

Liberty

February 2001

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What's
Left of
Gore

The Elephant in the Bedroom

by Sarah J. McCarthy

Vietnam: The Unlearned Lessons

by Timothy Sandefur

Make This a Freer World

by Randal O'Toole, David F. Nolan, Steve Dasbach & others

The Theology of Politics

by Robert H. Nelson

Also: *Leland Yeager* looks at voodoo science, *Robert Higgs* learns how to succeed with women, *Ed Rahn* gets to know his enemy, *Bill Bradford* explores the politics of plagiarism, plus other articles, reviews & humor.



"A bean in Liberty is better than a comfit in prison" — George Hebert

Letters

Mark Skousen's Strange Economics

Ayn Rand, Mark Skousen writes, "didn't really understand how capitalism works." Speaking through her heroes, she denied "a basic tenet of sound economics — the principle of consumer sovereignty" ("Ayn Rand's Strange Economics," January). Howard Roark, the architect hero of *The Fountainhead*, refused to subordinate his own professional and artistic standards to the whims of prospective clients. Skousen attributes to Roark and thus to Rand a "bizarre, almost anti-social attitude." Hers is the "snobbish attitude" of "artists and intellectuals who bash the capitalist system because they hate the idea of subjecting their talents to crass commercialism and the crude tastes of the common man."

But consumer sovereignty is *not* "a basic tenet of sound economics" — not if it means that the wishes of consumers should always override those of producers. Most sound economists do value a system of free markets and of gains from voluntary trading; but the sovereignty involved (if one insists on that word) includes the sovereignty of workers, entrepreneurs, and even investors. One might better speak of "individual sovereignty," or still better emphasize the principle of voluntary interaction. If an investor wants to avoid helping produce liquor, tobacco, or pornography, or if he wants to share in the perceived glamor of a high-tech venture or of a Broadway play, he is free to do so. People acting in the marketplace do not heed exclusively pecuniary incentives.

Rand's Howard Roark does not try to suppress what he may consider the bad taste of other architects and their clients (though he may hope to raise the level of tastes by his own example). He seeks a *niche* in the marketplace where he and like-minded persons, perhaps only a small minority, may

deal to their mutual benefit. Meanwhile, he does not demand subsidies or even sympathy. He supported himself for a while by laboring in a quarry.

Roark is the antithesis of the secondhand, the person who tries to curry favor with other persons by subordinating his own values (if he has any) to the values that others either have or pretend to have. Notable villains in Rand's novels either are secondhanders themselves or exploit the secondhandism of their victims. Roark's character, constructed in accord with Rand's conception of the romantic novel, illuminates secondhandism by contrast.

One form of secondhandism appears in a misconception of "market test," as if success in the marketplace is the test of truth and beauty and general excellence. (Sometimes this test is stretched to cover the metaphorical marketplace for ideas and academic publications; see my articles in *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Fall 1997, and *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics*, Fall 2000.) Such notions risk discrediting the valid case for a free society by misconstruing the market as an entity in its own right that transcends the mere men and women who trade on it, an entity that makes superior judgments even about good and bad. Yet, of course, money can be made by catering even to depraved tastes. The valid case for the free market is quite other than an actual exaltation of consumer sovereignty. A twisted version of free-marketetry harms the cause of freedom.

The retreat to Galt's Gulch of the heroes in *Atlas Shrugged* violates, says Skousen, the money-making imperative that drives business people in the real world, who wouldn't give Rand's John Galt the time of day. Well of course Rand's heroes do not behave altogether realistically. They exhibit the virtue of integrity in exaggerated degree. Skousen apparently does not

understand or does not appreciate Rand's avowedly romantic style of fiction. (With this reader, however, her style is effective and makes for gripping reading.) The consequences of the heroes' retreat to the Gulch — Atlas's shrugging — also helps make the point about how much the functioning of a country's economy depends on the work of the creative minority.

Admittedly, I would not have recommended Ayn Rand as teacher of college courses in economic theory. Her grasp of the subject was apparently unsystematic and incomplete. But she did convey profound insights (as Skousen recognizes, if only obliquely). She understood that creative entrepreneurs are the engines of progress. They go beyond merely meeting the wants that consumers already have. They envision wants that consumers may come to have once hitherto unimagined means of satisfying them are in place. They and their providers of finance *invest*: they incur losses and bear risks in hope of long-run profits — and also for the joy of creation. Roark behaved that way in his own career. The denizens of Galt's Gulch were, in part, investing in the hope of returning to and prospering in an economy freed of the shackles forged by the small-mindedness hitherto prevailing.

Even if her understanding of money — macro theory, in particular, was incomplete — Rand in *Atlas Shrugged* did recognize the primacy of production over mere demand; she had a glimmer of a nonfallacious and important version of Say's Law. As for money, she put a moving impromptu speech on its moral significance into the mouth of Francisco d'Anconia. Money is both tool and symbol of a society where productive men and women benefit from and contribute to one another's excellences, voluntarily trading value for value, instead of trying to live by looting or wheedling. Rand and her followers adopted the dollar sign as a symbol of such a society.

Paradoxically for the eminent Austrian economist that he is, Skousen in effect faults Rand for not having a static, Walrasian vision of the economic system and of business people's role. But Rand was no screwball on economics.

Leland B. Yeager
Auburn, Ala.

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Misunderstanding Rand

Mark Skousen misunderstands Ayn Rand, capitalism, and most surprisingly economics in his "Ayn Rand's Strange Economics." Skousen gets his economics wrong when he states that "the principle of consumer sovereignty" is "a basic tenet of sound economics."

Nonsense. Has Skousen forgotten that prices are determined by demand *and* supply? Supply, as he must know, is determined partly by the disutility of work. Garbage men, for example, must be paid more than workers of similar skills because of the relative disutility of their work — Economics 101. As Murray Rothbard explained in *Man, Economy, and State* the true principle of the market is not consumer sovereignty, which Rothbard attacks both as a descriptive and prescriptive ideal, but individual sovereignty. Needless to say, the characters in Rand's novel illustrate the idea of individual sovereignty just fine.

Alexander Tabarrok
Oakland, Calif.

Check Your Premises

Mark Skousen should have read a little more of Ayn Rand. He would do well to follow her advice to "check your premises."

Howard Roark, as Ayn Rand made clear — to everyone without the very constricting economic blinders worn by Mr. Skousen — worked primarily for the love of creating and for the pride of accomplishment; money was clearly secondary for him. His clients enjoyed his creation nearly as much as he did, but they were required to compromise their control as partial payment for his un-compromised creativity.

Skousen is simply unable to comprehend that fact. And he apparently does not notice that nearly everyone does the same thing. Money is only a part of our reason for doing much of what we do. That in no way detracts from economics or the work of Adam Smith, but it does make things a little more complicated than Skousen is able to appreciate.

Erne Lewis
Olympia, Wash.

Off Target

William Merritt ("Second Thoughts," January) asks whose right is it to keep and bear arms. He has an answer, but it is not quite correct. He

points to the first clause, "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state" for a clue. The problem is that it is only a declaration of face and places neither constraint nor qualification on what follows. See Federalist #29 for "who is" and "how to" regulate a militia.

The right of the people to keep and bear arms is protected by the Second Amendment. When Merritt questions who constitutes the "people," he ignores the rest of the Constitution. He will find that it is the "people" who elect the members of the House of Representatives. If the Constitution is to have any meaning, the people of the Second Amendment *must* be the same people mentioned in Article I, Section 2.

Surely Mr. Merritt does not suggest it is only the Black Panthers and Aryan Nations who make that choice. Or does he?

Bruce Erickson
Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif.

Third Thoughts on the Second Amendment

William Merritt bases his argument on how the term "people" is employed in the Ninth and Tenth Amendments, where the term refers to a collective right. However, the term's use elsewhere in the Constitution is not so constrained. The Fourth Amendment, for instance, declares: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated." Contrary to Merritt's position, "people" in the Fourth Amendment has been construed, repeatedly and without confusion, to secure individual rights, rather than merely a collective one. The term's plurality is, therefore, not controlling of its application. Consideration of the objective terms used in the Bill of Rights (e.g., "the accused" in the Sixth Amendment, "the right of trial by jury" in the Seventh Amendment) and their subsequent interpretation as indicative of personal rights suggests that it was generally individual rather than collective rights that the founders were protecting from the central government.

Merritt also contends that the Second Amendment's construction lends support to a collective interpretation, rather than an individual one. It does not. On strictly structural grounds

the close parallelism between the Second and Fourth Amendments ("the right of the people . . . shall not be infringed," "the right of the people . . . shall not be violated") renders illogical a collective interpretation for one and an individual interpretation for the other. What works for the Fourth Amendment works for the Second.

As for the Second Amendment's clauses and their meaning, Merritt's own words weaken the case for a collective interpretation. He provides a brief but useful recap of the "right to organize into a militia," and is careful to distinguish a "militia" from "the military," a distinction of which the founders were acutely aware. However, he apparently considers it self-evident that only as a body of people do Americans possess a right to keep and bear arms. This conclusion is inconsistent with the plain meaning of the historic statements Merritt supplies (e.g., "Englishmen had been forming themselves into militia since at least 1690, when nobles and, later, everyone else, were required by law to keep and bear arms"), as well as with his own statements (e.g., "men who had just used their personal arms to rise up and throw off the greatest army on the planet"). He seems to have all the pieces, but lacking an appreciation for what constitutes a militia, he does not fit the pieces together. The term "militia" refers not to regular soldiers nor to police, but to ordinary citizens, from whose ranks a militia was drawn, and who were expected to show up with their own arms when called to service:

The sentiment at the time [the Constitution was ratified] strongly disfavored standing armies; the common view was that adequate defense of country and laws could be secured through the Militia — civilians primarily, soldiers on occasion. . . . [O]rdinarily when called for service these men were expected to appear bearing arms supplied by themselves and of the kind in common use at the time (*United States vs. Miller*, 307 U.S. 174, 178 (1939)).

The Second Amendment guarantees the citizen's right to keep and bear arms in order that he may fulfill the requirements respecting a militia, which as Merritt concurs, is distinct

from a standing army or some other body subject to regulation and control by the central government. The Second Amendment was constructed as it is expressly to embrace the individual right to keep and bear arms, because a militia so construed was defined by the founders as the only "proper, natural, and safe" defense of a free state.

To accept the right to keep and bear arms only as a collective right might serve the purposes of a state, but it could not be the free state the founders intended. To the extent that we've bought into this line of reasoning and let the government abridge our freedom to exercise this individual right, we've departed from the Founders' vision, and thus have become citizens of a commensurately less free state.

Brian Halonen
Weyers Cave, Va.

Another Satisfied Reader

What has happened to *Liberty*?

Does not the editorial staff filter through the submissions as to what is acceptable for a pro-liberty periodical? Must be slim pickings these days when you allow the likes of William Merritt's article about the Second Amendment into your pages.

Either that, or *Liberty* is headed-up by communists in disguise, letting such post-modernist newspeak to slip between the covers of what is supposed to be a serious and thought-provoking journal for libertarian study, and gradually — in an ever-so-Fabianistic way — proclaim that liberty is really communism after all.

Merritt's article is an anti-liberty tirade, and a thinly-veiled assault on the essence of self-defence.

If I were to sum up that "piece," I would refer to it as "back door Marxism," simply because of Merritt's collectivist spin on the term and essence of "people," as he defines the term.

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

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Indeed, if we were to apply his particular connotation to every aspect of where the term is used, why then only groups of people would be able to vote, or do anything at all. Talk about the disenfranchisement of the individual citizen!

The very essence of the term "right" is spoken of in the every source from which the American Constitution finds its validity, as being uniquely individual in their character. There is no such legal device as "group rights." There are powers, but not rights. And his inference that the Tenth Amendment is

about group rights is as absurd as one can get. One need only look to the United States *vs* Verdugo-Urquidez to discover just where the individual is concerned.

If you are an individual at odds with the government, in Merritt's world, you are screwed. To infer that there must be more than one person to claim a protection under a right, then no person would be safe, for the government could well proclaim we must all possess membership in an organization of one type or another, in order to appeal to any of those rights. Taken on

From the Editor . . .

Politics pervaded the news for the past month, thanks to Al Gore's decision to invade Florida with an army of lawyers intent on snatching the election. And politics dominated talk among libertarian activists, thanks to the abysmal showing of the LP presidential campaign. So I hope you won't be surprised to see a fair amount of political discussion in this issue of *Liberty*.

For reasons I cannot quite fathom, I found myself rooting for George Bush during the post-election wrangling. Intellectually, I was convinced that Gore would be a better president, since he would have a hostile Congress unlikely to pass any of his idiotic agenda, while Bush, operating as a "uniter, not a divider," would likely show his moderation by getting fractious Republicans in line to enact half of Gore's proposals. But my heart was never in it, probably because I simply didn't like the idea of someone stealing an election, even if he did so by quasi-legal means.

I know that everyone but true-believer Democrats is sick of Gore, but this is our last opportunity to kick him around for a while, and we want to take advantage of it. We're now far enough from the election to try to gain some perspective on the meaning of the Gore campaign. Toward that end, I particularly recommend Steve Cox's reflection (p.7), Sally McCarthy's exploration of why we invite political beasts into our homes (p.21), and Bob Nelson's discussion of how American politics is transforming itself into a public religion (p. 21).

Last month, after analyzing the dismal failure of the Libertarian Party presidential campaign, I invited readers to consider the possibility of rethinking the whole issue of political action. The response was substantial, ranging from tinkering with the third party strategy to entirely new strategic approaches. The discussion of this issue begins on page 33 and will be continued in our next issue.

Happily, the presidential "crisis" is behind us and we can turn our attention to more important matters than which son of a politician will inhabit the White House for the next four years. Turning our focus to less profane objects, this issue of *Liberty* visits Greece with Leon Hadar, who finds things revolting in Athens; goes to the mail box with Bob Higgs, who finds a sure-fire way to succeed with women; discovers, with Robert Formaini, why it's so hard to argue with some people; explores, with Ed Rahn, the weird motivation of today's so-called "liberals"; and celebrates a visit from friends in government with Dan Schwarz.

In our review section, Leland Yeager takes a look at voodoo science, Tim Sandefur re-examines the Vietnam war, and Pierre Desrochers digs into Jane Jacobs' new book on the nature of economics and the economics of nature.

As always, we whet your appetite with *Reflections*.

R. W. Bradford

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the thin edge of equivocation, the only time any person would appeal to any right would be strictly under clause three of the First Amendment: the assembly clause. At no other time could a person be armed, not even on the way to such an event.

Imagine: every organization must meet some form of government approval, and the organization would be limited to only a certain maximum membership: The National Guard by any other name. Guess who loses out?

Ultimately, one wonders if Merritt even bothered to read the initial words put to paper by James Madison, of the original proposition for the amendment in question. One also wonders if he even knows of Tench Cox, the most preeminent political commentator of the period in which the Constitution was written. And, since there survives no credible disputation regarding Cox's writings from *any* of the Founders regarding the holding of the Second Amendment being an individual right, well, I can only surmise that there must have been one hell of a conspiracy to eradicate such literature, or Cox was spot on in his words.

Since the magazine *Liberty* seems intent on allowing the likes of Merritt to see the light of day, don't for even an instant think that I will renew my subscription. I refuse to subsidize willful ignorance, communist propaganda, and Fabianism.

E. J. Totty
Everett, Wash.

Self-Esteem and Cigarettes

Michael Edelstein nicely debunks the cult of self-esteem ("The Trouble With Self-Esteem," January). But he neglects to debunk some of the evidence that he cites. Edelstein refers to an Iowa State University study showing that smokers with high self-esteem "have difficulty admitting their behavior has been unhealthy and/or unwise," and fail to quit smoking. The psychologists who drew these conclusions based them on the silent assumption that the smokers cannot reasonably decide that the benefits of smoking outweigh the risks. That assumption is widely shared but not proven. The benefits of smoking may outweigh the risks. I believe that smokers easily admit that their behavior is unhealthy but do not choose to quit.

In fact, the history of smoking's popularity shows that large numbers of smokers did not quit when the health hazards of smoking became known and that large numbers of smokers did quit when smoking became taboo. Maybe the smokers who won't be shamed into quitting have high self-esteem.

Michael Christian
San Diego, Calif.

Making Your Vote Count

I'm curious why Yeager even bothered to vote. "I felt free to vote for Harry Browne," he wrote (*Reflections*, January), because Alabama was "safe for Bush." He then indicates that had this not been true, he would have voted for Bush. This seems to say that he would only vote for Browne if that vote didn't matter. If the vote doesn't matter, why waste the gas to go to the polls?

The closer a political race is, the more important it becomes to vote for the candidate you most want. Look at Ralph Nader. Had all of his voters voted for Gore, then Gore most likely would have won the election. However, by Nader possibly costing Gore the election he is now forcing the Democrats to give his faction more consideration.

Unless one truly believes that there will soon be a Libertarian President we can only make our voice heard through small victories similar to the Green Party's.

Deryl Garland
Lansing, Mich.

Austrian Economics Is Not Doctrinaire

David Ramsay Steele's reply to my letter (January) asserts that I called him a "positivist." I didn't. I said simply that he urged young economists to forsake an aprioristic approach for positivism, which is what in fact he *did* urge. To his larger assertion that I hold that *only* the aprioristic method can generate real contributions in economics, where or where did I ever say that? I have never said nor implied that in any of my writings, ever. Indeed, all of my 30 odd years of work in antitrust economics and case analysis refutes that smear. I did say that a deductive approach can yield important contributions and that if it can, why call it "mis-

continued on page 24

Reflections

Nothing left but arrogance — When I was 12 years old, I was fascinated by a picture I found in a world history text. It showed Marie Antoinette sitting in the tumbril, on her way to be guillotined. The Queen was obviously in very unfortunate circumstances, but she kept her chin up, literally; and she even managed a haughty, sarcastic little smile. As a caption for this picture, the writers of the textbook — covert sympathizers of the French Revolution — supplied the cruel words, “Nothing Left but Arrogance.”

I remembered that caption on the night of December 13, the night when Vice President Gore was finally dragged through the streets of videoland and forced to concede the presidency. Certainly, there was much less reason to pity Gore than there was to pity Marie Antoinette; but if there was arrogance in the one case it was fully matched in the other.

Albert Gore, Jr., was raised to consider himself a prince who would naturally become a king (a recent Gore biography is even entitled *The Prince of Tennessee*), and his manners suffered accordingly. Besides the ill-fated French queen, the figure with whom I automatically associate Gore is the character in *Candide* who is so arrogant that everyone who meets him feels the impulse to hit him.

But let's take a broader view of the subject. It's not just Albert Gore, Jr., who has nothing left but arrogance; it's his whole party.

