

Liberty

March 1991

Vol 4, No 4

\$4.00

Why
George Bush
Is No Hero
*He blunders. We pay.
He profits.*

War & Prosperity

How World War II Prolonged the Great Depression

by Robert Higgs

The Hot Side Tepid The Strange Death of the McDLT

by R. W. Bradford

Two Women *vs* the State

William Holtz on Rose Wilder Lane

Linda Locke tells Her Story

Uncovering Nude Rights

by David Danielson

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Krzysztof Ostaszewski on Polish Nukes;
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Inside Liberty

March 1991

Volume 4, Number 4

4 Letters on dolphin-killing, overindulged educators, celebrity celibacy, and winning the Civil War.

7 Reflections on Israeli terrorism and Kurdish revisionism, nuking Moscow by mistake, decennial favoritism, bankers who just say "yes" and Jesse Helms as an anti-American mole. Plus: a special section on the war in Iraq.

Features

23 The Myth of War Prosperity World War II did not end the Depression, it prolonged it by half a decade. Robert Higgs explains why.

27 Conservatism and Libertarianism Richard Weaver explores the fundamental compatibility of these two philosophies.

31 Keep the Hot Side Tepid Environmentalism is a hot topic, but the cold truth is that too many environmentalists are lukewarm on intellectual honesty, as R.W. Bradford and John Baden demonstrate.

35 Shadows in the Future Ominous murmurs of reviving socialism in Czechoslovakia. Frank Fox reports on his conversations with Communist-Catholic politician Zdenek Masopust.

39 The Way We Are Stephen Cox meditates on the meaning of America while vacationing in the heart of Leviathan: Washington, DC.

40 Beijing Memo/ Something to Be Said Two poems by W. Luther Jett.

41 Au Naturel Rights If the state deprives you of the right to disrobe publicly, does this constitute a naked infringement of your rights? David Danielson uncovers the facts on this burning issue.

44 Freedom Now Linda Locke, co-author of the classic *The Market for Liberty*, tells how she has found freedom in an unfree world.

45 The Woman versus the State William Holtz recounts the true tale of Rose Wilder Lane, prairie novelist, libertarian theorist, and courageous conscientious objector to the welfare state.

49 The Love of Money and the Root of Evil Christopher Faille dissects the Randian argument for money worship, and finds it wanting rationality.

51 Downloading the Three Rs David Friedman puts the future of education onscreen.

Reviews

53 The "Science" of Catastrophe Jane Shaw warns of the hazards of anti-apocalyptic and environmentalist debunking.

54 Old Whine in New Bottles Jan Narveson shows that the moral argument for socialism doesn't make any more sense than all the other arguments.

58 The Illusion of Expertise Richard Kostelanetz takes a look at the state of Latin American baseball journalism, and watches the lefties, er, leftists strike out.

60 The Man Who Would Be President Krzysztof Ostaszewski reviews Stan Tyminski's *Sacred Dogs*—the book that may yet change Polish history.

62 A Plan for Poland For your information: Stan Tyminski's campaign platform, translated from his campaign literature.

64 Booknotes on snooping, laughing at lawyers' expense, conserving conservatives, and taming the wild aphorism.

68 The Last Pinko Show Brian Doherty on Robert Redford's latest effort to portray inane love and insane politics.

69 Notes on Contributors Who we are, if not why.

70 Terra Incognita Excerpts from the official version of reality.

Letters

Save the Fetuses

Eric Schendel's distinctions between abortion and feticide ("Abortion and Feticide Are Not the Same Thing," January 1991), though technically correct, reveals a petty insistence on dictionary definitions, while ignoring the meanings words are given in everyday use. The fact that "live birth" is one of the complications of late-induced abortions gives the lie to this distinction.

I also find the assertion that "once she expels the fetus, it is no more her concern . . . she couldn't care less" to be dubious. If human beings were the rational creatures that so many of us libertarians like to pretend they are, then it might be so. But in truth, irrational behavior is more the rule than the exception for many.

Most importantly, I find Schendel's support of abortion by the principle of non-aggression to be unsound. The analogy with the slave and slave-owner, quadriplegic or whole, is simplistic. It misses an important point: most women become pregnant not by coercion, but rather as willing partners in sexual intercourse. Any resulting conceptus can hardly be said to have enslaved the woman, since pregnancy is a known risk of such intercourse, even for those women (and men) who use contraceptive measures. Women who willingly engage in coitus implicitly consent to the possibility of becoming a "slave." It is very telling that Schendel uses the example of a pregnant rape victim, a special case, and then goes on, as if his argument has lost none of its generality, to apply this to all women.

On a final note: Schendel's appeal to the ancient custom of infant abandonment is amusing but irrelevant. Tradition is not a sufficient reason, as I'm sure the ancients also practiced many other things that he wouldn't have us emulate. I am reminded of a "save the dolphins" ad I saw not long ago (I forget where): the dolphins' advocates asserted that the ancient Greeks had the same punishment for killing a dolphin as for killing a man, the implication being, of course, that we should wish to follow the example of so civilized and enlightened a culture. I chuckled at this, because the ad failed to mention that the punitive measure in question was

continued on page 6

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Letters (*continued from page 4*)

most likely death, which I'm fairly certain the dolphins' advocates do not espouse (at least not for killing a human being).

Patrick Guthrie, M.D.
Fayetteville, Ark.

Wrestling with Richman

I favor the replacement of government-directed foreign aid with private donations, or, as long as our personal resources are being depleted by taxes, by a system of tax credits that would let individual Americans decide what causes, if any, deserve their support. But opposition to government-directed foreign aid cannot excuse the publication of Sheldon Richman's "Wrestling with Israel" (January 1991) in a supposedly libertarian journal.

Yes, states *qua* states are nasty, and states at war triply so. And it is true that Israel has not been much of an exception to this rule. But those who see this as a confirmation of their anti-Semitic stereotypes would be well advised to compare the treatment of Arab Israelis with, say, the lot of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Adam V. Reed
Morganville, N.J.

The Only Good Educator Is . . .

Karl Hess' stirring apology for teachers ("The Hope in the Schools," January 1991) failed to touch me. Perhaps I'm a bit jaded after serving the last two years on a school board in a district much like his and seeing at close range just how defensible those rare "good" teachers are.

Yes, I used to make excuses for them, too. I used to think the "administrators" were the real problem, dreaming up new forms for poor, overworked, underpaid teachers to fill out. Not so. Wrong on all counts. First, teachers are neither poor, nor overworked, nor underpaid. Compare their workload to workloads of, say, twenty years ago. Compute their hourly wages. Add the value of their benefits to their reported salaries. You may

be surprised.

Not that administrators aren't part of the problem, but their real interest is in empire-building—more staff and more square footage; thus it is in their best interest to cultivate the friendship of at least a majority of the teaching staff, so they are very nice to the entire staff. Plus, they are all former teachers, so they know the drill.

Karl is right about one thing: the only time administrators or teachers ever get interested in such mundane subjects as student learning is when the school board or, in the event of a supine, rubber-stamping board (an all-too-frequent occurrence these days), a group of aroused and angry parents insists upon it.

But here's an interesting experiment: bring up the subject of student achievement tests in a roomful of teachers or administrators! It's not a pretty sight as all rush to assure you of the utter impossibility of such a task, using many of the arguments Hess used: the inadvisability of teaching to the test (the answer frustrated parents always give here is, "At least they'd be teaching *something*!"); the difficulty of measuring such an abstraction as "thinking" skills; the inaccuracy of the tests; the cultural bias of the tests; etc.

We all scorn bad teachers, forgetting that it costs school districts hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees and buyout costs to get rid of one bad teacher. "If only we could get rid of bad or mediocre teachers, then all would be well," we lament along with Karl Hess. "Just give those good teachers a chance, then we'd see some education happening," we cry. Sorry.

If you accept the proposition that a school system which relies totally on coercion will never produce anything except destruction; if you accept the proposition that anyone *in* that system becomes *part of* the system; if you accept the further additional proposition that any learning that occurs in such a system is an accident; then the conclusion is inescapable: *all* participants in that system are part of the problem.

If the "good" teachers want to solve the problem, they will have to leave the system. As a matter of fact, many have done so already.

If you think that is harsh, or cruel, consider this: Do you excuse the "good" Nazis, who "deplored" the actions of what they characterized as the low-class thugs working for Hitler? Do you excuse the "good" guards at the Berlin Wall, who

"had to" shoot the escaping East Germans? Do you excuse the "good" bureaucrats who work for the IRS, the DEA, the DOD? No! They deserve nothing but condemnation and our utter contempt for contributing to our and *their own* enslavement.

Please, Karl, I have such respect for your warm and caring approach to creating a freer world, don't fall into the trap of looking for someone else to blame and justifying the bad actions of good people.

Jo McIntyre
McMinnville, Ore.

Fan Mail for Stan the Man

Thanks for the scoop on Stan Tyminski. The coverage (if you could call it that) that he got in our local newspaper was enough to make one believe in conspiracy theories.

How about a follow-up story on the criminal charges he faced before leaving Poland? Our newspaper left me hanging. Did he make the plane out of the country, or did the "authorities" nail him?

Bosco Hurn
Palm Beach, Fla.

Gresham's Second Law?

David Friedman's article, "The Production of Virtue in a Free Society" (January 1991), reminds me of something I learned while working for a variety of regulated companies: bad employees drive out good ones. When a regulated company cannot dismiss bad employees, the good ones either leave or become as lazy and corrupt as the bad ones. It's analogous to Gresham's law of money. You might call it Gresham's law of employment.

Also, I couldn't keep from smiling at Prof. Lomasky's metaphors ("Lies, Liberalism and Lip-Reading"). Delightful! And the end made me realize he was presenting a reasoned argument. What a wonderful linguistic journey from observation to conclusion.

Ron Harris
Dublin, Ind.

The South Rises Again

I enjoy your magazine and your writing, but: "But what if we had won the war, as we won the Civil War?" What is this "We" crap, Yankee? My great grandfather lost a leg at Seven Pines, but lived to have children including my grandfather.

Jule R. Herbert Jr.
Gulf Shores, Ala.

continued on page 8

Letters Policy

We invite readers to comment on articles that have appeared in *Liberty*. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. All letters are assumed to be intended for publication unless otherwise stated. Succinct, typewritten letters are preferred. Please include your phone number so that we can verify your identity.

CHARLIE HADEN

and

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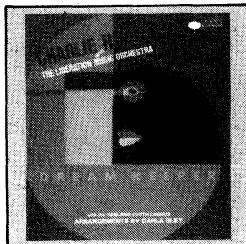


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Letters (*continued from page 6*)

Variations on a Theme

The review (November 1990) of Otto Friedrich's biography of Glenn Gould continues the unfortunate practices of some reviewers and journalists to seek out the sensational (see its title: "Sex, Drugs and the Goldberg Variations") in discussions about the late pianist.

Surely the biography, written by an experienced senior editor at *Time*, should and does devote most of its attention to Gould's remarkable abilities as a thinker, intellectual explorer and keyboardist of the top rank. The reader will have a hard time sensing this in Mr. Kostelanetz' review.

Embellishing the legend, Kostelanetz says, "It seems to me quite clear that Gould was an ascetic who resisted touching people perhaps out of a neurotic fear of contaminating his body . . ." When this writer first met Gould he could not wait for me to get out of my car before shaking my hand vigorously. When I visited him again two years later he not only shook my hand but hugged my wife at the meeting and again the next day when we left. I spent five days closeted with Gould in his tiny studio at the Inn on the Park. We were together about eighteen hours each day. Note to the reviewer: There was no body odor. Incidentally, Kostelanetz claims to have interviewed Gould in person. Using the techniques employed throughout the review, allow me to raise an eyebrow. If you did, why no comment about his body odor in that context?

Glenn Gould slept frequently with many women. I have hard information to back up this statement. At least, it is as hard as the information Kostelanetz has to the contrary.

No more musically idiotic statement has been made in print in a long time than the reviewer's comment referring to Ben Johnson's erratic performances (he the Canadian sprinter) "I thought of his fellow Canadian Gould, whose basic interpretive devices involved radically shifting tempos—to play pieces either much faster or much slower than they had ever been done before." To suggest that a few idiosyncratic tempos employed by Gould, mostly in the Mozart sonatas, represents Gould's basic interpretive devices [sic] is to expose the reviewer's lack of familiarity with the entire (immense) Gould oeuvre.

Robert Silverman
Wilmington, Vt.

(Silverman is editor of *The Piano Quarterly*. "I like to think that Gould counted me as a friend," he adds.)

Kostelanetz responds: *When I was young, I was advised, not unreasonably, never to pretend to know what I didn't. That lesson seems to have escaped Robert Silverman, who asserts that I had not met Gould. He needed only check Glenn Gould Variations (Doubleday Canada, 1983), a book that contains my memoir of Gould along with his, where I say on page 128, "We have actually met, briefly several times. . . . I once made the mistake of warmly embracing his right hand just after a recording session. (He screamed, I heard something crack; he ran off to soak it in hot water, returned in a few minutes, apologized for his rude departure, accepted my regrets, and then sent the piano tuner home.)" That is a fairly stark, albeit embarrassing, anecdote about a face-to-face, or hand-to-hand encounter that you'd think would not be forgotten easily by anybody reading it. Most of us writers read entire books where works of ours appear, especially about "friends" who are also subjects where we claim expertise; Silverman must be different.*

However, perhaps it would be better if Silverman remained illiterate; for when he reads, he doesn't read very well. Nowhere did I suggest that I knew Gould smelled or took drugs other than Nembutal, or abhorred sex, etc. The point of my critique was wonder at why his "authorized" biographer did not pursue these matters further. Such questions are not inappropriate in a review. As for whether Gould actually had hugged Silverman's wife, can we please have corroboration from a disinterested third party, or at least a photograph? As for Silverman's image of Gould's having "slept with many women" (simultaneously?), I'm waiting, nearly a decade after his death, for evidence of such group sex (?) or at least some second-party claims.

Perhaps my hypotheses are wrong, but merely saying or wishing they are wrong is not a refutation but, need I say, just another hypothesis.

A War of Words

I would like to take issue with two of his assumptions in R. W. Bradford's review of "The Civil War" (January 1991).

First is Bradford's implication that "radical anti-communists" favored and advocated an aggressive, all-out war against communism (as embodied in the Soviet Union). As evidence, he submits that we were dragged into Korea by these "radicals," then into Vietnam. As I

recall, however, we entered Korea under the aegis of that hotbed of frenzied anti-communism, the United Nations. We were of course brought into Vietnam by that radical arch-conservative John Kennedy, while massive escalation ensued under the administration of the peace candidate, Lyndon Johnson. Of course I cannot resist pointing out that U.S. involvement in Vietnam ended under the administration of someone with genuine McCarthyite credentials, namely Richard Nixon.

I also question Mr Bradford's assumption that we have successfully evaded WW III by engaging in an (absurdly long) list of admittedly productive and pleasurable activities. This silly list is merely an over-dramatization of the fact that war is destructive, while peace is not. It ignores that fact that often in warfare, at least one party (usually the defender) is an involuntary participant. Relaxing on the beach, enjoyable and non-destructive though it is, does not constitute defense against aggressive war.

David Batchelder
Pittsfield, N.H.

Bradford responds: *I didn't suggest that Kennedy was an arch-conservative, only that he was a radical anti-communist. I realize that the recent canonization of Kennedy has been accompanied by recasting him as a conventional left-liberal on foreign policy matters. But this is false. Consider: he founded the Green Berets, an elite jungle fighting force designed to fight communist insurgencies in the third world; he brought the world to the brink of nuclear war in a dispute with Kruschev in 1962; he started the Vietnam War, a conflict his predecessor had assiduously avoided. The equation of anti-communist bellicosity with the right wing is simply wrong: many American conservatives (e.g. Robert Taft) have opposed war on communism; many left-liberals (e.g. Johnson, Humphrey, Henry Jackson, Thomas Dodd) have been in the forefront of such crusades. The decision to go to war against North Korea was made by the U.S.; it went to the U.N. only to sanctify its policy.*

Nor did I assume that we evaded WWIII by "engaging in a list of pleasurable and productive activities." I argued that we were better off resisting the temptation to go to war, choosing instead to live productive and pleasant lives, allowing the communist empire to deteriorate from its own inherent flaws. Lying on the beach is no defense against war, but it is sometimes a preferable alternative.

Reflections

Building bridges, PBS style — In its report on the Polish presidential election, *MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour* observed that, "Today was for building bridges and re-uniting the nation." In the same report, it mentioned that the losing candidate, Stan Tyminski, had been arrested on suspicion of criminal slander of another candidate. A bridge? Or a ferry to Devil's Island?

—RWB

Deja vu, all over again — Dan Quayle had quite a fright during his New Year's visit to American troops in Saudi Arabia. He ran into the commander of his Indiana National Guard unit.

—SLR

Hello? Hello? Rationality calling . . . Intellectually, the coming few years may be better than we assume. There are signs that the last refuge of socialism in the U.S., the academic fortress, is crumbling. For one, articles in *The New York Times* and *Newsweek* have exposed the sad absurdity of "political correctness" on college campuses—a situation that until now bothered no one except conservatives and libertarians. A second sign is the remarkable ceding of victory to capitalism by Robert Heilbroner, a prominent left-of-center economist who has always hankered after socialism.

In the last issue of *Liberty*, Sheldon Richman reported on Heilbroner's announcement, fifty years late, that "Mises was right." Now Heilbroner has done it again. In a letter in *Dissent* (reprinted in the January 1991 issue of *Harper's*), he shares his anguished puzzling over why only the right, whom he represents by von Mises, Hayek, and Friedman, recognized the defects of socialism. With regret, he concludes that conservatives have a better understanding of human motivation than do the much more appealing and "progress-oriented" leftists.

True, the reader is embarrassed for him—for example, he talks about "visions" of human nature with no hint that he has read Thomas Sowell on the subject—but, articulate author that he is, he allows us to observe his mental struggle, and wins our sympathy by conveying how stunned he is by socialism's collapse.

Heilbroner (who's actually a fan of Adam Smith, though not for the right reasons) seems to be positioning himself as an interpreter of the outside world for his friends and colleagues in the academic citadel. Through the elite magazines, he is telegraphing messages to them from the real world. One of these days, someone will listen.

—JSS

Now that Panama is safe for democracy . . . Here's an update on America's protection of democracy in Panama. A year after U.S. forces invaded Panama to apprehend its head of state and replace him with a new leader sworn in on an American air base, U.S. troops continue to patrol the streets of the Central American nation. They recently arrested an unruly national police chief. The latest blow for democracy is the assistance provided by the CIA in setting up a domestic espionage organization without the authority of the national legislature. The organization will be controlled by the president sworn in on the air base. The legislature is trying to investigate the matter. This should not mislead us into thinking that President Endara is entirely our man. He (and the legislature) reportedly balked at American demands that Panama rewrite its banking laws so that the U.S. will have access to bank records—drug war, you know. All of this should teach Saddam Hussein a lesson.

—SLR

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—SLR

Nobel Prize nomination — Having awarded Soviet dictator Gorbachev the Nobel Peace Prize for his remarkable restraint in allowing the citizens of the Baltic countries to act as though they had the rights commonly recognized in Western countries for a full year before crushing them with tanks and spraying them with machine guns, the Norwegian Parliament might do well to consider awarding the Peace Prize to Saddam Hussein for the admirable restraint he showed in refraining from invading any neighboring countries for 18 months prior to his invasion of Kuwait in August, 1990.

—RWB

Mr. East, meet Mr. West. You'll like each other — *The Armed Forces Journal International* (Oct. 1990) reports an interesting interview that appeared recently in the Soviet newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya*. The interviewee was Grigoriy Kisunko, former head of the USSR's antiballistic missile system. Kisunko sounded disconsolate. He described parts of the Soviet ABM system as the most "absurd projects of the century." It seems that vast amounts of money have been wasted because of misfeasance and cover-ups by industry and military officials.

According to Kisunko, the operation of the over-the-horizon warning radar was so bad that the operators misreported its functioning to superiors, claiming to have tracked U.S. missiles when they had actually learned of the launches from the press or KGB contacts. More than once their ruse proved embarrassing when U.S. launches were delayed or cancelled at the last minute. Confronted with their failures, they concocted new cover stories.

Kisunko criticized the Soviet anti-missile system ringing Moscow. If actually used, its nuclear weapons would destroy much of the city it is supposed to protect. He blamed this idiotic design on "political dilettantes" enamored with the nuclear weapons used to defend U.S. ICBM silos, which are hardened and therefore quite different from a city.

According to *Armed Forces Journal International*, "the Kisunko interview revealed a Soviet military research and development establishment far less effectively managed than is usually believed in the West," one in which weapons develop-

ers favor their own programs over the needs of Soviet defense, and military and political leaders lack the ability to make "sophisticated judgments about technologically complex programs."

Sound familiar? It should.

Here in the land of the free, the latest in a long, long line of similar scandals came to a head in December 1990. It transpired that the Navy's next generation bomber, the A-12, being developed jointly by General Dynamics and McDonnell Douglas, had a cost overrun of \$1 billion to \$4 billion (sources disagreed on the exact amount), was more than a year behind schedule, and failed to meet the Navy's weight specifications. The contractors were less than candid in their reports of the A-12's progress, and a Pentagon audit found that they had collected hundreds of millions of dollars in advance payments unjustified by the actual work done.

Earlier in 1990 John Betti, the Pentagon's chief procurement official, dismissed criticism of the program, relying on the contractors' assurances that everything was all right. Accepting Betti's cheerful appraisal, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney strongly supported the A-12 and urged Congress to fund the plane's production, projected to cost \$52 billion for 620 units.

As internal reports at the Pentagon continued to reveal rotten spots in the Rosy Scenario served up by Betti and the boys at the Naval Air Systems Command, heads finally had to roll. Betti resigned. Vice Admiral Richard Gentz was forced into early retirement, and two other Navy acquisition officers were censured and reassigned—heavy punishments in the procurement field, where hardly anything can prevent steady advancement through the ranks and then a cushy job with a contractor after an officer leaves the service.

In January the interested parties held a series of meetings to determine what to do next. All the experts and media commentators agreed—and I did too—that some sort of bailout would be arranged. Then, on January 7, Cheney stunned the

In the wonderful world of defense procurement, it doesn't matter whether the Cold War is over or not, and it doesn't matter whether you're bending the metal in the USSR or the USA.

experts and me by announcing that he was cancelling the A-12 program, having concluded that the contractors had defaulted. General Dynamics and McDonnell Douglas, of course, maintain that the problems were not all their fault. So the question will land in the courts, where it will take years to resolve.

I admit that my fearless forecast was wrong this time, but standing back from this particular issue to contemplate the military-industrial-congressional complex as a whole, my faith in its capacity for well-paid ineptitude remains unshaken. The A-12, after all, is the biggest weapons development program ever terminated. The upshot: besides the billions the companies have spent, the taxpayers (via the Pentagon) have shelled out \$1.2 billion, and there is not even a single airplane to show for all that money, nor will there ever be one. The real resources devoted to the program have simply disappeared into a black hole.

The A-12 would appear to have much in common with the

Soviets' make-believe radars. In the wonderful world of defense procurement, it doesn't matter whether the Cold War is over or not, and it doesn't matter whether you're bending the metal in the USSR or the USA. Socialism doesn't work there, and it doesn't work here.

—RH

Big, but not that big — As the projected cost of the S&L bailout has grown, commentators have struggled to put it into perspective. Writing in *The Wall Street Journal*, Michael Gartner compared the \$500 billion S&L bill with various other government-imposed burdens. Perhaps the most arresting comparison, one repeated by other journalists, is Gartner's claim that even World War II cost the United States less. If only it were so.

Setting aside the more than \$250 billion in benefits paid to veterans of the war since 1944, World War II spending amounted to about \$300 billion in 40s dollars. Using the price index for government expenditures to put the spending in terms of 1990 dollars, the total comes to approximately \$3,300 billion, or 6.6 times the S&L bill. Adding the veterans' benefits would make the comparison even more lopsided.

But that's not the end of Gartner's misapprehension. The S&L cost will be spread over many years in the future. A dollar in the future is worth less than a dollar now. Of course, nobody knows precisely how the outlays will be spread over the pay-out period, but in any event discounting the flow of future costs diminishes the \$500 billion figure substantially. At an interest rate of 10 percent, for example, every dollar spent five years from now has a present value of just 62 cents.

Nor is that the last of the faults in Gartner's comparison. For the most part, the S&L spending will take the form of transfer payments. (Running the bailout operation itself will use up some real resources, but as a proportion this part of the cost will be almost negligible.) Taxpayers' money will be given to depositors in failed S&Ls. Some people lose money and other people gain money, but real resources are not directly affected by the redistribution. (Some *indirect* real effects may occur.)

Finally, the Gartner comparison does a disservice to those who lost their lives, their limbs, and their sanity in World War II. The \$300 billion the U.S. government spent at the time prosecuting the war vastly understates its true cost, because the government simply took many resources without paying market values for them, including the services of 10 million young conscripts.

The S&L bailout is enormous and it is an enormity, but it cannot bear comparison with the costs of World War II in any valid sense.

—RH

The literate person's guide to the postal monopoly — Nothing in America today seems to me quite as evocative of the old days in Eastern Europe as my local post office. There is always a line winding through the lobby, sometimes over thirty people long; there are always customers individually wondering why the service isn't better (since after all you're predisposed to part with your money); there are always employees who are visibly doing something other than serving, not to mention rushing to serve, the customers. I'm reminded of a summer Sunday afternoon in East Berlin, when I waited a full forty-five minutes to get an ice cream. No one complained, so accustomed were they to such

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persiflage, much like my neighbors must be at the post office.

Not too long ago, because I had stupidly acceded to an editor's request to send my letter "registered," I spent an equal amount of time waiting at the local post office. Although well over thirty people were on line, only one clerk was selling stamps. Another clerk behind him was reading a newspaper. When I asked why he couldn't handle me, the reply was that he was no longer authorized to sell stamps. (I remembered when he had been. Methinks he had a problem with juice that isn't fresh.) Another guy moving the mail around the post office gave the same reply. No one else in line said anything.

In both situations, the problem was the same. The East Berlin soda jerks behaved like the New York post office clerks in knowing that we had no place else to go. It seems to me that now that Eastern Europe has recognized the limits of state-owned monopolies, we should wise up and start to eliminate them here as well; and the business of delivering the mail would be a good place to start. Let UPS or Federal Express, or even ATT, compete. (The only other place you see snail-like lines is, of course, in urban traffic at rush hour. Since the state has a monopoly over the roadways, there is little incentive to expand the thoroughfare or construct a more efficient alternative.)

More than economics, or even the limits of human patience, is at stake in liberating the daily mail. My own opinion is that as long as the making of a telephone call is cheaper than the posting of a letter, Americans will talk and listen sooner than write and read, which is to say that the old-fashioned mail monopoly is also contributing to the new national illiteracy. —RK

The unintended consequences of Jesse Helms

Ever since writing *The End of Intelligent Writing* (1974), I've learned to separate literary politics and political results from public-relations fluff. That accounts for why it seems to me that the principal beneficiaries of attacks from Jesse Helms and his cronies have been artists whose works might have otherwise gone less noticed. Robert Mapplethorpe, Karen Finlay, et al., couldn't have found more effective press agents if they had all the money in North Carolina. If Helms has not yet been paid off by them (or, in Mapplethorpe's case, by his heirs), he surely deserves to be rewarded, once all involved get to heaven, with the most intimate benefits. He has given hoards of publicity-needy artists the easiest opportunity for grandstanding since the Vietnam War (as strange bedfellows does a climate of opportunism make). If not for Helms & Co., publicity hounds would necessarily confront the more difficult tasks of making better poems or stories or paintings or theater

than they've done before. Meanwhile, those artists continuing their previous work have reason to feel disgust for both sides of the show.

The principal loss has been America's new and fragile reputation for cultural maturity (realized, don't forget, only in the 1960s), as we now look like a country whose culture is threatened by subliterate yahoos, subverted as, say, France or Germany or England or Italy or even Russia would never be. (Not even Bulgarians have an equivalent of Jesse Helms.) Just ask any European cultural professional what he thinks of this brouhaha and you'll realize that the KGB couldn't have found a more effective agent of subversion than North Carolina's Prince of Darkness. May he drown in the rubles he deserves, better, of course, to be prepared for his rendezvous with Finlay, et al. Only because he disguises himself as a "conservative" (and panders to North Carolina tobacco interests) do we fail to see Helms' real function as an anti-American mole; his apparent success in deception should be regarded as a sure measure of stealth.

The forgotten truth of Helms' attack is that the government cultural agencies deserve critical examination—that they have

Only because Jesse Helms disguises himself as a "conservative" (and panders to North Carolina tobacco interests) do we fail to see Helms' real function as an anti-American mole; his apparent success in deception should be regarded as a sure measure of stealth.

gotten a generous ride, blissfully free of watchdogs; but by limiting his attack on the NEA to purported obscenity (and thus missing all the more serious problems), Helms has implicitly undermined all other criticism of the NEA, now and into the future, no matter how substantial (much as McCarthyism undermined all attacks on university tenure to this day). Those involved in peculiar business at the Endowments couldn't have found a better ally if they tried. What made this last thought clear to me was a personal letter from a notoriously devious NEA administrator urging me to "kick Jesse Helms' butt," but the senator's was not the only butt deserving such retribution—no, no, no, not at all.

For the same reason that Finlay et al. could capitalize on Helms' attacks, American art, and artists, will survive such a profoundly subversive media show. We Americans wouldn't have it any other way.

—RK

The long road back — During the final stages of the destruction of the Berlin Wall, a former East German junior officer who was in charge of removing a large section complained about how the work was being overseen. "They just ordered me to take the wall down," he said, "but they haven't told me if I am following the rules." Some people simply aren't ready for freedom. —JSR

It's only television — Most economic reports on television news programs present a significant datum, such as a newly released unemployment figure, with no attempt to put it in context, followed by a series of interviews that usually



"IRS, Mr. Halloway — I killed myself and came after you!"

make things appear worse than they are. But occasionally the viewer is presented with enough data to be able to tell that what the numbers mean and what the reporters say they mean are two different things.

For example, on December 14, 1990, CBS news ran a feature on charitable giving, and the relationship between private donations and economic hard times. The tone was characteristically foreboding; the message was that private charities would be devastated by a recession. A chart flashed on the screen which purported to show that in every recession, the amounts given to charities plunged. The line graph showed dips in recessionary times, peaks in periods of growth. There followed statements by several directors of charities that they were in dire straits, and the implication was that government would have to redouble its efforts to take the pressure off. But this was a misrepresentation of the facts. The chart showed not that dollars given to charities dropped during recessions, but that the rate of growth in giving declined. However, the chart did not depict "total donations," but "percentage growth in donations." Donations grew in even the worst recessions. Furthermore, growth declined mainly before recessions began. In each cycle the growth-troughs arrived at the beginning of recessions, and were followed by sharp increases, implying that once a crisis arrives Americans respond, even though they are presumably less able to. So the reporter's message, that Americans turn their backs on their neighbors in hard times and the government must pick up the slack, was diametrically opposite to the data presented in the chart.

Another example of doom and gloomery at odds with reality was a December 25, 1990, NBC News report that Americans were being "ripped off" at the gas pumps by oil companies. Irate consumers and upset distributors were interviewed to establish the theme, and were followed by a graph to substantiate it. First the price of oil was displayed: \$20.00 in June, \$41.00 in October, and \$27.00 in December. Meanwhile, "gasoline prices shot up to \$1.37/gallon" in December, from \$1.04 in June. This graph line, missing the October datum, appeared to show steadily climbing gas prices, even though they had dropped six cents in the past week (a fact reported by ABC the following evening). So the graph gave a superficial but erroneous impression of falling oil prices but climbing gasoline prices. But beyond this, where oil in December was up 35% since June, gasoline had only risen 31%, bringing into question the entire thesis of price gouging.

