

THE EGGS BENEDICT OPTION (RAW EGG NATIONALIST)

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Often those who complain about the world in which we live offer neither a clear vision of how things might be different, nor a path to achieve that vision. Refreshingly, in *The Eggs Benedict Option* the pseudonymous writer Raw Egg Nationalist offers both vision and path, centered around food, in all its aspects, as the core of human flourishing. His essential insight is that, now as ever, he who controls the food controls the people. We must pick the controller—either our globalist ruling classes, or each of us for himself. The former is and will be a disaster for the nation. But for the latter, hard work and discipline are required.

As you can tell from his pen name, REN is very focused on the health benefits of eggs, especially of raw eggs. (He earlier wrote a cookbook manifesto, titled simply *Raw Egg Nationalism*.) Eggs are, however, merely the condensed symbol of his worldview; he does not exhort us to live only on eggs, but rather to eat a full range of pre-industrial, largely animal-derived, foods. The Nationalist part of his moniker conveys his resistance to the globalist plan of universal imposition of an unhealthy and enervating plant-based, industrially produced-and-processed diet. That plan deliberately diminishes each of us, and “The nation is only as strong as the individuals who make it up.” REN has spread his message widely. For example, he was recently featured in the Tucker Carlson documentary *The End of Men*, which analyzed in detail the severe physical and mental debilities of today’s men (no doubt Carlson invited him in part because REN edits and publishes a notable men’s magazine, called simply *Man’s World*, in which yours truly has published an article).

The title of this book, in case it’s not obvious, is a play on Rod Dreher’s famous Benedict Option. However, Dreher does not appear here, other than for REN to make in passing the same point I have made repeatedly, that the Benedict Option is inadequate because it makes no provision for defense against attacks that are inevitable if it gets any traction whatsoever—which, let’s be honest, it’s not getting. The option REN offers is wholly compatible with Dreher’s ideas, but is much more defensible, as well as practical, because it is largely personal, involving no larger organization, formal or informal, that can be attacked.

The Eggs Benedict Option does offer specific nutrition advice, but most of all it is a book about politics—how we are governed, or more precisely, in our times of decay, how we are controlled. REN identifies the massive global push to force mankind into a wholly plant-based diet as a chimerical utopian impulse. Why is this program bad? It sickens us and enslaves us. What is the solution? Small-scale and household agriculture, which will make us healthy and contribute mightily to destroying our noxious overlords.

We begin with standard boogeymen of the Right—Klaus Schwab (whom REN calls a “thrift-store Palpatine”), the World Economic Forum, the Great Reset, “you will own nothing and you will be happy,” and so forth. As REN points out, none of what is planned for us, which he generically lumps together as the Great Reset, is a “conspiracy theory” (anyway now a meaningless term, or rather one that means the opposite of its original meaning), because our globalist overlords are entirely open about their plans for us. They aim to perfect, as it were, mankind through our simultaneous total atomization and total subordination to their control. REN (with reference to Alexander Dugin, who has done much legwork on this topic), traces this desire back to the nominalism of William of Occam. That may be a stretch (though he is not the first to make the connection, and nominalism is at least in part the root of our modern discontents), but certainly the idea of earthly human perfection is an ancient belief central to the Left.

To this end, they have a great many plans for us, all nasty. We will focus, however, on their plans for our diet. Their main plan is a global shift, for most people (the ruling class will, as always in history, eat the very finest and desirable foods whenever they want), to an exclusively plant-based diet, heavy on highly-processed products, derived ultimately from grains. The diet we will have thus imposed on us is some variation on the so-called Planetary Health Diet, originally proposed by an NGO that is one of the innumerable tentacles of the Regime (in this case, an NGO funded by a Swedish billionaire and his wife). The stated aims of the PHD are three: to feed ten billion people by 2050; to reduce deaths caused by poor diet; and “to be environmentally sustainable so as to prevent the collapse of the natural world.” To achieve these ends, the PHD demands the masses eat a diet of primarily grains, along with industrially-produced seed oils (i.e., oils that require intense chemical

processing to extract food from otherwise-inedible seeds), some fruits and vegetables, very little dairy and eggs (1/4 of an egg per day), and essentially zero meat (fourteen grams per day). This is not a diet meant to meet people's desires—would you choose to eat it?—but quite obviously a diet meant to make them easy to control. Controlling diet is not a new ruling class tool; REN points out that Plato suggested feeding the masses a vegetarian diet to keep them compliant, and nothing has changed in the past 2,500 years.

