

## EDITOR'S NOTE

---

### LESSONS OF L'AFFAIRE LOTT

The pathetic aftermath of Senator Trent Lott's public crucifixion for his brief remarks at Senator Strom Thurmond's one hundredth birthday party—a veiled insinuation that the country would have been better off racially had Thurmond's 1948 Dixiecrat insurgency prevailed against Harry S. Truman's presidential bid—confirms the need for an open and serious discussion of racial and ethnic issues, the *raison d'être* for the launching of this publication.

The lessons of l'affaire Lott loom large: the suggestion or mere hint that American society may have been better off in the pre-civil rights era or that all is not so well in this post-civil rights paradise is now deemed beyond the pale. Needless to say, rational discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture that take exception to the prevailing orthodoxy of racial egalitarianism and multiculturalism are off limits for public officials, public figures, and politically correct conservatives.

The example of a public figure crushed by political intimidation and interest-group pressure *for speaking freely in a free society* should have generated universal condemnation from conservative quarters. But no. The neoconservatives showed their true colors by leading the charge against Lott, and thus providing cover for their politically correct soul mates, the radical egalitarians. Any doubts as to the viselike grip that political correctness exerts on establishment conservatives are now dispelled. On race and ethnic issues, conservatives are indistinguishable from egalitarian leftists—all the more reason for a publication that, candidly and rationally, addresses the unmentionable: *The Occidental Quarterly*.

Not the least of the distressing aspects of the Lott fiasco was the (hardly surprising) confirmation of a leading “conservative” politician's lack of political integrity. (The difference between progressive and conservative public figures is that the former will defend their positions *on principle* whereas the latter coopt political positions for *unprincipled* reasons.) Lott's truckling to ethnic-minority interests to salvage his own political career, the latest in a long line of servile performances in such circumstances, hit rock bottom. Rather than stand up to his critics, Lott capitulated to a wave of criticism by turning his back on the triumphs and sacrifices of his forebears in order to save his own political hindquarters. Lott massaged his Southern heritage when it benefited his political career and quickly distanced himself from it when it hurt his political career.

The Lott episode epitomizes the institutional reality of Republican Party politics in particular and the conservative establishment in general: the renunciation of their own racial loyalties for superficial individual gain. The lead article of this issue of TOQ, Richard McCulloch's "Race: Reality and Denial," and Frank Martell's review essay on "social capital" raise important fundamental questions that run counter to the prevailing intellectual current on what the distinguished cytologist John Randal Baker once identified as the "ethnic question." These and the accompanying articles in this issue reaffirm our commitment to providing a forum for intelligent and open discussion of the racial, ethnic, and cultural issues at the core of Western civilization and central to the survival of our biological and cultural heritage.