Television economic analysis is basically stream-of-consciousness reaction to the world with little basis in fact and no real concern for the boring old objective truth. —JSR

Dungeons and dollars — Even as the mists of hangovers were lifting, the first great controversy of 1991 was born: Is it Colorado or Georgia Tech that's Number One? But it is beyond all controversy that the United States has now clearly gained premiere status as the country that incarcerates the greatest percentage of its people.

According to a nonprofit research organization named "Sentencing Project," 429 of every 100,000 U.S. residents is behind bars—and not the kind from which the editors of *Liberty* imbibed New Year's cheer. For black males the incarceration quotient is sharply higher, 3109 per 100,000. This translates into one million Americans locked into intimacy with the criminal justice system. By way of contrast, the previous champ,

South Africa, imprisons only 333 people/729 black men per 100,000. No one else comes close.

Why this less-than-enviable record? Well, Americans seem to rob more, rape more, and shoot more than do citizens of countries like Norway or Singapore. We are also inordinately fond of criminalizing matters of personal preference. The odd gambler or prostitute lands in a cell, but by the hundreds of thousands we stuff our jails with hostages of the War on Drugs. More and more states legislate mandatory prison sentences for drug sale or possession, including in some cases mandatory life terms. The result is that, though the overall crime rate has actually decreased modestly over the past decade, "get tough" sentencing guidelines have provided America with a prison population greater than the total population of, say, Boston.

The casualties of this war are not only those who languish in stir. While drug use and sale is a victimless crime, robberies and violence spawned by our nation's policies strike thousands of individuals who are, by any standard, innocent. And,

A 1989 study concluded that the annual cost of keeping someone behind bars is approximately \$18,000, roughly the amount one ponies up for a year at Harvard. Fortunately, we have not yet become so debased as to inflict Cambridge on coke snorters.

of course, we pay—and pay dearly—for the privilege of venting our loathing for those whose chemical of choice happens not to be alcohol or nicotine. A 1989 Delaware study concluded that the annual cost of keeping someone behind bars is approximately \$18,000, roughly the amount one ponies up for a year at Harvard.

Fortunately, we have not yet become so debased as to inflict Cambridge on coke snorters. Still, it's hard not to believe that there might be better use for the money now being siphoned off by the passion to imprison. Whatever bad things one might be tempted to say about Mr Bush, it cannot be denied that he is a man eminently capable of changing his mind. If the facts were clearly presented to him, just possibly he would be moved to relent. So let me try this: Decriminalize drug use, George, and you can employ the savings to bail out a couple more S&L's, and, with the loose change, dispatch a handful of additional regiments to Saudi Arabia. And who knows, if things go real well, maybe next year you'll need to raise taxes only a little bit.

—LEL

Gassing the facts — "Not even Hitler used gas on his own people," said George Bush. No, this is not evidence that Bush is falling prey to the crackpot views of the holocaust revisionists, but rather part of his campaign to demonize Saddam Hussein. This was too much for at least one Jewish organization, which pointed out that Hitler did use gas on German Jews. I suppose Bush could reply that the German Jews were not Hitler's "own people."

Of course, the same can be said of the alleged victims of Saddam's poison gas, the Kurds of northern Syria. They have never wanted to be part of Iraq (or Turkey or Syria or Iran). They are victims of European colonial powers, who for their

own convenience, split the Kurdish nation among four countries. Incidentally, three analysts at the U.S. Army War College have concluded after exhaustive study that Iraq did not gas the Kurds. Bush knew of this report last summer, before the invasion of Kuwait. But he wasn't about to let a little fact get in his way.

—SLR

The invisible hand, clapping — I just heard on television that Seattle police credit their experience at last summer's "Goodwill Games" with improving their ability to provide security now that the U.S. is at war. I applaud this recognition of the subtlety of unintended consequences, but I wonder: why is it that government officials can only observe unintended beneficial effects when the enterprise is a failed government boondoggle?

—TWV

Bank shots — Bankers have the reputation of being cold-hearted skinflints. For all I know, that might be accurate. But not so bankers' bankers. Their generosity is unparalleled.

Some background: The Bank of New England is—or was—a premiere regional financial institution. But as the local economy began to smell even worse than Boston Harbor, the bank found itself with a remarkably large portfolio of non-performing loans. The death watch had been going on for months, and in early January the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation stepped in to administer euthanasia. After taking over the bank, the FDIC announced that all deposits would be protected, even those in excess of the \$100,000 covered by insurance. Why? "I really don't think they had the option of liquidating the bank," explained Kenneth Guenther, executive vice president of the Independent Bankers' Association of America. "It would have been devastating to consumer confidence."

Readers not trained in the further reaches of economic science may have trouble grasping Mr Guenther's subtle point. So let me explain. First, be aware that the consumers of whom he is speaking are not your average Mom-and-Pop small depositors. Instead, they are people who are liable to plunk down in excess of 100 grand in bank accounts. Some might have even been prep school classmates of Our President. Second, if these consumers were to lose the confidence they now so energetically place in deficit-plagued banks, dire events would follow. No, they wouldn't put their cash under mattresses; six- and seven-figured sums make too big a lump to sleep on. Instead they would transfer it to more conservatively managed institutions. The result would be prudent lenders having greater sums at their disposal while the reckless are forced out of business. And this would be dreadful because . . . well, I told you that laymen would have trouble following the argument.

The Bank of New England is, we have been told, "too big to be allowed to fail." But, of course, it has failed. That is why the FDIC is picking up the pieces, both those that it is obliged by law to scoop up and also those that, as

"Well, I sure didn't hear any capital letters when you dictated it!"



an act of grace to the very wealthy, it is voluntarily assuming. The generosity does not, however, come without cost. Last year the FDIC lost \$4 billion, this year it is expected to lose at least another \$5 billion. To cover this hemorrhage of dollars, it is raising the cost of insurance coverage to all banks. That extra expense will lower profits of well-run institutions and render insolvent others that had been operating on the margin. Moreover, shrewd depositors will recognize that they are more secure placing their funds in very large institutions, no matter how slovenly administered, than in smaller ones that the FDIC might not feel constrained to bail out. For example, when minority-owned Freedom National Bank of Harlem failed last year, large depositors received only 50 cents on the dollar, and that after a loud public outcry. Why take a chance, even a small one, banking with the little guys when big ones afford immunity from losses?

Is this any way to run a bank? Or a country?

—LEL

Pick a decade, any decade — Anyone who reads "think pieces" in our country's major newspapers and opinion journals knows that a systematic rewriting of the history of the recently completed decade is underway. The eighties, we are told, was an epoch of mindless consumption, riotous greed, unmatched selfishness and moral squalor, leaving, for its survivors, an enervated civic order and a society ravaged by materialism, class division, environmental degradation, racism, corruption both public and private, and many more bad things. This analysis is presented in almost fairy-tale terms, with a few new twists (the king lived in luxury while the people starved, and besides he didn't recycle his garbage).

The 20s saw prosperity, peace, low inflation and the rapid flowering of the American middle class. The 50s were sort of the twenties with bomb shelters and hula hoops.

Well, I suspect that the decade can take care of itself. Accurate history has a way of getting itself written after a generation or so, unless emotions are still running very high (e.g. Nazism and the Holocaust) or source material is simply not (or not yet) available (e.g. some aspects of the Pearl Harbor attack). What I find more interesting is the rating of decades by the trendy left. Starting with 1910 (or 1911; I don't want to get into *that* controversy) the teens, thirties, forties (actually, first half only of same) and sixties are regarded as Good. The twenties, fifties (1946-1959), seventies and eighties are, of course, Bad. Without a detailed account, we can identify the teens as the decade of Progressivism and the First Good War, the thirties as the era of poverty, FDR and the rejection of the high living of the twenties, the abbreviated forties as the period of the Second (very) Good War, and the sixties as the epoch of social activism and the politics of rage. The twenties saw prosperity, peace, low inflation, and the rapid flowering of the American middle class. The fifties were sort of the twenties with bomb shelters and hula hoops. The seventies are more difficult to classify, featuring a kind of healing process after the social fragmentation of the late sixties as well as stagflation and a failed Democratic presidency. The eighties brought prosperity,

American power and, at the end, the rapid decay and virtual implosion of communism, the last event being, of course, not an American phenomenon but one that is arguably related in part to American policies.

If we distill the essences out of these respective eras, we come up with something like: war, statism, and the political culture of poverty and rage are good; peace and bourgeois values are bad. More fundamentally, the left seems to identify civic good with periods in which society is seen to place great collective demands on the individual (in the interest, allegedly, of combatting reaction, fascism, etc). These collective experiences are regarded as "authentic." More middle-class, personalized experiences are relegated to the margins of life and of history—more flotsam and jetsam of the passage of time. I, for one, hope that the nineties turn out to be another despised decade. This century has had more than enough noble collective enterprises. It could use some relaxation. —WPM

Best use of passive construction, 1990 —

On December 26, Albanian President Ramiz Alia informed a Communist Party conference that during the past 46 years of Communist power in his country "mistakes were made."

According to the *New York Times*, however, "Mr. Alia stressed that the party 'does not intend to abandon its Marxist ideology.'" —SC

Flip-flops — Is there anything, anything whatsoever, for which the current administration stands? Clearly not keeping its sweaty hands off the tax button; that's old news. Nor does foreign policy give evidence of settled convictions. Last I heard, Mr Bush's pronouncement that Saddam Hussein is "worse than Hitler" remains uncontradicted, but that doesn't up the consistency quotient. Recall that as recently as last August 1, official policy had it that Saddam was a man with whom America could "do business." There are even rumors circulating that the president contemplates dropping Dan Quayle from the '92 ticket, the one person by comparison with whom he appears almost statesmanlike. No, courage of convictions is not this administration's strong point. But for one shining hour the White House seemed willing to draw the line on promoting racial discrimination in the name of so-called civil rights.

When Mr Bush vetoed Ted Kennedy's favorite bill of 1990, he solemnly declared in the accompanying message that he would not be a party to a system of quotas. And then just last month Department of Education lawyer Michael Williams announced that college scholarships set aside by race are in violation of the law. The fact that this opinion came from a 37 year-old black man rather than, say, Jesse Helms, gave it a certain luster. Could it be that we were to see a stand made on the principle that mandated racial discrimination is wrong, regardless of whether the beneficiaries are white or black?

No it could not. Backtracking from the flap that arose in predictable quarters, one of Chief of Staff John Sununu's ghosts "clarified" the position, saying in effect that racially discriminatory scholarships are okay providing that the bookkeeping is done just so. The casuistical splitting of hairs left neither liberals nor conservatives happy, embarrassed Williams, and proved if further proof is needed that backbones are few and far between in our nation's capital.

I note, in fairness, that as we go to press the place of Millie

as favorite White House dog does seem unchanged and secure.

—LEL

Fear and loathing in Eastern Europe —

As the governments in Eastern Europe have abandoned the traditional Communist policy of officially respecting and sometimes even subsidizing Jewish culture while simultaneously discriminating against the Jewish population, the majority cultures have used their new-found freedom to indicate that intolerance towards the Jews is one policy of the *ancien régime* which they were sorry to see go.

This intolerance has been particularly evident in Russia and Poland, where many people seem to regard a streak of anti-Semitism as a healthy sign of genuine patriotism. Particularly disturbing are Lech Walesa's thinly veiled anti-Semitic remarks, which were issued during his successful campaign for the Polish presidency last fall. He indicated during the first round of the election that Tadeusz Mazowiecki, then the prime minister and one of his two main rivals for the presidency, might be a closet Jew and therefore not entirely loyal to the Polish state. When confronted about his remarks and by more

Are the Polish anti-Semites incensed because the majority of Poland's Jews are inconsiderately occupying valuable landfill sites? Or is it simply that the Poles need someone to hate, and in the absence of sizable ethnic minorities or some downtrodden group of guest workers to dump on, Polish bigots have had to latch onto the Jews by default?

direct anti-Semitic statements on the part of some of his subordinates, Walesa was unapologetic, and it apparently didn't hurt him with the voters, three-quarters of whom chose him in Poland's presidential run-off election.

But why would any Pole even make the effort of being anti-Semitic? Poland's Jewish population has dropped from 3.5 million in 1939 to about 5000 today. This is a drop from 10% of the total population to a little over one one-hundredth of one percent. The biggest drop came, of course, during the Holocaust and in the exodus to Palestine in the immediate post-war era, but the population was still large enough that in 1968 an additional 30,000 were caused to flee by a burst of anti-Semitic nastiness on the part of the authorities. Those who were left were mostly the old and the particularly inoffensive; the average Polish Jew is over 70. Young Jews are so rare that there has been only one *bar mitzvah* in the past thirty years.

Are the Polish anti-Semites incensed because, in these hard-pressed times, the geriatric Jewish population is collecting more in old-age pensions than it is contributing to the economy? Are they upset because the majority of Poland's Jews are inconsiderately occupying valuable landfill sites? Or is it simply that the Poles need some out-group to hate, and that in the absence of sizable ethnic minorities or some downtrodden group of guest workers to dump on, Polish bigots have had to latch onto the Jews by default? —SJR

Wanna make a bet? — Have you heard about the bet between Julian Simon and Paul Ehrlich? Paul Ehrlich is a bi-

ologist best known for his alarming statements about how humans are destroying the planet by too much pollution, too much development, and, especially, too many people. The failure of the world to fulfill his predictions—such as his 1968 forecast of massive famines—mysteriously seems to have enhanced his popularity, not reduced it.

Julian Simon is an economist who disagrees with Paul Ehrlich on just about everything, and has done so for years.

In 1980, at the height of the alarm about rising energy prices and prominent worries about natural resource scarcity, Simon argued that natural resources were not finite in any meaningful sense. (His seminal 1980 article in *Science* has just been republished by Transaction Publishers in his book, *Population Matters*.) Simon issued a challenge to anyone to name a commodity (food, energy, or other resource) and set a date in the future. Whatever the date, Simon was willing to bet that the price would be lower in real terms, not higher.

Ehrlich, with two other academicians who specialized in energy and resources, responded. They chose five commodities (copper, chrome, nickel, tin, and tungsten) in amounts that made the price of each commodity \$200, and bet that the price of the five would be higher than \$1000 ten years hence—October 1990. Simon agreed that if the price (adjusted for inflation) was higher than \$1000 in 1990 he would pay them the difference; if it was lower, Ehrlich would pay the difference.

As you have probably already figured out, and as reported by John Tierney in the *New York Times*, Simon won. Last October, Ehrlich quietly sent Simon a check for \$576.07.

The fact that natural resource prices are lower (indeed, even without adjusting for inflation they would have been slightly lower) doesn't surprise me, of course. Economic theory and the evidence of history poke holes in apocalyptic predictions. As scarcity develops, prices start to rise, and people respond by finding substitutes and lower-cost technologies. Then prices fall.

But I learned something from the incident. As one who hears a lot of doomsday announcements—all of them proved wrong so far—I tend to distrust the motives of the people making them. Surely, I muse, people such as Ehrlich and Lester Brown of the Worldwatch Institute can't *believe* what they are saying; they can't be blind to all the scholarship on this issue.

At least in 1980, Paul Ehrlich meant what he said. He was willing to back up his gloomy prognostications with money (not a personal fortune, of course, but something). He was benighted and foolish, but not cynical. He was genuinely mistaken.

Today, I'm not so sure. Simon offered Ehrlich another chance to bet, with the stake as high as \$20,000. Ehrlich told the *Times'* Tierney that Simon will eventually be proven wrong, that he is "like the guy who jumps off the Empire State Building and says how great things are going so far as he passes the 10th floor." But he did not take up the challenge. —JSS

The triumph of the hack — A small break with tradition by the Bush Administration may speak more to its treatment of the arts than all the hot air expended by it and Congress over the issue of NEA funding for dirty pictures.

On Sept 17, President Bush announced the appointment of John Mercanti to the post of chief engraver at the U.S. Mint. The announcement came as a surprise because the position of

chief engraver was not vacant. It had been held by Elizabeth Jones since 1980, and Ms Jones had not tendered her resignation. Indeed, she has indicated that she would like to continue in that position.

Ever since the Mint was established in 1792, the position of chief engraver had been a lifetime job. I am not one of those who believes that it is a good idea to give out lifetime appointments to government employees. But surely when an establishmentarian, conservative president like George Bush dispenses with a tradition that goes back to the beginning of the American Republic, he must have a pretty good reason, right?

A careful examination of the numismatic press coverage of the issue reveals that Mr Bush has not chosen to share with us his reason for dispensing with tradition and showing Ms Jones the door, whatever his reason may be.

I found one clue. The Director of the Mint, Donna Pope, told the press, "I've always known John [Mercanti] to do excellent work in a timely fashion." Does this mean that Ms Jones missed deadlines?

Take a look at the photographs of the coins below. Which one is more beautiful? Which shows talent? Which shows creativity?



Take a wild guess. Which of these coins is the work of a distinguished sculptor, with a genuine feel for the medium, who studied medallic art for years in Europe and is widely acclaimed as a masterful artist? Which is the work of an illustrator of children's books with a degree from the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, who landed a civil service job with the Mint at age of 31, and responded to a query about his appointment by suggesting that now his father-in-law, who had questioned his ability to earn a living, would have to eat his words?

The proof of an artist is in his art. These photos are the strongest argument I know in favor of Ms Jones and against Mr Mercanti.

Mercanti may be a fine illustrator of children's books. I don't really know. But one thing is certain: he is not a good medallic artist. His portraiture is simply awful: his busts of Eisenhower, Humphrey and Steinbeck lack any spark of life. Nor can he capture movement: it is simply impossible to believe that the figures passing the Olympic torch (pictured above) are mobile.

Jones, in contrast, shows a creativity and a skill that hasn't been evident in U.S. coins since early this century when the distinguished sculptors Augustus St Gaudens, A. A. Weinman and Herman MacNeil designed American coins. Her skill as an artist has been widely recognized and appreciated by numismatists; some even consider her the greatest U.S. coin designer of all time.

So should we conclude that Ms Pope is suggesting that Ms

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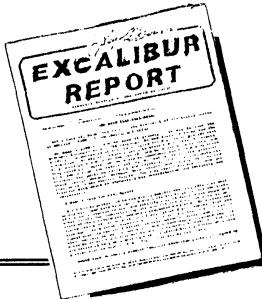
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Jones' work was not turned in on time? I don't really know, and, quite frankly, I don't care. Ms Jones' work is good art, perhaps even great art. Mr Mercanti's is schlock. If Michaelangelo were a few days late painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, would you fire him and hire a housepainter to do the job?

Of course, I may be inferring too much from Ms Pope's remarks. Maybe they were just meaningless words that fill out a press release. I have heard rumors that the decision is in some

sense "political," whatever that means in the context of art. Perhaps Mr Mercanti is a Republican while Ms Jones is a Democrat.

What sort of message does Mr Bush's decision to fire Ms Jones and elevate Mr Mercanti send to artists? As near as I can figure, it tells them that talent and skill and artistic flair and creativity mean nothing, and that unimaginative, plodding, and lifeless expression should be rewarded. —RWB

Guest Reflection

Helpless child in the road — There is a difference between morality, as I conceive it, and the notions of right and wrong that circulate in our society. Prudence demands that we accommodate these brummagem notions, to some extent at least, but it does not necessarily make the accommodation easy, as recently was demonstrated to me by a completely unexpected incident.

I was driving to my office when I saw a little boy in the middle of the street, stark naked and just big enough to walk. His skin blended with the dirt on the side of the road and I was horrified by the thought that he could be killed there. I stopped my car, put on my flashers and ushered him off the road. My next step was to find someone responsible for him, who would get him dressed and keep him out of the street. Since he was in the middle of the street and couldn't speak well enough for me to understand him, I didn't know where to begin.

My first challenge came in touching him. Should I hold him like one of my children? I tried to lead him with my finger but he refused to grip it. Should I take my shirt off and put it on him? I wasn't wearing an undershirt and the thought of me being half-dressed at that moment scared me. What would I do if he started crying? Suppose he had been molested prior to my finding him? Would I soon meet an hysterical mother? I couldn't leave him beside the road, and none of the passing motorists would get involved. In addition, my supervisor eventually would drive down the same road; could I explain to him what I was doing?

I went to the nearest house and called out repeatedly to no avail. I lifted the child, gripping him under the arms, holding his nude body as far from me as possible, and moved him to a grassy place where at least he wouldn't be standing on gravel. Should I enter the nearest house and maybe find whatever was there, or get involved in a terrible situation as a result of an unauthorized entry? By then, my yelling attracted a dog in the house, which came outside through a back door. Would I have to fight the dog? It was obviously his turf and I didn't belong. Would the dog attack the nude child as a result of my interference, or would the dog attack me in protection of the child? I took off my belt and wrapped it around my fist, expecting the worst.

Afraid to handle the child and afraid to leave the scene for fear of what might happen to him, I repeatedly asked passing motorists for help. One in particular I asked to "please call the police." Eventually I went to a nearby house soliciting help and found a neighbor who told me the child belonged in the house where the dog I had encountered came from. Eventually that neighbor called the police and together with the police we found the mother, the lost disposable diaper, and everything was back to normal.

The danger of the child being hit by a car was real, and a

critical concern to me, but apparently posed no concern to a host of passing motorists. Why? Was I the only one who noticed the child? Were the other motorists doing the *right* thing in not getting involved? The child needed help and I assumed it was a good act that I stopped and got involved—but was it *right*?

What if the dog had been aggressive and I had harmed it or even killed it in self-defense or defense of the child? I had absolutely no idea to what degree I was trespassing. Suppose the owner came out and found me fighting with the dog or assumed I was molesting the child and shot me in self-defense. Was I dead wrong in conventional terms of right and wrong, even if, by my lights, my purpose was good?

When the mother's story was later told, would I be accused of something I didn't do? Had I created an unsavory position for the mother with the neighbors . . . or her husband? Should I have entered the house to find if the mother had an accident and rendered assistance? Was it cowardly of me not to enter the house to search for a parent or someone responsible for the

I felt guilty and ashamed. Instead of maintaining a single focus on the safety of the child, my mind had been astir with modern caveats.

child? Fear was certainly involved in my decision to not enter the house.

When the police arrived and the mother eventually came out, she said she had been sleeping and didn't know her son could get the door open. I apologized for causing an uproar in the neighborhood, gave my name and address to the police officers, and left. The situation turned out okay, and nobody was harmed, but as I drove away I felt guilty and ashamed. Instead of maintaining a single focus on the safety of the child, my mind had been astir with modern caveats and concerns. I was not simply guided by good and evil, but also turned and twisted with our present-day notions of right and wrong; I was left feeling much less of a hero and more like someone I never wanted to become.

Maybe other people in the same situation would react differently. Most of us can conjure up a scenario in which we would emerge as a hero. But this is a sobering, even frightening world we have made for ourselves, and it is easy to be motivated by contemporary notions of right conduct that have more to do with the posturing and accusations of journalists and politicians than with a respectable understanding of good and evil. Sometimes it takes a situation like a helpless child in the road to remind us of what we have become. It sure did for me.

—Charles Goines

The Gulf War

Over the precipice — Now, after months of dramatic diplomatic activity and propaganda efforts, the culmination has come in the form of the U.S. attack on Iraq. As I write (January 20) it is impossible to predict how long the war will continue or how its course will be run. One can, however, reflect on the events that led to this momentous climax.

The official U.S. line is that the story began with the "naked aggression" of Iraqi forces against the "legitimate government" and people of Kuwait. Without denying the aggression and the consequent atrocities of the Iraqis in Kuwait, one might ponder the ambiguities of the situation. The borders of the Middle East, artifacts of the dismantling of European colonial empires, are more or less arbitrary in relation to the histories and sentiments of the people of the region. The "nations" sketched by colonial administrators with straight lines on a map have little if any relation to the native territories of those loyal to the greater Arab nation or to smaller groups such as the Kurds. Kuwait itself is the product of a British deal with the Sabah family. Iraq and Kuwait have a long history of conflict, and the Kuwaitis have called for and received Western protection on previous occasions.

In any event, the legitimacy of the Kuwaiti regime has no foundation other than mere diplomatic recognition. Americans are supposed to consider it a self-evident truth that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. By this standard, the Emir of Kuwait has no genuine claim to power. It is a travesty of justice for Americans, whose own nation was born in resistance to the claims of a monarch, to restore to autocratic power the multi-billionaire royal family, whose members are lounging comfortably abroad while their "white slaves" sacrifice life and treasure to retrieve the Sabah oil patch.

The Bush administrations' rationales fluctuated almost daily. In the beginning the United States ostensibly sought only to defend Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf sheikdoms. Oil, jobs, and "our way of life" were said to be in jeopardy. When such mundane objectives proved insufficient, fogtier goals replaced them. Envisioning himself as the rightful heir to Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, George Bush would have us believe he is fashioning a "new world order." So Americans are fighting another war to end all wars. Hegel once said that "the only thing one learns from history is that nobody ever learns anything from history." Whatever its status as a universal truth, the aphorism fits the immediate case.

One thing Bush and many others think they have learned from history is the "lesson of Munich." The metaphor of ill-fated appeasement has served repeatedly as a rhetorical club with which any warmonger, no matter how intellectually obtuse, can knock down doves. Saddam Hussein another Hitler? Get serious. If history is to be used no more carefully than this, it really would be better if people remembered nothing at all.

The two cases have hardly anything in common. That many people should consider them close parallels demonstrates the depth of their ignorance of the Middle East and, sadly, how promptly many people urge resort to arms whenever an international difficulty arises.

If an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was such a horror, why did the State Department make no attempt to head off the invasion when its imminence was obvious? Having clearly signaled its indifference, why did the U.S. side react so violently when the impending event actually took place? Once the Iraqis had occupied Kuwait and the world sought a peaceful resolution, why did the government stubbornly refuse to consider a peace conference to discuss the major disputes of the region? The adamant refusal of the Bush administration to countenance the dreaded "linkage" looks like another case of the Israeli tail wagging its American dog.

Congress cowered in the shadows until the eleventh hour. Then, after a couple days of huffing and puffing and self-congratulation for their historic courage in undertaking what was no more than their plain constitutional duty, the solons delivered into George Bush's hands a *carte blanche* to take whatever military actions his mind or emotions might favor. Giving such open-ended authority, as opposed to a clear declaration

Envisioning himself as the rightful heir to Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, George Bush would have us believe he is fashioning a "new world order." So Americans are fighting another war to end all wars.

for or against war, to a president of such manifest self-doubts about his masculinity was, at best, irresponsible. Once again, in the face of potential armed conflict, Congress simply rolled over to play dead. Gladly will the legislators share in any credit or glory that might present itself if the war goes well, but they will slough the blame onto the President if it goes poorly.

The plain fact is that U.S. forces initiated a massive attack on a country with which it was not at war, a country that did not—indeed could not—directly menace America. Is this not a clear case of the sort of action that libertarians condemn as axiomatically wrong? Inevitably many innocent people will be killed, wounded, or otherwise harmed. This war resembles virtually all others in that the masses of people on both sides are being cynically manipulated and sacrificed to gratify the vanities of the leaders and the ruling circles. To personalize the war, describing it as not against the Iraqi people but against Saddam, is morally equivalent to bombing a prison because one has a grievance against its sadistic warden.

No war is good. As Jeannette Rankin said, one can no more

win a war than one can win an earthquake. It is in the very nature of war that both sides lose, though sometimes they lose different things. At its best, war is a necessary evil, but this war was plainly not necessary.

Resort to war is an indictment of people's intelligence. In David Friedman's words, "the direct use of physical force is so poor a solution to the problem of limited resources that it is commonly employed only by small children and great nations." Resort to war displays a lack of imagination as well as a lack of humanity.

But now all such considerations have become moot; the reality of war is the great fact we face. Whether it lasts a week or a month or a year, it will have dire consequences whose long-term repercussions no one can foretell. Exacerbation of Arab enmity against the United States, acts of terrorism, upheavals against the Arab regimes that allied themselves with the Western infidels—these things seem more or less certain. When the shooting stops, none of the fundamental conflicts in the Middle East will be any closer to resolution, and some will be farther from resolution.

Within the United States, political divisions and animosities will be heightened. Great financial burdens will have to be borne, raising the government deficit even higher, with the usu-

Giving such open-ended authority, as opposed to a clear declaration for or against war, to a president of such manifest self-doubts about his masculinity was, at best, irresponsible.

al pernicious effects. To the extent that the U.S. war effort comes to be viewed as a "victory," the military establishment will be glorified and overseas adventures encouraged for many years to come. The military-industrial complex will plunge its grasping hands even deeper into the taxpayers' pockets. A new cohort of war heroes will be created, destined to supply the Congress and the presidency with future politicians possessing the same martial mentality that helped to bring about the catastrophe that began on January 16, 1991.

—Robert Higgs

Bush blunders, America suffers, Bush is rewarded — The Persian Gulf crisis and war are the result of three incredible blunders by George Bush. The crisis and war have already cost Americans billions of dollars, and it will probably cost billions more and the lives of thousands of soldiers before it is over.

Ironically, Bush has been rewarded for his mistakes.

On July 25, Saddam Hussein met with U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie to discuss Kuwait. Saddam had accused Kuwait of conspiring to depress the price of oil and had threatened invasion. Ambassador Glaspie sympathized with Saddam, saying that "many Americans" shared his hope for higher oil prices. And what could Saddam do about it? "I know you need funds. We understand that and our opinion is that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country. But we have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, such as your border disagreement with Kuwait."

Saddam, I suspect, could scarcely believe his ears. Here was the U.S. ambassador saying that it was okay with the U.S. gov-

ernment if he invaded Kuwait.

A week later, Saddam actually did invade Kuwait, conquering it easily.

And how did Bush react? By standing by and allowing the conquest to stand, as his Ambassador had suggested? Well, no. George Bush went ballistic. He ordered American fighting men to Saudi Arabia and aircraft carriers to the Persian Gulf. He went to the United Nations to get an official sanction for a blockade of Iraq and for a war if the blockade failed. He ordered his diplomatic staff to build an international coalition to support the U.S. action, even offering huge bribes to other Arab and Islamic countries for their support. He got the United Nations to set a January 15 deadline for Saddam's withdrawal from Kuwait.

George Bush was planning for war. Never again would he be denounced as a "wimp."

The cost of Iraq's conquest of Kuwait (which Bush encouraged) and of the American occupation of Saudi Arabia (which Bush ordered) has been tremendous. The cost of oil skyrocketed almost immediately, costing Americans every time they filled up their gas tank or purchased home heating oil. The military build-up cost \$2.7 billion dollars in fiscal year 1990, and will cost about \$30 billion in fiscal 1991, exclusive of any costs for actual fighting.

But support for Bush's bellicosity was not universal, even among his allies. On January 14, for example, France proposed that the "allies" offer Saddam a deal: Iraq abandons Kuwait and the U.S. agrees to talk about Palestine. Bush brushed this proposal aside, saying that the U.S. would never "link" the issues of Palestine and Kuwait.

At 6:30 pm EST the following day, the U.S. unleashed the greatest air strike in the history of the world. The attack seemed to go exceedingly well, knocking out a wide variety of military targets with pinpoint precision. Americans rallied behind their president. "The war is over," some Americans said, "and we won."

But the war isn't over, and we haven't won. Of course, the events early in the war have gone well; it has been widely recognized that the U.S. has a tremendous air superiority. The problem is that the war will not be fought exclusively from the air. There are two other important fronts:

1) On the ground in Iraq. People don't live in the air; they live on the ground. And until the ground forces of Iraq are defeated, the war isn't over.