The only economic ideas that the Democrats have going for them are hand-me-downs from the Great Society and, before that, from the New Deal and, before that, from the Technocracy movement of the late 1920s and, before that, from the populists and “democratic socialists” and, before that . . . This intellectual suit of clothes wasn't particularly good to begin with, and it's now looking very much the worse for wear. In fact, it's in shreds — totally discredited.

Not much better preserved are the Democrats' political ideas, which were tailored to fit their economic ones. Because Democrats believed in economic and social Planning, they also believed in the supremacy of economic and social Planners — in the sovereign rights and perquisites of such experts as Albert Gore, Jr., fancies himself to be. These experts assumed that they could create economic opportunity and social equality if they could just gain full power to tell everybody else what to do. Gore's ridiculous claim to having

invented the Internet was merely a deduction from this naive political philosophy: if something good gets done for the People, it must be government Experts who get it done.

Now that almost everyone understands that almost nothing really works the way the Experts used to think it did, precious little remains of the Democrats except the social attitudes and customs that accompany their obsolete ideas. Notice that the Democratic leadership consists largely of people who derive their influence from positions in steeply graded social hierarchies: union officials, college professors, inheritors of large fortunes, scions of politically established families, church officials, and bosses of ethnic or gender-related movements in which the leadership of the few is enforced through rigid suppression of the many. Notice also that the Democratic Party holds the loyalty of its core constituencies — blacks, gays, unionists, single women, Social Security pensioners — mainly by issuing dire warnings about these people's inability to survive without the protection and superintendence of the almighty Party.

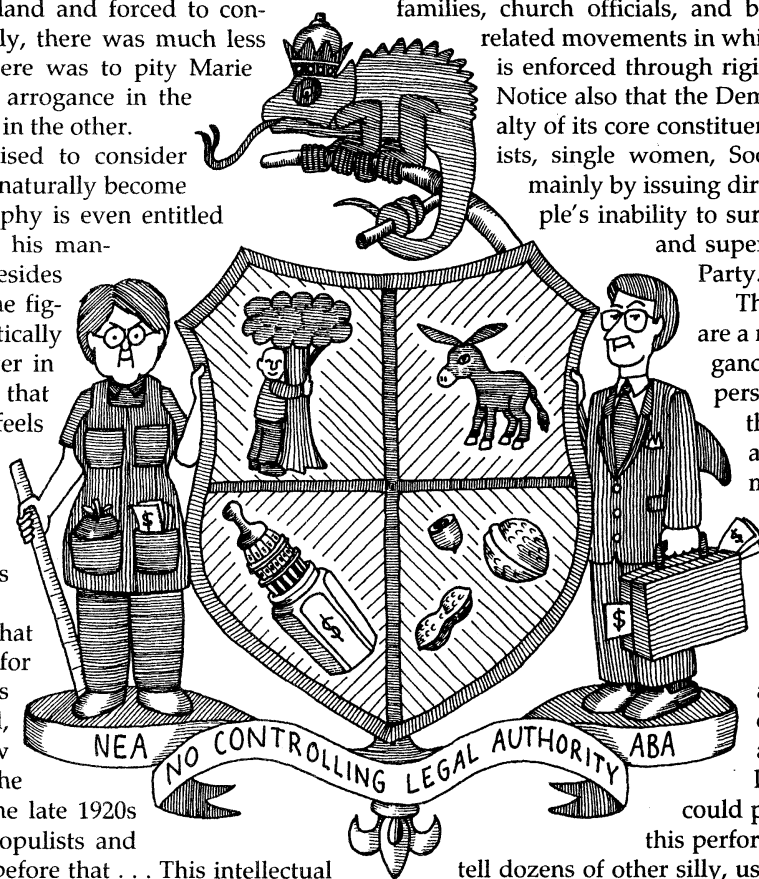
These preposterous threats are a measure of Democratic arrogance. But the best measure of a person's arrogance is what he thinks he is entitled to get away with. In this department, Marie Antoinette was nothing compared to the Democratic leadership.

Who but a Democratic leader of the year 2000 would use a presidential debate to tell silly, useless, and (above all) readily checkable lies, without any apparent inkling that he, like some mere mortal, could possibly suffer damage from this performance — and then go on to

tell dozens of other silly, useless, and readily checkable lies in the course of his campaign?

Who but a Democratic leader of the year 2000 would call his campaign “a fight for working families” — while bragging about his full participation in the Clinton regime, a regime characterized by unparalleled domestic scandals and ramrodded by the two bickering members of a notoriously dysfunctional family, one of whom had never worked a day in his life?

Who but a Democratic leader of the year 2000 would propose several trillion dollars of spending increases — while claiming to be a fervent advocate of “small government” and promising not to add “even one person” to the federal



payroll?

Who but a Democratic leader of the year 2000 would lecture the nation about the necessity of "turning down the volume" of public debate — while operating a campaign run by people who called themselves "the Killers" and their place of business "the Slaughterhouse"?

Who but a Democratic leader of the year 2000 would do all these things and still seem honestly to believe that he was fully entitled — even morally obliged — to do them?

Unfortunately for the Democrats, however, arrogance is something that few people approve in others. One of the Democrats' best weapons against Bush was the sneeringly self-satisfied assertion that his face sometimes assumes a sneeringly self-satisfied expression. Meanwhile, it was Gore's arrogance in debate that, more than anything else, antagonized large numbers of voters who were otherwise satisfied with the Clinton-Gore administration.

Arrogance, indeed, constitutes one of the Republicans' best weapons against the Democrats, if the Republicans can ever manage to understand that fact.

During the months ahead, the Democrats will try to destroy the Republicans by calling them thieves, racists, rightwing cranks, dumbies, and everything else they can think of. They will continue to describe themselves as the only salvation of America's weak and pitiable masses. I hope that the Republicans will not respond, as they usually do, by saying, "We're really *not* thieves, racists, and rightwing cranks! And we *are* smart! Just as smart as anybody!"

I hope they simply say, "You're right; we're not smart enough to tell you how to live your life. That's been tried, and it didn't work. But if you want to try it again, please vote for the Democrats. They know what's best for you — and if you don't believe it, just ask them."

— Stephen Cox

The counting game — Al Gore had one honorable option after George W. Bush had won Florida's machine recount: to count all the votes. That meant a statewide manual recount with uniform standards. Gore never took that option. Instead, he asked for manual recounts in three counties that

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How Environmental Regulation Prevents People From Protecting the Environment — Environmental economist Rick Stroup explains how iron-fisted regulators provide powerful incentives against private landowners caring for the environment. (audio: A402; video: V402)

The U.S. Forest Service: America's Experiment in Soviet Socialism — The country's premier expert on the U.S. Forest Service, Randal O'Toole, tells a sad tale of excessive road building, clearcutting and the strangling effects of Soviet-style centralized decision-making. (audio: A403; video: V403)

Environmental Religion in the Schools — Author Jane Shaw explores how schools indoctrinate children in the New Religion of Mother Earth. In this religion, wealth and production are among the deadly sins. (audio: A404; video: V404)

The Liberty Privacy Panel — R.W. Bradford, Fred Smith, David Friedman and Doug Casey explore the privacy issues of the 21st century. (audio: A405; video: V405)

Advancing Liberty in the Courts — Washington Supreme Court Justice Richard Sanders explains how libertarians get more bang for their buck by supporting judicial candidates. You'll hear how one libertarian justice can make a huge difference! (audio: A406; video: V406)

A Libertarian in Congress — The sole libertarian in Congress, Ron Paul, on the art of building coalitions and on how he led the effort to slay the privacy-invading Know Your Customer regulations. Hear him recount the history of the Social Security number as an identifier, and learn how laws on immigration, welfare reform, and health care are shredding your privacy. (audio: A407; video: V407)

Does the Libertarian Party Have a Future? — R.W. Bradford makes a powerful case that the LP is failing to advance freedom, and suggests a controversial new approach that could lead to a political breakthrough. Judge for yourself whether the provocative strategy he outlines will propel the LP into the big leagues. (audio: A408; video: V408)

Al Gore's War on Freedom and Mobility — Al Gore hates the internal combustion engine. If he gets his way, America's cities will look a lot more like the cities of communist Europe, so says Randal O'Toole. (audio: A409; video: V409)

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Selling Liberty in an Illiberal World — Fred Smith offers a revolutionary approach to spreading libertarian ideas, and explains how to frame issues for maximum appeal. (audio: A410; video: V410)

Contracts and the Net — The Internet will re-shape contract law, argues David Friedman, at the expense of judicial power. Learn how netizens are developing institutions to allow for private litigation, and hear how arbitration and reputation loss are actually more potent on the Net than in real space. (audio: A411; video: V411)

How to Write Op-Eds and Get Them Published — Join former *Business Week* editor Jane Shaw, *Orange County Register* senior columnist Alan Bock and *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* business reporter Bruce Ramsey for a workshop on how you can air your opinions in the newspaper. Learn Jane's six points that will send you on your way to publication, and hear the one phrase which Ramsey says is taboo at his paper. (audio: A412; video: V412)

What Does Economics Have to Do With the Law, and What Do Both Have to Do With Libertarianism? — David Friedman explores how economics and law relate to each other and to libertarianism. (audio: A413; video V413)

Urban Sprawl, Liberty and the State — Urban sprawl may turn out to be one of the hot-button issues of the next election. Learn why environmentalists want you caged in cities, and how they plan to do it, with Jane Shaw, Richard Stroup, Fred Smith, and Randal O'Toole. (audio: A414; video: V414)

My Dinner With James Madison — Scott Reid views modern America through the eyes of a Founding Father. Our Madison discusses some little known alternatives considered at the Constitutional Convention, and why they would have been better for freedom. (audio: A415; video: V415)

The New Liberty and the Old — R.W. Bradford explains how fundamental changes are reshaping the libertarian movement, and forthrightly takes on the advocates of the non-aggression imperative. (audio: A416; video: V416)

Using the First Amendment to Smash the State — Durk Pearson and Sandy Shaw tell how they've used the First Amendment to wage total war against the government. Learn how they brought the FDA to its knees, and share their secrets for successful litigation. (audio: A417; video: V417)

Making Terror Your Friend — In a world overrun with authoritarian creeps, Doug Casey highlights the attitudes and techniques that set him apart from the controlled masses. (audio: A418; video: V418)

End the Drug War or Forget About Freedom — Alan Bock journeys to the heart of darkness in America's failed effort at drug prohibition. The casualties of the war, says Bock, are a lot of harmless people and your civil rights. (audio: A419; video: V419)

Juries, Justice and the Law — Fully informed jury activist Larry Dodge explains the history and the importance of jury nullification, including efforts underway to increase the power of juries. (audio: A420; video: V420)



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he had won almost 2 to 1 — Volusia, Broward, and Palm Beach — plus Miami-Dade, a big county he had won by a less overwhelming margin. To tilt the odds more in his favor, Gore asked the canvassing boards of Broward, Palm Beach, and Miami-Dade, which used punch cards, to count “dimpled chads.” Broward was the only one that did; had the other two done so, Gore might have stolen the election.

In mid-November, Gore proposed in a speech that he and Bush accept a recount in all of Florida. Bush didn’t agree, and that was that. Gore never asked to recount all of Florida. In the first Florida Supreme Court case, one of the justices asked Gore attorney David Boies whether a statewide recount was necessary. Boies said it wasn’t. In the second case, a justice asked Boies again: What is the difference between these four counties and the 63 others? The difference, Boies said, was that we *contested* these four counties. When, on Dec. 8, with only four days left for choosing electors, the Florida Supreme Court ordered a manual recount in all 67 counties, it was because one justice had insisted on it as his price of joining to make a majority. The Gore campaign had not asked for it.

The question was left hanging: were dimpled chads votes? If not — and they are not, in my state and many others — then a few hundred votes from Broward had to be tossed out. But the court didn’t toss them out. And it declined to say whether dimples were votes in the other counties. For that violation of “equal protection of the laws,” the Florida court got punched out 7-2 by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Gore campaign endlessly repeated the slogan, “count every vote, and make every vote count.” *Counting* assumes that you know what a vote is. “Every vote” means votes in all 67 counties. Every vote also includes the military absentees and the absentees in Seminole County. Well, Gore didn’t mean it.

The morning after he conceded, the *New York Times* said his mistake was that he never asked, early on, for a full recount of all Florida. This was presented as a tactical error. Perhaps; but maybe it was calculation. Bush won 20 of the 27 counties that used punch cards. At month’s end, after four large Gore counties had been heavily mined, Bush was still ahead, and the counties he won were still virgin territory.

In any case, Gore never wanted to count all the votes. He just wanted to win.

— Bruce Ramsey

In his father’s footsteps? — The emotional high point of Al Gore’s high-minded concession speech was a

quotation of his father’s sage observation about his own defeat at the polls in 1970: “Defeat may serve as well as victory to shake the soul and let the glory out.”

Not surprisingly, given Gore’s history of embellishing the facts, reporters for the *Nashville Tennessean* immediately began a search of the newspaper’s back issues to discover whether Albert Gore the Elder had ever uttered these words. I was even more doubtful about this literary question than the enterprising reporters for the *Tennessean*; not because I had more confidence in Albert the Younger’s habitual mendacity, but because the purported quoted observation had a distinctive 19th century cadence.

So I did a search of Al Gore’s invention, the Internet. In 0.11 seconds, I found the passage quoted on over 50 websites. Not surprisingly, most of these sites were quoting Al the Younger, who had previously quoted this specimen of his father’s wisdom at Gore the Elder’s funeral in 1998. But there were several other references, mostly from on-line collections of sentimental quotations, websites with names like *livinglife-fully.com*, *gospelcom.net*, and *motivatus.com*.

These attributed the line to Edwin Markham. So also, quite drolly when you think about it, did a certain Department of Justice website.

Markham, as anyone of my generation who sweated through high-school English will recall, was a sentimental left-wing American poet whose most famous work is *The Man With a Hoe*, in which portrays the laboring class as brutally and hopelessly degraded by the economic system, and he warns the “masters, lords and rulers in all lands” to fear the day when “this dumb Terror shall rise to judge the world.” Obviously, this was before the Clinton-Gore administration saved capitalism, but Markham’s tone of apocalyptic whining is perennially attractive to people like Gore: witness the latter’s campaign speeches.

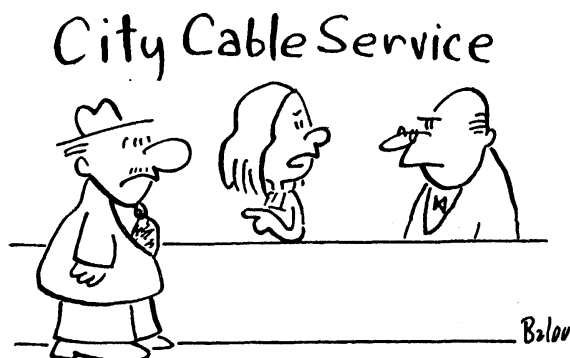
“Markham’s work,” William Rose Benét observed, “is not considered by critics to be distinguished by any important literary value.”

Is this merely another case of Al Gore’s tinkering with the truth, or was he taken in by plagiarism committed by his father? We all recall that Al the Younger was raised to be the perfect politician — though he always seemed to me to be more a Disney-engineered auto-animatronic imitation of a politician. Whether by example or by direct instruction, his training may have included the art of plagiarism.

Plagiarism is, after all, a popular and effective political tactic. You’ll recall that when Sen. Joe Biden ran for president in 1988, he plagiarized both a campaign speech and his life story from British politician Neil Kinnock. The sainted Martin Luther King plagiarized much of his famous “I Have a Dream” speech from a sermon delivered by an African-American preacher at the 1952 Republican National Convention. Both of these plagiarisms were ultimately found out, but Joe Biden remains a respected member of the world’s most august deliberative body, and I’ve seen no movement afoot to quash the national holiday that celebrates the life and work of the Rev. Dr. King.

— R. W. Bradford

Goodbye and good riddance — Most of my lefty friends were pissed at Nader for taking votes that might have gone to Al Gore. Libertarians should be pissed at Nader’s snotty refusal to debate Harry Browne, with whom



“Sir, this horrid little man wants to sign up for the Playboy Channel.”

he intellectually shared so much: decriminalizing recreational drugs, exposing how large corporations corrupt government, opposing American foreign aggression, etc. Nader deluded himself into thinking he was a serious candidate with a chance of winning who should thus debate only Gore and Bush, rather than, like most third-party stars, becoming the most visible publicist for important alternative ideas. For his egotistical hubris, Nader lost everything — not only votes during the past election but present respect from those who would otherwise be predisposed to him. Sayonara, Ralph.

— Richard Kostelanetz

Ominous parallels — The son of a president loses the popular vote but wins the electoral college in a contentious election: despite the similarities, I still have the nagging feeling that George W. Bush is no John Quincy Adams.

— John Haywood

Voter profile — Al Gore seems to be claiming that all the befuddled, incompetent, and stupid voters in Florida were supporters of his. Maybe he's right! — Sheldon Richman

The virtue of neglect — I grew up in Ohio where

social studies were taken pretty seriously. To this day I remember a fascinating lecture on executive neglect. The way the teacher explained it, the legislative branch could authorize the executive branch to do something, but it couldn't really force it to do anything. What this means is that the legislature could pass a law, oh, say, to round up all the Jews. It could prescribe procedures and budget the money. The cool thing is there is nothing the legislature could do to force the executive branch to carry out the law. Executive neglect means that the guys with all the guns and jails and internment camps and other really dangerous stuff could just say: "Oh yeah, round up the Jews; well, we're a little behind schedule on that one, but we should get to it soon." Then they could just blow it off. I really like executive neglect because it's a lot like Robert De Niro furrowing his brow and saying "You talkin' to me?" After all, since the executive branch does have all the guns and jails and stuff, it seems like anybody is walking on awful thin ice ordering it to do anything.

This was an important principle in the checks and balances instituted by all them dead, white, European guys. I gotta admit, them guys look smarter to me every day.

So now I'm thinking about this Katherine Harris gal down in Florida. It's obvious the media was able to cut and paste all the nasty things they said about Gennifer Flowers and any other perceived female enemy right into the latest press about poor ol' Kathy. What I need to understand is who does Kathy work for? I figure that Secretary of State is an executive-

branch job, so if she felt like it she could blow off the legislature's instructions and not do anything. But let's assume for the moment that she's not feeling too spunky or anything so she just wants to do her job. The law says she's got to certify the election by a certain date. Now, what I can't understand is how the Supreme Court of Florida can tell her what to do. I mean, doesn't she have the exact same right to say "You talkin' to me?" to the judicial branch as she does to the legislative?

I guess what I'm asking is who died and made the judicial branch king? If I was Kathy, I would have told the court to kiss my ass. Look, a big principle in business and military is the unity of command. You only have one boss to please. Her boss is dear ol' brother Jeb and, being a team player, all he wants is for her to follow the law as set down by the legislature. The legislature has made it very clear that she is to certify the votes by a certain date. Now, if the court wants to change that, they will need to get the executive branch, I assume via the attorney general, to send in the guns and cops and attack dogs to prevent Kathy from doing her sworn duty.

