

ELON MUSK
(WALTER ISAACSON)

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My positive opinions about Elon Musk are not popular on the Right. Many say he is untrustworthy. Not our friend. Controlled opposition. But some of what they say is wrong, and the rest is irrelevant. Musk is the most likely candidate to break the Regime which rules us, simply because he must, in order to achieve his life goals, and he has the power (and probably the will) to do so. No future is guaranteed, and certain tumblers must fall into place, including Musk making the final step to view himself as right-wing, and embrace what that means, but all has been following my predicted path for some time. As much as anything is, it is inevitable. You will see.

My opinions have not in the least been changed, and in fact have been reinforced, by this, Walter Isaacson's recent mass market biography of Musk, which follows Musk's life in a series of short, snappy chapters, nearly a hundred in all. It's not particularly deep (and when it tries to be, fails). It's a straightforward, adequate biography, done by selecting vignettes from a vast array of information. And as a side benefit it tells the reader a lot about successful entrepreneurship, which must be accurate because it all fits precisely with what I have earlier said on that topic.

True, the reader always rolls the dice choosing to read a high-profile biography, especially of a living person. Isaacson is a prolific and no doubt extremely well-compensated biographer. His own Left politics show through, but only occasionally. Still, one always wonders what is omitted, or simply not considered or observed by the biographer, based on his pre-existing view of the world (not a problem confined to one political segment, to be sure, though less common on the Right, because people on the Right are unable to live in a bubble as are people on the Left). Yet the book seems complete enough.

Despite Musk's association with it, we will not, for the most part, discuss techno-optimism today. Sorry. The philosophical question of "effective accelerationism," "e/acc," which has been getting much attention, is the topic of a future article of mine. Soon!

On a personal note, sometimes this book made me a little sad, because I will never approach Musk's level in power or wealth. I console

myself by reminding myself that not only is Musk's personal life disordered, and seems extremely dissatisfying (or rather would be to me), my personality is very different. I could not pay the cost that Musk has and be happy. Fundamentally, I do not have the ambition, the necessary preternatural drive, the comfort with, or even desire for, extreme risk, to achieve what Musk has achieved. What I really want to be is a peaceful hobby farmer, making cider and eating home-grown bacon, though I suspect that future will be denied to me, and will be more kinetic. To be determined, I suppose.

Musk was born in South Africa, in 1971. His father was (and is) a turbulent, difficult man, a fabulist and fantasist, psychologically abusive, and his parents divorced when Musk was nine—although for much of his remaining time in South Africa, Musk chose to live with his father, something he now regrets. He read a lot and, as with many Gen Xers, developed a keen interest in the new field of personal computers. After high school, he moved to Canada (his mother was born in Canada), and then to the United States, attending the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1995, having discovered early from summer jobs that he had no desire to work for others, and moved to Silicon Valley, at the beginning of the 1990s internet boom.

He and his brother started an internet business—Zip2, which (with patent protection) combined internet maps and a business directory. His lesson-learning continued, including that “you [cannot] truly be the chief technology officer or product officer unless you [are] the CEO,” which explains his insistence on being CEO in most of his companies. And, more importantly, that success required being “contemptuous of work-life balance,” as well as that having the people under you love you was not important. In 1999, four years later, they sold the company, and Musk walked away with \$16 million (after taxes).

He didn't think that was enough (and he's right, it's not, for someone with enough drive to get that much money). So, after studying banking, he invested \$12 million in creating a new business, the original X.com, the “one-stop everything store for financial needs.” He slaved over every detail, including obsessively testing the user interface. It never ceases to amaze me, to this day, that the majority of big companies have clunky, stupid, always changing but never improving interfaces, and I attribute this to a failure of the man at the top to obsess. For

example, the American Airlines website, which I use not infrequently, is an abomination, as is the American Express website. And they have been for twenty years, an opinion I frequently share with those companies' employees, to no effect whatsoever. If I were the CEO of either of those companies, I would be ashamed.