The globalists don't admit they just want control, no surprise. But their aim is very poorly hidden. The PHD's last stated goal, sustainability, is pretty clearly the most important aim of the PHD, with "collapse" being code for "global warming," and the PHD explicitly taking laughable farces such as the Paris Agreement as divine commands written on stone, much more important than any mere human desire. The globalists talk, for example, about "the globe's carbon budget" as a limitation on food, as if there were such a thing. We don't have to guess at the actual practice and results of this insane approach. Early examples can be seen already in recent instances such as the Dutch government's attempt to destroy farmers using military force in order to meet "climate goals," and the Sri Lankan government's deliberate collapse of the country's agricultural system in order to toady to their globalist overlords. Whether the first two PHD goals, of feeding people and reducing deaths, are real and merely secondary, or, as seems likely, just lies covering the Regime's well-documented desire to make the masses weak and compliant, and preferably much smaller in numbers, is not totally clear. It probably depends on which appendage of the Regime is being discussed.

Regardless, the PHD is to be implemented both by government compulsion and by handing over the food production and distribution process to giant corporate entities intertwined with the government. As REN notes, this latter process is already largely complete (hidden by that the vast majority of food companies which appear independent competitors are divisions of a handful of truly enormous companies). The PHD merely aims to finish it, and then in practice forbid eating anything not pre-approved and distributed through limited, official channels. To aid control, much work is being done on new foods, supposedly "sustainable" but actually demanding huge amounts of inputs,

such as lab-grown meat, fake meat, and insect proteins. The real benefit of these “foods” is that they can be patented and then manufactured centrally, increasing government and corporate control.

Leaving aside its inevitable use by the government to crush political opposition unconnected to food, were such a system to be implemented (Justin Trudeau would love to starve his enemies), REN emphasizes that the PHD, and all variations of it, is simply not healthy. (The sickly-looking Sam Bankman-Fried, fraudster head of the collapsed crypto exchange FTX, proudly followed the PHD, which is pretty much all the evidence you need.) Men are the most, but not the only ones, affected, because the PHD lowers testosterone and raises estrogen—a feature, not a bug, in the eyes of the planners, who fear masculinity most of all. It is a lie that seed oils are healthier than animal fats; it is a lie that cholesterol is bad for you. Grains are not healthy in quantity and plant protein is not the equivalent of animal protein. Moreover, the giant corporate farms needed to grow these grains use enormous amounts of pesticides, destroy irreplaceable topsoil, and are antithetical to ordered freedom.

I certainly oppose the PHD’s program, for the same reasons as REN, but my perspective is a little different than REN’s. I don’t think their more aspirational plans, requiring new technology, are going to happen, because we have passed technological apogee and are moving backward. Thus, although no doubt the globalists can cause a lot of damage, even horror, by simple, tried-and-true methods such as dictating who may eat what, or may eat anything; destroying farmers through confiscation; and taxing healthy foods while subsidizing revolting foods, we’re never going to be eating lab-grown meat or drinking cockroach milk, because those things are not technologically possible at scale, at least with the social-technological stack we have today. Moreover, I just don’t think the vast majority of Americans will put up with being told to adopt the PHD. Let’s not forget, the company Beyond Meat, after a decade of having been pumped up with billions of dollars, is failing rapidly and will soon likely disappear. (If you’ve ever tried their products, you know why.)

REN does find a few points of agreement with the PHD. He concurs that reducing food waste is a sensible goal. Nor should we have factory farming of animals. And it may be that Africans can benefit from the PHD, because a bad diet is better than no diet, and the incompetent governance and worthless cultures found in Africa often result in the

latter. But the West is not Africa (even if we are letting Africa invade us), and there is no need for us to eat like Africans, because we're not Africans, and we owe the Africans nothing. In any case, all these legitimate goals can be met without adopting any element of the PHD—to which end REN offers the Eggs Benedict Option.

So what would REN have us do? Unlike Neolithic people (REN discusses James C. Scott's excellent *Against the Grain*, which points out that sedentary agriculture was a health catastrophe for mankind, but enabled extraction by a new ruling class), we can't run away from our rulers, so we will have to fight in place. On the individual level, we should raise as much of our own food as possible, using regenerative farming techniques, and we should eat primarily eggs, meat, dairy, and animal fats, while limiting grain. (REN's plan is not dissimilar to William Wheelwright's "ice cream nationalism"; both ideas spring from the same ferment on the Right.) This is not just a pipe dream—as REN shows in detail, it's been done in Russia over the past few decades, where two-thirds of Russian households operate small garden plots, which collectively produce more than fifty percent of Russia's agricultural output (and this does not include extensive foraging, hunting, or fishing). This is not done, or not anymore done, primarily for subsistence or due to hardship; it is more a cultural phenomenon. (REN does not say, but it is true, that this system gives Russia enormous resilience completely lacking in most of America, and moreover also shows that Russia's relative GDP is underestimated, because such production is not included in GDP.) On the group level, we should have what Dugin called the Great Awakening, a spontaneous uprising to defeat the globalists, to oppose and to defeat the Great Reset. REN explicitly offers his ideas as part, though only part, of that Great Awakening. While I have read no Dugin, this certainly fits with my belief that not only is our Regime fragile, but it can be overthrown by a counter-elite that rises in the hour of need.

