

The K.F. Stone Weekly

(Formerly "Beating the Bushes")



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THE MIDTERM ELECTION: WHY THE "WORST THING IN THE WORLD" MAY NOT BE ALL THAT BAD

So here we are, about 60 hours before the polls close in Alaska and Hawaii. Finally, finally, the 2014 midterm elections will be coming to an end. *Requiescat in pace*. (Sorry to say, but the 2014 midterm elections won't, in all likelihood, be finally, finally, finally over until January 7, 2015 . . . but more on that later.) During this, one of the most dismal, least civil or edifying elections in recent memory, millions of voters have



already cast early ballots in virtually all 50 states. Over what seems by now an absolute eternity, billions of dollars have been spent on the purchase of tens of thousands of hours of television and radio time and Internet space -- mostly devoted to informing us how despicable, smarmy, underhanded, untrustworthy, traitorous and . . . (feel free to add a few of your own adjectives or adverbs here) the other guy or gal is. Few candidates, if any, have seen fit to run on anything even remotely positive; instead, they cherry-pick "gotcha" statements and votes of their

opponent and bang the gong which monotonously proclaims "*If you elect me, I won't be anything like the miscreant I'm running against . . .*"

States with Republican-controlled legislatures and governorships have, in the name of "voter integrity," enacted legislation meant to effectively keep students, African Americans and the elderly -- a majority of whom would likely vote for Democrats rather than Republicans -- away from the polls. Likewise, these Republican-controlled legislatures have gerrymandered Congressional districts in such a way as to make it next to impossible to defeat an incumbent. (**n.b.** *In all fairness, it must be said that when*

Democrats control the process, they do the same thing.) In response to this double whammy, some states have successfully placed initiatives and constitutional amendments on the ballot which, ideally, will bring out voters who might otherwise have stayed home. Florida is one example. Here in the Sunshine State, we have Amendment 2, which would legalize medical Marijuana. Activists pushed hard to get this amendment on the ballot for both medical and political reasons: medically, the use of *cannabis sativa* has shown to be effective in combatting the pain and nausea associated with chemotherapy and various conditions like Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD); politically, Amendment 2 might well entice a flock of younger voters to come to the polls. Then too, those against Amendment 2 are hoping to influence a different cadre to come out and vote. Opponents of medical marijuana claim that passing Amendment 2 will cost Florida tens of thousands of jobs, will cause a dramatic drop in juvenile I.Q. and will lead to increased crime and addiction to even harder drugs like cocaine and heroin. About the only thing they haven't done is run "Reefer Madness" on late night television. I guess all's fair in love, war and bare-knuckle politics.



As stated above, the 2014 midterm election is one of the most negative and least edifying in recent memory. Again, here in Florida we have a governor's race between incumbent Rick Scott and the man he replaced, then-Republican (and current Democrat) Charlie Crist. Despite collecting and spending an estimated \$200 million the two are in a statistical dead heat. So what have all these millions of dollars purchased? Next to nothing. Over what have they been debating? Florida's future? How to save Florida's pristine coastline and fragile ecosystem? Unbelievably, instead of taking the high ground and explaining their policy or programmatic differences, the candidates have gone swamp diving -- engaging in a truly weird debate over whose childhood was more Dickensian. I didn't realize that Tiny Tim was on the ballot. What we have here down south is what might be called "The evil of two lessers . . ."

At their third and final televised debate, Democrat Crist said *"If you're somebody like Rick Scott, and you have a private jet and you fly 30,000 feet above people all the time, or you live in an oceanfront mansion, you're out of touch, and you're not feeling what people who are watching tonight are feeling at home And I know that they are hurting."*

In response, Governor Scott charged *"Charlie, you grew up with money,"* Scott told his predecessor. *"I grew up with a family that struggled. . . . The reason he doesn't care is because he's never experienced it. I watched my parents lose the only family car. I watched a father struggle to buy Christmas presents. I went through that as a child."* To which Crist shot back, *"Listen, when I was a little kid, we lived in a small apartment in Atlanta when my dad was*

going to medical school, and he used to deliver papers to make ends meet. So you don't know me, and you can't tell my story."

The only time Crist got close to letting people know what he would do as governor was when he said that the middle class ". . . needs someone on their side." The fact that he hasn't been terribly specific about what he intends to do isn't all that surprising. He knows full well that even if he is elected, he will be saddled with an overwhelmingly Republican legislature that is going to be loath to pass anything he recommends. The same goes for so many candidates across the country; they know their policy wants will only come about in an ideal world where compromise is king and the people's elected representatives do what is best for their constituents rather than their benefactors.

