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Letters

Silly Putty

Sarah McCarthy, in "Aiming to Please" (Reflections, June), left out some important points: Ms. Fonda may have been quite articulate, but articulate isn't a synonym for smart; being "putty in the hands of men" isn't an excuse for anything, it is just Ms. Fonda's way of telling us is that she is still irresponsible at 67. And why on earth should we have more regard for the views of a successful entertainer (except on the subject of entertaining) than for the views of, say, a successful truck driver?

Did Ms. Fonda, Rosie O'Donnell, or the Dixie Chicks become successful by virtue of their political analysis? (For that matter, did Charlton Heston, Sonny Bono, Michael Medved, or Dan Rather?) So why should we regard their political views as noteworthy?

The bad news is, of course, that American elections are just another area of entertainment.

Bill Dunn
Soledad, Calif.

End It, Don't Mend It

I was disappointed that your recent article on Social Security advocated adjusting the Social Security system rather than eliminating the system altogether. Although a disclaimer claimed that the writer favored eliminating the Social Security system, the flavor of the disclaimer seems to suggest that we should simply accept defeat, and merely work for something better. The system proposed was more fiscally sound, but no closer to true freedom. It would continue to teach that the federal government is going to provide for us, and would legitimize an unconstitutional tax.

If we decide that the federal government may do whatever it wishes, that it has whatever power it wishes to assume, then we have, in effect, no Constitution. If we the people become so delusional as to decide that we are incapable of providing for retirement, then we should amend the Constitution to allow the federal government to do so. To simply allow the federal government to assume this function is to declare the Constitution dead. As Jefferson so eloquently put it: "Our peculiar security is in the possession of a written Constitution. Let us not make it a blank paper by construction."

I understand that we must be realistic in our goals. Victory is not achieved in an instant. But we do not achieve victory by acquiescing to defeat.

Caleb Johnson
Manchester, N.H.

Hitler's Welfare State

In "Breeding a Better Tomorrow?" (July), Ralph Reiland traces genocide in Germany back to eugenics in the United States, but that doesn't tell the whole story. Hitler didn't just take his inspiration from the United States, but, as revealed in George Watson's "The Lost Literature of Socialism," from Marx and the Soviet Union.

Both eugenics and the Holocaust need to be traced back to their origins. The cruelty of the concentration camps arose out of the compassion of the welfare state.

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Letters to the Editor

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Reflections

Clothes-minded — If the world is so anti-American, why do anti-American protestors — in Palestine, Bolivia, Iran, and virtually everywhere else — always appear on television wearing American clothes? — Stephen Cox

Enjoy your stay — When Gregory Despres arrived on foot at the Canadian border crossing at Calais, Maine, he was carrying a homemade sword, a hatchet, a knife, brass knuckles, and a bloody chainsaw. U.S. customs agents confiscated the weapons, fingerprinted him, and let him into the United States.

Shortly afterwards, Canadian officials informed the border agents that Despres was a murder suspect. I suspect that customs agents fell victim to the notion that Canada is a "Safe and Crime-free Nation." A blood-soaked chainsaw is not grounds for suspicion in the country where, according to Michael Moore, murder never happens. —Tim Slagle

Smack for seniors — Having a 94-year-old father who suffers pain gracefully, I see no need to restrict access to heroin, or any other painkiller, to anyone who has lived past 90. Though "addiction" might be a threat, rest assured that drug dependency among nonagenarians won't last long.

I know that a principal argument against free heroin for nonagenarians is that it will set a bad example for octagenarians, who will then be clamoring to get free "horse" as well. And then septugenarians, even though they feel even less pain. But just as humane policies must start somewhere, so must a line be drawn. — Richard Kostelanetz

Earning her way — Racer Danica Patrick came in fourth in the Indianapolis 500, and injected new interest into the sport. This happened in spite of President Bush cutting funds for Title IX, a federal program that mandated funding for collegiate athletic programs for women. The sad reality of Title IX is that very few sports fans are interested in women's sports. For the most part, they are just an inferior imitation of men's sports (see, for instance, the WNBA).

Danica competes in a sport dominated by men, on a truly level playing field, and proves that a woman can succeed on her own abilities, without Uncle Sam holding the door for her.

Sports are market-driven, and the fans want to see the best on the field. If a woman can compete with the best, everyone will cheer her on, despite her gender. Actually, Danica's gender has helped her — nobody remembers who came in fourth last year, but Danica is probably going to be on Wheaties® boxes and Pepsi® commercials all summer long. I bet she'll get ten times more commercial endorsements than this year's winner . . . what's his name?

—Tim Slagle

Looking for an angry fix — The Senate has formally apologized for never having passed anti-lynching legislation, and thereby giving their tacit approval to the savage murders of thousands of blacks.

I am not impressed. The Senate (and the House, and the other two branches of the federal government) still allow lynching to happen. They changed the name from "lynching" to "the drug war," but it's the same thing. The lives of a generation of black people are being systematically destroyed because of the pathological, institutionalized hatred and idiocy of the dominant class. — Patrick Quealy

Office romance — One of my favorite parts of the country, eastern Washington state, has become the center of a scandal involving a bisexual Republican ex-paratrooper mayor, and things he should not have done.

The editors of the Spokane Spokesman-Review, sick of hearing rumors about Mayor Jim West's sexual proclivities, enlisted a consultant to visit websites that catered to men cruising for anonymous gay sex, to see if they could catch His Honor in a compromising Instant Message.

The story broke at the same time some incarcerated unfortunates made this allegation: West, when with the sheriff's department, looked the other way while his partner molested a young man on a camping trip almost 30 years ago. (His partner later shot himself rather than face other indecency charges.)

The mayor denied that charge. But then he said some-

thing that must have been very difficult for a former Republican state legislator and caucus leader. "The newspaper also alleges that I used the Internet to meet adult men. I don't deny that."

And there it was. West, in his previous career, had resisted the annual push for anti-discrimination laws for gays and, more heinously, once proposed to block gays from teaching and day care positions. Now, he had to admit to a liking for rough trade.

The story didn't go away with that denial, of course; it got more sordid every day. Gay teens started coming out of the woodwork (not the closet; they are all much more open about their sexuality than the mayor) with similar stories of an encounter with a bi Republican ex-para who had lots of connections and influence.

Mayor West once proposed to block gays from teaching and day care positions. Now, he had to admit to a liking for rough trade.

The Spokesman-Review printed myriad quotations from Gay.com chat rooms. There it was in black ink: the mayor, "chatting" away on his computer with his nemesis, the hired gun from the local paper, blithely offering internship opportunities and other blandishments, the quid pro quo obvious but never quite stated.

About a week later, the mayor's staff started splitting hairs with a city councilman about whether the mayor had told her about masturbating at his computer in his office or merely masturbating in his car.

Why did he feel the need to compromise himself and his office, to risk being outed as a Republican chicken hawk? Well, for one thing, he's not as svelte as he used to be.

In 1988, I was one of about 2,000 young men gathered for the American Legion/VFW Boy's State at Cheney, a pit of a college town outside Spokane. It was a summer vacation week of speakers, mock legislative sessions, and moot courts designed to keep us indoctrinated with Americanism, whatever the hell that is. A couple thousand guys. Dressed for summer. And 1988 was the year of surf slippers, deep tans, and homemade tank tops that showed off way, *way* too much adolescent flesh.

One of the speakers was a guy named Jim West. None of us, except the real government geeks and former pages, had ever heard of this guy, and I don't remember anything about his talk. I do remember when he said "I'm a Vietnam veteran" and got a standing ovation. All those boys. Standing and applauding him. (This was back when Americans were undergoing ferocious guilt trips for their treatment of the veterans of that war. Those of us applauding wanted to draw a line between our generation and our possibly subversive parents.)

I went to a microphone to pitch him a question. In 1988, there weren't many Republican legislators, and it looked like it would stay that way. I asked him if it was fair that incumbents were so easily re-elected. "I don't know if it's fair, but . . ." said the incumbent legislator. He went on to say that there are occasionally large shifts in the electorate. "For example, in 1932, the Democratic incumbents in Congress were turned out as part of Roosevelt's coat tails, and the Republicans went on to dominate Congress for the next 50 years."

Huh? Maybe he noticed that I was dumbstruck at this assertion. He blurted "No, wait, obviously, it was the Democrats that took control of Congress that year, and the Republicans, rather, who were in the minority." He moved on to the next question.

News You May Have Missed

Woodward: Deep Throat Choice "No-brainer"

WASHINGTON — Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, who as reporters for the Washington Post unraveled the Watergate cover-up in the 1970s, said that their selection of W. Mark Felt to be the source known until now only as "Deep Throat" was inevitable.

"We already knew that G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt were heavily involved in Watergate," Woodward said, "and that J. Edgar Hoover had recently died and had been replaced as head of the FBI by L. Patrick Gray, so among all the people who came to us clamoring to be chosen as our Deep Throat, including John Dean, Henry Kissinger, Chuck Colson, Rosemary Woods, Maurice Stans, Martha Mitchell, Pat Nixon, Tricia Nixon, Howard Cosell, and Linda Lovelace, none of them had what we wanted: a cryptic first initial. So we went with W. Mark Felt and we weren't disappointed. This is a man who had gone underground and infiltrated numerous parking garages during his years as an agent, sending Hoover regular reports on how these shadowy subterranean organizations so undermined the confidence of ordinary American citizens that they would ever find their car again or find their way out of them, and that's why Felt and I always met in them, because I could never figure out how to get out of them either and lived in one from October 1972 to July 1974." Woodward and Bernstein added that now that he has finally disclosed that he was Deep Throat, they hoped that Felt would further reveal what the "W" stands for by the time he's 95.

Meanwhile, Monica Lewinsky's revelation that she was "Deep Throat" during the Clinton administration seems to have generated much less excitement in the nation's capital, and plans for a movie version starring Kirstie Alley have been shelved.

— Eric Kenning

Now, in 1988 I was pretty cute, but I had no notion that I might have caused a political junkie like him to lose his train of thought so completely, with nothing but my youthful charms and dewy eyes. Back then, West still looked like a paratrooper, or at least a reasonably fit Army reservist. Today, he does not. He has taken to wearing owlish glasses and his gut hangs ponderously over his belt. I didn't recognize him in the video of the infamous news conference because of all the gel in his hair. This is no longer a man who can attract a young sexual adventurer merely with witty banter and a "come hither" look in his eye. Now he has to tell these kids (all over 18, of course; Gay.com warrants so) that he's the Mayor of the Third Largest City in the state, and that he gives jobs to his tricks. — Brien Bartels

Dismantling Dean — I liked Howard Dean, and deep down, I think I still do.

Any sensible person could tell from the moment he threw his hat in the ring that he wasn't presidential material. But, like Fox Mulder from the X-Files, I wanted to believe.

Maybe what I wanted to believe in was as crazy as believing in flying saucers. I wanted to believe that this spunky, articulate candidate from "the Democratic wing of the Democratic party," the only Democrat with a chance in the primaries who genuinely opposed the war, a Democrat who solidly connected with his base and understood how modern elections are won, was someone I could get behind.

Sure, I disagreed with most of his platform on principle. Mere details. You take what you can get. He opposed the war. He understood economics . . . kind of. He pitched a way of socializing medicine that didn't ignore market principles as blithely as the other Democratic candidates' plans would have. He was decent on guns. He wasn't afraid of untouchable social issues like abortion and gay rights. For the love of God, he could string an honest sentence together, unlike Bush; and he believed some things, unlike Kerry.

Prime time was ready for a president like Dean: witness the popularity and success of "The West Wing," with its idealistic Democratic President Bartlet. But the converse wasn't true. Dean wasn't ready for prime time. He was the child who showed up the teacher in front of the whole class, but didn't know when to shut up. Now he's just the kid who's too smart for his own good, and so spends his afternoons in the detention hall. He'll always be on the principal's bad side, and he'll spend every recess inside writing on the board, "I will not 'promote tolerance' by saying I hate Republicans. I will not suggest that no Republican has ever done an honest day's work."

He seems on course to throw the DNC into disarray, cripple its fundraising, and continue the division he started among the inner circle of the Democratic Party. Perhaps that will be his lasting contribution. — Patrick Quealy

Buckle up or we'll shoot — Why are there legions of lawyers lined up outside appellate courtrooms to KO government inspection of our library cards — the Patriot act, you know — but none to carry a brief against the state's inspection of the front seat of my car? Seat belts save lives? Sure, but only my own, not yours. Therefore one would suppose my use of the belt would be my business: not yours, not the state's. I can't kill my neighbor by unbuckling. "Click it or ticket"? The state, with a mask of love, shows its arrogance.

Why not send a couple of those polite Highway Patrolmen to my house every morning, to make sure that I've taken my blood pressure meds? It's only a small logical leap from my car's front seat to my bathroom's medicine cabinet.

Last week my hometown, which I won't name to avoid embarrassment, set up a series of checkpoints around town to protect me from my careless self, lounging around my car seat without plastic restraints around my belly."There will be zero tolerance for those who do not wear seat belts." bleated a police spokesman: an ambiguous threat that could range from lifelong confinement to a strapping with an old frayed seat belt.

However, the cops did announce the times and locations of the blockades. Naturally they clogged up traffic like

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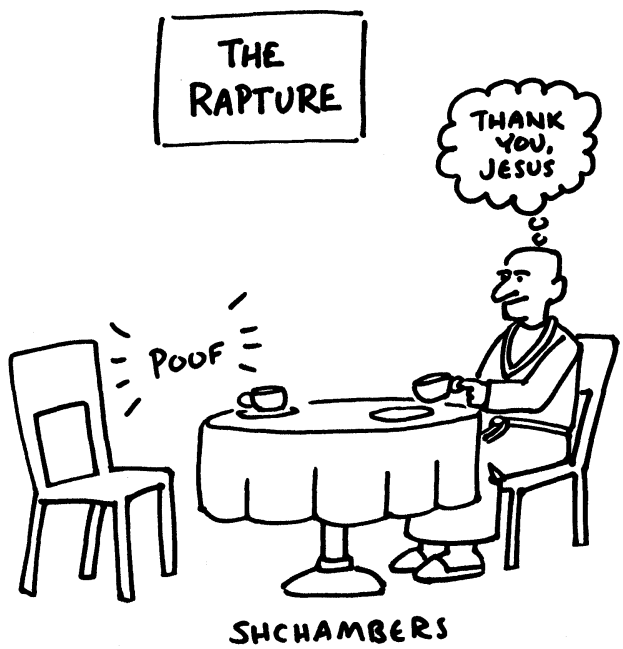
cheese in a colon. (I wonder how many people on the way to the ER died due to the delay? I wonder how many lovers rushing to randy rendezvous lost their one true loves because they were late?) Requirements for this kind of harrassment come with the check to the local police signed by the federal government.

How strange, these federal requirements. If a stranger with a gun blocked the road, pulled me over, and entered my car, I'd call the cops. But today there's no need: they're already here. — Ted Roberts

The cuisine of the proletariat — Vladimir Putin lashed out at Africa's past after being challenged about his own nation's human rights record. According to the Financial Times, Putin said, "We all know that African countries used to have a tradition of eating their own adversaries. We don't have such a tradition or process or culture and I believe the comparison between Africa and Russia is not quite just."

Considering Russia's communist legacy — the unproductive feasting on the blood, sweat, and labor of the productive while huge populations were allowed to starve to death — I don't think the denial of Russian cannibalism is completely honest. —Tim Slagle



Can we say that? — The press is free in the United States, and can discuss just about anything it wants. But at any given time certain ideas are on the table and others are ignored. It would be a fascinating study to see how an idea gets into the public spotlight, what keeps it there, and what removes it.

Referendums are the most obvious example. If there is a vote on a specific issue, it will be in the spotlight. Medical marijuana has attracted a great deal of attention in the Western states that allow initiative and referendum, but I suspect it's less in the public eye in the East (at least until *Raich* v. *Gonzales*). In my state, charter schools were in the public eye because of a long campaign to enact legislation creating them, but they dropped out after the charter law was repealed by public referendum. Getting an issue on the table — or off — is one of the strategic uses of the initiative and referendum.

There are also effects after a general election. After 1994, when the Republicans took Congress on an anti-government platform, public debate changed. Previously verboten ideas suddenly had a hearing. The corrosiveness of racial preferences, which Thomas Sowell had taken on but no white person dared address, was one such idea. Social Security personal accounts emerged from the libertarian world at about that time, and single-payer medical insurance took a back seat. It wasn't that Social Security reform had any realistic chance of passage in 1995. But you could talk about it. You can still talk about it now, though maybe in a year there will be a tacit agreement to forget about it.

A prominent political or cultural sponsor can open the door. Steve Forbes was a failure as a Republican candidate in 1996, but he got a flat tax on the national agenda for a while. He also helped start the debate about Social Security reform — though he failed to generate much support for the gold standard.

Sometimes there is a taboo. One is that one race may not criticize another, particularly whites criticizing blacks. On the issue of the "achievement gap" in test scores between the two races, Bill Cosby broke ground when he criticized black parents for putting up with bad English and black students for using it. Cosby took heat, but he could say it because he was black. Once he said it, it was OK for whites — for a while, at least — to agree with him.

Another taboo is religion. In the mainstream press you cannot make an argument about the existence of God, or whether the Pope speaks to Him, or whether Intelligent Design is true. You can, however, write about whether Intelligent Design ought to be discussed in biology class or whether the next Pope should be a Latino.

After the 9/11 attacks it was not possible to argue that the United States brought the attacks upon itself — that its foreign policy had helped to provoke them. A year later, it could be said. It wasn't popular, but you could say it. During the invasion of Iraq, debate on the war virtually ceased, primarily out of respect for the soldiers and their families. That taboo is long gone.

These taboos have little or nothing to do with censorship or conspiracy. They have everything to do with a sense of journalists of what is safe to talk about and what isn't. Radicals denounce this sense of propriety, because it usually excludes their ideas. But sometimes an idea considered nutty becomes intriguing instead. That's where drug legalization is today. You can talk about it, but legislators won't support it openly and won't vote on it. Privately, some of them say it makes sense. At some point, they will debate it. Not yet; it is an issue awaiting a Cosby or a Forbes. — Bruce Ramsey

Diversity travelogue — Recently, during one 36-hour period, I (A) drove to Cairo, Illinois, where I joined the largely black clientele of the best restaurant in town in ordering the establishment's (great!) ribs sandwich with potato salad (eight dollars, including coffee and pie); (B) went over

to Fairview, Kentucky, where I ascended the 350-foot obelisk marking the birthplace of Jefferson Davis, a spot from which I achieved an excellent view of the lush farmland spreading around the base of the monument, farmland now largely occupied by Amish men and women, complete with horses and buggies and the kind of pacifist sentiments that I don't think Davis would have liked; (C) traveled on up to Terre Haute, Indiana, where I was pleased to discover a house preserved in honor of Theodore Dreiser, a great novelist, though a devotee of certain ideas (e.g., communism) that I know I don't like; and finally (D), while pumping gas at a local filling station, looked up to find that I was standing next to a sign erected to memorialize the four (!) men who, right there in Terre Haute, designed that icon of capitalism, the Coca-Cola bottle.

Now, why do some people think that Americans must be forced to experience "diversity"? — Stephen Cox

Sorry about that — On June 14th the United States Senate apologized for never passing a law against lynching. Although the House of Representatives passed three bills, and dozens more were proposed, the Senate never could muster the support to pass a single one during the 105-year history of lynching.

I'm not a fan of these kinds of apologies. I do not understand how it is possible to apologize for slavery, or taking land from the Indians, since the slaves and displaced Indians have all passed away. Since I never owned slaves, or bought a great piece of land for just a string of beads, I'm not even responsible. Likewise, since most of the Senate wasn't there when lynching stopped in 1968, their apology is worthless.

Sen. Robert Byrd is another matter. Not only has he plastered his name on every pork barrel project built on former Indian land in West Virginia for the last fifty years, he was in the KKK back when lynching was as acceptable to the Klan as bingo is to the Knights of Columbus.

During the battle over judicial nominees, lifetime Southern Democrat Robert Byrd spoke about the grand tradition of Democratic filibusters in the Senate. Curiously, it was Democrat-led filibusters that prevented anti-lynching bills from even reaching the Senate floor in 1922, 1935 and 1938.

Of course, those who claim the Senate's power was needed are ignoring the fact that lynchings stopped anyway, without a federal law ever being passed. What stopped the lynching, inevitably, was the Second Amendment. In the '60s, movements like the Nation of Islam and the Black Panthers encouraged blacks to arm themselves. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice remembers her father loading up and patrolling the streets of Birmingham, defending the neighborhood from the Nightriders. You don't see lynching anymore because blacks are quite well armed, and today, white cracker bigots are afraid to go into black neighborhoods. Perhaps the Senate should instead apologize for the Assault Weapon Ban and the Brady Bill. —Tim Slagle

Pirates on the Potomac — Two days before my mother's 84th birthday, the government took $72,000 from her. A government that takes that much from an elderly woman of modest means is not a moral government. It may be a government of laws, but the laws are criminal.

The Founders wrote in the Declaration of Independence that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of certain inalienable rights, "it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government." They wrote these words as an angry response to British taxes and tariffs — plunder that pales in comparison to what today's tax code allows.

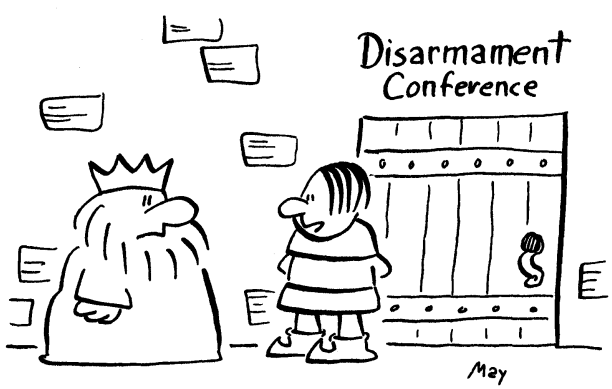
It is one thing for the government to take nearly half of my income and give most of the purloined loot to special-interest groups. But it is quite another thing for the government to plunder my 84-year-old mother. I don't know what angers me more: that she had so much of her retirement nest egg forcibly taken from her, or that most Americans don't give a damn.

The nation has passed the tax tipping point. The majority of Americans now get more back in government services and entitlements than they pay in taxes. We have become a nation of bloodsuckers, with a growing majority sucking the savings out of a shrinking minority. There is no way that the tax teeter-totter can ever be righted again. Those who think that it can be righted by a flat tax or consumption tax are delusional. A democratic government will always increase its plundering to meet the majority's demand.