2) In the minds of Arabs. If Arabs rally against the U.S., a land victory in Iraq will be ephemeral. For one thing, the support of the Arab governments (e.g. Egypt, Syria) who joined the American-led "alliance," will certainly evaporate. For another, the remaining monarchies in the oil-rich Arabian peninsula (Saudi Arabia, the Emirates) will likely be overthrown. In the end, virtually all the Middle Eastern oil could end up in the hands of forces extremely hostile to the United States.

It is in the context of the battle for the minds of Arabs that Bush's cavalier dismissal of the French proposal to offer talks about Palestine in exchange for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait was a terrible blunder. Had the U.S. agreed to the proposal, the ball would have been in Saddam's court. He could have refused the offer, in which case his claim to be fighting for justice for the Palestinians would have lost considerable credibility. Or he could have accepted it, at a cost to the West of talk—not concessions—just talk.

But apparently, the U.S. government is committed to support Israel's policies above all, and avoiding any talks about Palestine is a very high priority for the Israeli government. Only the night before the U.S. attacked, Israelis interviewed on ABC's *Nightline* said they hoped for a shooting war against Iraq to shore up support for Israel in America.

During the immediate aftermath of the U.S. attack, there were demonstrations against the U.S. in Tunisia, Morocco, and Mauritania. There were no demonstrations in Egypt, whose support the U.S. had acquired for \$7 billion, but it's hard to make too much of this, since demonstrations against government policy are illegal and are harshly repressed.

Whether Arabs rally behind Saddam as the war progresses remains to be seen. But that risk was greatly enhanced by Bush's dismissal of the French proposal.

The U.S. recognizes the independence of Lithuania and has never recognized its conquest by the Soviets in 1940. Yet the Bush administration responds to the literal crushing of Lithuanians beneath Soviet tanks with a mild rebuke, while unleashing the full force of American military might in defense of a wealthy monarch in the Middle East.

In addition to the higher cost of gas, heating oil and other petroleum products, the billions spent to buy the support of "allies" like Egypt and Turkey, the \$30 billion per year to maintain the military force in Arabia, the American taxpayer will pay \$1 billion *per day* as long as fighting continues. In addition, Americans will pay with the lives of those soldiers who die, and the health of those who are wounded, and the cost of caring for those maimed by the war.

And more. To fight the war in Arabia, the U.S. has concentrated virtually all its combat-ready troops at a location remote from what is ordinarily conceived as its defense perimeter, leaving the U.S. vulnerable to attack. (Unless, of course, we are using surplus troops, not really essential to our defense. If this is the case, of course, it would seem to imply that the President's repeated statement that our military forces were essential to America's defense has been a lie.)

And more still. In relations between the U.S. government and other nations, Bush's blunders have been very expensive. Already, they have run the risk of turning Arabs from Saudi Arabia to Yemen to Morocco against America. Already, they have allowed Soviet dictator Gorbachev to brutally suppress the pro-independence movement in the Baltic states. (It was no coincidence that Gorbachev chose the beginning of the war in the Middle East to order the machine gunning of Lithuanians. The U.S. recognizes the independence of Lithuania and has never recognized its conquest by the Soviets in 1941. Yet somehow, the Bush administration responds to the literal crushing of Lithuanians beneath Soviet tanks with a mild rebuke, while unleashing the full force of American military might in defense of a wealthy monarch in the Middle East. Presumably the administration's wimpy reaction is a *quid pro quo* for Gorbachev's

moral support of the U.S. war.)

Before the blood has stopped flowing in the Middle East, the cost to America will be tremendous—in terms of dollars, in terms of lives lost, in terms of soldiers maimed, in terms of losing the initiative in the breakup of the Soviet Empire, in terms of the demonizing of America throughout the Arab world and the possible loss of influence in that part of the world which produces most of the world's oil, and in other ways we haven't yet imagined.

And all these costs are the results of George Bush's encouragement of Saddam to invade Kuwait, his quick movement of U.S. troops into Arabia, and his refusal to accede to the French peace initiative.

Ironically, George Bush has profited greatly by his blunders. His popularity within the United States has increased, as Americans have rallied around their president. His friends in the oil business have profited from higher oil prices. The chances that Congress will agree to his insistence that the U.S. government maintain a huge military establishment, despite the end of the Cold War, have been enhanced.

Whether Bush will gain in the long run depends on the U.S. prevailing militarily. But politicians have a relatively short time horizon: what Bush needs is a boost in his popularity and political effectiveness sufficient to re-elect him. And the election is only 21 months away.

—F. Bradford

The first casualty — For months, as the president pursued his Persian Gulf policy, Congress did nothing. When criticism mounted that its inaction was causing its constitutional war-declaring authority to ebb away, Congress decided that it better debate the issue or face an adverse judgment by history. So the debate was held over President Bush's request for a resolution authorizing the use of force in response to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait.

But the debate was a fraud, a monumental act of self-deception by the U.S. Congress. There were basically two positions advocated by Congresspersons: Give the president the authority to attack that he seeks, or allow the blockade and sanctions to work.

The issue of a declaration of war, as required by the U.S. Constitution, was never debated. A debate over that issue would have been moot anyway because a state of war already existed between the United States and Iraq. The state of war

How can it debate the issue while 400,000 troops are sitting in a war zone? How can there be truly free discourse about presidential pledges already made?

has existed since August. The imposition of a blockade is an act of war. Laying siege to a state is an act of war. International law says it is. What else could it be? So the debate was not between those who want war and those who don't want it. It was a debate over war strategy. This is a far different issue, for while it is unquestionable that Congress has the constitutional authority to declare war, it has never had the authority to manage the conduct of a war.

The narrow scope of the debate was apparent to anyone who listened to it. Nearly every advocate of continued sanc-

tions prefaced his remarks by saying that he shared President Bush's objectives and only questioned his methods. Nearly every sanctions advocate refused to rule out the future use of force.

A genuine debate over war powers would have examined the president's claim that he has the authority, in the absence of congressional approval, to send troops into a potential combat zone and to involve the country in a blockade against another state. These issues were never debated; Congress has allowed its constitutional authority to be further eroded.

Of course, this is not entirely Congress' fault. How can it debate the issue while 400,000 troops are sitting in a war zone? How can there be truly free discourse about presidential pledges already made? Voting against the president at that point was to invite accusations of undermining the credibility of the United States.

When the United States entered World War I, Randolph Bourne worried about the same issue. Calling a congressional declaration of war "the merest technicality," Bourne wrote that "before such a declaration can take place, the country will have been brought to the very brink of war by the foreign policy of the executive. A long series of steps on the downward path, each one more fatally committing the unsuspecting country to a warlike course of action will have been taken without either the people or its representatives being consulted or expressing its feeling. When the declaration of war is finally demanded by the Executive, the Parliament or Congress could not refuse it without reversing the course of history, without repudiating what has been representing itself in the eyes of the other States as the symbol and interpreter of the nation's will and animus."

The president committed troops, imposed a blockade, and promised to launch a war without congressional authorization, rendering the U.S. Constitution's provision that only Congress can declare war nugatory.

— Sheldon L. Richman

Peace had its chance — The Gulf War is a just war: our armed forces are doing what we pay them to do. However, it is also a war that could have been avoided.

The Bush administration made a great diplomatic mistake when its envoy to Iraq told Saddam that "we have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, such as your border disagreement with Kuwait." This is reminiscent of how we got into the Korean war. In a January 12, 1950 speech to the National Press Club, Secretary of State Dean Acheson described the U.S. defensive perimeter in the Pacific, which included the Aleutians, Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines and points east. It did not include Korea, Formosa or points west. Acheson stated that "no person can guarantee these areas against attack," and that in case of conflict the indigenous peoples would have to defend themselves. He also said that if they failed, the U.N. would be called upon to provide assistance. Even with this caveat, it is easy to see how Stalin interpreted this as a signal that an attack on South Korea would not be resisted, despite the presence of U.S. troops there.

Apparently, the U.S. failed to learn that statements of this sort can be taken literally by potential aggressors. In the present case, one also wonders if Saddam Hussein could take seriously the risk of war with United States, a country which appoints a woman as ambassador. To him, this was a sign of weakness.

Once Saddam invaded Kuwait, the U.S. placed air assets on the ground within one day. This raised the stakes, and was probably not a good idea. Consider what happened when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1973 over the same issues (borders, oil-fields, islands) that motivated its recent invasion. Iraq occupied the northern part of Kuwait until an agreement was reached (mediated by the Soviet Union) in which Kuwait gave up some rights and paid some reparations. Iraq withdrew. U.S. intervention was restrained by fears of possible Soviet reaction. In 1990, this fear had been removed—bipolar stability had ended. Had Bush shown some voluntary restraint when the 1990 invasion took place, the 1973 scenario might have been replayed, and a major crisis averted. Had Iraq not left Kuwait, he could always have deployed our troops later. The only risk was that Saudi Arabia might have been invaded, but this was not a credible threat—witness the lengths Secretary Baker went to get our "invitation."

Though these two crucial blunders "manufactured" the crisis (whether it was intentional or not will be the source of con-

It is of paramount importance to eliminate Saddam Hussein and the long-term Iraqi threat. Saddam Hussein is not a liberal fellow-traveller; he is an aggressor. That alone is not reason to be rid of him. His invasion of Kuwait proved his threat a dangerous, violent reality.

roversy for some time to come), once the U.S. committed troops, the complexion of the situation changed dramatically. The troop presence itself became an issue, in fact the defining issue so far as U.S. policy is concerned. Negotiation entered a new phase, putting Saddam's character to the test.

Peace had its chance, and it did not produce any proposals worth considering, even in the unlikely event Saddam Hussein had accepted them. They all (to my knowledge) promised either explicit linkage to the Palestinian question, or a Mideast Conference in which "all issues" would be laid on the table. George Bush rightly asserted that the precondition for any of these proposals must be the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait without condition, as per the UN resolutions; else international law would be made vacant, and the solution would amount to a *de facto* reward for aggression.

It is now of paramount importance to eliminate Saddam Hussein and the long-term Iraqi threat. Saddam Hussein is not a liberal fellow-traveller; he is an aggressor. That alone is not reason to be rid of him; but when he began to assert his force throughout the Persian Gulf region, it was cause for concern. The U.S. aided him against Iran, because it was believed that Iran was a greater threat to stability. But after the death of Khomeini, Saddam became the greater threat. His invasion of Kuwait proved his threat a dangerous, violent reality.

It has been argued that if Iraq is laid prostrate, Syria and Iran will be left in dominant positions. This may be true; but it is not a reason to neglect a current danger. To prevent future conflict the U.S. might try to be a little more far-seeing in its policies in the region, but that is an issue for post-war diplomacy. Past blunders provide reasons for caution, not excuses to do nothing.

— James S. Robbins

Debunking

The Myth of War Prosperity

by Robert Higgs

Almost everyone—expert and lay person alike—believes that the experience of World War II is unambiguous: the war got the economy out of the Depression. This interpretation is dead wrong. In every meaningful sense, the war intensified and extended the Depression.

On October 22, 1990, while the Bush administration hurried to build up military forces in Saudi Arabia and its environs, *The Wall Street Journal* sounded a sour note. The three-column headline proclaimed: "Gulf War Might Not Aid U.S. Economy."

The subhead, as if it were solving a puzzle, explained that the "Mideast Scenario Differs From Past Conflicts." Clearly, the presumption is that war and economic prosperity go together. Any other relation seems anomalous. The experts quoted in the article agreed that previously war was an "unmitigated plus." Historically, military buildups were "stimulative," putting the economy "on an upward track."

The *Journal's* story began by stating matter-of-factly that "it took World War II to pull the U.S. out of the Great Depression." Undoubtedly this episode is the classic case. While people may argue about the economic effects of World War I or the Vietnam War, almost everyone—expert and lay person alike—believes that the experience of World War II is unambiguous: the war unquestionably got the economy out of the depression. History texts tell the tale in dreary monotony. The experience is commonly regarded as the strongest evidence in support of the Keynesian prescription for curing lackluster macroeconomic performance.

The standard interpretation is wrong. It rests on evidence that will

not bear scrutiny. It exemplifies bad economics and bad history. In large part, the prevailing misconceptions arise from the uncritical use of aggregative concepts and measures of economic performance. Rarely does anyone bother to ask what these familiar indexes really measure, what they really mean. Whatever the merits they may have in application to a peacetime market economy, the standard concepts and measures of national income accounting and the explanations derived from orthodox macroeconomic theories lose their meaning in application to a command economy. The prevailing misinterpretations of the performance of the U.S. economy during the 1940s have arisen because economists and historians have failed to appreciate that the U.S. economy during the war was a command economy.

The Consensus

What makes people believe that "the war got the economy out of the depression"? The evidence adduced usually features (1) great decline in the

standard measure of unemployment, (2) great increase in the standard measure of real GNP, and (3) the slight increase in the standard measure of real private consumption.

The entire episode of apparent business cycle boom during the war years is understood by most writers as an obvious validation of the simple Keynesian model: enormous government spending, financed mainly by selling bonds and creating new money, spurred the military economy itself and had multiplier effects on the civilian economy, the upshot being increased real output and employment and decreased unemployment.

The authors of economic history textbooks all rely on data taken from standard statistical compilations, either the Commerce Department's *Historical Statistics* or the annual reports of the President's Council of Economic Advisors, to document their accounts of economic performance during the 1940s. No one expresses any awareness that those data—for example, GNP measures based on the Commerce Department's concept of

national product—might be problematic. The standard numbers receive universal acceptance at face value.

Employment and Unemployment

The standard measure of the unemployment rate (the number of persons officially unemployed as a percent of civilian labor force) falls greatly between 1940 and 1944, from 14.6 percent to 1.2 percent. Michael Darby's measure of the unemployment rate, which

The country started in 1940 with an unemployment rate of 9.5 percent; the government then pulled the equivalent of 22 percent of the labor force into the armed forces; and, voilà, the unemployment rate dropped to a very low level. No one needs a macroeconomic model to understand these events.

does not count those in New Deal "emergency government employment" as unemployed, falls from 9.5 percent to 1.2 percent. Either measure signals a virtual disappearance of unemployment during the war, but in the circumstances neither measure means what it is commonly taken to mean.

The buildup of an armed force of more than 12 million persons by mid-1945 made an enormous decline of the standard unemployment rate inevitable. But the welfare significance of this decline is far from the usual one. Of the 16 million persons who served in the uniformed armed forces at some time during the war, 10 million were conscripted, and many of those who volunteered did so only to avoid the draft and the consequent likelihood of assignment to the infantry. The civilian labor force during 1940–45 was 54–56 million. Therefore the 12 million serving in the armed forces in 1944–45, most of them under duress, constituted about 18 percent of the total (civilian plus military) labor force, itself much enlarged during the war.

In short, the country started in 1940 with an unemployment rate (Darby concept) of 9.5 percent; the government then pulled the equivalent of 22 percent of the prewar labor force into the armed forces; and, *voilà*, the unemployment rate dropped to a very low level. No one needs a macroeconomic model to understand these events. Given the facts of the draft, no plausible view of the economy is incompatible with the observed decline of the standard unemployment rate. Whether the government ran deficits or not, whether the money stock increased or not, massive military conscription was sure to decrease dramatically the standard rate of unemployment.

So, the tight civilian labor market during the war reflected the creation of huge military employment, but military "jobs" differed categorically. They ranged (sometimes within the same job) from the abjectly disgusting to the intolerably boring to the unspeakably horrifying. Whatever their qualities, they lasted for "the duration." Often they entailed substantial risks of death, dismemberment, and other physical and psychological injury; sustained involvement in combat drove many men insane. Physical casualties included 405,399 dead and 670,846 wounded. To make the military jobs commensurable with the civilian jobs—a common statistical procedure in studies of the war labor market—betrays a monumental obtuseness to the underlying realities. Too often have economists and historians appraised the economic benefits of the war to the civilian population as if those benefits had no causal connection with the horrors of the battlefield. In reality all these events—economic as well as political and military, at home as well as overseas—were threads in the same blood-soaked tapestry.

To see more clearly what happened to the labor force, one can examine the part of the total (civilian plus military) labor force composing the labor "residuum," that is, all those outside nondefense employment. This includes the civilian unemployed plus uniformed members of the armed forces plus civilian employees of the armed forces plus everyone employed in the military supply industries. This measure rises from 17.6 percent in fiscal year

1940 to more than 40 percent during fiscal years 1943–45, then drops abruptly to about 10 percent during fiscal years 1946–49. The extraordinarily high level of the labor residuum during 1942–45 signals that the "prosperous" condition of the labor force during the war was spurious: official unemployment was virtually nonexistent, but four-tenths of the labor force was not being used to produce consumer goods or capital capable of yielding consumer goods in the future. The sharp drop of the labor residuum between fiscal years 1945 and 1946 marks the return of genuine prosperity.

Real Output

To find out what happened to real output during the war, historians usually reach for *Historical Statistics*. Economists typically reach for the latest issue of the annual report of the Council of Economic Advisors. Which source one consults makes a difference. Although the two series show roughly the same profile of real GNP during the 1940s, the latest Commerce Department version indicates (when

The U.S. economy during 1942–45 was the exact opposite of a free market system. Every part of the economy was either directly controlled by the authorities or subject to drastic distortion because of its relations with suppliers and customers who were tightly controlled.

indexed as 1939 = 100) a peak value of 192.7 in 1944, versus a peak value of 172.5 in 1944 in the series taken from *Historical Statistics*. The 12 percent difference is hardly negligible, even though it reflects only statistical as opposed to conceptual revisions during the past twenty years. Both series show a sharp drop of real GNP between 1945 and 1946: 12 percent in the older series, 19 percent in the newer.

Economists and historians who employ the standard real GNP series seem generally unaware that the num-

bers may be conceptually problematic. By contrast, Simon Kuznets, a leading figure in the development of the national income accounts, expressed many concerns. In his *National Product in Wartime* (1945), Kuznets discussed a number of issues that analysts must consider when deciding how to construct national product measures for a nation at war. Noting that the "complexity of observable reality compels the investigator to select one set of assumptions from among many concerning the purpose, value, and scope of the economic activity," he observed that "a major war magnifies these conceptual difficulties, raising questions concerning the ends economic activity is made to pursue. . . [and] the distinction between intermediate and final products." He noted that "war and peace type products . . . cannot be added into a national product total until the differences in the valuation due to differences in the institutional mechanisms that determine their respective market prices are corrected for."

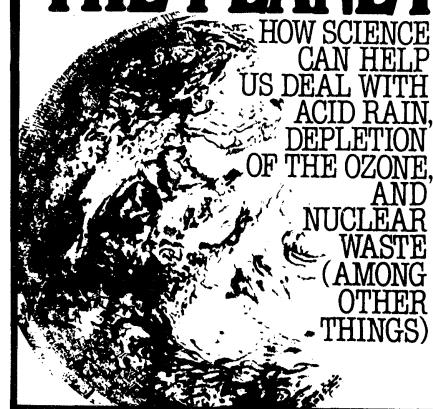
In refined estimates of national product that Kuznets later produced, he made an adjustment for the steep decline in the relative prices of munitions during the war, and he deleted nondurable war output (pay and subsistence of armed forces) from his estimate. The result was to eliminate most of the bulge of real GNP during the war years shown by the official Commerce data. He might have gone even further, however, to delete all government outlays for war purposes. The crucial question is: Does government war expenditure purchase a final good, and hence belong in GNP, or an intermediate good, and hence not belong?

William Nordhaus and James Tobin, in a monograph published in 1972, made numerous adjustments to the standard GNP concept to transform it into what they call a measure of economic welfare (MEW). They aimed to eliminate from GNP "activities that are evidently not directly sources of utility themselves but are regrettably necessary inputs to activities that may yield utility"; that is, they sought to eliminate spending that is "only instrumental." Accordingly they deleted—along with various other items—all national defense spending.

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Following the lead of Nordhaus and Tobin, one arrives at a measure of real GNP that shows no wartime prosperity whatsoever. Now one sees that real GNP in 1944, which the Commerce variant shows at a peak, was 12

The "prosperous" condition of the labor force during the war was spurious: official unemployment was virtually nonexistent, but four-tenths of the labor force was not being used to produce consumer goods or capital capable of yielding consumer goods in the future. The sharp drop of the labor residuum between fiscal years 1945 and 1946 marks the return of genuine prosperity.

percent lower than it had been in 1941. Only with the end of the war did the economy at last break out of its 15-year era of substandard performance, jumping nearly 27 percent between 1945 and 1946.

Finally, one can make an even stronger argument for rejecting the orthodox account of changes in real GNP during the war. One can simply argue that outside a more-or-less competitive market framework, prices become meaningless; all presumption that price equals marginal cost vanishes, and therefore no theoretically justified estimate of real national product is possible. Although mainstream economists cannot be expected to accept this argument, I believe it is sound.

Real Consumption

Some writers who recognize that the expansion of real GNP during the war consisted overwhelmingly of military outputs nevertheless insist that real private consumption also increased. In Seymour Melman's colorful but otherwise representative portrayal, "the economy [was] producing more guns and more butter. Americans had never had it so good."

This view is wrong. It fails to take

sufficiently into account (1) the understatement of actual inflation by the official price indexes, (2) the deterioration of quality and disappearance from the market of many consumer goods, (3) the full effects of the rationing of many widely consumed items, and (4) the additional transaction costs borne and other sacrifices made by consumers in getting the goods that were available. When one corrects the data to provide a more defensible estimate of real consumer well-being during the war, one finds that it declined.

During the war years consumers suffered extraordinary welfare-diminishing changes. To get the goods that were available, millions of people had to move, many of them long distances, to centers of war production. After bearing extraordinary costs of relocation, they often found themselves crowded into poorer housing. Because of the disincentives created by rent controls, the housing got worse each year, as landlords reduced or eliminated maintenance and repairs. Transportation, even commuting to work, became difficult for many workers. No new cars were being produced; used cars were hard to come by because of rationing, and were sold on the black market at steep prices; gasoline and tires were rationed; and public transportation was crowded and inconvenient for many, as well as frequently preempted by the military authorities. Of course, in literally thousands of particular ways, consumers lost their freedom of choice.

One must also recognize that while consumers were actually getting less, they were working harder, longer, and at greater physical risk in the workplace to get the available goods. The ratio of civilian employment to population (aged 14 and over) increased from 47.6 percent in 1940 to 57.9 percent in 1944, as many teenagers left school, women left their homes, and older people left retirement to work. The average workweek in manufacturing, where most of the new jobs were, increased from 38.1 hours in 1940 to 45.2 hours in 1944; and the average workweek increased in most other industries as well, in bituminous coal mining by more than 50 percent. The rate of disabling injuries per hour worked in

manufacturing rose by more than 30 percent between 1940 and its wartime peak in 1943. It is difficult to understand how working harder, longer, and more dangerously in return for a diminished flow of consumer goods comports with the description that "economically speaking, Americans had never had it so good."

Inappropriate Theories

None of the standard macroeconomic theories employed to account for the wartime experience provides an acceptable explanation. The standard models cannot do the job because none is a model of a command economy, and the United States during 1942-45 was a command economy. Regardless of the peculiarities of their assumptions, all the standard macroeconomic models presume the existence of genuine markets for commodities, factor services, and bonds.

None of these assumptions even approximates the conditions that prevailed during the war. Commodity markets were pervasively subject to controls: price controls, rationing, and in some cases outright prohibition in the consumer goods markets; price controls, prohibitions, priorities, conservation and limitation orders, quotas, set-asides, scheduling, allocations, and other restrictions in the markets for raw materials, components, and capital equipment. While taxes were raised enormously, many foods and raw materials received subsidies so that the price controls at the retail level would not drive suppliers from the market. Factor service markets were no freer, and in some respects were less free, than the commodity markets—recall the 10 million men conscripted. Credit markets experienced total control, as the Federal Reserve undertook to reduce and allocate consumer credit and pegged the nominal interest rate on government bonds at a barely positive level. Two-thirds of the investment in manufacturing plants and equipment from July 1940 through June 1945 was financed by the government, and most of the remainder came forth in response to tax concessions and other *de facto* subsidies authorized in 1940 to stimulate the rearmament.

continued on page 30

Essay

Conservatism and Libertarianism

by Richard M. Weaver

Many conservatives have suggested that libertarianism is merely a subset of conservatism. In this classic work, the late Richard Weaver argues that the reverse is true—conservatism is a special kind of libertarianism.

The subject of this paper is the common ground between conservatism and libertarianism—not *possible* common ground, for I am convinced that they already, or naturally, share the same place on the political arc even though sometimes they are found eyeing one another rather uneasily. Among the theorists in both groups it is true, we sometimes sense an unwillingness to come into a common front, apparently out of a feeling that this would require some fatal concessions. I hope to show that this is not so. It can be demonstrated that while the position of the conservative and that of the libertarian may not overlap exactly, they do have an overlapping and they certainly are not in necessary conflict.

The modifier which has been most frequently applied to my own writings is "conservative." I have not exactly courted this but I certainly have not resented it, and if I had to make a choice among the various appellations that are available, this is very likely the one that I would wind up with. I must say that I do not see any harm in it, and in this I am unlike some of my friends, unlike some people with whom I agree on principles, but who appear to think that the term is loaded with unfavorable meanings or at least connotations.

And there is, in fact, a concept of conservatism filled with disagreement which needs to be fought by everyone

who believes that a conservative philosophy is useful and constructive. There are some people who appear to think that conservatism means simply lack of imagination. The conservative, unable to visualize anything else, just wants to sit down with the status quo. There are others who seem to think that conservatism means timidity. The conservative is a person who has a sneaking presentiment that things might be better but he is simply afraid to take the risk of improvement. There are some who seem to think that conservatism is a product of temperamental slowness. If your mind or reflexes don't work as fast as other people's, then you must be a conservative. In these conceptions, the conservative is always found behind, whether from mental or physical deficiency, or just plain fearfulness. Naturally, nobody looks to that kind of person for leadership.

But this is very far from my image of the conservative. A conservative in my view is a man who may be behind the times or up with the times or ahead of the times. It all depends on how you define the times. And this brings us at once to the matter of an essential definition.

It is my contention that a conservative

is a realist, who believes that there is a structure of reality independent of his own will and desire. He believes that there is a creation which was here before him, which exists now not by just his sufferance, and which will be here after he's gone. This structure consists not merely of the great physical world but also of many laws, principles, and regulations which control human behavior. Though this reality is independent of the individual, it is not hostile to him. It is in fact amenable by him in many ways, but it cannot be changed radically and arbitrarily. This is the cardinal point. The conservative holds that man in this world cannot make his will his law without any regard to limits and to the fixed nature of things.

There is in Elizabethan literature a famous poem entitled "A Mirror for Magistrates." It contains stories of a large number of rulers, kings, princes and others, who got into trouble and came to untimely and tragic ends. The story from these that I remember with special vividness concludes with this observation as a moral—and it is a kind of refrain line throughout the account: "He made his will his law." And that has stayed with me as a kind of description of the radical: he makes his will the law, instead of following

the rules of justice and prudence. Fancying that his dream or wish can be substituted for the great world of reality, he gets into a fix from which some good conservative has to rescue him. The conservative I therefore see as standing on *terra firma* of antecedent reality; having accepted some things as given, lasting, and good, he is in a position to use his effort where effort will produce solid results.

Radicals and liberals sometimes try to knock the conservative off balance

My instincts are libertarian, and I am sure that I would never have joined effort with the conservatives if I had not been convinced that they are the defenders of freedom today.

by asking, "What do you want to conserve anyhow?" I regard this question as by now substantially answered. The conservative wants to conserve the great structural reality which has been given us and which is on the whole beneficent.

I might make this a little more precise by saying he wants to respect it, although of course respect must carry with it the idea of conserving. There is a famous saying of Francis Bacon which can be applied with meaning here. Bacon does not seem the most likely figure to be brought into a defense of conservatism, but then every great thinker will say some things of general truth. Bacon declared that man learns to command nature by obeying her.

The same holds for the moral, social, and political worlds. One does not command these by simply trying to kick them over. One commands them as far as it is possible to do so or appropriate to do so by obeying them—by taking due note of their laws and regulations and by following these and then proceeding to further ends. Of course, the conservative does not accept everything that is as both right and unchangeable. That is contrary to the very law of life, but the changes that he makes are regardful of the forms that antedate, over-arch, and include him. The progress that he makes, therefore, is not something that will be undone as soon as his back is turned.

The attitude of the radical toward the real order is contemptuous, not to say contumacious. It is a very pervasive idea in radical thinking that nothing can be superior to man. This accounts, of course, for his usual indifference or hostility toward religion and it accounts also for his impatience with existing human institutions. His attitude is that anything man wants he both can and shall have, and impediments in the way are regarded as either accidents or affronts.

This is very easy to show from the language he habitually uses. He is a great scorner of the past and is always living in or for the future. Now since the future can never be anything more than one's subjective projection and since he affirmed that he believes only in the future, we are quite justified in saying that the radical lives in a world of fancy. Whatever of the present does not accord with his notions he classifies as "belonging to the past," and this will be done away with as soon as he and his party can get around to it. Whereas

the conservative takes his lesson from a past that has objectified itself, the radical takes his from cues out of a future that is really the product of wishful thinking.

As a general rule, I am opposed to psychoanalyzing the opposition, knowing that this is a game both sides can play. But here we have a case so palpable that one is tempted to make an exception. So many of these radicals seem to be persons of disordered personality. There is something suspicious about this impassioned altruism. They often seem to be struggling to cover up some deep inner lack by trying to reform the habits or institutions of people thousands of miles away. Something like this becomes thus an obsession, almost to the point—or maybe to the point—of irrationality. Not that I regard all desire to reform the world as a sign of being crazy. Even more than that I would go along with Plato and say that some forms of craziness may be divinely inspired. But here we come to an essential distinction, and a parting of the ways. There is a difference between trying to reform your fellow beings by the normal processes of logical demonstration, appeal, and moral suasion—there is a difference between that and passing over to the use of force or constraint. The former is something all of us engage in every day. The latter is what makes the modern radical dangerous and perhaps in a sense demented. His first thought now is to get control of the state to make all men equal or to make all men rich, or failing that to make all men equally unhappy. This use of political instrumentality to coerce people to conform with his dream, in the face of their belief in a real order, is our reason, I think, for objecting to the radical. As an individual he may think about molding the world to his heart's desire. He may even publish the results of his thinking. But when he tries to use the instrumentalities of the state to bring about his wishes then all of us are involved, and we have to take our stand.

Here, as I see it, is where conservatives and libertarians can stand on common ground. The libertarian, if my impression is correct, is a person who is interested chiefly in "freedom from." He is interested in setting sharp



"Boy, I don't believe the post office sometimes —
this was mailed to me during a previous life!"

bounds to the authority of the state or other political forms over the individual. The right of the individual to an inviolable area of freedom as large as possible is thus his main concern. Libertarianism defined in this way is not as broad a philosophy as I conceive conservatism to be. It is narrower in purview and it is essentially negative, but this negative aspect is its very virtue.

It took the study of John Calhoun to wake me up to a realization that a constitution is and should be primarily a negative document. A constitution—and we may think primarily of the Constitution of the United States in this connection—is more to be revered for what it prohibits than for what it authorizes. A constitution is a series of "thou shalt nots" to the government, specifying the ways in which the liberties of individuals and of groups are *not* to be invaded. A constitution is a protection against that kind of arbitrary interference to which government left to itself is prone. It is right therefore to

The libertarian is interested in setting sharp bounds to the authority of the state or other political forms over the individual. Libertarianism defined in this way is not as broad a philosophy as I conceive conservatism to be. It is narrower in purview and it is essentially negative, but this negative aspect is its very virtue.

refer to our Constitution as a charter of liberties through its negative provisions, and it is no accident that in our day the friends of liberty have been pleaders for constitutional government. I think conservatives and libertarians stand together in being this kind of constitutionalists. Both want a settled code of freedom for the individual.

