the rest of Southeast Asia will follow; lose Greece, and say *adiós* to Spain – and Ireland and Portugal and who knows what else.

We Americans can feel relieved that this time, the malefactors who think this way are not our malefactors. The United States has not exactly been helping the Greeks out, but at least we are not the worst of the worst.

Worst of the worst has been our role seemingly forever, but nowhere more than during the still continuing, still intensifying, “war on terror.” Now, for however briefly, that title passes to the neoliberal vanguardists of the Fourth Reich and to their Balkan and northern European collaborators.

Washington, it seems, actually wanted the Germans and the others to chill a little. So did some of America’s more compliant European partners. Even the IMF proposed a way out of the immediate crisis by offering the Greeks face-saving, though barely consequential, debt-relief or restructuring. This could still happen – at some yet unspecified future time.

Whatever moderating influence Obama exercised, be sure that it was not out of kindness or affection for the Greek people, and certainly not because Obama and the banker class don’t see eye to eye.

Obama, his corporate-friendly former Attorney-General Eric Holder, Wall Street’s Protector-in-Chief, and the administration’s entire gaggle of economic advisors – not just the obvious culprits, Larry Summers and Timothy Geithner, but the whole sorry crew – have been the banker’s best friends, bar none.

The god-awful Wolfgang Schäuble, Angela Merkel’s Finance Minister, doesn’t hold a candle.

If Obama *et. al.* urged moderation, it was only because the empire they steward already has too much on its plate.

Instability in peripheral regions of the EU, especially in a country close by Muslim regions of the Eastern Mediterranean where the Islamic State has a presence, is the last thing Obama needs now.

It is relevant too that the capitalists he serves care more about keeping the Euro intact than about undermining European welfare states or otherwise inflicting neoliberal discipline upon European populations. The priorities of their class brethren in Europe are not quite the same.

The Europeans’ geopolitical interests center on Europe itself and nearby regions, and on Europe’s former colonial possessions in Africa and elsewhere. Obama’s sights are set on the entire world.

Lately, he and his minions have been especially intent on dominating the core of the Euro-Asian landmass.

To this end, they are hard at work reviving the Cold War with Russia and keeping China down by “pivoting” towards East Asia.

They are also very aware that the rise of the BRICS nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – poses a greater threat to American economic dominance than any vestiges of European Social Democracy possibly could.

The threat, so far, is only potential – witness how neither Russia nor China lifted a finger to help Greece. But situations change.

Accordingly, while the Schäuble Gang has been going after Greece, Obama has been busy bringing hard-core twenty-first century Cold Warriors into his administration – Ashton Carter, for instance, as Secretary of Defense.

It is telling too that his candidate for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, is Russo-phobic enough to delight even the likes of John McCain and his risible sidekick, Republican Presidential candidate Lindsey Graham.

Evidently, Samantha Power-style “humanitarian” imperialism is no longer enough for the military-industrial-national security state complex.

It is plainly not good enough to meet the institutional needs of the military itself. After nearly a decade and a half of a war on terror that has succeeded only in spreading murder, mayhem and political instability throughout the Muslim world, creating an endless supply of terrorists, the Pentagon is ready for a change of course.

The American public is ready too – and not just because of all the economic conscripts that have been killed or maimed or psychologically damaged in the Bush-Obama wars. The war on terror is getting old; even inveterate Islamophobes no longer enthuse over its endless continuation.

No wonder, then, that the military brass longs for the good old days – when they had an enemy they could respect that they never needed actually to fight.

Back then, the generals and admirals could count on a frightened and misled nation sending endless streams of money into the coffers of the arms merchants with whom they were in cahoots, guaranteeing them all the lethal weapons they could possibly want.

In the David Petraeus days, the generation of officers that missed out on being humiliated by tiny Vietnam wanted to show the world how they could get counterinsurgency right. This worked out poorly for them.

The geniuses in the Pentagon today have therefore put counterinsurgency on the back burner. They are more interested, these days, in casting their lot with the neocon chicken hawks and humanitarian interveners Obama empowered; they all see eye to eye on the benefits of bringing the old Cold War enemies back.

The idea is not actually to fight Russia or China, at least not in the way that wars used to be fought. Everyone understands that wars with nuclear powers are best kept “cold.”

