



**COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO
WEEK OF AUGUST 5 - 11, 2018**

THIS WEEK

**PUBLIC FACILITY FEE PAYMENT SCHEDULE
REFORM OPPORTUNITIES**

**REQUESTS TO ADJUST CANNABIS REGS AND
TO ALLOW MORE GROWS**

**MORE BEHAVIORAL AND THOUGHT PROCESS
RULES FOR BOARD MEMBERS PROPOSED**

LAST WEEK

**SLOCOG TO USE PUBLIC FUNDS TO OPPOSE
REPEAL OF THE GAS TAX?**

**SLOCOG MEETING BASICALLY A POLITICAL
RALLY AGAINST GAS TAX REPEAL**

NO SUPES MEETING

**SLO COLAB IN DEPTH
SEE PAGE 11**

The Origins of Our Second Civil War

By Victor Davis Hanson

Globalism, the tech boom, illegal immigration, campus radicalism, the new racialism . . . Are they leading us toward an 1861?

AFSCME's PUSH FOR RENT CONTROL PROVES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JANUS UNION-DUES RULING

By Steven Greenhut

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, August 7, 2018 (Scheduled)

Item 1 - Deferred Payment of Public Facility Fees. This is the annual extension of a policy whereby a home developer can elect to defer payment of 80% of the Public facility fees levied on a project until the project is cleared by final inspection. In the past applicants were required to pay at the time the building permit was issued.

The benefit of this deferral is that when the project is cleared by final inspection, it is closer to the point of generating revenue, which makes the financing more feasible. The process may especially benefit various categories of affordable projects.

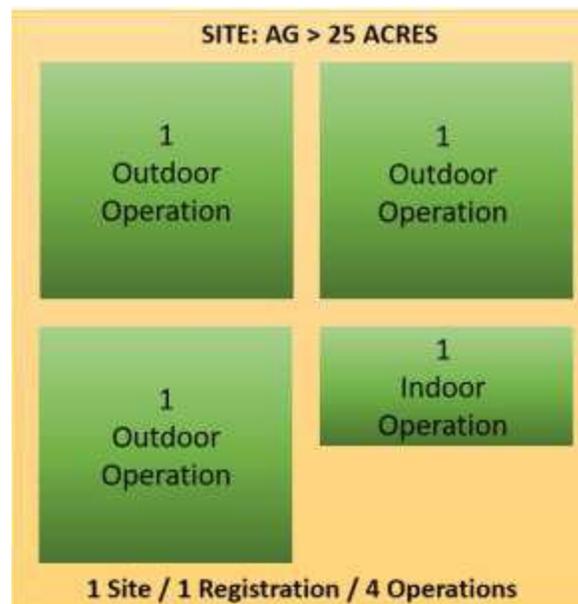
Public facilities fees are levied on developments to provide future capital for parks, sheriff's facilities, fire facilities, administration buildings, and so forth. These can be hundreds of thousands or even millions depending on the size of the project.

At this point: The Board should approve the ordinance and should direct staff to make it permanent so that it wouldn't have to be renewed every year. It should also eliminate the 20% down payment and expand the concept to the fee exactions levied for roads.

Matters After 1:30 PM

Item 45 - Multifaceted Item Dealing with Marijuana. This is likely to be the time consuming and difficult item of the day.

Part 1 - Experience to Date: As real life operations have progressed, experience shows that cultivators are placing up to 4 grows on a site (permitted by the ordinance). This is eating into the cap of 141 new grows countywide. Staff is suggesting some loosening up. This may beget some push back on the one hand and advocacy on the other.



Relatedly, applicants report that there is a logjam and that the process takes too long. No actual performance data is reported. This was to be a component of the new multi-million dollar permitting system.

Part 2 - Coastal Commission Interference: Per the Coastal Act the County was required to submit its marijuana regulatory ordinance to the Commission. As usual the Commission added a number of stricter provisions, which must be accepted by the County if the coastal portion is to be certified. For example:

The Commission found that the proposed ordinance addressed most of the resource-impact issues associated with cannabis but did not adequately address potential cannabis-related impacts on visual and scenic resources, including possible effects of cannabis screening devices, hoop structures, security lighting, and mixed-light cultivation.

Additionally, it was not clear to Commission staff how the Local Coastal Program (LCP) policies relating to sensitive natural resources, such as wetlands, riparian vegetation, and environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHAs), applied to cannabis uses. Therefore, the Commission approved modifications that require all cannabis-related activities to meet specific visual standards, including standards that ensure protection of blue water ocean views and address night lighting impacts to views from public roads, and that clarify the setback requirements for riparian habitats, wetlands, and ESHA established in the Land Use Plan apply to cannabis activities. Other modifications ensure that such standards cannot be waived or modified, except, for a process to modify the 600-foot distance of cannabis activities from certain uses.

Part 3 - Statistical Report on Activities so Far:

Land Use Permit Activity Update

- Land Use Permit Applications
- 40 active (30 MUPs and 10 CUPs)
 - 1 MUP approved 6/1/18
- Hearings anticipated September
 - Pre-application Meetings
 - 59 completed and 7 pending
 - Phone Calls, Emails, Walk-ins
- 80-100 calls/week, 60 emails/week, 15-20 walk-ins/week

Disappointedly, the report contains no data on permit revenue to date, the average cost per various categories of permits, nor the amount of marijuana tax money received so far.