This is a shared *political* position, but we can show that their agreement has a philosophical basis. Both of them believe that there is an order of things which will largely take care of itself if

you leave it alone. There are operating laws in nature and in human nature which are best not interfered with or not interfered with very much. If you try to change or suspend them by government fiat, the cost is greater than the return, the disorganization is expensive, the ensuing frustration painful. These laws are part of what I earlier referred to as the structure of reality. Just as there are certain conditions of efficiency for operations in the physical world, so there are conditions for efficient operation in the social and economic worlds.

There is a concept expressed by some economists today in the word "praxeology." Praxeology, briefly defined, is the science of how things work because of their essential natures. We find this out not by consulting our wishes but by observing *them*. For example, I believe it is a praxeological law that a seller will always try to get as much as he can for what he has to sell, and a buyer will always try to pay as little as he can to get it. That is a law so universal that we think of it as part of the order of things. Not only is this law a reliable index of human behavior; it also makes possible the free market economy, with its extremely important contribution to political freedom.

The conservative and the libertarian agree that it is not only presumption, it is folly to try to interfere with the workings of a praxeology. One makes use of it, yes, in the same way that a follower of Bacon makes use of nature by obeying her. The great difference is that one is recognizing the objective; one is recognizing the laws that regulate man's affairs. Since the conservative and libertarian believe that these cannot be wished away through the establishment of a Utopia, they are both conservators of the real world.

My instincts are libertarian, and I am sure that I would never have joined effort with the conservatives if I had not been convinced that they are the defenders of freedom today. This fact is so evident in the contemporary world that one hardly needs to point out examples of it.

It requires only a little experience in politics or publishing for one to learn that the enemies of freedom today are

the radicals and the militant liberals. Not only do they propose through their reforms to reconstruct and regiment us, they also propose to keep us from hearing the other side. Anyone who has contended with Marxists and

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their first cousins, the totalitarian liberals, knows that they have no intention of giving the conservative alternative a chance to compete with their doctrines for popular acceptance. If by some accident they are compelled physically to listen, it is with indifference or a contempt because they really consider the matter a closed question—that is, no longer on the agenda of discussable things.

The conservative, on the other hand, is tolerant because he has something to tolerate from, because he has in a sense squared himself with the structure of reality. Since his position does not depend upon fiat and wish fulfillment, he does not have to be nervously defensive about it. A new idea or an opposing idea is not going to topple his. He is accordingly a much fairer man and I think a much more humane man than his opposite whom I have been characterizing. He doesn't feel that terrible need to exterminate the enemy which seems to inflame so many radicals of both the past and the present.

This can be shown by relating an incident from the career of George Washington, who figures in my mind as the archetypal American conservative—a man versed in the ways of the world but uncorrupted by them, a man

whose unshakeable realism saved our infant republic. Washington, for example, had the very ticklish job of maintaining relations with radical, revolutionary France during both of his administrations. In 1789 there arrived in this country one Citizen Genet, new minister from the French Republic, whose commission it really was to stir up trouble. He tried to involve the United States in a new war with Great Britain, and he even threatened to appeal to the American people over the head of their government. He was the sharpest thorn in Washington's side for some while.

But the next year, 1794, came the fall of Genet's party, the Gironde, and the accession to power of Robespierre and his radical Jacobin government. Genet was replaced, and Washington was requested to send him back to France, where he undoubtedly would have faced the guillotine. But, and I here quote the words of a recent biographer: "Washington would take no agency, even remote, in the bloody business of the French terror; whatever Genet had done or tried to do, the president did

not intend to order the young man to his doom. If Genet wished, it was agreed, he might have political asylum in America." So Genet became an American citizen and lived peacefully for forty years in our conservative republic. This impresses me as a classical instance of conservative tolerance and essential humaneness.

But thinking back to this period may remind us that Washington was himself a revolutionist, and this to my mind refutes any notion that a conservative must be distinguished by timidity and apathy. When the time is out of joint, he can be an active exponent of change. The difference is that he does not have the inflamed zeal of his counterpart, the radical revolutionist, who thinks that he must cut off the heads of his opponents because he cannot be objective about his own frustrations. It is interesting to know in taking leave of this subject that Washington's Farewell Address was noticed by the London *Times*. What it had to say was this: "General Washington's address is the most complete comment upon English Clubs and Clubbists, upon factions and

parties and factious partisans. The authority of this revolutionist may be set up against the wild and wicked revolutionists of Europe, if not as an altar against an altar at least as an altar against sacrilege."

In conclusion, I maintain that the conservative in his proper character and role is a defender of liberty. He is such because he takes his stand on the real order of things and because he has a very modest estimate of man's ability to change that order through the coercive power of the state. He is prepared to tolerate diversity of life and opinion because he knows that not all things are of his making and that it is right within reason to let each follow the law of his own being. A rigid equalitarianism is to him unthinkable because he appreciates that truth so well expressed by the poet Blake: "One law for the lion and the ox is oppression." I therefore can see nothing to keep him from joining hands with the libertarian, who arrives at the same position by a different route, perhaps, but out of the same impulse to condemn arbitrary power. □

Higgs, "The Myth of War Prosperity," continued from page 26

In sum, the U.S. economy during 1942–45 was the exact opposite of a free market system. Every part of the economy was either directly controlled by the authorities or subject to drastic distortion because its relations with suppliers and customers who were tightly controlled. To suppose that the economy allocated resources in response to prices set by the free play of demands and supplies in underlying markets for commodities, factor services, and bonds is to

suppose a complete fiction. So the assumptions that underlie standard macro models are unsatisfied by the empirical reality of the wartime economy.

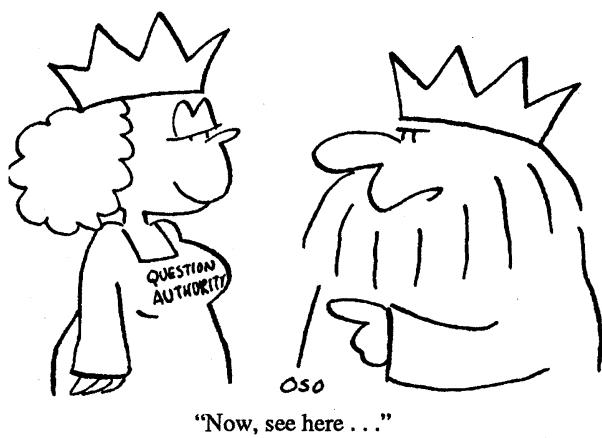
The upsurge of military commodity production during the war—undeniably an awesome accomplishment when measured piece by piece in physical units of munitions—should not be viewed as an expansion phase of the ordinary business cycle, a phase that fits into the longer-term ebb and flow of

the economy before and after the war. The war production surge was *sui generis* and must be understood on its own unique terms. Examined carefully, it bore no close resemblance to what is normally understood by the term prosperity. The U.S. economy

during the war was exactly what the slogan said, an arsenal. As such, it produced what the authorities ordered, using the materials and methods they required and charging the prices they dictated.

I would not want my argument to be understood as pacifistic. Anyone who views it as such is missing the point. In certain circumstances, people may prefer to turn away from their usual economic pursuits and take up the production and use of weapons. I am not saying that people who make such a choice are necessarily making a mistake. Indeed, if ever such actions were not mistaken, World War II was the occasion.

The point is simply that choices have costs. World War II has been portrayed as what amounts to a case of something for nothing: more guns and more butter—"the good war." It was not like that. Nor can we expect any future case to be like that. People cannot have their enemy's blood and eat it too. □



Observation

Keep the Hot Side Tepid

by R. W. Bradford

"Everything is connected." This applies not only to ecological science, but also to the ozone layer, intellectual dishonesty, and the McDLT.

For the past few years, there has been a persistent campaign against cheap plastic foam insulated boxes used by fast food restaurants. At first, the argument was that fully halogenated chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) release free chlorine which destroys ozone in the stratosphere, thereby allowing more biologically effective ultraviolet light, or UV-B, to reach the earth.

Excess UV-B was suspected of harming plankton in the Antarctic. Plankton stands at the beginning of a food chain that culminates in the highest form of life: the plankton is eaten by a fish, which is eaten by another fish . . . which is eventually eaten by *Homo yuppicus greenius*. Not only that, it is argued, increased ultraviolet light can hurt crop yields of soybeans and wheat.

The conclusion seems inescapable: the use of foam leads to an ecological nightmare, the destruction of the earth and of life on it.

There are, however, problems with this theory.

- The ozone "hole" (actually a thinning of the ozone layer) over Antarctica is real and has been known to scientists since 1956. It occurs every spring, lasts a few weeks, and goes away. For reasons that are not known, the ozone "hole" got worse between 1983 and 1987; it was during this time that the CFC thesis was first proposed. Unfortunately for the advocates of the ban, the seasonal ozone "hole" has since stabilized, despite continued dispersal of CFCs into the atmosphere.

- Compared to other sources of atmospheric chlorine, CFC is small potatoes. Annual human production of CFCs peaked at 1.1 million tons, resulting in 750,000 tons of chlorine. Each year, the evaporation of sea water adds four hundred times as much chlorine—300 million tons—into the atmosphere. There are about 100 volcanic eruptions each year; most are in remote locations where emissions are not monitored. The eruption of Mt. St. Augustine in Alaska in 1976 injected about 318 million tons of hydrochloric acid directly into the atmosphere—more than 400 times the peak annual chlorine dispersal from CFCs.

- Even if one accepts the dubious propositions that CFCs are having a significant effect on the ozone layer and that depletion of the ozone layer increases the amount of UV-B to reach the earth, there is no reason to worry much over it. The simple fact is that at the same time that NASA satellites were reporting a depletion of the ozone layer (from 1974 to 1985), the actual amount of UV-B reaching the earth was *decreasing*. Of the eight locations in the U.S. where data have been

recorded, the average annual decreases varied from 0.4% at Philadelphia to 1.1% at Minneapolis. The average decrease in the eight cities was 0.71%. (*Science*, Vol. 239, Feb 12, 1988, pp 762-3.) So far, the only places where UV-B radiation has been measured are these eight U.S. locations, and it is possible that the decreases are not indicative of the earth as a whole, and no one knows why UV-B is decreasing at these locations. But there is no evidence at all that UV-B radiation is increasing, and it is plain that the ecosystem is far more complex than most environmentally-sensitive people imagine.

- About two years ago, scientists in the Antarctic discovered to their surprise that real plankton, unlike hypothetical plankton, weren't harmed significantly by ultraviolet light. "Researchers aren't seeing any pronounced effect from ultraviolet radiation," according to Penny Penhale, the National Science Foundation's program manager for polar biology and medicine.

- The notion that excess UV-B threatens the yield of wheat and soybeans, however popular it may be on

public television, is without scientific foundation: both crops have long prospered in the tropics, where UV-B radiation is much higher than in the temperate zone.

Not surprisingly, the 1987-88 Annual Report of the Rand Corporation concluded: "The extent of

Environmental horror stories often have a life that transcends scientific evidence, partly because they are good copy for popular news media, but mostly because they provide a rationale for those who advocate increasing the power of government and reducing individual liberty.

ozone depletion and the severity of the consequences of projected emission levels are extremely uncertain. Projections of future depletion are based on complex simulation models that have not been reconciled with the limited available measurements . . ." Of course, one cannot totally dismiss any possibility that CFCs harm the environment. But in the absence of evidence to the contrary, there is no reason to believe the horror stories, let alone base laws on them.

However, environmental horror stories often have a life that transcends scientific evidence, partly because they are good copy for popular news media, but mostly because they provide a rationale for those who advocate increasing the power of government and reducing individual liberty. As the popularity of socialism has declined in the past few years, opponents of human liberty have flocked to the environmental movement. In addition, scientists engaged in research funded by the government find it easier to obtain funding and to increase their funding if they arrive at cataclysmic conclusions.

Indeed, some scientists openly advocate lying to the public. For example, Stephen Schneider, proponent of the theory that CFCs are depleting the ozone, told a group of scientists: "[W]e

have to offer up scary scenarios, make simplified, dramatic statements, and make little mention of any doubts we may have. Each of us has to decide what the best balance is between being effective and being honest."

So even today the anti-CFC story makes the rounds. When challenged, environmentalists often fall back to the position that depletion of the ozone layer can cause increased skin cancer in fair-skinned people. There is no doubt that skin cancer is caused by ultraviolet light, which is present in all sunlight. But the increase in skin cancer in recent years is attributed almost solely to the increasing popularity of the well-tanned look; scientists believe that skin-cancer could be eliminated altogether by keeping out of the sun or using sun-block lotions.

A year ago, Port Townsend, the little town where I live, outlawed the use of plastic foam, ostensibly because of the logic stated above. I say "ostensibly" because the focus of the public discussion of the issue was panic—panic about McDonald's. The gigantic purveyor of hamburgers had recently opened a restaurant in Port Townsend over considerable opposition led by operators of local fast-food joints and upper middle class leftish activists who see Port Townsend as a pristine community untouched by such hints of lower class America. Petitions were circulated, arguing that no one in Port Townsend wanted a McDonald's and urging the city council somehow to outlaw it, and besides, McDonald's buys beef from Brazil where rain forests are cut down for cattle pasture, which contributes to the greenhouse effect . . .

McDonald's was prepared. It knew from its research that local consumers would welcome lower-priced, consistently prepared fast food. It had acquired a piece of land already designated on the city's "master plan" for a restaurant. When the City Council publicly discussed ways to keep McDonald's out, attorneys for McDonald's stated that they would fight any legal harassment with all the resources at their command. And the city council backed down, reluctantly allowing McDonald's to build its tiny store.

However, the politically active elitists soon seized on McDonald's use of plastic foam boxes for its sandwiches, and trotted out the quasi-scientific rationale for banning the use of foam. The city council was happy to oblige: this was a way of getting McDonald's without much danger that McDonald's would sue.

As the activist elite had anticipated, no one on the city council was aware of the problems in the argument that CFCs cause ozone depletion and ozone depletion damages the eco-system. But McDonald's did bring up an argument that seemed, on the surface, convincing: the plastic foam that it used was produced by a new non-CFC process.

The anti-McDonald's forces countered this argument brilliantly. Port Townsend is a small town, they said, and its inspectors possess neither the scientific knowledge nor the laboratory equipment necessary to distinguish between foam produced with CFCs and CFC-free foam. So the only way to protect our environment is to ban all foam,

Those in the market for fast food at modest prices are not the same people who circulate petitions for the environment or lobby city council. They are mostly the poor and the young. They often don't even vote. So to hell with them.

whether it might be damaging the environment or not. And besides, they said, foam takes up a lot of room in landfills.

McDonald's countered that it is implementing a program to recycle the plastic it uses, and pointed out that paper boxes for food packaging required coatings, which prevent their being recycled at all. It has since been discovered that the role of fast food packaging in landfill has been grossly overestimated: although most people suppose it amounts to some 20% to 30% of landfill, actual archeological investigations of garbage dumps reveal fast food packaging (including foam) amounts to less than 1/10 of 1%.

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But by this time it was plain that logic would not prevail against the anti-McDonald's eco-paranoia. The city council passed the law and residents of Port Townsend no longer are contributing to the destruction of the environment by using a product that might be manufactured with CFCs but isn't, and might take up a lot of space in landfills, but doesn't.

It also meant that people who want to buy a McDLT could no longer get it with its "hot side hot and its cool side cool." (The McDLT consists of the usual slab of ground beef on one side of a bun, with tomato, lettuce, cheese and salad dressing on the other. It is packaged in a foam container which keeps the two halves separate until eaten, with the "hot side hot and the cool side cool," according to McDonald's advertisements.) Unless eaten immediately after preparation, a McDLT served in Port Townsend is a mass of room-temperature goo, having more in common with garbage than with a sandwich. But no matter. Those in the market for fast food at modest prices are not the same people who circulate petitions for the environment or lobby city council. They are mostly the poor and the young. They often don't even vote. So to hell with them.

Now it appears that the gushy slop served by McDonald's in Port Townsend's will soon be served all over America: on November 1, in response to pressure from environmentalists, McDonald's announced that it is phasing out the use of foam boxes for all the sandwiches at all its 11,400+ stores. In a press release, McDonald's president Ed Rensi acknowledged that foam packaging is environmentally sound and admitted to submitting to pressure. The press release also quoted a leader of an environmental pressure group that had led the attack on McDonald's, claiming that McDonald's had "scored an environmental touchdown" by banning foam packaging.

Meanwhile, in Port Townsend, the environmentalists still don't eat at McDonald's. They prefer trendy little restaurants serving trendy little meals, smug in the knowledge that they are doing good. None seem to worry about the environmental sense of the water they drink with their meals, put into

non-refillable bottles halfway around the world, transported to America on ships powered by non-renewable fossil fuels emitting hydrocarbons.

Curiously, the same New York Times that told of McDonald's cave-in to eco-hysteria, reported the latest beverage for socially-conscious residents of the Big Apple: Glaciér, which is water "from melting snow on the glacial tundra in British Columbia," bottled in plastic bottles, designed by "Phillipe Starck, the French designer who put his imprimatur on New York's Royalton and Paramount Hotels," and available only at Bloomingdale's at \$1.49 per bottle. Glaciér will eventually be offered at "design and food stores" in New York and will, I suppose, one day find its way to Port Townsend's cafés, where environmentally smug residents will drink it in

preference to the local tap water that comes from melting snow on the glacial tundra of the nearby Olympic Mountains.

There is a final irony to the whole episode. Why did McDonald's change to foam cartons in the first place, way back in the 1970s, when the McDLT with its cool side and its hot side was still just a gleam in Ray Kroc's eye? According to a statement from McDonald's, the company changed from paper to foam "because of serious concerns at that time from environmentalists about the destruction of trees, water pollution and the high use of energy involved in manufacturing paper."

What are the environmentalists really seeking? A cleaner environment? Or control of private businesses? Or maybe just control, period. □

Big Mac Attack

by John Baden

In recent years, McDonald's has worked with other Fortune 500 companies to recycle its foam packaging on an experimental basis. They succeeded in developing ways to recycle foam into long-lived and useful products including food trays, waterproof insulation board, office products, toys, videocassette cases, and combs.

McDonald's and Amoco Chemical Company, however, wanted to go further. They planned to team up in early 1991 to launch a major recycling effort. McDonald's would collect and compress the foam "clamshells" into bundles on-site, transport them to central facilities via United Parcel Service, and use them as feedstock in petroleum refineries.

A leading environmental group, the Environmental Defense Fund, brought pressure on McDonald's to stop using foam packaging altogether. EDF is noted for devising creative solutions to vexing ecological problems, often with incentive-based approaches. The work of Tom Graff, Zack Willie, and other analysts at EDF is widely respected and admired by policy analysts and econo-

mists. EDF may have done more than any other environmental group to pursue ecological integrity within the framework of private property rights and market incentives. But even this group is sometimes seduced by "politically correct" marketing opportunities.

Its campaign against McDonald's use of foam is apparently opportunistic behavior: EDF traded possible long-term ecological benefits for short-term gains in membership and income. EDF, like other major environmental groups, has become a captive of its expanded budget; it appears to have an addiction for members and money. Officers and professional staffs are expensive. To maintain their budgets, environmental groups must operate in part as a marketing organization offering a new and innovative range of products. They offer opportunities for citizens to invest their time and money in policy reforms linked to good intentions. Although recycling is the penance of environmentalism, the "clamshell" apparently was beyond redemption. The marketing prospects of attacking

continued on page 38

Interview

Shadows in the Future

by Frank Fox

Socialism may not work, and "social justice" may be little more than jargon. But in certain influential Eastern European circles, these ideas are not yet dead.

As we approach the year 2000, there is a growing inclination to write epitaphs on past ideologies and sing hosannas on the end of history. Yet it may be too early to sound a requiem over the demise of Marxist ideology in the world, to say nothing of other forms of socialism. During a recent trip to Czechoslovakia, I noted the emergence of a political leadership laying claim to a socialist tradition, one that identifies with the aborted reforms of the 1905 revolution in Russia rather than the Bolshevik *coup d'état* of 1917. An interview with a leading Czech politician shed light on efforts to make the socialist ideology respectable again.

Zdenek Masopust is a Doctor of Laws, an editor of a prestigious law journal, one of forty-seven Communist Party members in the Parliament of Czechoslovakia and a Deputy Chairman of a Parliamentary Committee for Constitution and Legislation. He is also a practicing Catholic. I reached his small office on Narodni Trida, a wide street that leads to Wenceslas Square in Prague. Close by is the famous *Laterna Magika* theater, where live performances are synchronized expertly with film and recorded music. A few steps from his door one passes a dark arcade where a bronze sculpture of eight defiant hands with fingers spread in the familiar V sign, is illuminated by candlelight. The engraved date is 17/11/1989. On that day Czech police cornered and beat mercilessly, on that

very spot, protesting students. Rumors of one death, and the widespread revulsion that followed, were important catalysts that precipitated the "velvet revolution" that eventually brought Vaclav Havel to the seat of power.

Masopust's cluttered little office and his rumpled attire were more in keeping with his academic career (he has been a teacher of international law for more than two decades) than with his current political prominence. I was especially interested in his views of the similarities between the American and Czechoslovak legal traditions, a subject on which he is an expert. After all, Czechoslovak independence was largely the result of the efforts of Woodrow Wilson. During President Bush's visit to Prague this past November, he informed President Havel that we would return to Czechoslovakia a letter that Wilson wrote to Thomas Masaryk, the founding father of the modern Czech state. It was a letter outlining a declaration of independence and a constitution.

Masopust, nonetheless, empha-

sized the differences between the two systems, offering arguments that are particularly relevant today. "America is a federation," he said, "a country that allows for ethnic and other differences, without calling into question the national compact that makes all people who live under it Americans. Our people do not have the experience of being governed by laws formulated by judicial precedent, by an evolutionary process as you have." He referred, with more than a touch of envy, to the American system, which on the eve of the second millennium functions under a Constitution that is reinterpreted while retaining its original character. This is in contrast to his own country where four distinctly different constitutions have been promulgated in seventy years. The chief stumbling block, he stated, was the question of minorities. The 10 million Czechs form about 65% of the population, but there are about 5 million Slovaks, enough that during World War II, its leaders, with Hitler's approval, established a rump state, and close to 700,000 Hungarians as well as

Germans and Gypsies. "Our first President, Masaryk, used to refer to our country as one tree with two branches, but no one sees such an idealized image anymore," said Masopust. This pessimistic assessment of Czechoslovakia's minorities problem was confirmed recently when Havel, in a speech welcoming President Bush, took the unusual step of addressing his countrymen on this very question. Pointing to the growing dissension between Czechs and Slovaks, he quoted Alexander Hamilton, who had warned Americans two centuries earlier that "Among the greatest obstacles obstructing the passage of the new Constitution, one can easily discern the undisguised interest of a certain group of people in each state to prevent the coming of all changes to restrict their power."

"Provisorium" was a word that Masopust used several times in our conversation. He meant by it a state of suspended animation in which he and his countrymen lived under Communist rule. "During the last forty years," he said in his precise manner, "we lived in a kind of historical *provisorium*. It was as if time had stopped. It seems we are now returning to a pre-1948, or even a pre-1938 stage. And this is particularly true of the problem between the Czechs and the Slovaks. Officially, we were always told that these ethnic frictions were a thing of the past, but obviously they were not. To an American all this may seem hopelessly out of date, like some 19th century romanticism, but believe me it is quite real."

Masopust made it clear that he questioned President Havel's ability to deal with the problems confronting the country, a view that one heard more frequently in Czechoslovakia than outside. A stonemason working at the presidential palace, said to me "Havel? I give him two years. A man of ideals but he has no money. I mean, he has his own money, but the rest of us need it too. We have to get someone who will get us money. A good,

is now part of a pluralistic society. "After December 1989, it was decided to drop all the traditional statements about a 'class struggle,' 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' 'leading role of the Communist Party,' and all that rubbish." He was one of the pioneers of that transformation. "Now you may ask," he continued, "why we still call ourselves Communists. I have asked that question of myself, but I feel it more honest to do that. At least for now. Otherwise we would be under attack for just changing and running under a new firm." I was struck by his choice of such a business term, but it occurred to me that the language of trade and enterprise may have a special attraction for communists, whose envy of the capitalist system, even as they struggled against it, has not been sufficiently analyzed.

"After December 1989, it was decided to drop all the traditional statements about a 'class struggle,' 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' 'leading role of the Communist Party,' and all that rubbish."

honest man, but no good. Thank you very much." I heard more sophisticated comments about the President during my stay in Prague, but no one put it more succinctly.

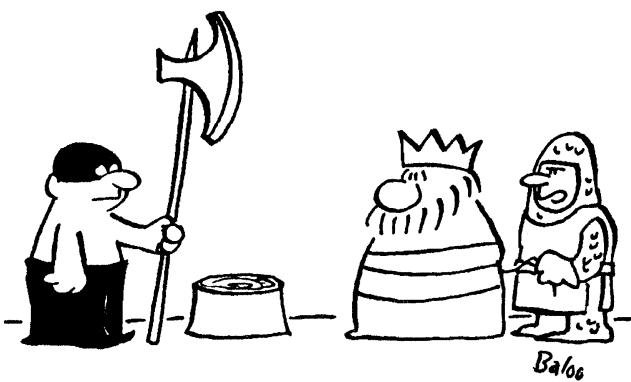
Masopust reserved his harshest comments for the Civic Forum, the umbrella party that oversaw the "velvet revolution" as the power of the Communist Party ebbed. "It seems to me," he said, "that the Civic Forum may be imitating too much the ways of the Communists. They exclude people. The so-called 'leading role' of the Communist Party has been replaced by the 'leading role' of another central committee." It should be noted that while the Civic Forum emerged as a

leading party in Parliament with about a hundred deputies, the Communist Party has a respectable forty-seven, making it, in terms of numbers, the second strongest.

Masopust explained at some length the transformation of the Communist Party, which he said

Masopust's comments on the Social Democrats, another party that lays claim to a socialist tradition, who received only 5% of the vote making them eligible only as an extra-parliamentary opposition party without voting power, showed his astuteness as a politician.

"I think that the Social Democrats lost in my country because of their own mistakes. They started with a strong anti-Communist platform and of course it was very nice to criticize what had been the 'official line.' Nobody believed it any more anyway. They were just beating a dead horse. But in my own travels when I campaigned for office I realized that the Communist Party was not just the leadership. There were hundreds and thousands of Moms and Pops in the villages. They never abused power because they had none and they didn't steal because they never had access to goods. They were just ordinary people with a simple idea of social justice. The Social Democrats missed a great opportunity. They should have said to those who had voted for the Communists in the past 'We take you. Forget the past. Nobody is perfect. Mistakes were made, but not by you.' Yes, they should have accepted the masses. You see, I really believe that there is a strong, decent, democratic left in this country."



"Oh, quit whimpering — anybody would think you were the only king who ever had his head chopped off!"

Masopust himself is campaigning hard for the 1991 elections, particularly in the small localities. He claims he is getting a good response. "I tell them that I am in favor of a system of social justice. I am very critical of the former Communist Party that could not live on the one and a half billion crowns a year that were given by Party members and that even appropriated State property. My credibility with the voters is sound," he added with more than a touch of pride, "they see me as an expert on constitutional law, which I am. I feel good about myself."

His views were an interesting amalgam of ideas culled from the whole spectrum of economic theories. "Now this will surprise you," he remarked at one point, smiling mischievously. "I really believe that your former President Reagan was right when he said that a social revolution is not a vehicle for real change. For a social transformation to be really effective, it has to be done slowly, step by step. It is not for the barricades. And the ordinary person must benefit from

"The Communist Party is not just the leadership. There are hundreds and thousands of Moms and Pops in the villages. They never abused power because they had none and they didn't steal because they never had access to goods. They were just ordinary people with a simple idea of social justice."

the changes. I also agree with Milton Friedman when he says that there is no such thing as a 'free lunch.' All that society gives must be paid by someone. Social equality is not supposed to inhibit productivity. We have to reward excellence. It does not pay to become an engineer when the wages favor the worker. But I also believe that those who fail should not fall on their faces. We want to have motivation but at the same time we want to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. In Germany, those out of

work get five hundred marks as compensation. This gives them a chance to live a normal life."

Masopust was certain that efforts to foist "Thatcherism" or "Reaganism" on Eastern Europe would not work. He looked rather to Scandinavian countries, Sweden in particular, to provide a model for the new *Sozialrechtstaat*, a socially-oriented constitutional state. The conflict in Eastern Europe, he insisted, would not be between capitalism or communism, but over the nature of government as it has evolved in Europe since the Middle Ages.

Masopust's view of the Soviet Union was not just critical, it was frequently derisive. "Do you want to know," he chuckled in anticipation of his punch line, "how the legacy of Marxism was distributed unequally among nations? The best got the Capital and the rest of us got the Manifesto." His frequent trips to Russia hastened his disenchantment with the Soviet style of socialism. "I must tell you," he said, "that although many of my Russian colleagues were members of the Communist Party, they represented themselves to me as Cadets [Constitutional Democrats]. I met enough of them in the Soviet Union to convince me that there was a tremendous gulf between words and deeds. I saw the misery. Who was it in your country who said 'I saw the future and it works?' Well, I saw the present and it didn't. I took my cue from that. Now maybe my timing was off, but that remains to be seen."

I asked about his Catholicism. There has been a cartoon of him, a Communist Party member, his hands folded in prayer. How did he reconcile his religious beliefs with membership in the Party? He saw no contradiction. He believes in a Church actively committed to social change. "Certainly, the Catholic Church should not let itself be portrayed as a church associated with wealth." His remarks on religion led to a more personal recollection of his experiences in his youth. Clearly he had always considered himself a dissident. He never supported the hardline leadership of

the Clement Gottwald or Gustav Husak variety. He rejoiced with his countrymen when Alexander Dubcek proposed Marxism with a "human face." After the invasion by Warsaw

"For a social transformation to be really effective, it has to be done slowly, step by step. It is not for the barricades. And the ordinary person must benefit from the changes. Milton Friedman is right when he says that there is no such thing as a 'free lunch.' All that society gives must be paid by someone. Social equality is not supposed to inhibit productivity."

Pact countries in 1968 there seemed little possibility for future reform. Masopust explained his joining of the Communist Party in 1981, a year before the death of Leonid Brezhnev, as a pragmatic step, an expectation that now an era was ending and the communist system might finally embark on a long process of reform. "I thought that this would go on for the rest of my life," he said. "Now who would have thought that it could come with a speed of light. So here I am, a Catholic, not a believer in the Communist Party, yet a member of it. Still, I don't feel that I should drop my affiliation like so much dirty linen. You know, when I was a student at the Charles University Law School I was almost expelled for my ideas. I took it as normal to have free elections and political competition. I was and am a firm believer in freedom of speech, of press and association. That was and is my credo."

For a man in his early fifties, Masopust's hopeful attitude about the future and his positive approach to his role in politics is in sharp contrast to the views of many of his generation. When one talks to people in their forties and fifties in Eastern Europe today one is conscious of a sense of ennui, a physical weariness, a feeling of hurt

that comes from a "missed life," from having lived bound hand and foot to an ideology that no one believed in. This is perhaps what Masopust meant by a "provisorium." Seldom before in history has the accidental chronology of birth meant so much in the lives of ordinary people. Was one born before or after 1945? Did he spend his formative years in an Eastern Europe still in the grip of an aging tyrant in the Kremlin, or did one begin his ascent (as did Gorbachev) during the relative thaw of the Khrushchev era? Did one live to see Havel installed in the Prague castle with enough years left on life's calendar to start anew, or did the moment of liberation come too late for an individual exhausted with years of struggle? Masopust seemed unusual in this respect. A middle-aged man, ready to start a new career, resolved to "give it a shot," as he would say from his well-stocked compendium of Americanisms.

