

The New Criterion

Features

June 2009

The state despotic

by [Mark Steyn](#)

On our gradual slide into servitude.

Driving north out of New York the other day, I heard a caller to Mark Levin's show discuss his excellent book *Liberty and Tyranny*. The word she kept using was "inevitable": The republic felt exhausted, and there was an "inevitability" to what was happening. A quarter-millennium of liberty seemed to be about the best you could expect, and its waning was—again—"inevitable." As she spoke, the rich farmland of Columbia County rolled past my window. To many of its residents, the caller would have sounded slightly kooky. Were any of the county's first families suddenly to rematerialize from their centuries of slumber, they would recognize the general landscape, the settlements, the principal roads, and indeed many of the weathered farmhouses. And they would be struck by the comfort and prosperity of their successors in this land. So what's all this talk abo ...

Mark Steyn's most recent book is *America Alone: The End of the World As We Know It* (Regnery).

[more from this author](#)

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 27 June 2009, on page 4

Copyright © 2012 The New Criterion | www.newcriterion.com

<http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/The-state-despotic-4096>