In 2000, as the first internet bubble collapsed, X.com combined with its main competitor, PayPal, led by Peter Thiel, and Musk became CEO. As very often in this book, there is an interesting scene presented by Isaacson, with implications disconnected from Musk. He visits Rudy Giuliani, then launching his post-mayoral career as fixer and telling Musk he could "guide them through the policy intricacies of being a bank." It was a waste of time. One of the main X.com investors says, to my complete non-surprise, "[Giuliani] was surrounded by goonish confidantes. He didn't have any idea about Silicon Valley, but he and his henchmen were eager to line their pockets." Giuliani demanded ten percent; he got nothing. But this highlights the low caliber and base character of the vast majority of those with power on the Right, a persistent problem, the solution to which we will discuss below.

What was forged in connection with PayPal was the so-called PayPal Mafia, including several men of national stature today—not only Musk and Thiel, but also David Sacks and the truly loathsome Reid Hoffman, who bears a startling resemblance to Jabba the Hutt, and whose wealth, which he uses to destroy the nation, will hopefully soon be confiscated and put to better use. Musk was ultimately pushed out as CEO, but to his credit, and somewhat against his usual practice in business disputes, maintained good relationships with these men, which stood him in very good stead over the coming years. Just as much to the point, he walked away with something like \$200 million.

Pondering what to do next, he pivoted to another long-standing interest of his, Space. This is an area on which Musk and I strongly agree, with somewhat different emphases, and also one of the areas that I am told is foolish, often by the same people who tell me my admiration for Musk is foolish. Musk cites reading a lot of science fiction as a child as a key influence, and I understand this, for it is also one of mine. (How this fits with my demand that political goals and actions be based in reality is a topic for another day.) Gen X children mostly read optimistic, ideology-free science fiction, not the horrible trash that now passes for

science fiction, and it sinks, or sank, into your brain. He decided his goal would be Mars. Part of it was for survival of the human race, but just as importantly, he believed it necessary to rekindle the spirit of adventure and achievement that built America, and to keep technology moving forward. So in 2002, he founded SpaceX.

SpaceX is its own fascinating story, and I have also read Eric Berger's *Liftoff*, about the early days of the company, though not discussed it. I will not repeat the many advances and successes of SpaceX here, except to note that SpaceX now launches more orbital rockets than any other entity on the planet—in 2023, ninety-eight of 109 total American launch attempts (and it appears, though it is hard to get data, that NASA launched only a handful, now being nearly wholly reliant on SpaceX). Interestingly, the Chinese are second, with sixty-seven, and the Russians third, with nineteen. A handful of other countries launch a few rockets every year. Most importantly, SpaceX is the best example, better than Tesla, of Musk's ability to reimagine a whole industry, and to push forward through apparent failure. These efforts suffered plenty of near-death experiences. At one point in 2008, both Tesla and SpaceX had payrolls coming up, which neither they, nor Musk personally, could meet. This is the norm for entrepreneurs—it is probably true that if you do not face such challenges, you will not be successful as an entrepreneur. But Musk made it through, and is now the richest man in the world.

There are some specific business lessons here. One of the most interesting sections of the book is where Musk realizes that the high degree of automation around which he had built Tesla's factory was in fact much less efficient and productive than manual work. Robots have their place; it is a very limited place, as I have found out in my own manufacturing experience. His principle now is only to introduce automation when a process is fully designed, and only sparingly. Combining this type of willingness to make major changes with constant questioning (with total indifference to the feelings of those being questioned), another Musk trait, is unbelievably powerful.