Since my interview with Masopust, events in Czechoslovakia have shown that Communism is far from a spent force. True, there has been increasing criticism of the Communist Party within Czechoslovakia and large rallies supporting a government proposal to confiscate the Party's property and demands that the Party be banned altogether, its leaders expelled from Parliament and former officials placed on trial. This angry mood was stirred by the comments of Vasil Mohorita, the Party's First Secretary. This thirty-

eight year old former head of the Communist youth organization made a speech announcing the end of the "national understanding," and calling for the start of a "hard and uncompromising"

Masopust is certain that efforts to foist "Thatcherism" or "Reaganism" on Eastern Europe will not work. He looks rather to Scandinavian countries to provide the best model. The conflict in Eastern Europe, he insisted, would not be between capitalism or communism, but over the nature of government as it has evolved in Europe since the Middle Ages.

mising" struggle. He has since explained that his remarks were merely in opposition to the government's economic plans and did not mean that his Party is opposed to a pluralistic system. Mohorita has suggested that at the upcoming Party Congress the name of his organization be changed to "Party of Labor and Democratic Socialism."

In spite of the criticism of the Communists, the Party has fielded candidates for local elections in 74 districts. President Havel's Civic Forum

has done so in 73 districts. On November 23, in the first free municipal elections in 52 years, the voters gave the Civic Forum 35% of their votes, with the Communists coming in second with 17%. This was a decline for the Civic Forum, which in the June elections to Parliament had received 49.5%. Masopust may have been right about the Moms and Pops.

Conventional wisdom has it that underneath many of yesterday's Marxists there lurks a potential adherent of Adam Smith and that the almost magical expression "joint-ventures" brings a gleam to the eyes of even the most convinced socialist. Zdenek Masopust, dissident, Communist Party member and member of Parliament, a practicing Catholic, may be proof that there is a new and unnamed political movement that will embrace many of the theories that have been discredited. It is possible that eventually other countries in Eastern Europe (and perhaps Russia as well) will settle on some sort of a socialist ideology and individuals such as Masopust may emerge as alternatives to a freewheeling capitalism. Whether these future leaders in Eastern Europe will be like Zdenek Masopust, whose hero is the late Olaf Palme, or whether these will be like Vasil Mohorita, who still believes it is necessary to study the works of Marx and Lenin, or perhaps still another variety of a "man of the left," it is too soon to tell. □

Baden, "Big Mac Attack," continued from page 34

fast food foam were sufficiently attractive to the organization to get the recycling programs scuttled.

EDF's success in pressuring McDonald's to stop using foam carries an environmental cost: the loss of information that would have been produced by the proposed recycling experiment. Right now, we also don't know whether foam "clamshells" make more environmental sense than paper alternatives. We don't know whether foam can be recycled in a way that makes environmental or economic sense. We don't understand the costs associated with disposal of each. The

McDonald's-Amoco effort would have provided at least partial answers to these questions.

Perhaps the effort would have conclusively demonstrated that the use of foam containers by the fast food industry makes a great deal of sense. On the other hand, they may have discovered that the cost of collection, transportation and processing exceeded acceptable limits. Regardless of the conclusion, in the process of investigating this question consumers, processors, and retailers might have discovered new data on behavior and technical innovations that would have

transformed the packaging dilemma in unexpected and fruitful ways. At a minimum, we would have new useful information.

In the popular view, both McDonald's and EDF gained White Hats and Green Thumbs for their decision to ban the infamous "clamshell." However, there is reason for those of us who want to improve the environment to regret the decision to abort an important experiment which might well have improved the environmental record of a fast food system visited by 1 out of 7 Americans each day. This is a real loss. □

The Way We Are

by Stephen Cox

A visit to the mysterious East gave *Liberty* senior editor Stephen Cox an opportunity to reflect on the origins of free people.

Three of my friends and I planned to visit Egypt during our Christmas vacation, but in November we cancelled our trip, victims of a baseless fear that war would soon break out and we would end up cowering in the Cairo Hilton, besieged by Islamic fundamentalists. But we wanted to go somewhere, and somehow it was decided that we would visit the one place on earth more formidably exotic, to a bunch of Californians, than ancient Africa.

We would undertake a pilgrimage to Washington, D.C.

After all, the Washington Monument is just a larger, heavier obelisk; the capital as a whole is just a more elaborate display of pyramids. But to be on the safe side, we also arranged to escape from the crocodile-faced gods of Washington for a few days in the Virginia countryside.

We did it all: we meditated in the galleries of Congress, hassled our Representative for tickets to the "VIP" White House tour, stoically endured the lighting of the White House Christmas tree, celebrated the real Christmas at St. John's Church, saw much and learned little at the glittery Smithsonian, studied the topography of the battles of Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Yorktown, admired the view from Jefferson's piazza, and repressed our urge to correct the guides at Williamsburg. And what we discovered in D.C. and Virginia was, indeed, stranger than anything we would have found in Egypt. We discovered the strangeness of our normal lives, the

triumphant strangeness of our liberty.

The liberty invented by people like Jefferson and defended by people like Washington and Lafayette had, in an important sense, made us the people we are—and allowed us, in ways inconceivable to inhabitants of other times and places, to transcend ourselves and see ourselves in the making.

At Jamestown in southern Virginia, men in armor stockaded themselves against the swamps and "savages" and dreamed of ripping off enough wealth to live happily back in Europe. From this messy experiment in exploitation grew an America that finally demonstrated to Europe, and the rest of the world, that real wealth lies not in tobacco, furs, or even gold, but in an open society. To walk through those swamps now, on a nice sunny day with a good rental car a few steps behind, ready to deliver you, in half an hour, to the pancake and waffle shops of Williamsburg, is to ask yourself: What would I be like if certain seventeenth- and eighteenth-century experiments had not taken the course they did? Who would I be without the freedom and "material" progress pro-

vided by the open society?

Well, who were "you" even as recently as three or four generations ago? Judged by the lives of my ancestors, I was a poor farmer or shopkeeper anchored firmly in backwoods Illinois. Judged by the lives of *their* ancestors, my three friends were farmers and fishermen eking out a living in Sweden and along the north coast of Norway; and they were young Russians living in Lithuania, anxious to escape the tsar's conscription. Their relatives still live in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. Some of them are still trying to escape from societies in which they cannot become what American liberty has enabled the four of us to be: a physicist, the head of a successful company, a film editor, a college professor—people who share a culture of freedom and have the modest resources necessary to participate fully in that culture.

Only in a society of limited government and its inseparable complement, free enterprise, would we four be sufficiently free from poverty and from ethnic and legal barriers to decide that we would all like to travel across the continent to gawk at the underside of

the Capitol dome and, in a few days, manage without much trouble to do just that.

You may be thinking that something more than this might be expected from the American experiment in liberty; you may be thinking that its positive results have often been tardy and limited and that its survival is by no means assured. You may be thinking about what bad art that *Apotheosis of Washington* on the underside of the Capitol dome really is.

Sure, I agree with you. But the ability to see America, or any other free society, in the context of its history, to see it as an experiment rather than an unchangeable structure—in the way in which Egypt and Russia and every other pre-capitalist society regarded

itself — this is the gift of self-transcendence that the open (all right, the relatively open) society gives everyone who cares to enjoy it.

And there are times when one sees oneself very clearly by looking at something else. There were a lot of those times for us. We—the descendants of some very serious immigrant types—rediscovered the pleasure that the sheer exuberant silliness of modern American capitalism gives to us. Don't miss those waffle shops in Williamsburg.

We rediscovered the exact degree of embarrassed respect that we as Americans have for the embodied expressions of our imperfect constitution. On some mornings, the Supreme Court building does look as "majestic" as it's

supposed to look.

And we rediscovered our respect for things that really are majestic but don't look that way, or any particular way. On a bright winter afternoon, we drove up a little ridge at Chancellorsville and looked down a long field of stalks glowing orange in the setting sun. Here on May 3, 1862, a Sunday morning, Jeb Stuart's 30 pieces of Confederate artillery opened fire on opposing Federal troops, setting the neighboring woods ablaze and forcing the Union army to retreat from Chancellorsville and escape toward the river. We walked casually to where the cannons stood and watched a family of wild deer lunging through the orange stalks. If this be mysticism, make the most of it. □

Poetry

Beijing Memo

Unexpected spring
took the cities by storm:
blossoms filled the streets
encircling the square.
First, the flowers,
then, the air,
mountain-fresh and wild
as the ocean wind.

Beneath the wall,
murmuring laughter rang;
new songs were sung
by three thousand voices.
Then, three thousand silences.

There are some things
that don't yet have words,
which lies cannot destroy.
When salt's in the wind,
seed's ripe for planting.
Someday, we'll laugh again.

Something To Be Said

There is something to be said
for every dream in every head,
but my advice is to be shy
of every flag that passes by.

For every flag I've ever seen
was once a fragment of a dream,
torn from the sky by iron fists,
nailed naked to a piece of stick.

Why rush to join the brief parade?
That banner bright is sure to fade,
for, captive, dreams betray our trust
as ranks of iron run to rust.

There is something to be said:
Those who dream are never dead.
But those who give their dreams away
find iron by night and dust by day.

—W. Luther Jett

Defense

au naturel rights

by David G. Danielson

Public nudity is a crime, despite the fact that nudity is usually considered a sign of vulnerability . . . the very opposite of aggression, which is the hallmark of criminality. What's really going on here?

A member of the National Rifle Association once asked me if I believed in the right to bear arms. I answered, "Sir, I'm a libertarian. I believe in the right to bare *everything*."

That's a right the Reagan-Meese Department of Justice clearly *did not* believe in. Among that prudish team's parting gifts to America was the Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act of 1988. Thanks to the Act, parents who are nudists run the risk of being arrested as "child pornographers" merely for taking family pictures at a nudist resort. Also at obvious risk are publishers of nudist periodicals. Publication of an updated edition of Lee Baxandall's *World Guide to Nude Beaches and Recreation*, the skinny-dippers' bible, was delayed while the publisher worried over the possibility of incurring the government's wrath.

There was good reason to worry. Consider the ordeal of internationally known photographer Jock Sturges. The FBI called on him one day, with a van. Into it they loaded all his dark-room equipment, computer equipment, business records, and thousands of negatives—damaging many of the negatives by careless handling. Meanwhile, an associate of Sturges, photo technician Joe Semien, was arrested by the FBI. Semien was incarcerated and interrogated for two days, before being released at a *habeas corpus* hearing. What had caused the FBI to subject Sturges and Semien to this Gestapo-like treatment? Believe it or not, it was one roll of film containing pictures Sturges had taken on a cloth-

ing-optimal beach in France, showing parents and kids walking on the sand. Neither the grown-ups nor the kids were doing anything sexual, mind you, but they were nude. Under the vague Reagan-Meese Act, that's evidently all it takes for law enforcement agencies to consider photographs "child porn." It isn't child molesting or the sexual exploitation of children that the Act attacks. It's nudism.

"[The Act] is not about protecting children at all," observed columnist Tom Teepen in the Atlanta *Constitution*. "The federal law books already boast 32 obscenity and child pornography statutes; another is hardly needed. But pressed by the censorious Reagan administration and the religious right, senators and representatives enacted legislation that could cost honest publishers and booksellers their business and sentence them to prison for publishing and selling mere nude pictures. Child pornography was just the excuse, a respectable-seeming cover for lawmakers intent on patently unconstitutional ends."

State and local governments are no more hospitable toward nudists. In fact, even semi-nudists can be in for a

rough time in some jurisdictions.

In May 1990, police arrested four men and a woman on Sarasota, Florida's North Lido Beach, for the crime of wearing a string swimsuit known as a thong. The five had violated a city ordinance banning exposure of the "anal cleft." After mug shots and fingerprinting, the dangerous criminals were put behind bars until they could make bail.

The Reagan-Meese Act on the national level, and North Lido Beach's ban of "anal cleft exposure" on the local level, barely scratch the surface. The U.S. abounds in laws against public nudity. The crime is often referred to as "indecent exposure."

But what needs exposing is the logic behind the legislation: just what kind of "crimes" are these acts? Is walking down Main Street in the buff comparable to murder? Rape? Robbery? Or more like smoking marijuana, burning flags, or gambling . . . that is, crimes by virtue of violating public opinion rather than by virtue of harming another human being? It seems to me to be the latter, although many a prude has tried to convince me that there would, indeed, be "victims" if

anti-nudity laws were repealed. Consider, for instance, the "pragmatic" argument for these laws.

The Pragmatic Prude

"If the government allowed naked people to walk down Main Street," so the argument goes, "motorists would be distracted by the sight and accidents would result."

I fail to see how this argument differs from that of a racial bigot, who claims: "Seeing a mixed couple holding

Feminist nudists have objected to anti-nudity laws on the grounds that these laws entail gender discrimination. A bare-chested man isn't "nude," says the law, but a bare-chested woman is. Granted there are differences between men's chests and women's. But then there are differences between Arnold Schwarzenegger's chest and Pee Wee Herman's.

hands as they stroll down Main Street, would distract and upset me, as I drive by, increasing my chances of an accident. Therefore, mixed couples should be prohibited by law from holding hands in public. The civil rights people won't like it, but let's be pragmatic; such a law will prevent accidents."

To both the bigot and the prude, I would answer: if you have such fears, perhaps you should choose to let someone else do the driving, someone more mature and self-controlled than you.

In truth, of course, if public nudity were legalized, the sight of a naked pedestrian would very quickly lose its novelty and would be no more distracting to motorists than is the sight of a gorgeous clothed pedestrian at present.

Church and State

Humility, most religions teach, is a virtue. Translated into an imperative, it is the command: Don't be a show-off. If you show off your mind, your crea-

tivity, your industry—if you show the world just how productive you can be—the government will penalize you with progressive taxes, and your chances of entering heaven will decrease to less than the chances of a camel passing through a needle's eye. If you show off your body, you will likewise be in for a rough time from churches and states. Cover up your mind, cover up your body, don't show off, is the egalitarian command of both institutions. The church holds humility to be a virtue, and the state enforces that "virtue" at the point of a gun.

Thus, historically, in Islamic theocracies, women have been legally required to keep their faces covered in public. Similarly, in our Christian theocratic state, women, under penalty of law, have historically been required to keep their breasts covered, and both genders to keep their genital areas veiled. In both Islamic and Christian dictatorships, the church holds that certain portions of the human anatomy, because they are sexually appealing, are therefore "evil," "dirty," "dangerous," and should be hidden. And in both societies, the government's message is: politicians have the right and duty to enforce, at gunpoint, the church's hostile attitude toward the flesh.

If no pragmatic, secular, rational justification can be found for anti-nudity laws, then we should face the fact that these laws are nothing more than the product of religion's traditional bias against the flesh (and its traditional bias for humility). And if that's the case, then the principle of Separation of Church and State would seem to require the repeal of laws against public nudity.

The KGB versus Nudists

Let us not forget about that other widespread religion: communism. "For communism is a religion, too," notes Petr Beckmann, "with its church (party), its priests, its scriptures, its rituals, its dogmas, its liturgy; the communist claims about dialectical materialism and Marxism-Leninism being a science are just so much more mumbo-jumbo."^{*}

As do other religions, communism preaches humility: don't show off,

* Petr Beckmann, *A History of Pi* [Pi], Golem Press, 1971.

don't display the pride of thinking for yourself and questioning the party line. Being so like other religions in these respects, it is no surprise to find communism differing not at all from other faiths in its attitude toward nudism.

Slavenka Drakulich, a Yugoslav political writer, has noted just how anti-sex Eastern bloc countries are: "The puritanism of the Soviet media has thus far forbidden any representation whatsoever of female sexuality. . . . *Playboy* and other men's magazines featuring female nudity are considered pornographic and are confiscated at the borders of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc countries. But even relatively innocent publications are suspect. Last summer a colleague of mine who works for the Yugoslav political journal *Nin* went to the Soviet Union. He brought with him a magazine that had on its cover a picture of a woman sunbathing topless. A customs official snipped off the portion of the picture displaying the woman's breasts

If the emperor truly had no clothes, perhaps he wouldn't be an emperor. Without his majestic robes or sparkling military uniform, what scrawny, wrinkled, or obese dictator would be as impressive as the brawny worker he seeks to awe and rule? There's nothing wrong with a Saddam Hussein that a public de-pantsing couldn't cure.

and returned the magazine to its owner."

But she does not believe that this censorship is motivated by typically Western concerns about the exploitation of women. "A woman is deemed a worker and a mother first, and a woman second. A unique female identity is not recognized; its emergence must await better times." Whether or not *glasnost* will unravel Soviet prudery remains to be seen, but she is skeptical, for the experience of Yugoslavia

in the 1960s reveals just how revolutionary nudism can be:

In that decade, the press was hit by a wave of nudity, first in low-brow magazines, like *Adam i Eva* and *Cik*, and eventually in serious newspapers, including *Vjesnik*, the bulletin of the Socialist Alliance of Croatia. Nudity was one of the signs of democratization and greater freedom of the press, and that process did not occur without bureaucratic resistance. There were cries for censorship, and some issues of the magazines were banned or even burned. Should we take that response as a sign of socialist concern for the humiliation of women? Again, no. Sexual repression is the hallmark of patriarchal authoritarian societies. Paradoxical as it may sound, in Yugoslavia pictures of a naked female body were a sign of freedom, of liberation from moral and ideological strictures.

Much to her credit, Ms Drakulich was unafraid of drawing a surprising (if unpopular) moral from this analysis:

Did the appearance of women as sex objects, among other things, encourage the development of a consciousness of female sexuality apart from childbearing? Was it in the pages of the male chauvinist press that women for the first time were publicly granted the right to their own sexual identity—closely linked to male pleasure, of course, but still an autonomous entity? Did it, perhaps, work to women's interest, however odd that may sound? And in that case, doesn't the Soviet Union need a nude *glasnost*?

The Law's Double-Standard

Feminist nudists have objected to anti-nudity laws on the grounds that

these laws entail gender discrimination. A bare-chested man isn't "nude," says the law, but a bare-chested woman is. Granted there are differences between men's chests and women's. But then there are differences between Arnold Schwarzenegger's chest and Pee Wee Herman's. If one bare-chested human is "nude" in the eyes of the law, then it is unjust for the law to say that another bare-chested human isn't.

In 1986, eleven plaintiffs filed a class action suit against the Cape Cod National Seashore, in an effort to eliminate a long-standing regulation against the nude use of beaches at Cape Cod. After two years of legal effort had been spent, along with \$36,000 provided by the Naturist Society and other nudist organizations, the battle was abandoned because of a disagreement over tactics.

Most of the funding for the fight came from Lee Baxandall, president of the Naturist Society, who felt Cape Cod's anti-nudity regulation should be fought on first amendment grounds, as a violation of freedom of expression. But six of the plaintiffs wanted the regulation fought on *fourteenth amendment* grounds, as discrimination against women. After all, the regulation forced women, but not men, to cover their chests in public.

Explains Nikki Craft, one of the six: "Some of us have come to realize that shirt-free rights for women and first amendment rights for nudists are incompatible legal strategies when used in the same case. In a case where the plaintiffs are shirt-free women, a first amendment challenge must begin by

accepting the presumption that a bare-chested woman is 'nude,' but the logic of gender equality rejects this sexist principle. If a bare-chested man is not 'nude,' then neither is a bare-chested woman. The Cape Cod National

The shy taxpayer, it seems to me, has no right to order the nudist taxpayer to cover up, nor has the taxpaying nudist the right to order the taxpaying prude to disrobe. Any facility that both nudists and shy folks are compelled by law to fund should be a clothing-optional facility.

Seashore's anti-nudity regulation treats women differently than men by requiring us to keep our chests covered. This unmistakable gender discrimination, based on male-defined mores and a sexist definition of 'nudity,' is the issue that our demonstrations were meant to challenge, and the predominate concern we had hoped our case would address." She prefers to use the fourteenth amendment to fight anti-nudity laws, because, "These first amendment arguments will win even more rights for the commercial exploiters of sex, for proprietors of topless bars, for pornographers and perhaps, at some point, even nudists and naturists, but it is highly unlikely that women as a class will benefit."

While Ms. Craft's objection to the law's definition of "nudity" is well taken, she's mistaken that women "as a class" don't benefit from the first amendment approach to fighting anti-nudity laws. Freedom of expression benefits women "as a class," unless Ms. Craft thinks it's a class whose members have nothing to express. And she seems oblivious to the possibility that some women might be, or might like to be, proprietors of topless bars. In any event, all women should be free to go into that business, so the freedom of such proprietors is in the interest of women "as a class." (Though Ms. Craft's snide use of the

continued on page 50



"I can't believe it — they threw me out for violating local community standards."

Autobiographical Note

Freedom Now

by Linda Locke

In 1970, Morris and Linda Tannehill published The Market for Liberty, a book hailed by many as a pioneering work of "no government" libertarianism. After the Tannehills' self-published edition went out of print, new editions were published by Arno Press (1972) and by Laissez Faire Books (1984). It remains in print to this day, more than 20 years after its original publication.

The Tannehills were divorced shortly after publication of the book, and before long, both fell into obscurity. Morris Tannehill founded a psychological cult, worked as a typesetter, a night clerk in a motel, and other marginal occupations. He died of liver failure in 1988.

The primary author of The Market for Liberty was Linda Tannehill, who reclaimed her maiden name shortly after the divorce. She dropped out of both the libertarian movement and the mainstream of American life. We asked her for a "memoir of her personal history." Here she tells her story.

I live on the road, in a converted school bus that i fixed up myself (and very nice it is, too). I spend winter in the southwest, and the rest of the year wherever inclination takes me, usually following the Rainbow Gathering if it's not held too far from where i am. Last summer, it took me to northern Minnesota, and the summer before to Nevada. I maintain myself financially as an independent craftswoman, making and selling rope sandals. I live pretty marginally, money-wise.

I lived in the Missouri Ozarks for 13 years, most of that time as part of a small back-to-the-land group. We had 25 acres and raised almost all our own food—we had an organic garden and orchard, plus chickens, pigs, beef and dairy cattle, and bees—and boy, did we eat well! It was something i'd wanted to do ever since i was a child, and i enjoyed it a lot. But traveling is also something i've always wanted to do, and you can't devote yourself to a piece of land and still travel a lot. So now i'm doing the travel things and enjoying them too.

I've fallen in love with the area around Glenwood, New Mexico. The isolation, the scenery, the wilderness, and the independent-minded people all make it my kind of place. My long-range goal is eventually to buy a couple acres somewhere around there and maintain it as a home base, giving me the constant option of traveling or staying home in a place i love.

As far as "history and memoirs," i think the only significant thing about me is that i stopped theorizing about a free society and instead devoted my energies to living as a free person. I opted out of the producer-consumer-taxpayer system in which most people are enmeshed—i refused to be a cog in the Establishment's machine. So i live wherever i want (in some of the most beautiful country there is) and come and go when i please. I have lots of free time because i work only enough to keep myself in necessities (and it's amazing how little is *really* necessary to one's comfort and happiness). I meet interesting people from many walks of life and have lots of friends. In short, i've spent the last couple of decades living the way i *want* to, and not the way i "have" to.

Many people tell me they envy my lifestyle and wish they could do it too. I tell them they can, if they can get free from the artificial "need" for material goods that leads to three forms of slavery: consumer slavery, wage slavery, and debt slavery. And most of them sigh, and keep on wishing. I can only conclude that freedom belongs to those with the courage to grasp it. □

Biography

The Woman vs the State

by William Holtz

While other fighters for liberty talked a good game, Rose Wilder Lane put her life where her words were.

As the New Deal moved into its second decade and the U.S. entered World War II, intellectual interest in libertarian ideas had almost vanished. By 1943, support for freedom was at its nadir.

That year, three woman novelists published books that began the renaissance of liberty. One, Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, was a novel that sold moderately well when released and eventually became a bestseller. The other two were works of non-fiction: Isabel Paterson's *The God of the Machine* and Rose Wilder Lane's *The Discovery of Freedom*. Neither sold very well, but both provided intellectual succor for libertarians during the dark war years and eventually became classics of libertarian thought.

The commercial failure of *The Discovery of Freedom* did not discourage Rose Wilder Lane from continuing her battle for human liberty. She was convinced that government controls of prices, production, and distribution would suppress the natural productivity of the American people and needlessly distort the economy. Late the previous year, she had begun to write a column for the Pittsburgh *Courier*, a small weekly black newspaper, which she now used to articulate her opposition to wartime rationing.

Against the background of a short history of the inefficiencies of planned economies, she granted the good intentions of the government but raised the question of the government's role

in personal economic affairs once the war was ended; clearly she was attempting to educate a voting public for a future repudiation of the New Deal.

In her private letters, her tone was less moderate and the occasion became one in which her principles demanded a personal symbolic act:

I have no ration card and shan't have one; every time the radio says, "You must get your ration card," I turn purple with rage and snap it off; no radio lives to say must to me. I do not believe in rationing, in principle; I am certain it causes more shortages than it relieves; for instance the meat shortage now was caused by "control" of feeds, and price-fixing, which made farmers kill off their calves and young stock because of uncertainty about what orders would be issued next. Also, I can live without buying any food, so let those who can't, have whatever is in the groceries. All I need is flour and salt; even sugar I rarely use, I still have most of a 25 lb. sack...

As spring came, she planned a large garden in the yard of her home near Danbury, Connecticut, and negotiated with neighbors to go shares on a

cow, a few pigs, and some chickens. It would be the Ozarks of the turn-of-the-century again, as it was when she was young: homemade butter and cheese, fresh meat and vegetables in season, and hams and home-canned foods in the winter. And remembering the scarcities of Europe after the last war, she had already in 1939 hoarded six cases of Ivory soap against an uncertain future. For a long time she had informally traded baked-goods to her neighbors for occasional rides to town. Only the rationing of cigarettes would stump her, if it should occur, and she looked forward to the chance to quit a habit of twenty-five years.

Alarmed, Mary Paxton Keeley, an old friend, offered to send her rationed goods, as Rose herself had sent scarce items to her old friend Elsie Benedict in embattled England. "Thank you a lot," Rose replied, "but you mustn't send me rationed things."

I intend to get along without them. And if you think a minute you will see that I can't refuse to get a ration card and at the same time take coffee and sugar and so on from people who do; that would be just taking a stand and then getting out from under the

consequences.

She went on to elaborate the principle. "Of course it does not matter what we get along without. It isn't that I mind not having anything."

She said, "Yes, I wrote that. What have the State Police to do with any opinion that an American citizen wants to express?"

The trooper said, more sternly, "I do not like your attitude."

A furious American rose to her full height. "You do not like my attitude! I am an American citizen. I hire you, I pay you. And you have the insolence to question my attitude? The point is that I don't like your attitude. What is this—the Gestapo?"

But it seems to me that what our boys are fighting for, America's real meaning, is going to get lost behind their backs if we who stay at home don't defend it. If we let our country be national-socialized, if we let ourselves submit to politicians' "control" of everything we do and get so used to it that we don't get rid of every one of these restrictions upon personal freedom just the minute that the war is won, then this whole war will be just waste motion and lost lives. For what is the use of getting rid of Hitler if we let our own country adopt his political philosophy? As Roosevelt says, it is the Nazi philosophy that must be got rid of. And it can not be got rid of by believing it. It can only be got rid of by "little people" like you and me, who won't submit to bureaucratic regimentation.

And so she prepared for her own long winter. In time, she had 1200 jars of food of all kinds safely stored down in her cellar.¹

* * *

The spring of 1943 brought her yet another battle, really more of a picket-

line skirmish, but one that vaulted her briefly into the national news and gave her another hearing. She was accustomed to listening to radio commentator Samuel Grafton, who one day asked his listeners' opinions on an extension of Social Security. Rose had seen the end of a version of Social Security in the chaos of the Weimar republic; she could see the economic implications of an unfunded national obligation that operated like a Ponzi scheme; and she was appalled that her government should presume to choose for its citizens how they should prepare for their old age. She had recently spoken on the radio against Social Security, and the facts of her argument were fresh in her mind. On a postcard she scribbled a brief message:

If school teachers say . . . "We believe in Social Security," the children will ask, "Then why did you fight Germany?" All these "Social Security" laws are German, instituted by Bismarck and expanded by Hitler. Americans believe in freedom, in not being taxed for their own good and bossed by bureaucrats.

Fearing that her professional name would draw undue attention—perhaps hoping that her message would carry the force of a voice from "the little people"—she signed her married name, Mrs. C. G. Lane, and gave her address.

At some point in the mails, her postcard passed under the eyes of the Danbury postmaster, who, in the tense wartime atmosphere, thought it subversive, and copied the message and sent it to the state FBI headquarters. What followed was an exercise in error, bureaucratic bumbling, and general bad judgment that left the Bureau with egg on its face and spread Rose's name and picture across the nation's newspapers. It also produced an FBI file of over a hundred pages.

The first error was that her name was mis-copied as C. G. Lang, and when an FBI record search yielded no one by that name at her address, the matter was turned over to the State Police for investigation, who sent out a young trooper perhaps over-impressed with the importance of his mission. The remainder of the story is best told in Rose's own words, for that is what made it to the papers. She had cast herself as a character in a small drama:

Two weeks later she was digging dandelions from her lawn, when a State Police car stopped at her gate. A State Trooper, uniformed and armed, walked up to her. He said that he was investigating subversive activities for the FBI, and asked her whether anyone in her house had sent a postcard to Samuel Grafton.

She said that she had sent one. The State Trooper leafed through a sheaf of papers clipped to a board, found a typed copy of the words she had written, held this before her eyes and asked sternly if she had written those words.

She said, "Yes, I wrote that. What have the State Police to do with any opinion that an American citizen wants to express?"

The trooper said, more sternly, "I do not like your attitude."

A furious American rose to her full height. "You do not like my attitude! I am an American citizen. I hire you, I pay you. And you have the insolence to question my attitude? The point is that I don't like your attitude. What is this—the Gestapo?"

The young State Trooper said hastily, "Oh no, nothing like that. I was not trying to frighten you."

"You know perfectly well that your uniform and your tone would frighten a great many Americans in this neighborhood who remember the police methods in Europe. You know, or you should know, that any investigation of opinions by the American police is outrageous!"

"Oh, come now," the trooper protested. "At least give me credit for coming to you, instead of going around among your neighbors and gathering gossip about you. I only want to know whether you wrote that postcard."

"Is that a subversive activity?" she demanded.

Somewhat confused, the trooper answered, "Yes."

"Then I'm subversive as all hell!" she told him. "I'm against all this so-called Social Security, and I'll tell you why." And for five minutes she told him why. "I say this, and I write this, and I broadcast it on the radio, and I'm going to keep right on doing it till you put me in jail. Write that down and report it to your superiors."

By the time it reached print the story had no doubt been polished by several tellings in letters to her friends ("it's really too bad that only the dandelions heard me," she wrote Dorothy Thompson). But someone drew it to

the attention of the National Economic Council, a small New York-based group of conservative businessmen and laissez-faire theorists who published occasional pamphlets and a monthly review of books. "What is this, the Gestapo?" was published anonymously under their imprint and mailed widely throughout the country. When the story was picked up by the national newspapers, the FBI was forced into embarrassed denials of impropriety and Rose had suddenly a wider national exposure than her books had ever gained her.

Locally, her new fame won her an audience before the Danbury Lions' Club, to whom she gave a talk warning against creeping socialism, the New Deal secret police, and communist-inspired books in the schools; this talk was also reported to the FBI by a Danbury informant as "seditious." As a curious cap to this story, and an indi-

"It seems to me that what our boys are fighting for, America's real meaning, is going to get lost behind their backs if we who stay at home don't defend it. If we let our country be national-socialized, if we let ourselves submit to politicians' 'control' of everything we do and get so used to it that we don't get rid of every one of these restrictions upon personal freedom just the minute that the war is won, then this whole war will be just waste motion and lost lives."

cation of the complex consistency of her thought, Rose wrote directly to J. Edgar Hoover himself, acknowledging the necessity of a national secret police to protect the country in time of war, in fact praising his work—but insisting on the necessity of keeping it within the limits of "American principles":

To this end, whenever a policeman or an investigator puts so much as a toe

of his boot across the line protecting any American citizen's right to free thought and free speech, I regard it as that citizen's duty to refuse to permit this, and to raise a loud yell.