The colder they remain, the better they are for addressing the military’s institutional needs and also, not incidentally, for keeping the military-industrial-national security complex happy.

But this requires careful management.

With the Middle East – and, indeed, the entire Muslim world — in turmoil, thanks mainly to the Bush-Obama wars, a stable Europe is therefore as important to Washington as a stable Euro is to Wall Street.

Therefore, the orders have gone out to the empire’s underlings in Brussels and Frankfurt: impose all the austerity you want on whomever you want, but keep the EU intact and the Euro strong.

And don’t push anybody to the brink! This is good advice regardless of geopolitical considerations.

After all, neoliberalism’s victims can only take so much. Lately, they have been expressing their indignation with increasing frequency. The July 5 referendum in Greece is only the latest, and clearest, example; it will certainly not be the last.

Will the forces now out to humiliate Greece and its government take heed?

Probably not; the predator-creditors are on a roll and they see no need to pull back.

Their motto might as well be: *après nous, le déluge*. But anything can happen. And sometimes events have a way of spinning out of control – more rapidly than anyone would imagine.

Anything can happen in the United States too, though the prospects for anything good happening are bleak. Our problem is not that we have a currency we cannot devalue or that foreign creditors are determined to drive us to ruin. That could happen someday, should the Chinese get a notion, but, for now, there is little chance of that.

Our prospects are bleak, especially now with the 2016 election looming, thanks in part to our exceptionally undemocratic electoral institutions, our duopoly party system, and our preposterous campaign finance laws.

For these reasons and others – a media system dedicated to dumbing down political discourse is high on the list — the beneficiaries of the neoliberal order in the United States feel at least as secure as the vultures that led the attack on Greece.

As the nominating process for the 2016 electoral circus picks up steam, it will be well, especially for Bernie Sanders enthusiasts, to keep this in mind. The Greek debacle speaks with particular relevance to their hopes for a change of course.

It provides other useful lessons for American progressives too.

* * *

Less is Sometimes More

There is much that Americans can learn from the Greek debacle. There are lessons in it even for voters in the coming Democratic Party primaries and caucuses.

To appreciate those lessons, it is well to state some obvious points that most people still don't get – mainly because our media are hell-bent on denying the undeniable.

Because those ad revenues are hard to resist, they have a financial stake in making the coming election seem like a horse race. And, as flacks for corporate America, they are invested politically in channeling democratic aspirations into electoral dead-ends.

The first and most obvious of these very obvious points is that the ideas Republicans advance are not worth taking seriously, and that most Republicans these days are beneath contempt. They are like the Schäuble Gang, only a lot dumber and less couth.

Like foul weather, they sometimes have to be worked around and, whenever possible, made the best of; but except for comedic purposes, their views don't merit a moment's thought.

Nevertheless, we must not “misunderestimate,” as George W. Bush would say, their capacity to win local and state elections or how much harm they can do with the offices they hold. Scott Walker's Wisconsin is not the only case in point.

But no one need worry that a Republican will win the Presidential election in 2016. The GOP will lose because they will nominate a buffoon – which one hardly matters — who cannot possibly gain the requisite number of electoral votes.

The Clintons are beneath contempt too, but because there are “liberals” – and, in Hillary's case, “feminists” – who don't quite see it this way, their views do have to be taken seriously.

Combatting “Clintonism,” –Reaganism for Democrats — is, or rather ought to be, the first task of the American Left. This has been the case since even before the Clintons first moved into the White House in 1992.

Indeed, Hillary is more dangerous than any likely Republican candidate could be — because, like her husband and like Barack Obama, she is able, as Republicans are not, to neutralize opposition to neoliberal assaults on equality and wellbeing.

The Syriza government capitulated out of necessity; its leader, Alexis Tsipras, rightly or wrongly thought that he had no choice. When the Clintons bring austerity upon us, no greater power is forcing them. They side with the banksters because it is their nature.

As Bernie Sanders poll numbers have surged, Hillary Clinton has been faking left. Only a fool would believe a word she says. Like her husband, she is an inveterate liar. And, like him too, she cannot keep from occasionally flaunting her duplicity.