Code Enforcement Update

- Cannabis Hearing Officer
- 18 cases » 18 abatement orders
- 6 abatement warrants served » 2.6 tons of cannabis destroyed
 - 2 additional cases resolved prior to hearing
 - California Valley
- 95 active sites and 109 abandoned sites
 - South County
 - 20 complaints

Item 46 - Adoption of a Board of Supervisors Governance Manual. The Board letter accompanying the Manual states in part:

On February 6, 2018, the Board directed staff to draft a Governance Manual that would set forth the appropriate manner in which Board members perform their governance role and agreed upon rules of conduct by members of the Board in their interactions with other Board members and constituents. The Board further adopted a Code of Civility with several cities within San Luis Obispo on June 19, 2018, which outlined agreement between the local government entities to adhere to specified rules of conduct and to work collaboratively on the needs of the County's residents.

Key components deal with substantive and behavioral aspects of the Supervisor's roles as quoted below:

Governance Principles

The County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors will:

1. Govern as a team, strategically focused and mission driven.

- *Think and act strategically with shared purpose and direction.*
- *Consider issues with a long-term view on strategy and performance, focusing on sustainable success.*
- *Make decisions that serve the public interest and promote the greatest public good.*
- *Be willing to cross political, social, ethnic and economic boundaries to achieve community outcomes.* **COLAB NOTE: What if different supervisors desire widely diverging policy outcomes – say dispersed vs. dense housing or community choice aggregation vs. private investor owned electric companies?**

Also what exactly does this principle mean in full? What exactly are these boundaries?

2. Make well informed and transparent decisions.

- *Be rigorous and transparent about their decision-making process.*
- *Have quality information and advice available to support high quality decisions and base decisions on evidence and data.* **COLAB NOTE: Does this mean that Board members must accept “currently accepted” climate change data as a basis for policy formulation?**

• *Actively seek diverse viewpoints from all communities within the County to ensure the best outcomes from the community as a whole.*

- *Align goals and resources.*
- *Constantly measure results based on facts.* **COLAB NOTE: Who is the arbiter of facts?**
- *Ensure that goals are calibrated with resources; staff is not asked to deliver*

without the tools and means to do the job. COLAB NOTE: Does this mean that the staff should not pursue a policy of doing more with less as part of continuous improvement?

3. Be accountable to each other for the highest standards of Board performance and effectiveness.

- Promote a culture of discussion and inquiry, shared acceptance of disagreements and the ability to find common ground.*
- Govern in a collaborative manner with the community, staff and within the Board.*
- Govern with civility and integrity.*
- Respect and embrace ethnic and cultural diversity and actively include all communities in the decision-making process. COLAB NOTE: Would this include conservatives?*
- Assess the Board's effectiveness and adherence to adopted protocols. COLAB NOTE: The voters will do this every 4 years. Will the Board members agree to rate themselves on these principles on their campaign websites so voters won't forget?*

4. Establish clear roles, responsibilities and delegated decision-making responsibility.

- Members and officials work together to achieve a common purpose within a framework of clearly defined functions and roles.*
- Commitment to creating and maintaining a collaborative environment, respecting the roles of the Board, County Administrator, and staff*

San Luis Obispo County Integrated Waste Management Authority (IWMA) of Wednesday, August 8, 2018, 1:00 PM in the BOARD OF SUPES CHAMBERS, SLO.

Forensic Audit? Future of the Executive Director?

The actual meeting may be an executive session. Public comment is allowed before they go into the session. No agenda has been posted as of this writing – Friday August 3, 2018.

News reports appeared in the last several weeks indicating that the District Attorney and the FBI are conducting investigations of the IWMA involving alleged misstatement of financial position, misuse of public funds, misuse of credit cards, lack of public bidding, gifts of vehicles for favored IWMA vendors, and a long term pattern of cronyism at the IWMA. Separately but relatedly, a private investigator reports inconsistencies of the testimony of the plaintiff and witnesses in the lawsuit against the Cal Coast News. The trial resulted in a huge verdict against the Cal Coast News. The Cal Coast News had reported illegal dumping of hazardous waste by the plaintiff Tenborg, who operated a hazardous waste management disposal firm.

Legally the IWMA is a species of local government known as a joint powers authority. Its members include the County, 5 cities, and some special districts. All 5 of the County Supervisors sit on its Board along with 5 city representatives, and a special district representative. Rumors of these problems in the past have been shrugged off by the IWMA Board. Apparently some members have now requested a public meeting on the issue.

The IWMA website indicated that there would be an IWMA Board Executive Committee meeting on July 26 to discuss performance of the IWMA Director William Worrell. At present it cannot be determined from the website if the meeting took place or what happened. No minutes have been posted as of this writing.

3. **Closed Session.** It is the intention of the Executive Committee to meet in closed session for the following: Performance Evaluation of the IWMA Manager (Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)).

Apparently there is some dispute on the IWMA Board about whether it would conduct its own investigation by means of an independent forensic audit. Some sources have indicated that Hill and Gibson had opposed this previously.