To listen to political prognosticators, commentators and out-right gasbags, one might believe that Tuesday's election is the ultimate contest between the forces of light and darkness. Democratic strategists threaten that a Republican takeover of the United States Senate will result in the total dismemberment of Obamacare, the destruction of Social Security and Medicare as we know it and the utter demise of much of the nation's social safety net. In short, what they are warning is that Republican control of both the House and Senate would be the worst thing in the world.

Don't you believe it.

As much as I would relish the Democrats retaining control of the United States Senate, it doesn't really matter. Let's face it: regardless of which party is in control, precious little is going to be accomplished in the next two years. As of January, 2015, we are going to be entering the next presidential election cycle with a vengeance; a time in which nothing of substance ever gets done lest one side take credit for accomplishing something . . . anything. In other words, the gridlock we've experienced for the past several years will continue -- regardless of who's in charge.

(By the way: when the Senate gathers to organize the new session on January 3, 2015, it is likely the final tally of Senate Democrats and Republicans won't be known. Georgia's Senate runoff election won't take place until January 6. At the moment, Democrat Michelle Nunn has a slight lead over Republican David Perdue. This could be a net pickup for the Dems.)

Should the Republicans wind up controlling the Senate, they will undoubtedly pass symbolic measures emasculating Obamacare, cutting federal spending, overturning state laws granting martial rights for gay couples and denying the reality of climate change. But it will shadow lacking substance. Remember, the president does wield a veto pen. And, presuming the Republicans do take over the upper chamber, they're not going to have enough votes to override a veto . . . let alone enforce cloture. What they will have enough votes to do is further infuriate the American public who will see them

for the out-of-touch obstructionists they are, and then turn around and give an overwhelming victory to the Democrats in 2016.

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SHOULD POLITICAL LIES BE PROTECTED SPEECH?

Now that the 2014 midterm elections are 98% over, we politically active folks can expect to see a dramatic reduction in the number of emails finding their way into our electronic inboxes. I don't know about you, but up until this past Wednesday (the day *after* the election), my various inboxes had filled to overflowing with emails from dozens upon dozens of candidates all warning me that America's future depended on my making a \$3 -- or \$5 or \$10 or more -- contribution to their candidate within the next 24 hours. As of this past Wednesday, the number has gone from approximately 100 a day to *nearly* zero. (The one exception is Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu, who is facing Republican Rep. Bill Cassidy in a December 6 runoff race.)



Sen. Mary Landrieu

Within hours of Louisiana's so-called "jungle primary," Landrieu pulled out all the stops, releasing the first in what promises to be a [hard-hitting series of ads](#) against Cassidy. In the first, (called 'Whoa') the Landrieu campaign used footage from a Republican Leadership Conference speech that Cassidy gave this past summer that aims to portray the congressman as being totally out of it.

There is a problem with this ad: it is a highly-edited 30-second collection of snippets from a more than 9-minute speech. To be perfectly blunt, it is a lie. Anyone taking the time to watch Cassidy's speech in its entirety, will discover that while Cassidy -- who is a doctor -- is certainly no Demosthenes, he is neither as dense nor as inarticulate as the

Landrieu ad would have it. Whether or not Senator Landrieu's frontal assault on her opponent will be helpful or harmful remains to be seen.

Lies -- whether white, fabricated, deceptive or bold-faced -- are endemic to politics. In 1934, writer Upton Sinclair ran for Governor of California using the slogan EPIC -- "End Poverty in California." Along with his running mate, Sheridan Downey "Uppie and Downey" pushed an overtly socialist agenda. With only a few weeks left until Election Day Sinclair and Downey held a sold lead. Then Hollywood studios got involved in a big way, flooding movie theaters with so-called "newsreels" purporting to show tens of thousands of what were then referred to as "hoboes" flocking to California atop hundreds of railroad box cars in order to reap the benefits of a socialist government. Problem was, these "newsreels" were made with thousands of Hollywood extras, all of whom were paid \$5 a day. Uppie and Downey wound up losing to incumbent Governor Frank M. Merriam by more than 250,000 votes. Then too, back in 1950, our congressional representative, Helen Gahagan Douglas, lost her bid to become United States Senator from California when then-Representative Richard Nixon repeatedly referred to her as "The Pink Lady," claiming that she was "pink right down to her underwear." I later learned that Nixon was lying through his teeth. Mrs. Douglas was not a Communist (a "pink"); she, like her husband, the actor Melvin Douglas, was a progressive Democrat.