So now I'm really wondering about forced bussing and all this other judicial activism stuff. Doesn't it really require a pantywaist executive branch to go along with all this crap? I

would figure the founders wanted a best two out of three system where the judiciary could request the executive do something, but then it only would get done if the executive agreed and the legislature couldn't whip up a new law. Sounds like perfect gridlock to me. Like I say, them dead white guys seem smarter every day.

— Paul Rako

AL GORE RIDES OFF
INTO THE SUNSET



A journalist's

lament — I was sorry it took so long to clear up this presidential election thing. I needed to know whom to criticize.

— Sheldon Richman

Toasting the French — In a bold step towards gender equality, the French National Assembly lifted a ban on women working at night in industrial jobs. Amazing. Apparently the program of "liberty, equality, fraternity" has reached implementation stage after only 211 years of delay. What dramatic reforms will they come up with next? Permitting French retailers to set their own hours of operation?

— Andrew Chamberlain

Chadtastic! — The word "chad" used to be an arcane piece of technical jargon only bandied about during an election by those behind the scenes. The average citizen only knew it, if at all, from easily forgotten ballot instructions. But thanks to recent events, "chad" will enter the language at large.

Much as it will be missed as jargon, I hope that the term will be readily applied in the arena of slang. I don't think that

old favorites like "He couldn't find his ass with both hands" will fall into disuse because of arrival of "chad," but it does have promise. It could come to mean something small, insignificant, and worthless. "I couldn't give a bag of chads what you think!" has a certain rhythmic quality to it. Extending this would lead to the derogatory term "chad counter," or one who focuses on small and relatively unimportant details to the exclusion of the bigger picture.

The term "chad dimpler" could signify a weak, ineffectual milksop characterized by vacillation and indecisiveness. How would you respond to the charge that you "couldn't dimple a chad"? There would be "chad cheaters" who, being denied bigger prizes, content themselves with petty swindles and lies. "Well, I was late because I asked a chad cheater for the time." And the possibilities multiply — "fat chad," "chad of gold," "chad bonanza" or (my personal favorite) "chad-hanging close." At least something worthwhile came out of this fiasco.

— Eric Raetz

T-shirt dumping — For most of us, the economic costs of protectionism are invisible in everyday life. This isn't the case for Seattle entrepreneur Paul Liang.

Liang, a 23-year-old recent college grad and Taiwanese native, decided to order some logo-embossed T-shirts to help promote his new high-tech start-up company. He found that while the shirts cost \$30 apiece domestically, a Taiwanese manufacturer offered the same shirts for only \$10. Naturally, he thought importing would be a great way to save money.

But the U.S. government thought otherwise. Liang received a call from U.S. Customs agents informing him that his shipment of shirts was being withheld. After spending two afternoons completing reams of paperwork and being bounced between trade bureaucrats, he found that he was required to purchase a trade visa, a \$40 bond, and "handling fees," all in addition to the applicable import tariffs. Ultimately he ended up hiring an import brokerage firm — a thriving industry thanks to the complexity of U.S. trade restrictions — to handle the administrative details.

In the end, Liang spent over \$450 to release \$250 worth of shirts from U.S. Customs. So his total cost was \$28 a shirt — about the same price charged by domestic shirt makers — meaning that U.S. trade restrictions dissipated nearly all the gains from this trade. That's not exactly what I'd call "efficiency-enhancing policy."

— Andrew Chamberlain

What if they held a peace summit and nobody came? — On the very day Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak announced his resignation to make way for new elections, prompting Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to accuse Barak of cynical manipulation and to pronounce the vaunted "peace process" dead for at least 60 days, a new U.S.-led commission started holding meetings on resuscitating the peace process. Former U.S. Sen. George Mitchell held meetings and issued statements, virtually oblivious of the chaos and violence swirling around him. Is there any reason these clueless representatives of the "international community" should command even a modicum of respect?

— Alan Bock

Asphalt for the masses — Advocates of "smart growth" — that is, of central planning leading to mandatory density increases in existing urban neighborhoods, strict lim-

its on development of rural areas, and rail-transit boondoggles — saw their state ballot measures in Arizona and Colorado crushed by the voters, who rejected them by 2-to-1 margins.

But this doesn't discourage smart-growth proponents. The Surface Transportation Policy Project, an anti-auto group headquartered in Washington, D.C., recently released a report claiming that "sprawl," meaning low-density suburbs, forces people to waste money by driving their cars more. The report doesn't mention several important facts that seriously weaken its case.

First, the presumption that city dwellers drive less than suburbanites is false. After adjusting for income and household size, per capita inner city driving is almost exactly the same as suburban driving. This means that people drive because they find drivings' benefits exceed the costs, not because they are forced to drive by low densities.

Second, most Americans have chosen to live in low densities because they prefer large backyards, uncongested roads, and other amenities lacking in the inner cities. If this means they have to drive a little more, they obviously consider the benefits worth the cost. But they really don't have to drive more, because jobs, shops, and other services are growing in the suburbs much faster than in the inner cities.

The ballot measures started a "dialog" between developers and planners that could still lead to major restrictions on freedom and property ownership in both states. Advocates of liberty and property rights in these and other states should rush to work with realtors, developers, and politicians to ensure that personal freedoms are not unnecessarily compromised away to appease environmental radicals.

— Randal O'Toole

One out of four ain't bad — What distressed me most about the major party candidates was that three of the four sounded like bad actors playing pitchmen in a boring movie. Their speech was affected, circumspect, badly coached, and instantly intolerable to my ear. I couldn't listen to Gore, Lieberman, or Son-of-a-Bush for more than three phrases without pressing the mute button or surfing away. The only one who sounded like a human being was Dick Cheney, who has been politically the most objectionable. None sounded half as genuine as Harry Browne.

— Richard Kostelanetz

Prove me wrong! — It now looks as if the Republicans will control both houses of Congress and get Bush into the White House. Despite being a dedicated, nonvoting libertarian who insists there is no meaningful difference between the parties, this is the outcome I was hoping for. My Republican friends maintain that Reagan and Bush couldn't reduce the size of government because of the Democratic Congress and that the Republican Congress couldn't because Clinton was president. If the Republicans really ran things, they've been telling me for years, they'd shrink the government. I never believed them.

But I hope I'm proven wrong. If I am, I'd have to reexamine some of my political thinking, but thinking that can't stand reexamination isn't very good.

A major party actually making government smaller would mean libertarian arguments are getting through on some

level. Losing an obnoxious "I told you so" and eating copious crow would be a small price for that. — John Haywood

Lurking in the shadows — I was both relieved and frightened to hear of the final triumph for Bush: relieved that the entire fetid and steaming mess can now be shoveled off to the compost heap of history; frightened because Bush won and Gore felt the urge, in his concession speech, to tell us that, traveling across America, he has heard the voices of the American people and will continue to fight for them. Ugh. If Gore in front of the spotlight made you queasy, how would you feel with Gore behind-the-scenes? — Eric Raetz

The language campaign — During the election campaign of the year 2000, the American language suffered some regrettable losses but also received some important reinforcements.

The biggest loss was the death of that common and useful verb "count," as in, "There are thousands of votes in Miami-Dade that have never been counted," and, "All the votes in Miami-Dade have been counted at least four times." The word "count" has now been permanently ruined. In the future, parents will teach young children to "enumerate," pessimists will be advised to "add their blessings," and insomniacs will have to "reckon sheep."

Minor losses to the language include a number of metaphors derived from sports, such as "up for grabs"

("Florida's electoral votes are up for grabs") and the omnipresent "team" ("the Gore team," "the Bush team"). These expressions got far too much playing time. Words can be knocked in the head only so often, and (like other sports expressions) these particular words weren't very bright to begin with. They'll probably be benched for the next few seasons.

A more serious linguistic defeat resulted from the bizarre inflation of the word "official," which eventually lost any necessary connection with official acts. It was used to cover anything that happened on television: "Florida has now officially been called for Gore," "Florida has now officially been called for Bush," and so forth. "Official" at last became so dangerously inflated that people could not tell whether real officials, such as Florida's Secretary of State, could properly be said to do anything at all in their official capacity.

Linguistic losses were, however, more than balanced by gains. The word "embellish," formerly restricted to those weird things that interior decorators do, has now been added to the long and august roll of synonyms for "lie." "Mislead," "prevaricate," "feign," "fib," "counterfeit" . . . "embellish." ("The Vice President may have slightly embellished his per-

sonal history.")

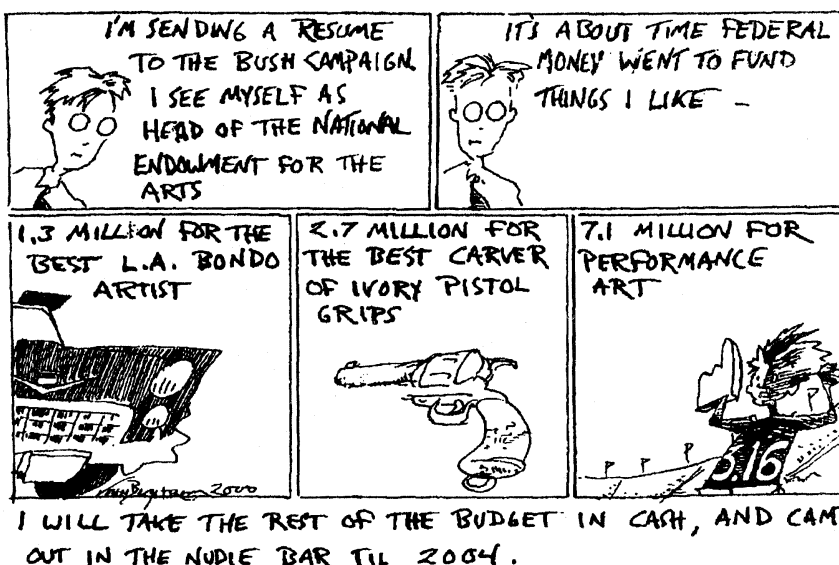
Another helpful expression, "no controlling legal authority," a phrase that has enjoyed considerable popularity in the past, was successfully revived by the Republicans and seems likely to stand as a permanent memorial to its author, former Sen. Albert Gore, Jr. "No controlling legal authority" is a clever synonym for several more cumbersome phrases, such as "the ability to violate the law and get away with it."

The campaign's one magnificent addition to the common language was, of course, the word "chad." No one expected this obscure monosyllable to make a sudden break for glory, but the little noun saw its chance and took it. Within days of the election, "chad" had established itself as one of the most frequently used words in America.

I don't need to recite the many applications of the term. I wish only to emphasize its remarkable capacity for poetic ambiguity, a capacity that assures it a lasting and honored place in the language. Few other words, indeed, are so open

to creative reversals of meaning. To say, "My chads are hangin', baby" can mean either (1) "I just voted," or (2) "I just tried to vote, but I screwed up," or (3) "I thought about voting, but I couldn't quite do it," or (4) "I am deathly ill," or (5) "I got my mojo workin'." The word is a treasure house, as rich in ambiguities as a Palm Beach ballot interpreted by a Democratic lawyer.

— Stephen Cox



Lost bill — Various politicians have recently called for a "Patients' Bill of Rights," a "Crime Victims' Bill of Rights," even an "Air Passengers' Bill of Rights." With all these new models, it's easy to see how the original Bill of Rights is getting lost in the shuffle.

— John Haywood

The proper focus of indignation — I am annoyed with myself for taking so long to realize where the blame lies for the weeks of uncertainty and acrimony that followed the election. It lies on the sloppy minority of Florida voters who failed to follow instructions. (These are distinct, of course, from voters who deliberately abstained from a presidential choice.) Voting, like driving, entails responsibilities. A driver is not excused for the damage caused by driving on the wrong side of the road just because he says he intended to drive on the right side. Similarly, the sloppy Floridians have no valid excuse for the anguish inflicted on their fellow Americans. They were told, for example, to check the reverse side of the ballot for incompletely detached chads. Were it not for the secrecy of voting, they, like careless motorists, should be punished.

Instead they are treated as victims, not culprits. They, or their self-appointed spokesmen, whine about their being disenfranchised. A lot of manpower and money has been spent on trying "manually" to intuit the true meaning of their carelessly cast ballots. They have been accorded privilege at the expense of their fellow taxpayers. — Leland B. Yeager

Them amazin' Dems — So things are still a little fuzzy about the election just past, but a few facts are certain:

- 1) The Democrats rushed to naturalize Democrat-leaning foreigners to help tilt the election to Gore.
- 2) The Democrats actively sought to discourage Republican-leaning military personnel from voting.
- 3) The Democrats handed out cigarettes to homeless people to encourage them to vote and to vote Democratic.
- 4) The Democrats dug back 20 years to find a DUI to discredit their opponent.
- 5) The Democrats sent memos to vote counters advising how to disallow opposition votes.
- 6) The Democrats insisted on recounts only in the heavily Democratic counties that are sure to help their candidate.
- 7) The Democrats made full use of Democratic judges and election workers to bias the election their way.
- 8) The Democrats sold not only access but also lodging to fund the campaign.
- 9) The Democrats had great concern for the misdemeanors of the opposition while sweeping their own felonies under the rug. (Thanks Janet, you're a real team player.)
- 10) The Democrats used the entire machinery of the federal government as a campaign aid.
- 11) The Democrats offered Ralph Nader \$12 million to drop out of the race.
- 12) The Democrats hinted that Nader is gay.

What most amazes me is that it is the Democrats that accuse the Republicans of a Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy. In my half century on the planet I have noted that those who question the integrity of everyone else are generally the most untrustworthy scoundrels around. Perhaps if they see conspiracy everywhere, it is only because they are working so hard on a conspiracy of their own. — Paul Rako

My Clinton moment — Now it's over, the end of eight years of Bill Clinton. I spent the entire time abroad, in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. I don't remember ever hearing of Bill Clinton while I was living in America. Since I'm from Oklahoma I must have, but then we don't pay a lot of attention to what goes on in Arkansas. I've followed events in the States, but living in Europe and the Middle East made

it all seem a bit distant.

I'm afraid that I had absorbed a lot of the Old World attitude towards politics and politicians as well. A corrupt chief executive? Oh, whatever will this poor old world be forced to endure next!

As the revelations about Clinton's mendacity and corruption kept piling up, my reaction was one of puzzlement and amusement. Puzzlement because his lies didn't seem to serve any purpose other than, well, practice. Amusement because he was such a buffoon. Early in his first term I wrote a friend to ask, "Does Clinton seem as much of a clown to you as he does over here?" He replied, "Clinton strikes us as a clown who fails to make us laugh."

My Clinton Moment, the moment when something snapped inside and everything changed for me, came in 1997 when I was working in Yugoslavia during the months of the massive demonstrations in the streets of Belgrade.

I was teaching at the Institute for Foreign Students in Belgrade. Many of my students were members of the opposition parties and all had participated in the demonstrations. I was always looking for readings in English that might be relevant to their experience.

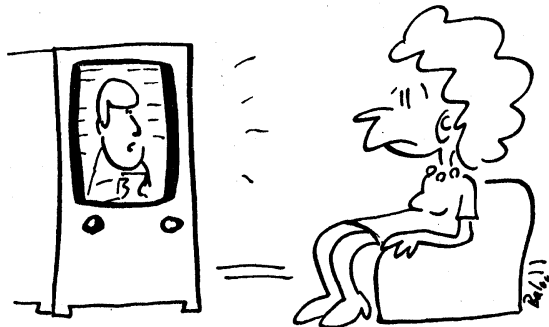
About this time came the revelations that the Clintons had turned the Lincoln Bedroom into a motel for big buck contributors, the room with a holograph copy of the Gettysburg Address on the wall. I saw the famous photo of Markie Post and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason jumping on the bed like high school girls at a slumber party. I read the address over and over. It had never before had such meaning for me as it did while reading it in that war-torn land. Then I read the Second Inaugural Address, and was struck by these words: "to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have bourn the battle, and for his widow, and for his orphan — to do all that may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves and with all nations."

That's when I lost it. Mr. President, here are my wishes for you as you leave office. May you live a long time in this country you have disgraced and betrayed as each new revelation of your mendacity, treachery, and criminality comes to light. May you see your friends abandon you one by one as you have abandoned them as it suited your purposes. May that harridan of a wife of yours never leave you, and may your charming daughter grow up to fall in love with men just like you! — Stephen Browne

Unfair representation — I was disappointed that several reflections in the January *Liberty* defended the Electoral College. Majority rule has its faults, but I fail to see how deciding elections based on the number of senators and representatives in each state helps any.

With 538 votes in the Electoral College, each vote represents an average of about 500,000 Americans. But this ranges from less than 200,000 in Wyoming, the District of Columbia, and Vermont all the way to more than 600,000 in Florida, California, and Texas. Why should the vote of someone in Vermont count for three times as much as the vote of someone in Texas? Why should votes in Delaware and Rhode Island count for twice as much as votes in Colorado and Tennessee?

I could see some justification for the Electoral College if we had a parliamentary system, with people voting for spe-



"A new Federal study has shown that, tragically, 87% of American dogs and cats have no health insurance whatsoever. . ."

cific members of the College who then would vote for the presidential candidate they thought best. This could give people an opportunity to vote for the mix of electors that they thought would best represent their interests.

I say "Down with the Electoral College." Democracy is not perfect, but we should find refuge from the problems of democracy in freedom, markets, and property rights, not in perverting the democratic process. — Randal O'Toole

Just say "No!" — Justice Clarence Thomas' dissent was the most interesting aspect of the Supreme Court's decision to strike down Indianapolis' practice of setting up roadblocks to check for drivers' licenses while sending a drug-sniffing dog around the car. He went along with the two other justices who approved the search scheme, he said, because the court had previously approved essentially similar schemes — to search for drunk drivers and illegal immigrants — and a decent respect for precedent suggested the Court do the same with this scheme. However, he went on: "I am not convinced that [the previous cases] were correctly decided. Indeed, I rather doubt that the Framers of the Fourth Amendment would have considered 'reasonable' a program of indiscriminate stops of individuals not suspected of wrongdoing." Let's hope some enterprising attorney can present the court with the opportunity to reconsider past decisions. — Alan Bock

Turn up the heat — In the Washington state Senate race, Libertarian Jeff Jared has been accused of taking Republican votes from Senator Slade Gorton and, as a result, "spoiling" the election (i.e., helping to elect Democrat Maria Cantwell, who is very unlibertarian). Here's the final vote:

Maria Cantwell	1,199,260	48.72%
Slade Gorton	1,197,307	48.65%
Jeff Jared	64,756	2.63%

Cantwell beat Gorton by 1,953 votes. Jeff Jared attempted to run a race that would take more votes from the Democrat than from the Republican candidate. He emphasized drug reform. He said he would consider tearing down the Snake River dams — a position with which most libertarians and Republicans completely disagree. Jared proposed that American troops be brought home and placed in a purely defensive posture, that American taxpayers should not have to subsidize being world cop. None of these positions were likely to attract most libertarian Republicans, but they did attract from Cantwell those libertarians who had seen the Democrats as the defenders of personal liberty.