Why aren't Americans grabbing their pitchforks, storming the castle, and putting the heads of their overlords on pikes for ravens to peck at?

Why did my mom have to pay $72,000? Because she and my dad scrimped and saved and lived below their working-class means. In an attempt to protect their nest egg, they invested in the stock market. Last year, my mom sold the stock and transferred the money to fixed-income investments.

She had to pay capitals gains taxes on the paper gains from the sale. I say "paper gains," because most of the gains were due to inflation, and most of the inflation was caused by the government printing money to cover its profligate spending. To classify the gains as income is as preposterous as classifying food and water as discretionary spending. The



"It's just a formality, Sire, but I'll have to frisk you."

government also hit my mom with a $4,000 Alternative Minimum Tax, which was originally enacted by Congress in response to multi-millionaires using legal tax dodges to avoid paying income tax.

Mom's tax bill amounted to more than half the proceeds from the sale of the humble house that she and my father had lived in for 60 years. (As she was putting her home up for sale, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch ran an infuriatingly chirpy story about welfare recipients moving into new public housing. Photos showed townhouses considerably nicer

Word Watch

by Stephen Cox

The American language radiates from various centers of influence — various places where people work with words. There is a sales and advertising center, a computing and electronics center, a political center, and a bureaucrats-of-all-shapes-and-functions center, each with its own way of using and abusing language. Computer people "interface"; politicians "review options"; bureaucrats "seek consensus" and "strive for closure"; meanwhile, sales and advertising wonders, "Where's the beef?" and indulges itself in a periodic kraze for "K." Think what you will (or better, what I will) about the wholesomeness of these concoctions, they do show that the language is still alive. Of course, Frankenstein's monster was alive, too, in a way. . . .

One of America's leading centers of language dissemination has always been the Christian church. This is a center, indeed, that has often shown its ability to dominate other centers. What would American politics be like without "brotherhood," "faith" in our country's institutions, and perpetual "crusades" to "save" this and that? Not much, brothers and sisters. At the moment, however, religion is more the victim than the aggressor in the contest of language diffusion.

Consider the current plague of "mission statements." These days, it's hard to enter a liquor store without seeing a glossy red, white, and blue, 24"x 36" cardboard Mission Statement tacked up behind the cash register, heralding "our commitment" to "provide fast, quick, convenient service" to every tippler, boozer, and wino "in this community."

"We bring you God's peace and a bundle of love."

"Mission" is a religious term, hijacked by the bureaucratic segment of society. A bureaucracy is, by definition, an organization that is too complicated to know what it's doing. At some point, some bureaucrat must have tried to codify what his org should be doing — and the mission statement was born. Now everyone has to have such a statement, even churches; and it's sad to see how "mission" has recoiled on its original owners.

An ecclesiastical mission statement is a confession of failure. I mean, if it isn't already obvious what a church is for, then what's the purpose of explaining it? But wherever there's a church, you're likely to see a mission statement — beside the door, in that wide space on the narthex wall, next to the sign out front, on the website, in the little bulletin they give you when you turn up for a wedding . . . It's there someplace; you'll find it. And once Americans start writing things like that, they never find a good place to stop. Soon they're lost in elaborate attempts to rewrite the Bible ("When God created the world . . ."), the creeds ("We believe . . . "), the Democratic Party platform ("We welcome all God's people regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, age, handicap, sex, and sexual orientation"), and "I'm OK, You're OK" ("A church where we laugh and rejoice together, cry and comfort together, sing and dance together," etc., etc.).

I don't need to tell you that in most of these statements the "church community" proclaims itself "united" in its "diversity," yet striving for "empowerment" so that it can become yet "more fully human." And once the cart is rolling down the hill, it's easy for it to take a swerve toward politics. To cite one of a thousand instances, a Roman Catholic parish notifies us that "we live in a society conspicuous for its unequal distribution of power and material goods" (really? check out India, folks, or Vatican City), and that it is therefore earnestly "seek[ing] to hear the word of God spoken by the poor and suffering."

That last expression is one of those arrangements of words that become less comprehensible the more you study them, but it does exemplify a typical attribute of spontaneous (that is, bad) writing: the tendency to double things. It's never enough in a mission statement to talk about people being "poor"; they have to be "poor and suffering." One Protestant mission statement puts its message in this way: "We value each and every person, Christian or non-Christian, adult or child . . . We value a church culture where people are actively 'bringing and including' others, 'inviting and enfolding' . . ." All right, all right, I get it.

The orgy of mission statements is merely the latest expression of the American church's chronic desire to be something other than what it is. This weird existential craving began after World War I, when every church with a bank account bought up the lot next door, added a gymnasium, a social hall, and a bowling alley, and started pretending to be Metropolitan Social Services. It continued after World War II, when churches themselves began looking like gymnasiums and supermarkets

than my mom's house, and their new residents — obese women and their gaggles of obese kids, with no fathers in sight.)

Mom now lives in a tiny one-bedroom apartment in a retirement home. She fears she lacks sufficient money to live out her remaining years without becoming a burden on her family. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of people her age are living in nursing homes at the expense of taxpayers. Many of them were either spendthrifts all of their working lives and thus had no savings upon retirement, or had considerable

("Feed my sheep"). It intensified after the Vietnam War, when many churches became indistinguishable from daycare centers, methadone clinics, and the last act of "Hair." It got thicker and deeper when the religious left responded to the War on Terror by abandoning the word "church" altogether, preferring to "open dialogues" about "faith traditions." The idea was to pat yourself on the back for being religious, without convicting yourself of "bigotry" by setting one "faith tradition" (its own) above another (Islam).

The flight from distinctively Christian language can be found in conservative as well as liberal churches. "Family values" (a phrase not present in the Bible, where very few families have any "values" at all) is the best example of this, but there are plenty more. Even fundamentalists are now calling the church part of their "campus" the "worship center." It's sort of like the "food court" down at the mall; if you get tired of the other "features," you can always "take advantage" of the Sunday special. And just as every store requires a "sales team," so every "worship center" has its "worship team." This usually consists, I believe, of entities formerly known as the "pastor," "assistant pastor," and "choir director." Thank God, they've gotten rid of all those confusing religious titles.

I cannot be sure what is meant, however, by the California pastor who recently went online to tell his virtual flock ("Dear Church Family") how greatly "our time of worship" has been "enhanced" by "the Hula Worship Group." They worship the hula, is that what he means? No, maybe not. I'm just not sure. But I know that the luau liturgy, whatever it consists of, cannot be an isolated eccentricity. In the same way in which one ant is always evidence of a million other ants, there has to be an organization somewhere in America that's sending out "kits" telling local churches how to "enhance" their "worship experience" with the aid of twirling thighs.

Of course, no "church family" is safe so long as the Bible retains its ancient dignity of language. Numerous attempts have been made to "translate" this text so as to remove any connection with the tone and meaning of the original, and much progress has been made. The translation currently being foisted on mainstream churches is the New Revised Standard Version, an egregiously maladroit collection of phrases, the purpose of which appears to be the gratification of deaf professors at inferior universities. To cite just one absurdity, out of the thousands available: in place of the majestic "firmament" of the creation account in Genesis, the writers (or typists) of the NRSV give us nothing more than a wimpy little "dome" — as if nobody nowadays could be expected to understand what "firmament" means, or as if the ancient Hebrews knew anything about "domes" to begin with. Which they didn't. Trust me, when a Bible translation sounds silly, it's also wrong.

But the stunts pulled by the "translators" of the NRSV are as nothing, compared with the antics of Mr. John Henson, a retired Baptist preacher who has decided to create a New Testament that lets us "hear as if for the first time what the Christian scriptures were saying." That's according to the foreword that Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury and titular head of the worldwide Anglican communion, wrote in recommendation of Henson's "Good as New: A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures" (2004). This is a British publication, but its goofiness is American, through and through.

First, we have the typically American idea that "history," as Henry Ford believed, "is bunk," and that its replacement should be politics. Confronted with books of the Bible that he doesn't consider politically correct, Henson just leaves them out. Consider the book of Revelation: "Most of the fundamentalist sects of the fringes of Protestantism, distinguished mainly by their lack of love [thank you, O loving Henson!], have gained their impetus, their twisted theology, their lunacy and fanaticism from too much reading of Revelation." He blames "Waco" on the last book of the Bible. But don't worry; he's gotten rid of that book.

Second, and yet more amusing, we have the typically American idea that we's all jest fokes. That being true, we can't possibly be expected to interest ourselves in a text in which somebody is actually called "Mary Magdalene" (get her!) and another somebody is called "the Lord." To let us hear what the Scriptures are really saying, Henson transforms "Mary Magdalene" into "Maggie," and "the Lord" into "the Leader." Yes, I know, for historically educated people "the Leader" has another, somewhat sinister association, but we ain't educated, air we? Oh, and "Peter," whose name is related to a word meaning "rock": he's "Rocky," ain't he? That's how Henson translates it. So the First Epistle of Peter becomes, if I'm correctly identifying the faint resemblances between the original and the "translation," "The Call to Hope: A message from Rocky."

Now for "inclusive language." You've heard that at the last supper, Jesus' friend John "leaned on his breast"? You don't get it? Well, let me spell it out for you: "This was the friend," as Henson "translates" John 21:20, "who snuggled up close to Jesus when they were having a meal." It's 9:30, time for Will and Grace.

Or consider the moment in the gospel of Luke in which the "sheep farmers" (as Henson calls them) see the host of heaven announcing Messiah's birth with "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." You can't possibly understand that, can you? Of course not — not without the help of the Reverend Mr. Henson, who conveys it to us in this wise: "Then a band of singers appeared. They were singing songs for God. This is what they sang: 'Look at God's beauty around and above, / We bring you God's peace and a bundle of love.'"

No wonder, as he says, the sheep farmers "ran as fast as they could."

savings that they surreptitiously gave to their families in order to qualify for Medicaid.

Meanwhile, members of the U.S. House of Lords — both Democrats and Republicans — set up their adult children in lobbying firms and lean on corporations to funnel hundreds of thousands of dollars to them. They take exotic vacations at corporate expense. President Bush is no better: he made millions from subsidized baseball.

Why aren't Americans grabbing their pitchforks, storming the castle, and putting the heads of their overlords on pikes for ravens to peck at? Why aren't they taking the Founders' advice about altering or abolishing a government so destructive of inalienable rights?

I don't know the answer. But I do know that I'm sharpening my pitchfork and polishing my pike. — Anonymous

Valedicere, Farewell Address — The graduating student who delivers the valedictory, or farewell address, at the graduation ceremony was in the past called the valedictorian. In some schools, he (or she) is still called the valedictorian. In a growing number of schools, however, referring to "the" valedictorian is imprecise. You must specify this or that valedictorian, or perhaps this or that throng of valedictorians.

The Seattle Times reports that Garfield High School in Washington has 44 valedictorians (none of whom will give a valedictory) in a graduating class of 406. Bullard High School, in California, lists either 58 or 59 — there are conflicting counts. (Big numbers are hard!) A few seconds with an Internet search engine reveals that these are not aberrations.

Grade inflation! Lowered standards! They're giving this honor to every kid who can struggle through most of a page of "Fun with Dick and Jane." Disgusting. I have to put my newspaper down and let my blood pressure subside somewhat before continuing.

Turns out it's not quite as revolting as I'd feared — some, maybe all, of Garfield's valedictorians have taken challenging classes, earned straight A's, and been accepted by top-notch

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News You May Have Missed

New Cellphones Simplify Everything

CHICAGO — Motorola, a leading cellphone manufacturer, has announced a technological breakthrough in its new cellphone model, available early next year, which industry insiders believe will be quickly matched by competing cellphone companies offering their own versions. The new cellphone line, called Motorola Motormouth, will not only send and receive text messages, take snapshots, access the Internet, arrange schedules, and take over lives, it will carry on cellphone conversations all by itself.

The user will program the phone by clicking through a brief personality test and entering a few salient facts about job, family, friends, pets, and sexual, entertainment, and shopping preferences, and then the phone will interminably do the rest. First of all, a built-in global positioning device will automatically give an answer to the question "Where are you now?" (automatically asked by the other conversing cellphone) by providing not only basic information like "I'm stuck in the frigging traffic again on the frigging Cross-Bronx Expressway," or "I'm in line at this pizza place on Clark Street," or "I'm kind of at this like party, at this guy's house, I don't know, somewhere like really far out? like I guess the suburbs, I don't know," but also a pinpoint reading of latitude, longitude, and lassitude. The phone will then automatically offer extended, repetitive accounts of clothes bought, persons flirted or argued with, meals eaten, TV shows and sports watched, and all other significant events from the past 24 hours of the user's so-called life.

Other options, which the customer can select at any time during the conversation, will include standard cellphone conversational modes like maundering, prattling, blathering, gibbering, high-speed interrupting, advanced digressing, repeating the question, repeating the answer, missing the point, spending 14 minutes trying to think of the name of the restaurant that's near the theater, and continuing the conversation for up to an hour after it has apparently exhausted itself. The phone will automatically dial preset numbers at random during commuter train rides and carry on a series of pointless conversations at amplified volume for the duration of the trip. It will also automatically respond to calls received in inappropriate public places with standardized messages like, "Hey dude, but listen, I can't talk now, I'm in the theater, the movie theater, yeah, but did you get the message I left you, 'cause I totally can't go tomorrow night, and, hey, this is a really cool movie, right now there's this great scene where what's-her-name, no, no, not Reese Witherspoon, you know, she's . . . yeah, okay, look, I know you're trying to watch the goddamn movie but this is an important call . . . listen, I can't talk now, but . . . "

Motorola spokesperson Amber Muldoon said that one advantage of the new phone would certainly be safety. "Now when you're driving and carrying on a cellphone conversation, all you have to do is listen, and the phone will argue and scream and totally lose it for you while you stay calm and watch the road," she said. "And if you're walking down a crowded city street, having the phone do all the conversational belaboring and drifting that you need will reduce the vague meandering swerves to the left or the right and the sudden stops that are the cause of so many tragic pedestrian collisions."

Electronics companies are reportedly working feverishly to develop an even more advanced mobile phone that will automatically go to the mall and run up huge charge card debts while simultaneously talking about nothing in particular, allowing the owner of the phone to remain home in bed, staring at the ceiling. — Eric Kenning

The Cookie Monster Goes to Jail

by Rycke Brown

If you can't beat 'em, starve yourself.

The last time I was convicted of a crime, I served a three-year sentence. I'm not really concerned about being convicted this time, because I have a way to avoid prison: while in captivity, I will not eat.

I realize I could be forced to accept a feeding tube, but I think that's unlikely. Hospital upkeep is expensive. The county can't afford it, and neither the state nor the feds are eager to take a fasting prisoner. They won't want the expense, and they won't want the publicity.

I also realize I could be allowed to die. This is also unlikely — very bad publicity. No sheriff will want to head into an election accused of starving a poor widow gardener like me, all because she gave away a few pot cookies!

Every Sunday for the past two years, I spent two hours at the intersection of 6th and G Streets in beautiful Grants Pass, Ore., holding a protest sign, dancing to 70's rock music, and handing out leaflets. The police left me alone, I became quite popular, and I had lots of fun. Occasionally, I gave away cookies made with pot butter. Most of these were given to protest helpers or medical marijuana patients.

My protest helpers are usually young adults, and word spreads fast among the young. One recent Sunday, four young women walked up and exclaimed, "The cookie lady!" and asked for cookies. I asked them if they wanted oatmeal-sesame chocolate chip cookies (which contain no marijuana) or the pot gingersnaps. They wanted the pot cookies. They said they smoked pot daily, so I gave them one cookie apiece.

Apparently, all four women were later urine-tested at the Gospel Rescue Mission, and claimed they didn't know what was in the cookies I gave them. One of the women was pregnant, and one was only 15 years old. (I try to avoid giving cookies to minors, but 15 sometimes looks like 21.) I'd been set up — not by my opponents or by the authorities, but by fellow drug users.

The following Sunday was Easter. There was a warm spring rain falling, and a police car half a block away whose occupants were obviously watching me. I gave a couple of cookies to two young men. One of them had tried them before, and he warned the other that one was enough. They sat on the porch of the nearby community center, ate their cookies, and watched me dance.

A lady came up and told me she doesn't smoke marijuana, but admires what I'm doing. She asked if I had anything she could sign, and I gave her a "Legalize Freedom of Medicine" leaflet and a copy of my petition to make all elections in Oregon non-partisan. She asked if I'd given cookies to the young men on the porch, and if she could have one as well. She chose the pot ginger-snaps, and I advised her to eat no more than half a cookie.

About five minutes later, a couple of Grants Pass' finest informed me that I'd just given a cookie to an undercover officer, and they arrested me. I spent the next 26 hours in jail.

While I was in custody, the police searched my house and took urine samples from my daughter and a gardening

apprentice, both of whom were there at the time. They didn't get much more than the urine — just a few seeds and some paraphernalia. Their search was desultory, for two reasons.

First, they thought they already had me on possession, distributing to a minor, and four counts of causing to ingest without knowledge or consent. Anything that would add significantly to these charges would be fairly obvious and easy to detect. A search for minute traces of anything would be a waste of their time, and they probably wanted to get home to their Easter dinners.

Second, there's what I think of as the "activist factor." Cops are more likely to oppress people who don't know their rights: the poor and the ignorant. People who protest on street corners, or even sport radical bumper stickers, are apt to know their rights and will sue to prove it. When it becomes necessary to arrest known activists, policemen treat them with respect if they show the same. (When I was busted in Arizona, the police were extraordinarily polite and careful with my family and belongings. They let me take my kids to a friend's house, and they left my guns, after unloading them.)

My brother put up $1500 to bail me out before I could be conditionally released. My initial appearance had been continued to the next day, as I had no lawyer and refused a court-appointed one. It's better to bail out, as there are no requirements except showing up in court, whereas conditional release includes restrictions like not using illegal substances or alcohol. In court the next day, the judge warned that self-representation would put me at a disadvantage. I said I understood, but that accepting a lawyer appointed by the state would put me at an even greater disadvantage.

No sheriff wants to head into an election accused of starving a poor widow gardener.

After the hearing, I went down to Neil Morey's law office. His bread-and-butter is DUI, but he specializes in marijuana cases. As I walked through his door, he said, "I was hoping you'd call me." Just what I needed to hear. I'd done self-representation before; I really didn't want to do it again. It would take a lot of time and study and I'd likely end up convicted again. For his part, he'd seen me protesting every Sunday and had considered giving me his card, figuring I'd need it sooner or later.

I told him that this was a political prosecution, and that I'd have to fight it by telling the press at every opportunity that everyone who got a pot cookie was told there was pot in it. I would be admitting to a non-rights-violating offense in order to fight the rights-violation charges of causing to ingest. In the end, whatever they convicted me of, I would accept no more punishment than a month or so of fasting while they held me. I would not pay fines or accept probation.

He agreed! He understood! But then, that's why he was hoping I'd call him. He likes to do trials, and he rarely gets to. And all publicity is good publicity for a lawyer.

The cookie angle has been a great publicity boost. My protest and arrest has made the Northwest AP News, and area TV and radio news broadcasts. Early stories emphasized the 15-year-old and the pregnant woman. Channel 10 interviewed me for a follow-up story which got across the point that everyone who took a cookie knew what was in it. The Daily Courier did an in-depth interview that ran under the headline "Protester Insists Pot is Religious-Freedom Issue." The article, which quoted liberally from my leaflet, was fair and favorable, although it presented my protest as mainly about pot.

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Rycke's Gingersnaps

This is the cookie recipe that got me arrested:

3/4 cup pot butter (see below)
1 cup brown sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup molasses
2 1/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour
2 teaspoons soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon ginger
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1/4 teaspoon salt
small bowl of granulated sugar.

Mix thoroughly butter, brown sugar, egg, and molasses. Blend in remaining ingredients except granulated sugar. Cover; chill 1 hour (or freeze for later use).

Heat oven to 350°F. Separate dough into teaspoon-sizes, round into balls, dip tops in granulated sugar. Place balls sugar-side up 3 inches apart on lightly greased baking sheet. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or just until set. Immediately remove from baking sheet. Yield: 3–4 dozen.

Pot Butter
1 cup butter
1 cup shake (marijuana with seeds and stems removed)

Place butter and shake in the top half of a double boiler (lacking the double boiler, in a glass or metal bowl). Fill the bottom half of the boiler (or a saucepan) with an inch or two of water. Place top on bottom; simmer for 1 hour.

Strain the melted butter out of the shake, pressing to get as much as possible out. Pour a small amount of boiling water into the shake and press again. Throw away the shake and allow the butter to cool (or use immediately for softer cookies). Yield: 3/4 cup butter.

Doing What Comes "Naturally"

by Stephen Cox

Is liberty an acquired taste?

The political history of the late 20th century (in the West, at any rate) can be mapped as a battleground between two forms of liberalism, "classical" and "modern." "Classical liberalism" (now usually called libertarianism) upheld the idea of individual rights, protected by strict limitations on government. "Modern liberalism," the more popular form, offered a hope of individual empowerment, guided and assisted by large extensions of government influence.

The two labels lose much of their meaning when taken outside the immediate political context, yet each form of liberalism is ordinarily associated with its own set of cultural attitudes, attitudes so congenial to its nature as to merit the name of either "classical liberal" or "modern liberal." And, just as every political idea presses toward some ideal formulation, some utopian display of itself, so does every cultural attitude. The ideal version may be found in a film, a poem, a cultural movement — anything that shows the nature of the attitude in definite and unmistakable form.

If you want a pure and pungent taste of the liberal cultures of the 20th century, you would do well to read a pair of books that can be found in any used bookstore, "Lost Horizon" (1933), by the British novelist James Hilton, and "Summerhill" (1960), by the British educationist A.S. Neill. Each is a work of utopian literature, motivated by its own variety of liberal assumptions; and each was once very popular. (Both books, indeed, remain in print.) The sequence of the two works, with "Summerhill," the modern liberal volume, coming in second, and the difference between their dates of publication (three decades, the interval between one generation and another), aptly symbolizes the gradual process by which modern liberalism became the final ideology of the century. Yet both works maintain their relevance today, as ideal expressions of the strengths and weaknesses of the two great cultural attitudes.

Jorge Luis Borges once spoke of literary works that seem obligatory, works that one can hardly imagine not being in the world. It is difficult to imagine a world in which modern liberal assumptions were not carried to the "Summerhill" extreme. It is equally hard to imagine a world in which classical liberal ideals and anxieties did not result in something like "Lost Horizon."