An obvious question is who in this scenario is going to feed the urban apartment-block dwellers. In Russia, and in Central Europe in my personal experience, it is common for city dwellers to have plots in the country close to the city. Are American urban dwellers, or for that matter suburbanites, going to do this? Well, probably not, not now at least. They're too busy watching Netflix (REN observes that the

average American watches thirty-two hours of television every week) and getting handouts, either from the government or from those who employ them at their parasitical jobs. But they could. As REN points out, Russian gardens are about nineteen million acres; America has twenty-eight million acres of lawns (though looking online, some estimates are forty million acres). Moreover, America has a much more favorable growing climate than Russia. Yes, making a change in America to something resembling the Russian system would require a cultural (and legal) earthquake, but much stranger things have happened, and if there were a need because supply chains had collapsed along with handouts, it might get the necessary stimulus very quickly.

We should also recognize that raising our own food has many benefits beyond healthy eating. Most importantly, it is a skilled practice rooted firmly in reality. (I butchered a rooster this afternoon; that was very real, and very instructive to my children.) In the words of Matthew B. Crawford, adopting such practices creates a “situated” man (or woman), one who understands that he is not autonomous or able to escape reality, making him a more rounded individual with far more strength than the desiccated, massified individuals who make up our population today. Or, put another way, a strong nation will result from REN’s plan in ways much beyond the merely physical. In addition, as I discussed in connection with Jean-Michael Fortier’s *The Market Gardener*, that localism in agriculture increases social trust very significantly.

I’m not a hundred percent sold on everything REN says. I don’t think it’s true, for example, that in the Middle Ages “nobles towered over much of the peasantry.” While conditions in Europe over a thousand years varied widely, it is generally true that prior to the Industrial Revolution peasants in the West were usually very healthy—not surprising, given they had plenty of good food and plenty of exercise, along with half their days as holidays. It was Enlightenment propagandists who manufactured the lie that the Middle Ages were times of oppression, starvation, and unhappiness. (In fact, most likely the higher nobility was less healthy than the peasantry; gout, for example, was famously an upper-class disease caused by eating excessive amounts of rich foods, and they were crowded together more than the peasantry.) More relevantly, I think it’s possible that REN overstates the benefits of his proposed diet. For example, he recommends (although emphasizing that self-experimentation

is key) entirely eliminating grains. It seems to me fairly obvious that humans in their natural state are generally omnivores who eat quite a few, but not exclusively, animal products, and do not eat products that are highly processed or contain additives, whether synthetic sweeteners, fillers, or what have you. Therefore, any diet of that sort is likely to be relatively extremely healthy, and perhaps REN's diet skews too far in one direction. But the beauty of his approach is that whatever works for you, you can adopt.

Over the past two decades, I have myself gradually changed my views not only on diet, but on related matters such as organic food (especially that which avoids pesticide use) and plastics. If you had asked me in 2000, I would likely have suggested, channeling all the slick propaganda of the corporate/government complex (much of it since revealed to be the opposite of the truth, such as that eggs and butter are bad for you, and you should eat margarine and soybean oil), that there was no problem with any of those things. And having just started dating, and then marrying, a vegetarian (well, pescetarian, meaning eating fish), I was cutting the amount of meat I ate. But years of seeing increasing diet-connected problems in the West, from obesity to low testosterone and sperm counts, have largely convinced me (and my wife) there is a very big problem with the food we eat, and the obvious response is to eat more simply. Should we completely eliminate seed oils, for example, something that has gotten attention in Right circles recently? I'm not sure, but the arguments seem plausible enough that my family has sharply reduced their consumption. We are also introducing quality meats into our family's diet, though it is early days on that yet, and encouraging yet more consumption of butter and eggs. We raise chickens and bees, I extensively foraged for black walnuts this fall, and will, hopefully soon, have at least a full acre under intensive cultivation. It takes time, but not massive amounts, and the direct benefits are many, including the psychological boost that comes from working outside, rather than sitting for endless hours in front of a glowing screen.

One possible objection to REN's plan that my own experience shows is that eating more simply is more expensive (if you are already preparing your own meals). It's easy for the wealthy to buy organic food and meat that's not factory farmed, and to eat twelve eggs a day. It's less easy for most people, and becoming harder as inflation increases.

True, household gardening, along with barter, alleviates some of these challenges. Practices such as raising chickens are within the reach of most people, as is vegetable gardening. But there is a learning curve, and you need quite a few chickens to get twelve eggs a day, or to get any significant amount of meat.