Musk also exemplifies something I have often noted—perhaps the single most important external-facing characteristic of a business leader is being decisive. “Musk calculated that on a good day he made a hundred command decisions as he walked the [Tesla] floor. ‘At least twenty percent are going to be wrong, and we’re going to alter them later. But

if I don't make decisions, we die.' ” The vast majority of people, even in an empowered business environment, do not want, at all, to make decisions of substance. The same characteristic is on display at Musk's other companies, notably at Twitter, which needed this most of all, having devolved (or perhaps having always been) an insane place, where eighty-plus percent of the employees provided zero or negative value. Isaacson says “Twitter prided itself on being a friendly place where coddling was considered a virtue. . . . The company had instituted a permanent work-from-home option and allowed a mental ‘day of rest’ each month. One of the commonly used buzzwords at the company was ‘psychological safety.’ Care was taken not to discomfort.” Barf. In other words, totally aside from its wild Left bias, Twitter was a wholly feminized company, adrift and worthless, and when Musk arrived it got both barrels of a masculine approach, which shocked it back to life.

Despite his dubious interpersonal skills, Musk seems capable (with assistance from trusted lieutenants) of assembling a top team—repeatedly, and in very different industries. He says he is, and this seems right, very good at quickly assessing a potential employee's engineering skills. He is not interested in credentials; he says, correctly, that “Most PhDs are irrelevant. The number that actually moves the needle is almost none.” What is never mentioned here, but is an avenue of attack that I expect to be used aggressively against Musk, is that the teams he creates consist of, and therefore all of his businesses are built around, white men. There is a scattering of brown people and a handful of women; everyone else is a white man, and all important events, the ones that get pictures, show this. There is a lesson here, and it is not the one that we are fed every day by the Regime. Musk says, “People are mistaken when they think that technology just automatically improves. It only improves if a lot of people work very hard to make it better.” And those people, empirically, have to be dominated by white men.

Aside from this, a key part of team creation, often ignored, is that firing is just as important, if not more important, than hiring. It took me a long time to realize this, and to also realize that there has not been a single time when I did not realize not only that a firing was the right thing to do, but that it had been delayed far too long. You always know when someone has to be fired, and you should do it sooner, much sooner, than later. As Musk says, “By trying to be nice to people, you're actually

not being nice to the dozens of other people who are doing their jobs well and will get hurt if I don't fix the problem spots." You are also not being nice to yourself.

It is part of his business approach, although a longer-term aspect, that Musk also agrees with me that the coming population collapse is one of the biggest problems facing our civilization. "People are going to have to revive the idea of having children as a kind of social duty. Otherwise, civilization will just die." He has been doing his part to alleviate the problem. On the other hand, he chose to date the obvious psycho Amber Heard, so there's that. He doesn't listen enough in these matters to his closest confidants, notably his brother, Kimbal. What comes out is that Musk very rarely listens to the advice of others, except (sometimes) when he first asks for it. Such self-confidence is, obviously, crucial for an entrepreneur (and almost never found in women, which is one of many reasons actual female entrepreneurs, of enterprises other than tiny ones, are extremely rare). Unfortunately, he is still influenced by Left social connections, such as some of his ex-wives and malignant wealthy men such as James Murdoch. This is exacerbated by his lieutenants suggesting to him he should be non-political, meaning subservient to the Left dictates of the Regime. But reality, including that one of his sons developed gender dysphoria and now pretends that he is a girl, has been sinking in over the past few years. Judging from his public pronouncements, even in the past six months Musk has traveled very far to the Right, though he has a ways to go.

Finally, an important part of Musk's personality, crucial both for business and for other success, which does not get enough attention and which other men of destiny (notably Napoleon) shared, is an extreme ability to compartmentalize, to both shut out the world as a whole and to focus only on what one chooses to focus (Napoleon compared it to having a cabinet, and being able to simply close one drawer while opening another). He has suggested he has a tinge of autism; maybe so, or maybe it's just his personality—the modern mania for diagnosis is mostly a hindrance to actually understanding people. Certainly a touch of the sociopath, indifference both to what others think of one and the willingness to totally ignore social cues and expectations (the psychological trait known as disagreeableness) is also essential for entrepreneurial success. On the other hand, it's also possible to

overstate Musk's oddity, and I suspect envy drives some to do so. In many ways, he's just what used to be considered normally masculine. He chose a college because his other choice had few girls, and "I didn't want to spend my undergraduate time with a bunch of dudes." He more or less stole his first wife, Justine, away from "a writer who sported a soul patch of hair on his chin," because "I thought the soul patch was a dead giveaway that the guy was a douche." True enough. Some of his behavior merely seems odd at first glance because open masculinity is today proscribed.