"Summerhill" is the story of a "progressive" school, written by the school's leader and founder. Alexander Sutherland Neill (1883–1973) started the institution that would eventually be known as Summerhill in 1921, but the place became famous only after his book was published. It was a huge bestseller. The copy I own represents the tenth printing in just four years. It carries fulsome encomia by Ashley Montagu, the social biologist, and Henry Miller, the novelist; and it contains a long foreword by Erich Fromm, the man who probably did more than anyone else to popularize "advanced" ideas of psychology, and the cultural attitudes derived from them, in post-World War II America. When I was in college in the 1960s, a psych-major friend of mine expressed the general attitude of the hip people I knew. "I wouldn't want to be a teacher," he said, "unless I could teach in a Summerhill school." He did become a teacher, but it wasn't in a Summerhill school. He now laughs at his early

enthusiasm. For a season, however, Neill's ideas exerted an irresistible effect on many people. And although "Summerhill" itself is pretty much out of circulation, its cultural assumptions are not.

Located in an English provincial town, Summerhill was a school for 40 or 50 pre-teens and teenagers whom Neill, its anti-"master," preferred not to call his "students." This reluctance made sense, because Summerhill was less a place to study than a place in which to enact a philosophy of life. Summerhill residents were not required to attend classes or, actually, to do much of anything. If they wanted to study, they could, and some apparently did, but the hallmark of the place was the total absence of ordinary rules. Summerhill was the image of a world made free from all restrictions, at least of the more obvious and traditional kinds.

Neill has often been termed a "libertarian," a title seemingly merited by Summerhill's simple "test" of practical morality: "Is what Mr. X doing really harmful to anyone else? If the answer is no, then objectors to Mr. X are acting anti-life." At Summerhill, as we will see, other ideas managed to trump that one, but it's a pretty libertarian idea nonetheless.

And Neill had other ideas that bespeak a broadly liberal culture. He was certain, for instance, that young people should not be bullied or coerced by their teachers, and especially that they should not be bullied into training themselves for "respectable" careers that they did not really want. President Clinton's notion that every American should attend college would have seemed ridiculous, even monstrous, to Mr. Neill. In addition, Neill was an apostle of sexual freedom and frankness. A great deal of Summerhill is concerned with the evil of warning children against masturbation and otherwise teaching them that sex is to be feared and avoided.

This is the side of modern liberal culture that is most attractive to classical liberals, many of whom have exactly the same ideas. Liberalism always stands for some kind of liberty, and modern liberals have taken a distinguished part in campaigns for what they often call "personal freedom" (as if there were an impersonal kind).

Of course, it's hard to talk about sex for very long without becoming a crackpot, and Neill became a very pronounced form of crackpot. Believing, like most other people of his generation, that homosexuality was a bad thing, instigated by bad childhood experiences, and believing also that a Summerhill education was good for almost anything that ailed you, he easily concluded that "over a period of thirty-eight years, the school has not turned out a single homosexual." I'll bet. Nevertheless, he does not recommend that homosexuality be punished in any way. His idea is that people are good and that when they are placed in good and happy environments, goodness and happiness must result:

> No happy man ever disturbed a meeting, or preached a war, or lynched a Negro. . . . No happy man ever committed a murder or a theft. No happy employer ever frightened his employees.
>
> All crimes, all hatreds, all wars can be reduced to unhappiness.

I will have more to say about Neill's idea of "happiness." Just now, I want to note that he is never very strong in the fact department. A lot of the things he says are merely things that make him happy to say. Most readers, encountering declarations like the one just quoted, will immediately be inclined to ask: Didn't Adolf Eichmann say that he would leap into his grave happy because he had liquidated millions of Jews? And haven't you ever worked for anybody who enjoyed making everybody else miserable? To such obvious questions, Neill has nothing to say. After reading a few pages of his book, one begins to see why Summerhill was called "The Island."

Neill's innocent trust in happiness and goodness is a clue that he is not playing a classical liberal hand. From the beginning, classical liberalism emphasized the importance of distrusting "good" people and their spontaneous urges. Isabel Paterson spoke for most classical liberals when she said that nothing that good people might ever do could possibly surprise her. There are many more good people than evil people in the world, and the good people have a much better chance of imposing their will on others. That is one reason why government must be limited — to make sure that no one, including good people like you and me, ever gets enough power to dominate other people's lives. Inseparable from classical liberal culture is a skepticism, even a cynicism, about freeing all the "goodness" inherent in "the people."

These ideas, though simple, never occurred to A.S. Neill; although it must be admitted that in "Summerhill" he professes little interest in any problems of government, except those that elicit his peculiar notions about the causes of war and crime. (He does think that government should do things like "abolishing the slums," but he doesn't go into detail about that.) "Summerhill," however, is a perfect model of the modern liberal state, where every resource necessary for

Summerhill was less a place to study than a place in which to enact a philosophy of life. Its residents were not required to attend classes or, actually, to do much of anything.

"happiness" is provided by a benevolent higher power, in this case A.S. Neill and his staff. The reason why young people at Summerhill are "free" to steal, swear, masturbate, and cut their classes for decades at a time is that, whatever happens, the masters of Summerhill are ready to minister to all their needs.

In this sense, freedom at Summerhill is something bestowed: "[t]he bestowal of freedom is the bestowal of love." And the limits of freedom (for there are limits, after all) are decided, not just by the Neill administration, which is always lurking in the background, arranging meetings, cooking dinners, and cadging money from parents, but by a general assembly of staff and students, each gifted with an equal vote. There is no separation of legislative, judicial, and executive powers in the "democracy" of Summerhill. The assembly meets every Saturday to make up rules, try the people who violate them, and execute condign punishment. Freedom at Summerhill is the freedom to do what one's neighbors decide to let one get away with. Democracy is freedom, freedom is happiness, and happiness is goodness. What democracy does has to be good.

Very simple. But where have we heard something like this before? The unacknowledged source is the great prophet of modern liberalism, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Yet, lest you imagine that Summerhill, like certain other institutional progeny of Rousseau's political ideas, is always on the brink of a reign of terror, it is important to stipulate that the power of the General School Meeting is mitigated and rendered palatable by its lenient and relativistic idea of personal responsibility.

To put this as briefly as possible, personal responsibility really does not exist at Summerhill; all responsibility is "social." When someone uses his "freedom" to go wrong, "society" pays the price — "society," of course, being the innocent bystanders. All will be well if they understand that they have a duty (to their own happiness, of course) to endure the unruly adventures of the freest spirits among them. In fact, they have a duty not just to endure the aggressive but also to reclaim them, by means of counseling, laws, judicial processes, and big rewards (manifestations of "love") for misbehavior.

Neill tells the story of a boy who stole bicycle pedals from another boy in order to fix his own bicycle and take a trip on it. The case was brought to the General Meeting, where the offending student (or, to Neill's way of thinking, the non-offending non-student) was condemned to return the pedals and give up the trip. When the boy's fellow citizens were told, however, that he stole the pedals because he was out of cash (good reason!), "Jim's" sentence was rescinded. But that's not the end. There was still the nagging question of "what to do about Jim" himself: "Finally it is decided to open a subscription fund to put Jim's bike in order. His schoolmates chip in to buy him pedals for his bike, and he sets off happily on his trip."

The reward for theft is the blessing of the community. Neill assures us that when people appeal a sentence, they "usually" get a lighter one, because "the children realize that if the defendant feels he has been unfairly judged, there is a good chance that he actually has been." This realization, of course, has nothing to do with any rational reflection on specific facts, only with a desire to believe that everyone at Summerhill is good and free and happy, or just about to become that way, when shown enough love. "Reason" is one of the rarest words in Neill's vocabulary, but we do hear a great deal about the supremacy of "the heart" over "the head," and "the power to subordinate thinking to feeling."

There is, however, an implicit and strongly insistent rationale for the whole Summerhill establishment. I refer to the fact that the parents of Summerhill children, as Neill describes them, are modern liberals or radicals who are wealthy enough to pay annual fees of £250 — $7,000 in today's money — to ensure the survival of his experiment in democracy. (Summerhill's five staff members were paid only about $10,000 a year in today's money, plus room and board, which says something about the possibility of economic "exploitation," even in utopia.) Modern liberal experiments have usually been inspired and supported, if not always funded, by the people who have least to lose from them. One can easily imagine what would result if Summerhillian ideas — the priority of emotion to intellect, of play to work, of unearned approval to merited respect — were exported to less favorable environments. One can imagine the result because one can see it plainly manifested in public schools throughout America's inner cities, schools in which discipline has collapsed, academic subjects have become diluted almost to the vanishing point, and sports, sex, and the cultivation of "positive" though unearned "self-images" dominate the cultural landscape.

It's hard to talk about sex for very long without becoming a crackpot, and Neill became a very pronounced form of crackpot.

Neill would deny that such tawdry counterfeits of education have anything to do with his ideas, because none of them represents a full and pure expression of what he had in mind. True, but unconvincing. The same could be said, and usually is said, by everyone who advocates a failed social program. "The experiment," it is said, "hasn't really yet been tried." Yes, something is always interfering. But why didn't you take account of that to begin with?

Modern liberals, who have spent the last 40 years applying affirmative action, busing, bilingual teaching, and anti-racist, anti-sexist propaganda to the problems of American education, often claim that all the important problems would have been solved by now if it weren't for the reactionary attitudes, the "ingrained racism," etc., of the surrounding society, or simply for its "chronic underfunding of social programs." The implication, which is seldom allowed to remain unspoken, is that society as a whole must be remodeled, that social engineers must be given more sweeping powers, before the good in everyone can come spontaneously to light.

There is a good deal of this elitist cultural assumption in Neill's book, where the (rare!) failures of his system are routinely blamed on outside influences — bad parents, rotten

customs, an entire culture that Neill would change, if only he had the power to transform everyone into a "social being." Thus failure becomes an implicit argument for bigger experiments, larger investments, a wider sphere of influence for Neill himself. If only everyone in the world would give up religion, cease trying to make a profit, surrender silly ideas about sex, stop treating kids like inferiors, start acting like the best of Summerhill parents: "Our successes are always those whose homes were good." It's an interesting move in the intellectual game, this assertion that educational success depends on the swamps around the Island, rather than the Island itself. It's also a bluff: if the outside environment is that important, who needs Summerhill? But it's not clear that the player sees that he's bluffing.

Believing that homosexuality was a bad thing, and believing that a Summerhill education was good for almost anything, he concluded that "the school has not turned out a single homosexual." I'll bet.

Equally interesting is Neill's argument that his ideas must be good because some people manage to prosper in spite of them. "Take," he says, "the case of Mervyn." Mervyn "attended Summerhill for ten years" and was never forced to "attend a single class." So he didn't. Therefore, "at age seventeen, he hardly knew how to read." This astonishing revelation will appear less astonishing when one considers that it could be made about millions of American graduates of government schools, young people who have never attended a meaningful class and who, therefore, are functionally illiterate. But as Neill demonstrates, there is no cause for alarm. "When Mervyn left school and decided to become an instrument maker, he quickly taught himself how to read and absorbed in a short time through self-study all the technical knowledge he needed. Through his own efforts, he made himself ready for his apprenticeship. Today, this same chap is thoroughly literate, commands a good salary, and is a leader in his community." The child whom Neill wanted to save has obviously saved himself.

Victims of elitist attempts at acculturation in contemporary America often save themselves, too. But it never dawns on Neill, just as it never dawns on any other educational bureaucrat, that the Mervyns of this world have no need to languish for decades in pedagogic utopias where nothing is being either taught or learned. It would have been better for Mervyn if he had dropped out of school at the age of 7. Unfortunately, he was not permitted to do so.

Like "Summerhill," our other book, "Lost Horizon," is a work of utopian imaginative literature; but it is conscious of the fact that it is. It is clearly labeled a work of fiction. Like the seminal book in the genre, Thomas More's "Utopia," it is one of those rare works of serious fiction that have given a word, an image, and a concept to popular speech. Everyone knows what is meant by "utopia," and everyone knows what is meant by "Shangri-La," the fictional location of "Lost Horizon": it is a paradise, hidden behind inaccessible mountains, where people live far beyond the normal range of human years and far beyond the normal scope of human happiness.

One of the great scenes in 20th-century literature is the episode in "Lost Horizon" in which Hugh Conway, a member of the British foreign service who has found his way to Shangri-La, hears its history recited by the leader of the community, the High Lama. The elderly gentleman narrates the adventures of Father Perrault, a French missionary, who in 1719 discovered the ruins of a Tibetan religious establishment on a high shelf of rock about the Valley of the Blue Moon, deep in the Himalayas. He decided to restore the monastery and dedicate it to the service of his order. The High Lama describes the mutual respect between Perrault and the local Buddhist population, the way in which his philosophy of life grew broader and more tolerant and their philosophy grew more cosmopolitan and sophisticated, the way in which he drew like-minded refugees from the outer world into a brotherhood of scholars, philosophers, and artists dwelling peaceably at Shangri-La. He tells Perrault's story through the 17th century, the 18th century, the 19th century . . . until Conway, grasping the truth, exclaims, "You are still alive, Father Perrault."

He is indeed alive, preserved as if in living amber by the peculiar atmosphere, physical and cultural, of Shangri-La. The remainder of the book narrates the conflict within Conway's mind, and the minds of his three fellow travelers, about whether to remain in Shangri-La or try to escape from it. Hilton is not a great artist; his plot is weak and at some points intellectually ambiguous, and his characterizations are mostly stereotypical. His prose isn't entirely up to his great conception. Yet the conception itself is unforgettable. I mean, of course, the conception of an ideally private life, extended and enriched by its studied isolation from "this world." Even Ayn Rand, the libertarian "realist," evidently could not avoid being inspired by the fantasy of Shangri-La. Her model for the utopia of "Atlas Shrugged" (1957) is more than anything else the utopia of "Lost Horizon."*

The model was well chosen, because the central theme of "Lost Horizon" is not the extension of life but, as in Rand's novel, the preservation of individual liberty and the conditions that make it possible. "Lost Horizon," like "Summerhill," does not pretend to be a political book, but its political preoccupations are clear. The work is dated

*Like Shangri-La, Rand's utopia ("Galt's Gulch") is hidden behind a range of mountains, is founded by a great creative spirit who surrounds himself with friendly collaborators, and is strongly devoted to philosophy and the arts. Like Hilton's visionary community, it exists in opposition to the outside world while containing in "miniature" (one of Hilton's favorite words) the best features of that world's culture and technology. Though motivated by a central idea (like Shangri-La) it lacks (like Shangri-La) any system of central planning. I can think of no utopia that shares this set of features with "Atlas Shrugged" and "Lost Horizon." Anyone who reads the two books can discover more similarities, such as the clue to the utopia's existence that is provided by a character's knowledge of a famous artist's hitherto unknown composition, preserved in the secret utopia. (The composer is Chopin in "Lost Horizon," "Richard Halley" in "Atlas Shrugged.")

"April, 1933," soon after Hitler's coming to power, and it offers countless allusions to the political crises of the 20th century. It begins with disenchanted remarks about the British empire, which Conway serves with a considerable degree of skepticism. The Great War set him adrift from his cultural moorings: "The chief thing I've asked from the world since then is to leave me alone." He is fleeing from another outbreak of political violence — a revolution in "Baskul," where he served as His Majesty's Consul — when he fetches up in Shangri-La, a place that seems to preserve the peace and privacy that are necessary for the cultivation of individual life.

That is also the High Lama's view of the situation. He dreams of maintaining Shangri-La as the last refuge of real civilization — delicate, complex, accessible only to individuals in their most private moments. Reviewing the trend of political and military events from the 17th century to the present, he "foresaw a time when men, exultant in the technique of homicide, would rage so hotly over the world that every precious thing would be in danger, every book and picture and harmony, every treasure garnered through two millenniums, the small, the delicate, the defenseless — all would be lost like the lost books of Livy, or wrecked as the English wrecked the Summer Palace in Pekin."

Notice Hilton's choice of words: "the small, the delicate, the defenseless." That puts "civilization" on the proper scale, the scale of individuals appreciating the kind of things that only individuals notice and care for. The thought recurs when Father Perrault speaks about Conway's own future at Shangri-La: "You will conserve the fragrance of our history and add to it the touch of your own mind. You will welcome the stranger, and teach him the rule of age and wisdom; and one of these strangers, it may be, will succeed you

That is one reason why government must be limited — to make sure that no one, including good people like you and me, ever gets enough power to dominate other people's lives.

when you are yourself very old." What opposes tyranny and barbarity is the understanding and enjoyment of history and culture. Culture can be appreciated, augmented, and passed on to the future only by individuals. Only an individual can smell a "fragrance"; only a truly free individual will be at leisure to enjoy the "fragrance of history."

Like liberals of all varieties — like Neill, for instance — Hilton wants all people to be free and happy. Happiness is so much the point in Shangri-La that even the grave High Lama makes much of his pleasurable experiences with drugs, and communicates to Conway the pleasant intelligence that girls in the Valley of the Blue Moon are only moderately chaste. Like Conway, however, we may be curious to discover what "the ultimate basis of law and order" may be in Shangri-La, a place where the rulers are self-absorbed philosophers, backed by "neither soldiers nor police."

The rule of the lamasery is about 99% noninterference. A spokesman for the "ruling" elite restates a classical liberal principle: "We believe that to govern perfectly it is necessary to avoid governing too much." Under this system of government, the people enjoy prosperity; and prosperity,

Even Ayn Rand was inspired by the fantasy of Shangri-La. Her model for the utopia of "Atlas Shrugged" is more than anything else the utopia of "Lost Horizon."

Hilton says, is conducive to order. Also, "crime was very rare . . . because only serious things were considered crimes" — a libertarian principle, par excellence.

Neill would endorse that principle, although I am not sure that he would endorse the High Lama's radically libertarian idea that people who want to leave his utopia are free to do so, but no help will be provided them, even if they die, as they probably will, in the howling wilderness that encompasses Shangri-La. This is not what Neill and other modern liberals mean by "freedom." The freedom that they most appreciate is the kind that lovingly "enables" people to do what they want and get what they want. But the regime at Shangri-La does not consider itself under any obligation to become a nanny state.

This brings up another aspect of the difference between Shangri-La and Summerhill. It has to do with the question of democracy. For Hilton, "freedom" means being free, as much as possible, from the interference of one's neighbors. It means privacy, and privacy means limitations on what people can do to other people. For Neill, however, "freedom" is inseparable from "democracy," and once you have "democracy," the sky's the limit. "Democracy" means the weekly Meeting, where people shout and scream, accuse and convict, make and unmake laws as if nobody ever made a law before, and in general ensure that everybody is always in everybody else's "social" face. There is no such "democracy" in Shangri-La, and the absence of democracy is not regretted. For the people of Shangri-La ("citizens" would never be the right word), the form that government takes is not important. What they want is a government that creates the conditions for privacy.

The trick is to keep such a society — in essence, a classical liberal society — in healthy operation. Hilton is well aware that in the modern world (probably in any world, including "utopias") the social order cannot be maintained indefinitely if people in general are not happy with it. That's a banal statement, but it's pertinent to the current discussion, because the idea of happiness is essential both to Hilton's work and to Neill's, although their concepts of happiness, and of the relationship of happiness to freedom, are as different as night and day.

For Hilton, both freedom and happiness are, to a large degree, cultivated tastes; for Neill, they represent the gratification of "natural" impulses. Here is a difference between

liberalisms that does not quite conform to the classical liberal versus modern liberal distinction, but it is a difference that needs to be emphasized, even to radical libertarians, many of whom are more on Neill's side of this issue than on Hilton's.

There are three ways in which people can be induced to favor — to tolerate, to appreciate, to be happy with — a free society. They can be led to favor it by discovery, by learning, or by inheritance.

1. People can discover, on their own, that such a society makes them happy.

2. They can learn its virtues (a) from books, or (b) from the arguments of other people.

3. They can grow up in its culture and consciously or unconsciously conform themselves to it.

In long-established liberal societies, these three approaches are ordinarily combined with one another, and muddled together conceptually. But they can be analyzed separately, and our two authors help us to do so.

Neill vociferously recommends the first approach. That is his claim to fame — his insistence that happiness can easily be found when people are simply "left alone" to find it. By now, to be sure, we know that he is dealing from more than one deck of cards: Summerhill is a "free" institution whose inmates are committed to its custody by their parents, after which they are submitted to an all-encompassing program of social conditioning. One part of the program is the provision of limitless time to play, but another part is the sinister form of play that goes on in those amazing Weekly General Meetings: approach No. 2b.

For Neill, "freedom" is inseparable from the weekly Meeting, where people shout and scream, accuse and convict, and make and unmake laws as if nobody ever made a law before.

And despite the hateful remarks that Neill enjoys making about the wage slaves who dwell outside the Island, about the whole "society" that "is carried on the shabby shoulders of the scared little man — the scared-to-death conformist," he is unable to keep conformity (approach No. 3) completely out of his scheme:

> I know that when Jean [a troublemaker] is fifteen, she will be a social girl. . . . I pin my faith on public opinion. No child will go on for years being disliked and criticized. . . .
>
> Gradually his natural love of approval forced him [another troublemaker] to seek the approval of the people in his new environment. . . . [H]e adapted himself to his new companions. In a few months he was a social being.

But suppose that someone's environment is not "social" in the way in which Neill, and other proponents of spontaneous development, prefer to define that word. Suppose that someone's ideal of happiness is just living from day to day with no thought in his head except the pleasure of annoying and imposing on other people? That's a good question. But let's go one step farther and ask, Who's to say that Neill's idea of happiness is the one that should prevail? What justifies his ideal? What arguments? What convincing evidence? As soon as we ask those questions, we are back to approach No. 2, the approach that assumes that ideas of liberty need to be learned, that the inclination to liberty needs to be intellectually cultivated.

Neill considers this issue no more attentively than other modern liberals consider the necessity of public education. Haven't schools always been run by the government? Well, no. They were made public with some difficulty. Persuasive arguments, bad or good, had to be found (approach No. 2). It is only because government schooling has now become traditional that its supporters can rely on people to continue believing that it can be made to work (approach No. 3). Neill's cultural ideas also rely heavily, though implicitly, on arguments made in the past, the conclusions of which have become traditional assumptions. I refer especially to arguments for Christianity. Neill detests religion (it's not "natural"), but he has no difficulty invoking the Christian idea of ethics and even the Christian idea of salvation: "You talk about salvation. We live salvation. . . . No, we do not consciously [!] follow Christianity, but from a broad point of view, Summerhill is about the only school in England that treats children in a way that Jesus would have approved of."