If any of this turns out to be true and/or indictments come down, everyone will head for the hills and blame the executive director. The question for the public will be: Should their elected officials who sat on the IWMA Board be returned to office – especially those who opposed an independent investigation?

IWMA Board Members

President: Jeff Lee, City of Grover Beach
Vice President: Aaron Gomez, City of San Luis Obispo

Tim Brown, City of Arroyo Grande
Tom O'Malley, City of Atascadero
Robert "Red" Davis, City of Morro Bay
John Hamon, City of Paso Robles
Sheila Blake, City of Pismo Beach
Debbie Arnold, San Luis Obispo County
Lynn Compton, San Luis Obispo County
Bruce Gibson, San Luis Obispo County
Adam Hill, San Luis Obispo County
John Peschong, San Luis Obispo County
Robert Enns, Authorized Districts

We could find no current financial data on the IWMA website, such as the Adopted FY 2018-19 Budget or the 2017 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, August 9, 2018 (Cancelled)

The meeting is cancelled. It appears there is a lack of business.

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, July 31, 2018 (Not Scheduled)

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 7, 2018.

San Luis Obispo County Council of Governments (SLOCOG) Meeting of Wednesday, August 1, 2018 (Completed)

Item 1-A: SLOCOG Political Campaign to Oppose Repeal of Gas Tax. This item appeared under the vague title: **State Transportation Funding.** In fact it was an hour-long political rally against the repeal of SB 1. Ultimately the SLOCOG Board voted 7/3/1 to oppose State Ballot Proposition 6, which would repeal the SB 1 gas tax. Directors Bruce Gibson, 2nd District Supervisor; Adam Hill, 3rd District Supervisor; Tom O'Malley, Atascadero; John Shoals, Grover Beach; Ed Waage, Pismo Beach; Fred Strong, Paso Robles; and Dan Rivoire, SLO all voted yes to oppose Proposition 6. Directors Arnold and Compton voted no. Director Peschong abstained stating that since the matter was now a measure initiated by the people and was scheduled in the November election, Directors should not take a position. Directors Headding, Morro Bay and Brown, Arroyo Grande were absent.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff:

A. Protect existing funding per adopted legislative positions (2/17 & 4/17) and oppose Proposition 6.

B. Disseminate implications of reduced funding resulting from the passage of Proposition 6.

Note that in the highlighted section above, the SLOCOG staff will be using taxpayer funds to promote a political position on a pending ballot measure of the people. Readers will remember

that the SLOCOG also expended hundreds of thousands of dollars on the abortive ½ cent sales Tax Measure J two years ago. A California Fair Political Practices Commission complaint is already under formal investigation relative to that violation.

SLOCOG will claim that it is simply passing out information; however the very Board letter covering this item contains 6 pages of assertions about reduced road funding, negative economic impacts, negative job impacts, reduced rail funding, and reduced transit funding and a general apocalyptic vision of the future.

The same write-up contains no balancing information about the impact of the SB 1 fuel taxes and other fees on the economy, jobs, food delivery costs, impacts on those with fixed incomes, or the fact that California already had some of the highest road related fees and taxes in the nation before the Legislature adopted SB 1.

At The Meeting: In addition to the staff report, there was a full-on presentation by Susan Branson, the Executive Director of the all-powerful State Transportation Commission (STC) extolling the benefits of SB 1. Under rhetorical questioning from Supervisor Hill, she even suggested a couple of ways to manipulate the rules for various grants to capture funding for access to the Pismo Preserve (Use state road money to mitigate the environmental impacts of improving Highway 101). Apparently, and after the County and others spent millions on this open space, no one remembered that there was no safe access or trailhead parking. Apparently \$3.9 million more are needed for access before it can open. Even then, you will have to hike or bike up the very steep mountain to see the view.

There was a great deal of polemical handwringing by some of the city council members who voted to oppose the repeal of SB 1.

Fred Strong of Paso doesn't like the new tax because he favors a mileage based fee approach, but at this point "this is the only way to do it."

John Shoals of Grover Beach supports SB 1 because it protects existing revenue.

O'Malley of Atascadero didn't like the tax but said this is an infrastructure investment.

Hill and Gibson were more didactic and direct:

Hill stated that Opposition to SB 1 is a symbolic, ideological, reflexive, and reactionary act.

Gibson stated that Preserving SB 1 is practical thinking.

Item A-5: Further Review of Components of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/More Handwringing about SB 1. The Board received and approved a status report on the work on the RTP and again underscored the need to preserve SB 1 taxes.

Background: The RTP is the long-range needs assessment and plan for all components of SLO County's (including its 7 cities) transportation systems for the next 25 years. It contains sections on roads, transit, freight, air travel, bicycle travel, harbors, and so forth.

It is a rolling document, which is updated every 4 years and is required by the State in order for the County and the cities to be eligible for State and Federal transportation funding.

In June the SLOCOG Board had a look at the Sustainable Communities component, which is the most policy laden as it contains the aggregated commitments of the County and cities to comply with SB 375. The Sustainable Communities chapter requires that the County and cities in aggregate adopt land use and transportation plans that promote less vehicular travel, denser communities and housing, climate change mitigating policies, and anti-sprawl provisions in general.

