



Will the West Awaken?

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“The most magnificent speech in the last 50 years,” is how journalist and novelist Robert Bidinotto described U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio’s [address](#) last week [from the Acropolis](#).

“Here, in Athens, we found the first full realization of all the essential traits that would come to define the West: fierce individuality and relentless ambition; daring exploration and invention; a yearning for discovery, for adventure, risk and glory,” Rubio told his audience.

“The ideal of many ideologies in our time has, frankly, become a world of perfect safety, devoid of risk or failure, with neither the glory of victory nor the shame of defeat,” he said, adding that “we preoccupy ourselves more with the comfort of the worst than the potential of the best. We hold the most exceptional things among us hostage

to the average, the ordinary, the mediocre.”

The Secretary refreshingly sounds a bit like Ayn Rand.

“Over time, we in the West came to feel ashamed of the very things that made us exceptional. We felt embarrassed that our achievements set us apart from the rest of the world. Our prosperity somehow became a source of guilt. . . . we condemned our own history. And in too many places, we taught our children to be ashamed of the countries they would inherit.”

Of course, one of our central tenets is the right, even duty, to criticize our government. But only a woeful lack of historical perspective or a perverse ideological malice (or both) allows some to pretend that ripping apart our society is a thoughtful critique.

Europe, Rubio urged, must “awaken from its long slumber and rekindle the fire that was lit here millennia ago.”

So, too, should America.

We must stand up for our core values. Or watch them expire.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.