Nevertheless, Jared is widely credited with defeating Gorton, and the GOP doesn't like this one bit. "It's something we're going to have to take a look at in the future," Washington GOP chairman Don Benton said. "Libertarians did better than I think many people expected. We have to do a much better job of articulating our message to the voters."

I suspect that the Republican fear is well grounded. Jared did take more votes from Gorton than from Cantwell. Libertarian-Republican voters despise Slade Gorton. He swears to uphold the Constitution, but daily disregards and undercuts it. If Slade Gorton had been more libertarian, the Libertarian Party would not have run a candidate against him. His votes and his actions, as opposed to his rhetoric, have been in favor of more power for an expanding federal

government.

- He has consistently upheld the right of police to invade our homes, take our property and sell it for their own purposes, without due process.

- He has paid lip service to reducing the complicated IRS tax regulations, but voted for more and more complications.

- He has supported the Social Security system, knowing that it is as phony and vicious a wealth-redistribution scheme as any the government has ever devised.

- He has voted for enormous federal budget increases.

- And Slade Gorton has voted to support and expand every federal government agency, whether or not authorized by the Constitution.

I could go on. Slade Gorton has voted hundreds of times against the Constitution. It was not Jeff Jared that damaged Slade Gorton. It was Gorton's actions that demanded that a Libertarian enter the race. Libertarians do not want power. Libertarians want their individual liberty. We will not run against any Democrat or Republican who actively defends individual liberty — if we are ever able to find one. Unfortunately, every incumbent senator now in office has been a party to the destruction of the Constitution and individual liberty. Any legislator who actually rediscovers his libertarian roots and supports libertarian policies will have our complete support. Sorry Chairman Benton, but just articulating the proper message won't do it. It's not about rhetoric, it's about actions.

Now to the issue that most people raise: that Gorton is not nearly as bad as Cantwell. They say that with people like her in power, this nation will quickly collapse into a socialist system; and, at least Slade and the other Republicans defend some of our liberties, some of the time.

Yes, but the history of the 20th century is the history of Republicans yielding one liberty at a time without ever, ever pointing to the principle that is at stake: that every individual has a right to unlimited action — with the exception that the use of force against others must be defensive. And of course, there is a corollary. Government power must be completely restricted for any purpose except to protect the individual's right to self-interested action and defensive force.

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Without a doubt, if Libertarians cause Republicans to lose elections, it will mean that the socialists in control of the Democratic Party will advance their program faster. Libertarians will cause liberty to erode faster. But just as a frog will not notice if the water it swims in is heated to boiling very slowly — the frog will die long before it boils — Americans will lose their love for individual liberty if the United States keeps moving slowly toward socialism. And as long as we keep electing Republicans who pay lip service to the Constitution while selling it out a little at a time, we will

keep moving slowly but inexorably toward socialism. As long as we expect Republicans to defend liberty with pragmatic and unprincipled arguments, we will continue to lose our freedoms. The frog will die if we don't turn the heat up all the way. Perhaps he still has the strength and brains to jump if the water heats up fast enough.

We cannot recover individual liberty without removing and replacing those who do not understand or care that individual liberty rests on a principle that must never be compromised. If we do not fight for strong, principled libertarians, if

Liberty to the Left of Me, Liberty to the Right

We're right — A sense of history is sometimes difficult to come by, particularly in the nether regions of the political spectrum. But I found a strong dose of horse sense in a speech given Dec. 9 to the Republican Liberty Caucus in Atlanta by paleo-libertarian Llewellyn Rockwell. I don't always agree with what Rockwell says, but this time I liked it a lot.

First, he said, the election of 2000 has dragged the name of politicians, particularly Democrats, into even deeper mire. It has desanctified the judiciary. For those with a skeptical view of government, that is for the good. Indeed, the general desanctifying of government in the past 30 years has made the outlook for liberty better. Politicians are back to being rogues and scoundrels, as they were in Mencken's day.

Second, the election just held proved that third parties can't win elections. Why another proof was needed, I don't know; but there it is. Irrefutable. Your political vehicle has to be the Republicans.

Third, the audience for libertarian ideas will not be the avant-garde, but instead the sort of people who vote Republican: "property owners, middle-class families, and the vast majority of the country that lives outside the four major urban centers." Of course, you take support where you find it. But where to look? "Our natural constituency these days consists not of jailbirds, but of home-schooling moms who are tired of being oppressed by regulators, small businessmen sick of environmental edicts, savers and investors, and middle and upper-middle class entrepreneurs," Rockwell said. He noted that the bourgeoisie were the backbone of the American Revolution and the supporters of classical liberal ideas.

"Another thing about our natural supporters," he said, "they are overwhelmingly religious." A poll of libertarians by Rasmussen Research found that we are overwhelmingly irreligious. No matter. If they want liberty, God bless 'em. "We must defend their liberties too," he said, "because their cause is our cause."

Which reminds me of another thing. Libertarians defined themselves in the 1960s and 1970s as neither right nor left. It was a plausible claim then, because the right was wrapped up in religion and the war in Vietnam, and supported the draft and an interventionist foreign policy. But this "neither right nor left" line is a fiction no longer possible to maintain. Let's own up to it: Libertarians are part of the right. That is what they were in the 1930s, that is what they are now. Probably,

though they hate to admit it, it's what they've been all along.

— Bruce Ramsey

Let's not get left behind — I agree with Bruce Ramsey's assessment of Lew Rockwell's observations on the desanctification of politicians and the viability of third parties. But I have a lot of problems with Rockwell's claim that the natural constituency of libertarians is found on the right, among "property owners, middle-class families" and the "overwhelmingly religious," and Ramsey's suggestion that we libertarians should abandon the theory that we are "neither left nor right."

The central libertarian belief is that the state has too much power and that most people have too little liberty. Our natural constituency is people who are victims of state power, a category that includes men and women from all across the political spectrum. It includes religious people who are persecuted for their beliefs, atheists whose tax money is used to support religion, victims of the drug war, over-regulated businesspeople — virtually all people who are not net beneficiaries of the state.

Which brings up the central difficulty we face in our attempts to spread libertarian thinking: the fact that most people are victims of some state policies and beneficiaries of others. Virtually all Americans, for example, are victims of high taxes. But nearly all Americans get back subsidies that mitigate the taxes they pay.

Justice Holmes famously observed that "Taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society." As usual, he wasn't quite right: taxes may pay for civilization, but it is certain that they also pay for a hell of a lot of other stuff. I dare say that civilization could survive without subsidizing peanut farmers in Georgia or tariffs on wool to protect Wyoming sheep ranchers.

The major reason why libertarians fare so poorly in the political marketplace is that we haven't found a way to convince people that the costs outweigh the benefits. Young people pretty much all know that Social Security is a ripoff and a Ponzi scheme. But it provides some money and medical care for their parents, so the kids don't have to worry so much about doing so. How do you balance the benefit against the cost? It's a complicated question, and given the difficulty of changing the system, most people don't try to figure out the answer. They prefer to be what economists call "rationally ignorant."

we keep voting and apologizing for a Slade Gorton because he is better than a Maria Cantwell, and for a G.W. Bush because he is better than an Al Gore, then our children and grandchildren will live in a world with no memory of individual liberty and free markets. The concept of liberty will die for all but a relative few. Libertarians must offer an unequivocal vision of individual liberty under the libertarian principle. We must fight the Republicans (and Democrats) who vote to take our personal and economic liberty. And if that brings a more immediate tyranny, then perhaps the American people

When a libertarian presents a broad case against government power, the response is usually narrow and personal. "Well, if we adopt your program, who'll pay for Granny's medicine?" or "Am I gonna have to come up with enough money to pay for my kid's college? It's pretty expensive these days, you know." For most people, the cost of implementing broad libertarian policies seems much higher than the perceived benefits. "Sure, I'll save a little in taxes," they say, "But who's going to collect the garbage? I don't want it piling up in the streets!"

The left-right spectrum originated in the French Revolution, and was protracted by specific political alignments in France at the beginning of the 19th century. It has been adapted to help describe more recent political ideologies, alliances and events. But there is no reason that to think that it provides an intelligent analytic framework for us to describe libertarian thinking, which predates the left-right spectrum.

In the 1960s and 1970s, we who advocate liberty came to realize that we were neither left nor right. In opposing state-imposed personal morality and imperialism, we agreed with the left; in opposing state control of voluntary economic exchanges, we agreed with the right. The situation has not changed.

This does not mean that every libertarian should try to work with people on both ends of the political spectrum. Each of us is naturally inclined to promote libertarian thinking among the people with whom we feel most comfortable. A religious libertarian like Lew Rockwell feels more comfortable with other religious people. An economic libertarian like Bruce Ramsey feels more comfortable among other advocates of the free market. Since both these groups of people are right-wing, both Rockwell and Ramsey are liable to see those on the right as potential allies in the battle for liberty. But an avant-garde artist like Richard Kostelanetz values liberty just as much as Rockwell or Ramsey, and he is most comfortable among other avant-garde artists, who are mostly on the left.

I submit that this is just the way things should be. We are all more effective advocates of liberty among people who are similar to us. I don't think Kostelanetz would be any more effective trying to spread libertarian ideas among conservative Roman Catholics than would Rockwell among performance artists. Let everyone, to use the old African-American expression, put down the bucket where he is. And let libertarians of every cultural or religious inclination realize that in a political context, liberty is what's important, not the cultural or religious differences you may have with other libertarians.

Liberty isn't good just for right-wingers or for left-wingers. Liberty is good for everybody. — R. W. Bradford

will see the problem and still have the brains and courage to turn again to individual liberty.

Boil the damn frog! Vote Libertarian! — Erne Lewis

I'll take a taco, with double Friedman sauce

Mexican President Vicente Fox has named Francisco Gil Diaz, who received a doctorate of economics at the University of Chicago and is said to be an adherent of Milton Friedman's views, to the key post of finance secretary. Do you suppose Dubya will name anyone with such firm free-market views to any post of real influence? With economic restructuring, including consideration of sloughing off state enterprises like oil, on the agenda in Mexico, will the time come when Mexico has a freer market than that of the United States?

Not that it would take all that much. — Alan Bock

More safety, less freedom

Evening TV news anchors make a living asking lots of questions. It's just too bad they're usually the wrong ones.

Upon the announcement of a new airbag technology protecting against head injuries in side-impact collisions, one local news anchor observed that automakers aren't legally required to offer this new technology to consumers. Naturally he asked, "So, what's taking the government so long to act?"

The story never seriously tried to answer that question. Instead, it detailed the results of crash tests showing how the new bags may reduce some injuries in some collisions, and concluded that this is a good thing. Of course, these safety improvements may be very real and significant. But the real question is, "At the margin, how much *more* safety do they provide, and at what cost?" My guess is that for most drivers, the incremental safety from a third airbag is trivial while the cost is substantial, given that it's a recent product of expensive research and development.

Just like with everything, some of us like lots of safety and some don't. Exactly how does a one-size-fits-all mandate covering all car buyers — and raising the price of all new cars — result in net social gains? I suspect that's a question your local news anchor won't be asking anytime soon.

— Andrew Chamberlain

Cowards or heroes?

In October, two men drove a rubber raft next to the U.S.S. *Cole* while it was refueling in the harbor of Aden, Yemen, stood at attention, and detonated an explosive device that blew a 20 by 40 foot hole in its hull and killed 17 sailors. Or at least those are the facts gleaned and reported by the press.

Bill Clinton called the attack "a despicable and cowardly act." I suppose, insofar as it killed a bunch of kids who joined the Navy to see the world and were just doing their jobs, it was despicable. But war is despicable, and the bombers and millions more like them see themselves at war with the U.S. People unable to attack their enemy with high tech weapons in a conventional way must make do with materials at hand. Doing so is really no less despicable than the things the U.S. government has done to antagonize them. Just offhand, I recall the U.S. initiating attacks in Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia, Afghanistan and Sudan in recent years, and it has a continuing military presence in Kosovo. And those are just the Islamic countries that come to mind.

Clinton's use of the word "despicable" may be questionable, but his use of the word "cowardly" is simply idiotic. Does anyone actually doubt that it took a lot of courage to drive a small boat up to a warship and blow it up? If a couple of Americans had done that during any recent conflict, they would justifiably have been tipped for the Medal of Honor.

As a military assault the attack on the *Cole* was a stunning victory for the forces of Islam; it cost them two guys and a few thousands dollars worth of explosives to take out a billion-dollar warship. I'd make that trade every day of the week. And you'd better believe they will too — at every possible opportunity. Success on that scale breeds the confidence to go on the offensive. But these people see it as simple self-defense. They aren't the ones sending planes, warships and troops to America the way the U.S. government has been doing in their homelands.

The only way to prevent this situation from getting more out of hand is for the U.S. government to stop acting as a global Robocop run amuck and employ its military for actual defense, as opposed to projecting the quirky vision of Beltway policy wonks. But that's not likely. Madeleine Albright (no, Albright — I keep getting that wrong), with a typically Orwellian twist, says the incident should not "deter us from our mission of promoting peace and security in the Middle East." She went on to say "This is no time for the United States to retreat from its responsibilities in the region. We are operating in a world filled with a variety of threats. But that doesn't mean that we can crawl into an ostrich-like mode. We are eagles." Well, not always. The attack on the *Cole* suggests we're sitting ducks. — Douglas Casey

The mystery and majesty of the law — In the legal wrangling of the after-election, an audiotape of a Supreme Court argument was released to the public and broadcast almost immediately. This was an historic first.

This supposed democracy claims to value openness, transparency, and public access to the institutions of governance, but the Supreme Court — the government institution reputed to be the most widely trusted and respected — has been a virtual black box. Briefs go in and opinions come out, but the ways of the U.S. Supreme Court have always been more than a bit mysterious to most of the population, and intentionally so.

The fact that federal judges are appointed for life to insulate them from political pressures is apparently not enough. The court also has encouraged a certain mystique, fed not

only by the impressive building in which it is housed and the arcane and ceremonious way it is run, but by the very secrecy that characterizes the high court. It is curious that in a system ostensibly dedicated to open government people respond positively to an institution that has been virtually the antithesis of openness.

The fact that so many people are willing to place more credence in an institution that is purposely mysterious than in those that hold no secrets may be one of those mysteries of the human psyche. There are understandable reasons, of course. The rituals, the robes, the limited access, the secrecy of the deliberative process all contribute to a sense that Supreme Court justices are somehow set apart from mere mortals, that they are singularly impartial and dedicated only to the rule of the law. Apparently we Americans like a little mystery, a little ritual, even a little magic in at least some of our governmental institutions. Justice John Paul Stevens' concern in his dissent that "... the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the nation's confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the law" is a fair statement of what the court wants Americans to believe.

It should hardly be surprising that justices of the U.S. Supreme Court enjoy being treated as demigods. It is more surprising that so many members of the media, who think of themselves as a cynical and suspicious lot that gets their kicks from debunking those in positions of power, would be at such pains to sustain the illusion. Yet almost all the chattering classes fretted openly about whether the court as an institution would squander some of its authority, credibility, and mystique in deciding such a political question. Even those who disagree with this decision seem to want to maintain the notion that the court itself is still the proper and legitimate final word on almost everything. In part this may be because in recent decades the court system, including the Supreme Court, has been instrumental in implementing portions of the pseudo-liberal agenda to which so many in the chattering classes cling.

While it may seem paradoxical, the liberal or progressive elite that justifies its power by its concern for "the people" has had a marked paternalistic and elitist odor. A good deal of modern "liberalism" amounts to a conviction that the blessed and beloved people are dolts who need to be taken care of by their betters in government and academe, who will need a good deal more power to get the job done.

The Supreme Court building was built to resemble a temple, and most of the institutions of modern state power, from civics classes in government schools through most of the media encourage us to think of the place as something of a Holy of Holies. We are free to criticize individual court decisions, but we are encouraged to view the institution itself with an almost religious awe.

It takes a certain suspension of disbelief to buy into this, of course. As anybody who has observed the court over a period of time or taken a constitutional law class from a reasonably candid professor knows, the U.S. Supreme Court has often been quite ideological or partisan. Those who serve on it are generally expert at presenting their opinions in the language of impartial law, and after more than 200 years there are plenty of precedents to justify almost any opinion.

The inherent partisanship of the court is one reason that so many on both sides during the recent election were concerned



"Actually, medical waste isn't all that toxic when you consider that 99 percent of it is federal forms."