Which, of course, she had. She might have been less charitable to the FBI had she known the extent of their records on her, which included her association with the Pittsburgh Courier (itself under surveillance for subversion) and her 1919 connection with the Finnish Singing Society, identified as a propaganda wing of the Industrial Workers of the World.²

* * *

The FBI files also contain a record of her next exercise in subversion, which was an attempt to reduce her income below taxable levels. It was, of course, the next logical step in her exercise in self-sufficiency; its immediate occasion was probably a fee of \$1750 for a *Reader's Digest* reprinting of *Let the Hurricane Roar*. This had always been her most popular book: its message of struggle against overwhelming adversity was appropriate for a wartime audience, and no less a person than Sinclair Lewis had recently thought to offer it in an anthology for a book club. But the *Reader's Digest* fee effectively doubled her income for the year, and the tax bite was correspondingly large. She found an attorney who was willing to set up a trust to receive her income and pay out all but her necessary expenses to charity. By now, no one depended on her income but herself; her mortgage was paid and she really needed only enough to buy a few staples and pay her taxes. She was receiving sixty dollars a month for her Pittsburgh Courier column, which sufficed for her needs, and she had the satisfaction of seeing little or none of her earnings going to a government she vociferously condemned. Rose described her stance and her strategy in another talk to the Danbury Lions' Club, making a story which was duly picked up by the news wire-services and widely reprinted. A reporter from a New York newspaper had called for an interview and quoted freely from her remarks. NOVELIST HAS GIVEN UP WRITING AND INCOME TO FIGHT NEW DEAL was the heading next to her picture:

Rose Wilder Lane, novelist, has taken to the storm cellar until the Roosevelt administration blows over. She calls it "resisting regimentation."

"I stopped writing fiction because I

She intermittently fought off solicitations from the Social Security Administration to accept a number and enroll for a retirement income. In this, her honor was at stake as much as in her refusal to accept a wartime ration book. To the end of her days she remained without a number and without its benefits.

don't want to contribute to the New Deal . . . The income tax was the last straw. I don't see why I should work to support the Writers War Board, the OWI and all such New Deal piffle while men are dying and there is work to be done at home."

"I raised a pig, butchered it last fall, 600 pounds of beautiful pork. I get around the butter and sugar rationing by making my own butter and using honey as a substitute for sugar."

She smiled. "Would you like to see my wealth?" Leading the way down to the cellar she pointed to rows of canned vegetables and fruits on the shelves. "Eight hundred jars. Corn, peas, beans, tomatoes, pickles, green peppers, beets, berries, all raised in my own garden. That's genuine social security."

She spoke earnestly. "The thing to do, if you think such practices are wrong, is to resist them. The American people did it with prohibition. The colonists did it when King George III tried to overtax them. The New Deal is going back to King George's economy and scarcity. I feel very hard times are coming....

The column was clipped and sent to the FBI by someone who had attended the earlier Lions' Club meeting; it was, the informant claimed, "extremely seditious."³

Thus the war years passed as she fought her own battles on her three-acre patch of independent soil, dividing her time between her garden, her

kitchen, and endless hours at her typewriter where she wrote endless letters to the small band of fellow-thinkers she had found across the land. As the war ended and, shortly after, war-time rationing and price-controls as well, someone from the Chicago *Tribune* recalled her notoriety of 1943 and sent a reporter to Danbury to see how she was faring. "He found her more of an individualist than ever and with a cellar full of meats, fruits and vegetables to prove that anyone with similar convictions and ambitions could have sat out the war without a ration card." Virginia Manor, an aspiring writer, now something of an acolyte, was with her again and in the interval Rose had acquired two Maltese terriers:

Although she hadn't done any canning from the time she was 12 until she began her self-subsistence a few years ago, Mrs. Lane refuses to consider herself a pioneer in undertaking to feed herself, her young companion, Virginia Manor, who also writes, and her two dogs named Jonathan Edwards and Henry David Thoreau.

She has taught Virginia how to churn butter and this product along with all the others, is made at a fraction of retail store cost. Virginia keeps the household books and maintains their inventory, but no attempt is made to figure production costs.

The only items on the cellar shelves prepared with the use of sugar are the jellies and preserves made by Virginia who explained: "I had a sugar card when I came here but I know better now."⁴

* * *

At the end of 1951 Rose turned sixty-five and became eligible for Social Security benefits. To pay income tax had been bad enough: she acquiesced only to the fact of the government's

power to seize her property, and she had in some years been able to keep her earning below taxable limits. But recently she had found her royalties subject to taxation and her status classified as "self-employed"; and to submit further to participation in an unfunded Ponzi scheme, by which the government would pre-empt her earnings and spend it for her own good—ultimately, she was sure, bankrupting the nation—was just too much. The National Economic Council was a non-profit organization; by law, it could choose not to bring its employees under Social Security coverage. For reasons she could never fathom, the Council chose otherwise; and rather than submit her tiny monthly check to an immoral deduction, she ceased her work on the *Review of Books*. In the years following, she would take some comfort in a mock-conspiracy with the handyman who worked about her place not to deduct Social Security taxes from his wages; and she would intermittently fight off solicitations from the Social Security Administration to accept a number and enroll for a retirement income. In this, her honor was at stake as much as in her refusal to accept a wartime ration book. To the end of her days she remained without a number and without its benefits.

The Internal Revenue Collector sent me a bill, including fine, for my not having paid the Self-Employment tax one year (no space for including it, no mention of it, having been on my tax form.) I sent a check. At intervals since then, various Authorities have been trying to force a Social Security number on me. They telephone and tell me I must have one; since I have none, they are giving me one. I tell them I won't have it. I get forms, my humble request to be

entitled to Social Security Benefits; with command, Sign here and return to—I put them in the wastebasket. I get orders to appear at such an hour, such a date, at such an office, with all records and receipts to show cause—I reply that it is not convenient for me to appear—etc., etc. I even get an order to appear and support with documents my claim for refund of the tax-and-fine that I paid; I return this, writing across it, I have made no such claim. The telephone rings, and I am informed that I am being given the necessary Social Security number; I say that I have none and shall not have one; I will have nothing to do with that Ponzi fraud because it is treason; it will wreck this country as it wrecked Germany. I won't have it; you can't make me.⁵ □

Notes:

1. Letters to Mary Paxton Keeley, Jan. 26, 1943.
2. The details of this episode come from the FBI file on Rose Wilder Lane, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. "What is this—the Gestapo?" (New York: National Economic Council, August, 1943). The story received two columns, with Rose's picture, in the Washington Post, Aug. 10, 1943; and shorter notice in many other papers, as well as several editorials. Her letter to J. Edgar Hoover is dated Sept. 9, 1943.
3. Diary, April 7, 1943. Letter, attorneys Pullman and Comley to George Bye, Dec. 6, 1943. Letter, Jasper Spock [for George Bye], to RWL, Nov. 22, 1943. Receipt to RWL from George Bye, Nov. 18, 1943. Sinclair Lewis's special interest in *Let the Hurricane Roar* is described in William Holtz, "Sinclair Lewis, Rose Wilder Lane, and the Midwestern Short Novel," *Studies in Short Fiction*, 24 (Winter 1987), 41–48.
4. The story, by Charles Oothart, made the newswires again; I quote here from a clipping from the Kansas City Star, Oct 25, 1946.
5. Letter to Jasper Crane, May 9, 1958; also Dec 11, 1954.

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Refutation

The Love of Money and the Root of Evil

by Christopher C. Faille

The search for certainty has led some proudly to proclaim that "A is A." So far, so good. But when the apostles of certainty go beyond this, it is time to ask, "A is A What?"

It is true to assert of anything that is, that it is; or of anything that is not, that it is not. This was announced to the world by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* and it has come to be known as his "identity principle." It is also sometimes represented algebraically: "A = A."

The late gadfly novelist, Ayn Rand, offered arguments that marched implacably but implausibly from that principle to a very complete and very anti-statist political and social program. Now obviously one can not just say, "The IRS ought to be abolished because A equals A." Such an argument would produce a giggle in some, conviction in none. The premise and the conclusion must be mediated, either by cogent deductive reasoning or by rhetorical trickery.

In Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*, one key character, Francisco D'Anconia, crashes a wedding reception and gives a speech defending both money and the love of money against the proverb that speaks of such love as the root of all evil. The defense runs, in pertinent part, as follows:

"Have you ever asked what is the root of money? Money is a tool of exchange, which can't exist unless there are goods produced and men able to produce them. . . . Money is made possible only by men who produce. Is this what you consider evil?

"When you accept money in payment for your effort, you do so only on the conviction that you will exchange it for the product of the effort of others. It is not the moochers or the

looters who give value to money. . . . Is this what you consider evil?"

He goes on at length, and by extension so does the author who created him, on the principle that one should never use a single page of print to make a point when thirty pages will suffice. Let's try to represent this argument in formal terms, as a chain of propositions each supporting the next, from the most fundamental of assumptions to the desired conclusion. By virtue of another, even longer, speech later in the book, broadcast to the nation by one of Francisco's associates, we can make explicit certain steps in the argument that the wedding speech only implied, and so we can produce the following schema:

1. Everything is what it is (identity principle).
2. A man must act in accord with what a man is.
3. Man is productive (by what Francisco calls "the best power within you").
4. Therefore, Man must act in a manner consistent with productivity.
5. This productivity is the "root" of all market values, and so it is the root of money.

6. Any man who professes to despise money is a hypocrite, in that he is false to his own nature or human essence.

7. Thus, only men who love money are to be trusted.

This speech gives us a litmus test by which we may judge the worth of the reasonings in the Randian system as a whole. Unfortunately, it also flunks the test. There is no cogent deductive reasoning, only rhetorical trickery, in the above. Part of the trick lies in the metaphor of the "root" and in the premise that the love of a root implies the love of the thing so rooted. I see no such implication, and Francisco gives me no reason to believe in one.

Let's take the metaphor seriously. One might do this by imagining a philosopher named Hare-istotle, a rabbit wise in logical lore, who reasons much the same way:

"If I love carrots, I must love the greens. How dare anyone suggest that I should not love the greens, that they might make me ill? Have you ever considered what is the root of the greens? They are the top of the plant, and they cannot exist unless nour-

ished by the delicious yellow stuff beneath the surface of the soil. Is this what you consider evil?

"Anyone who pretends to despise the greens while chomping away happily at their root is someone who is not to be trusted, who neglects the best digestive powers of rabbits, who is, indeed, a looter of carrots."

I submit that Hare-istotle would be wrong, for just the same reason that Francisco is wrong. A wise rabbit will "love" foods that are good for him or her and will shun those that are not. The question, then, is not one of nature or of essence or of anything else invoked in the usual scholastic terminological net. The question is one of effects. Is this (carrot or money or whatever) good for me? And if so, in what way? Under what circumstances is it good?

I should be very clear about what I do not mean. I do not mean to endorse the moral value of poverty or condemn anyone's effort to make more money than they spend each week. I mean to condemn the type of reasoning Francisco employs, and to prove that it cannot reach his desired pro-capitalist conclusion because that

sort of reasoning cannot reach any cogent conclusion. Objectivists misuse the notion of "reason" when they apply it eulogistically to such chains of propositions as that above.

I would agree, by the way, that it is not reasonable to express contempt for money. This is to say that I would be willing to assent to proposition six in the above chain, suitably rephrased. But that still will not get me to the desired conclusion. After all, Francisco wants to teach us, or to teach the crowd gathered at the wedding, or at least such of them as may have ears to listen, that money ought to be loved. But he spends most of his time arguing that it should not be despised. Obviously, there is something incomplete in this way of ordering the possibilities.

But I want to make another point, one that applies to each of the final three propositions in the above schema: This use of the term "money" as a unitary object of concern or even of affection is an instance of misplaced abstraction. Abstraction, an essential part of any logical operation, is nevertheless the cognitive equivalent of fire. We can recognize that it has been indispensable for civilization but we still ought to

treat it carefully lest we be burnt. Speaking abstractly of the good or the bad or the indifferent nature of "money" is an extremely careless handling of matches.

Of course the ubiquity of money does require that I must make many particular monetary judgments. But the only sort of judgment required is quite particular indeed: should I buy this wrench at retail? Could I get a better price from a wholesaler? Am I in a position to make productive use of such a tool? Would the warranty from the retailer justify the higher price? No hating, loving or even respecting need be involved in any of this, and certainly not a hating, loving or respecting of money *per se*, money in general, or money as the object of a bizarre wedding toast.

That speech is but one example—unfortunately a representative one—of the deductive chains that Ayn Rand, philosophic metal-worker to the masses, sought to forge. Her arguments can have a certain superficial, emotive appeal, but unspellbound lovers of liberty must be wary of getting caught, and intellectually bound up, by these chains. □

Danielson, "Au Nature Rights," continued from page 43

adjective "commercial" indicates that she is very intolerant of business activity on *anyone's* part, and thus blinded to some of the legitimate interests of members of her class.)

A Property Rights Issue

Public nudity is ultimately a property rights issue. If buses, subway trains, buildings, parks, and beaches were not only privately owned but *not regulated*, the owner of a particular enterprise would decide whether to allow customers to go about in the buff. Many park entrepreneurs, for instance, would likely offer clothing required facilities, and some would operate exclusively nude facilities. Others would offer "clothing optional" areas, just as some restaurants offer "no smoking" areas.

But in a mixed economy, such as ours, where nudists are forced, via taxation, to pay for various buildings, vehicles, and recreational areas, they

have a natural right (or, if you will, an *au naturel* right) to use these facilities *sans* apparel. The shy taxpayer, it seems to me, has no right to order the nudist taxpayer to cover up, nor has the taxpaying nudist the right to order the taxpaying prude to disrobe. Any facility that both nudists and shy folks are compelled by law to fund should be a clothing-optional facility.

The Clothed Road To Serfdom

If the emperor truly had no clothes, perhaps he wouldn't be an emperor. Without his majestic robes or sparkling military uniform, what scrawny, wrinkled, or obese dictator would be as impressive as the brawny worker he seeks to awe and rule? A naked Hitler might have generated giggles, not obedience, from the German masses. In my view, there's nothing wrong with a Saddam, Castro, or Qaddafi that a public de-pantsing couldn't cure.

Nudism and a freedom-loving spir-

it often go hand-in-hand. Virtually all libertarians recall the first line in Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*. "Howard Roark laughed." But how many remember the second line? "He stood naked at the edge of a cliff." □

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Essay

Downloading the Three Rs

by David Friedman

Book-learning is not the only form of learning, and lecturing is not the only form of teaching. Do you want to play a game?

Some years ago, while writing an economics textbook, I came up with some ways of using a computer to help teach certain economic concepts. My publisher arranged to make my programs available to students who used my book. As part of our promotional efforts, I attended a number of American Economic Association meetings, spending much of my time demonstrating the software to interested professors.

As a result of demonstrating the programs, talking to the professors, and looking at the software other publishers were demonstrating, I reached two conclusions. The first was that most economics professors believed that most educational software was useless. The second was that they were right. The reason most of the software was useless was that it used a computer to do things that could be done almost as well—sometimes better—by a book.

Typically such software—variously labelled as computer tutorial, programmed instruction, or computer workbook—consisted of screens of text and figures explaining economic ideas. The computer was used to move students from one such screen to another on the basis of their answers to questions about the material, in the process telling them whether or not their answer was right.

Asking students questions and telling them if their answer is correct can be done quite easily on paper. Making the order of the presentation depend on the student is not much harder—it

is, for instance, routinely done in "plot it yourself" children's books, where at various crucial points the reader is asked to choose alternative a, b, or c and jump to a new page according to which one he chooses.

So far as I could tell, the basic theory of such software was that computers were sexy, high tech objects, and students would be so excited to get their fingers on them that they would be willing to study with care and interest the same material—in blurry letters on a computer screen—that would put them to sleep if printed in a textbook. It is not a very plausible theory. Computers, after all, were also large, heavy, expensive devices, hard to read in bed (this was before modern laptops), and with resolution greatly inferior to print on paper.

What was wrong with such software was nicely summed up in the question that professors would ask me when I started talking about my programs: "how many chapters of your book do you have on disk?" The answer, of course, was "none." The chapters of my book were where they belonged, between its covers. The software was an attempt to teach particu-

lar concepts in ways that could not be done by either a book or a teacher.

My point so far is not that computers cannot be useful for teaching—on the contrary, I believe they can—but that they usually are not. They are a new tool, very different from the tools with which we are familiar, and we have not yet developed the body of ideas and skills necessary to use them. At present, each useful new program requires a new clever idea.

Such programs do get written. One very simple example is the program my son used to help learn how to type. It was a video game. At the center of the screen was a spaceship with a wizard sitting on it. He was being attacked by missiles, each labelled by a letter. If you hit the corresponding key on the keyboard, the wizard threw a lightning bolt and destroyed the missile. The sequence of letters was designed to first teach the student to use single keys on the home row, then sequences on the home row, then keys elsewhere on the keyboard.

It was not a terribly good video game; my son would probably have preferred space invaders or the like. But it was good enough to convert

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typing drills from a deadly dull chore to a mildly entertaining game—with the result that I was able to persuade him to spend half an hour a day learning to type.

Another example is an old Apple II game called *Robot Wars*—one that I have sometimes described as the world's only computer game. Playing the game consisted of writing a program. The program, written in a simplified assembly language, controlled an imaginary robot. One register recorded his X position, another his Y position, another his X velocity, and so on. Put new numbers in the velocity registers and the robot accelerated or decelerated accordingly. In a similar way, the program controlled the direction in which the robot's gun turret was pointed, sent out radar bleeps, recorded the echo sent back by a potential target (and its range), fired the gun at other robots, and reported any damage suffered from attacks by other robots.

Once you had programmed your robot and your friend had programmed his, it was time for battle. The two of you sat back and watched your robots fight it out on the computer screen, each following the instructions built into his program. If your robot stopped every other second to check his damage register in order to see if he had been hit, the result was to slow him down—with possibly lethal results. On the other hand, if you had programmed him never to check his damage register, he would simply stand there while the other robot, having located him, gradually blew him to bits.

Thus the success of the robot depended on the skill of the programmer. The better designed the program, the faster and smarter the robot. After losing a few rounds of battle, you could stop fighting and rewrite your program, trying to eliminate whatever flaws you had observed on the battlefield. The inventors of the game had made learning assembly language programming—the acquisition of a difficult and sophisticated intellectual skill—into, literally, child's play.

Programs like these represent a small fraction of current educational software—but the fraction that matters. Over time, there will be more. Ingenious people will figure out how to use computers to make more and more

What is wrong with most educational software was nicely summed up in the question that professors would ask me when I started talking about my programs: "how many chapters of your book do you have on disk?" The answer, of course, was "none."

of the business of learning into an interesting game. That is, after all, what learning is supposed to be—as I can easily check by watching my five month old daughter learning to control her hands and feet, or her fourteen year old brother conquering ever more astronomical levels in Super Mario Brothers.

In ten years, if I am right, a substantial fraction of what children now learn in the first twelve years of school will be available on disks suitable for your home computer. It will be fun and it will be cheap. The effects on our educational system should be interesting. □

A Macintosh program apparently based on *Robot War* is *Robowar*, available as shareware. My son's typing program was *Master Type*.

—DF



"I told you an open house was a bad idea."

Reviews

Trashing the Planet, by Dixy Lee Ray with Lou Guzzo.
Regnery Gateway, 1990, 206 pp., \$18.95.

The "Science" of Catastrophe

Jane S. Shaw

As one who deplores the widespread and erroneous public alarm over many environmental issues, I was eager to read Dixy Lee Ray's new book. A biologist by training, Ray is a former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, a former Governor of Washington, and a plain-speaking woman. And she is fed up with uninformed, apocalyptic claims that the world is heading toward environmental disaster.

But I was somewhat disappointed. *Trashing the Planet* does offer common-sense talk about most of the environmental scares of the past decade, from Alar and acid rain to nuclear energy and Ozone depletion. Indeed, Ray (who wrote this book with Lou Guzzo) is refreshingly blunt. On acid rain, she writes: "Any federal funds . . . should be spent on research—not on boondoggles to satisfy the mindless cries to 'do something' from those who would substitute passion for science." Nuclear energy, she says, is "an unparalleled success. Nuclear generation of electricity is safe. In the more than a quarter century of commercial operation in the United States and the Western World, there have been no fatalities, no significant releases of radioactivity to the environment, and no one has been exposed to radiation in excess of the

very conservative limits that have always characterized the nuclear industry."

The trouble with *Trashing the Planet* is that the range of sources Ray uses to support her arguments is often less than impressive. Although portions of the book are authoritatively documented, others are not, and occasionally she fails to cite any sources at all.

The chapter on pesticides, for example, relies heavily on secondary sources, including works sponsored by individuals or organizations with reputations as advocates, such as the National Council for Environmental Balance and the American Council on Science and Health. These undoubtedly contain good information and there's nothing wrong with citing them or authors such as Elizabeth Whelan and Edith Efron; but they should not, it seems to me, be the final source of one's factual information. Relying on them rather than on peer-reviewed scientific literature does not provide the credibility that I, for one, was hoping for.

I started reading *Trashing the Planet* to find out Ray's views on the ozone depletion issue, which I have been following. She makes it clear that there is significant doubt about whether global stratospheric ozone is being lost (the natural variation, she says, can be as much as 15%), and that the source of

the chlorine that apparently leads to depletion "has not been unequivocally established." Ray cites several natural sources of atmospheric chlorine that dwarf human-produced chlorine.

The claims she makes are vivid, and if they represent the full story they pose a persuasive challenge to the ozone depletion theory. But my enthusiasm dimmed when I looked at the footnotes. On the possible origins of stratospheric chlorine, Ray cites only four sources. One is a chapter in a book by S. Fred Singer, one of the few prominent scientists who is dubious about the prevailing theory. Singer's book is a valuable repository of information, but he is less skeptical of the prevailing theory than is Ray. In the relevant chapter he writes: "There is little doubt that chlorine chemistry is the *immediate* cause of the seasonal (October) ozone decrease at around 18 km in the southern polar regions—rather than purely meteorological effects based on dynamics or direct solar influences related to the solar cycle. It is also probable that the major source of the chlorine is man-made chlorofluorocarbons [CFCs]—although no precise estimate exists of the chlorine contributed by various natural sources . . ." In other words, he retains doubt, but he goes a long way toward recognizing the merit of the depletion-proponents' views.

Ray's second source is a popular article in *National Review*—also by Fred Singer and thus not a source of much additional information. The other two sources are articles by Rogelio Maduro, one in *EIR*, and one in *21st Century*. *EIR* is published and was founded by Lyndon LaRouche. While I know no more about LaRouche than most people know about ozone, his publication is not in the mainstream of scientific literature. *21st Century* is a more scientific journal, but is also related to LaRouche. (One staff member calls them "sister publications.") I admire the scientific detective work that went into Madu-

ro's 21st Century article, "The Truth Behind the Ozone Hole Scare," and I look forward to reading more from him, but I don't consider these articles definitive sources of information. Neither is likely to convince people who are on the fence about these issues.

I also noticed errors in the footnotes to *Trashing the Planet*, including two misspellings, an erroneous quotation,

Ray and Guzzo offer common-sense talk about most of the environmental scares of the past decade, from Alar and acid rain to nuclear energy and ozone depletion. The trouble is that although portions of the book are authoritatively documented, others are not, and occasionally they fail to cite any sources at all.

and a misplaced citation. Given the large number of notes, perhaps such errors are unavoidable. More bothersome was the inclusion of several statements that weren't footnoted at all.

On page 51, in a chapter debunking recent environmental scares, Ray writes: ". . . there are now approximately 60 to 100 million people who are dying each year as the direct or indirect result of anti-pesticide campaigns that have caused restrictions or bans on the products that could have prevented such deaths." This astounding claim is not footnoted. (It may be embedded in articles cited in the separate chapter on pesticides, but I don't know how to find it.)

Another sweeping statement is found on page 127, where Ray discusses the safety of nuclear power by comparing it of the safety of coal. "Again, to put that calculated risk into perspective, there are about 10,000 deaths every year from using coal to generate electricity, so for nuclear power to be as dangerous as coal-burning, we would have to have a great many meltdown accidents per year. Since we

have not had any and there have been no fatalities at all, clearly nuclear power is safer than using coal."

Yes, I am sure that nuclear power is safer than the use of coal. But where did the 10,000-deaths figure come from? Not from mining accidents (about 600 people die in mining accidents each year). It must be some probabilistic total of deaths, including the coal and utility industries' contributions to cancer and black lung deaths. But no footnote tells me where to find

its origin.

Perhaps I am falling into the critic's classic error of complaining because an author didn't write the book I wanted. Evidently, Dixy Lee Ray wanted to write something more popular and readable (and perhaps easier to put together) than the authoritative book I expected. But Ray's reputation led me to expect the latter and, as a footsoldier in a war of information, I want more than a boost in morale; I want ammunition, artillery, and air power. □

The Meaning of Socialism, by Michael Luntley.
Open Court, 1989, 214 pp., \$32.95 (cloth), \$14.95 (paper).

Old Whine in New Bottles

Jan Narveson

Michael Luntley claims to offer "a pathbreaking defense of socialism on ethical grounds" in his new book, *The Meaning of Socialism*. But any defense of socialism has to be on ethical grounds, once one realizes that such routes as simply predicting it on historical-determinist grounds are non-starters. And not just any old theory will do; we need to have the right ethical theory

Yet by Luntley's own admission, he offers no such genuine theory of the sort required. In its place, he serves up some supplementary arguments that involve both the stale old Marxism one thought he was rejecting, and some further, unsupported value judgments that not only seem irrational, but end up supporting enough of the worst features of socialism to leave us in about the same mess that other socialisms have produced. In the end, the appearance that he's "defending socialism on ethical grounds" is strictly appearance. What we are given, instead, is a set of fraudulent reasons for rejecting the free-market view of society.

Socialism, he tells us, is "in crisis": it has lost its sense of what it is, what it

should be doing, or why. *The Meaning of Socialism* is an attempt to settle that matter. And what is most refreshing about Luntley's book is its candid recognition that socialism involves the *rejection of liberalism*. At one time, socialists thought that their system would give more people what they wanted. But Luntley appreciates that socialism consists in massive *interference* with liberty, understood as letting people do what they want. "Too often people are deflected by considering the question of how we should interfere without giving an answer to the question of whether, if we do interfere, we have legitimate license to interfere. That is the central philosophical question that socialism must answer before any of its particular prescriptions can be put into effect" (p. 11). Bravo! This puts things in their proper light. For too long, too many people have supposed that somehow socialism was more liberal than liberalism, was "ultra-liberal," indeed "radical." Not so. Radical liberalism is libertarianism, the view that we shouldn't, if at all possible, intervene in free arrangements *at all*. Socialism says, "Hell no: Let's interfere!" It is, then, a species of moral conservatism, and a denial of liberalism.

So how do we justify this interference? If we are going to reject liberalism, then which version of ethical conservatism are we going to put in its place? "Central to any credible version of socialism," says Luntley, "must be the idea that there is such a thing as *the good life* . . . there must be a conception of social life, a conception built upon ideas about what things are good and bad irrespective of whether or not many people currently view these things as good or bad" (3). Luntley proclaims as "constitutive of socialism" the following principle, which he calls "The Good Principle"; "There is more to the achievement of the good life than the satisfaction of individuals' actual preferences" (11).

The interesting thing about this proclamation is not that it's heroic and path-breaking, but that it's a platitude. It is the mark of wisdom to appreciate that the good life is more than the satisfaction of one's current preferences, whatever they may be. But it's a further mark of wisdom to realize that nothing, so far, follows from this. In particular, it doesn't follow that we will identify our good life with the satisfaction of someone else's preferences—certainly not those of the Central Committee! But one notes the enormous danger of elitism if we misread this "principle"—which is exactly what Luntley winds up doing. For if ordinary people do not know what is good for themselves, then who does? "It is because of the idea of there being something called 'the good life' that socialists have a license for interference" (4). But who issues the license in question? Well, maybe some intellectual who has figured it all out. Plato, maybe, or Marx. Or Dr Michael Luntley and his fellow members of the Socialist Philosophy Group at London. To his credit, Luntley appears to appreciate the danger: "The models that spring readily to mind—the busy-bodying do-gooder and the totalitarian despot—are clearly unpalatable" (4). Thus "We need to know what model of interference can be legitimized by our notion of the good life." Yes, indeed. Especially since there is, after all, a model of non-interference at hand.

As Luntley also appreciates. He spends some space on Robert Nozick's

"Entitlement" theory of justice, agreeing that Nozick's criticisms of various alternative liberal theories are cogent, but rejecting his conclusion *because he rejects its individualistic premise*. And why reject the premise? Because, he says, it implies "the economism of values," that "the good life amounted to no more than the condition of individuals having their preferences satisfied" (10). And more of that sort of stuff.

For too long, too many people have supposed that somehow socialism was more liberal than liberalism, was "ultra-liberal," indeed "radical." Not so. Radical liberalism is libertarianism, the view that we shouldn't, if at all possible, intervene in free arrangements at all. Socialism says, "Hell no: Let's interfere!"

But he has missed the point. Liberalism does not depend on this last claim as a thesis about what value and the good life is. Instead, it depends only on the claim that Luntley in fact accepts: that there is no *agreement* on what The Good Life is. And *that* is the real problem of politics. Of course if we all knew what The Good was, then we could just discuss ways to pursue it. (Incidentally, it still wouldn't follow that the right way to pursue it would be by massive interference in people's freedom. Maybe freedom is *part of* the good life, after all. And maybe collective pursuit of The Good would be inefficient. As indeed seems more than just a "maybe.") But in any case, as Luntley is the first to recognize, we do *not* know what it is. So there are, as yet, either no political implications at all from his Principle, rather than Socialist ones; or else it is the very recognition of this "ignorance" that must supply whatever input into politics there can be from the idea of The Good.

Luntley tries that tack, in fact—but chooses what is demonstrably the wrong way. In his version, we will organize society as a kind of huge round-

table discussion in which we try to decide what The Good is. But his version, his further theory of politics, depends entirely on one, spectacularly unwarranted move: the discussion isn't allowed to be a *free* discussion. Whatever The Good might turn out to be, its pursuit, for some reason, *must* be *collective* rather than individual. He calls for an "idea of the good as a collective notion, something about which we need to argue together and construct between us," something that "transcends individual choice" (7).

There are two problems here.

First there is the same old problem as before: even if that's what The Good has to be, whose view of the individual-choice-transcending good are we going to adopt, and why? It is, after all, a matter on which we each must form our own opinion, and none of us can claim to know that we have the right one. Different people will claim to "know" quite incompatible things. So a dilemma now looms for Luntley. Is he arguing that people should *not be allowed* to do what they think best? That they are instead to be forced to do what somebody else tells them is best? *Even if they don't agree?*

Luntley claims to reject this sort of totalitarianism. But when we come to his vision of politics, which we are told would be a sort of "Camelot discussion," in which we sit around figuring out what The Good is, there turns out to be a rule: "to protest at the results of the round-table debate amounts to no less than to want to disengage altogether from civil society, to break away and construct one's own debate on the good." Gee! And moreover "in disengaging from the round table, one sets up one's own notion of the good above the authority of that notion which is independent of any particular agent . . . Any attempt at the breakaway good implicitly sets up the vision of some agent or group as better than that which depends on no particular agent at all" (125). So we'll just suppress those deviants, right? In short, the collectivity—meaning all the others who don't share your view—*knows best*. So much for avoiding totalitarianism!