Or maybe, sometimes, she just feels that the plutocrats who own her need reassurance. Was it because her BFF, Haim Saban, the Democrats' answer to Sheldon Adelson, needed reassurance that she wrote him that infamous “Dear Haim” letter, promising unstinting opposition to boycott, divestment and sanctions actions aimed at Israel and eternal love for the ethnocratic settler state?

If Hillary craps out, her “rival,” Martin O’Malley, could fill her shoes. He is a Clinton Democrat who, for Clintonesque (opportunistic) reasons, has decided to run to Hillary’s left. At the same time, he is also running to be Hillary’s running mate.

Better him than her, better almost anybody than her, but it is a safe bet that an O’Malley presidency would be only marginally less awful than the one that awaits us when, as still seems likely, those dreadful Clintons again take up residence in their former lodgings.

O’Malley could audition for the role of President if they ever redo “The West Wing.” He’d stand a good chance of getting the part. Sanders, a septuagenarian Jewish man with a Brooklyn accent who calls himself a socialist wouldn’t get past the receptionist.

Nevertheless, he is already making waves — because he is the most “progressive” candidate in the race.

He is what polltakers call “very liberal.” It is nice that he calls himself a “socialist”; some good could come of that. But it is not true; not if “socialist” means what it has meant for some two hundred years.

Sanders has never said or done anything that suggests that he would like underlying property relations to be socialized in any meaningful sense of the term. Private property would be as secure under Sanders as under Hillary Clinton or Jeb Bush.

Even so, “very liberal” is not to be despised, especially nowadays.

In this neoliberal age, Europe too could use more “very liberal” politicians. Genuine socialists are more plentiful there than here, but socialist politics is very nearly as defunct.

There were plenty of bona fide socialists who voted “No” in Greece on July 5, and the Syriza party is stocked with militants whose socialism is the real deal.

Nevertheless, the July 5 referendum was only about relief from the burdens “the troika” – the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank, and the European Commission — were imposing upon the Greek people.

And Syriza’s platform was only about halting the assault on the social progress of past decades, not about moving society forward.

Therefore, ironically, what the Greeks were voting for was, if anything, even less challenging to capitalism than what Sanders calls for in his stump speeches.

But the Greeks were challenging austerity from the left; and this the predator-creditors could not abide.

The context is different, of course, but the lesson is clear: were Sanders to seem a genuine threat to the power and privileges of those whom Occupy Wall Street called “the one percent,” the

entire political class, with its media in tow, would crush him faster than a German banker can say “Alexis Tsipras.”

It would hardly matter that on foreign and military affairs, Sanders is no better than the average Democrat — which is to say, that he is no good at all. All the furies in hell would rise up to attack him.

Are we, then, going to find ourselves in 2016 in much the same situation that the Greeks are now in: suffering under a neoliberal order and without any visible means of relief?

This is more than likely – and not just because, one way or another, the Democratic Party will find a way to deny Sanders the nomination. The even bigger problem is that, were he somehow to become the nominee, the events in Greece portend the future that would lie in wait.

However, there is another possible scenario that, were it to materialize, would offer a little more reason to hope — on the principle that, for progressives, less can sometimes be more.

Unfortunately, though, its chances of materializing are poor.

* * *

When media analysts mention Jim Webb, something they rarely do, the phrase “centrist Democrat” often comes up. But then they also say that he is an “economic populist” and a strong advocate for equality.

They say the same thing about Sanders and non-candidate Elizabeth Warren too. What, then, are they talking about when they call Webb a “centrist”? Do even they know?

Webb probably does lean less to the left than Sanders or Warren. It would be nice to know for sure, and maybe someday it will become clear, but it really doesn’t matter – for just the reason that the Greek debacle illustrates perspicuously.

It doesn’t matter because this side short of fundamental regime change, capital will continue to get its way, no matter who is nominally in charge.

Who the President is does still matter, though, in foreign and military affairs, at least to some extent. In these areas, Webb just might be the better candidate.

If both names are still on the ballot when I get a chance to vote next Spring, much as I’d like to cast a protest vote against Hillary by voting for someone conspicuously to her left, I just might find myself voting for Webb, even if it is plain by then that what he has to say about domestic politics is indeed, in some meaningful sense, “centrist.”

If nothing else, Webb is the only candidate in sight who would – and could — put a stop to the bipartisan chicken hawkery that is driving America to ruin.