1Helen Gahagan & Melvin Douglas

We all get lies delivered to our inboxes; especially about President Obama. Not a day goes by without a couple of people forwarding an email, either asking "Is this true?" or defiantly writing "What do you think about your 'good buddy' now?" The latest one goes like this:

I had to listen to this three times to make sure I had not misunderstood what he said! The American people are too small minded to govern themselves???? Please listen to this!

As you know "our leader" is just back from Europe for a NATO meeting. The German press is reporting on his speech. It is disgusting -- this 19 second clip tells it all. Interesting that our press is not reporting this, not even Fox. This is enough to turn your stomach.

Subject: Watch and Listen closely to this 19 sec clip! Listen carefully to these words. Is this what you voted for?

This is the most Un-American statement ever uttered by any American President. He is selling us down the river! He says we are too small minded to govern our own affairs and we must surrender our individual rights to the World Order?

Only 19 seconds long. PLEASE WATCH. Not reported by US media – the German Press had to do it. The German caption reads: "Obama declares the New World Order."

Then comes a link to the 19-second video in which the president talks about "**The international order that we have worked for generations to build,**" and boldly asserts that ". . . **ordinary men and women are too small-minded to govern their own affairs, that order and progress can only come when individuals surrender their rights to an all-powerful sovereign.**"

In doing a bit of research, I came across the president's entire speech. Let's put the above into its true context, for this is what President Obama actually said in his speech to students in Berlin last March 26:

*Leaders and dignitaries of the European Union; representatives of our NATO Alliance; distinguished guests: We meet here at a moment of testing for Europe and the United States, **and for the international order that we have worked for generations to build.***

Throughout human history, societies have grappled with fundamental questions of how to organize themselves, the proper relationship between the individual and the state, the best means to resolve inevitable conflicts between states. And it was here in Europe, through centuries of struggle – through war and Enlightenment, repression and revolution – that a particular set of ideals began to emerge: The belief that through conscience and free will, each of us has the right to live as we choose. The belief that power is derived from the consent of the governed, and that laws and institutions should be established to protect that understanding. And those ideas eventually inspired a band of colonialists across an ocean, and they wrote them into the founding documents that still guide America today, including the simple truth that all men – and women – are created equal.

*But those ideals have also been tested – here in Europe and around the world. Those ideals have often been threatened by an older, more traditional view of power. This alternative vision argues that **ordinary men and women are too small-minded to govern their own affairs, that order and progress can only come when individuals surrender their rights to an all-powerful sovereign.** Often, this alternative vision roots itself in the notion that by virtue of race or faith or ethnicity, some are inherently superior to others, and that individual identity must be defined by "us" versus "them," or that national greatness must flow not by what a people stand for, but by what they are against."*

In other words, President Obama was *not* in any way, shape or form pushing a "New World Order." In matter of truth, he was ascribing that worldview to an ideology he explicitly rejects. And yet, to all those forwarding this mendacious email, there is a

question as to whether POTUS is attempting to undermine the very principles upon which this republic was founded. Oh yes, there are certainly those who are incapable of believing anything positive about this president; accuse him of being an extraterrestrial and they will believe it. Indeed, there are tons of weird people out there.

But the larger question is about telling bold-faced lies under aegis of protected speech. Are there any circumstances under which so-called "protected" speech should become vulnerable to legal challenge? Why can't egregious mistruths be susceptible to the laws of slander and libel? Fifteen states have election laws which prohibit making false statements in political campaigns. The constitutionality of those laws currently under consideration the United States Supreme Court. God help us all.

And before my conservative friends claim that I only have a problem when the lies are about "my buddy" President Obama or other Democrats, please know I find Senator Landrieu's attack on Rep. Cassidy to be just as despicable. And she is a Democrat running against a Republican.

The more money candidates and their campaigns -- more than \$4 billion in the 2014 midterms -- the more lies they can broadcast; the more video hatchet jobs they can put before a gullible public. And the more lies they broadcast, the more cynical and disgusted the American public becomes. And the more cynical and disgusted we become, the less likely we are to participate in the Democratic process.