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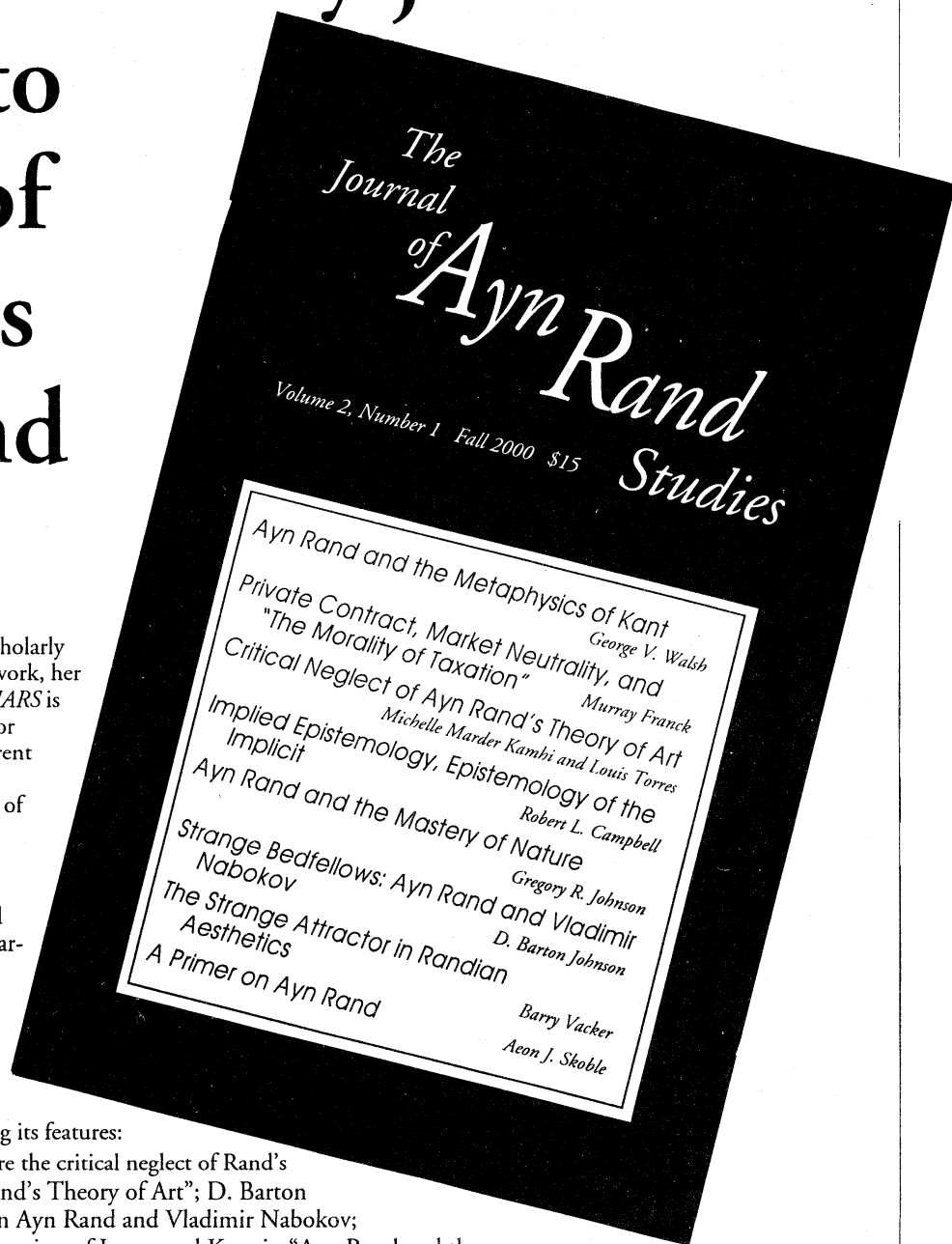
Our Fall 2000 issue is our largest ever. Among its features: Michelle Marder Kamhi and Louis Torres explore the critical neglect of Rand's aesthetic theory in "Critical Neglect of Ayn Rand's Theory of Art"; D. Barton Johnson examines the strange parallels between Ayn Rand and Vladimir Nabokov; and George V. Walsh challenges the Objectivist view of Immanuel Kant in "Ayn Rand and the Metaphysics of Kant."

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with who would pick the next justices. It takes a certain suspension of disbelief and independent judgment to buy into the whole statist premise that people need as much supervision and governance as they now receive. Again we hear the language of religious belief. How many times during the last few weeks have you heard some talking head refer to ballots or to the act of voting as "sacred"? Agnosticism about democracy and active governance are not encouraged.

But by releasing audiotapes of arguments before the Supreme Court, some of the veil has been torn from its sacred mystery. The scene is reminiscent of the famous scene in "The Wizard of Oz" where the all-too-human wizard urges Dorothy and her friends to "pay no attention to that man behind the curtain."

We have learned that far from being demigods, the justices are human beings with opinions, preconceived attitudes, shortcomings and human frailties. We have learned that several justices are fully capable of almost obsessing over minor points or issues of dubious relevance. We now know that Clarence Thomas is seldom an active participant in oral arguments, that Ruth Bader Ginsburg is not the highest card in the deck, and that Antonin Scalia and a couple of other justices come right to the edge of intellectual bullying. If such knowledge reduces the almost religious veneration in which the Supreme Court is held, that might well be a good thing for the republic and for the cause of individual freedom.

— Alan Bock

With anchovies and justice for all — The Clinton Justice Department is now micro-managing deliveries of Domino's Pizza. After being bullied into compliance by administration officials, Domino's has agreed to deliver pizza to neighborhoods it had shunned because of risks to its drivers, 24 of whom have been killed on the job.

The Justice Department said that all people, regardless of race or creed, have a right to pizza delivery. Administration officials asserted that Domino's, in business for 40 years and

The Justice Department said that all people, regardless of race or creed, have a right to pizza. But what about the right of all people, regardless of race or creed, to avoid getting killed?

the world's largest pizza delivery company, was essentially guilty of racial profiling because it permitted its drivers to avoid neighborhoods that they considered to be too dangerous.

"What about the right of all people," regardless of race or creed, "to avoid getting killed?" asked *Investor's Business Daily*. "Call us crazy, but that right would seem to trump the Justice Department's newly found right to pizza."

This case brings to mind a 1997 case in Pittsburgh in which an African-American couple, Carl and Shelia Truss, filed a complaint with the city's Human Relations Commission (HRC) regarding Pizza Hut's refusal to deliver

them a sausage pizza on May 2, 1992, the night of the rioting in Los Angeles set off by the Rodney King verdict. After being informed that there weren't any deliveries, Shelia Truss told the Pizza Hut clerk that all was peaceful in her neighborhood. "What does what's going on in California have to do with me?" she asked. Her attorney, Ann Simms, claimed that Pizza Hut was guilty of an unlawful public accommodation practice. In his initial reaction to the case, Charles Morrison, the director of the HRC in Pittsburgh, stated that Pizza Hut's failure to deliver to the Trusses was most likely a case of "illegal redlining."

"We wanted to err on the side of caution," explained Mike Logan, the local manager of the Pizza Hut, at the HRC hearing. When the store first opened, located near Pittsburgh's upper Hill District, also known as Sugar Top, a mostly African-American section of the city, it delivered pizza to the Hill. Night deliveries were stopped after several robberies of its drivers. Logan testified that the sight on television of white truck driver Reginald Denny being pulled from his truck's cab and beaten by rioters simply increased the safety concerns of the company.

Announcing that Pittsburgh's HRC had "declared war on pizza shops," and fearing that they were going to be forced to deliver to unsafe neighborhoods, a grassroots group formed the Pittsburgh Pizza Coalition, organized by Dan Sullivan, a local libertarian activist who'd worked a few months earlier for the same Pizza Hut outlet that was under fire from the HRC. "I went to work there when that shop first opened," he said. "We went door-to-door in the Hill District, delivering coupons for discounts on pizzas. The shop definitely wanted to do business in that neighborhood."

Sullivan explained what then happened: "We had drivers robbed every day. We had the same driver robbed three times in one week. They usually robbed us with a gun. They know we're not allowed to carry a gun, or more than \$20. Drivers would quit after a couple of days."

Vowing not to give up their rights — or their lives — without a fight, pizza drivers and shop owners held a demonstration on the steps of Pittsburgh's City-County Building. "I won't die for a \$9 pie!" read the hand-lettered inscription on a pizza box lid held by Jane Wadsworth, owner of Pizza Outlet. Her husband, she said, once had a loaded gun held to his head while delivering. "I've been robbed" read the pizza box sign carried by Alexander Lifshitz, a Russian émigré who delivered pizza to support his family.

"In memory of Jay Weiss," read another of the homemade signs. Weiss, a 34-year-old father of three children, was murdered in 1993 while delivering for Chubby's Pizza in the Manchester area of Pittsburgh. He was accompanying another driver, Paul Puhac, who was apprehensive about delivering alone. Both men were shot, Weiss fatally.

Pittsburgh police reported that a few blocks away, while Weiss was bleeding to death in the street, two teenagers who lived in an abandoned house ate the pizza that they'd ordered as a ruse in order to rob the drivers. The coroner's deputies at the scene said that people in the crowd laughed out loud as they removed the body of Jay Weiss. Veteran homicide detectives shook their heads in disbelief.

At a break in the HRC hearing, I suggested to attorney

continued on page 26

Menagerie in the House

by Sarah J. McCarthy

What do you do when there is a donkey in your living room and
an elephant in your bedroom?

Paul Begala, a Clinton-Gore talking head with a weak, sad face that belies his ferocity, and a mouth that roars, certainly knows how to shock. Commenting on the vivid red and blue electoral map of the United States circulating during the Florida recount, a map that displays each county colored according to who won, showing a sea of red for Bush and just some chunks of blue around the edges for Gore, Begala said: "If you look closely at that map you see a more complex picture. You see the state where James Byrd was lynch-dragged behind a pickup truck until his body came apart — it's red. You see the state where Matthew Shepard was crucified on a split-rail fence for the crime of being gay — it's red. You see the state where right-wing extremists blew up a federal office building and murdered scores of federal employees — it's red. The state where an army private who was thought to be gay was bludgeoned to death with a baseball bat, and the state where neo-Nazi skinheads murdered two African-Americans because of their skin color, and the state where Bob Jones University spews its anti-Catholic bigotry — they're all red too."

We could play the red and blue game all night, like checkers, if we wanted to. I could argue, if I were inclined, that you might want to look at the District of Columbia, the murder capital of America, where the streets are a hostile environment, and where in government offices, decisions were made resulting in the largest number of Americans ever killed by their own government, the incineration of some 80 people, mostly women and children — it's blue. You see the county where a subway car full of defenseless commuters were helplessly gunned down like sitting ducks by a homicidal maniac — it's blue. Check out the county where rioters pulled truck driver Reginald Denny from his trailer truck and bludgeoned his head with a concrete block,

and were let go with a hand slap, or the county where courts permitted O.J. to saunter off to the golf course after a travesty of a trial for cutting off his wife's head, and where the trial focus was shifted to a police officer who had once said the "N" word — it's blue too.

If we're going to throw Nazis into the debate, as Begala does, then I suppose it's fair game to identify neo-Communists and other variations of class warriors who fan the flames of envy and destruction and greed — they're blue. The state that just elected a senator who once declared that she "could not go out and save every under-capitalized entrepreneur in America" who couldn't afford her health plan and called America's small-business owners "free-riders and freeloaders," and then attributed the resulting backlash against her to gender discrimination — it's blue. Despite the fact that over the past century the biggest holocaust has been the holocaust against the achievers — the 100 million people who were killed by their own governments in China, the U.S.S.R., Cambodia, Germany, and others, inflamed by class warfare and pathological attempts to equalize wealth by murder and plunder — we have the state of Massachusetts with a senator who fires class warfare guns at small-businesses owners, proclaiming they're "getting away with murder" if they don't buy his nationalized health-care plan — it's blue, too.

And then there's the interesting statistic compiled by law professor Joseph Olson, who broke down the murder rates in the counties won by Bush and Gore: in the blue counties peo-

ple are murdering each other at a 130 times higher rate than in the red counties.

Yes, Paul Begala, who really does have a way with words, knows how to shock. *Wall Street Journal* commentator Peggy Noonan observed that Begala's column was remarkably hate-filled, but that it was also:

a public service in that it revealed what animates Clinton-Gore thinking regarding their opponents: hatred pure and simple, a hatred that used to be hidden and now proudly walks forward. It stands in the living room too. As does the unstated but implicit message of the hatred; that extraordinary means are understandable when you're trying to save America from the terrible people who would put George W. Bush in the presidency.

It's what Al Gore declared in the black churches during the final hours of the campaign, that the election was a fight between "good and evil."

Noonan describes Democratic hatred as the "donkey in the living room," drawing a parallel to the "elephant in the living room" phrase that Alcoholics Anonymous uses to describe a problem so huge and obvious that those living with it can hardly ignore it, but they do. It's called denial. Noonan neglected to mention, because she, too, is a partisan, that both sides in the American political drama are operating like a dysfunctional family, pointing fingers while refusing to claim ownership of the unruly animal in their own house that is muddying up the carpet, peeing in the punch bowl, hurling the rhetorical furniture.

Noonan is repelled by the "donkey in the living room," but, like a dysfunctional family member, she is oblivious to the elephant in the bedroom. He, too, is remarkably hate-filled, and he lumbers triumphantly forward. He is the one who selects Bible quotes to buttress his prejudice that

Both sides in the American political drama are operating like a dysfunctional family, pointing fingers while refusing to claim ownership of the unruly animal in their own house that is muddying up the carpet, peeing in the punch bowl, hurling the rhetorical furniture.

gays are an "abomination," the one who carried the sign at Matthew Shepard's funeral saying "Fags deserve to die." He stomps forward too, spewing a hatred pure and simple, one that is not hidden, but held high like a cross. He is the finger-pointing hypocrite, like Newt Gingrich, who compares homosexuality to a disease and Bill Clinton to a lecher while committing adultery himself. He thunders proudly forward, like Dick Armey, the GOP Congressman who wants us to believe that calling a colleague "Barney Fag" was a slip of the tongue, and like radical priest Donald Spitz of Pro-Life Virginia who says that the cowardly gunman who shot Dr. Barnett Slepian in Amherst, N.Y., through his kitchen window is a hero. He tramples recklessly and dangerously forward.

The talk show hosts who say they sympathize with the

bombing of abortion clinics, they stomp forward too; the theocrats known as the Promise Keepers who believe women should be subservient to their husbands, and Phyllis Schlafly who wants individual control over everything except a woman's uterus, they walk arrogantly forward; the Republican mouthpieces who ridicule soccer women, and who pontificate that women vote Democratic because they are "aroused" by Bill Clinton, they walk forward. The

Noonan is repelled by the "donkey in the living room," but, like a dysfunctional family member, she is oblivious to the elephant in the bedroom.

Republicans who maintain that women are illogical, captive of their feelings and little more, these male supremacists stride proudly forward. They too stand in the living room.

Columnist Michael Kelly defends Paul Begala, saying his red and blue article was incited by MSNBC commentator Mike Barnicle's statement that the red and blue map is a portrayal of "family values versus entitlement." At the *National Review*, Jonah Goldberg threw his hat into the ring, telling Republicans to listen to Paul Begala. After being inundated with angry e-mail, he issued a Corrections Column, declaring that under no circumstances should anyone ever listen to Paul Begala.

Though he makes wild generalizations about red and blue counties and the things that go on there, color me firmly in the camp who thinks Republicans should listen to Mr. Begala. The red and blue map is in itself a generalization — after all, the red areas are nearly half blue . . . and nearly half of the blue areas, red. The map, to be accurate, should be shades of the color purple — plum, burgundy, lavender, lilac, and mauve. Red and blue states, like black and white states or people or parties, don't really exist, and those who think they do have huge animals of one species or another filling the space that used to house their brains.

Francis Fukuyama writes in a *Wall Street Journal* article, "What Divides America," that the bizarre election results reveal an electorate split evenly down the middle, with both houses of Congress also narrowly divided:

This indicates a sharply divided country, but what are Americans sharply divided over? It's clear that they are not divided over foreign policy, management of the economy, crime, welfare or other traditional issues that used to separate left and right. The real issues in American politics have become the cultural ones.

It is, says Fukuyama, a culture war:

The single most important social change to have taken place in the United States over the past 40 years concerns sex and the social role of women, and it is from this single source that virtually all the "culture wars" stem. That conservatives held a losing hand in the culture wars became painfully evident during the Monica Lewinsky impeachment saga. There is hardly anyone in the country who approved of President Clinton's behavior. But a sub-

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Electoral Theology

by Robert H. Nelson

You can't understand the election of George W. Bush without understanding how politics is morphing into religion.

Gore supporters said throughout the long post-election disputes that more Floridians voted for Gore than for Bush. What these people really meant was that, if we could ask them, more voters had it in their minds when they went to the polls to vote for Gore. But what they really thought or intended, God only knows.

Unfortunately, God did not volunteer to do the recount. Absent divine intervention, the only option is for election officials, who may lose votes or be biased, to count the votes of people, who may not understand the ballot or follow the directions correctly, using machines that occasionally malfunction.

Many people could not accept this. So they demanded that the process continue until "every vote is counted accurately," asking election officials to do what only an omniscient overseer could do. Gore himself seemed to suggest that resistance to further recounts was a grave moral offense against discovery of "the truth."

This is characteristic of him. The Florida recount gave us lessons in the thinking and psychologies of the two candidates. Gore seemed actually to believe that, if we could ask God, He would be on Gore's side. This impression of moral certainty that he conveys was one of the main things that turned people off during the campaign. Gore's 1991 book, *Earth in the Balance*, is famous for its apocalyptic themes. It is Gore's account of his own intense search for God's plan for nature and the environment — the outcome of which Gore now insists must become public policy. Gore's selection of Joe Lieberman, and Lieberman's naked appeals to religion during the presidential campaign were no accident.

Bill Clinton gives the appearance of not believing in anything. With Gore the problem is the opposite. He wears his righteousness on his sleeves. That is why it was so hard for Gore to assume the mantle of the Clinton presidency. Clinton first won on the slogan of "it's the economy, stupid." Gore's life story is not about economics but about finding absolute truth. Gore at times has suggested that economic progress is a snare and an illusion — an old Calvinist way of thinking, dressed up in a new terminology.

The electorate in 2000 roughly divided according to its views of Gore's truths. The urban-rural divide was to be the biggest story of the 2000 election. Just before the election, a Gallup poll found that 61 percent of rural men planned to vote for Bush. Despite the huge gender gap nationwide, 51 percent of rural women favored Bush. After the election, the areas of Bush red on the electoral map were states with large rural populations — almost all of the Rocky Mountains, the farm belt, and the South. Gore won in states where there were large cities and their suburbs — the Northeast, the upper Midwest, and the west coast. The older the city, also, the better for Gore.

This stark division of the nation — now split into two separate "red" and "blue" countries — was not about economic policy. William Jennings Bryan once ran for president on a campaign of "free silver," i.e., inflation, but Bush and Gore could find little to disagree about in supporting Alan Greenspan.

In 2000 the division was cultural. If you knew only one thing about a household — that at least one person owns a gun — you could predict with 61 percent accuracy that its members voted for Bush. Among those who go to church once a week or more, 59 percent went for Bush. Among the 60 percent of voters who had an "unfavorable" view of Bill Clinton's personal character, 70 percent voted for Bush. Among those who think abortion should be illegal, 71 percent supported Bush. Protestants overall supported Bush at fully 56 percent.

However, 90 percent of African Americans and 79 percent of Jews voted for Gore. Gays and lesbians favored him at 70 percent. This had little to do with their economic status: voters from the upper middle class, in which many Jews and gays would fall, went 54 percent for Bush. These groups are

culturally alienated from the Republican Party, which they see as a bastion of the forces in society that once repressed them — and that might rise again.

About 4 percent of the electorate self-defined itself in exit polls as belonging to the “upper class.” This group, including many people from places like Wall Street, Hollywood, and

One should not be surprised to see electoral politics get nastier and uglier: that's always the case in battles about religion.

Silicon Valley, actually supported Gore by 56 percent. Their cultural truths were closer, it would seem, to Gore's, which was more important to them than his constant bashing of the richest 1 percent of Americans.

Gore did abysmally among a group of people with a lot less money but who live in the rural parts of the Rocky Mountain west. In the state of Idaho, Gore received only 29 percent of the vote. The economy in Idaho is booming, like

most of the U.S. What is distinctive about Idaho is that it is more than 60 percent federal land; with fully 40 percent of the state designated as national forests and managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Gore has been actively pushing to turn much of the federal land in Idaho into an enormous nature preserve. Idaho has many Mormons and other rural residents whose religion is very different from Gore's environmental religion.

