

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

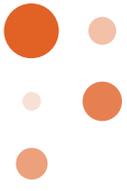
- At the beginning of the video, Mr. Crocker asks, “Over the last 400 years, what power has done the most to spread the ideals of limited government, an independent judiciary, certain inalienable rights, and free markets? It was the British Empire, the largest empire the world has ever known, which made these ideals global aspirations.” What do you think is so remarkable about this truth? What sort of value judgment do you attribute to this historical fact- in other words do you think that the rise and spread of the British Empire was good or bad? Explain.
- Mr. Crocker goes on to explain that, “Freedom was an Englishman’s right—and wherever he went he took that right with him... the British always thought of themselves as liberators, as bringers of freedom.” Do you think that imposing one’s own cultural values on another culture is justified or morally acceptable under the intention of freedom, or for any reason? Explain. What exactly is a ‘right?’ Where do you think rights actually come from, and where do you think rights should come from? Explain.
- Later, Mr. Crocker points out that, “The British believed the final and necessary justification of their empire was a moral one. The British kept the peace; they brought sound, honest administration; and they insisted that basic moral standards were honored.” Why do you think the British felt a moral justification was necessary to impose imperial rule? What do you think Mr. Crocker means when describing the British as insisting on ‘basic moral standards?’
- Further along in the video, Mr. Crocker states that, “Even where the British have merited criticism, as in Ireland, there is more to the imperial story.” What sort of criticism do you think the British ‘merited?’ Explain. What do you think the ‘more’ to the imperial story is?
- Mr. Crocker concludes the video by sharing with us that, “If you love America, you should also love the power that gave us our sense of inalienable rights—rights traceable back to Magna Carta. It all started in America with the British Empire, a great, liberty-loving empire. It is the empire’s legacy—the English-speaking world—that remains the great global guardian of freedom today.” Do you think that Mr. Crocker makes a compelling case for the actions and existence of the British Empire? Why or why not?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: The Napier Doctrine

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “The Napier Doctrine,” then answer the questions that follow.

- Who was Charles Napier, and what did he do? What is Sati? What did Captain Quinn do, and why did he do it? What did Nietzsche say about nations?
- In the article, Mr. Goldberg states, “There is nothing wrong with power, per se, only with the abuse of it.” Do you agree with this sentiment? Why or why not? How does this thought relate to the main point of the article and to the main point of the video? Do you think Captain Quinn was justified to do what he did? Why or why not? Do you think imperial power is okay when it is wielded for universal good? Explain.
- Mr. Goldberg points out that, “Such civilizational confidence is being taught out of our children today. It is an outrage to even suggest that there might be something to celebrate about Western civilization, beyond, of course, its capacity to immolate itself in the name of ‘self-criticism.’” What do you think Mr. Goldberg means by this? Why do you think that the left demonizes Western civilization?
- Mr. Goldberg also notes that, “Every country is exceptional, but not in equal measure... Every culture has its pieties and therefore its Tartuffian hypocrisies, but not all pieties are equal... The irony is that it is the Left that teaches that all cultures are equally good, while failing to recognize the logical consequences of this idea. If all cultures are equal, then there is no outside standard by which to condemn some and praise others. If that’s the case, then there is no moral argument against, say, the once proud British custom of conquering other countries and civilizing them.” Do you agree with Mr. Goldberg’s points here? Why or why not?



QUIZ

IF YOU LIVE IN FREEDOM, THANK THE BRITISH EMPIRE

1. The British always thought of themselves as _____.
 - a. bringers of freedom
 - b. conquerors
 - c. pacifists
 - d. merchants

2. Over the last 400 years, what power has done the most to spread the ideals of limited government, an independent judiciary, certain inalienable rights, and free markets?
 - a. The Ottoman Empire
 - b. The Ming Dynasty
 - c. The British Empire
 - d. The Roman Empire

3. The British were more than content to leave people alone, to let them be themselves, to govern them with the lightest possible hand.
 - a. True
 - b. False

4. Wherever an Englishman went, he took his right of _____ with him.
 - a. free speech
 - b. freedom
 - c. passage
 - d. property

5. What is the practice of *suttee*?
 - a. worshiping multiple deities
 - b. blessing homes
 - c. Widow-burning
 - d. arranged marriages



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<https://www.nationalreview.com/nrd/articles/425633/napier-doctrine>

Happy Warrior

The Napier Doctrine

by Jonah Goldberg November 2, 2015, Issue

Some of you probably know the story, but too many people don't. So I will repeat it here. General Charles Napier was the British commander-in-chief of colonial India. His most notable military accomplishment was conquering the province of Sindh — now in modern Pakistan — despite not having been instructed to do so. After securing victory, he reportedly sent a one-word message back to the Home Office: “Peccavi.” In Latin, “Peccavi” means “I have sinned.”