As we reported here, the SLOCOG Board in June was presented with a draft that contained these provisions. Some members supported them strongly while others simply seemed to acquiesce. This month's item reminds everyone:

The Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) (Chapter 13) first emerged in California to recognize the critical links between transportation, land use, and other societal goals following the passage of SB 375 (2008). A required element of the RTP, the SCS identifies a forecasted development pattern for the region, which is informed by the inventory of existing land use throughout the region, along with the identification of sites where future development can be located, while still reducing VMT and GHG emissions. SB 375 established an approach to ensure that cities, counties, and the public are involved in the development of regional plans to achieve targets set by the ARB for reducing GHG emissions from passenger vehicles and light-duty vehicles. An SCS must also be consistent with other plans prepared by local, state, and federal agencies. Consistency can be described as a balance and reconciliation between different policies, programs, and plans. Land use scenarios, developed in the SCS, considered local jurisdictions' general plans, zoning, and pending and approved specific plans.

The Plan must be completed and approved by October 2018. It will be submitted to the State for review for potential approval or rejection. A critical review will be conducted by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to determine if it contains sufficient provisions to reduce vehicle trips and provide stack-and-pack housing.

Item D-4: New SLOCOG Executive Director to be confirmed. The Board confirmed the appointment of Peter Rogers as the new Director.

Background: The write-up stated in part:

In March 2018, Ronald L. De Carli notified the SLOCOG Board of his intention to retire after 38 years as Executive Director on Friday, September 7th, 2018. In April 2018, upon receipt of his notice, the SLOCOG Board initiated the process in Closed Session to find a replacement. Following further Closed Session discussions in June 2018, negotiations began with SLOCOG Deputy Director Peter Rodgers to fill the position of Executive Director. Peter Rodgers has served as Deputy Director of SLOCOG since July 2016. He has worked for SLOCOG for the last 28 years with increasing levels of responsibility. After securing a degree in Environmental Services – Natural Resources Management from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Mr. Rodgers served four (4) years in the Peace Corps in both Haiti and Costa Rica. The attached contract mirrors the terms and benefits previously provided to Mr. De Carli and is within the adopted salary range.

The contract states that he will be paid \$151,000 per year to start, and the APCD will pick up (pay) his share of his pension payments on his behalf. It is not known what this is worth. He will also receive the normal cafeteria of health, disability, vacation, holiday, professional time off, etc.

It is not known what he thinks about the Sustainable Communities Strategy generally or locally, but given his education and 28 years with the agency, he probably won't be calling for a sea change in policy to promote traditional homes or converting more land for housing.

COLAB IN DEPTH

IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME, LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES AND FORCES

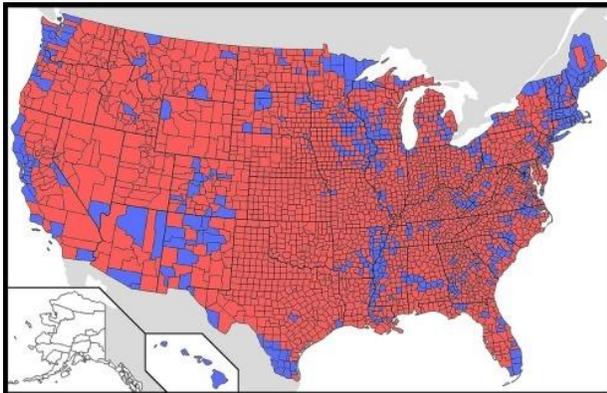
The Origins of Our Second Civil War

By Victor Davis Hanson

Globalism, the tech boom, illegal immigration, campus radicalism, the new racialism . . . Are they leading us toward an 1861?

How, when, and why has the United States now arrived at the brink of a veritable civil war? Almost every cultural and social institution — universities, the public schools, the NFL, the Oscars, the Tonys, the Grammys, late-night television, public restaurants, coffee shops, movies, TV, stand-up comedy — has been not just politicized but also weaponized.

Donald Trump's election was not so much a catalyst for the divide as a manifestation and amplification of the existing schism.



We are now nearing a point comparable to 1860, and perhaps past 1968. Left–Right factionalism is increasingly fueled by geography — always history's force multiplier of civil strife. Red and blue states ensure that locale magnifies differences that were mostly manageable during the administrations of Ford, Carter, Reagan, the Bushes, and Clinton.

What has caused the United States to split apart so rapidly?

Globalization

Globalization had an unfortunate effect of undermining national unity. It created new iconic billionaires in high tech and finance, and their subsidiaries of coastal elites, while hollowing out the muscular jobs largely in the American interior.

Ideologies and apologies accumulated to justify the new divide. In a reversal of cause and effect, losers, crazies, clingers, American “East Germans,” and deplorables themselves were blamed for driving industries out of their neighborhoods (as if the characters out of *Duck Dynasty* or *Ax Men* turned off potential employers). Or, more charitably to the elites, the muscular classes were too racist, xenophobic, or dense to get with the globalist agenda, and deserved the ostracism and isolation they suffered from the new “world is flat” community. London and New York shared far more cultural affinities than did New York and Salt Lake City.

Meanwhile, the naturally progressive, more enlightened, and certainly cooler and hipper transcended their parents' parochialism and therefore plugged in properly to the global project. And they felt that they were rightly compensated for both their talent and their ideological commitment to building a better post-American, globalized world.

