

MARTIN DIAMOND RESTS IN PEACE

1919-1977

Martin Diamond died while manning the ramparts of the founding ship of state. However untimely may have been the end of his life, it was indeed fitting. For we may praise him for nothing so highly as for the consequences of his teaching regarding the American regime. Inclined though we be to recall his impact on us personally and individually, it is our duty to view his life and his work from that same perspective of grand ambition and humane intention which animated his own inclinations. Ο κυβέρνητης—a helmsman—he would have been. And the art, as much as the government of the ship itself, was his concern.

Martin Diamond was a teacher. And nothing graced his art so well as the highly developed capacity to bring the student to love, on its own merits, the object of his study. The supreme object of study for Martin Diamond was America. He brought students to love America, on its own merits. And he brought them to seek those merits in America's founding. As he sat before a Senate Committee investigating the electoral college, he sought to repeat, for it, the experience of discovering in a mere "paper institution" a source of improving reflection on the character of American politics.

Martin Diamond taught the appositeness of the questions, what is America to do now? and what was America to be? The connection between these questions once appeared to be lost to American political science. Under the influence of a naïve institutionalism, soon to become a consciously obtuse behavioralism, and a de-rationalized determinism, American political science had closed the door on the founding, just as a revisionist American history had substituted for political judgment political appetitiveness.

Martin Diamond's great personal charm and influence made the effect of this teaching all the more certain. He was able to lead the student not away from the problematic, but right into the heart of stormy doubt. You will recall many such examples of the effective use of this grace, charm, and insight. But perhaps few are more instructive than the sleeping bear metaphor with which he introduced students to the fabled American "common man."

Martin Diamond's students will not likely forget this tale, for through it alone the student might travel the distance from love of the regime, to anger and revulsion, and finally reconciliation. The "sleeping bear" metaphor likens the American to the powerful despot who rules wisely through neglect and indulgence. Having exchanged a harem for a single wife, and a single vizir for several representatives, the new despot, the "sleeping bear," sleeps the repose of sated appetite. Seated before his television, graced with a tee-shirt and beer can in hand, his benign influence works his will as his numberless vizirs outdo themselves in discovering and satisfying for him yet new passions. the student's marveling upon the wondrous system is not long undisturbed, for it does not escape attention that, however secure this low but solid way, it certainly cannot be a lofty ambition to preserve this on its own terms. Thus arises the angry consciousness of a corrupted bargain. But it was Martin Diamond's own appreciation of lofty ambition which enabled him to tell the tale and charm the student. And he was not long in challenging the angry to weigh the "defect of better motives" in the scale of political good. Hence the reconciliation.

Martin Diamond opened the door to the American founding. Through those doors have entered students and colleagues of Martin Diamond, yet unnumbered. They have recalled and

are recalling past political arts as a guide to present political understanding. Through those doors they have carried the dried and decaying bones of political judgment, to bear flesh anew, nourished by the marrow of unblinking patriotism though moved by the sinews of inquiry.

Martin Diamond died within the doors. The promised land may be for others to take and hold. But they bear the duty of erecting a monument to Martin Diamond. Their works become his monument. Uncertain as may be the critical questions his students and colleagues now engage, his was the pipe which called them in train. It is, indeed, impious to consider the death of any mortal untimely. But that Martin Diamond is no longer among us as we sail into the strong winds of debate and discussion may entitle us to regret of his absence. From these currents his students and colleagues will bear one or more enduring accounts of the American founding. And the highest praise we can bestow on Martin Diamond will be to recognize that such progeny are not as bastards to him. David sacrificed the life of the Hittite when it proved impossible to deceive him about his wife's conduct. Martin Diamond's life was not sacrificed; may his children live long after him and sail on in the corrected course of his comely bride, America.

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