Despite his palpable reliance on the past — the heritage of Christianity, the culture instilled by "good homes" — Neill still visualizes happiness itself as easy, spontaneous, immediately attainable. His prevailing examples are the pleasures of sex, food, idle play, joyous disruption of other people's activities. He seldom recurs to the happiness of reasoning, reflecting, reading, or pursuing anything requiring intellectual effort or spiritual refinement. "Books have little value for me," he happily confesses. "Only pedants claim that learning from books is education."

With a candor virtually unexampled among other pedagogues, he confides that "learning" fails to arouse his passions: "Learning is important, but not to everyone. Nijinsky could not pass his school exams. . . . All that any child needs is the three R's; the rest should be tools and clay and sports and theater and paint and freedom." What this means in practice is suggested by the minutes of a General School Meeting:

> "Harry [a teacher] complains that he spent an hour planing a panel for the front door, went to lunch, and came back to find that Billy [a pupil] had converted it into a shelf. I make accusations against the boys who borrowed my soldering outfit and didn't return it. My wife makes a fuss because three small children came after supper and said they were hungry and got bread and jam, and the pieces of bread were found lying in the hallway the next morning. Peter ['nother pupil] reports sadly that a gang threw his precious clay at each other in the pottery room. . . . There is always something happening, and there isn't a dull day in the whole year."

No? Offhand, I can't think of anything duller than meditating on the problem of the unused bread and jam, or on the little Gallipoli in the pottery shack — anything, that is, except people who put such controversies at the center of their lives. My suggestion is to punish the culprits and get on with the important things in life.

The GSM is clearly the reductio ad absurdum of something, but of what? I believe it is an attitude cherished by many people both in the classical liberal and in the modern liberal camp, the idea that, as Neill put it, people should be free to do what they want and no one should seriously object to the ideal of happiness that motivates them.

Well, of course someone should object, and someone had better object, if the results of education in freedom turn out to be the destruction of any kind of culture consistent with freedom itself. Libertarians who delight (as I do) in the vision of society as a "spontaneous order" should not assume that all spontaneous action is a good idea. Liberal societies were not created by the yelping barbarians who appear in Summerhill's version of "democracy." The frameworks for those societies — the only societies in history that have not been cruel and merciless, almost beyond belief — were laid by people who had learned (yes, had been taught) to take pleasure in historical knowledge, careful thought, skeptical evaluation of rival claims to belief, the studious separation of what is important from what is mere junk.

Neill considers this issue no more attentively than other modern liberals consider the necessity of public education.

These people saw limited government as the best protection for individual freedom, but they knew that an appreciation for limited government was not something that children, or anyone else, can automatically arrive at. It wasn't until the 17th century that anyone did arrive at it. Further, they suspected that restraints of government are easiest to maintain in a culture that values self-restraint, a culture in which people discover more pleasurable pursuits than shouting, whining, politicking, and otherwise wasting their lives in hurtful play. The pursuits — the private joys — of civilization are almost all acquired pleasures.

That is the message of "Lost Horizon." Hilton emphasizes that his protagonist, Hugh Conway, can appreciate the civilized order of Shangri-La because he is a man of culture and learning who also found out what barbarism was, from his experience in World War I and the political events of the 1920s. He reflected on his knowledge and experience and acquired an intense appreciation of the pleasures of private life. The novel portrays the limited government of Shangri-La as dependent on its subjects' cultural attainments, particularly their education in self-restraint: "The chief factor in the government . . . was the inculcation of good manners, which made men feel that certain things were 'not done,' and that they lost caste by doing them."

A utopia for snobs? Not really. Remember those Valley girls who are only moderately chaste. "Good-bye, Mr. Chips," the novel that Hilton wrote a few months after "Lost Horizon," shows that his own idea of culture was not impossibly challenging. Chips is a schoolteacher. His specialty is classics, one of the thousand forms of learning that schoolteacher Neill disdains. Chips' academic attainments, however, are only moderately good, and his expectations for his students are only moderately high. What distinguishes him is mainly "good manners" — decency, civility, a sensitivity to right and just ways of doing things. He realizes that this kind of culture is not innate. He is loath to punish his students, but he knows that he has to do so when they act out their infantile aggressions in the ways that Neill's regime encouraged his students to. Once regressions are repressed (worst of all words to Summerhill liberals), there is room for other things — not just the appreciation of Latin verse but also the appreciation of privacy and unregimented kindliness, and the mutual respect that ought to prevail in a liberal society.

I don't mean to suggest that "Good-bye, Mr. Chips" is an interesting work of literature. It's not. It has a slick sentimentality that does not appear in "Lost Horizon." It is, in fact, as sentimental as "Summerhill." A sentimental world is one in which good feelings always, in the end, prevail. Mr. Chips' version of liberal education always works, just as A.S. Neill's version always works (so long as the children's "homes" are good). That's not true of liberal culture in Shangri-La. I don't want to spoil the plot for you, in case you decide to read the book, but "Lost Horizon" is consistent about the idea that acquired tastes have to be, well, acquired, and not everyone acquires them. Or keeps them. Some well-educated, reputedly cultured people actually want to escape from Shangri-La, or even destroy it.

This is a most unusual observation for a utopia to make — the observation that even people living in an ideal society may not just naturally understand what makes it ideal. That was one of the considerations that led the founders of American classical liberalism (see James Madison in the tenth number of The Federalist) to insist on the idea of limited government, as opposed to unlimited "democracy." It's a consideration that should continue to commend itself, in a world in which the pleasures of coffee and wine, Raphael and T.S. Eliot, baseball statistics and books of economic theory, and even the kind of good manners that it doesn't take a wizard to divine, are recognized by all as cultivated tastes, while the pleasures of a free society are regarded by most as nothing more than doing what comes naturally. ❑

"The extra 30% is the self-employment tax on your businessman's lunch, sir."

What Has Been Done

by Robert Formaini

The Patriot Act was just the beginning.

The 1980 publication of Milton Friedman's "Free to Choose" helped usher in a period of privatization and deregulation. The tide turned toward freedom, and the market worked its magic. Planned economies collapsed, and the world embraced the benefits of capitalism.

After the attacks of 9/11, however, the tide turned again.

Benjamin Franklin once famously said that those who prefer security to freedom will wind up with neither. Americans have proven the accuracy of his warning by disregarding it. The New Patriot Act of 2006, modifying the original in the wake of the attack on Las Vegas, and its later supermodification (the Total Security Act of 2012) severely restrict commerce, speech, and travel. Of course, there was little actual debate before the passage of any of these acts — proponents simply labeled opponents "crackpots" and "lunatics."

This has led directly to national identification cards, universal ID chip implants that can be tracked by GPS satellites, and mandatory retina scans for anyone flying domestically or entering the United States from abroad. All vehicles that travel on American roads are required to have so-called "black boxes" and GPS transponders so their exact location and history can always be ascertained. The transponders, the black boxes, and the data they gather belong to the government, not to individual vehicle owners. The only grounds for appeal of any conviction based on these data sources is vehicle malfunction, but it has proven almost impossible to successfully appeal black-box cases, despite the common knowledge that the equipment, like all technology, does sometimes malfunction.

There are now over 1.5 million people on federal and state "Do Not Fly" and "Arrest Immediately" lists. Almost 260,000 people are incarcerated, awaiting disposition of cases based on catch-all terrorist charges, some of which are years old. Federal military laws now control every major transportation system in the nation including, but not limited to: docks, roads, rail, air, even bike paths and hiking trails. School security was federalized after hundreds of children were slaughtered in attacks on public facilities in 2006–7. All substances known to be possible bomb ingredients are rigidly controlled under ATF and Homeland Security regulations, and violators can receive the death penalty for selling or just handling them — even in very small amounts.

There are now over 2,000 Class-A controlled substances, and 14,000 altogether when all classes are summed. As of Dec 31, 2024, every 17th person in the country works in security — 19 million people in all. There are over 400,000 agents on the Mexican border alone, enforcing the National Border Integrity Act of 2007, which was passed by a Republican Congress campaigning for the 2008 elections on an anti-immigration platform. Federal border agents regularly conduct "shoot on site" patrols around known illegal entrance routes. The courts found constitutional the Judicial Interpretations and Reconciliation Act of 2009, which automatically removes any judge who tries to overturn its provisions, or who fails to rigorously apply the act's sentencing guidelines.

Of course, during time of war, political speech has always been curtailed, either by law or by public sentiment. America's attempts to curtail free political speech go all the way back to John Adams' Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. The course to our present state of abridgment was set when the Supreme Court upheld McCain-Feingold (2004). Criticisms of incumbent politicians have been strictly regulated since that point, and are now further restricted by the Preservation and Extension of Free Speech Act (2008). Under that act, you may speak freely only under the following circumstances: (1) on your own, unmortgaged property, to no more than 50 people; (2) on radio call-in shows, provided you are a registered user whose phone is equipped with identity verification hardware; (3) on assignment for news organizations that fit the federal definition, are federally registered, and currently fully paid on their "news organization assessment accounts"; (4) on Internet discussion groups, provided they are federally registered, current on their "Internet assessment accounts," and verify the identity of all participants, (all of whom must also be up to date on their personal Internet tax assessments); (5) in publicly regulated places in full view and hearing of the appropriate public discourse monitors and ultra high-speed, infrared digital cameras.

The Internet Consolidation, Revenue, Registration and Public Airwaves Control Act of 2010 is the source of all current Internet regulatory activities, including Wi-Fi, cable, and any other kind of Internet access available — or that may become available in the future. After terrorist hackers were able to enter key systems to release toxic substances and generally disrupt daily activities, especially air travel and financial transactions leading to crashes of planes as well as markets in 2007 and 2009, all the while using their technical savvy to remain mostly anonymous, Congress took complete control of the system in late 2007 with a preliminary bill. It took an additional two years to craft the final, comprehensive bill under which we now live.

All Internet providers and users are routinely tracked by Homeland Security and NSA computers, users and providers are taxed monthly, based on an assessment of their use of the network, and all computers are federally registered so that they leave a cyber-trail whenever they access the Internet, much like an airplane's transponder reveals who it is and where it is headed. It is a federal crime, punishable by a minimum of ten years imprisonment, to access the Internet on any computer that does not have the cyber-trail hardware. A few hackers have succeeded in bypassing the system, but none has remained free for very long after doing so, and several have been sentenced to ten or more year terms, in maximum security facilities, for attempting to "undermine homeland security."

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There are now over 5 million digital cameras publicly — and privately — employed for security purposes. It is almost impossible to go anywhere without being watched by Homeland Security. Digital cameras that feed directly to the Internet have been built into existing technologies, so few incidents have gone unrecorded, even if they are recorded only by private citizens. Of course, there are several popular television programs that deal exclusively in footage from these digital image displays, which sometimes capture horrific terrorist acts.

Of course, there are several popular television programs that deal exclusively in footage from surveillance cameras, which sometimes capture horrific terrorist acts.

Continuing a trend begun with 1973's Bank Secrecy Act and continued in 1980's Financial Institutions Deregulation and Monetary Control Act, the Comprehensive Supervisory Financial Institutions Information, Supervision, and Control Act of 2007 made all financial transactions "transparent," and placed a 15% surcharge on all cash transactions over $1,000 to discourage (as the Act put it) the "anonymous economy," and make it difficult for terrorists to purchase anything with cash. Anyone willing to pay the 15% cash fee gives the government a prima-facie case that the transaction is illegal in some way, since the payer is presumably trying to remain anonymous. Public conveyances no longer accept cash, and they are required to keep detailed records of all fares, passengers, pickup and departure points, and final destinations. All financial transactions are now traced, catalogued, and stored forever. There are no legally operating banks in the world outside this system. Bank secrecy now exists solely in the fugitive banks of Russia and its war-torn former satellites.

The collapse of democracy in Russia and its re-emergence as a totalitarian power with imperialistic ambitions has been blunted, to some extent, by the endless internecine wars within its former satellites among their Islamic and non-Islamic inhabitants. Russia is also a constant target of terrorists. These problems, along with an anemic economy, have prevented Russia from grabbing much in the way of territory, even with the United States and Europe distracted by their own terrorist problems.

China has emerged as the world's largest and fastest-growing economy. After retaking Taiwan in 2007, and annexing North Korea a year later, China then successfully "Finlandized" Japan, and now oversees a vast Pacific empire that would have made the 1942 Japanese government green with envy. China's thirst for the Middle East's oil leads it to support radical Islamic clerics, but this support goes unpunished, as no major country stands a chance if it goes against China's wishes.

The xhiang, introduced in 2009, is now the world's premier currency, followed by the euro, the Canadian dollar, and the U.S. dollar. Years of domestic and international wars have resulted in inflation and poor economic performance here at home, battering the dollar to the point that many in government are beginning to talk about replacing it with a "new dollar," trading each of them for 20 "old" dollars. This long-awaited policy is called the "Argentina two-step."

The sealing of the U.S. border and the abandonment and official repudiation of NAFTA have demolished Mexico's economy. The added stress from an influx of immigrants fleeing the Cocaine Wars to its south has caused Mexico to degenerate into near anarchy. These wars have been used by Venezuela as a pretext for trying to spread "Chavezism" to its neighbors. Most of the rest of Latin America is a shambles, run by the usual assortment of leftist politicians and their thuggish supporters, even though they have brought their economies to the point where further looting of their citizens is almost impossible. The Chilean military government has not yet confiscated the private retirement accounts that were the centerpiece of Chilean economic reform, but most analysts believe it is only a matter of time. This development is no doubt partially the product of the demise of the large international aid agencies which collapsed in 2014–15 under mountains of debt. When international markets realized that they were never going to be repaid by anyone, including strapped U.S. taxpayers, the World Bank, IMF, and AID all collapsed. Little time elapsed before the region's nations, deprived of their welfare largess, began the Cocaine Wars.

Many in government are beginning to talk about circulating a "new dollar," trading each of them for 20 "old" dollars. This long-awaited policy is called the "Argentina two-step."

During the last fifteen years, France and Germany have continued to struggle for control of the European Union, as well as competed to be the — in modern terminology — "front nation" for the so-called "New Europe," a Europe that has been discussed for decades but that looks remarkably like the old Europe. The internal tensions in the EU are troubling, with member countries often threatening military action, and Germany flexing of its military muscle, gained from secret development of laser weapons. Of course, the German government claims that historically it has always been entrusted with enforcing the regulations and policies of the EU, and will use force if necessary, but only as a "last resort." This reassurance offers little comfort.

After the terror war forced America to redeploy many of the troops based in allied countries, it only took a decade for Germany to become the most potent military power in Europe, since most of its neighbors worship peace at any price, including non-retaliation against terrorists. The Germans retaliate fiercely, and use their experiences to further strengthen their emerging military establishment. At first, the U.N. tried to constrain Germany's new military might, but when the German government denounced the U.N. and stopped paying U.N. dues (like America did years ago), talk of sanctions was dropped.

The Middle East has been a colossal mess for decades, but things have deteriorated markedly since 2002. The major civil war that erupted after Iraq's election in late 2005 brought a major U.S. reinforcement to the country, but at the cost of reinstating the military draft. That led to ongoing, domestic rebellion reminiscent of the Vietnam War era. The events in Iraq also destabilized Iran and Saudi Arabia. America's pre-emptive air strikes against Iranian nuclear facilities reignited theological revolution in Iran and led directly to the fall of the House of Saud. When that ruling elite fell, oil exports to the U.S. were shut off for three years. The Riyadh Accord in 2009 allowed resumption of sales of Saudi oil to American companies, but only at a 15% premium above the world price, and required a U.S. pledge that no military actions would ever be taken against the new Saudi Wahhabi-backed government or its allies, which include Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Algeria, and Libya.

Israel became a garrison state, with commerce all but impossible, terrorist acts constant, and nuclear annihilation no longer merely possible, but probable. Some analysts believe that Iran is only waiting for the appropriate long-term wind patterns that would make an attack a one-way nuclear disaster for Israel. Meanwhile, Israel consumes vast amounts of American financial aid, as they are one of the few places left in that region from which American military operations can be mounted. Some American policy makers are arguing that we should use nuclear weapons on Iran before it does the same to anyone else, but that position is highly controversial and not supported by a majority of Americans.

Domestically, the burden of war diminished economic performance and regenerated inflationary pressures, and the Baby Boomer retirement bubble significantly strained government budgets at all levels. Deficits and interest rates rose, GDP growth dropped, and markets stagnated, with the Dow Jones average standing today at 17,755. That's an average return of 3% since 2004, but after adjusting for inflation, overall returns in the market have been consistently negative. Chronic energy shortages have become the norm, with stringent regulatory restrictions on energy consumption. Brownouts and blackouts are common in American cities, as are long lines at the few remaining gas stations. The Energy Profits Equalization Tax, combined with onerous excise taxes on energy, have cut American consumption by almost

The major civil war that erupted after Iraq's election in late 2005 brought a major U.S. reinforcement to the country, but at the cost of reinstating the military draft.

15%, but population and economic growth have cut in the other direction without any substantial increase in supply. Alternative fuels still have not eliminated the demand for oil, despite tens of billions of dollars in direct subsidies and tax credits to selected corporations for R&D.

Our fiscal position was helped slightly by major benefit reductions in entitlement programs between 2016 and 2022, increased audits and state and federal prosecutions of fraud, and a significant increase in the payroll tax (currently up to 22% and 34% for the self-employed) all phased in over the past eight years. Though some economists feared that raising the payroll tax rate would cause the work force to shrink rapidly, most people found that they couldn't afford not to work. The national debt stands at $38.5 trillion, about twice the current GDP. With GDP currently growing at about 2% annually, and inflation at 7%, the debt is slated to reach five times GDP in 20 more years. The collapse of several large pension plans as they were abandoned by their sponsors and turned over to taxpayers had irrevocably bankrupted the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation by 2012. Congress repudiated underwriting private-sector pension plans with public funds. Plans continue to fail and nothing is being done about it.

After Castro's death in 2011, Cuba became the "Hong Kong of the Caribbean" and allied itself with the U.S.

Of course, not every development has been negative. After Castro's death in 2011, Cuba became the "Hong Kong of the Caribbean" and allied itself with the U.S. as a bulwark against the general Latin American trends discussed above. A rare success story, but an important one.

Nevertheless, the ability of the federal government to carry out any coherent fiscal policy is tightly constrained, and the Fed has been unable to find any interest rate structure that is consistent both with growth and price stability. Politicians declare that we are in some kind of New Economy — as they did in prior times, but for very different reasons.

The external fiscal pressures are simply too large to reverse with standard 20th-century policy measures. Needless to say, full employment has not returned even with the draft, and consumer confidence is at a 30-year low.

Where can we go from here? The policy options currently available to alter many of these unpleasant realities are quite limited. A return to classical liberalism is not very likely. Incrementally, however, we can move some things in a direction favorable to freedom.

In that spirit, I offer the Free to Choose Manifesto for 2025:

1. The restoration of free speech is priority number one. If we cannot respect the very first amendment in our own Bill of Rights, we certainly cannot claim to be exporting any ideas other than our own particular form of government oppression.

2. The daily invasions of privacy that occur, generated both by public and private institutions, need to be redressed and contained. It is clear that, given current world realities, they will never be entirely eliminated, or even scaled back to pre-9/11 levels.

3. Free exchange across the Internet must be restored.

4. The right to a reasonably speedy trial should be reinstated, and civilians should not be held accountable to military tribunals operating under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

5. National identification cards were enacted mostly to ensure smooth travel. That ought to be the goal, not the occasional pleasant surprise.

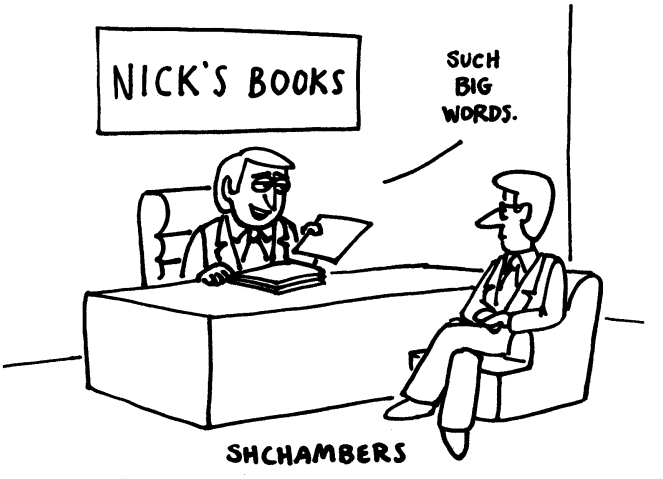
6. Limits on cash transactions should be raised to at least $5,000. This is not a perfect solution, but unmonitored large transactions are probably gone for good.

7. Energy access should be denationalized. That would go a long way towards alleviating the chronic shortages and high prices of energy. Repeal, or seriously modify, the Kyoto II-Brussels III environmental protocols, which have severely penalized American economic development while subsidizing that of other nations.

8. Privatize medical care, or at least allow a tiered system of care based on ability to pay. The criminalization of privately-provided and funded medial care is one of the worst features of the current American economic and political scene, and one of the worst public policy enactments since the founding of the nation. The use of the federal system to punish certain behaviors by withholding medical care is cruel and a clear denial of individual choice, as well as a denial of human freedom and simple human dignity.

9. Privatize more water delivery systems. The chronic water shortages that have plagued even areas that receive sufficient — or more than sufficient — rainfall each year are unnecessary and bureaucratically generated. The slow depopulation of much of what were once the fastest growing regions of the nation — Arizona, Nevada, and California included — is not the best long-term solution to the water use issue.

The enactment of these reforms would be a good start towards eventually restoring some of our nation's basic liberties. Until then, we can only continue to speak out against governmental abuses, in the times and places appointed for us to do so. ❑



The Paper-Money Crusade of 1894

by Garet Garrett

The left has often lost. This bit of forgotten history recalls one of their more pathetic defeats, though also the precursor of ideas that would come to the fore during the New Deal. This account, from Garet Garrett's novel "The Driver" (1922), describes the farm-state anti-capitalist crusaders that became known as Coxey's Army, which walked to Washington, D.C. during the depths of the depression of 1893–1895. The "soft money plague" to which Garrett refers is the run on gold resulting from the Sherman Silver Purchase Act — a law that made the depression worse.

It is Easter Sunday in the village of Massillon, Stark County, Ohio, fifty miles south by east from Cleveland. Fourth year of the Soft Money Plague, 1894. Time, about ten o'clock.