One cultural artifact was that as our techies and financiers became rich, as did those who engaged in electric paper across time and space (lawyers, academics, insurers, investors, bankers, bureaucratic managers), the value of muscularity and the trades was deprecated. That was a strange development. After all, prestige cars, kitchen upgrades, gentrified home remodels, and niche food were never more in demand by the new elite. But who exactly laid the tile, put the engine inside the cars, grew the arugula, or put slate on the new hip roof?

In this same era, a series of global financial shocks, from the dot-com bust to the more radical 2008 near-financial meltdown, reflected a radical ongoing restructuring in American middle-class life, characterized by stagnant net income, family disintegration, and eroding consumer confidence. No longer were youth so ready to marry in their early twenties, buy a home, and raise a family of four or five. Compensatory ideology made the necessary adjustments to explain the economic doldrums and began to characterize what was impossible first as undesirable and

later as near toxic. Pajama Boy sipping hot chocolate in his jammies, and the government-subsidized Life of Julia profile, became our new American Gothic.

High Tech

The mass production of cheap consumer goods, most assembled abroad, redefined wealth or, rather, disguised poverty. Suddenly the lower middle classes and the poor had in their palms the telecommunications power of the Pentagon of the 1970s, the computing force of IBM in the 1980s, and the entertainment diversity of the rich of the 1990s. They could purchase big screens for a fraction of what their grandparents paid for black-and-white televisions and with a computer be entertained just as well cocooning in their basement as by going out to a concert, movie, or football game.

But such electronic narcotics did not hide the fact that in terms of economics the lifestyles of their ancestors were eroding. The new normal was two parents at work, none at home; renting as often as buying; an eight-year rather than three-year car loan; fewer grandparents around the corner for babysitting or to assist when ill; and consumer service defined as hearing taped messages of an hour before reaching a helper in India or Vietnam.

High-tech gadgetry and the power to search the Internet did not seem to make Americans own more homes, pay off loans more quickly, or know their neighbors better. If in 1970 a nerd slandered one on the sidewalk and talked trash, he might not do it twice; in 2018, he did it electronically, boldly, and with impunity behind an array of masked social-media identities.

The Campus

Higher education surely helped split the country in two. In the 1980s, the universities embraced two antithetical agendas, both costly and reliant on borrowed money. On the one hand, campuses competed for scarcer students by styling themselves as Club Med–type resorts with costly upscale dorms, tony student-union centers, lavish gyms, and an array of *in loco parentis* social services. The net effect was to make colleges responsible not so much for education, but more for shielding now-fragile youth from the supposed reactionary forces that would buffet them after graduation.

History became a melodramatic game of finding sinners and saints, rather than shared tragedy. Standards fell to accommodate poorly prepared incoming students.

But if campus materialism was at odds with classroom socialism, few seemed to notice. Instead, the idea grew up that one had no need to follow concretely the consequences of his abstract ideology. Or even worse, one's hard-left politics — the louder and more strident the better — became a psychological means of squaring the circle of denouncing the West while being affluent and enjoying the material comforts of the good life.

Universities grew not just increasingly left-wing but far more intolerant than they were during the radicalism of the Sixties — but again in an infantile way. Speakers were shouted down to prove social-justice fides. “Studies” courses squeezed out philosophy and Latin. History became a melodramatic game of finding sinners and saints, rather than shared tragedy. Standards fell to

accommodate poorly prepared incoming students, on the logic that old norms were arbitrary and discriminatory constructs anyway.

The curriculum now was recalibrated as therapeutic; it no longer aimed to challenge students by demanding wide reading, composition skills, and mastery of the inductive method. The net result was the worst of all possible worlds: An entire generation of students left college with record debt, mostly ignorant of the skills necessary to read, write, and argue effectively, lacking a general body of shared knowledge — and angry. They were often arrogant in their determination to actualize the ideologies of their professors in the real world. *A generation ignorant, arrogant, and poor is a prescription for social volatility.*

Frustration and failure were inevitable, more so when marriage and home-owning in a stagnant economy were now encumbered by \$1 trillion in student loans. New conventional wisdom recalibrated the nuclear family and suburban life as the font of collective unhappiness. The result was the rise of the stereotypical single 28-year-old — furious at an unfair world that did not appreciate his unique sociology or environmental-studies major, stuck in his parents' basement or garage, working enough at low-paying jobs to pay for entertainments, if his room, board, and car were subsidized by his aging and retired parents.

Illegal Immigration

Immigration was recalibrated hand-in-glove by progressives who wanted a new demographic to vote for leftist politicians and by Chamber of Commerce conservatives who wished an unlimited pool of cheap unskilled labor. The result was waves of illegal, non-diverse immigrants who arrived at precisely the moment when the old melting pot was under cultural assault.

The old black–white dichotomy in the United States was being recalibrated as “diversity,” or in racist terms as a coalition now loosely and often grossly inexactly framed as non-white versus the (supposedly shrinking) white majority. Compensatory politics redefined illegal immigration once it was clear that not just a few million but perhaps one day 20 million potential new voters would remake the Electoral College. Difference was now no longer a transitory prelude to assimilation but a desirable permanent and separatist tribalism, even as it became harder to define exactly what ethnic and racial difference really was in an increasingly intermarried society. We soon went from the buffoonery of a wannabe Native American Ward Churchill to the psychodrama of an Islamist, anti-Semitic Linda Sarsour.