Or is that the point of all the lying . . . ?

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THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN . . . OR HAVE THEY?

As I have long told my politics students at Florida International and Florida Atlantic University, politics -- at most every level -- is not a game of Texas hold 'em poker. It is

far more akin to a game of chess; a competition in which victory will more often than not go to the player who can see ahead six or seven or eight moves . . . both *co's** own and *co's** opponent's. [*'Co,' by the way, as longtime readers of this blog might recall, is the gender-inclusive pronoun I invented a long time ago. When reading co, think 'he or she'; when reading co's, think 'his or hers.'*] Those who can



"Chess Match" . . . by Hershel
Fall

successfully envision what their opponent will do several moves down the road, will likely win; those who can successfully *compel* their opponent to make the moves they envision will likely become a grand master.

Generally speaking, the same holds in politics which, like chess has, comparatively speaking, very few grand masters.

In a chess match, victory is clear; you win

by capturing your opponent's king. In politics, victory is never so clear-cut, despite the fact that every campaign *does* wind up with one candidate winning

and the other being defeated. In chess, the magnitude of victory is objective; it can be both quantified and qualified by the number of moves it takes to

vanquish one's opponent. In politics victory can *also* be quantified and qualified . . . but it is frequently both subjective and biased.

Take the nation's recently concluded midterm election.

Without question, the Democrats *did* take a shellacking; indeed the most oft-used adjective describing their defeat seems to be 'crushing.' The Republicans picked up eight, perhaps nine seats in the Senate and at least a dozen seats in the House, cementing what the *New York Times*' Nate Cohn called " . . . a nearly unassailable majority that could last for a generation, or as long as today's political divides between North and South, urban and rural, young and old, and white and nonwhite endure." The 114th Congress will be the most dominant Republican Congress since 1929, with an almost-certain 8 percent majority in the Senate and a better than 15 percent majority in the House. And this is not to mention what happened at the state level, where Democrats lost governorships in both Massachusetts and Illinois.



News commentators have referred to the G.O.P.'s victory as both 'a tidal wave' and 'a tsunami.' Speaking with one voice, Republicans from Maine to California call it 'a mandate,' proclaiming that "The American people have spoken." And even without the benefit of reputable pollsters concluding their post-election data mining, Republicans have determined precisely what it was that voters were against . . . or in favor of. As but one example, the conservative website *Western Journalism* proudly noted:

The American people have spoken . . . again. A tidal wave of victories by Republicans in the 2014 Midterm elections only matter if those in power will stop the radical transformation of the United States of America. Voters are overwhelmingly unhappy with the direction of the country. The Obama agenda must be thwarted; reckless spending must be stopped, the Constitution must be upheld, Planned Parenthood must be de-funded, families must be strengthened, marriage must be protected, Obamacare must be repealed and replaced, Common Core must be eliminated, and the borders must be secured and laws enforced.

Question: have "the people" really spoken?

Answer: No . . . unless 18.9% of the voting public constitutes "the people."

According to figures provided by the United States Election Project, only 36.4% of the voting-eligible public cast ballots in the recently concluded midterm

elections. This represents the lowest voter turnout in any midterm election since 1942, when only 33.9% of eligible voters cast ballots. *[In that election FDR and the Democrats lost forty-five seats in the House and 9 seats in the Senate. Despite this, Democrats maintained their majority in both chambers.]* Of the 36.4% of the voting eligible public who did vote in the midterm election, approximately 52% cast votes for Republicans.

What does this mean? Let's do the math: if 52% of the 36.4% who voted cast ballots for Republicans that means that only 18.9% of all the eligible voters in America voted for the G.O.P. I wouldn't call that a wave . . . much less a tsunami. "Well," you say, "a majority of those who did turn out to vote did cast ballots for Republican candidates, and that's all that counts." Yes . . . and no.

Nonetheless, be prepared for Republican National Committee Chair Rance Priebus, incoming Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Speaker John Boehner and the various incoming committee chairs to tell us over and over about their mandate. Get ready for statements like:

"The American people gave us a mandate to end Obamacare," or

"The American people gave us a mandate to enact the Keystone XL Pipeline," or

"The American people gave us a mandate to end Common Core," or

"The American people voted against gay marriage," or

"The American people voted against Obama, Pelosi and Reid."