Bush pledged, if he should become president, to try to unite the nation. This task will be difficult. It is easy enough to divide an economic pie. When people are separated by visions of religious and moral truth, it is hard to split the difference. Too many true believers would rather fight to the end.

One might say that the large cultural shifts of the 1960s in the United States were more about religion — sometimes traditional, sometimes secular — than about economic policy. The children of the '60s will be the U.S. presidents of the early twenty-first century. One should not be surprised to see electoral politics get nastier and uglier: that's always the case in battles about religion.

Historically, it is easier to separate religious combatants than to get them to compromise. Maybe it is time to start thinking about bringing back secession as a legitimate American option — like, say, the red from the blue. □

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guided” as Steele did with reference to Murray Rothbard. In his reply Steele softens his criticism of Austrians and admits that they may “be able to develop a distinctive contribution, and offer valuable criticisms, to mainstream economics.” Fine. If he had said that originally, I would not have sent any letter.

Further, I did raise questions for alternative methodologies in economics, but I never said that economists following them can't make important contributions to our economic understanding. Steele's tirade against that strawman is totally bogus. I don't reject mathematics or statistics out of hand in policy analysis and know few Austrians who do. To be sure, Austrians are appropriately skeptical that statistics and mathematics can establish the truth or falsity of important economic principles. But that is a far cry from asserting that math and statistics can have no value whatever in economics. The great majority of Austrians readily concede that data and data analysis can be of great historical interest and can highlight and be illustrative of important economic principles while deepening our understanding of various economic phenomena. Yet this important methodological distinction, repeatedly explained by Austrians to the rest of the

profession, is too often ignored or misinterpreted by critics. My concluding suggestion is that we tone down the critical rhetoric on both sides and get back to serious research and writing.

Dom Armentano
Vero Beach, Fla.

Close Only Counts in Politics

R.W. Bradford is skeptical that Harry Browne's vote total is low because of the closeness of the presidential race (“The 2000 Election”, January). After all, notes Bradford, Browne didn't do better in states where Bush or Gore won by a wide margin. (In such states, voters should be more willing to cast a protest vote.)

However, Bradford doesn't consider a number of reasons for libertarian-leaning voters to pick Bush or Gore, even in “landslide” states. First, not all voters even understood the significance of the electoral college. In Colorado, Bush won by a wide margin, yet in the post-election fiasco one Republican got mad at me for voting Browne. Second, not all voters trusted the polls. At least one Colorado television station ran a story right before the election in which Democrats claimed they might take the presidential race after all.

Bradford's cross-state analysis is interesting, but it doesn't establish his point.

Bradford also places too much emphasis on the presidential race. In Colorado, the real news was that the LP ran more candidates for state legislature than the Democrats. Fifty-eight Colorado candidates ran against both a Democrat and a Republican and averaged 4.9 percent of the vote. Several candidates earned over 7 percent of the vote (and over 20 percent in a two-way race). No, those numbers don't win races, but they get attention, both from the public and from the other parties. In fact, the Republican governor complained about the LP on the biggest radio station in the state. Several Republicans claimed they were “libertarian” and asked the LP to withdraw candidates. The *Denver Post* endorsed a Libertarian, and LP candidates earned coverage in papers across Colorado. Local candidates spoke on at least four major radio stations and appeared on local television a couple times. In my race, the incumbent Democrat had to respond in the local paper to my criticisms of her.

Ari Armstrong
Westminster, Colo.

Bradford responds: I do not believe that all voters understand the electoral college any more than I think all voters

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A Sign of Progress?

by R. W. Bradford

Libertarian Party candidates for Congress got more votes in 2000 than any fringe party had ever before received. But when the vote is examined closely, the news isn't as good as it seems.

The Libertarian Party has given up attempting to portray the 2000 presidential vote totals in a favorable light. Shortly after the January *Liberty* provided an "unspinning" of the favorable interpretations previously offered by LP leaders Steve Dasbach and Perry Willis, the LP changed the election report on its website. Its new "analysis," written by *LP News* editor Bill Winter, began by frankly admitting "No spin is possible. We were shellacked in the presidential race. Harry Browne's vote total — probably below 385,000 when the final vote comes in — was disappointingly low. Heart-breakingly low. Shockingly low . . . lower than anybody expected."

This admission came as a breath of fresh air, though it would have been a little fresher if it had come before *Liberty's* unspinning was published. It also contained a factual error. Browne's vote total was not "lower than anybody predicted." Two of the eight prominent LP observers who predicted Browne's vote total in the December *Liberty* said that Browne would get even fewer votes than he did get, though one of these — Bruce Ramsey of the *Seattle Times* — was so accurate in his prediction that it seems a shame to say he missed his target at all.

Winter may have given up on spinning the presidential vote, but he didn't give up on spinning other things. Consider his description of the LP congressional campaign results:

Libertarians set a new U.S. House vote record, winning a combined 1.66 million votes.

When Richard Winger, third-party expert and publisher of *Ballot Access News*, heard that figure, he said, "I'm stunned." It was the first time in U.S. history that a third party won more than a million votes for U.S. House. The last party that came close: the Socialists in 1920.

Our average Congressional vote totals were also up sharply since the 1996 election. That year, our typical U.S. House candidate won about 4,000 votes; this year, he or she won about 6,000.

And that vote average went up despite the fact

that, as with the presidential race, the contest for control of Congress was portrayed by the media as razor tight. It was — and 1.66 million Americans still invested their votes in a Libertarian.

At first glance, this looks like very encouraging news for Libertarians. But first glances can be deceiving.

There are many ways by which a party can increase the number of votes it receives in the congressional race. The obvious way is to get more people to vote for it in each race. Since the major parties tend to run candidates in nearly all races in nearly every election, an increase in either of their vote totals is usually evidence of having more support from voters.

But the LP is not a major party. In the election just past, it fielded candidates in 253 congressional races. In the last presidential election year, it fielded candidates in only 166 districts. Obviously, running 87 more candidates will increase your vote total. In fact, entering candidates in races that the LP had not contested in 1996 had a net effect of increasing its congressional vote total by 762,020. But the LP vote in 2000 total was up by almost a million votes from its 1996 level.

A careful analysis of the returns of all 292 congressional districts in which the LP ran a candidate in either 1996 or 2000 quickly reveals another important development: in 1996, only two LP candidates ran in districts in which one of the major parties didn't run a candidate, while in 2000 a total of 34 LP candidates found themselves in this happy situation. I say "happy situation" because fringe party candidates always do better when they face only a single major party opponent. The reason is simple. The districts in which the Republicans or Democrats do not field candidates are invari-

ably districts that they don't have a ghost of a chance of winning, although these districts contain a good number of voters loyal to the weaker major party. If you are a loyal Democrat living in a district that habitually votes 80% Republican, and your party decides not to waste money fielding a candidate, you are still disinclined to vote for the Republican. If there's another candidate on the ballot, there's

Considering all major factors, LP congressional candidates did worse in the November 2000 election than they did in 1996.

a good chance you'll vote for him. LP candidates who face only one major party opponent receive, on average, a little more than four times as many votes as those who face opponents from both major parties.

That's significant. This year, it was a very significant factor in increasing the LP's aggregate vote total. In the 34 districts where the LP faced only one major party opponent, its candidates got 640,982 votes. In its two non-competitive races in 1996, it got 30,044 votes. That means that in 2000, there was increase of more than 600,000 votes.

Of course, it's not the easiest thing in the world to estimate the party's performance in one year as compared to its performance in another. Securities analysts face a similar problem when they try to evaluate how well a chain store is doing. If McDonald's or Wal-Mart open new stores, the sales of those stores will goose total sales, even if existing stores are doing worse. The solution is to compare sales on a "same store" basis. Rather than comparing total sales from year to year, analysts compare sales from only those stores which were in operation in both years.

This suggests the best way to evaluate how the LP is doing: we should compare the total votes the party received in the districts in which it ran against similar competition (or lack of competition) in both races. This eliminates the effect

of the party's running 87 more candidates in 2000 than in 1996, as well as the effect of the 17-fold increase in the number of LP candidates who faced only a single major party opponent.

There are 115 districts that are comparable in this way. In 1996, LP candidates received 496,178 votes in those districts, or an average of 4,315 votes in each. In 2000, LP candidates received a total of 475,389 votes in the same places, or an average of 4,139. That's a decline of 4.2%.

Considering all major factors, LP congressional candidates did worse in the November 2000 election than they did in 1996. True, the aggregate for LP congressional candidates rose, but there were two reasons for this anomaly:

1) The LP ran more candidates in 2000 than in 1996.

2) In 2000, the LP ran far more candidates in uncontested races than in 1996; and voters are much more inclined to vote for fringe party candidates in uncontested races.

Getting 1.65 million votes for Congress is quite an accomplishment, and all libertarians should be grateful to the activists who contested races and contributed their time and money. It is evidence of hard work and generosity. But it is not evidence of growing support in the public at large for LP candidates or for libertarian ideas. □

A Note on the Data

Doing a comprehensive comparison of LP congressional vote totals for 1996 and 2000 required finding returns on a total of 419 races. If there is a single place to get reliable totals for all these races, we couldn't find it; neither could Richard Winger, the acknowledged authority on minor parties' electoral returns, nor LP Executive Director Steve Dasbach knew of a single, reliable source. So we pieced together data from the following sources:

1996 and 2000 LP vote totals except those from California: LP website

1996 vote totals of major parties except for those from California:

The Political Reference Almanac, compiled by Anthony Quinn, 1999.

2000 vote totals of major parties except for those from California:

LP website

All California vote totals: website of the California Secretary of State

Special thanks to Elizabeth Merritt and Shannon Seibert, both of whom assisted with the monumental job of gathering data, entering it on computer, and verifying its accuracy.

Reflections, from page 20

Simms that the Pizza Hut case seemed not to be about racial discrimination, but about the store's concern for the safety of its drivers. "Bullshit!" she replied, obviously unconvinced that a multinational corporation, or maybe any business at all, could have any concern whatsoever for its employees' lives. After all, a long political tradition has been established that only left-wingers and personal injury attorneys care about deaths on the job. One can only imagine, of course, how eager Simms, a personal injury attorney, and her cohorts would be to sue if any company was found to have forced a driver into a dangerous area in which he was injured or killed.

"How did you feel when you couldn't get a pizza?" Simms asked her clients at the hearing. "I felt sad and ashamed," replied Carl Truss. Mrs. Truss testified that she was stewing, spastic, venting, hyper, and obsessed after the delivery refusal. She walked across the street in her pajamas to visit her attorney friend, Simms, to complain that she couldn't get a pizza. Simms then filed the complaint with the

HRC, resulting in a four-year investigation of Pizza Hut.

During the hearing, I wondered how the Trusses would feel if a young black man, maybe their son, were forced to deliver a pizza to a neighborhood where the KKK was up in arms. Most of us would consider it a travesty for a store owner to force a black driver into such an area.

"We had looked at it every which way and couldn't see Pizza Hut's defense as legitimate," HRC director Morrison initially told the Pittsburgh newspapers. "More likely than not," he said, the refusal to deliver was a case of "racial discrimination." One wondered if Mr. Morrison had thought about why Pizza Hut, a company that had grown so large by meeting customers' needs, would really want to walk away from business just so they could discriminate? By the end of the hearing, following the protests by the Pizza Coalition and the testimony of the drivers, the HRC had changed its mind and the case against Pizza Hut was dismissed.

— Sarah J. McCarthy

Globalization Blues

by Leon Hadar

As Europe unites, Greece divides.

Hundreds of thousands of protesters swarming through the streets of Athens was not the kind of scene that one would have expected to see there in response to the European Union (EU) announcement that Greece would become the newest member of the euro zone. The EU announcement reflected the recognition by the advanced economies of Europe that Greece was ready to join the club of modern nations which were adopting post-nationalism, secularism, and free-market economics as a new way of life.

But many Greeks didn't see it as a sign of progress. In mid-November, when I arrived in Athens with a group of U.S. journalists, under the auspices of the American Journalism Foundation, those angry anti-EU Greeks were surging into the streets. During one of my first visits to Greece, about 20 years ago, I witnessed a large demonstration in Athens that was organized by a leftist coalition, and that brought together all the usual types one expected to meet in those events, that is, mostly long-haired young students. This time the demonstrators were led by the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church and carrying crucifixes and Greek flags, protesting the government's decision to remove religious affiliation from state identity cards. Greek membership in the EU, including the move to adopt the euro as the national currency and its integration into the global economy, symbolized a growing threat to the country's national identity.

After all, it was Brussels' pressure on Athens to adopt the EU's consensus on protecting religious minorities that forced the Socialist government to remove the religious affiliation from the identity cards. In this nation where 98 percent of the population is Orthodox Christian, the church saw the move as "another sign that the forces of globalization are eroding the traditional foundations of national society," according to Theodore Couloumbis, director of the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. "There is a lot of concern among some groups in the religious right as well as among

members of the traditional left that Greece as a national culture is now under attack by American consumerism and the European bureaucracy."

Indeed, the end of the Cold War and the integration of Greece into the global economy has produced a major political realignment in this Mediterranean country. Against the backdrop of the civil war in the late 1940s and the 1967 military coup, Greece's post-war political culture has been dominated by what seemed to be the never-ending conflict between anti-American Marxists and the U.S.-backed conservatives. Not unlike what happened in Italy and Japan, the Cold War retarded the political and economic evolution of Greece for thirty years, with the U.S. taking over the role of the sponsor of royalist and reactionary governments (whose members included figures and parties that had collaborated with the Nazis during World War II) from decrepit Great Britain.

The political right, including the monarchy and the military, backed by big business allies, cooperated with the British and Americans to help link the country to the global anti-Soviet military-political system and secure the domestic status quo. This meant the repression of political dissent and the perpetuation of a statist economy, which eventually led to the rise of the Colonels and Turkish-Greek crisis over Cyprus. The political left, including the Communists and Socialists, remained on the defensive after its defeat in the civil war, but emerged as the leading opponent of the Colonels and as the darling of "progressive" forces in Europe and the United States. One of its leaders, Andreas Papandreou, the Harvard-educated economist who headed

PASOK, the Socialist Party, and was elected as prime minister in 1981, turned Greece in a militant, collectivist, and anti-American nationalist direction that devastated the Greek economy and transformed the country into a Third World, backwater entity.

To describe what has been happening in Greece since the end of the Cold War and the acceleration of European eco-

Twenty years ago, I witnessed a demonstration in Athens that brought together the usual radical leftists. Now the demonstrators are led by the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church and carrying crucifixes and Greek flags.

nomic and political unity as a "revolution" would be an exaggeration. Like Italy and Japan, Greece is going through a slow process of "normalization." The old right-left ideological split is now history, and the political environment is being shaped by a much more reformist and market-oriented elite, whose members reject the old Marxism and xenophobic nationalism and embrace an Internet-style American culture. Not surprisingly, globalization is producing its own discontent and creating a new ideological rift that can be observed not only in Greece, but also in other European countries.

Athens, the vibrant and Americanized port city in which more than 70 percent of the country's population lives, is becoming a battleground in the new clash of civilizations. On one side are the prime minister's Socialist Party and the conservative opposition party, New Democracy, who together with the country's major business executives, academics, and journalists support Greece's ties with the EU, its

pro-American foreign policy, and its continuing efforts to reform its centralized socialist economy. On the other side is what can be described as the Red-Black alliance: the Communist Party and members of PASOK's old guard on the left, and the Orthodox Church and its allies on the right. These forces are trying to exploit the fears of many Greeks over the changes that globalization and the ties to Europe are creating. One of the major issues is the flood of more than 600,000 illegal immigrants from Albania, that many believe are "stealing" jobs from Greek citizens and contributing to the city's rising crime wave, including drugs and prostitution. A large majority of Greeks were opposed to the U.S.-led NATO bombing campaign in Yugoslavia and expressed sympathy for the Serbs, with whom they share the Orthodox religion and common cultural roots.

While the economic liberalization that is taking place in Greece has been applauded by the majority of business executives and young entrepreneurs who are trying to link Greece to the Internet-led New Economy, it is threatening the interests of two powerful economic-social groups: farmers, who are losing the protection of the state for their dwindling sector, and owners of small businesses, who are concerned about competition from large European and American retailers. It is not surprising that they are attracted to the message of the Orthodox church, whose leader, Archbishop Christodououlos, standing behind a Coca-Cola billboard, told the demonstrators in Athens that the "forces of globalization and religious marginalization are out to get us." But, for American-educated Constantine Arvanitopoulos, Director of International Relations at the University of Athens, these demonstrators are just another group of political "losers" that globalization is producing, but who under the current economic condition are not able to mount any serious challenge to the process. "It's the Greek version of the Buchanan brigades," he says, "noisy, but ineffective." □

"Menagerie in the House" *continued from page 22*

stantial number of Americans disliked the Republicans even more intensely for what they perceived to be moralism on this issue. This confirms the findings of a recent study by sociologist Alan Wolfe, who found middle-class Americans to be intensely concerned about "moral decline," but just as steadfastly opposed to people who were "judgement[al]." Ironically, the greatest moral passion of contemporary Americans turns out to be hostility to "moralism" in areas related to sex and family life.

Neal Gabler, writing in January 1999 in the Los Angeles Times about the impeachment battle, said that in:

... the longer view, the Clinton scandal was the latest and fiercest battle in what we may now recognize as a long cultural civil war, the sides of which the two major parties have come to symbolize. On one side are the Republicans, most of whom seem to believe in an objective reality and an absolute morality. Though it may sound drastic to say, if they often seem to act like the mullahs of Iran, it is because they think like those mullahs. For them, every issue seems to resolve itself into black and white, wrong and right. Homosexuality is a sin against nature. Abortion is murder because life begins at conception. Not telling the full truth before a legal tribunal is a crime no matter what the circumstances. ... This civil war isn't really about who

gains office and what policies are promulgated, which is why the Republicans don't seem to mind that the public reviles them. This civil war is about the belief in an objective reality and an implacable moral system. One suspects we will see people fall on their swords before they give up that fight.

After Florida, the real fight will have just begun, with George W. in the role of lion tamer trying to keep an unruly pride of cats in the Big Tent. Though some say he is not too bright, Bush, like Reagan, seems to understand the vitally necessary fundamental: being a uniter, not a divider. During the election recount circus, his post-election lead has grown. He's surrounded himself with competent and diverse advisors like Dick Cheney, Karen Hughes, Condoleezza Rice, and Colin Powell, black and white, male and female, pro-choice and anti-choice. When the dirt-diggers, finger-pointers, stone-throwers, mullahs, and sexists walk triumphantly forward to elbow everyone else from their place at the table, as Chris Matthews reports Jerry Falwell is already doing by trying to veto Christie Todd Whitman from a cabinet appointment, George W. might want to remind them that he ran as a compassionate conservative, as a unifier, ran to be more than Dumbo. □

Know Your Enemy

by Edward Rahn

Sometimes, it's a bad idea to give your enemy the benefit of a doubt.