The Obama Project

We forget especially the role of Barack Obama. He ran as a Biden Democrat renouncing gay marriage, saying, “I believe marriage is between a man and a woman. I am not in favor of gay marriage.” Then he “evolved” on the question and created a climate in which to agree with this position could get one fired. He promised to close the border and reduce illegal immigration: “We will try to do more to speed the deportation of illegal aliens who are arrested for crimes, to better identify illegal aliens in the workplace. We are a nation of immigrants. But we are also a nation of laws.” Then he institutionalized the idea that to agree with that now-abandoned agenda was a career-ender.

Obama weaponized the IRS, the FBI, the NSC, the CIA, and the State Department and redefined the deep state as if it were the Congress, but with the ability to make and enforce laws all at once.

Obama vowed to “work across the aisle” and was elected on the impression that he was a “bridge builder” who would heal racial animosity, restore U.S. prestige abroad, and reignite the economy after the September 2008 meltdown. Instead, he weaponized the IRS, the FBI, the NSC, the CIA, and the State Department and redefined the deep state as if it were the Congress, but with the ability to make and enforce laws all at once. “Hope and Change” became “You didn’t build that!”

President Obama, especially in his second term, soon renounced much of what he had run on. He raised taxes, stagnated what would have been a natural recovery, weighed in on hot-button racialized criminal cases, advanced a radical social agenda, and polarized the country along lines of difference.

Again, Obama most unfortunately redefined race as a white-versus-nonwhite binary, in an attempt to build a new coalition of progressives, on the unspoken assumption that the clingers were destined to slow irrelevance and with them their retrograde and obstructionist ideas. In other words, the Left could win most presidential elections of the future, as Obama did, by writing off the interior and hyping identity politics on the two coasts.

The Obama administration hinged on leveraging these sociocultural, political, and economic schisms even further. The split pitted constitutionalism and American exceptionalism and tradition on the one side versus globalist ecumenicalism and citizenry of the world on the other. Of course, older divides — big government, high taxes, redistributionist social-welfare schemes, and mandated equality of result versus limited government, low taxes, free-market individualism, and equality of opportunity — were replayed, but sharpened in these new racial, cultural, and economic landscapes.

What Might Bring the United States Together Again?

A steady 3 to 4 percent growth in annual GDP would trim a lot of cultural rhetoric. Four percent unemployment will make more Americans valuable and give them advantages with employers. Measured, meritocratic, diverse, and legal immigration would help to restore the melting pot.

Reforming the university would help too, mostly by abolishing tenure, requiring an exit competence exam for the BA degree (a sort of reverse, back-end SAT or ACT exam), and ending government-subsidized student loans that promote campus fiscal irresponsibility and a curriculum that ensures future unemployment for too many students.

We need to develop a new racial sense that we are so intermarried and assimilated that cardboard racial cutouts are irrelevant. Religious and spiritual reawakening is crucial. The masters of the universe of Silicon Valley did not, as promised, bring us new-age tranquility, but rather only greater speed and intensity to do what we always do. Trolling, doxing, and phishing were just new versions of what Jesus warned about in the Sermon on the Mount. Spiritual transcendence is the timeless water of life; technology is simply the delivery pump. We confused the two. That

water can be delivered ever more rapidly does not mean it ever changes its essence. High tech has become the great delusion.

Finally, we need to develop a new racial sense that we are so intermarried and assimilated that cardboard racial cutouts are irrelevant. Our new racialism must be seen as a reactionary and dangerous return to 19th-century norm of judging our appearance on the outside as more valuable than who we are on the inside.

Whether we all take a deep breath, and understand our present dangerous trajectory, will determine whether 2019 becomes 1861.

This article first appeared in the National Review of July 31, 2018 and subsequently the Hoover Institution of Stanford University Daily Report. Victor Davis Hanson is an American classicist, military historian, columnist, and farmer. He has been a commentator on modern and ancient warfare and contemporary politics for National Review, The Washington Times and other media outlets. He has appeared at COLAB SLO dinners and Fall Forums and on the Andy Caldwell Radio Show.



A modern civil war with current weapons would be a disaster.



Which side will they be on?

AFSCME's PUSH FOR RENT CONTROL PROVES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JANUS UNION-DUES RULING

By Steven Greenhut

What do the following two things have in common: The U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision allowing government workers to opt out of paying union dues and an effort by liberal activists to pass a rent-control initiative in November? On the surface, both issues directly involve the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. AFSCME was the defendant in the court's *Janus v. AFSCME* case and its affiliate supports the California campaign.

More significantly, such promotion of a political initiative that has nothing to do with worker rights illustrate the wisdom of the high court's *Janus* ruling. The court declared that all mandatory dues – even for collective-bargaining activities – are a violation of the First Amendment's right to free association. Government workers may now opt out of all union payments, which means that public-sector unions will have less time and cash to promote these kinds of nefarious left-wing ballot campaigns. It's the very definition of the "win-win" cliché.