It goes with saying that one of the chief benefits or rewards of handing the opposition a stinging defeat at the polls -- even when so relatively few actually participate in that defeat -- is being able to proclaim that whatever position your party takes on the issue of the moment has the overwhelming support of the American people -- even if polls show otherwise.

Interestingly, in going over what post-election data is already out there [mostly from ABC, NBC and CBS], a majority of those surveyed stated that their chief concern was "the direction the country's headed." One might think that such a response would have prompted the networks' pollsters to ask "Why? What is it that makes you concerned about the direction the country's headed in?" But they did not. They failed to discuss specifics of voters' discontent, such as the economy, foreign policy, ISIS, Ebola, climate change etc. that was "driving" voter displeasure. While 33 percent of voters polled said one reason for the way they voted was to "express opposition to Barack Obama," 45 percent said that the main issue on their minds was the economy -- this according to the exit polls

sponsored by the National Election Pool. (The National Election Pool is sponsored by all three broadcast news networks and numerous other major news outlets.)

Other exit poll data indicates that only 25 percent of voters said health care was their most important issue this election, while 14 percent said their top issue was illegal immigration and 13 percent said foreign policy. And yet, you can make book on Republicans insisting that whatever proposals they make on health care, immigration or foreign policy [assuming that they do more than stand in opposition to President Obama] has the tacit -- if not vocal -- support of the American people.

I say give House and Senate Republicans a free, unfettered hand in trying to enact whatever legislation they propose. Worst comes to worst, President Obama can always veto the most egregious measures, knowing full well that there won't be enough votes to override anything he rejects. In adopting this strategy, Democrats, far from having to react or respond to Republican moves, will, like chess masters, force the G.O.P. to play *their* game, thereby forcing Republicans to reveal what America would look like were they to have total control after 2016. Let the Republicans show the country what *they* propose to do about job creation, cutting the deficit (which is now at its lowest level since 2007), climate change, immigration, health care and the rest. It might actually bring out a lot more voters in 2016.

So tell me: what's the first . . . and the next . . . and the next move going to be?

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SAM COOKE MUST BE SPINNING IN HIS GRAVE

It's hard to believe that in just a couple of weeks it will be 50 years -- one half century -- since the murder of Soul legend Sam Cooke at the Hacienda Motel on South Figueroa (that's hard-core LA). Cooke, whose voice was as heavenly as a celeste, has often been called the "King of Soul." He was the total package: a singer/songwriter/music



publisher who had a string of 30 US top 40 hits between 1957 and his death in 1964. Among his best-known hits were "You Send Me," "A Change is Gonna Come," "Cupid," "Chain Gang," "Twistin the Night Away," and my personal favorite, "Wonderful World."

The latter song came to mind earlier today when I read an article about the latest inanity coming out of Texas. This past week, the Texas State Board of Education approved several dozen social studies textbooks which include copious references to Moses as "a strong influence on the Constitution" and the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) as "the root of Democracy." The textbooks, which passed the board by 10 votes by Republicans to 5 votes by Democrats contain false information regarding climate change and ozone depletion. One of the textbooks was written to include the sentiments of the Heartland Institute, a conservative advocacy group funded in part by the Koch brothers, which denies the existence of human-driven climate change.

To a great extent, state standards are to blame for the conservative Christian bias in many of the textbooks. According to said standards:

- Students should be able to "explain why a free enterprise system of economics developed in the new nation, including minimal government intrusion, taxation, and property rights."
- Students should be able to "understand how the free enterprise system drives technological innovation and its application in the marketplace."
- Students should know about "McCarthyism, and the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), the findings of which were confirmed by the [Venona Papers](#)." (*These papers were a long-classified set of documents purporting to show the extent of liberal involvement in the Communist conspiracy.*)
- Students should to be able analyze "two different points of view" on global warming. (*Heartland states that it is impossible to say whether warming is due to natural or human causes.*)

While one's instinctive response might be, "Hey it's Texas . . . what do you expect?" this would be both wrong and dangerous. Because of its size, Texas is one of the largest consumers of textbooks in the nation. And as a result, publishers use these curriculum standards for textbooks which are sold and distributed in nearly every state in the nation. Thus, what happens in Texas can affect the nation.