The sky is low and brooding, with an untimely thought of snow. Church bells are ringing. They sound remote and disapproving. Almost nobody is mindful of their fall. The soul may miss its feast; the eye of wonder shall not be cheated. The Comic God has published a decree. Here once more the sad biped, solemn, ludicrous and romantic, will mount the gilded ass. For weeks in all the newspapers of the country the fact has been advertised in a spirit of waggery. At this hour and from this place the Army of the Commonweal of Christ will set forth on foot in quest of the economic millennium.

The village is agog with people congregating to witness the fantasied event. There are spasmodic sounds of laughter, retort, argument and ribaldry; and continually the shrill cries of youth in a frenzy of expectation. Buggies, two-wheelers, open carts and spring wagons line the two sides of the street. The horses are blanketed. A damp, chill wind is blowing. Vendors from Chicago, lewd-looking men, working a hundred feet apart, are yelling, "Git an Army button here for a nickel!" There is a composite smell of ham sandwiches, peanuts, oranges and cigars.

A shout rises at the end of the street. The crowd that has been so thick there, bursts open. A band begins playing Onward, Christian Soldiers, and the spectacle is present.

First comes a Negro bearing the American flag. Next, on a white horse, is a thick, close-bearded, self-regarding man with powerful, darting eyes and an air of fantastic vanity. He wears a buckskin coat with fringed sleeves; the breast is covered with gaudy medals. On his head is a large white sombrero. Around his neck swings a string of amber beads. He is cheered and rallied as he passes and bows continually.

Behind him walks a trumpeter, and after him walks the astrologer, bearing the wand of his mysterious office. Then a band of seven pieces.

And now, by the timbre and volume of the cheering, you recognize the commander. He rides. Sitting so still and distant beside a Negro driver in a buggy drawn by two mares, he is disappointing to the eye. There is nothing obviously

heroic about him. He wears spectacles. Above the thin down-growing mustache the face is that of a man of ideas and action; the lower features, especially the mouth, denote a shy, secretive, sentimental, credulous man of mystical preoccupations. None of these qualities is more than commonplace. The type is well known to inland communities—the man who believes in perpetual motion, in the perfectibility of human nature, in miraculous interventions of the Deity, and makes a small living shrewdly. He might be the inventor of a washing machine. He is in fact the owner of a sandstone quarry and a breeder of horses.

This inconsiderable man, ludicrously setting forth on Easter Sunday in command of a modern crusade, has one startling obsession: He believes that with the bandit-looking person on the white horse he shares the reincarnation of Christ.

In a buggy following, with what thoughts we shall none of us ever know, rides his wife.

Next comes another Negro, bearing the banner of the Commonweal of Christ. In the center of it is a painted Christ head. The lettering, divided above and below the head, reads:

Peace on Earth: Good Will to Men
but
Death to Interest-Bearing Bonds

Then comes the Army of the Commonwealers. They are counted derisively. The commander said that there would be a hundred thousand, or at least ten thousand, or, at the start, not fewer than one thousand. Well, the number is one hundred, scant. They are a weird lot — a grim, one-eyed miner from Ottumwa, a jockey from Lexington, a fanatical preacher of the raw gospel from Detroit, a heavy steel-mill worker from Youngstown, a Swede laborer from everywhere. There is not a fat man among them, nor one above forty. They march in order, looking straight ahead.

At the end of this strange procession are two wagons. One is called the commissariat wagon; it is loaded with a circus tent, some bales of hay for the horses and a few bags of provisions — hardly enough for one day. The other is a covered wagon painted blue. The sides are decorated with geometrical figures of incomprehensible meaning. This vehicle of mystery belongs to the precious being on the white horse ahead. He created it; inside are sliding panoramas he has painted.

As these wagons pass, people on foot and in buggies and wagons to the number of more than a thousand fall into line and follow. Their curiosity is not yet sated.

Among these followers are forty-three correspondents, representing newspapers from New York to San Francisco; four telegraph operators and two linemen. The linemen are there to climb a pole and tap the wires, with special operators to dispatch the news. The reporters are to whoop the story up and be in on the crucifixion.

The road is ankle-deep with that unguent kind of mud which lies on top of frost. Snow begins to fall. Followers begin to slough off, shouting words of encouragement as they turn back. The marchers are miserable. None of them are properly shod or dressed for it. After a few miles a number of them begin to limp on wet, blistered feet. The band plays a great deal and the men sing.

At one o'clock there is a stop for coffee and dry bread, served out of the commissariat wagon. It is understood that the army will live off the country as it goes along, trusting to charity and providence; but the shrewdness of the commander has foreseen that the art of begging will have to be learned, and that in any case it cannot begin successfully on the first few miles out.

At four o'clock a halt is called near a village, the inhabitants of which make friendly gestures and bring forth bacon and hams, which are gratefully added to the boiled potatoes and bread served out of the wagon. The tent is raised. The man on the white horse makes a speech.

He is the more aggressive half of the incarnation. Indeed, it presently becomes the opinion of the correspondents that he is the motivating principle of the whole infatuation and holds the other in a spell. He is full of sound and rhetoric, his talk a wild compound of Scripture, theosophy and populism.

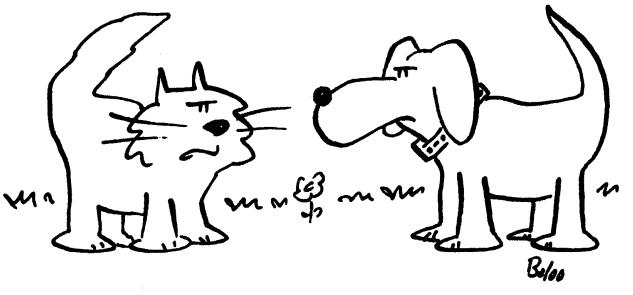
The kingdom of heaven on earth is at hand, he says. The conditions foretold in Revelation are fulfilled. The seven heads of the beast are the seven conspiracies against the money of the people. The ten horns of the beast are the ten monopolies nourished in Wall Street—the sugar trust, the oil trust, and so on.

This feeling of againstness is sometimes stronger to unite men, especially unhappy men, than a feeling of forness.

"We are fast undermining the structure of monopoly in the hearts of the people," he declaimed, reaching his peroration. "Like Cyrus of old, we are fast tunneling under the boodlers' Euphrates and will soon be able to march under the walls of the second Babylon, and its mysteries too. The infernal, blood-sucking bank system will be overthrown, for the handwriting is on the wall."

This is how two fatuous spirits, visionaries certainly — Carl Browne on the white horse and Jacob S. Coxey in the buggy — let the Army of the Commonweal of Christ — Coxey's Army, for short — out of Massillon, out on the easting highway toward Washington.

And for what purpose? Merely this — to demand from Congress a law by which unlimited prosperity and human happiness might be established on earth.



"I'm *supposed* to pussyfoot around!"

Two years before this, Jacob S. Coxey, horse breeder and quarry owner whom no one had ever heard of before, proposed to cure the economic disease then afflicting the country by the simple expedient of hiring all the unemployed men on public works. Congress should raise half a billion

When they are asked how the money power could profit by their unemployment, what motive it could have in creating hard times, they take refuge in meaningless phrases.

dollars from non-interest-bearing bonds and spend the money on national roads. This plan received some publicity as a freak idea; nobody had been really serious about it. What then happens?

Browne, a theosophist, demagogue and noise breaker, seeks out this money crank at Massillon, and together they incubate the thought of calling on the people to take the plan in the form of a petition and walk with it to Congress. The thing is Russian — "a petition in boots," a prayer to the government carried great distances by peasants on foot. The newspapers print it as a piece of light news. Then everybody begins to talk about it, and the response is amazing. People laugh openly and are secretly serious.

A day is set for the march to begin, a form of organization is announced, and Coxey Army contingents begin to appear spontaneously all over the country. Little groups of men, calling themselves the Christ Army of the Commonweal, set out from Missouri, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Michigan, from anywhere east of the Missouri River, footing it to Massillon.

Then it rains. For three weeks there is nothing but rain, and the flesh fails. That is why there is but a scant one hundred to make the start. Coxey believes the bemired and tardy units will survive and catch up. He still hopes to have tens of thousands with him when he reaches Washington.

But all this vibration is unmistakably emotional. That is a fact to be accounted for. When did it become possible to emotionalize the human animal with a financial idea—specifically, a plan to convert non-interest-bearing bonds into an unlimited amount of legal-tender money? Never. The money theory is merely the outwardness of the matter. Something else is signified. What is it?

Why are people hungry in a land of surplus food? Why is labor idle? Labor applied to materials is the source of all wealth. There is no lack of materials. The desire for wealth is without limit. Why are men unemployed?

The Coxeyites blame the money power in Wall Street. When they are asked how the money power could profit by their unemployment, what motive it could have in creating hard times, they take refuge in meaningless phrases. Most of them believe in peaceful measures. Only a few harbor destructive thoughts.

The manner of the army's reception by farmers, villagers and townspeople is variable. In poor, dilapidated communities there is always a hearty welcome with what food the people can spare, cheerfully bestowed; the better and more prosperous the community the worse for the Commonwealers. The army is much maligned by rumor as a body of tramps obtaining sustenance by blackmail. It isn't true. There is no theft, very little disorder, no taking without leave, even when the stomach gnaws.

In those industrial communities where class distinctions have arisen, the police are invariably disagreeable and the poor are enthusiastic over the Commonwealers. At Allegheny, where the steel-mill workers have long suffered from unemployment, the army receives a huge white silk banner, lettered:

LAWS FOR AMERICANS
More Money
Less Misery

At some towns the army is not permitted to stop at all. At others it is officially received with music, speeches and rejoicings.

The size of the army fluctuates with the state of the weather. Crossing the Blue Mountains by the icy Cumberland Road in a snowstorm is an act of fortitude almost heroic. Confidence in the leaders declines. Browne comes to be treated with mild contempt. The line, "Christ and Coxey" painted on the commissariat wagon is almost too much. Everybody is discouraged when the expectation of great numbers has finally to be abandoned. Never does the roll exceed five hundred men, not even after the memorable junction in Maryland with Christopher Columbus Jones, forty-eight men and a bulldog, from Philadelphia.

Yet there is a cohesive principle somewhere. Nearly all those who started from Massillon stick to the very end. What holds them together? Possibly a vague herd sense of moving against something and a dogged reaction to ridicule. This feeling of againstness is sometimes stronger to unite men, especially unhappy men, than a feeling of forness. The thing they are against was formless in their minds. It cannot not be visualized. Therefore it is a foredoomed crusade.

The climax is pitiably futile.

Two self-mongering reincarnations of Christ, both fresh and clean, having nighted in decent hotels, lead four hundred draggle-tail men into Washington and up Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol grounds, enormous humiliated crowds looking on. Browne dismounts and leaps over the low stone wall. Coxey tries to make a speech. Both are good-naturedly arrested for trespassing on the public grass and violating a police ordinance. The leaderless men wander back to a camp site that has been mercifully loaned. For a time they duly subsist upon charity, cease altogether to be news, and gradually vanish away. ❑

Garrett wrote that "a great swell of radical thought" and "social insubordination" swept the country. Out West, trains were seized by bands of armed men. Federal and state officials were "afraid to act against Coxeyism," he wrote, "because too many people sympathized with it."

Two years later the spirit of Coxeyism was represented by William Jennings Bryan, Democratic and Populist candidate for president. Bryan lost to William McKinley, a supporter of gold. The depression lifted, and Coxeyism evaporated.

His Mark on the World

by Alan Ebenstein

Milton Friedman's ideas and tireless advocacy have changed the course of history.

Milton Friedman was born in 1912, and his early career was shaped by the Great Depression in the United States. He went to Rutgers University from 1928 to 1932, and began as a graduate student at the University of Chicago in the fall of 1932. He says that he originally went into economics instead of applied mathematics because of the economic circumstances of the times.

The University of Chicago at the time Friedman studied there was known for the strong and able advocates of free-market capitalism on its faculty, in particular Jacob Viner and Frank Knight. In addition, Henry Simons was an intellectual force, both in person and through his pamphlet "A Positive Program for Laissez Faire," which defended a free market at a time when capitalism faced one of its most severe challenges.

At the same time, the era was much more left-liberal, and this influenced the young Friedman. Following Simons, Friedman favored a progressive income tax through at least the 1940s, and he also possessed a more egalitarian view of the appropriate outcomes of economic interaction than he now does.

In the 1940s, Friedman saw little role for monetary policy in influencing inflation. In testimony before Congress in the early 1940s and in publications from the same time, he makes significant references to inflation without mentioning monetary policy. He thought inflation could be controlled through fiscal measures.

After World War II, he became much more libertarian in public policy. Much of this shift in his thinking stemmed from his reinterpretation of the Great Depression. Because he came to believe that the Great Depression was not caused by a crisis in capitalism but mostly by inappropriate monetary policy, he came to reject the perspectives of most of his peers.

Through his work with Anna J. Schwartz in their monumental 1963 study "A Monetary History of the United States, 1867–1960," Friedman demonstrated that the cause of the Great Depression was the collapse of the money supply, which the Federal Reserve System fostered. The Great Depression did not demonstrate the incapacity of capitalism to provide reasonable employment and a productive economy. It showed that the monetary policy pursued during those years was disastrous.

Since the 1950s, Friedman has been the most influential proponent of monetarism. At a time when the accepted belief was that government fiscal policy determined national economic activity including inflation, he put forward the view that inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon, and that monetary policy is far more important than fiscal policy in determining economic fluctuation.

Friedman's rethinking of the Great Depression is vital. It refutes the notion that free markets failed, and dispels the idea that it was (and is) the government's responsibility to step in and deal with the problems left in the wake of capitalism's failure.

At Chicago, Friedman learned from Jacob Viner the importance of the price system in establishing relative value in an economy. He became imbued with the idea of freedom: Let adults do whatever they would like as long as they are not harming anyone else. If both sides consent to a trade,

both feel they benefit from it. Why prevent individuals from trading?

Friedman's approach is gradual and incremental in nature, but he is ultimately more radical than the policy proposals he advances suggest. He is not an anarchist; ultimately, he sees no alternative to a continuing coercive role for a minimalist state, but the state he thinks optimal is substantially smaller than the diminished role he now advocates as a transitional step.

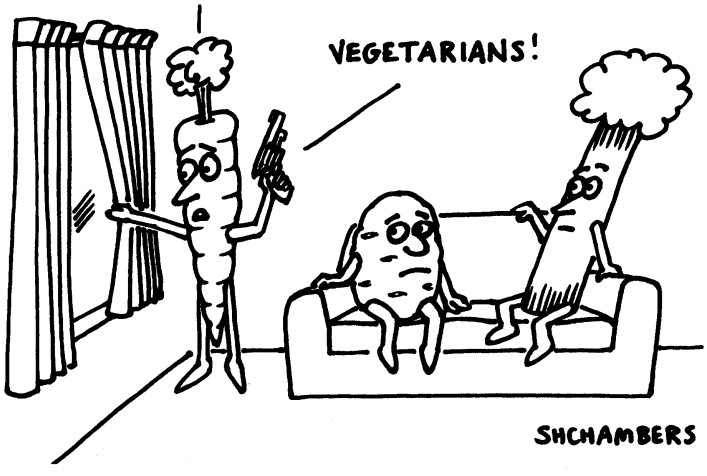
Friedman's rethinking of the Great Depression refutes the notion that free markets failed, and dispels the idea that it was (and is) the government's responsibility to step in and deal with capitalism's failure.

He supported floating international exchange rates for almost a quarter of a century before they were implemented in the United States. Here, too, his views were informed by price theory. Prices work their magic by reflecting relative supply and demand in monetary terms. If whole currencies are under- or over-priced, price signals cannot operate, and international trade will be diminished.

Creation of an international market is one of the outcomes of flexible international currency exchange rates. The liberal view in the 19th century was that free trade among countries promotes peace, because each country has a stake in the success of the other.

Friedman first gained a national audience during Goldwater's presidential campaign in 1964. Before then, he had been well known in academia, but not to the general public. He was frequently identified in the popular media as Goldwater's leading economic adviser.

One of Goldwater's campaign planks in 1964 was a five-year cut in income tax rates of 5 percentage points per year, a total of 25 percentage points, across the board. In the Reagan administration, income tax rates were cut by 25 percentage points across the board over three years.



In 1966, Friedman began writing a column for Newsweek that appeared every three weeks. In these columns, he spelled out many of the positions that have become public policy since. One of the most consistent topics of his early Newsweek columns was the need to eliminate the pegged rate of $35 per ounce of gold. He advocated the system of freely fluctuating international currencies that subsequently was implemented.

His overarching concern from the late 1960s through early 1980s was inflation. He consistently advocated monetary restraint to control inflation and said that fiscal remedies for inflation were useless.

Early on, Friedman advocated the policy of tax cuts which became hallmarks of the Reagan and George W. Bush administrations. As early as 1962, Friedman recommended a flat tax; failing that, he suggested reductions in top income tax rates in order to spur productivity. In 1979, he recommended reducing the top income tax rate from 70% to 25%. By the end of Reagan's second term, the top rate was 28%.

In the 1960s, Friedman recommended tax cuts and budget deficits as the best way to reduce the role of government, or at least to prevent its increase. In his memoirs, he says he would prefer total federal spending of $1 trillion and a deficit of $500 billion to total federal spending of $2 trillion and a balanced federal budget.

The target of Friedman's opposition is government spending, not whether the federal government runs a budget deficit. He does not think the latter of much consequence, but believes the former is pernicious.

In recent years, Friedman has supported educational vouchers as an alternative to the public school monopoly in the United States. He has also suggested that if health savings accounts, together with high-deductible catastrophic insurance policies, were to replace present employer, Medicare, and Medicaid health coverage, health care costs would be cut more than half as a proportion of gross national product in the United States.

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In addition to his contributions to public economic policy that were either implemented or remain under debate, Friedman helped introduce the idea of a negative income tax, which dominated welfare reform discussion in the first year or so of the Nixon administration. His influence extends abroad, where he has been an advocate of the denationalization of governmentally-owned industries.

Friedman will turn 93 on July 31, 2005. His contributions to the discussion of political economy are many and varied, and only some of them have been touched on here. One can only marvel at the creativity and power of a mind that has put forward so many ideas before they became widely held and, in many cases, implemented. ❑

Short Story

Zero Tolerance

by Scott Stein

Team Leader signaled the sniper to take up position. He hoped to God he wouldn't have to use him. It was always worst with the young ones. High schools and middle schools were bad enough, and the elementary school last week was a horror story, so many wasted lives barely begun. Even that was nothing compared to today.

Sunnyville DayCare was surrounded. Patrol cars, two SWAT teams, and news vans from every major network ringed the rectangular brick building and fenced-in playground. Helicopters overhead sent aerial views to millions of televisions in homes across America. Officers locking arms kept the reporters at bay. A mother sobbed, "My baby!" Cameras whirled and microphones lunged.

Team Leader blocked it out, and his hunger, too. He was determined to end this without bloodshed, but knew it wasn't up to him. Those kids in there had started this. Only they could end it peacefully. There'd been too many of these lately, almost one a week. It was an epidemic all right — the world was going to hell in a hurry.

He lifted the bullhorn. "Kids, listen up. This is the police." He had to be careful not to provoke them. How they got their hands on dangerous contraband still wasn't clear, but there they were locked inside with it. A mistake could lead them to use it — he'd be held responsible for any consequences to their health. Probably someone had left it unguarded, maybe a store clerk. More likely it was a careless parent.

This sort of thing didn't use to happen. He remembered his own childhood — sure, sometimes kids talked back or broke curfew, but never this kind of open rebellion against adults and rules and the best-intentioned standards of a caring society. And at such a young age!

His voice through the bullhorn boomed. "Come out of there now and no one will get hurt."

No answer. Team Leader couldn't wait any longer. The risk was too great. He signaled, watched as the canister shattered a window of Sunnyville DayCare. In an instant thick white smoke billowed from the hole. Another signal, and four team members in gas masks swung from the roof through other windows, smashing glass and disappearing into the building and the smoke.

Quiet.

Seconds passed like minutes.

Then the front door swung open, heavy smoke blowing wild as the team members exited the building, children slung over their shoulders. There were four kids in all. No shots fired, no open wounds.

For a moment, Team Leader smiled. Tragedy had been averted.

Smile gone now as he got a closer look at the kids, chubby five-year-olds, crumbs on their shirts, glazed sticky fingers, sugar-high eyes darting. One girl still clutched the now-empty box of donuts, her knuckles white.

Team Leader shook his head. Four more victims. He consoled himself — you couldn't save them all — and prepared for the worst.

The media descended. □

Cookie Monster, *from page 14*

This is how we can win the drug war, and end other governmental violations of our rights — by fighting charges in court instead of taking plea bargains, and by refusing to eat jail food if convicted. The latter provides the confidence to do the former.

Fasting isn't a get-out-of-jail-free card. I've never heard of any violent criminals trying it — they might be allowed to die. Most people wouldn't particularly care. They already resent providing health care to prisoners when many free men can't afford it. But the costs of keeping violent criminals healthy mean that prisoners convicted of relatively minor crimes tend to be released if they have serious health-care costs. If you don't eat while in captivity, you won't stay in prison. The punishment they threaten you with becomes irrelevant. You can fight your case with good heart and make the state prove every element of every charge.

I'd been set up — not by my opponents or by the authorities, but by fellow drug users.

Today, 99% of defendants accept plea bargains instead of going to trial. If even 10% of defendants exercised their right to trial by jury, the judicial system would grind to a halt. Prosecutors would have to stick to prosecuting real criminals. Laws would have to change.

There is a slim chance I might die, but I would prefer that to years in prison. I love the life I live now, in my house, my garden, and my customers' gardens. I love the life I live with my lover, my daughters, my parents, and my friends, in a town I chose over many others in which I've lived. If I eat in jail and thereby go to prison, I would be trading that life for a life surrounded by concrete and barbed wire, living with company I don't choose, eating institutional food, and following an institutional schedule.

The charge of distributing to minor carries a sentence of up to 20 years, but even one year would destroy my life. By the time I got out, my customers and my house would be lost, and my friends and family would be gone or changed. If I save my life by eating, I have lost it. If I lose my life by fasting, I have saved it.

That, my friends, is the good news, not the bad. It is a choice any one of us could face: there are so many laws and so many ways to run afoul of them. We can free our country without having to convince anyone who isn't already on our side. We can defeat overwhelming force by peaceful resistance, simply by fighting to the finish in court and not eating their food. All who do so will live free. If enough do so, everyone will live free.