To be sure, his is the perspective of a professional military man, not an anti-imperialist. This sometimes leads him to draw conclusions that principled opponents of the American empire's role in the world cannot abide.

But his views are consistently more informed and well thought out than any Republican's or any Clintonite's or, as far as one can tell, than Bernie Sanders'. It says something that he has been an unabashed critic of the Bush-Obama Middle Eastern wars from Day One.

Sanders may be able to get a campaign going on small contributions alone; especially if he is able to remain the kind of lightning rod that Syriza was. There is a lot of justified indignation out there, looking to attach itself to something that promises hope.

Webb has so far not drawn the same kind of interest; this is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

Therefore his best chance for giving Hillary a run for her money is to find a billionaire or two to stake him. Unfortunately, between the Republicans and the Clintons, there aren't many left.

And so, his candidacy may not even get to the flash-in-the-pan stage.

It doesn't help either that his best asset, his ties to the rural South, both white and black, has become a liability in the latest episode of self-congratulatory hypocrisy to sweep the United States.

It hardly matters that, on the Confederate flag question, he is way more right than the average liberal.

He agrees with them, of course, that Confederate symbols should not be displayed on public buildings.

His reason, though, is that those symbols have been hijacked by white supremacists. Unlike his rivals, he insists that just being a Confederate symbol hardly merits special condemnation.

He is surely right. The Confederacy itself, compared to much else that we Americans venerate, was hardly uniquely noxious or even unusually questionable from a moral point of view.

Prissy liberals who have lately taken to vilifying the Confederacy because slavery was the main reason why the Confederate states seceded are confused or hypocritical or both.

They are also confounding the interests of Southern planter elites with the concerns of the vast majority of white Southerners.

The ancestors of most of the people today who think that Confederate symbols honor their heritage did not own slaves; they were more likely to be class enemies of the elites that did. And not nearly as many of their contemporaries up North were as guiltless as people outside the South like to think.

There was a report on television recently about street names and subway stops in New York City named after notorious slave-owners and defenders of slavery – Delancey Street (Etienne de Lancey), for example, and Chambers Street (John Chambers). Northern fortunes and northern institutions were built with money from the Atlantic slave trade and, at the time that the thirteen British colonies that would form the United States declared their independence, slavery was legal in every one of them.

The Northern states outlawed slavery one by one in a process that stretched out over decades after 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was signed, and after 1787, when our slavery friendly Constitution was adopted.

Moral reasons undoubtedly played a role in this process. The evils of slavery were being increasingly recognized in all the Old World countries that had brought African slaves to the Americas, and in many parts of the New World.

But the main reason why anti-slavery opinion was so much stronger in the North than in the South was not that Northerners were more morally developed; it was that Northern agriculture, manufacturing and commerce had no use for slave labor, while plantation agriculture in the South still did.

Anti-slavery fervor in the North never ran deep; and for all the self-righteousness now on display over Confederate flags, it doesn't to this day – not, at least, in a way that bears on the kinds of symbolic issues that liberals have gotten themselves exercised over since Dylann Roof's murderous assault on the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

Where are the cities in Germany named after celebrated Nazis? Yet, how many Americans — Northerners even more than Southerners — live in cities or on streets named for some of America's most distinguished defenders of slavery?

I, for one, was born in *Jefferson* Hospital in Philadelphia, lived for many years in *Madison*, Wisconsin, shopped on *Monroe* Street, and now live not far from *Washington* DC, the nation's capitol. Where are the calls to change those names?

By the way, I now live in Maryland, one of five slave states that remained in, and fought for, the Union – against the eleven slave states that comprised the Confederacy.

I would add that far more harm has been done in this world under the banner of the stars and stripes than under the stars and bars. Confederate soldiers never executed genocidal campaigns against indigenous peoples, never dominated distant countries and regions, never spread murder, mayhem and wanton destruction across the planet, and never dropped nuclear weapons on anybody.

If we are going to start denying bragging rights to veterans of America's wars or their descendants in a fair and honest way, would there be anything at all for anyone to brag about?

Maybe, veterans who fought against Nazism in the European theater during World War II could meet the test. But then we would have to overlook the fact that they fought in a segregated army and that their top civilian and military leaders lived and worked in a segregated city, named after a Virginia slave owner.