This is by no means the first time that Texas textbooks -- and by extension, textbooks all over the country -- have been "dumbed down" and/or used as tools for getting across a conservative, revisionist, anti-science, pro-Christian point-of-view. In truth, it's been going on for more than a generation. And the result? Students know less and less about more and more; and much of that which they "know," is either biased or just flat out wrong. For those needing proof -- and having the stomach for it -- I suggest viewing the following 3-minute video clip of random interviews with students at Texas Tech (*once the video begins to run, click it to go to full-screen; hit "escape" to return to regular view*):

For those without the ability -- or desire -- to watch the video it showed that:

- None of the students being interviewed knew which side won the Civil War.
- None had the slightest idea what that war was about and when it took place.
- Not one could name the current Vice President of the United States.
- Not one could identify from what country America won its independence.

And yet,

- Every student could name what cable show "Snookie" starred in ("Jersey Shore").
- Every student could name Brad Pitt's current wife (Angelina Jolie).

- Every student could name Brad Pitt's first wife (Jennifer Aniston).

This is by no means a *specific* indictment of the academic level of students attending Texas Tech. It is, I fear, a pretty frightening example of the level of knowledge students in Texas -- or Ohio, New Mexico or pretty much anywhere in the United States -- have these days. Polling shows that this generation's knowledge of American history likely goes back no further than last week; their interest in politics is nil; their desire to learn for the sake of knowledge is exiguous; they are computer literates who can barely write. To be sure, there *are* many knowledgeable, literate, engaged students in America's elementary, middle and high schools as well as its colleges and universities. However, the sense I get in dealing with an awful lot of young people these days is that they know more and more about less and less. And this does not bode well for the future of our country.

For more than a decade, the end all and be all in education has been so-called "comprehensive assessment" testing; programs in which students, teachers, individual schools, districts and even states are graded through taking and administering "one size fits all" examinations. We are all familiar with the major arguments against these tests, not the least of which are that they turn pedagogy on its head, force teachers to "teach to the test," and increase student angst, frustration and boredom. The latest proposal -- the "Common Core" -- is somewhat of an upgrade. It proposes that students know more than objective answers; it seeks to expand students' understanding -- that, as an example, in addition to knowing that America won its independence from Great Britain in 1776, understand the reasons why the colonists felt the need in the first place.

Even though it has already been implemented in nearly all the states, "Common Core" is under attack from both the right and the left. Many know what is "wrong" with the program; few have given voice as to what it should be replaced with. One positive about "Common Core" is that it stresses thought processes as much as fact retention; one negative is that when all is said and done, it is still "teach to test."

Now admittedly, one does not have to have read Hamlet, or know who Dostoevsky was, or be able to name the seven continents of the earth or the ten planets of the solar system in order to be successful. I understand that. However, something in my makeup rejects the growing lack of knowledge evinced by so many people in modern America. Perhaps it is personal: who will buy my books in the future? Who will attend my classes at the university? In the future will there be anyone left who enjoys learning for its own sake?

Which brings us back to Sam Cooke's "[Wonderful World](#)."

For those who have forgotten the lyrics (originally by Lou Adler and Herb Alpert) -- or never knew them -- they are:

*Don't know much about history
Don't know much biology
Don't know much about a science book
Don't know much about the French I took*

*But I do know that I love you
And I know that if you love me, too
What a wonderful world this would be*

*Don't know much about geography
Don't know much trigonometry
Don't know much about algebra
Don't know what a slide rule is for*

*But I do know one and one is two
And if this one could be with you
What a wonderful world this would be*

*Now, I don't claim to be an A student
But I'm trying to be
For maybe by being an A student, baby
I can win your love for me*

*Don't know much about history
Don't know much biology
Don't know much about a science book
Don't know much about the French I took*

*But I do know that I love you
And I know that if you love me, too
What a wonderful world this would be*

*La ta ta ta ta ta ta (History)
Hmm-mm-mm (Biology)
La ta ta ta ta ta ta (Science book)
Hmm-mm-mm (French I took)*

*Yeah, but I do know that I love you
And I know that if you love me, too
What a wonderful world this would be*

From all the available evidence, Sam Cooke was one smart cookie. He was one of the very first black performers or composers to found both a record label (SAR/Derby) and a publishing company (Kags Music). He also created a management firm that had

offices in the Warner Brothers Building on Hollywood Blvd. Were he alive today, he would be (gasp!) 83 years old. But alas, he is not; he was murdered at age 33, and thus will always remain young.

I have to believe that Sam Cooke is spinning in his grave, utterly amazed that that old lyric of his about "Don't know much about . . .") has all but come true.

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