Enough of business and Musk's personality. Let us talk of Musk's future, and how it intersects with ours, as the inevitable hour of decision for America arrives. Musk shows, or until recently showed, very little interest in politics, except as it intersects with his businesses, and is therefore a cost of doing business. Trump is a unfocused and undisciplined fraudster; "Biden is a damp sock puppet in human form." This attitude is actually very promising, since what America needs is a clean start, not more men who want to be politicians. If Musk wanted to be a politician, he would not be a good candidate for America's Man of Destiny, which is my fundamental claim about him.

What is Musk's life goal? In short, "The lens of getting to Mars has motivated every SpaceX decision," and that is, *mutatis mutandis*, true for every decision Musk makes. Why, exactly, this is his goal doesn't matter. We would reach the same conclusion if Musk wanted to get to Mars because, as did Ponce de León of Florida, he had convinced himself he would find there the Fountain of Youth. Nor does it matter if it is a sensible goal. What we have in Musk is an very prominent, powerful, and wealthy leader, unique in America today, who is able to surround himself with extremely competent teams of people loyal to him, is used to cutting the Gordian Knot, and who has identified that his life's work is a specific thing. He does not appear to believe in any life after death; there is nothing more for him if he fails. And he does not have a lot of time left; maybe twenty years.

What exactly am I predicting? I am predicting that the Regime will try to stymie Musk in reaching his goals, and that in response, he will break the Regime, becoming a locus of mass revolt. The Regime cannot allow Musk any more power; his success gives the lie to every one of their ideological shibboleths, all based in the denial of reality. He is

a living refutation of Regime ideology; this cannot be tolerated. Musk is very linear; he knows or will know, that he has to go, or the Regime has to go. He has already shown, extremely dangerously in these days of elite over-production, that at least eighty percent of all workers at large companies produce zero or negative value. He cannot be allowed to keep demonstrating that yesterday's accomplishments can be multiplied ten or a hundred times, simply by creating and empowering teams of smart white men. Musk is, at core, and ironically given his own background, the condensed symbol of heritage America. The goal of the Left is to expropriate heritage Americans, then exterminate them. To do that, they will have to first bring Musk low. This arc is inevitable.

The Regime's attempt to destroy Musk is already under way, and it will accelerate within the upcoming months. As we have seen with Donald Trump, the Regime faces no obstacles in simply voiding the rule of law to confiscate assets of its enemies. They have begun that process with Musk, part as warning and part as punishment for his allowing free speech on Twitter (the existence of which under his rule is fantastically damaging for the Regime), stealing \$55 billion from him a few weeks ago. I anticipate not just ever-multiplying regulatory tentacles designed to tie Musk down, but direct attacks on Musk, accelerating as the inevitable re-election of Trump looms. Most likely they will trump up some kind of criminal charge, or (as they did with Russell Brand), anonymous (and false) accusations of some kind of misconduct. I also expect attempts to directly steal his companies, either straight up or by the same device the evil moron Letitia James is using in New York, "monitors" for his companies. The excuse will probably be "national security" at a moment when fear can be whipped up, beginning with Starlink. The goal would be control of, and benefitting from, his companies, but the result would be their destruction, because the Regime is incapable of value creation, and the companies would then be run on insane Left Lysenkoist principles.