Neglecting the awesome illogic of his reasoning here, let's just ask how can he possibly go on to say, "Accep-

tance of The Good Principle seems to take away the authority residing in the individual and give it to another agent. This is a mistake . . ." (12) But if it's a mistake, then he must take back this nonsense about the majority being absolutely authoritative over the individual. Absent a reasonable solution to the plainly insoluble problem of preserving the individual's free judgment while at

It is the mark of wisdom to appreciate that the good life is more than the satisfaction of one's current preferences, whatever they may be. But it's a further mark of wisdom to realize that nothing, so far, follows from this. In particular, it doesn't follow that we will identify our good life with the satisfaction of someone else's preferences — certainly not those of a Central Committee!

the same time insisting that it may always be overridden by the Collectivity, there is a serious question what the interest of this whole study could possibly be thought to be.

The second problem with his characterization of The Good as a "collective notion" is that he seems not to appreciate that the market idea is *itself* a social notion. The free market exists when people recognize, as a social, collective rule, that individuals have the right to own property, to use their bodies and minds as they see fit. Their recognition of this right consists in their accepting a duty not to interfere with these free actions of individuals. But *this* social rule has the enormous advantage of being the *only* collective rule compatible with individual freedom and autonomy. This is, I suggest, the only rational way in which society can cope with the problem posed by nonagreement about The Good. Note too that if everyone *did* agree on The Good, then there would be *no difference* between the free market and whatever arrangement, be it collective or some-

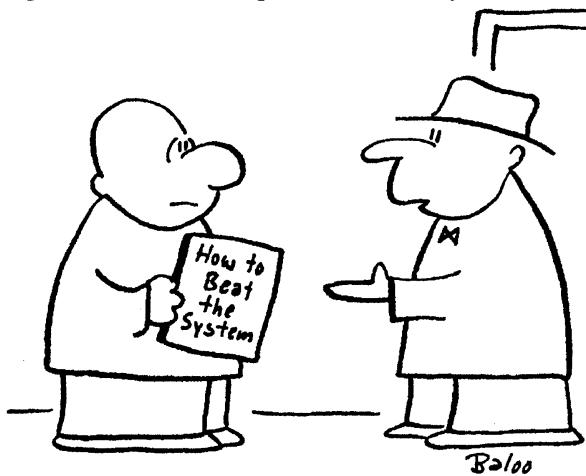
thing else, that the grand agreement on the Form of The Good turned out to be—since by hypothesis everyone would voluntarily embrace and act on it. But in all other cases—for all practical purposes, *all cases*—free market institutions would be available to allow people with differing views to interact on a basis of recognition of their respective rights to differ. The market enables those who disagree to disagree without violence. Socialism, on the other hand, consists in letting either the majority or—far more likely—the Central Committee, use virtually unlimited violence against essentially everyone, essentially all the time. How could anyone think that that is a better way to run things?

There's a curious streak of political nostalgia in this work. Luntley talks about "reviving a lost political culture, a shattered notion of what a civil society might look like" (187). It would be interesting to know when this supposedly lost ideal ever flourished—in King Arthur's time, perhaps? (There's all that talk about "Camelot," after all!) It is an enchanting thought that socialism consists in a yearning after lost innocence, lost community. Ah, for the good old days in which The Good was known (just ask good ol' King Arthur—no problem!). Enchanting, yes. Quite out of touch with the aspirations of most actual socialists, of course. And, much more importantly, a yearning that can only lead to more totalitarianism if taken seriously.

Well, what connection is there—the reader must be thinking by this time—between this second-order "pursuit of the idea of The Good" stuff and what we used to call "Socialism"? To try to make a longish story short, it seems that in capitalism "the criteria of moral agency are supplanted by the criteria of economic agency." Luntley claims to reject most of the standard Marxist criticisms; but then, having chucked some of socialism's stale ideas out the

front door, he reintroduces them via the back. It seems that in socialism, "economic agency" is going to be subordinate to more ultimate values—to The Good, even if we don't know what it is. We'll just subordinate people to the search for The Good, instead. And how do we do this? Well—what do you know?—by guaranteeing high levels of welfare support to the unemployed, unlimited educational opportunities for all, and the rest of it. All of course, at public expense—i.e., the expense of the very people the socialists claim to be "helping."

It should be appreciated that Luntley's supposedly new critique of capitalism is just as misguided as the old one. The idea that there is some kind of evil, materialistic, "economic agency" that replaces "more fundamental values" in a market economy is simply all wet. For the *moral* values of capitalism are not "on the market": respect for the rights of your fellow men, including their property rights, is a genuine moral value, distinct from the value of cheese or Mercedes-Benzes. What capitalism does do is to allow people to interact as best they can, each according to his perception of what is desirable and undesirable, within this general framework of liberty. So the Luntleyan critique is simply off base. But it's a bluff anyway. What Luntley really is saying is the same old stuff that Marxists have always been telling us: profit is evil, because it lets some people end up with more money than others, and it allows them (Gaspl) to spend it as they please, on things that the Luntleys of this world



"I'm from the Government, sir — I'm afraid I'll have to take that book."

find frivolous, instead of on More Important Things, things that are "transcendental necessities" for "citizenship." These, we are told, include health, education, and housing, which "are not to be counted as marketable goods about which questions of just distribution are apposite" (129). They are "primary goods," which means that of course we can tax people all we want in our efforts to provide them for all.

Take welfare claimants, for instance: "we have to provide a level of benefit far in excess of current levels and, quite probably, in excess of the wages of many who are currently in full employment" (134). This, as a modest amount of elementary economics will tell you, is economic suicide. But then, we Labour Party folk don't worry about how all this is to be paid for, since, after all, the whole thing is out of the economic sphere altogether—it's The Good, right?

Having chucked some of socialism's stale ideas out the front door, he reintroduces them via the back.

Or take health and housing. The availability to *anyone* of what we would currently count as minimal medical care was zero prior to roughly 1920. (The chances that a medical person would kill you rather than cure you didn't get far below 50-50 until well into this century.) Until the late 19th century, even in advanced industrial societies, indoor flush toilets were essentially nonexistent. Roman Emperors lacked amenities normal to American welfare recipients. Isn't it more than a little daft to urge that somehow society has been cheating all of these billions of people out of their social birthrights? Yet that's what his "justification" of these draconian measures consists of.

Luntley accepts a free-market account of justice "for those goods for which there are problems of distribution . . . things like cars and continental holidays" (138). But he doesn't see the favored things on his list as being like that—with them, The Committee rules. And they don't allow Ms Citizen to make up her own mind about how

much health, education, and welfare she will have, no siree! So he can "justify" taxing the dickens out of her to supply her with these "goods" whether she wants them or not. The fact that Ms Citizen will thereby end up in poverty, which *she* doesn't think is part of The Good, isn't allowed to count. After all, she, the poor sod, doesn't know what's Good for her, right?

There isn't much in here about state ownership of the means of production, to be sure. But what we have instead—massive intervention via taxation, etc.—will do just fine. Learning the lessons of economics isn't a big thing with enthusiasts for socialism.

"My claim is not that it is impossible for an individual to be good under capitalism. That would be silly. My claim is that it is not possible for society to be good under capitalism." People under capitalism "do not flourish within a civil order of the good" (76). Isn't it interesting how much you can accomplish with an argument that began with the admission that we *don't know* what The Good is? Of course, if you simply *define* the notion of civil order in nonliberal terms, as Luntley here does, then his "claim" is "true," in the same way that all arbitrary definitions yield "truths"—namely, empty verbalisms, not actual claims at all. But apart from this semantic maneuver, the argument comes to precisely and absolutely nothing. You've been had, gentle reader!

Luntley agrees that earlier on he "dodged all the difficult questions . . . like, what level of health care . . . what level of access to education is a condition for citizenship, etc." But, he says, "First, these questions are not really my concern . . . I do not pretend to have the answers to all the particular issues that arise when we start asking questions like [those]. That is not a philosophical enterprise . . . It is no more and no less than an exercise in the Camelot debate" (148-50). What is really dodged, though, is the question of why individual citizens with differing views about The Good should be compelled to subordinate—or is the word "enslave"?—themselves to a majority of their fellows on such issues.

Mrs Thatcher, we are told, holds that "Jerusalem will be built upon the

shifting sands of contracts and bargains struck between self-interested individuals operating in an otherwise moral vacuum. Such an unimaginative and naive vision would be laughable if it were not, currently, so powerful." "What, then, is missing? The idea of a civil society . . . traditions of thought and feeling that help us to define our place within the communities in which we live. Indeed, at root, we have lost our communities. . . ." (198) ". . . We can set the requirements of human life over those of the requirements of Capital" (200).

So there we have it. Enough of this nonsense about individual rights and pursuing one's own version of the good life. Let those with the higher light on The Good do that for us! Or at least, let your fellow citizens, suitably guided by the Central Committee of Guardians, do it for you. And if all of this strikes the reader as the provision of even worse reasons than those we were given before for adopting a totalitarian social system—one that has the additional demerit of being a proven failure on top of it—then you have, I believe, gotten the right message. Fortunately, philosophers aren't kings! □

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El Béisbol, by John Krich.
Prentice-Hall, 1990, 272 pp., \$8.95.

The Illusion of Expertise

Richard Kostelanetz

El Béisbol purports to be an impressionistic tour of Latin American baseball. As a veteran visitor to Puerto Rico (and a *fanático* of the baseball there), I turned first to see what he said about a world I knew. The first mistake to strike my eye comes on page 43 in the reference to "Hiram Blithorn Stadium, the home of the [San Juan] Metros, named after the first Puerto Rican to sneak through the big leagues' color barrier." However, the player's last name was Bithorn. My suspicion was that Krich was confusing the Puerto Rican pitcher with Charles Blithorn, the financier who put together the Gulf & Western conglomerate that owns, among other properties, this book's publisher. What confirmed my hunch was the reference on p. 121 to "Gulf + Western Corporation chairman Hiram Blithorn," which, all would agree, is quite a promotion for a ballplayer breaking an employment barrier. (No, I'm not making this up. I wish such mistakes could be blamed wholly on copyeditors' cooping, to use the New York police term for sleeping on the job.)

Krich doesn't mention that the Bithorn Stadium also houses the Santurce Crabbers, Santurce being the larger city surrounding San Juan. One convention peculiar to the place is that Santurce playing at home occupies the third-base dugout, whose roof is emblazoned "Santurce," just as the top of the first-base dugout has "San Juan" in large type. Finally, just beyond the ticket windows is a statue of Bithorn, his left foot raised, his facial features visibly caucasian. Since 1942 was Bi-

thorn's rookie year, whatever barrier he might have broken was not racial. Indeed, the real question Krich should address is why Puerto Rican players took so long to get to the majors. Cubans had entered thirty years earlier, with Mike González in 1912. He played for twenty years before becoming a coach and interim manager in 1938 and 1940, a full two years before Bithorn ap-

Even on so benevolent a subject as baseball, some writers find it necessary to fake information in order to support their preconceived leftist ideas.

peared. One of Krich's deepest prejudices, you see, is that the only Puerto Rican baseball players worth noticing are as black as Roberto Clemente or Vic Power, thereby excluding any mention of Dickie Thon, say, or the current Metros star, Hector Villanueva; for the truth visible to anyone watching Puerto Rican baseball is that the teams, like Puerto Rico itself, represent a rainbow coalition.

Another problem is that like the j-school graduate (he may or may not be) Krich believes in the epistemology of the interview as preferable to firsthand experience. So the Puerto Rican chapters have extended quotations from Rubén Gómez, Vic Power, Mrs. Roberto Clemente, and a scout named Nino Escalera. Perhaps because Krich arrived just before New Year's Day, after the conclusion of the regular Winter League season (but before the begin-

ning of the playoffs), there is no evidence of him actually attending a professional game in Puerto Rico. Indeed, there are symptoms to the contrary. He deprecates the stadium food, whereas I'm prepared to testify that the piña colada (\$2.00), fresh out of the blender with crushed ice, ranks among the best in all San Juan. The meat *empenadas* at \$0.75 are preferable to any mainland hot dogs eaten by me. Though Krich speaks of the San Juan *fanáticos* as unruly, consider this contrast: At Yankee Stadium, which I patronize regularly, a security man inspects your bags as you enter, confiscating anything that might be thrown, while beer is sold only in paper cups. At the Bithorn Stadium, there is no security person at the entranceway, and the beer vendor gives you the can along with the paper cup. (There is also a guy with a roving cart containing the fixings for mixed drinks. Such a civilized amenity would be unthinkable in New York.)

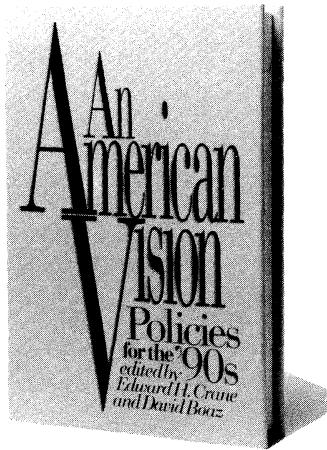
As a lefty journalist, Krich is predisposed to like Nicaraguan ball even at the risk of ignorant slander of other Latins: "The backstop netting [in León, Nicaragua] functions as protection from foul balls—not, as in other Latin countries, to shield the players from projectiles hurled by the disgruntled rabble." Well, at Bithorn, there isn't enough backstop netting to fulfill Krich's purported protective function, and there is no equivalent of the Yankee Stadium net that runs from the top of the backstop to the mezzanine. Krich rhapsodizes further about Nicaragua: "It takes a nation in its birth throes to show how our national pastime might have looked in the days before computerized scoreboards or press releases, Astroturf or covert operations." However, that's exactly how baseball looks at Hiram Bithorn, which, as I have said, Krich may not have actually seen.

He reminds me of certain Paleo-Stalinist writers who think that as long as their politics are "correct" they can say whatever strikes their fancy.

On p. 49, Krich speaks of receiving during "the seventh-inning stretch" an invitation to spend New Year's Eve with Escalera's family in Ponce, which is on the other side of the island, a few hours away from San Juan. Krich then describes how he is driven out and back

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— Lawrence Kudlow, "Money Politics," March 25, 1990



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on the same night, wholly without incident. The obvious problem with this story are, first, that there is no seventh-inning stretch at Bithorn (and no national anthem either—a detail a lefty writer might have noticed, were he there) and, then, that you're advised to stay indoors on New Year's Eve, especially after midnight. Some Puerto Ricans celebrate the New Year by firing guns into the air, and every year innocent bystanders get hit. My recollection of a New Year's Eve only three years later is that you could hear the bullets well into the night.

El Béisbol has no interviews with current players in Puerto Rico, whether native born or from the mainland; no interviews with mainland stars recently playing there (Don Mattingly won the batting title just before his debut with the Yankees); no notice of the advertising logos on the backs of the players' uniforms (as a mainlander you'd think that all the Arecibo players were named "Bud Light") nothing about the Major League alumni who continue to play here (e.g. in 1990-91, Iván de Jesús, Juan Beníquez); no appreciation of the quality of play (high minor league); no observation of players talking to the fans during the game; nothing about the bilingual scoreboard that freely alternates "DH" with "BH"; no comment upon the regular schedule that differs from those on the mainland in having nearly continuous travel from day to day (no home stands, no extended road trips); nothing about the Puerto Rican minor leagues that play every Sunday in local parks. I could go on.

Krich also makes generalizations that, with more experience of his subject, he could have modified. For instance, on page 20, he thinks the Texas Rangers are called *Llaneros*. Well, that might be true elsewhere in Latin America, but the principal Puerto Rican paper, *El Nueva Día*, calls them the *Vigilantes*. Admittedly, you would need to have experienced Puerto Rico and its baseball to begin to discover what might be wrong with Krich's book. About the other sections I cannot speak; but based upon what I know, it is fair to say that for all of its superficial plausibilities *El Béisbol* is written out of ignorance, only for those who are even more ignorant. □

Swiete Psy, by Stanislaw Tyminski.
Officina, 1990, 263 pp.

The Man Who Would Be President

Krzysztof Ostaszewski

The presidential election in Poland was expected to be a two-way conflict between the advocates of rapid reform, represented by Lech Walesa, and the advocates of a go-slow strategy of privatization and deregulation, represented by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the former prime minister.

The date of the election was declared only about six weeks before the first round was to be held, and presidential candidates were required to submit a petition with the validated signatures of one hundred thousand eligible voters, thereby presenting a nearly impossible task to all potential candidates except for Mazowiecki and Walesa, who knew what was coming and were prepared for signature collection. Two reasonably popular figures from the opposite ends of the political spectrum—Janusz Korwin-Mikke, a conservative libertarian, and Kornel Morawiecki, from the nationalist left—failed to collect the signatures in time. Then Stan Tyminski showed up.

Tyminski chose a different approach. He offered anyone who signed his petition a free copy of his book *Swiete Psy* (*Sacred Dogs*). He had no problem collecting the signatures.

Then Tyminski started gaining popularity and decisively beat Mazowiecki in the first round of the election. But neither he nor Walesa (who finished first in the election) received a majority, so a runoff election was required. For a while, it seemed that the momentum on the side of Tyminski was strong enough to duplicate the stunning victory achieved by Fujimori in Peru. (Earlier in 1990, Alberto Fujimori had emerged from relative obscurity and won the Peruvian presidency over the

overwhelming favorite, Mario Vargas Llosa.) However, in the second round Walesa played perfectly, distancing himself from many of the attacks on Tyminski, using Poles' fear of the unknown, and obtaining the unconditional support of the Catholic Church.

Tyminski did not beat Walesa, of course, but his campaign is fascinating in its own right. *Sacred Dogs* played a central role in his surprising success, and it is an unusual book indeed.

Sacred Dogs is an ideological declaration of economic war. It is a call to arms for Polish guerrilla capitalists. Extending the metaphor of guerrilla warfare and even quoting Mao Tse-tung, Tyminski states that if a nation is to gain prosperity, it must penetrate "enemy" territory—in other words, successfully enter foreign markets.

Tyminski proceeds to list Poland's assets. He declares that the 15 million Polish emigrants around the world are the country's greatest resource: most of these expatriates are either energetic entrepreneurs, or at least very thrifty. They are never unemployed—those likely to be unemployed apparently stayed in Poland.

Tyminski then launches an attack on the Polish economic system. The first problem is the tax system: it is extremely complicated, includes a 43% payroll tax, income taxes, very high tariffs, sales taxes, expensive licenses, and taxes on office space. Finally there is the tax that Tyminski hates most: the turnover tax of 20% of the value of any trade between any two producers. This tax has effectively eliminated the possibility of any cooperation between enterprises, making Polish factories into bloated monstrosities trying to produce everything on their own, yet turning out nothing for customers.

The Mazowiecki government increased the turnover tax for private businesses from the 6% rate that prevailed under the communists to the current 20%. Ironically, the government collected more revenues than it needed, and was running a surplus during a severe recession. (Of course, we in America know better than to raise tax rates during recessions.)

Tyminski sees the government's job as allowing people to make money. He explains the basic principles of Western-style accounting and financing, and shows that they can easily be introduced in Poland. He calls for bringing capitalism to Poland by cutting the size of the government, eliminating corruption, and easing taxes. Most of all, he calls for Polish guerrilla capitalists to start exporting to the West, to sell to any market they can enter. He observes that productivity is the key to prosperity, and that it is Marxist nonsense to

Tyminski sees the government's job as allowing people to make money. He calls for bringing capitalism to Poland by cutting the size of the government, eliminating corruption, and easing taxes. Most of all, he calls for Polish guerrilla capitalists to start exporting to the West, to sell to any market they can enter.

believe that productivity can only increase via more machines and more capital investment. People's individual creativity is the real key to productivity.

He goes on to give his own opinion of socialists: People who do not like individualism or the free market (the "common sense system") must have a peculiar sense of justice, he argues, since they want to solve all problems by using force. His distaste for bureaucrats is strong: "Just try to tell a bureaucrat that you have a better idea about what to do with your hard-earned money than to pay it in taxes!"

He demands accountability of gov-

ernment, privatization through recognizing pension and other benefits in equity claims and giving shares in companies to the workers.

The most controversial proposal in *Sacred Dogs* concerned nuclear power. Although Tyminski gives a long description of the Chernobyl accident, sympathetically recounting the efforts of the workers and firemen who worked to control the meltdown, often not fully aware of the danger involved, he supports nuclear energy. Much more controversially, he calls for Poland to develop its own nuclear weapons. This position led to some pretty severe criticism from the Western media, but the position deserves to be considered in the light of Polish history.

In the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, Poland was one of the richest and most powerful states in Europe. It was spared the religious wars, intolerance, and misery of the times. It was a major producer of wheat, allowing its population to live in relative prosperity.

However, the Republic (the king of Poland was elected) declined rapidly in strength in the eighteenth century. In 1772, large parts of Poland were annexed to Russia, Prussia, and Austria. This is referred to as the First Partition of Poland. A second partition followed in 1793, between Prussia and Russia, leaving the Polish state only a small fraction of its pre-partition territory. In a last, desperate attempt to retain independence, a hero of the American Revolution, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, led an uprising against the Russians in 1794.

This was crushed by the overwhelming Russian military power, and Poland was erased from the map of Europe through the Third Partition between Austria, Prussia, and Russia. The various minority nationalities inhabiting Poland did not at first mind the new rulers, who seemed to offer greater stability than had been possible under the Polish Republic. This resulted in an animosity [on the part of Polish nationals] towards foreigners, replacing the traditional Polish attitude of tolerance. As the repeated attempts to regain independence during the nineteenth century failed, the Poles looked anxiously to the West for help.

But it never came. World War I weakened the occupying powers, and allowed Poland to regain its independence during the interwar period. But World War II started with the Fourth Partition of Poland, between Germany and Russia (as Poles joke, the even-numbered partitions are always done without the Austrians).

People who do not like individualism or the free market must have a peculiar sense of justice, he argues, since they want to solve all problems by using force.

All of this helps to explain Tyminski's concern with nuclear weapons. He would like to ensure that there are no future partitions. If this seems to be an unhealthy way of thinking, consider the popularity in the West of the familiar argument that Russia must control Poland in order to protect itself from aggression from the West—despite the fact that the invasions from the West by Napoleon and Hitler took place, in each case, immediately after Russia itself eliminated Poland from the map of Europe. Consider that nearly as many Poles died in Auschwitz as Jews, and that the elimination of the Poles was also a goal of the Nazis.

Understandably, Poles view their country as a tragic, helpless victim of its own innocence and the treachery of its neighbors. Unfortunately, they tend to view themselves as doomed—losers no matter what the odds—often recovering only after emigrating to America. Polish sacred dogs (i.e., leftist intellectuals and bureaucrats) howl for free money from the West, because Poland is so weak, so poor...

Tyminski does not seem to be affected by the psychological scar that history has left on many Poles. Not surprisingly, the sufferers of the victim complex did not take kindly to Stanislaw Tyminski or to the self-confident tone of *Sacred Dogs*. He was, during the course of the campaign, accused of every crime imaginable. The intensity of

continued on page 64

Stanisław TYMIŃSKI Kandydat niezależny na Prezydenta

TEZY PROGRAMU GOSPODARCZEGO listopad 1990



Sytuacja Polski wymaga nowego programu. Uważam, że moj program wzywoli możliwości i połączy nas w celu rozwoju gospodarczego kraju.

Moja wizja przyszłości pozwala zapomnieć o różnicach między lewicą, prawicą i centrum. Mój plan jest wynikiem wiedzy i doświadczeń, które zdobyłem w Polsce, Szwecji, Kanadzie, U.S.A. i Peru. Przez ostatnie lata często przyjeżdżałem do Polski. Znam dobrze mój rodzinny kraj, jego problemy. Obecna sytuacja to film, który już raz widziałem w Peru kilka lat temu. Ten film zaczyna się po roku planów gospodarczych, które duszą inflację bez możliwości rozwoju. Ja wiem, jak ten film się kończy i mogę ten film Wam opowiedzieć. Nie chce aby tak się stało w mojej Ojczyźnie.

Znam powiedzenie, że każdy może popełnić błąd jeden raz i nauczyć się już więcej go nie powtórzyć i nie wolić popełnić tego samego błędu po raz drugi. W Polsce produkcja spadła o przeszło 30 % w 1980 roku. W dziesięć lat później sytuacja się powtarza. Nie możemy dopuścić, aby w przyszłym roku produkcja spadła o dalsze 30 %.

Jestem w pełni świadomy, że na Prezydencie spoczywa dzisiaj szczególny obowiązek i jako kandydat na urząd Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polski przedstawiam mój program.

1. W chwili obecnego kryzysu Prezydent ma obowiązek wyegzekwować od Rządu rozwijowo-strategiczny plan gospodarczy, który da szansę konkurencji na rynkach międzynarodowych.

2. Naczelnym obowiązkiem Prezydenta jest dziś wzmacnienie Ducha Narodu oraz wyczucie zagrożeń suwerenności ekonomicznej i terytorialnej.

3. Na arenie międzynarodowej chcę przedstawić wole przełamania kryzysu i popierać wszelkie inicjatywy rozwoju naszej Ojczyzny. Reputacja Polski obniża się wskutek kłopotów,ewnętrznych walk i nietrzebnych emocji. Stanowi to poważna przeszkoda w rozwoju inwestycyjnym. Ja

ko Prezydent będę starał się zdobyć zaufanie Polaków i emigracji.

4. Prezydent ma obowiązek docenić historyczną rolę Kościoła katolickiego. Czas wielkiej zmiany wymaga oparcia na wartościach duchowych.

5. Nasz kraj musi okazać szacunek dla wszystkich mniejszości narodowych. Jest to warunkiem włączenia Polski do gospodarki światowej.

6. Odbudowa i rozwój zależy od pracy obywateli. Moim założeniem jest system, w którym wartość każdej pracy będzie doceniona.

7. Zapewnienie godnego życia i pomocy potrzebującym jest moim celem i wymaga wyraźnego podkreślenia w Konstytucji.

8. Prezydent musi walczyć z korupcją, która jest rakiem narodu i wymaga radikalnego lekarstwa.

9. Każdy kraj, który wydostał się z kryzysu musiał przejść przez takie same etapy rozwoju. W pierwszym etapie należy dać się do wymiernych sukcesów opierając się na własnych atutach, a więc zakładając pracę, które już mamy, korzystnym położeniu geograficznym i nam właściwych cechach narodowych. Drugi etap - inwestycyjny był bowiem zawsze i wszędzie następstwem sukcesów dokonanych własnym wysiłkiem.

10. Polska jest krajem przemysłowo-rolniczym i dlatego też niezbędne jest ścisłe powiązanie ekonomiczne między rolnictwem i przemysłem. Rolnictwo uważa się za najważniejszy strategiczny punkt obrony naszego kraju w obliczu międzynarodowej konkurencji ekonomicznej.

11. Wojsko Polskie zgodnie z historyczną tradycją musi być silne. Szczególnie teraz, jako użytkownik nowoczesnego sprzętu, ma do spełnienia historyczną rolę, nie tylko obrony naszych granic, lecz również technologicznej edukacji młodzieży.

12. Budżet państwa musi być jawnym i ogłaszanym co kwartał. Musi to być budżet wzrastająco rozwijowy, a nie tylko rozdzielczy.

13. Rzeczpospolita Polska ma być krajem rządów prawa.

14. System podatkowy ma gwarantować równość wszystkich podmiotów wobec prawa. Jasna, jednostronna deklaracja roczna będzie podstawa płatienia podatków. Pracownicy, a nie tylko zakłady pracy muszą mieć możliwość zysku możliwości zarobku, możliwość rozwoju.

15. Jako najszybciej, ale dopiero po wolnych wyborach, Parlament powinien opracować nową Konstytucję. Powinna ona być zgodna z naszym charakterem narodowym oraz zapewniać warunki konieczne do wyzwolenia najlepszych zdolności każdego obywatela.

16. Polska jest ofiarą międzynarodowej wojny ekonomicznej. Natychmiast potrzebujemy strategicznego planu walki o dobrobyt. Jego przygotowanie i efektywna realizacja będzie podstawowym obowiązkiem przyszłego Rządu.

17. Pierwszym zadaniem jest reforma niesprawnego systemu gospodarowania państwowymi zakładami przemysłowymi. Kierunkiem długofalowym jest ich prywatyzacja. Powiniem to być jednak proces, w którym pracownicy tych zakładów mogą stać się ich współ udziałowcami w drodze swobodnej decyzji. Należy także zachęcać do inwestycji kapitału zagranicznego, dając jednak preferencje kupna akcji pracownikom. Zakłady społeczeństwio należą traktować jako prywatne, gdzie każdy może godnie zarobić.

18. Wykształcenie i wyzwolenie możliwości twórczych naszej młodzieży jest najlepszą gwarancją dobrobytu, a dla starszej pokolenia wyższej emerytury.

19. Wraz ze wzrostem budżetu państwa muszą rosnąć nakłady na opiekę zdrowotną, kulturę i szkolnictwo.

20. Musimy bronić nasz kraj przed zatrutiem środowiskiem.

21. Inflacja złotówki będzie faktem przez następne kilka lat, az do zrównania poziomu gospodarczego Polski z krajami Zachodu. Trzeba jednak zapewnić bezpieczeństwo ludziom potrzebującym pomocy. Wzrost cen jest nieunkoniony, ale o wiele ważniejszy jest wzrost dochodów. Wartość złotówki to wartość naszej pracy. Im nasza praca jest bardziej produktywna, tym silniejszy będzie nasz pieniądz. Inflacja jest spowodowana przez brak mechanizmów wyzwalających rozwój produktywności. Chęć udowodnić, że możemy dobrze żyć i zarabiać bez konieczności emigracji z naszej Ojczyzny.

Warszawa, 26 października 1990 roku.

Stanislaw Tyminski
Independent Candidate for the President of Poland
Theses of the Economic Program
November 1990

Poland's situation requires a new program. I believe that my program will free new opportunities and unite us all in order to achieve economic development.

My vision of the future will allow us to forget about the differences between the political left, right, and center. My plan is a result of all the knowledge and experience I have gained in Poland, Sweden, Canada, the U.S.A., and Peru. In recent years I have often visited Poland and I know my homeland and its problems well. The present situation is like a film of what I saw happen in Peru. The film begins with a year of economic planning to kill inflation, without allowing for growth. I know how the film ends and can tell you the whole story. It is a film I would rather not see played in my homeland.

I know the saying that everyone is allowed to make one mistake, learning from that mistake so as not to repeat it. In 1980 Poland had a 30% drop in economic output; ten years later the situation has been repeated. We must not let another drop like that occur the coming year.

I am fully aware of the great responsibilities that must be faced by the new President. As a candidate for that position I present my program.

1. In the current crisis situation the President has an obligation to demand from the government a strategic economic plan that gives Poland a chance to be competitive internationally.

2. The major duty of the President is to strengthen the spirit of the nation and to deal with all threats to the nation's economic and territorial sovereignty.

3. I want to demonstrate to all the world our will to overcome the current crisis by supporting initiatives for development. The reputation of Poland is hurt by internal conflicts and unnecessary emotions. This is a significant obstacle in the investment process. As President I would seek to gain the trust of all Polish emigrants.

4. The President must respect the historical role of the Catholic Church. In this time of great change, we seek

strength in our spiritual values.

5. Our country has to respect all national minorities. This is a precondition for the Polish economy to join the economy of the world.

6. Rebirth and growth depend on the work of the citizens. I want to create a system where work is rewarded.

7. Life of respect and help to the needy is one of my goals and should be included in the Constitution.

8. The President must fight the corruption that is destroying our nation; it must be dealt with radically.

9. Every country that succeeded economically had to go through the same stages of development. In the first stage success is achieved by using the nation's advantages—that is, the existing infrastructure, geographical location, and national character. The second stage—the investment one—is always predicated on success in the first stage.