The *Janus* decision changed the status quo that went back to 1977, when the Supreme Court split the free-speech baby in the *Abood* decision. Back then, government employees had to pay union dues – and the unions were free to use the money however they preferred, on everything from contract negotiations to political action. It clearly was wrong to force conservatives to fund liberal political activities (and vice versa) or to belong to a group they found offensive.

But the court was concerned about "free riders" when unions negotiated contracts on behalf of their members, so an uneasy truce was reached for four decades. Public employees would pay their dues to their respective bargaining units, but they could go through a convoluted process to opt out of union membership and keep the portion of dues (determined by the unions) that went directly to political activism. Plaintiff Mark Janus argued, however, that all union spending is inherently political. If, say, a union protects workers from firing or passes a massive pay increase, then those have a direct bearing on public policy and publicly funded budgets.

Fast forward to the current rent-control campaign. In 1995, the Legislature passed the Costa-Hawkins Act, which halted localities from placing rent controls on single-family homes and condominiums and newer properties. It also outlawed vacancy controls – rent-control statutes that forbid property owners from raising rent prices to market rates after a tenant vacates the unit and before it is rented to

someone new. In the face of a housing shortages and soaring rents, activists have qualified a measure for the November ballot that would repeal Costa-Hawkins. It won't impose rent control on the state, but will let localities pass far-reaching rent-control measures.

Rent-control is a disastrous policy, of course. There's no question that California already is not building enough housing, with the Legislative Analyst's Office noting in 2015 that the state needs "to build as many as 100,000 additional units annually – almost exclusively in its coastal communities – to seriously mitigate its problems with housing affordability." It's impossible to measure the degree to which rent controls add to that problem, given that they stop new housing from ever happening. It's hard to measure what never took place. But such controls always restrict the creation of new supply. And they divert attention from the real cause of skyrocketing housing prices: the state's growth controls and the California Environmental Quality Act, which encourages litigation against building projects. Instead of capping prices, policy makers need to encourage apartment construction.

Rent control appears to be, as Swedish economist Assar Lindbeck said, "the most efficient technique presently known to destroy a city – except for bombing." We can see that in San Francisco, which has such strict tenant-protection laws that 30,000 or more apartment units sit vacant in a city where average rents push \$4,000 a month. Why would landlords forfeit such revenue? Because the city's laws make it nearly impossible to evict a tenant, so many property owners don't want to rent their apartments to strangers, given they may never be able to get rid of them.

That's just the most astounding example of how rent control and other laws that purport to protect tenants but which, in fact, make it harder for the majority of them, and destroy cities. They incentivize owners to turn their rental housing into condos or vacation rentals. They discourage renovations. Why upgrade the kitchen and roof when you don't want to lure new tenants, but wish the old ones would go away? They dissuade developers from building apartment complexes. Because landlords are stuck with tenants who pay under-market rents, it encourages investors to get out of – rather than into – the housing business. No wonder there's a housing shortage, given that rent controls punish people for providing a much-needed product.

One can find union fingerprints on virtually every bad idea in California, so it's no surprise that public-sector unions are backing this campaign. "AFSCME California PEOPLE, the political and legislative body representing over 90,000 of the AFSCME's 179,000 members in the state, has endorsed Proposition 10, the Affordable Housing Act, a statewide initiative to repeal the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act and return the right of local communities to set reasonable limits on rents through rent control," according to a recent press release.

If one doesn't agree with this kind of political effort, one shouldn't be forced to support it. Indeed, this type of campaign is directly political, and union members have long been able to opt out of spending for such things. In particular, contributions to "AFSCME People" are voluntary, although the union has set a goal of gaining contributions from 10 percent of its members.

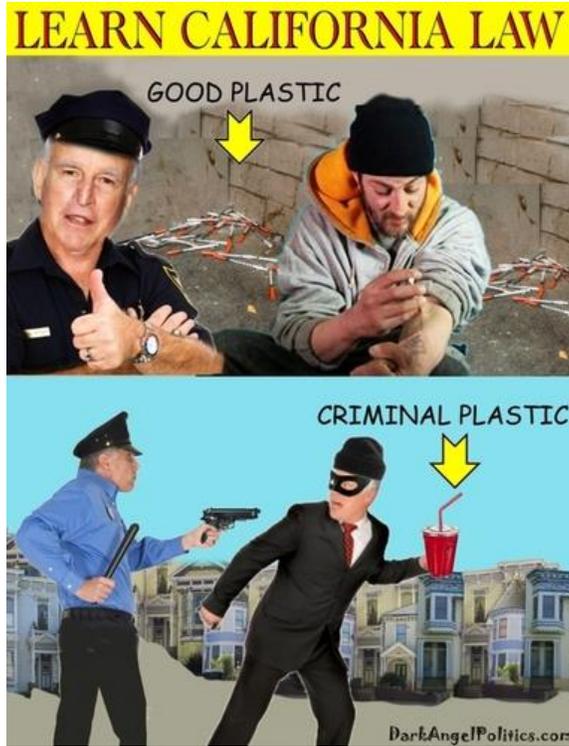
Still, the simple fact is clear: The more members any union has, the greater its ability to muscle contributions from members or to simply use current dues – or exact temporary assessments – to fund a coming political effort. The more money it has overall, the better able it is to focus on broad-based political campaigns rather than focus on services for, and retention of, its members. The new post-*Janus* reality means that workers who don't want to be in the union can more easily opt out of it, which will over time reduce the power of the unions.