The Sunday protest goes on, amplified. The arrest kept me off the street for one hour of a very rainy day. I have pledges from daughters and friends that they will be out there if I'm taken off the street again. My lawyer says that his lawyer friends are having conniptions at the sight of me back on the street and talking to the press. I'm handing out twice as many leaflets as I did before my arrest. More people are stopping to talk and help, and there's even a little more opposition.

My business goes on as normal. Customers may support me, disagree with me, or not care, but reasonable people don't let politics come before business. My bumper stickers weed out most of the unreasonable people before they can hire me.

Court dates occasionally cut into my work schedule. The stretch between dates can be anywhere from weeks to months. The next one is supposedly to make a plea and set trial. The DA has offered to drop the two remaining "causing to ingest" counts in exchange for pleading guilty to the charges of distributing to a minor and felony possession. Not happening.

No matter what the outcome of the trial is, my life will go on. ❑

Letters, *from page 4*

How did these welfare-state socialists get associated with the far right? What is the Right, but the principle of laissez faire, of live and let live? How did that get connected to fascism and mass murder?

Marxist theory demanded and required genocide for the simple reason that, when human nature can't be eradicated, human beings must be.

Interestingly, Watson referred to the eugenics movement in Social Democratic Sweden, but not, as Reiland had, to that of the United States; and, while indicting the Left, failed to implicate the Center. While neither has told the whole story, each has told a big part of it.

D.G. Lesvic
Pacoima, Calif.

Second Opinion

Two letters to the editor (July) assert that Terri Schiavo was not in a persistent vegetative state, arguing that only a PET scan or MRI could have given conclusive evidence. Take a look at the online transcript of The Abrams Report interview with Ronald Cranford, a neurologist who had the advantage of actually examining Schiavo (http://msnbc.msn.com/id/7328639/), and look at the CT scan pictured. The large dark spots in the center are where the cerebral cortex is completely gone. So much cortex was gone that a PET or MRI scan was completely superfluous.

Those interested in the facts of this case should read the December 2003 report of Terri's guardian ad litem, Dr. Jay Wolfson from the University of South Florida, which may be found online at http://abstractappeal.com/schiavo/WolfsonReport.pdf.

Those who argue that Schiavo was conscious and aware are simply engaging in wishful thinking at odds with the facts.

Jim Lippard
Phoenix, Ariz.

Reviews

"To the Flag: The Unlikely History of the Pledge of Allegiance," by Richard J. Ellis. University Press of Kansas, 2005, 312 pages.

Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Pledge

Bruce Ramsey

Many libertarians have noted that the Pledge of Allegiance was written by a socialist. But in the story as told by Richard J. Ellis, professor of political science at Willamette University, Francis Bellamy's socialism is of little consequence.

Bellamy said decades later he had written the Pledge so that it could be "applicable to either an individualistic or a socialistic state." There was no socialism in it, nor was there any religion in it, though Bellamy had been a Baptist minister. Its content was nationalist; its "one nation, indivisible," was a reference to the Civil War (and reminds us why the Pledge did not catch on in the South for a long time); its "liberty and justice for all" was an encapsulation of the American Creed.

The root question about the Pledge is why it exists at all. What is the explanation, asks Ellis, for "the paradox of this most individualistic of nations requiring children to declare daily their allegiance to the state"? In his book, Ellis gives three answers: war, radicalism, and immigrants.

As Ellis tells it, the writing of the Pledge "was part of an effort to rekindle the patriotic flame of the Civil War" among a people increasingly urban and commercial. It also expressed nativist worries about the tide of immigrants, many of them Catholics or Jews from Southern and Eastern Europe. Molding their children into Americans appeared to be a difficult task. The Pledge was meant to bolster a sense of nationalism and patriotism — and it has done that.

The Pledge was introduced as part of a nationwide ceremony for schoolchildren on the day the Columbian Exposition was dedicated in Chicago. The year was 1892, the 400th anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus. The task of designing the schoolroom ceremonies had been given to Youth's Companion, a national magazine that had campaigned to put a flag in every public school. Bellamy, who worked at the magazine, was assigned to write the flag oath. Facing a deadline, he retired to his office, scribbled for two hours and came out with this: "I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

It was an elegant oath, and kids all over America said it on an October day in 1892. But it was published in a magazine which did little afterward to promote it. The Grand Army of the Republic, the organization of Union veterans, endorsed Bellamy's Pledge for the older school grades, but for younger grades it endorsed a rival oath that said, "I give my hand, my head, my heart to my country. One country, one people, one flag."

That sounds a lot like "Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer," though the Nazis came decades later. The 1892 flag salute was a military salute followed by extending the arm outward, palm toward the flag — which is why early photos of children saying the Pledge look to us like Hitler Youth. The United States intentionally settled on the hand-over-heart salute in the early 1940s for that reason.

World War I and its aftermath made the Pledge a national institution. The book skims over the wartime story, but obviously something happened then. Before the war the Bellamy oath was one of several, and after the war it was dominant.

After the 1918 Armistice came a wave of labor unrest, radicalism, and deportation of radical immigrants. In February 1919, most of the city's unions joined in a five-day general strike in Seattle, an event Mayor Ole Hansen labeled as Bolshevism. It wasn't quite that: the strike was peace-

ful, and though communists tried to influence it, they did not control it. But it scared people. That same month, the legislature made it a felony to fly the red flag of the anarcho-syndicalist

The conventions changed the wording, replacing "my flag" with "the flag of the United States of America," to prevent anyone from using the Pledge to swear allegiance to any other flag.

Industrial Workers of the World. It also passed a law making Washington the first state to require public school teachers to administer Bellamy's Pledge of Allegiance.

Open immigration was brought to an end in 1924 — and it was in 1923 and 1924 that the American Legion held two national flag conferences. The Pledge had been published in a private magazine and spread by a private veterans' group; in these two flag conferences it was canonized by other private organizations. Today we would have the government do it, but in the 1920s, they didn't.

The conventions changed the wording, replacing "my flag" with "the flag of the United States of America," to prevent anyone from using the Pledge to swear allegiance to any other flag.

Resistance to the Pledge came mainly from the deeply religious. Some were too otherworldly to fight it, but the Jehovah's Witnesses were willing to file suit, and they were tenacious. Twice they took cases to the Supreme Court. The first, *Minersville School District* v. *Gobitis*, was handed down June 3, 1940, when France was falling to the German army. It was not a good time for the Supreme Court to strike down an oath of national loyalty, and it didn't. The ruling was 8-to-1 in support of a mandatory Pledge, with only Justice Harlan Stone, who had been appointed by Calvin Coolidge, opposing.

The ruling was written by a loyal New Dealer, Justice Felix Frankfurter. He was a Jewish émigré from Vienna, passionately opposed to Hitler and obsessed with the war. He recognized that his ruling curtailed freedom, but "the time and circumstances," he wrote, required that the court support the government.

Much of the press praised Stone. A wave of violence against Witnesses increased sympathy for their beliefs. In June 1942, less than a week after the U.S. victory at Midway, the Supreme Court ruled on a case involving the licensing of Witnesses' door-to-door campaigners. Four justices — Harlan Stone, Frank Murphy, Hugo Black and William O. Douglas — sided with the Witnesses, agreeing on a broad statement of religious freedom. The Witnesses took that as a sign to try again, and in 1943, when the Allies were winning on all major fronts, the court accepted another Pledge case, *West Virginia* v. *Barnette*.

"He was never actually in combat."

In this famous decision, another New Dealer, Justice Robert Jackson, wrote: "If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein. If there are any circumstances which permit an exception, they do not now occur to us."

That is one of the best examples of how court rulings follow more than just the law.

The next part of Ellis' story is the insertion of "under God." This was done in 1954, just after the stalemate in Korea, as a way to distinguish Americans from Communists. "In the Cold War's early years," Ellis writes, communism was not just a military enemy but "was seen to be a dangerous rival for the allegiance of men and women in the United States and across the globe. Communism seemed capable of instilling a devotion and loyalty that some feared the West could not match. Only religious faith, many Americans believed, could counter the appeal of totalitarianism."

Ellis makes clear that in 1954 "under God" was not meant as "ceremonial deism," as its legal apologists maintain today.

Adding "under God" was a project of the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic organization — a notable fact because the original Pledge was part of a movement that feared immigrant Catholics. But the nation had changed.

Ellis covers the "under God" controversy about as impartially as one could. He makes clear that in 1954 "under God" was not meant as "ceremonial deism," as its legal apologists maintain today. It meant the Judeo-Christian God. On the other side, he notes that Bellamy, in 1892, should not be given credit for keeping God out of the public schools, either. There was no effort to do that back then, and constitutional law did not demand it. He was just trying to keep his Pledge focused.

In its final chapters, the book cov-

ers fights over the Pledge by Vietnam War protesters, its use by George H.W. Bush in the election campaign of 1988, and its use as a conservative and Republican weapon in the years since. The story ends with the quixotic legal campaign of atheist Michael Newdow to have the Supreme Court remove the words "under God."

If "under God" ever comes out — and as a matter of practical politics it could be done only by a court — Ellis will have to write an update of his book. Right now, this is the definitive account of America's nationalist oath for schoolchildren. ❑

"Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith," directed by George Lucas. Twentieth Century Fox, 2005, 146 minutes.

Untying Loose Ends

Jo Ann Skousen

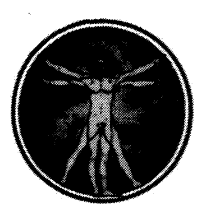
"No one mourns the wicked" is a recurrent motif in the popular Broadway musical "Wicked," which tells the backstory of the Wicked Witch of the West from "The Wizard of Oz." The lyric is deliberately ironic, however; by the story's end, everyone in the audience mourns this "wicked," feeling tremendous sorrow for the fallen protagonist. In describing the essence of tragedy, Aristotle wrote, "The finest kind of tragedy should be complex and not simple . . . a representation of terrible and piteous events . . . inspiring either pity or fear, but not revulsion." The tragic hero "does not fall into misfortune through vice or depravity, but falls because of some great mistake." Usually that mistake is associated with a choice, or a series of choices, so that the viewer or reader continually mourns: "If only!" One of the greatest fallen villains of Western literature is Satan; it has been written that he was "an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God, who rebelled . . . and the heavens wept over him — he was Lucifer, a son of the morning . . . and lo, he is fallen! Is fallen, even a son of the morning!"

Darth Vader is such a villain, a great Jedi knight who "was in authority" but fell to the dark side for reasons that creator George Lucas promised to explain in Episodes I–III. Fans of the original "Star Wars" trilogy (which comprised Episodes IV–VI) have flocked to the prequels to learn what great mistake or event could have caused Anakin Skywalker, the chosen Jedi Knight, to fall and become the pre-eminent villain of the universe. "Episode III: Revenge of the Sith," though nowhere near as entertaining or compelling as the original "Star Wars" trilogy, is the best of the prequel episodes, light years ahead of "The Phantom Menace" and "Attack of the Clones," with fabulous special effects, no interminable Senate debates, and no annoying Jar-Jar Binks characters.

Besides bringing space operas to mainstream Hollywood, Lucas' most enduring contribution to film is his special effects studio, Industrial Light & Magic, and that's what continues to shine. As a stand-alone film, I might give this movie a couple of thumbs up, despite the wooden acting and cheesy dialogue, simply for its spectacular special effects. But as a prequel, Episode III introduces more questions than it resolves. And I allow Lucas no excuses — he's had over six hours to tie up the loose ends, for heaven's sake!

Lucas seems stuck between needing to explain the fall of his hero and wanting his villain to be heroic. This conflict produces not the greatest villain of the 20th century, but a mealy, angst-driven, lovesick half-villain. Yes, Lucas makes half-hearted attempts to fill in the blanks toward the end (Anakin was seduced by the lust for power; it was too late for him to turn back once he realized what he had done; it appeared that his wife Padme had betrayed him). Any of these events could have created believable motivations, if they had occurred while he was actually making his choice. But these events and comments all occur after his conversion, not before, ratifying his choice but not explaining it. In a true tragedy, just the opposite should occur; after the decision is irrevocably made, the hero learns the truth of his mistake, and either regrets his fall (Othello, Oedipus) or wallows in bitterness (Satan, Vader).

We needed to see either a tragic misunderstanding or genuine bitterness as motivation for Anakin's turn to



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the dark side — some dramatic angst as he falls. Someone with so much goodness (as Young Anakin showed in the first two prequels) would have to have experienced a true abandonment or betrayal in order to change that much; he must either mistakenly believe that the Jedi have become enemies of the good side, or he must believe that he has been betrayed. But Lucas wants us to believe that a bad dream is enough motivation for Anakin to turn toward the dark side. And a dream about a natural occurrence, at that! (After all, no one causes death in childbirth.) In the end, if he should feel bitter towards anyone, it's the evil emperor, Chancellor Palpatine, who doesn't keep his promise to resuscitate Padme. But Anakin remains true to the chancellor who has betrayed him. Utterly inexplicable.

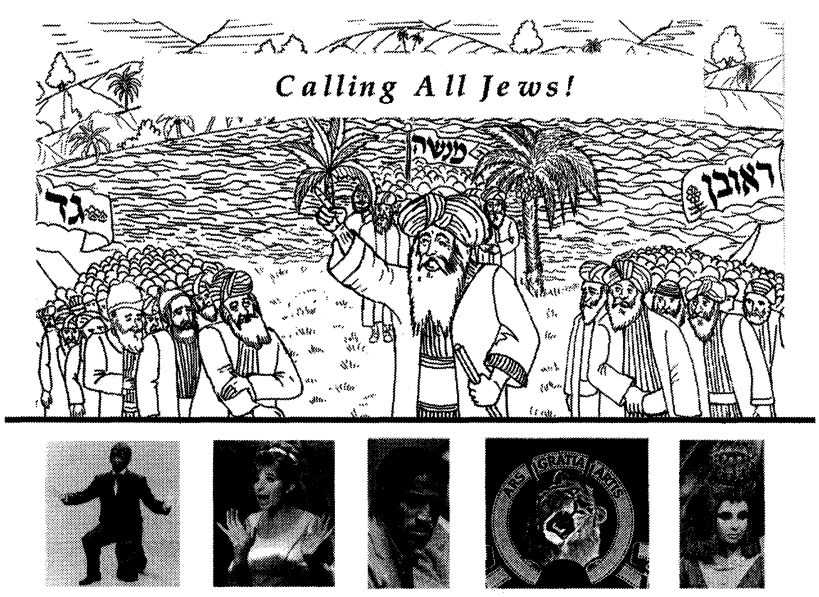
To Lucas' credit, he includes some classic science fiction themes in this episode: peace is more than the absence of war; security must not be purchased at the price of liberty; power corrupts; freedom is worth fighting for. If he had remained true to his original plan for Vader's backstory, he probably would have produced a satisfying end to the "Star Wars" saga. But in his zeal to fit in with Hollywood's political mindset, Lucas seems to have abandoned his original timeless plan by making overt allusions to present-day politics. He equates Chancellor Palpatine with George Bush when the Jedis complain,

I allow Lucas no excuses — he's had over six hours to tie up the loose ends, for heaven's sake!

"He was appointed, not elected," "We're in a war based on his lies," and "He controls the courts and the Senate." He also presents a military made up of clones who blindly obey the Chancellor's inhumane "Order 66" — a not-so-subtle allusion to 666, the mark of the Beast. This may cause cynical cheers among Bush-hating audiences today, but such timeliness weakens the plot overall. Perhaps because George Bush is associated with the religious right, Lucas chooses to associate the Chancellor and Darth Vader with the Christ figure, an archetype of the good side in science fiction. They utter such lines as "Only the Sith believe in absolutes," "You must have faith," and "One Sith discovered the power to return from the dead." Chancellor Palpatine even lays his hands on Anakin's forehead in imitation of priestly healing. The allusions become eerily convoluted and depart from traditional science fiction prototypes.

Astonishing special effects are nice, but what makes a great movie is a powerful script with believable, three-dimensional characters portrayed convincingly. These have been sadly lacking throughout the prequel trilogy, including this episode. Okay, it's made over $300 million at the box office already, and I've seen it twice, so it's not bad. But still, Lucas manages to turn fine actors into wooden mannequins mouthing simplistic dialogue. Ewan McGregor (Obi-Wan) works overtime at his Alec Guinness impression; Ian McDiarmid (Palpatine) seems to be channeling Monty Burns from "The Simpsons"; Samuel L. Jackson (Windu) sounds like he's reading from cue cards; Yoda can't get his grammar straight (how hard is it to be consistent in putting the verbs last?); Hayden Christensen (Anakin) smolders without passion; and Natalie Portman (Padme) makes me want to shake her every time she sighs "Oh Annie!" or suggests "Let's go to Naboo and fix up the baby's room!" As a Star Wars fan for nearly 30 years, I missed the unexpected plot twists, the camaraderie between Luke Skywalker and Han Solo, and the never-ending adventures of the original trilogy. And I felt cheated by the lack of closure in what was supposed to be the explanatory episode.

I still want to know: How does Leia know about Obi-Wan at the beginning of the original "Star Wars," but not about Luke? How does Leia became a freedom fighter, and how can she remember her "real mother" in Episode VI? If Obi-Wan is hiding Luke, a la Sleeping Beauty, why doesn't he change Luke's name to



Jolie, Barbra, even Sammy, Leo, and Liz

"Almost every Jew in America owes his life to laissez faire capitalism. It was relatively laissez faire America that welcomed Jews in unlimited numbers and *progressive*, New Deal America that turned them away by the boatload, and back to Auschwitz... For Jews especially: God Bless America should be God Bless laissez faire capitalism."

For *The Jewish Debt to the Right*, the New Mises Seminars, an Open Forum of the Right, and new ideas that the old libertarians don't want you to know about

see Intellectually Incorrect at intinc.org

something besides Skywalker — or at least let everyone think that Luke is Owen's son instead of his nephew?

Astonishing special effects are nice, but what makes a great movie is a powerful script with believable characters portrayed convincingly.

Why doesn't Darth Vader find his son? What does Owen know about his brother Anakin, anyway, and why didn't we see anything about Owen in Episode I ("The Phantom Menace")? How did Chewbacca go from being Yoda's protector to being a bandit's sidekick, and why doesn't he recognize C-3PO when they get together in Episode IV (the original "Star Wars")? Shouldn't Chewie be more noble in Episode IV, given his heroic role in Episode III, instead of always seeming to be afraid? What was Han Solo's backstory, anyway? He was the true star of the original "Star Wars," and the one I miss the most.

Perhaps these questions could be answered in Episode III I/II, (heaven help us!) but frankly, I don't think Lucas should be the one to write it or direct it. "No one mourns the wicked," but we do mourn the wasted opportunity. ❑

"Cowboy Capitalism: European Myths, American Reality," by Olaf Gersemann. Cato Institute, 2004, 209 pages.

Europe Rides Into the Sunset

Gary Jason

The New York Times has just concluded a particularly lachrymose series of articles lamenting economic insecurity and inequality in America, problems that presumably never existed before, and presumably will vanish once we elect Hillary president (or perhaps crown her the Virgin Queen). Even the Wall Street Journal recently ran a series on inequality. Amazing. Our economy has shown stunning resilience, and is doing incredibly well even after a stock market correction of colossal proportions, a terrorist attack that killed more civilians than any other attack in our nation's history, the resultant loss of a million jobs, and two wars. But many are unconvinced, and they turn to enlightened Europe for inspiration.

Recently, however, there has been doubt within European nations about the strength of their economies. The EU model of cozy, union-dominated welfare states working within a large trading block, relatively immune from competition, has seemed more and more untenable. The overwhelming rejection of the proposed EU constitution by French and Dutch voters has only intensified the debate. "Cowboy Capitalism," written by a well-respected reporter for Germany's largest economic and business weekly, had an explosive effect on this European internal debate when it was first published in Germany in 2003. The Cato Institute has done us a service in publishing this translation. It is a sustained examination of the myths about American economic life by an outsider, providing a valuable perspective — we get to see ourselves as (some) others see us.

Olaf Gersemann begins by noting an anomaly: despite the fact that, over the last quarter century, the U.S. economy has enjoyed an average real growth rate of 2.9%, which is a rate of growth 55% greater than that of Germany, 48% more than that of France, and 39% greater than that of the EU as a whole, and despite the fact that the United States has enjoyed lower unemployment rates than have those countries, the Europeans view our economy as a model, not to be copied, but to be avoided at all costs. In Germany, the phrase "*amerikanische Verhaltnisse*" (roughly "the American way of things") is used as a slur. He finds this puzzling, and while he isn't necessarily in love with our system (a point I will take up later), he thinks that it has aspects that European nations should emulate.

To convince Europeans of this, he compares the economic performance of the U.S. with those of Germany, France, and Italy (which account for half of the economic output of the EU, and over 60% of that of the euro zone). First he looks at economic growth, labor productivity and employment levels. Then he debunks many of the ugly myths about the U.S. economy perpetuated by the European Left and American leftists such as Michael Moore (whose books "Stupid White Men" and "Dude, Where's My Country" have been runaway best-sellers in Germany). Finally, he compares economic security and justice in the United States and the EU.

In America in the late 1970s, Jimmy Carter was talking about our "national malaise" and "crisis of confidence" (never, of course, assigning any blame for this to himself or his political party). The U.S. had high inflation and unemployment rates, and major industries in trouble (especially the auto industry, where Japanese and German auto makers were cutting into the U.S. market). Meanwhile, both Germany and Japan looked like economic miracles. In the second half of the 1970s, for example, American inflation and unemploy-

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ment rates were triple the German rates. It appeared that Europe was not only going to match us economically, but surpass us.

However, the 1980s saw these rates reverse, and by the late 1990s the gap between America and Europe was wider than at any time since the late 1960s. Gersemann points to a number of factors that account for this. First, Europeans are working fewer hours. Working-age Germans average 2 hours and 35 minutes of work per calendar day, with the French and Italians working even less. More important is the explosive growth in U.S. productivity: between 1996 and 2003, annual labor productivity growth was a phenomenal 3.09%, compared to 1.6% in Germany during the same period. This also reverses an earlier trend, which saw Germany's productivity growth outstrip America's. One of the reasons for our amazing productivity growth is our investment in information technology; another is (horrors!) Wal-Mart, which by itself accounted for 25% of the productivity growth in retail (with another 46% being due to improvements that Wal-Mart's competitors had to make to keep up). He also points to the fact that in the 1980s, the rapid growth in the size of government in the U.S. was slowed, tax rates went down, and the economy was liberalized. Airline, electric, and telecommunications industries were deregulated, and the power of unions was curtailed. In 1996, Congress finally passed welfare reform. The U.S. now ranks near the top of any list of the freest economies, while France, Germany and Italy rank much lower. Governmental expenditures in 2003 as a percent of GDP were 35.9% in the U.S., while they were 48.5%, 49.4% and 54.4% in Italy, Germany, and France respectively.