For better or worse, the enormous expansion of federal bureaucracy in the 1960s was the most sweeping change in the political and social landscape of America since the Civil War. Moreover, it fundamentally changed the nature of the liberal movement. At the beginning of the Great Society, it was plausible to argue that liberals were primarily motivated by the belief that social problems could be cured by an activist government, and that larger and more active bureaucracies, at the state and, especially, at the federal level, were a means to that end.

The liberal "solution" to housing needs, for example, was to create massive, government-run public housing projects. But because the government managers had no incentive to maintain efficiency, order, or the most minimal sanitary standards, these housing projects quickly became vandalized, filthy, crime-ridden hovels. The liberal "solution" to poverty was to dispense cash and cash equivalents — food stamps, subsidized housing, subsidized daycare, subsidized medical care, and payments made to women who have illegitimate children. According to academics involved in planning the Great Society, lack of money was the reason why lower-class people engage in pathological behaviors such as drugs, alcoholism, unemployment, crime, childbearing out of wedlock, and welfare dependency. Give them the financial resources of middle-class people, and they will behave like middle-class people.

Things didn't work out that way. The expanded welfare state created a permanent welfare underclass, characterized by all those behaviors that liberals claimed they were trying to extinguish. Payments for nonwork encouraged people to refuse to work. Payments for children born out of wedlock created a pattern of illegitimate motherhood that extended down to teenage girls — liberal policies actually encouraged teenage girls to become pregnant, and family structure disappeared. With no father to provide discipline and a positive example, many young men who were born illegitimate grew up to be criminals.

Liberal "solutions" exacerbated crime, poverty, urban decay, the breakdown of the family — indeed, the breakdown of the social order. Liberals try to deny this; one of

their favorite arguments is that we are not devoting enough "resources" to fighting social problems. This "more of the same" argument — if we spend more money, establish more social programs, and hire more social workers and other bureaucrats, all our problems will disappear — was demonstrably wrong. Yet liberals continued to espouse their old, tired, big-government "solutions" to social problems long after they themselves recognized the "solutions" as abysmal failures.

If we are to understand the failure of modern liberalism, we must understand why this happened.

Every social movement can be roughly divided into two groups: a core of activists, the real movers and shakers, who generate the ideas and provide the direction, and a larger group of followers. The core of the liberal movement is comprised of people from groups that earn their livelihoods — and often, their very identities as social classes — from a large, socially activist government. These are the social workers and their academic allies, the social "scientists," as well as government bureaucrats, lawyers, public school teachers (all of whom are government employees), college and university professors (most of whom are government employees, or at least dependent upon federal grants for their salaries), organized labor (especially the government employees' unions), and the staffs of the large and heterogeneous collection of private, semiprivate, and public corporations that work for big government. These core liberals benefit directly from the growth of government. Bigger government means that there are more federal grants and more excuses for lawyers to litigate. There are more job opportunities within the social-activist government agencies, and as the number of middle level managers increases, everyone has a chance to move up in the pyramid. The conclusion to

be derived from these facts is that liberalism is driven not by ideology but by self-interest. Let us call this the Self-Interest View of Liberalism, in contrast to the earlier, Naive Ideology View of Liberalism.

One example of the Self-Interest View is its treatment of the welfare state, whose two largest components at the federal level, the departments of Housing and Urban Development and of Health and Human Services, each spend about three-quarters of their funds on administrative overhead. This is without parallel in private industry; there is no honest way an organization can have an overhead that high. If the liberals really cared about the lower classes, they would reduce the overhead; to cut it down from three-quarters to one-half would double the money available to help the subjects of the

The core of the liberal movement is comprised of people from groups that earn their livelihoods — and often, their very identities as social classes — from a large, socially activist government.

welfare state. The failure to do so cannot be explained by the Naive Ideology View, but the Self-Interest View explains it easily. Providing good jobs for welfare “professionals” is the *real* purpose of the programs; the money spent goes into the pockets of core liberals and cements the liberal coalition. The one-quarter that goes to the common folk is a by-product — the means by which the whole process is justified.

The Self-Interest View does not suggest that sincere belief is not present among liberals; rather, it suggests that the real insiders of the movement, the core liberals, are motivated primarily by financial interest. They genuinely believe that their policies are good for the country, but they have convinced themselves of this to alleviate the cognitive dissonance between the suspicion that liberalism is wasteful and ineffective, in fact bad for the country, and their drive to magnify their self-interest. Their ideology is merely an epiphenomenon of their material interests.

In accepting the Naive Ideology View for so long, liberalism’s critics have made a classic error: that of analyzing their enemy by their own standards. Opponents of big government are motivated by strongly held beliefs: social conservatives want to restore traditional morality, libertarians wish to maximize individual freedom, economic conservatives want to promote rational economic policies. Populists are hostile to internationalism in all its guises — free trade, military interventionism, the UN, the IMF, multinational corporations, etc. All are motivated by sincere beliefs about the good of society — that is, they are all basically trying to help others. Because they care about ideas and are motivated by concepts of what is good for America, they assume that the liberals are as well.

The long-standing adherence to the Naive Ideology View has led opponents of big government to focus on the battles over specific political ideas. But as the new millennium begins, politics is no longer primarily about ideology: it’s about money and power. There is one big issue undermining constitutional government and the rule of law — the drive of the liberal coalition for more money and more power.

In any struggle, one’s analysis of his enemy determines one’s tactics. Once critics of the growing power of the state recognize that the real enemy is not liberal ideology but the liberal coalition’s drive for more money and power, they will understand that their overall strategic objective must be to break the power of the liberal coalition, and there must be those who will advance this goal.

One of the greatest sources of liberal strength is the infusion of taxpayers’ money. The federal grant process is used to divert money to left-wing advocacy groups. At last report, the left was getting \$400 million every year from the public treasury. The first goal of those who seriously want to reduce state power must be to eliminate, completely, down to the last penny, all public funds going to the left. This will decrease the strength of the left and make subsequent moves easier.

The two major means by which the left has advanced its agenda are litigation in federal courts and regulations issued by the federal bureaucracy, which suggest the next two strategic objectives: clipping the wings of the federal judiciary and of the federal bureaucrats.

The left has been enormously successful in advancing its agenda by transferring into judicial arenas matters which are properly the concern of legislatures. Such judicial imperialism is, in and of itself, a mortal danger to democracy, since people no longer rule themselves if any enactment of their elected representatives may be overturned at the whim of unelected federal justices. It has been pointed out* that Article III, Section 2 of the Constitution gives Congress the power to regulate the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The lesser federal courts, being established under authority of Congress, can also be similarly limited.

Without needing to pass a constitutional amendment, Congress can and should forbid federal courts from banning any practice or overruling any law that does not involve a violation of the exact letter of the Constitution or the common law as it existed at the time of the establishment of the Constitution. By this one action, judicial imperialism can be eliminated.

The second course of action will be far more difficult to implement. It was once an accepted premise of constitutional law that the legislative authority of Congress cannot be delegated. But as the left grew in influence during this century, it persuaded America to accept delegation of legislative authority to the federal bureaucracy. Today, Congress routinely enacts laws that merely establish general goals, and leave federal bureaucrats to write regulations to implement them. In practice, unelected bureaucrats use this as a loophole to write new laws that have little to do with the original legislation passed by Congress.

Critics of contemporary liberalism must argue that while it is acceptable for federal departments to write regulations that govern internal practices and procedures of those departments, it is totally unacceptable — and unconstitutional — for American citizens to be prosecuted for violating any federal regulation. They must fight to re-establish the principle that American citizens can only be prosecuted at the federal level for violating laws passed by Congress. This is a radical step, since it contradicts the entire trend in American government

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* George, R.P. and R. Ponnuru, “Rule by Law,” *National Review* (Feb. 26, 1996) p. 54-55, 68.

The Unacknowledged Premise

by Robert Formaini

There are times when a sub rosa belief can make fruitful
dialogue impossible.

Recently, I had an exchange of e-mail with an economist whose name would no doubt be familiar to readers of this magazine. We had some disagreement, and he, I suppose with some exasperation, finally demanded to know why I didn't wholeheartedly support one of his opinions. After thinking it over, it suddenly occurred to me why he and I did not — and literally could never — agree about the matter then at hand: he's an anarchist and I am not.

In itself, this was hardly a profound observation, and I will not dignify it with that much-overused word "epiphany." But this exchange did get me thinking about something that I believe is important — the fundamentally different types of libertarianism and why "full disclosure" is important in political and economic debate.

Too often, the unremarked premise of assuming anarchism hinders people's ability to communicate their differences effectively. Given the reputation anarchism has in this country, I can understand the reluctance by some practitioners to admit such a position "up front." And given the nature of the stakes involved, I even can understand the revisionist history that is always being written, which tries to turn non-anarchists into anarchists after they are no longer with us to dispute such claims. But none of this kind of writing and arguing is going to change anyone's mind because many anarchists have a secret: They know why the argument is going around in circles, but their intellectual opponents do not. Being an anarchist means being allowed to criticize endlessly without the burden of having to offer an explicitly anarchist alternative.

Since I have said that I am in favor of full disclosure on this issue, I happily admit to having many anarchist friends and acquaintances. In fact, one of my more enjoyable pursuits is to play a golf match against a good friend of mine who is an anarchist, and debate the various issues that arise as we meander after our golf shots for 18 holes until he has, once again, beaten me. (At golf, anyway.) So, as you can see, I am not an anarchist-basher — I take the perspective seriously and

always have, and I am not unacquainted with its central and even its peripheral arguments, nor with many of its intellectual champions. In brief, I don't think that an anarchist society would be populated by bearded bomb-throwers, nor would it lack roads, schools, and law because there was no central government to "provide" these things. I am a sympathetic critic of anarchism, not a rabid opponent. And in this capacity of a sympathetic friend, even if, ultimately, a non-believer, I want to ask a favor of anarchists everywhere. As Ayn Rand put it so often, and so charmingly: "State your [damn] premises."

If you and I are engaged in any kind of real discussion, it matters greatly whether we are talking about reforming something or eliminating it altogether. If you do not tell me that you are an anarchist, then you are implicitly holding me and my time — which is, as for us all, limited — in utter contempt. For you are wasting my time. And you have the argumentative advantage for, no matter what I say, you will disagree but never reveal the nature of the fundamental disagreement between us. What possible good can come of such endlessly unfulfilled discussions?

Are there many discussions of the type that I have just described? Unfortunately there are, and not just verbal ones. I've read many of them as they were carried on (and in some cases on and on and on) in magazines and journals. I suggest the following disclaimer be adopted by anarchists: "I am an anarchist and the following analysis is based upon that viewpoint." Alternatively, when comments are given where being an anarchist is less important, it might read: "Readers should know that I am an anarchist, but that I do not consider that fact to be important regarding this particular topic . . . although readers might."

Now, quite obviously I am being a bit facetious here.

Anarchists would never adopt a rigid disclaimer code, whether publicly (before the always-coming revolution that will free them from anything "public") or privately suggested. But perhaps some of them will accept the spirit of the idea and explicitly state their starting point before launching their speeches, comments, written papers, books . . . whatever, as Gen-Xers like to say. I can think of absolutely no reasonable objections to this general disclaimer policy.

Libertarian anarchists might respond that it is unfair to demand of them disclosures that are not demanded of their

Being an anarchist means being allowed to criticize endlessly without the burden of having to offer an explicitly anarchist alternative.

political opponents. In the case of liberals and conservatives, this is mostly irrelevant. They are self-identified by what they support, what they oppose, or where they publish. Their paper trails and income sources always betray them. The better analogy would be to communists, and I would like them to admit their starting position as well. "As a communist, I support returning Elián González to Cuba which now, as always, owns him and any and all of his future potential." None of this "rights of the father" mantra ought to be allowed when the offending pundit is just another domestic

red fellow traveler towing the current commie line.

What I am requesting is simple honesty on the part of America's libertarian intellectual class, regardless of whether followers of other ideologies do likewise. It is frustrating and useless to spend an hour or so debating what the First Amendment really means only to find out that one's opponent is an anarchist for whom the U.S. Constitution is a non-binding document of no current importance outside a history class. If that's the way you see it, then why not just say so and save a bunch of time?

Just the other day I read an interesting discussion about the writing and passage of the Constitution. To the unsuspecting reader, this analysis read like a postmodern, deconstructionist interpretation of that document by a rather conventional leftist thinker. Because I know the author, I know what was really going on: he's a libertarian anarchist but, as usual, he failed to inform the reader of that fact. Why?

Is it, perhaps, because many anarchists are funded by non-anarchists — mostly free-market-supporting, conservative types — and to admit their position openly might jeopardize their current and future income? Could this be why we have so many "closeted" libertarian anarchists?

In that case, maybe they should all be "outed." After all, as anarchists they could have no principled objection to one's personal information being made public. And since truth is a defense against slander and libel, neither would they have recourse for redress, regardless of the impact on their personal fortunes, under the current governmentally-imposed legal system. Maybe an informative, new Internet site should be started. Just kidding . . . I think. □

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for the last 70 years. Most of the tax code would be abolished, along with most of the rules under which the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Environmental Protection Agency, and numerous other federal agencies operate. This may take years to implement. But it must be done.

Many will argue that enabling legislation is necessary because a modern welfare state is so complex and has so many issues to deal with that it would be impossible for any legislature to enact all its laws and regulations. To which the answer is: just so, but this is not an argument for the bureaucratic state; it is an argument for dismantling it. Since it amounts to saying that the welfare state and democracy are incompatible.

Winning this battle involves public relations. The left fights the battle for public opinion every day of every year, and will stoop to any means to defeat and destroy their enemies in the court of public opinion. Critics of big government gear up every two years to publicize their ideas in the four months or so before the election. They have persisted in trying to convince the public that they are more practical than the liberals. Liberals counter with the claim that they are compassionate, and conservatives are callous. Unfortunately, compassion trumps pragmatism every time. Much of the public says, "The Democrats may be somewhat naive, but at least they care." Once again, the Naive Ideology View undermines liberalism's critics.

Instead of trying to play their game, we who advocate private property and limited government must cut across the

compassion argument entirely by publicizing the Self-Interest View. When the liberals say, "We need bigger government and higher taxes to cure social ills and help the poor and downtrodden," we must reply, "The liberals only want higher taxes because they pocket most of that money, and all their talk of compassion is just a ploy to pick your pockets." This speaks to the self-interest of every listener. It appeals to those portions of the electorate that are the most difficult to reach. It is not in the interest of blacks, Hispanics,

As the new millennium begins, politics is no longer primarily about ideology: it's about money and power.

and rank-and-file union members that they be plundered for the benefit of well-to-do white people who have never done real work in their lives. The leadership of nearly every liberal special interest group has been co-opted by federal grants, money which does not benefit the groups' ordinary members. If we make the Self-Interest View the focus of an ongoing public relations effort, we can capture the allegiance of those groups and turn them against the aggressively leftist leaders who betray the real interests of their followers.

Make no mistake about it: we are at war. And if we intend to win that war, we must understand our enemy and attack him where he is vulnerable. □

Libertarian Activism: Time for a Change?

In the January Liberty, R.W. Bradford concluded an article about the disappointing results for Libertarian Party candidates in the November elections with an invitation for readers to participate in a symposium on libertarian activism. Specifically, he posed these questions to readers:

- *Should libertarians abandon the hope (or the pretense) that the LP might become a major party?*
- *Should libertarians continue to operate as a minor party on the fringe of American politics?*
- *Should libertarians continue to believe that we are having an impact?*
- *Is there any way to reorganize or reorient our efforts so that we can achieve some of our goals?*
- *Should libertarians abandon political activism altogether?*

A few days later, Bradford invited several prominent libertarians to address the same questions by writing an essay or article for publication in Liberty.

The response both from readers and those who were specifically invited was overwhelming. In this issue, we publish a variety of assessments of libertarian activism. In our next issue, we'll publish critical analyses of these comments and the views of our readers.

Learn from the Environmentalists

by Randal O'Toole

For 28 years, libertarians have invested tens of millions of dollars and uncounted thousands of hours of hard work running candidates for elective office. What dividends has this investment paid? Virtually none: the highest office any Libertarian Party candidate has ever won in a partisan race is state representative, a position the party has won in only two small states, Alaska and New Hampshire, and has been

unable to hold.

Worse still, libertarian impact on the nation's political agenda has been negligible. The power of the state continues to grow unchecked, and libertarians aren't even part of the debate.

It should now be clear to every libertarian that running candidates for president and other elective offices is not an effective use of our resources.

It's time for the LP to take stock of its assets and liabilities and see whether it can find a way to be effective. There's no reason to throw good money at an enterprise that has never succeeded.

Three decades ago, libertarians and environmentalists were in similar situations. The libertarian movement and the environmental movement were just getting started; neither had much political power. Both were concerned with issues that were vital to Americans' lives and personal goals. Both attracted large numbers of young people and idealists. Both were driven by a vision that resonated with America's heritage: environmentalists to the idea that nature ought to be left free to run its course, libertarians to a notion that people ought to be left free to do as they please.

Yet the two movements have had dramatically different impacts. Environmentalists have succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. Today, it seems all an environmentalist group has to do is say "boo!" and the whole country jumps. Libertarians remain on the fringe of American life, hardly known to the general public, often confused with conservatives or libertines.

The issues that libertarians have raised are just as important and just as timely as those raised by environmentalists, if not more so. The fate of a spotted owl in a distant forest is far less important to most people than their huge tax bills, governmental restrictions on their daily activity, or the risk that they'll be sent to prison and have their property confiscated as a result of their having participated in victimless crimes.

There are two reasons why libertarians failed where environmentalists succeeded.

First, the environmental movement was broad based and

inclusive. I've seen nuclear engineers working on anti-logging campaigns and loggers working on anti-nuclear campaigns, often in the same offices and sitting on the boards of directors of the same environmental groups. This inclusiveness has not watered down the environmentalists' message, but it has enabled the movement to adapt to more situations and appeal to more people. It also involves many

The government kowtows to every environmental rumor and whim, and runs roughshod over private property rights and personal liberties of every kind while libertarians whine on the sidelines.

people who would not otherwise identify with the environmental movement — hunters interested in preserving the populations of game birds, for example, and loggers interested in sustainable forestry.

Libertarians have never been inclusive. Indeed, the largest libertarian organization, the Libertarian Party, has always been exclusive, insisting that people sign a profession of belief to become members — a profession so parochial that many prominent libertarians, including Ludwig von Mises and Milton Friedman, could not sign it. The LP has beaten back attempts to modify or eliminate its oath, on the ludicrous theory that the oath protects the party from being taken over by non-libertarians.