This is where we run into the simple fact that most people's food desires today are distorted and lacking virtue, totally aside from the plans of our globalist overlords. Expense is not the main problem; the main problem is that most people don't want to eat simply and well. They prefer mass quantities of processed food engineered to taste good and they are too lazy to cook. As with changing or breaking any habit, it is difficult and takes time and discipline to totally, or even significantly, change your diet. Discipline is in very short supply today. People today, of all classes, are mostly very averse to any hardship, especially physical labor that takes them from their transitory electronic pleasures. That's even true when the alternative is death—as all who paid attention know, anyone not very old who died during the Wuhan Plague was almost certainly fat. But people put on weight during the Plague, rather than losing it, and acted like they couldn't help it. If they won't change with that incentive, the only incentive that seems as if it might work is fear of starvation, at which point it's very late to adopt the necessary practices.

On the more positive side, it is a lie told to us by corporate goons that industrial farming, drenching the world with atrazine and Roundup while stripping the earth of nutrients, is necessary to feed our large population. (In truth, most industrial farming is the result of government deformation of the farming market, along with political manipulation of various types.) To the extent it's true, it's only because most people want to eat grossly excessive amounts of food engineered to taste good, bought cheaply, without having to lift a finger to prepare it. If that ended, so would any possible rationale for industrial farming on the scale it is practiced in America today—and we would get health and resiliency benefits of incalculable value. But again, this can't be done overnight.

And, to close on what is to some degree inside baseball, let's examine a recent dispute related to this book. This was triggered by an article in *City Journal*, by the Swedish writer Malcolm Kyeyune, not a man of the Right but popular in certain circles on the Right (and someone whom I admire and often cite for his insights). He views REN's program

negatively, as something meant less for the practical ends REN identifies, and more as a program meant to create meaning for individuals adrift on the sea of liquid modernity. He claims, in short, that the recent erosion of social cohesion, dating more or less in its current downward spiral to 2008, has been “a privatization of meaning among younger millennials and members of Generation Z.” This leads often to forms of Gnosticism. For Kyeyune, food choice is only part of a much larger, mostly futile, search for hidden meaning.

Kyeyune doesn't think much of Tucker Carlson's documentary. “The casual observer can be forgiven for thinking that some sort of vaguely ‘fascist’ imagery is on display. But look closer, and a different picture emerges: what you see advertised is a form of messianic, almost millenarian, self-help—about as far as one could get from an ideology of violent collectivism. Once you understand why the activities are taking place, moreover, the self-help dimension becomes impossible to ignore.” “The ‘science’ here is secondary. Seed oils are not merely bad on some empirical level; they are evil on a spiritual level. Seed oils corrupt the body. By eliminating them (and by preaching such elimination), one cleanses oneself of impurity and helps others achieve salvation, as well. In this narrative, which the Carlson special echoes, many contemporary young men have been robbed of their true potential due to an environmental toxicity. If the toxicity is removed, a higher, more natural state of being opens up.” Kyeyune ties this impulse to the desire to profit through cryptocurrency, finding hidden knowledge while at the same time striking a blow against our satanic overlords. He says all these movements are a form of religious revival, of “conversion and salvation.”

This article set off some sniping on Twitter among the online Right. We can leave aside the question of how important the online, or dissident, Right is in the grand scheme of things (my short answer is not very important, though it punches above its weight, but it might rapidly gain influence under the correct conditions). I think Kyeyune overstates his case, and incorrectly blurs the distinction between self-improvement and transcendence. Nothing REN promises, for example, is perfectionism; nor is it related to spiritual gain, really; nor is it even hidden knowledge. In the usual historical routine, Gnostic hidden knowledge is limited to initiates, who have been prepared to receive knowledge when they accept the guiding principles of a group, and they must continuously

prove themselves to be admitted further in. Scientology is the obvious modern example. What REN offers is open and for everyone, and if you don't like all of it, well, go ahead and try some of it. Or don't; you're not going to hell, or being thrown into a volcano by Xenu, you're just going to have lower energy and less happiness.

Moreover, I don't think that REN's program, and similar programs, are as individualistic as Kyeyune claims. Rather, they are building blocks of new communities, many enabled by positive use of modern communications technology—and if there is somewhat of a revivalist feel to this, so what? Revivals are what rebuild a society. This is evident in Carlson's documentary, and it is necessarily the case that local agriculture leads to the creation of an interlocking web, as trade in goods and information naturally develops. Sure, crypto communities are poisonous, encouraging desperate suckers to lose what little they have, and following classic fad and fraud dynamics. That doesn't mean all proposed alternatives to the current system have those same debilities, and as I have already outlined, it's undeniable that REN's program has manifold high-impact, real-world benefits for those who choose to follow it—and if enough do, for the entire nation.