In Germany, the phrase "amerikanische Verhaltnisse" (roughly "the American way of things") is used as a slur.

In passing, Gersemann refutes the oft-heard claim that America is replacing valuable manufacturing and agricultural jobs with lower-quality service sector "McJobs." He points out that the ratio of low-skill to medium- or high-skill workers is much higher in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors than in the service sector. He also shows that service-sector employees are more than twice as likely to have college educations.

It is sometimes said that even a modern economy needs a strong industrial base, because the service sector produces nothing tangible and therefore can't be the foundation of an economy. Even Adam Smith, the otherwise sharp spiritual grandfather of capitalism, thought that only industrial work can be "productive." The work of the service provider "adds to the value of nothing."

Why Smith erred can be shown with an example. In the past, almost everyone who worked for the agricultural sector also worked in agriculture. In today's modern economies, only a small percentage of workers are employed in agriculture. But many service providers support this sector — for example, software engineers who write programs that help farmers manage their businesses or scientists who develop genetically modified seeds.

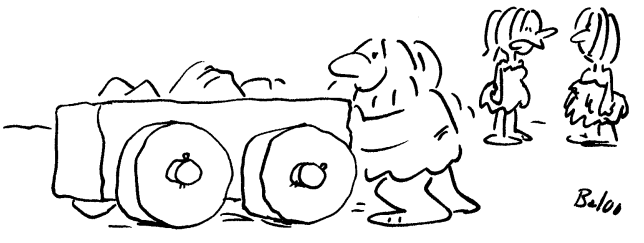
Thus, as an economy matures, employment tends to shift from the actual production of goods towards jobs that, broadly speaking, help to make the production process more efficient. That's one of the reasons why highly developed economies tend to have a high percentage of service jobs. Therefore, strong growth in service-sector jobs is a sign that the structure of an economy is improving. One unsettling figure in the book shows Germany and Italy lagging far behind in this area.

What's more, the gap between the U.S. and Europe is especially pronounced in business, financial, and other knowledge-intensive services — in other words, those areas of the service sector that offer the highest proportion of high-paying jobs. In five such knowledge-intensive service industries, real output in the United States grew by at least 195% between 1980 and 2003.

He also notes that our research and development spending is significantly higher than our competitors, even per capita, as is the number of high-tech workers. Some indication of the effect of this is given by the statistics on Nobel prizes awarded between 1990 and 2003: in Chemistry, 69.0% of the prizes went to Americans, as opposed to 3.4% for France, Germany and Italy combined; in Physiology and Medicine, 71.0% went to Americans, compared to 9.7% for France, Germany and Italy combined; in Physics, 76.5% went to Americans, compared to 8.8% for France, Germany and Italy combined; and in Economics, 88.5% went to Americans, compared to 3.8% for France, Germany, and Italy combined.

Germans average two hours and thirty-five minutes of work per calendar day, with the French and Italians working even less.

With this foundation in place, Gersemann continues by correcting or outright debunking a number of misconceptions that Europeans frequently hold, and that American leftists — who desperately want America to become a European-style welfare state — tend to push. He addresses the myths that American living standards are declining, that Americans are debt-ridden and savings-averse, that Americans are sliding into poverty, that American



"Sure, but his wheel would never have amounted to anything if *I* hadn't invented the cotter pin."

moms are forced to work to survive, that Americans have to work three jobs just to get by, that American unemployment seems so low because the unemployed here are often incarcerated, and that Americans have little access to health care. Let's glance at two of these.

Consider the claim that American living standards are on the decline. It seems like the critics of the American economic system have a point: while the average hourly wage of production and non-supervisory workers increased in real terms in the 1950s and 1960s, it peaked in the 1970s and declined in the 1980s, though it has been rising again during the 1990s. But this figure is misleading: first, it considers earnings before taxes, and taxes have gone down significantly since the 1960s and 1970s, especially for those with low incomes; second, it doesn't consider the contributions employers make towards health care, retirement and savings benefits; and third, it doesn't consider the fact that more and more earnings come from dividends, capital gains and interest. In 2001, over 50% of American households owned stocks (directly or through pension and mutual funds); even among the lowest fifth of income earners, over 12% owned stock. Moreover, Americans work more than they used to, and more work full-time rather than part-time. If you look instead at the income of American households in real dollars, there is a clear, pronounced upward trend since the 1980s. All in all, the per capita real income of the average American household has risen by over 22% since 1980. Gersemann buttresses his analysis with figures showing dramatic increases in purchasing power, and showing the high rates of consumer goods ownership. For example, while over 68% of American households own homes, only 55% of French households do, and only 41% of German households do. (The rate of home ownership of all German households only equals the rate of the poorest fifth of American households!) And while the average size of the American dwelling is 1,763 square feet, it is less than 950 square feet in France and Germany.

The myth that Americans need to work three jobs to survive (a claim made by Germany's top union leader) is similarly refuted by Gersemann's analysis. In 2003, only 5.3% of employed Americans worked more than one job. Of these, most worked either one full-time and one part-time job, or two part-time jobs — only one fifth of 1% worked two full-time jobs. This figure is about what it was during the 1970s. It is true that Germany's statistics show only 2.4% of its workforce holding more than one job, but that is a dicey figure, because the size of the underground economy is much bigger there due to the steep income tax rates. And given the higher unemployment rate in Germany, it may be that many Germans would like to work a second job, but can't find one. Furthermore, despite what skeptics might suspect, it is skilled professionals such as teachers who are most likely to hold second

Even Adam Smith, the otherwise sharp spiritual grandfather of capitalism, thought that only industrial work could be "productive."

Notes on Contributors

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jobs — no surprise, considering that teachers typically have three months off each year.

In the last part of the book, Gersemann takes up the more general issues of equality and justice. Among other things, he shows that global inequality is decreasing, not increasing, due to the rapid growth of industry in China and India. And he devotes considerable effort to make clear that while income inequality within America has grown, it is because the rich have gotten much richer, not because the poor have gotten poorer. Moreover, the increasing unequal distribution of income has not been mirrored by a growing inequality of consumption. That may be due to the fact that measures for income redistribution focus more on the needy in the U.S. than they do in the EU. And the increasing wealth of the rich is due in great measure not to inherited wealth, but to the rise of super-rich entertainment and sports stars, as well as entrepreneurs. If you compare the Forbes list of the wealthiest 400 Americans in 1989 with that of 2001, you see that their average wealth has grown from

The rate of home ownership of all German households only equals the rate of the poorest fifth of American households.

$920 million to $2.15 billion. Moreover, there is not a great amount of overlap — 230 of those on the 2001 list weren't on the 1989 list, and of those 230, all but 20 got there by their own work, not by inheritance. Gersemann makes a telling point about filthy rich entrepreneurs: "As for entrepreneurs, it can be assumed that most founders are driven not by some noble ideal but rather by the simple wish to become rich — filthy rich to be precise. That's the reason why a society that is concerned about its own well-being has to assess whether it might not be better, for all the dangers to the meritocracy ideal, to accept the possibility of successful entrepreneurs amassing gargantuan riches." (p. 163)

Put differently, the income distribution in the United States would surely be more even if the Waltons had remained grocers, the Dells had become high school teachers, and the Ellisons had become journalists. If income inequality is the yardstick, America would be a more "just" country today — but almost certainly a poorer one, too.

Gersemann finishes with some interesting tidbits. First, that there is still more social mobility in the U.S. than in the EU. Second, the ridiculous employment protection laws that characterize EU economies not only result in higher unemployment, but much longer periods of unemployment — so it's not surprising that surveys show higher rates of optimism and security in America than in the EU. Third, the rich in America pay a higher share of tax revenue, and receive less in income transfers from the government, than do the rich in Germany.

As an insightful and wide-ranging comparative analysis of the European and American economic models, this book is hard to beat. Keep in mind, though, that Gersemann did the bulk of his analysis in 2001–2002, publishing the original German edition in 2003. Imagine how much starker the contrast would appear now that we've emerged from the 9/11 recession, created 3 million new jobs, and lowered unemployment to 5.1%. Our growth rate is currently 3.6%, three times that of the euro zone. And, as reported recently in the Wall Street Journal, in 2004 the net average household wealth of Americans reached an all-time high, with the number of net millionaires — people worth a million dollars or more, minus all debt, and excluding the value of their primary residences — rising by 21% to hit a historic high of 7.5 million households. (If that figure included equity in primary residences it would surely be at least 10 million.) The number of U.S. households with $20 million or more in liquid assets is increasing by 3,000 households per year, and the rate of home ownership just hit a new high of 70%.

Gersemann overlooks or understates some points that make the European model come off even worse. First, the Europeans get a free ride from the United States when it comes to defense. If America pulled its troops and equipment out of Europe, forcing the Europeans to pay the full price for their own defense, the European economies would face even greater problems. Second, while the population of Europe has been shrinking, we have steadily taken in millions of very poor immigrants, and given them the opportunity to move up the economic ladder. Indeed, over the last 20 years, we have taken in a number of immigrants equal to the entire population of Canada, and assimilated them. Third, he overlooks the fact that "McJobs" are typically first jobs that teach people valuable work habits. Just look at some of the people who got their first job at McDonald's: comedian Jay Leno, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, astronaut Leroy Chiao, White House chief of staff Andy Card, actress Andie McDowell, former governor of Illinois Joe Kernan, and Representative Pat Tiberi. Over 1200 owners of McDonald's restaurants started as crew members there, as did 20 of the top 50 worldwide McDonald's managers — including the current CEO.

If income inequality is the yardstick, America would be a more "just" country today if the Waltons had remained grocers — but a poorer one, too.

More critically, at times he is somewhat sketchy on data, confining himself to economic statistics (as opposed to broader sociological measures). For instance, the only data to support the view that Americans are more satisfieds with their lot in life than Europeans is Harris Interactive polling data. That is good as far as it goes, but it would be possible to get a more accurate picture by looking at a greater variety of data, such as rates of application to emigrate, or perhaps rates of alcoholism or depression. But it has to be admitted that it is difficult to explore the superiority of the American model in only 200 pages.

Somewhat distressingly, he takes pains throughout to explain that he is not advocating that Europeans adopt the American model, but only that

they reform. "American conditions?" he asks. "In Europe? Of course not. No one would seriously suggest copying one economic model, no matter which, in another country." (208–9)

But why not pursue reforms that would allow the inhabitants of countries such as France, Germany, and Italy to reap the benefits of the American model? The problems that come along with American capitalism could for the most part be avoided, because, after all, they have little or nothing to do with cowboy capitalism itself.

European economic systems need not be as "American" as the American system itself. The success of the American model doesn't stand or fall with the fact that only some Americans enjoy six weeks of vacation every year. Nor do all employee protections have to be chucked in order to provide firms and employees with the flexibility they need in these Schumpeterian times.

Maybe I'm just too much of a cowboy, but yippie-ki-yay, pardner, this strikes me a downright wimpy conclusion. What moderate compromise is he suggesting here? To take the most obvious issue: how could Europe possibly have our lower tax rates and their cradle-to-grave state-paid health care?

All told, however, Gersemann has written an audacious book, and written it well. Its message is important for Germans, of course, but it needs to be taken to heart by Americans as well. Our system is working well — not perfectly, but well — and now is not the time to go all wobbly about free-market economics. We need to combat the continuing push from leftist journalists and academics to turn our country into a giant Euro-sclerotic welfare state. ❑

Booknotes

The fiction of global warming — Looking for a summer beach book with some intellectual stimulation along with a fast-paced story line? Michael Crichton's "State of Fear," (HarperCollins, 2004, 603 pages) may be just the choice, offering the improbable twists and turns of a thriller along with 20 pages of bibliographic references on global warming. Had enough environmental moralizing to last you a lifetime? Get this: Crichton, a medical doctor and scientist turned Hollywood insider, thinks global warming is a crock, designed to create fear, dependency, and donations.

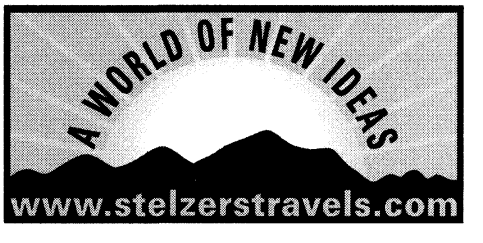
"State of Fear" is a fun read, although like so many recent Crichton novels, it veers toward lunacy in the end. (Remember the cymbal-crashing monkeys in "Congo"?) George Morton, a disillusioned philanthropist, threatens to revoke his $10 million grant to a global-warming awareness group when he realizes that "All these environmental organizations are thirty, forty, fifty years old. They have big buildings, big obligations, big staffs. They may trade on their youthful dreams, but the truth is, they're now part of the establishment. And the establishment works to preserve the status quo. It just does." Crichton's story proposes that one of these big organizations is deliberately causing climate-related catastrophes in order to stimulate big donations. As Morton's associates race to prevent the catastrophes, Crichton introduces characters who discuss the global warming plot, referencing graphs and footnotes embedded in the text. With three appendices and that 20-page bibliography to back it up, he makes a pretty convincing case, despite the over-the-top ending.

Those who are skeptical of big organizations with "pretentious names with the words 'world' and 'resource' and 'defense' and 'wildlife' and 'fund' and 'preservation' and 'wilderness' in them" will appreciate the observations of some of Crichton's characters. One says to a Hollywood tree-hugger, "You just don't get it, do you? . . . You think civilization is some horrible, polluting human invention that separates us from the state of nature. But civilization doesn't separate us from nature, Ted. Civilization protects us from nature."

He continues: "The biggest cause of environmental destruction is poverty. Starving people can't worry about pollution. They worry about food. . . . We need to design delivery systems that really work, test them, have them verified by outsiders, and once we know they work, replicate them."

Refreshingly, Crichton looks to private enterprise rather than government for those solutions. "It's difficult if you are a government agency or an ideologue. But if you just want to study the problem and fix it, you can. And this would be entirely private. Private funding, private land. No bureaucrats. Administration [should be] five percent of staff and resources. Everybody is out working. We'd run environmental research as a business. And cut the crap." — Jo Ann Skousen

A celebration of minutiae — The ultimate book about the collapse of the Confederacy, "An Honorable Defeat: The Last Days of the Confederate Government," (Harcourt, 2001, 512 pages) traces the fortunes of President Jefferson Davis and his leading collaborators from the fall of Richmond through their ultimate escape to other countries or their capture by Union forces. For the reader who is only mildly interested in the Civil War, this book will be a crushing bore — a day to day account of everything that happened, no matter how minute. But for the student of political decadence, it is an absorbing experience. My favorite parts are those that deal with Davis's almost supernatural inability to admit that he might ever be capable of doing anything wrong, and with the bizarre adventures of his sec-



retary of state, Judah P. Benjamin, who remains the most mysterious member of the Confederate government and one of the most mysterious Americans who has ever achieved high office.

The following has nothing to do with mystery, but I was vastly amused by William Davis' account of the efforts of Confederate bigwigs to flee from the United States through southern Florida, a hellish wilderness seemingly inhabited only by people trying to escape from somewhere else. He describes Mr. Benjamin wandering in that wilderness and attempting to decide which fork of a road to take. He can't decide, so lies down and takes a nap, hoping that somebody will happen along to enlighten him. His rest is broken by shouts of "Hi for Jeff! Hi for Jeff!" Peering through the brush, he sees a parrot strutting around, cheering for Jefferson Davis. So he throws stones at the bird "to herd it homeward," where he is sure he will find a Confederate to help him. He does.

— Stephen Cox

Calling Alan Greenspan

— Hans Sennholz was born in Germany, served in the Luftwaffe during World War II, was shot down over Egypt, and became a prisoner of war in the United States. At war's end, he returned to Germany and to school, where he earned a doctorate. He then immigrated to the United States, and earned a second doctorate under Ludwig von Mises, acquiring as well a firm understanding of Austrian economics and monetary theory. For many years, Sennholz taught at Grove City College in Pennsylvania. Although English is his second language, he is one of today's clearest English-language thinkers and writers on complex economic problems.

Sennholz's "Sowing the Wind" (Libertarian Press, 2004, 323 pages) is made up of 42 articles which first appeared on his web page (1997–2003). Almost every day we read about some new economic crisis with wide-ranging consequences. Yet practically no one seems to understand what causes them. Most modern economists "crunch" the numbers and try to anticipate the future by extrapolating from the statistics of the past. Only Austrian economists understand the economy as the outcome of complex interpersonal relationships and transactions, and trace crises back to the actions, decisions, and choices of individuals under various circumstances.

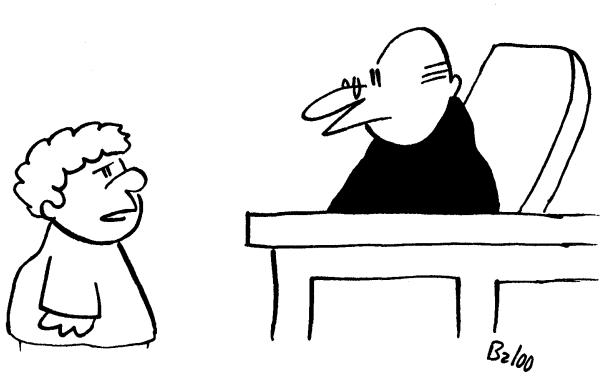
During the years that Sennholz wrote these articles, he analyzed the economies of many countries — Mexico, Thailand, Japan, Argentina, Germany, etc. He studied stock market bubbles, economic depressions, and monetary exchange rates. Sennholz blames almost every economic crisis on monetary manipulation, credit expansion, and inflation. And though he is well aware of the political difficulties of making any sudden or radical changes, he says it is never too late to reform. Every crisis creates the opportunity for a new beginning.

Sennholz blames the Fed's monetary policy for the United States' soaring deficits and the shrinking purchasing power of the dollar. He recommends "a gradual abandonment of the monetary policies and an orderly readjustment to unhampered market conditions," (p. 84) — and a return to gold money. "[T]here cannot be any doubt that a gold dollar would restore justice in international relations and reassert American power and leadership. It would clear away much conflict and strife and pave the way toward a more equal and peaceful world order." (87)

Regarding Argentina's disastrous experience with inflation and bankruptcy, Sennholz writes: "The Argentinian crisis presents not only great dangers to the country's political and economic order but also an opportunity for a new beginning." (221) "Reform must come from within; it cannot be imposed by a creditor. . . . Someday Argentinians may be ready for a reform that regenerates and revitalizes the economy. They may demand freedom in all monetary matters: the freedom to enter into any currency contract of their choice, whether it be U.S. dollars, the euro, the peso, or even gold. In a free and unhampered contract system, creditors and debtors, banks and depositors would soon come to reasonable and fair agreements about their contractual relations. A contract system would call for no new taxes, not even compensation for harm done by law and regulation. It would reopen all banks and allow them to meet their obligations to the best of their ability. It would expect the government to honor its peso obligations and manage the peso as it pleases. But it would demand that government cease and desist from any more regulations, new outlays, new taxes, and new disruptions of any kind." (224)

Whether Sennholz is discussing economic crises in the United States or elsewhere, his analysis is always sharp, incisive, and enlightening. Ultimately, he traces the origin of almost every single crisis to government-fostered inflation and credit expansion. He makes the most complex situations understandable, and his proposed reforms are sober and realistic. Federal Reserve authorities should pay attention.

— Bettina Bien Greaves



"Of course I was window-peeping — I'm a women's studies major!"

"Summarize Proust in 15 seconds"

— That was the challenge given in a skit performed by Monty Python, the British comedy troupe. It's absurd to expect that anyone could say anything coherent about Marcel Proust's 3,000-page epic "*A la recherche les temps perdu*" in just 15 seconds. Where could you begin — the themes, the plot, the characters, the prose style? In the skit, only one of the contestants manages to get as far as the first page. It is in the same spirit that I find myself writing a booknote on Neal Stephenson's 2,650-page epic, called

collectively "The Baroque Cycle," and comprising "Quicksilver," "The Confusion," and "The System of the World" (William Morrow, 2003–4).

The plot is rollicking "boys' own" stuff: romance, espionage, high-seas adventure, all shot through with the personalities and undertakings that made the late 17th and early 18th centuries one of the most engrossing eras of history. Stephenson has a flair for tangents perhaps matched only by Robert Burton (the 17th-century author of "The Anatomy of Melancholy," which contained a digression in praise of digressions), so it's easy to get lost in the world he portrays — and he portrays a lot of it: England, Holland, Russia, Turkey, India, Japan, the Solomon Islands, and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. But unlike his earlier novels, I never felt like shaking him and saying, "Get on with it!": the detail kept me fascinated. Also unlike his earlier books, "The Baroque Cycle" has a proper ending. Not that he ties up all the loose ends, but he at least resolves some of them, instead of leaving off at the moment of climax and providing only the hastiest denouement. My only disappointment with the trilogy is when he slips in anachronistic words like "voodoo" or "jumbo," and even that tendency disappears by the last book.

Providing any more detail would require an article well beyond the scope of a booknote, or likely even a full review. "The Baroque Cycle" will make for an absorbing beach read or an ideal nightstand companion — but it may well dominate your vacation or ward off sleep. Consider yourself warned. — Andrew Ferguson

Media Notes

Answering the bell — By his own admission, director Ron Howard doesn't let the facts get in the way of a good story. When Max Baer, Jr., complained about the villainous way his father is portrayed in Howard's new boxing film, "Cinderella Man" (Universal Studios, 2005, 144 minutes), Howard's spokesman Leslee Dart defended the characterization by saying, "Baer needed to be vilified, you know, for artistic purposes." A storyteller first and a historian second, Howard is a master at using film to tell a true story, even if it isn't completely factual. In "A Beautiful Mind," his previous collaboration with Russell Crowe, Howard manufactured a conspiracy-theory subplot in order to demonstrate cinematically the mental disorientation experienced by math genius John Nash. For "Cinderella Man," Howard wanted to tell more than a story about a famous prize fight; he wanted to tell a story about the Great Depression, as experienced by one family. Thus he portrays heavyweight champion Max Baer as a high-living, ruthless killer in the ring (Baer did cause the death of two opponents), in order to emphasize the hardships of the Great Depression that forced former boxer James Braddock, driven from a successful boxing career by injury and into poverty by the stock market crash, back into the ring, risking injury and even death in order to keep his family together. The result is a gripping film, full of brutal punches, unrelenting poverty, and tender emotion.