It is no doubt true that Musk has allies inside the Regime, constituting those not wholly consumed by ideology who want their rockets launched, mostly military types. Whether those people have real power, I have no idea, but I do know their interests will not be allowed to slow down the Regime's attempted destruction of Musk one bit. Musk's only play is the approach Sean Connery famously endorsed in *The*

Untouchables. “He sends one of yours to the hospital, you send one of his to the morgue!” There can be only one.

What would Musk’s turn toward grasping the mantle of power look like? This dynamic is very old, and has many historical examples, but few of a man without a military background or connection. After all, for every action, a reaction, but reincorporating in Texas when billions are stolen from him in Delaware is not the type of punching back that wins life-and-death conflicts of this sort. The most likely scenario is that Musk continues, in 2024, to continue to work mostly within the rules, meaning appealing court decisions and other government attacks, relying on what threads of the rule of law remain in America (which are stronger, for a few more years, at the higher levels of the federal courts). Then, when Trump wins and the inevitable mass chaos is unleashed, opportunities that are difficult to precisely outline will emerge.

The question is what triggers actual action by Musk and what those actions will be. The trigger will be some kind of turbulence that poses existential danger to his life work, but therefore at the same time offers opportunity to turbocharge that same work. One action by Musk to look for, which as far as I know nobody has floated, is that Musk will create a “private security force.” This would be in Texas (where most or all of his companies are or are moving), and it could there obtain deputized status and therefore access to military-grade weapons. Nobody would be fooled; this would be a private army. But offer competent men with military experience high pay in a masculine environment, and he could easily raise a group with the necessary skills to use in a variety of scenarios. Twenty thousand men would be enough to do nearly anything, no matter what the future offered. Maybe Erik Prince can help out.

It does not undermine my claims that many of Musk’s secondary goals are silly. Strong AI will never exist. Nor will (at least for decades, and then only, maybe, if the Regime is destroyed and the potential of America unleashed) so-called autonomous cars. Neuralink will never do much. Optimus robots will never replace human workers. True, there is no clear law of reality that precludes those happenings; it is just obvious that they are unlikely, and all of them are shining examples of the first-step fallacy. But none of them distract materially from the path Musk is on. Some of them may actually be useful on that path, and most importantly, the men who work in these areas will most definitely be

useful. Nor does it undermine my claims that Musk sometimes plays nice with the Regime, or with other powerful groups, notably the Jews. Always fighting with everybody is never a good strategy, and one cannot tell much about a man's inner thoughts from such surface activities. Those who spend their days nitpicking Musk because he does not always play offense should settle down.

Yes, Musk is far from an ideal leader. If we could create our own, as we can create an avatar in a computer game, he wouldn't look too much like Musk. For example, I think he needs to read a lot more history, in order to make the right moves at the right time. But imperfection is true for all men of destiny, and moreover, you go to war with the leaders you have. Musk is an icebreaker ship, making possible what was not possible before. He's never going to think exactly like we want him to, any more than Napoleon thought like Edmund Burke. And my prediction is that Musk will grow closer to an ideal leader as his perception of the battlefield changes. Right now he probably still has one foot in the old world, a belief that "muh Constitution" supposedly protects men such as him from arbitrary governmental tyranny, we can all get along if we try, and voting harder will allow our society to coalesce into a coherent whole again. There is some argument that Musk, right now, only wants the 1990s back. But a realization all that is false, and the 1990s are never coming back, is inevitable (if it has not already occurred), because Musk strives to view the world through the lens of reality, and that is always a Right lens, never more so in history than in 2024.

We should be clear that if Musk adopts this role, that of Man of Destiny, nearly everyone in public life today on the Right will have no role in the future dispensation. Far too many are hacks and grifters in the mold of Giuliani, or mere internet scribblers, not men of action, which is what Musk is going to need. (To be fair, I put myself more in the former category than the latter.) New men will rise to the top; many of the former elite will abandon what they claimed were their principles and participate in the new order. What role you, and I, will have, I cannot say. But you will, it is sure, have opportunity, and that in itself will make all the difference.