10. Poland is both an industrial and an agricultural nation, so it is necessary for us to have cooperation between industry and agriculture. I believe agriculture is a strategic asset in international economic competition.

11. The Polish Armed Forces must be strong, in line with our historical tradition. Especially now, when modern technological equipment is used, the armed forces not only protect the borders of the nation, but help give our youth a modern education.

12. The government budget must be openly published every quarter, and must serve the goal of economic development, not just distribution.

13. The Republic of Poland must be governed by the rule of law.

14. The tax system must guarantee equality of all subjects before the law. The tax forms should be simple: a one-page annual declaration should be sufficient. The workers as well as companies should have an opportunity to make money, increase profits, and grow.

15. As soon as possible after a free

election to the Parliament, a new Constitution should be written. It should be consistent with our national character and create conditions for freeing the best talents of all citizens.

16. Poland is a victim of the international economic war. We must develop immediately a strategy for our economic well-being. The preparation and effective realization of this battle-plan will be the main duty of the new government.

17. The first goal of the plan should be to reform our ineffective system of using the existing infrastructure. The long-term goal must be privatization. Privatization should be performed in such a way that workers can choose freely to become co-owners of the enterprises they work for. Foreign capital should be invited to invest in Poland, but the preference should be given to the workers. Companies owned by the government should immediately become like private businesses, allowing their workers to earn decent wages.

18. The education and freeing of the creativity of our youth is the best guarantee of economic well-being for everyone, and of higher pensions for the elderly.

19. As the budget of the government grows, so must grow the expenditures for health care, culture, and education.

20. We must protect our country from the destruction of the natural environment.

21. Inflation of the zloty is necessary for the next couple of years, until our economy catches up with the West. We must, however, help those in need. Prices must rise, but it is more important that wages rise. The value of our currency is created by the value of our work. If we are more productive, our currency will become stronger. Inflation is caused by lack of mechanisms freeing creative productivity. I want to prove that we can live well, and earn good wages, without having to leave our country.

(signed) Stanislaw Tyminski
 Warsaw, October 26, 1990

translated by Krzysztof Ostaszewski

hatred towards Tyminski was, I must say, shocking to me. I cannot recall anyone attacking their opponents that way since the Communists tried to destroy Walesa in 1982, or when Michnik and Kuron (Communists who turned against communism in the 1960s, now prominent in the Mazowiecki camp) were attacked in 1978. (Ironically, it was Michnik who led many of the most vicious attacks on Tyminski.)

One of the silliest charges against Tyminski was that he was a KGB agent. This charge was so poorly researched that it would have embarrassed Joe McCarthy. The "proof" was the claim that Tyminski had obtained visas to travel to Poland at the Polish embassy in Libya. The story was denied by Tyminski, and seems somewhat hard to believe, since Tyminski holds a Polish passport and does not need a visa to travel to Poland! As well, there is the fact that Tyminski's Canadian tax return shows that his income last year from his various business activities was over \$400,000, according to *Echo*, a Polish weekly published in Toronto. This is a rather impressive side operation for a KGB agent. It also dispels the charge that Tyminski wasn't as rich and successful as he had claimed to be.

While supporters of Walesa and Mazowiecki made all sorts of outrageously slanderous charges against Tyminski, he was unable to speak freely. He has been charged with slandering a public official (in the heat of the campaign, he called Mazowiecki "a traitor to the Polish nation") under the same law that the Communists used to employ to silence their opponents: it was once used to jail Kuron and Michnik.* Imagine having a law like that in the United States, dragging to court everyone who had ever made such a statement about Ronald Reagan; we could reduce the population of New York by 50%! None of this is likely to attract the foreign investment that Tyminski had hoped to

* In January, a Polish court agreed with Tyminski's argument that his alleged slander was of Mazowiecki *qua* political candidate, not Mazowiecki *qua* government official, and therefore fell under the jurisdiction of a different provision of the law, one whose prosecution required the consent of the victim of the alleged slander. Mazowiecki did not agree to the prosecution, so the case was dropped.

attract, nor encourage Polish emigrants to return to their homeland.

All in all, *Sacred Dogs* is a well-written manifesto. The main message is stated clearly and with persistence. As is to be expected in a book of this sort, there is much that simply does not get mentioned. The fact that Tyminski was the leader of the Canadian Libertarian party is never discussed, and libertarian, objectivist, or conservative ideas are not discussed as such. The book is, most of all, a call to arms, in the guerrilla capitalist war, and a call to win that war.

Tyminski was attacked for using a former communist propaganda journalist Roman Samsel to help him write the book—well, the propaganda work is done very well, so Tyminski apparently chose a good advisor. In fact, in view of the immense popularity of capitalism in Poland now, it seems that the book greatly helped his campaign.

Much less impressive, on the other hand, was a short brochure issued by Tyminski in the second round of the election (see previous page). It emphasizes that Tyminski would, as president, support environmental taxes with no property basis, subsidies for agriculture, state-run education, and other socialist ideas. These elements were also present in *Sacred Dogs*, but they are much more prominent in his program. Perhaps he was defeated in the second round because the self-help message of the book ceased to be the dominant factor in his campaign.

Now that the election is over, what Tyminski may or may not have done as President is moot. For good or ill, Walesa is in power. I would have given up on Poland if Mazowiecki or anyone to the left of him had won. There is, however, hope in the victory of Walesa, who apparently wants capitalism in Poland. □

Booknotes

A Talk on the Wild Side —

Thomas Szasz is a great writer, perhaps the greatest writer-psychiatrist since Sigmund Freud, with whom he otherwise shares little; for Szasz's deity is another Viennese iconoclast, Karl Kraus (1874–1936), a kind of Austrian Mencken best remembered for such aphorisms as "psychoanalysis is the disease of which it purports to be the cure." Szasz's professional books are filled with well-worked, resounding sentences. With *The Untamed Tongue: A Dissenting Dictionary* (Open Court, 1990, 200 pp., \$34.95 cloth; \$15.95 paper), he drops the professional paraphrenalia for sharp sayings that he collects under thirty topics. His unit of choice is less the sentence than the paragraph or the paragraph-long sentence. Every reader will have a favorite; mine is this:

Writing philosophy betokens intellectual conceit—that one has something fresh to say about the human condition; writing poetry, emotional conceit—that one has sensitivities and sentiments worth sharing with strangers; and writing aphorisms, esthetic

conceit—that one can say something worthwhile elegantly and entertainingly.

Like any good essayist Szasz is the master of the unfamiliar analogy:

The idea that it is a grave moral wrong to treat money as a commodity generated the illicit trade in money; similarly, the idea that it is a grave moral wrong to treat drugs as a commodity now generates the illicit trade in drugs.

(I bet you never thought of that one before; I certainly didn't.)

Indeed, Szasz's central insights are that the results of some human efforts might be the opposite of what is claimed (as in the epigram about psychoanalysis) and then that language can be imprisoning or liberating, perhaps with a twist of a phrase or the discovery of an appropriate analogy. Otherwise, several themes reappear continually, such as his critique of social mechanisms that deflect individual responsibility and free will, his acceptance of human instincts as inevitable, and his contempt for the psychiatric profession.

Occasionally he presents us with clumsy constructions that reveal a lack of awareness of the ambiguities of English, which is, after all, not Szasz's first language. In the book's second paragraph, the opening word, normally a verb with an object, is used confusingly as a noun without a modifier, forcing most of us to reread: "Control communicates care and devotion to children, condescension and disdain to adults." Szasz strives too often to be cute, with the kind of childish glee that makes you want to pat him on the head.

But most of the time he deserves a pat on the back. The literature program of the National Endowment for the Arts gives a "Senior Fellowship for Literature . . . to individuals who have made an extraordinary contribution to American literature over a lifetime of creative work." If only to protest the idea of literature as limited to poetry and fiction, I last year nominated the great musical lexicographer Nicolas Slonimsky (who didn't win); this year I'll nominate Thomas Szasz. —Richard Kostelanetz

Avoid the Shysters! — Given the inconvenience that the growth of laws and proliferation of lawyers and lawsuits has visited upon us, the market for anti-lawyer jokes is very strong. Republican-turned-Libertarian-turned-Republican Sam Steiger has collected anti-lawyer jokes and just plain nasty epithets for years, and for some reason was inspired to publish them in book form as part of his 1990 campaign for Governor of Arizona.

Kill the Lawyers! (Prickly Pear Press, 1990, 95pp, \$9.95) may be a bit peculiar as a campaign book, but it does have a lot of good jokes. Some are short:

What's black and brown and looks good on a lawyer? A Doberman pinscher.

It was so cold in Prescott one day, I saw a lawyer with his hand in his own pocket.

Some are a bit longer:

A lawyer died unexpectedly and appeared at Heaven's gate where St Pete was faithfully keeping accounts.

"This is an outrage!" thundered the attorney. "I'm much too young to die . . . I'm only 33 years old."

"We have your age as 98."

"What kind of arithmetic arrived at that incorrect number?"

"We added up your billable hours."

Kill the Lawyers! is well designed and handsomely printed, but there aren't as many jokes as one might expect. The jokes are interspersed with photographs of Steiger, anecdotes about his life, bits of anti-lawyer doggerel, and cartoons.

—R. W. Bradford

Privatizing "Intelligence" — Herbert Mitgang's *Dangerous Dossiers* (D. I. Fine, 1988, \$18.95) is an account, more outraged than amused, of our intelligence agencies' utterly inept surveillance of major American writers: Faulkner, Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, John Steinbeck, Archibald MacLeish, John O'Hara, among others. Mitgang exploited the Freedom of Information Act to get files that were previously unavailable. (Perhaps I should acknowledge a bias before proceeding. The most devastating rejection slips I ever received came from the FBI and CIA. Both replied, back in 1976—after I had lived for a decade mostly in the East Village, publishing in a variety of alternative journals—that they had "no record pertaining to you." To think that I thought these guys were into scissoring.)

Mitgang's theme, reiterated for page after page, is that the FBI, CIA, and the like portrayed politically innocuous writers as subversives, collecting whatever what was told them, often in utter ignorance of the writers' work. Their political "intelligence" was often no better than their literary moxie, as they couldn't understand, for instance, how the Italian writer Ignazio Silone could be both anti-Communist and anti-Fascist. Similarly, many non-Communist native writers had files "opened," as they say, simply for being visibly anti-Fascist. Damaging information, no matter how inaccurate or personal (and thus politically irrelevant), was sometimes leaked to cooperative journalists and the writers' professional antagonists. *Dangerous Dossiers* is a story of inefficient insidiousness run amok, without any overseeing checks from, say, another government agency or inquiring journalists, and all at public expense. The soberist lines in the book comes from John Kenneth Galbraith on his FBI file: "Unparalleled in my experience as a mine of misinformation, the

file also proves, and here beyond the most pallid shadow of a doubt, that the government of the United States has, in these matters, a colossal capacity for wasting money."

What this suggests to me is a conclusion that escapes an earnest liberal like Mitgang—that such intelligence-gathering should be privatized, which is to say not only that the government should be forbidden to keep files on the political proclivities of its citizens, but that such watch-dogging should be assumed by whoever wants it. Only a socialist country insists that government incompetence be allowed to continue (usually for such devious reasons as the continued employment of the civil servants). Back here, if you do a job badly, you're fired, with the assumption that everyone involved, including yourself, would be better off if you worked elsewhere. The rule should be that once the government bungles a job assigned to it, one solution to be considered is not "better" bureaucrats but dissolution of that responsibility.

If private individuals or even corporations want to collect such information on purportedly "subversive" writers and artists, distributing their findings to an inevitably skeptical audience, they are welcome to do so—it's free country, as we say; and they're also welcome to waste their own money chasing after false suspects. It would be at minimum amusing to see the Robert Welches of this world in competition with one another. But for heaven's sake, never again should unchecked government agencies be involved.

Speaking of our intelligence departments, I'm reminded that the East Germans had the second most successful intelligence agency in the world (after the Israelis). It placed spies high in the personal office of Chancellor Willy Brandt, in the West German counterespionage agency, in the economics ministry, to name a few who were caught or defected east. The fact that no East German spies were discovered here means either that there were none or that they eluded detection. My own hunch is that the second conclusion is more likely; and now that the Stasi has gone, its files becoming public, we may discover that our so-called counter-intelligence agencies were no more effective at catching them than they were at following our

major writers. In that case, shouldn't we suggest privatizing as well the fundamental functions of the FBI, the CIA, and the like?

—RK

One Time a Great Notion — When this periodical polled libertarians a few years ago, many were surprised to learn that Barry Goldwater finished eighth as an intellectual influence, ahead of such notables as Spooner, Locke, Heinlein, Spencer, Mill and Nozick. This is understandable: the Arizona Senator spoke out strongly against the state at a time when anti-state thinking was a very scarce commodity. I was 13 years old when I read *The Conscience of a Conservative*, Goldwater's 1960 book summarizing his political vision, and I remember to this day its impact on my thinking. What America needs, Goldwater wrote, were political candidates elected to office on the following program:

I have little interest in streamlining government or in making it more efficient, for I mean to reduce its size. I

do not undertake to promote welfare, for I propose to extend freedom. My aim is not to pass laws, but to repeal them. It is not to inaugurate new programs, but to cancel old ones that do violence to the Constitution, or that have failed in their purpose, or that impose on the people an unwarranted financial burden. I will not attempt to discover whether legislation is "needed" before I have first determined whether it is constitutionally permissible. And if I should later be attacked for neglecting my constituents' "interests," I shall reply that I was informed that their main interest is in liberty and that in that cause I am doing the very best I can.

Liberty! What an interesting notion, I thought. Clearly, this was not the kind of talk I was hearing from other politicians, from my teachers, from the news media. Goldwater carried out his libertarian theme imperfectly, but that didn't matter. It had got me thinking about liberty, and within a couple years, between games of baseball and trying to get girls to notice me, I self-

consciously identified myself as a libertarian.

I hadn't reread the book for nearly three decades when I got a copy of a new edition (Regnery Gateway, 1990, 117pp, \$17.95). As I read it over, I was surprised that it is very much a politician's book, full of bromides and caution. Despite its libertarian thrust, it is a conservative book, militarily hawkish, compromising on its principles. But it remains a significant book: probably more than any event, its publication started the conservative movement on its way to political victory and it certainly launched Goldwater's campaign for the presidency.

The Regnery edition is handsomely produced on acid-free paper, so it should be a hit with libraries and others who want books that will last several lifetimes. It also contains a new introduction by Patrick J. Buchanan, the smartest of the current crop of political conservatives. Buchanan's introduction is mainly a brief conservative interpretation of recent American political history, glorying in its success. Buchanan does admit to one failure of conservatism, by the way, that "we failed utterly, however, to check the growth of government." The earlier edition was a best-seller and millions of paperbacks were sold in the 1960s, so this edition should appeal primarily to those too lazy to visit a used bookstore, or who need a book that will outlive them, or can't get their fill of Buchanan from his television appearances and columns.

—RWB

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Trash-free — There is no doubt that Ronald Reagan's reputation has suffered since he left the presidency. The man who was the most powerful, the most popular, and the most radical president of the century while he was in office, it seems is now remembered as some sort of doddering old fool who slept while his staff ran the administration, waking up occasionally to memorize a few lines to read to the American people.

One aspect in the decline of Reagan's reputation is simple to understand: Americans, especially intellectual Americans, have an inordinate respect for power and for those who wield power. I noticed the influence of the sucking-up-to-power syndrome on Reagan's reputation within hours of his

election in 1980. There was a subtle change in his treatment in the electronic media. The same television commentators who spoke of him with ill-disguised contempt prior to his election suddenly were speaking of him with respect that almost seemed like adulation.

So long as Reagan remained popular and therefore powerful, this attitude from the media hardly wavered. Only when the Iran-Contra story burst and the Republicans lost the Senate in 1986, enabling the Senate to embarrass Reagan by hassling him on appointments, stalling legislation, harassing him with niggling investigations and the like, did the tone of the media change. But he remained President and remained fairly popular with the public, so mostly the journalists and intellectuals counted the days till he was out and they could really begin to dump on him.

I suppose that it is a measure of my own cantankerousness that as Reagan's reputation with the public has declined his reputation with me has risen. To some extent, the change in my view of his presidency is the product of the man who followed him. George Bush makes him look pretty good by comparison. Reagan, whatever his flaws (and there were many) at least had the courage of his convictions. Bush, on the other hand, seems to have no convictions at all, as he twists and turns with every breeze in public opinion.

Reagan's reputation seems to have suffered as much by the hands of his former aides and advisors as from his enemies. His staff, it seems, has discovered that the easiest way to cash in on their years in the White House is to write books that trash their former boss. David Stockman, Michael Deaver, Larry Speakes, Donald Regan . . . the list seems endless. Whether this is an illustration of the corrupting influence of power or the loathsome character of the authors I shall leave to the psychohistorians.

Curiously, so far as I know, the only two of Reagan's advisors who have written trash-free memoirs are both in the same classical liberal or libertarian intellectual tradition as am I: William Niskanen and Martin Anderson. I'd like to believe that this is a result of the decency that is inherent to the social philosophy that we share, but I suspect this

is only wishful thinking.

The Hoover Institution has just published a new paperback edition of Martin Anderson's very fine book, *Revolution* (Hoover Press, 1990, 500+lii pp., \$11.95). Niskanen reviewed the first edition in these pages two years ago, and I shall not try to add anything to his review. But the new edition includes "The Reagan Legacy," a new 27-page essay by Anderson that merits comment, so comment I shall.

Anderson's goal in "The Reagan Legacy" is plain: to defend Reagan against his critics. He tackles the most frequently heard criticism with gusto. The Reagan that Anderson knew was not a somnambulist who let his staff run the country. Indeed, Anderson argues, Reagan was a very competent executive who made the key decisions and set policy on all important issues. Elsewhere in his book, he gives an insider's view of Reagan's decisions on economic issues. In his new chapter, he tells of Reagan's most important foreign policy decision: to begin meaningful nuclear disarmament.

According to Anderson, Reagan had been seeking nuclear disarmament since 1976. He realized that so long as the arms race was one-sided (with only the Soviets actively building up their nuclear forces) there was no hope for disarmament. Only if the Soviets could be convinced that the U.S. would not allow them to have nuclear superiority would they be willing to disarm.

So Reagan began a buildup of both offensive and defensive weapons by increasing arms spending and beginning work on the "star wars" defense shield. At the same time, he took the offensive in the war of words (his famous "evil empire" speech), partly in an effort to show the Soviets that he was sincerely committed to preventing their long-term nuclear stability.

The break came in 1983, when Andropov had written Reagan suggesting they talk peace. Reagan responded in a hand-written letter on July 11. That letter, published here for the first time, certainly seems extraordinary: it suggests that the two of them take the initiative for disarmament, by-passing normal diplomatic channels: "Historically our predecessors have made better progress when communicating has been private and candid. If you wish to engage in such communications you will find me

ready." Reagan's efforts culminated in the 1987 INF treaty for mutual reduction of nuclear forces.

History's judgment of Reagan will likely depend on future events and the influences of intellectuals not yet born. For the present, Anderson's vigorous defense at the very least reminds us that Reagan was not the sleepy actor his critics portray.

—RWB

Up from Libertarianism

by D. G. Lesvic

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Havana, directed by Sidney Pollack.
Starring Robert Redford and Lena Olin.

The Last Pinko Show

Brian Doherty

Actor Robert Redford has long been enamored of "liberal" and "progressive" causes, and he's even lectured at and raised money for a film school sponsored, funded and run by the Cuban government. Knowing this, and knowing that director Sidney Pollack, who collaborated with Redford in *Out of Africa* and *Three Days of the Condor*, has participated in past Havana Film Festivals, I wondered how well my stomach would hold up under rich assaults of liberal pieties in the latest film collaboration between the two, *Havana*.

The film is a love story set in revolutionary Cuba in late 1958, the last days of the Batista regime. Considering the bad reputation of communist revolutions these days, some commentators have found political significance and messages in this film that just aren't there. Maybe it's hard for them to imagine that Pollack and Redford would work on a movie in such a setting and *not* have it suffused with images of noble *campesinos* in the hills, grotesque displays of wealth on the part of disgusting Americans and the Cuban ruling class, and constant harping on the iniquities of the Yankee, Batista regime of corruption, gambling and prostitution.

The film doesn't lack these elements entirely. They're there, but understated. They don't stick out in the viewer's mind as much as does the typically unconvincing movie story of sudden, sweeping, overpowering love arising between two entirely different people who just met. The happy (and ridiculous) couple are Redford, playing Jack Weil, an American who makes his living at high-stakes poker in the fleshpots of Havana, and Lena Olin as Roberta Durán, the wife of a wealthy

Cuban who is also a leader in the rebellion against Batista.

Redford meets Olin on a ferry from Key West to Havana, where she pays for his help in driving her car, loaded with radio transmitters for the rebels, into Cuba. Redford plays the classic Hollywood world-weary, cynical rake who only cares about "snatch and poker," in the estimation of his friend, a casino owner named Joe Volpi (played by Alan Arkin) whose quiet wit, sense of resignation and love of his work make him the movie's most likable character.

Havana doesn't deal seriously with the Cuban revolution. There are a couple of scenes of village carnage and a mob riot on New Year's Eve, after the news of Batista's flight from the country is announced, that certainly didn't make me feel any sympathy for the cause of a city full of savage vandals. But, except for a short speech from rebel leader Arturo Durán about poor villagers dying of tuberculosis and one from a Colonel in the secret police about how the rebels are out to destroy everything that people like Redford come to Havana for, the reason why someone might feel dedicated either for or against the rebellion are not addressed. The viewer can't understand what motivates Olin in her apparent passionate desire, as the wife of a Cuban of old wealth, to risk herself for Castro's cause. But this actually helps the viewer believe it when she abandons the cause without any apparent soul-searching, to take a boat ride around the world with Redford, for whom she falls after her husband is taken by Batista's secret service.

In fact, all one gathers about the whole issue of communist revolution from this film is that it allows rich, guilty Americans to assuage some guilt about their own ineffectuality or inadequacy, while not apparently affecting, in any perceptible way, the lives of the

poor and disaffected in whose names it is fought.

I'm not denying that there isn't perhaps some very deep truth in this view of communist revolution. But the explicit discussion of the theme doesn't get farther than Arturo Durán telling Redford that "Politics is hope," and Redford responding with tough gambler wisdom about how politics is just politics, and how he likes playing poker with politicians, because they are so easy to beat. Why? Because they don't understand that sometimes it's better to lose with a winning hand so you can later win with a losing one. It's easy to see this as perhaps a metaphor for the idea that repressive, seemingly all-powerful governments like Batistas would be better served by giving in strategically while they still have the upper hand. It's also easy to see it as a superficially mysterious, deep-sounding platitude intended to fit the

Maybe it's hard to imagine that Pollack and Redford would work on a movie set in Cuba and not have it suffused with images of noble campesinos in the hills, grotesque displays of wealth on the part of disgusting Americans and the Cuban ruling class, and constant harping on the iniquities of the Yankee.

film's too-obvious extended metaphor about gambling as a way of life.

Despite any fun one might get from looking for political wisdom, or any sort of coherent political message at all, in this film, it's still a boring, slowly-paced mess. At about two and a half hours, it's about an hour too long, and I can't remember the last time I saw a film I was so ready to walk out on at any minute. I've seen too many characters like Jack Weil get their cynical armor pierced by the love of an idealistic and beautiful (always beautiful) woman to have any interest in watching the old cliché be played out one more time, especially in such a tedious version. □

Notes on Contributors

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Jane S. Shaw is a Senior Associate of the Political Economy Research Center in Bozeman, Montana.

Timothy Virkkala, an assistant editor of *Liberty*, shares at least one characteristic with Saddam Hussein: he didn't think Bush would attack Iraq.

Richard Weaver (1910-1963), one of the leading conservative intellectuals at mid-Century, was the author of numerous books and essays, including *Ideas Have Consequences*.

Terra Incognita

Philadelphia

The long arm of the law in the City of Brotherly Love, as reported by the *Detroit News*:

T. Milton Street, assistant budget director for the Philadelphia Traffic Court, was suspended after it was learned that he had \$1,967 in unpaid Traffic Court violations. Street had refused to pay fines, for offenses including running a stop sign, reckless driving, driving without a license, and driving an unregistered vehicle.

Los Angeles

The Widow of the Sainted Kennedy the Younger offers advice to an overweight nation, as reported in the *Los Angeles Times*:

Ethel Kennedy, the near-reclusive widow of Robert F. Kennedy,

told the *Ladies Home Journal*: "When the Iraqi invasion occurred, I really hoped the President would ask us all to tighten our belts."

Sacramento, Calif.

Vanity goes to unusual lengths in the Golden State, as reported in the *Chicago Tribune*:

Of the 333 citizens of California who chose to include the word "wop" or "dago" on their "vanity" license plates, 162 have appealed the decision of the Department of Motor Vehicles' regulatory panel on vanity license plate nomenclature to prohibit the use of those ethnically charged terms. "I'm outraged," said Ron Cascio of Sacramento, who appealed to be allowed to keep his "No. 1 Wop" plate.

Terra Incognita

Hayward, Calif.

Proof that while faith may move mountains, it has difficulty with automobiles, as reported in the *New York Times*:

A man who said God told him he could drive through cars with his flatbed truck hit 18 vehicles and injured 12 people on Saturday, authorities said.

Rapid City, Mich.

A new way (or is it an old way?) to enforce community standards, as reported in the *Manistee (Mich.) News Advocate*:

The Crossroads Bar, embroiled in controversy over the years for its entertainment, was destroyed by fire early Thursday evening. Arson has been ruled out. On a nightly news program Rev. Coffia of Martyrs Memorial Baptist Church threatened the owners, saying if they rebuilt the bar, the church will pray for even greater destruction.

Midwest City, Okla.

Ecologically sound use of food wastes, as reported in the *Detroit Free Press*:

A man who became enraged that his Thanksgiving turkey was not defrosted was charged with assaulting his wife with the frozen bird, police said.

Green Cove Springs, Fla.

Evidence that victory is at hand in the war on euphemisms, as reported by the *Washington Post*:

The 1941 children's literary classic *My Friend Flicka* was pulled from fifth- and sixth-grade optional reading lists by school administrators after parents complained it contained vulgar language. The book contains the word "bitch," in reference to a female dog.

Yuma, Ariz.

Sexism can take the most insidious forms, as reported in the *Arizona Republic*:

Members of the Desert Herdsmen may have to find a new name. It's not that they want to change the name of their Yuma County 4-H club. The federal government says they have to. "Herdsmen," the federal government says, is "gender specific" and violates federal regulations.

Washington, D.C.

Good help is hard to find even in the insect world, as reported in the *Detroit News*:

The egg-laying queen ant at the National Zoo was decapitated by worker ants a few days ago, but her loyal subjects were still tending to her, unaware that she is dead. The worker ants—all daughters of the queen—lopped off the queen's head apparently by mistake while trying to squeeze her through a small hole in their nest to a better location.

New Delhi

A speedy and public trial, by the standards of modern India, as reported by the *Associated Press*:

J. M. Kochar, R. M. Banthiya, S. N. Murteja, and J. K. Batra, were acquitted of feloniously purchasing substandard motor parts while working for a transport company in 1957. Of the 64 witnesses called by the prosecution, only 12 ever testified. Sixteen of the others died, and 36 were lost track of before the trial could be completed. The average age of the defendants at the conclusion of the trial was 70.

Bethesda, Maryland

Unintended consequences of state involvement in Arbor Day activities, as reported in the *New York Times*:

The governor personally apologized today for a state work crew that had mistakenly cut down seven trees bordering the yard of Arun Vohra. Mr Vohra had notified the Maryland Highway Administration about a diseased pine tree on state property in front of his house. A few days later he returned home and found that the tree was still standing but that six other trees had been cut. Mr Vohra complained, and soon another state official came to his house and was shown the diseased pine. Mr Vohra marked the pine with a ribbon.

Some time later he returned home from work and found that the massive cedar a few feet from the pine had been cut. The pine was still untouched.

Wall St.

Cruel and unusual punishment of America's ex-junk bond king, as reported in the *Detroit News*:

Convicted junk-bond king Michael Milken will have to go to prison without his curly hairpiece. Unless he has a medical reason, Milken will have to leave his wig home because of rules to "prevent hairpieces from being used as part of a disguise or to conceal weapons, keys, or contraband."

Beverly Hills, Mich.

Innovation in stewardship, as reported in the *Detroit Free Press*:

A Beverly Hills minister who told authorities he robbed banks to pay for high-priced call girls wants people to pray for him. The Rev. Roy Alan Yanke is charged with two counts of unarmed bank robbery. But FBI agents say they have a statement from the 37-year-old fundamentalist Christian in which he admits to a dozen other robberies. His congregation has been "understanding."

Guymon, Okla.

Proof that voters in the Sooner State are tolerant of diversity on the bench, as reported in the *Wall St Journal*:

Final results of the Nov 7 election for the office of District Judge in this northern Oklahoma city:

Frank Ogden (incumbent)	9,377 votes (91%)
Josh J. Evans	959 votes (9%)
Frank Ogden died on August 9.	

Raleigh, N. C.

Advance in animal rights in the Tar Heel State, as reported in the *New York Times*:

Elijah Lawrence was sentenced to one year in prison for kicking a police horse. "I can't condone assault on a law officer," said Judge James Fullwood, announcing the sentence.

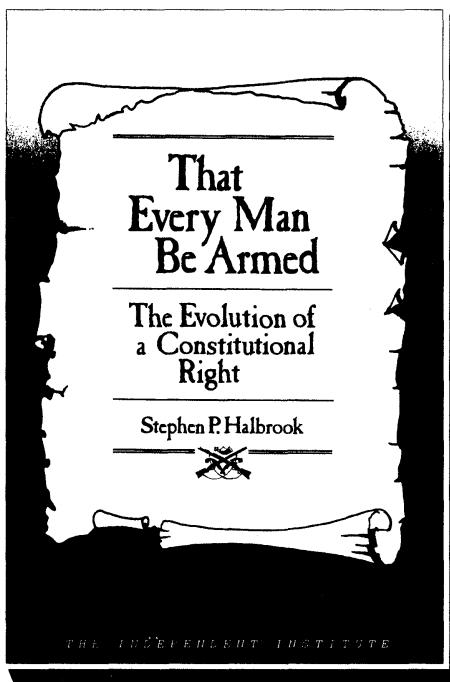
Tokyo

Advise on dating from the magazine *Brutus*:

"Order a tea immediately when your date shows up at a coffee shop to meet you. . . . Smile even at waitresses and passers-by to better your image. . . . Don't order drinks that make you look like a wimp. . . . And finally, enjoy sex."

(Readers are invited to forward newsclippings or other items for publication in *Terra Incognita*.)

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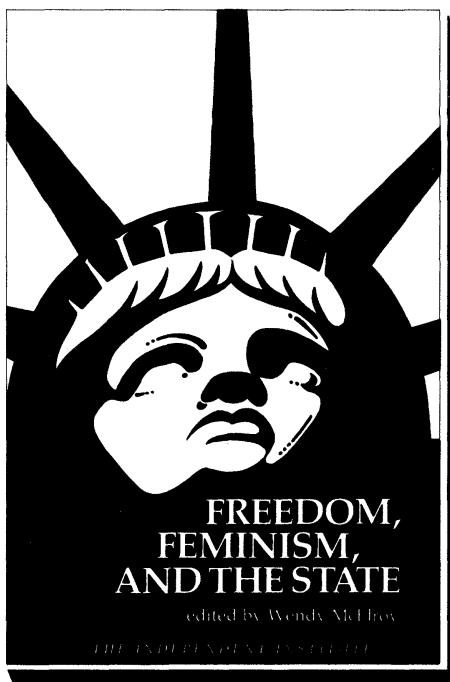
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