Critics say that the best direction does not draw attention to itself, but I have to give Howard credit for actors who are emotional but not maudlin, lighting that creates atmosphere without being gimmicky, and editing techniques that are striking without being distracting. During the fight scenes, for example, Howard interjects quick flashes of X-ray images to portray injuries as they happen, eliciting pained gasps from the audience, as well as quick flashes of unpaid bills, freezing rooms, and hungry children to demonstrate Braddock's motivation: Baer is a

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lady's man fighting for a title, but Braddock is a simple dockman, fighting for his family.

Russell Crowe delivers a knockout performance, with standout performances as well by Paul Giamatti ("Sideways") as Braddock's coach Joe Gould, who all but fights with him in the ring; Craig Bierko, who plays Max Baer; and Paddy Considine ("In America") as Braddock's friend and fellow dock worker, Mike Wilson. Wynn Thomas, production designer, also deserves kudos for his recreation of 1930s New York. — Jo Ann Skousen

Moving on — Q: "What did the hippie say when he ran out of drugs?"

A: "This music sucks, man."

So goes a joke from the '60s, and it has become more applicable with time. Psychedelic culture foundered when Timothy Leary took the helm and steered it into shallows filled with rootless, disaffected teenagers with unresolved emotional crises — not exactly the ideal subjects for psychedelic experimentation. The establishment, faced with the prospect of an army of addlebrained hippies, responded predictably. The anti-drug propaganda campaign they mounted (stripped of the often explicit racism of earlier drug crusades) still informs the stereotyping of drug users today.

Much of the blame for the continued success of that propaganda must rest with drug users themselves. So many are content to act like stereotypical hippies: lazing around, rolling blunts, making grandiose plans for projects that they intend to start but never quite get around to. Which is probably a grace, considering that many hippies haven't developed their aesthetics beyond faded tie-dye and weary folk singalongs — to the point that tribute band Dark Star Orchestra got successful by playing old Grateful Dead setlists, song for song, segue for segue. If hallucinogens can help mankind tap into vast reservoirs of creative potential, then where are the creative hallucinators?

They bailed on hippiedom long ago, shunning the stultifying adoration of nature, preferring instead a blend of the organic and the mechanical — thus the psychedelic themes in graphic design, computer art, and especially electronic music. In that latter category, there is no group that better conveys the Promethean fire of the hallucinogenic trip than Shpongle. On their third and final album, "Nothing Lasts . . . but Nothing is Lost" (Twisted Records, 2005, 67 minutes), the duo behind Shpongle again synthesize a vast array of musical styles (salsa, samba, jazz, flamenco, dub reggae, even heavy metal), and combine them with found music (tribal drumming, fluttering flute lines, and samples from various religious ceremonies). The resulting mix is nothing less than a hymn to the psychedelic experience — serious, but playful; wry, but jubilant.

The first two Shpongle albums ("Are You Shpongled?" and "Tales of the Inexpressible"), reduced to their simplest themes, can be seen to represent birth and life, respectively. As the final album for the Shpongle project, "Nothing Lasts" concerns itself with death — not death as all-consuming destruction, but death as change, as a transition from one state of being to another. The album is dedicated to psychedelic researcher and guru Terence McKenna, and includes snippets from a lecture in which he discusses his preparations for death after discovering he has brain cancer. Nothing lasts: death comes to all, and it is something for which we must ready ourselves. But nothing is lost: our creative endeavors are not in vain; they will survive beyond our bodies. These declarations are the twin pillars of the psychedelic ethic, flanking like Jachin and Boaz the entrance to the temple — and Shpongle is the music playing inside.

— Andrew Ferguson

Reflections, *from page 12*

universities. There may yet be hope for these public-school survivors. The real problem is clearly the school administration: too mired in the mud of absolute egalitarianism to comprehend the beneficial results of competition, or perhaps just too complacent in their union-shielded jobs to bother deciding which single student had done most to earn the title of valedictorian. Outrageous! I have to set my paper aside again. I don't want to have a stroke today.

When I resume my reading, I remember (and by "I remember," I mean "I am reminded by the surprisingly good article") that parents whose children narrowly miss becoming valedictorians have frequently sued the schools. (I therefore retract and regret my slur on this school administration.) That's one way to teach your kids how to get ahead in the real world. At last I have discovered the real villains — parents and lawyers. I knew it.

Some schools are pronouncing all their semi-literate graduates valedictorians (cruelly elevating them over their completely illiterate graduates). Some schools are restricting the award to truly outstanding students, even if it is no longer a singular honor. In cynical moments, I am convinced that schools in the former group outnumber schools in the latter group a hundred to one. In optimistic moments, I hope that the ratio is only ten to one. I suppose I should be happy as long as the latter group continues to exist. — Mark Rand

Col. David Hackworth, RIP — Over the years I've written quite a few obituaries, and they generally serve one of two purposes. One is, despite the prohibition against speaking ill of the dead, to debunk inflated and undeserved reputations. The other is to give credit to those whose contributions haven't been adequately acknowledged. This obit is of the latter type.

On May 4, Col. David Hackworth, known to his friends as Hack, joined the ranks of the departed at age 74.

I first encountered him indirectly when I was visiting my editor at Simon & Schuster in 1982. He gave me a copy of Hack's first book, "About Face," with the comment that I'd like both the book and its author. He was correct, although I didn't meet Hack personally until a mutual friend invited him to a private conference I've sponsored for some years. He was 67 at the time, but looked like a very fit 55-year-old.

What was he like, aside from being a great drinking companion? General Hal Moore, author of "We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young," called him "the Patton of Vietnam." General Creighton Abrams described him as "the best batta-

lion commander I ever saw in the United States Army." Hack spent a full seven years of his life in actual combat. He was nominated for the Medal of Honor three times (the latest application is currently under review at the Pentagon), and he was twice awarded the Army's second-highest honor for valor, the Distinguished Service Cross, along with ten Silver Stars, eight Bronze Stars, and eight Purple Hearts.

At 15 he lied about his age to join the Army. He won a battlefield commission in Korea, where he became the Army's youngest captain; in Vietnam he became its youngest full colonel. I've heard (and can easily believe) that elements of his highly eclectic personality made him a model for both the Duvall and Brando characters in "Apocalypse Now." He quit the Army in 1971 and moved to Australia, after saying on ABC's "Issue and Answers," that Vietnam "is a bad war . . . it can't be won. We need to get out." He predicted that Saigon would fall to the North Vietnamese within four years. He was the only senior officer to sound off about the Vietnam War. It seems to me he was equally distressed about the conduct of most of America's current foreign adventures.

Hack's main concern was the problems the average grunt has to face due to careerism among the Perfumed Princes of the Pentagon: "Most combat vets pick their fights carefully. They look at their scars, remember the madness and are always mindful of the fallout. That's not the case in Washington, where the White House and the Pentagon are run by civilians who have never sweated it out on a battlefield."

I'd like to see a study testing Hack's opinion on this; I intuitively suspect that he is correct — although there are obvious exceptions, like Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, and even Hitler. But, notwithstanding their criminal careers, at least you have to respect them because they were once, themselves, on the front lines. It's hard to have anything but contempt for those who start aggressive wars while never having dared to first put themselves in harm's way.

— Douglas Casey

News You May Have Missed

Dems Propose Nude Deal; GOP Counters With Leash Law

NEW YORK — New airport scanning devices are being developed that will allow security personnel to see passengers naked instead of as ghostly X-ray images on checkpoint screens, and implementation of the devices is expected to greatly facilitate recruitment to the low-paying, formerly tedious jobs. But while the new technology is widely seen as a step in the right direction, it still falls well short of national security requirements, according to federal officials and sympathetic legislators concerned about millions of other American citizens who are not regularly lining up at airport checkpoints but are just anarchically running around loose, many of them with clothes on, without authorities being able to know precisely what they are up to and precisely how cute their asses are.

"What we need is a Nude Deal for America," said Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.), possibly rehearsing a campaign slogan for her expected 2008 presidential run. "Freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom from clothes, and freedom from freedom. An America where everyone is required by law to be stark naked, except for electronic ankle bracelets." The ankle bracelets, like those already in place in many states on paroled prisoners, would transmit signals to a satellite-based global positioning system, allowing authorities to know where every citizen is at all times, while tiny surveillance video cameras, embedded in mandatory nose rings, will give government monitors a pretty good idea of what he or she is, and maybe shouldn't be, doing.

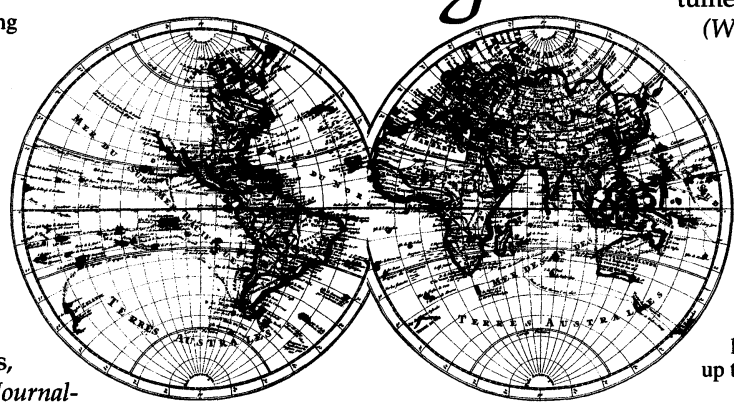
"Americans who have nothing to hide have nothing to fear from having nothing to hide it with," said Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), a co-sponsor of a bill that would, in his words, "turn all of America, in a very real sense, into a strip mall."

While the measure is expected to be opposed by some leaders of the religious right, who are against nakedness on principle and have proposed measures in several states that would subject babies who are born naked to fines for public lewdness, others are defending it on biblical grounds, seeing it as a God-mandated return to the Garden of Eden, which this time around would be subdivided and opened to development by Christians. And as the Rev. Pat Robertson put it, "any libertarian snakes, tempting obedient Americans with knowledge, free choice, and other forbidden fruit, would be turned into snakeburgers." "Besides, it'll put all them nude dancing places in my district out of business," said one Georgia congressman, though a spokesman for a strip joint business association said that most "gentlemen's clubs" would probably continue to thrive by offering desperate, salivating men the sight of pretty girls wearing clothes.

Nevertheless, the Bush administration is said to be worried that a national "all nude, all the time" policy would not only hurt sales at retail clothing chains, it might prohibit the president from getting into a flight suit to declare victory in Iraq should it occur again. The administration is quietly backing an alternative measure, a federal leash law, which would forbid American citizens from leaving home unless attached to a leash, no more than six feet long, firmly held by federally funded private interrogation personnel formerly employed at Abu Ghraib. "One way to confound and frustrate the enemies of freedom and to just plain stop 'em in their tracks," Bush said during brief remarks in the Oval Office, "is to take away pretty much all the freedom that they seek to destroy before they can even get at it."

— Eric Kenning

Terra Incognita



San Francisco

Mayor Gavin Newsom explains the proper role of government, noted by the *San Francisco Chronicle*:

> If we can't change people's behavior and make them think what's in their best interest, then that's when government comes along and becomes a bit paternalistic.

San Diego

The battle for campaign reform rages on, as reported in the *San Diego Union-Tribune:*

> The San Diego Ethics Commission fined Councilwoman Donna Frye $3,000 for improperly noting her fundraising committee's role on three mailers widely circulated as part of her mayoral campaign last fall. The note was printed in 9-point type instead of 12-point.

Savannah, Ga.

Vigilance in the War on Pocket Contents, reported in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*:

> FAA regulations forced Lt. Col. John King and the 280 troops under his command to turn out their pockets for nose hair scissors and cigarette lighters before they were allowed to board a chartered flight from Savannah to Kuwait City. The soldiers were allowed to carry their pistols, shotguns, and M-16 rifles on board.

Del Mar, Calif.

Shrewdness in the real estate market, from the *North (San Diego) County Times*:

> In 2003, Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham (R-Calif.) sold his home to campaign contributor and defense contractor Mitchell J. Wade. Wade immediately put the house back on the market at a reduced price, but it stood vacant for eight months until it was sold at a $700,000 loss.
>
> Government defense contract revenue for Wade's company, MZM Inc., has tripled in the past few years.

Cook County, Ill.

Innovative policing technique, reported by the *Chicago Daily Herald*:

> After administering Breathalyzer tests to a young couple, State Trooper Jeremy Dozier lied and said that the girl had failed the test. Saying he didn't want to ticket them, he instead ordered them to strip naked, lie in a nearby ditch, and urinate.
>
> Once Dozier's back was turned, the couple — in their underwear — fled on foot. When they called 911 to report that that they had been accosted by someone impersonating a police officer, Dozier was dispatched to take their statements.

U.S.A.

A bold step towards ridding our skies of unreal problems, dutifully recorded in the American Transit Authority's *Daily Briefs:*

> "A study funded by the Transportation Security Administration found when targets of a search rarely show up, they are more likely to escape detection. Researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital, which conducted the study, plan to work with TSA employees to determine if there is a real problem."

Wheeling, W. Va.

Victory in the fight against costume apparel, from the *Charleston (W.Va.) Daily Mail*:

> Police arrested Norman Eugene Gray for wearing a Grinch mask while walking along a city street.
>
> Wheeling City Solicitor Rosemary Humway-Warmuth and Ohio County Prosecutor Scott Smith said masks as well as dark window tinting in vehicles can pose a safety hazard to law enforcement officers. The offense is punishable by a fine of up to $500 or up to a year in jail, or both.

Naples, Fla.

The thin blue line separating society from chaos, from the *St. Petersburg Times*:

> Felipe Santos hasn't been seen or heard from since Collier County deputy Steven Calkins arrested him for driving without a license in October 2003. When Santos' brothers tried to bail him out, they were told that the deputy had decided to let him go at a Circle K.
>
> Terrance Williams hasn't been seen or heard from since Calkins caught him driving without a valid license in January 2004, and decided to let him go at a Circle K.
>
> Calkins has changed his version of events several times, given statements that contradict other evidence, and failed polygraph examinations. Sheriff Don Hunter says the two men may "be purposely avoiding being found."

Kaohsiung, Taiwan

The wonders of the free market, from the *Taipei Times*:

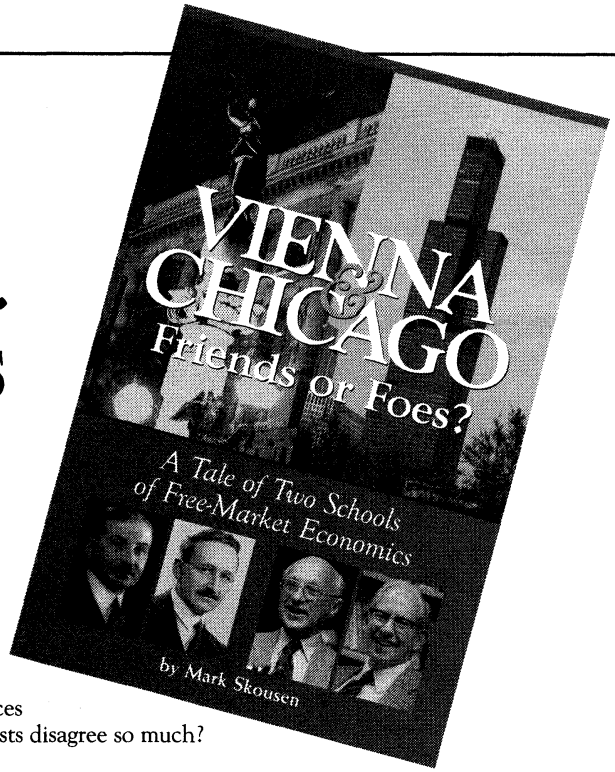
> Diners entering Eric Wang's new restaurant Marton are greeted with a giant toilet bowl sitting between two urinals. White ceramic toilet seats comfortably accommodate their bottoms, and urinals grace the walls. The cuisine is delivered not on plates and dishes, but in miniaturized Western and Asian style toilets, both the flush and non-flush variety.
>
> The Marton (Mandarin for *toilet*) follows in the noble tradition of Taiwanese novelty restaurants. Other successful ventures have purposely confined scores of contented diners to coffins or jail cells, or exposed them to full-scale pictures of Mao.

Special thanks to Russell Garrard, Philip Todd, James Ogg, Dick Timberlake, and Kevin Bjornson for contributions to Terra Incognita.
(Readers are invited to forward news clippings or other items for publication in *Terra Incognita*, or email to terraincognita@libertyunbound.com.)

Announcing
Mark Skousen's
controversial new book....
CLASH OF THE TITANS

"You're all a bunch of socialists!"
— Ludwig von Mises (Vienna)

"We are friends and foes!"
— Milton Friedman (Chicago)



Austrian and Chicago economists have battled Keynesians, Marxists and socialists alike, but they often fight each other as well. What are the differences between the Austrian and Chicago schools, and why do free-market economists disagree so much?

After years of research and interviews in both camps, Columbia Professor Mark Skousen has uncovered the strengths and weaknesses of each, and determines who's right and who's wrong at the end of each chapter by declaring either "Advantage, Vienna" or "Advantage, Chicago." He ends with a chapter on how they could reconcile on major issues.

Chapters from *Vienna and Chicago, Friends or Foes?*

1. Introduction: A Tale of Two Schools
2. Old and New Vienna: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of the Austrian School
3. The Imperialist Chicago School
4. Methodenstreit: Should a Theory be Empirically Tested?
5. Gold vs. Fiat Money: What is the Ideal Monetary Standard?
6. Macroeconomics, the Great Depression, and the Business Cycle
7. Antitrust, Public Choice and Political Economy: What is the Proper Role of Government?
8. Who Are the Great Economists?
9. Faith and Reason in Capitalism
10. The Future of Free-Market Economics: How Far is Vienna from Chicago?

Highlights.....

- Whose methodology is more controversial—Mises or Friedman?
- A debate that the Austrians have clearly won.
- Why Chicago economists have won more Nobel Prizes than the Austrians.
- Why did Israel Kirzner call George Stigler's essay on politics "bizarre, disturbing, unfortunately, and an affront to common sense"?
- Emotional fights at the Mont Pelerin Society, Foundation for Economic Education, and other freedom organizations.
- Why Friedman and Mises admire Adam Smith, and Murray Rothbard despises him.
- Why some Austrians call Friedman a "Keynesian" and "a statist" while Friedman calls Mises and Ayn Rand "intolerant" and "extremist."
- Major differences between Mises and Hayek..... and between Stigler and Friedman.
- The "fortress" mentality: Why the Mises Institute doesn't advertise, or appear on TV.
- Amazing similarities between Austrians and Marxists, and between Chicagoans and Keynesians.
- Why Mises refused to use graphs and charts in his books.
- How Friedman shocked the audience when asked "Who is the better economist, Keynes or Mises?"
- Why Austrians are usually pessimists and Chicagoans optimists.
- Powerful contributions by the "new" generation of Austrian and Chicago economists.....

How to Order this Book

Vienna and Chicago is a 320-page quality paperback available now from the publisher Capital Press (www.regnery.com), Laissez Faire Books (www.lfb.com), Amazon, or directly from the author (see below). The book normally retails for $24.95, but Liberty subscribers pay only $20.

Yes, please send me ____ copies of ***Vienna and Chicago, Friends or Foes?*** for $20 plus $3 shipping and handling. Make checks payable to Skousen Publishing Co., and mail to address below.

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From the Chicago school: "This tale is thorough, thoughtful, even-handed, and highly readable. All economists, of whatever school, will find it both instructive and entertaining." ***—Milton Friedman***

From the Austrian school: "In his upbeat tale of two schools, Skousen gives us a delightful blend of theory, history, and political science, and shows that there is much common ground and scope for development." ***—Roger W. Garrison***

From an anonymous reviewer: "A novel approach. Skousen sells neither school short and takes a non-doctrinaire view. He spices up his narrative with materials from personal correspondence and one-on-one discussions. No one other than Skousen could have written this book. Advantage, Skousen!"

THE ADVOCATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

Fastforwarding Our Libertarian Future

WITH ROBERT RINGER

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Sign up now to qualify for the **"Early-Early Bird" Special** — only $239. That includes 3 days of events, all speakers, 2 luncheons, a dessert reception, and the gala banquet. The at-the-door price is $349, so you save $110 by registering now. Plus, the first 100 tickets sold before July 15th include a reserved seat at a VIP banquet table with a featured speaker!

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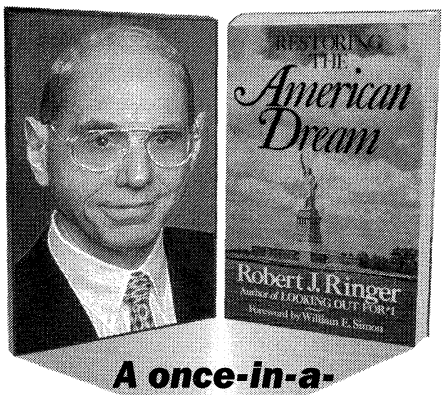

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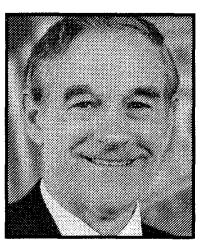
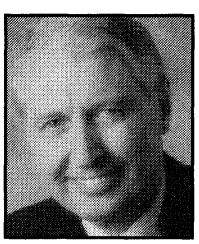
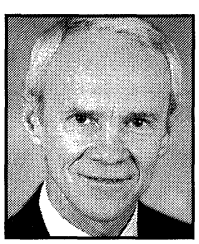


Ron Paul
U.S. Congressman (R-TX); 1988 Pres. Candidate

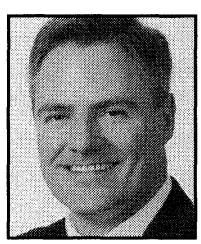


Harry Browne
1996 & 2000 Pres. Candidate; author, *Liberty A-Z*

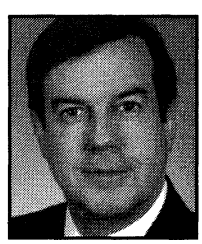


David Bergland
1984 Pres. Candidate; author, *Libertarianism In One Lesson*

Dr. Mary Ruwart
Author, *Healing Our World In An Age of Aggression*



Tom Palmer
Senior Fellow, Cato Institute; Director, Cato University



Michael Cloud
Author, *Secrets of Libertarian Persuasion*

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Liberty August 05

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