But that's not the story I have in mind. On one occasion a delegation of Hindu priests came to Napier to repeat their objection to the British prohibition of sati, the practice of widows' throwing themselves onto their husbands' funeral pyres, sometimes under compulsion. You Brits, they explained, do not appreciate what a venerable custom this is in India.

Napier replied:

Be it so. This burning of widows is your custom; prepare the funeral pile. But my nation has also a custom. When men burn women alive we hang them, and confiscate all their property. My carpenters shall therefore erect gibbets on which to hang all concerned when the widow is consumed. Let us all act according to national customs.

Yes, yes, let us all note that imperialism is an ugly thing. But this is still a glorious example of might and right working in tandem. Too often we are taught, in a kind of implied fallacy, that because “might doesn't make right,” might must always be wrong. There is nothing wrong with power, per se, only with the abuse of it. Speaking truth to power is a fine thing, but sometimes the truth one should speak is “Stay the course.”



The Napier anecdote has been rattling around in my brain for weeks, ever since the New York Times reported that American soldiers have been ordered to ignore rampant child rape by Afghan militias, even on U.S. military bases. Special Forces captain Dan Quinn beat the tar out of an Afghan commander who'd kept a boy chained to his bed as a sex slave. As a result, Quinn has been drummed out of the military.

Of course, the Pashtun fondness for bugging young boys is well known. Kandahar's reputation as the pederasty capital of South Asia — worst tourist slogan ever! — goes back centuries. The practice, called *bacha bazi*, is a kind of Veblenesque “conspicuous consumption.” Rich and powerful men — chiefly warlords — take on sex slaves as a status symbol. The unpopularity of the practice helped fuel the rise of the Taliban, which banned it. Local village elders complained to Quinn and others about how predatory the militias had become. So beating the child rapist can be understood as an improvisational effort to win the hearts and minds of the locals. But even if not, it was the right thing to do.

I'm no wild-eyed idealist. If we absolutely need to ally ourselves with scummy, backward people in furtherance of a broader strategic imperative, so be it. But you know what? Tolerance is a two-way street. Our troops are taught to adhere to many local customs around the world as a sign of respect. Take off your shoes when you enter their homes. Eat from the communal bowl with your right hand only. Etc.

Well, in return, our allies should be expected to meet the minimum requirements of our culture. And way up high on the list of good manners in the West — much higher, in fact, than the proper use of salad forks or covering your mouth when you cough — is: Do Not Rape Young Boys When You Are a Guest of the Americans. An important follow-up in the etiquette manual would state: “If you wish to follow your own customs in this matter, take note: It is an American custom to beat the stuffing out of men who chain up and rape young boys.”

Such civilizational confidence is being taught out of our children today. It is an outrage to even suggest that there might be something to celebrate about Western civilization, beyond, of course, its capacity to immolate itself in the name of “self-criticism.”

Nietzsche was right when he said that “every nation has its own Tartuffery, and calls that its virtue.” And Obama was right when he suggested that every country thinks it's exceptional in its own way. And every parent is right to think that his kid is special. One can acknowledge all of these things without making the nihilist's leap into the belief that there are no meaningful moral distinctions. All kids are special to someone, but everyone can agree who the piano prodigy is — and isn't. Every country is exceptional, but not in equal measure. As the late William Henry III put it in his book *In Defense of Elitism*: “It is scarcely the same thing to put a man on the moon as to put a bone in your nose.” Every culture has its pieties and therefore its Tartuffian hypocrisies, but not all pieties are equal.

The irony is that it is the Left that teaches that all cultures are equally good, while failing to recognize the logical consequences of this idea. If all cultures are equal, then there is no outside standard by which to condemn some and praise others. If that's the case, then there is no moral argument against, say, the once proud British custom of conquering other countries and civilizing them.