Perhaps the time has come to take seriously the plain fact that symbols are only in the head – in other words, to reach the level of clear-headedness of the banksters and politicians now vandalizing Greece.

The hardships they demand that the Greeks impose upon themselves are not only stupid; they are punitive. The troika insisted upon them in order to throw their weight around – to teach those rebellious Greek voters and those Syriza negotiators a lesson.

But even Angela Merkel and Wolfgang Schäuble are fine with the Greeks keeping all the symbols of national sovereignty they want. All that matters to them is that their bosses get to make an example of the people they are bleeding dry.

Of course, symbols that now stand for white supremacy have no more business being on public buildings than swastikas do. No doubt, Merkel and Schäuble and their supporters back home can appreciate that, even as they dedicate themselves to dominating Europe – with a viciousness not seen since the days of the Third Reich.

But unlike swastikas, Confederate flags mean different things to different people. For some, they really do signify Southern pride.

In today's world, however, they are best relegated to Civil War museums. Southern pride would be better celebrated in less contentious ways.

I like Mojo Nixon's idea: celebrate it with something all Southerners, black and white, can get behind – sweet ice tea, football, and barbecue. Most Northerners could go along with at least two of the three.

Better yet: appeal to Southern pride by promoting inter-racial solidarity in a way that would bring white Southerners back into the progressive fold. To this end, it is crucial to focus less on symbols and cultural distractions, and more on the basic economic issues that politics is ultimately about.

If anybody could, do this, it would be Webb; a bona fide son of the South, a battle-scarred ex-marine, a former Secretary of the Navy, a writer of outstanding ability, and a fighter who knows how to pick his fights and how to win them.

Webb's views on immigration could stand improvement; but then, the Clinton record over the years has not been great either; there is a reason why she is presently less well received in Hispanic venues than Bernie Sanders is.

In any case, in deeds, if not in words, Webb could hardly do as much harm as Barack Obama has done. Obama has been the most prodigious Deporter-in-Chief in the history of the United States.

Webb's views, expressed years ago, on women in the military – that they shouldn't be put in combat situations – are also likely to strike some liberals and feminists the wrong way.

Because nobody should be put in combat roles except in just wars, and because – with the possible exception of the war against the Nazis –the United States never fights any of those anyway, I cannot get too upset over this. But, for those who do, denying women a chance to do their fair share of killing and maiming is a small price to pay for reining in America's perpetual war machine.

Bernie Sanders is good for moving Hillary Clinton, and therefore the Democratic Party, leftward — rhetorically. But for moving the country off its present, deleterious course, I would hazard that Webb is a better bet.

* * *

Sanders is America's Syriza.

Even if lightning strikes – in other words, even if he somehow wins the nomination and therefore becomes the one who will send the Republicans' chosen flyweight packing – it would only set Americans up for the fate that befell the Greeks.

It would be different if he were beholden to well-organized progressive constituencies. This is how it works in parts of the global South – for example, in Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia — but it is not the American way, and it never will be unless the Democratic Party is shaken to its foundations.

When people who enthuse over Sanders talk about “the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party” they are thinking about New Deal-Fair Deal-Great Society Democrats. Sanders' views do indeed follow along the path they forged long ago.

Much good was done under their aegis. But that was because, in their America, they were able sometimes to prevail.

They could prevail because, more often than not, they had the support of the white-supremacist “solid South.” This was also why the good they did was as limited as it was.

Whenever matters that threatened to mitigate white supremacy were at stake, Southern Democrats dragged the Party rightward, blocking its progressive thrust.

Because the Solid South became a solid Republican South as the consequences of the Voting Rights Act took hold, modern Democrats, going back to the Carter days, have been able to get their way only by becoming de facto Republicans. In Obama's case, even that hasn't been enough.

Bernie Sanders won't be allowed to be President, but even if a beneficent god intervenes and he becomes President nevertheless, either he would forsake the milquetoast leftism of the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party or else he would be crushed. The American Syriza would meet Syriza's fate.

On the other hand, were Webb to succeed in forging a cross-racial, class based alliance with which some significant portion of Occupy's "ninety-nine percent" could identify, the constraints now blocking very liberal politicians like Sanders — and genuine socialists too, were any to venture into national politics — just might change enough for some good finally to happen.