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The conservatism of the future

by [John O'Sullivan](#)

On what the direction conservatism must take to regain the ascendancy.

Conservatism around the world seems to be suffering from some sort of nervous breakdown. This takes different forms in different countries as we would expect from a political disposition that stresses the local, the practical, and the traditional. Still, the breakdown seems to be more acute in the English-speaking world than in continental Europe and elsewhere. It also exhibits certain common features.

Let me begin with an acute example: “mainstream” conservative parties in all countries for the last thirty years have shunned nationalist voters and the causes that arouse them from immigration to anti-supra-nationalism. This has resulted in the rise of third parties and political entrepreneurs specializing in such issues. Examples include the National Front in France, the People’s Party in Denmark, the Freedom Party in Austria, the National Alliance in Italy, One Nation in Australia, the Reform Party in Canada, Ross ...

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