



Council on Foreign Relations Doesn't Understand Voters' Anger

In his article [published by the Project Syndicate](#) on Thursday, Richard Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) revealed that he doesn't understand voters' anger manifesting itself in the unexpected success of candidates viewed as establishment outsiders such as Senator Ted Cruz and businessman Donald Trump.



He noted voters' "considerable anxiety" and even their "outright anger" but cannot understand why they feel that way. After all, he said, gas prices are down, the stock market is up, millions of new jobs have been created since the bottom of the recession, and many Americans are now covered by health insurance. Why are they angry?

Perhaps, he said, it's because household income in real, inflation-adjusted terms, has been flat for the past 15 years. Perhaps Baby Boomers are now, for the first time, discovering they haven't saved enough for their old age. Maybe it's fear that terrorists will attack them. Or, maybe, he suggests, it's the decline in morality and the culture that's making people mad.

But the anger being reflected in the rise of anti-establishment candidates is bad, he insists. "The divisions between Democratic and Republican parties will make compromise and the formation of coalitions that are essential for governing all but impossible," he laments, adding that "an America that is distracted and divided is less likely to be willing to take the lead in promoting stability in the Middle East, Europe, or Asia, or in meeting [other] global challenges."

Without knowing it, Haass has perfectly described exactly what the cause of the anger really is: himself and the institutions he represents, and especially their condescending attitude toward the worker bees who should just go along with the elite's plans and purposes. Since its beginning the CFR has striven to guide America away from its constitutional foundations and into a world government run by the elites. This is the worldview Haass absorbed as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, where he obtained two degrees. His worldview was confirmed and enhanced as vice president and director of foreign policy studies at the liberal Brookings Institute and further reinforced while a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Add to that his stint as director of policy planning for the State Department before assuming his role in 2003 as president of the CFR. This is the group referred to, in an unguarded moment by Hillary Clinton, as "the mother ship."

On the other hand, Professor Angelo Codevilla — author of *The Ruling Class* published in 2010 and many other books and articles including one just published by *The Federalist* — nailed it. Voters' anger



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 25, 2016

has little or nothing to do with gas prices or how the stock market is doing. Half the population doesn't own a single stock. It has little to do with income equality. There's always been income inequality and, until recently, most voters celebrated the idea that each of them could also become wealthy by dint of plain hard work and some luck.

Most voters aren't upset about foreign adventurism; most would just let foreigners handle their own affairs without U.S. intervention.

What most angers voters is that condescending attitude expressed by elites such as Haass. Wrote Codevilla in 2010:

The more that an idea or scheme — whether global warming or government-guaranteed medical care — is dear to the Ruling Class, the more the Country Class has turned its back on it. In doing so, the Country Class is rejecting the ideas' patrons just as much as their substance.

In short, the Ruling Class has lost the American people's respect. And having responded by insulting the American people, the Ruling Class has denied itself the possibility of ever regaining it. Hence, doing away with the Ruling Class' power and perquisites is the prerequisite for solving America's prosperity, civility, and morality.

Professor Codevilla updated this theme at *The Federalist*: "Obama has been our first emperor." Ideas that the American Republic was based on laws and not on men have been not only discarded but excoriated as old-fashioned and irrelevant:

During the twentieth century's second half, both parties and all branches of government made a mockery of the Constitution of 1789. Today's effective constitution is: "The president can do whatever he wants so long as one-third of the Senate will sustain his vetoes and prevent his conviction upon impeachment."

Codevilla extended his remarks, noting that "[the Ruling Class's] fatal feature is its belief that ordinary Americans are a lesser intellectual and social breed.... This has spawned a Newtonian reaction, a hunger, among what may be called the "country class" for returning the favor, with interest." He added:

Ordinary Americans have endured being insulted by the Ruling Class's favorite epithets: [they are] racist, sexist, etc., and, above all, stupid....

No wonder, then, that millions of Americans lose respect for a Ruling Class that disrespects them, that [as a result] they identify with whoever promises some kind of turnabout against that class....

It is precisely for this reason that Haass is unable to discern the source of Americans' anger, simply because he is part of the problem. According to Haass, foreign affairs and relations must be run and managed by experts in the field, and ordinary Americans should get on-board and let them get on with the job. When Americans reach the end of their tether, they support candidates such as Cruz and Trump who they believe (or at least hope) will, despite their real or perceived faults, throw the insiders out.

If a homeowner discovers wasps have invaded his home, he calls for the exterminator. If the exterminator who arrives has tattoos, body odor, or vulgar language, the homeowner would not be as concerned about these traits as he would be about getting rid of the wasps.

So, according to Codevilla, American homeowners want to rid Washington of the condescending leeches. In fact, that's what they've been trying to do for years with hardly any measurable success. Their anger and frustration isn't about policy; it's about the elites who want to continue running the show without disruption or disagreement from those paying for it.



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Photo of Richard Haass: AP Images

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