Here's what AFSCME wrote about the case (before the ruling) on its website: "If the billionaires and corporate CEOs behind this case get their way, they will take away the freedom of working people to come together and build power to fight for the things our families and communities need: everything from affordable health care and retirement security to quicker medical emergency response times." Translation: *Janus* will reduce the ability of unions to lobby legislatures and pass voter initiatives that promote destructive policies such as rent control.

Obviously, it's too late for the decision to reduce AFSCME's power in time for the November election, but think of all the noxious, future initiatives that won't see the light of day as government unions are forced to focus on self-preservation rather than left-wing politics. This is a real-world example of why *Janus* was such a significant decision.

Steven Greenhut is contributing editor for the California Policy Center. He is Western region director for the R Street Institute. Write to him at sgreenhut@rstreet.org. Greenhut has appeared at COLAB events and is a regular on Fridays on the Andy Caldwell Radio Show. This article first appeared in the August 1, 2018 California Public Policy Center.

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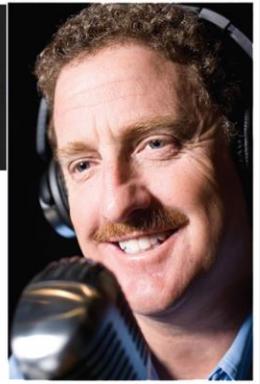
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STOP The Oil & Gas **SHUTDOWN** In San Luis Obispo County

Join Community Leaders, Small Businesses and Working Families in Opposing the Oil and Gas Shutdown Initiative



A Complete Shutdown of Oil and Gas Production

Safe and productive onshore oil and gas operations have been an important part of San Luis Obispo County's economy for decades. This initiative includes drastic provisions that would lead to the shutdown of all operations in the County.

The Loss of More Than 200 Jobs and Millions of Dollars to our County's Economy

If the oil and gas shutdown initiative passes, over 230 mainly blue-collar workers and their families who are reliant on the

oil and gas industry will be threatened with losing their jobs. The impact of this job loss would ripple throughout our county. In addition to the loss of jobs, San Luis Obispo County would also lose an industry that is responsible for \$64 million in economic output. Considering the pending closure of Diablo Canyon – and the looming economic strain that it will put on our county – we cannot afford the loss of another major employer.

Loss of Revenues for Local Schools, First Responders and Public Programs

The annual taxes and fees paid by the oil and gas industry provide over \$1 million to our County's General Fund. Our public safety departments, public schools and county programs benefit from these resources. A shutdown would force the county to make even more cuts to these vital services – forcing cuts in firefighting services, taking police officers off of our streets, opportunity away from our students and assistance from those who need it most.

More Oil and Gas will be Imported from Foreign Countries and Threaten Our Environment

While our country is making the transition to a greater reliance on renewable energy, it is important that we maintain our energy independence in the interim. Shutting down local oil production in California does not result in less consumption -- rather it means replacing local oil and jobs with foreign oil to meet our energy needs. As long as we need oil and natural gas to drive our cars, heat our homes and make electricity, it's better to produce it responsibly here in California where we have the strictest global environmental regulations in the world.

Hurts Those Who Can Least Afford It

California's gas prices are already among the highest in the country. Without local production in San Luis Obispo and other counties to meet our energy needs, gas prices and energy costs could rise, placing the heaviest burden on disadvantaged communities and working-class families.

Paid for by Stop the Oil and Gas Shutdown, a Coalition of Concerned San Luis Obispo Taxpayers, and Energy Companies that Create Jobs for Our Local Economy, Committee Major Funding from California Resources Corporation

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DAN WALTERS EXPLAINS SACTO MACHINATIONS AT A COLAB FORUM

See the presentation at the link: <https://youtu.be/eEdP4cvf-zA>



**AUTHOR & NATIONALLY SYNDICATED COMMENTATOR BEN SHAPIRO
APPEARED AT A COLAB ANNUAL DINNER**

Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business
 San Luis Obispo County
 "Your Property – Your Taxes – Our Future"
 PO Box 13601 – San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 / Phone: 805.548-0340
 Email: colabslo@gmail.com / Website: colabslo.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

General Member: \$100 – \$249 \$ _____ Voting Member: \$250 - \$5,000 \$ _____

Sustaining Member: \$5,000 + \$ _____

(Sustaining Membership includes a table of 10 at the Annual Fundraiser Dinner)

General members will receive all COLAB updates and newsletters. Voting privileges are limited to Voting Members and Sustainable Members with one vote per membership.

MEMBER INFORMATION:

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Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

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For those who choose not to join as a member but would like to support COLAB via a contribution/donation.
 I would like to contribute \$ _____ to COLAB and my check or credit card information is enclosed/provided.

Donations/Contributions do not require membership though it is encouraged in order to provide updates and information.
 Memberships and donation will be kept confidential if that is your preference.
 Confidential Donation/Contribution/Membership

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Card Number: _____ Exp Date: ____/____ Billing Zip Code: _____ CVV: _____

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