Another reason environmentalists have had so much more impact than libertarians is their willingness to use a broad range of tactics to promote their cause. Environmental groups engage in public education, legislative and administrative lobbying, litigation, street theater, and research. They hold conferences and workshops, take people on tours, and write letters to the editor. In short, they do everything they can to capture the public's attention.

Libertarians, meanwhile, rely almost entirely on two tactics: they operate think tanks, and they run someone for president every four years. Of the two tactics, the think tanks have been more successful. They have published hundreds of research and policy papers, many of which have influenced some public policy.

Environmentalists also have think tanks, of course, but such activities represent only a tiny portion of their efforts. They don't rely on them as much as libertarians do. Protests, street theater, and Earth Day have all bolstered and promoted the green agenda.

Both groups have gone against their instincts of how best to manage an organization. Libertarians, who are supposedly enamored with free markets, seem to prefer a centrally-managed movement, while environmentalists, who are in theory opposed to free markets, have created a movement that is decentralized and encourages initiative.

Rather than run their own platform, environmentalists have, from their earliest days, made an effort to work with politicians in both major political parties. During the 1980s,

they discovered that demonizing members of one party was an excellent fundraising tool, so they formed an alliance with the Democratic party, which was in control of both houses of Congress. When the Republicans gained control of Congress in 1994, environmentalists established relations with enough Republicans in Congress to stop most legislation they didn't like.

Libertarians, in contrast, chose to align themselves with a party that has never played a role in government. Libertarian Party members (and not a few think-tank leaders) think it is more fun to take potshots at Republicans and Democrats than it is to build bridges to legislators with whom they may agree on "only" some issues.

The results are predictable: the government kowtows to every environmental rumor and whim, and runs roughshod over private property rights and personal liberties of every kind, while libertarians whine on the sidelines.

Harry Browne has proven that the best of intentions and innovative fundraising ideas alone cannot resurrect a failed tactic. As Alan Bock pointed out, the press almost completely ignored Browne, while it gave extensive coverage to Ralph Nader and even Pat Buchanan. Bock suggests that this is a case of Washington insiders getting a boost from their friends in the media. In fact, Nader got attention because he had a real chance of stealing the election from Al Gore. Buchanan got attention because he took over Ross Perot's party, which tipped the 1992 election to Bill Clinton. The message is clear: third parties will be covered if they have a chance of changing the outcome of elections. The Libertarian Party has never approached this level of support.

Running as a third-party candidate might be worthwhile if the campaign educated people about the issues. Unfortunately, the millions of dollars spent by the Libertarian Party and the Browne campaign have done precious little for public civic education. While Browne managed to run a few television commercials on a few cable networks, there is no evidence that his two campaigns

The Libertarian Party is made up of thousands of intelligent and motivated people. Instead of investing all our money and energy into ineffective efforts like third party campaigns, it should look for ways that actually promote its goal of advancing liberty.

changed any minds or had any influence on governmental policy.

I believe libertarians should adopt the successful strategy of the environmental movement. Libertarian Party members should entirely give up on the idea of being a third party that runs candidates under an independent banner. The party should not disband. Instead, it should change itself from a political party into a non-profit activist group similar to the Sierra Club.

I select the Sierra Club because its structure closely

Libertarian Activism: Time for a Change?

resembles that of the Libertarian Party, being a national organization with a national staff and tens of thousands of members organized into state and local chapters. Throughout its history, the Sierra Club was exactly what its name suggests — a club one joined to enjoy outdoor experi-

Libertarian Party members should abandon the idea of running candidates under an independent banner. But the party should not disband: It should change itself from a political party into a non-profit activist group similar to the Sierra Club.

ences such as hiking, backpacking, river running, and bicycling. The club still sponsors such activities, but since the late 1960s it has become highly politicized, engaging in lobbying, litigation, and publishing on behalf of the natural environment.

The exact name libertarians choose is not terribly important. I'll refer to it as the Liberty Club as a matter of convenience and to retain the parallel to the Sierra Club. Like the Sierra Club, the Liberty Club could lobby, litigate, support ballot measures, endorse major candidates, and provide grassroots support for libertarian policies. The Liberty Club could have a national office in Washington, D.C. Naturally, the D.C. office would work closely with the Cato Institute, the Competitive Enterprise Institute, and other libertarian think tanks that are already on the scene. It would not duplicate their work, but it would do things that think tanks do not, such as actively lobby on Capitol Hill.

State and local chapters of the Liberty Club could address state and local issues. While the D.C. office might lobby to stop the FBI from reading people's e-mail, the Washington state chapter might work to keep local growth control laws from interfering with people's property rights. Both the national and the state groups could draw on Club membership for letter writing at critical periods of their campaigns.

In addition to lobbying, chapters in many states could circulate initiative petitions to put measures on local ballots and conduct campaigns to win support for those measures. Even without libertarian involvement, initiative campaigns have already limited taxes, legalized medical marijuana, and protected Second Amendment rights. With the Liberty Club providing organized support, initiatives could be an even more effective way to advance liberty. Political conventions could be replaced by conferences and workshops aimed at helping local staff and volunteers be more effective.

Donations to organizations that promote or oppose specific pieces of legislation are not tax-deductible, so environmental groups have set up affiliates to provide support without lobbying. For example, the Sierra Club has created the Sierra Club Foundation. The Liberty Club could do the same.

To promote environmental litigation, the Sierra Club

started the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund (which since has changed its name to the Earth Justice Legal Defense Fund). The ACLU covers some civil liberties, and various conservative legal foundations work to protect property rights. There is still plenty of room for the Liberty Club to begin its own Liberty Legal Defense Fund to defend illegal drug users, challenge asset forfeitures, and call attention to other government restrictions on liberty.

Environmentalists climb trees, not to keep loggers from cutting the trees down, but to get public attention for the trees they are trying to save. Though the Sierra Club doesn't consider tree-sitting to be quite respectable, it does provide assistance to people who want to begin their own groups dedicated to specific issues. As a result, the environmental movement is made up of thousands of organizations with professional staffs and thousands of other volunteer groups.

Similarly, the Liberty Club should make no effort to be the only, or even the largest, group promoting liberty. It should encourage the formation of other groups, either groups that can do things that the Club itself might not want to do, or groups dedicated to single issues such as the Drug War or the War on Sprawl.

The Libertarian Party is made up of thousands of intelligent and motivated people. It has the resources needed to put candidates on the ballot in every state and fund its candidates' political campaigns. Instead of investing all this money and energy into ineffective efforts like third-party campaigns, it should look for ways that actually promote its goal of advancing liberty. Changing the Libertarian Party into the Liberty Club will do this.

It's time to get away from the fringe and into the process of changing the world. □

Keeping the Faith

by Steve Dasbach

Why would someone choose to get involved in building or supporting a third political party in America? More specifically, why would a libertarian choose to get actively involved in the Libertarian Party?

Henry David Thoreau said it best: "In the long run men hit only what they aim at." If we want liberty and justice for every American, then we must squarely aim for what we want. For a libertarian, that means supporting the Libertarian Party and helping it to succeed.

America is relentlessly traveling down the road to serfdom. Each and every day, we have less individual liberty to bequeath to the next generation. I believe that most libertarians, irrespective of their opinion of the Libertarian Party, want to see this trend reversed.

History suggests that the task is daunting, perhaps even impossible. One is hard-pressed to find examples of people achieving liberty without first experiencing repression, tyranny, and revolution. Unfortunately, all too often, the result of revolution is more repression and tyranny, as one despot simply replaces another. We owe it to our children to find a better alternative.

The founders of our republic provided the means to rein

in the power of government, if the American people are willing to use it. Our task as libertarians is to find the most effective way to make it happen.

Can this best be accomplished by working within the existing major political parties? Experience suggests otherwise.

The major parties are conduits for exercising political power. Both are overwhelmingly populated with those seeking to exercise power for their own advantage. That is, they are overwhelmingly populated by non-libertarians.

Suppose we libertarians took the advice given by some and tried to "take over" one of the major parties and use it to promote a libertarian agenda. To promote even a mildly libertarian agenda, that party would have to turn against the interests of those in the party exercising power for their own advantage. Which is to say, most of the party hierarchy.

Folks, it isn't going to happen. The only way you'll ever get these people to give up their power is to wrench it away from them. But that's the one thing you can't effectively do from within a major party.

When you work within a major party, you are expected to support the party leadership. To support other party candidates, no matter how bad you think they are. To support the party's policy agenda and vote for your colleagues' "pork."

If you don't go along, your bills die in committee, your access to lists and money disappears, and you will likely face a challenge in the next primary. Even if you manage to hang onto your seat, you won't be in a position to accomplish much.

To see how this works in the real world, consider the record of the past six years, since the Republicans campaigned on the Contract with America and took control of the House.

As you may recall, the Republicans boldly called for the elimination of three cabinet agencies and 95 government programs. So what happened?

- Over the past three years, total discretionary spending approved by Congress exceeded Bill Clinton's budget requests by more than \$30 billion. The 2001 Senate Budget resolution, if enacted, would result in the largest two-year increase in domestic spending since 1977-78 — an astounding 11% — after adjusting for inflation.

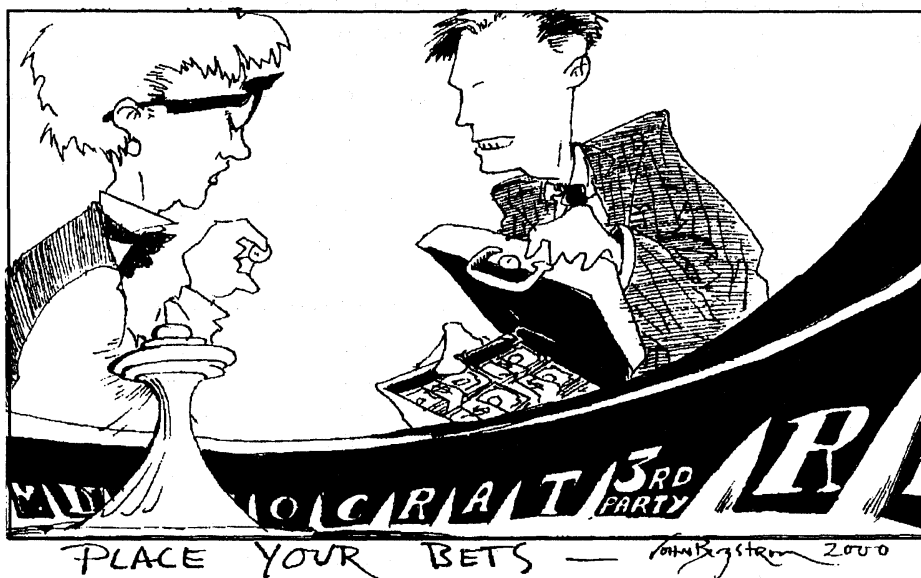
- President Clinton's pet project, AmeriCorps, which costs taxpayers about \$12 for every hour "volunteered," is more than three times larger today than it was in 1995.

- The Department of Education, which Ronald Reagan proposed eliminating in 1980, and the Republicans still wanted to eliminate back in 1994, is looking at a total budget increase of more than 25% since 1999. And President-elect Bush seems certain to call for even more federal spending on education.

- Republican members of Congress even put Democrats to

shame when it comes to dishing out pork, with ridiculous appropriations such as half a million dollars for the Springfield Library and Museum Association in Massachusetts to build a memorial to Dr. Seuss.

GOP Sen. Chuck Hagel perhaps said it best, with his frank assessment that Republicans keep "sticking [their] snouts in the



trough just like the Democrats."

Now it is certainly possible that some individual libertarians may be able to more readily get elected as Democrats or Republicans than as Libertarians — although there is little evidence to support that. However, given our recent experience with electing "less government" Republicans, it is highly

Building a new political party, dedicated to advancing liberty, large enough to have an impact on politics, it is the only alternative that offers any real hope of restoring our American heritage of freedom.

unlikely that working within either major party will result in policy changes that actually promote liberty.

With the notable exception of Ron Paul, even the most "libertarian" congressmen aren't very libertarian. According to David Boaz's rating of Congress, which appeared in the May 2000 issue of *Liberty*, the average Republican scored 52%, a paltry nine points higher than the average Democrat. Even more telling, the median rating for the so-called "Republican-libertarians" (i.e. members of the "Advisory Board" of the Republican Liberty Caucus) was an embarrassing 58%.

This also points out the limitations of relying on non-political organizations to advance the cause of liberty. The Cato Institute has produced first-rate public policy materials for more than two decades and is considered one of the more

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influential think tanks on Capitol Hill. It makes sure that every member of Congress has access to well-reasoned libertarian policy proposals, together with all the supporting research to back them up.

But despite Cato's alleged clout, the size and cost of the federal government has grown relentlessly every year.

The fact is, unless there is enough outside pressure on Congress — unless individual representatives are worried about losing their seats if they vote to further restrict individual liberty — libertarian proposals from think tanks simply don't get enacted.

Given the reality of major party politics, working to build the Libertarian Party as an independent, grassroots party that consistently promotes individual liberty on all issues appears to be the strategy with the greatest likelihood of success.

We have several historical examples of third parties promoting specific public-policy agendas, developing public support for those agendas, demonstrating that support at the ballot box, and having a portion of that agenda enacted by one of the major parties. In fact, it appears that only the threat of losing votes to a third party provides sufficient stimulus for major-party politicians to take actions that would otherwise be contrary to their own interests.

Many of these have been organized around a single issue, or charismatic personality, or both. These have had the greatest immediate impact and generated the most presidential votes. The most recent example was Ross Perot's campaign in 1992, which convinced Congress that it simply had to balance the budget (or at least appear to do so).

However, once the issue is addressed, or the party founder moves on, these parties quickly fade away. They sting once, then die. The Reform Party appears to be following this pattern, and may not even run a presidential candidate in 2004.

Parties that organize, instead, around a set of principles and a broad range of issues can have an impact that is more pervasive. The best example is the Socialist Party, whose ideas formed the basis of much of today's welfare state. Some of these ideas, such as the income tax, Social Security, and Medicare, are now considered givens by both major parties.

Third parties like the Socialists drew their strength from their grassroots organization, and by running candidates at all levels, just as the Libertarian Party does today. In fact, the Libertarian Party this year became the first third party since the Socialists to run candidates for a majority of U.S. House seats, and the first ever to earn over a million cumulative votes for the U.S. House (actually 1.65 million).

By fielding candidates at all levels, more than twice as many as all other third parties combined, we are able to address a wide range of libertarian issues. Our presence on the ballot provides major party candidates a strong incentive to address our issues. And our elected officials, twice as many as all other third parties combined, give us the opportunity to demonstrate that libertarian ideas work at the local level.

For example, we've run thousands of Libertarian candidates who have consistently called for an end to the government's War on Drugs. In the face of attacks and ridicule, we've continued to stand up for what we know is right, and

moved a fringe issue into the political mainstream.

Today, initiatives to legalize medical marijuana are passing by 2-to-1 margins in states around the country, and ending drug prohibition altogether is becoming part of the political debate. A few major party politicians are even talking openly about ending the War on Drugs — more will follow. By aiming at what we knew was right, we now stand a real chance of hitting it.

Contrast our actions with those of the National Rifle Association. For years, the NRA has refused to acknowledge

Our presence on the ballot provides major party candidates a strong incentive to address our issues.

the existence of Libertarian candidates. They have endorsed Republicans whose opposition to gun control was lukewarm at best over Libertarians who were committed to the right to keep and bear arms. They have tried to defend the Second Amendment by talking about hunting and target shooting.

They've failed.

The NRA has failed to stop the erosion of the Second Amendment because they have accepted the lies that are the foundation of conventional wisdom:

- You can do good only if you have political power.
- You can't change anything unless you're on the inside.
- To get along, you've got to go along.
- It's always better to support the "lesser of two evils."

They haven't aimed at what they really wanted — to restore the right to keep and bear arms. And you can't hit what you don't aim at.

It's the same problem that "libertarians" working within the major parties have. After supporting the "lesser of two evils," after "going along to get along," after doing whatever it takes to gain political power, they find that they still can't really change anything. They've sold out their principles for nothing.

Until there is a major party in America fully committed to restoring our heritage of individual liberty, we will continue down the road to serfdom. Maybe the Libertarian Party will grow to become that party, displacing one of our competitors like the Republicans did in 1860. Maybe we will spur one of the existing major parties into co-opting our agenda, like the Socialists did in the early 1900s.

Perhaps we will need to change our strategy dramatically. Perhaps the key is to simply grow a lot bigger. After all, we've grown more since Harry Browne's nomination in July 1996 than in the entire history of the LP up until that point — the same is true for the number of Libertarians elected to public office. Whatever the answer, it is certainly a discussion worth having.

According to a poll by Rasmussen Research, 16% of Americans — about one of every six voters — strongly agree with the libertarian position on issues. That's more than the number who strongly agree with either the liberal or conservative position. It's a base we can draw upon to build a

stronger, more successful Libertarian Party.

For nearly 30 years, the members of the Libertarian Party have chosen principle over power. We've chosen to aim at the bull's eye of what we know is right; knowing that's the only way we'll ever succeed in hitting it.

Building a new political party, dedicated to advancing liberty, large enough to have an impact on politics, is a monumental undertaking. However, I believe it is the only alternative that offers any real hope of restoring our American heritage of freedom. □

Seize Opportunities for Freedom

by Jane S. Shaw

Resources going into the Libertarian Party could be better spent. The Libertarian Party may be a lot of fun — as I have said before, being active in the LP is kind of like a Las Vegas vacation — but the world is crying out for freedom.

No one knows exactly how to bring freedom about, in this country or abroad. During the past two decades, as the Libertarian Party struggled in an almost futile effort to have a modicum of impact, libertarian-leaning people have done great things.

When the Soviet Union was on the brink of collapse, Tom Palmer, now with Cato, was smuggling books by Hayek and Mises into Eastern Europe. The Atlas Economic Research Foundation was starting a growing collection of free-market institutes in Eastern Europe and around the world from Hong Kong to Ghana. In war-torn Guatemala, Manuel Ayau

I urge those who have been devoting time and resources to the Libertarian Party to consider applying them to other activities. But I do not expect that to happen.

was building a free-market university that is now a beacon for Latin America.

In the United States, scholars developed concepts such as free-market environmentalism and justice without government. Others challenged the reigning precepts on gun control and welfare.

The scholarly case for liberty received intellectual backing through the decade-long development of an index that measures economic freedom throughout the world (the work of James Gwartney, Milton Friedman, and others), as well as a similar index developed by the Heritage Foundation. Already, the Economic Freedom Index has been shown to correlate with prosperity, environmental improvement, and higher living standards for even the poorest in each society.

The developers of the Economic Freedom Index, along with many other libertarian scholars, some in marginal positions and less-than-lofty institutions, were aided by the leg-

acy of Pierre Goodrich. His foundation, Liberty Fund, gives scholars opportunities to meet and discuss liberty unfettered by political correctness. Other organizations like PERC, FEE, and the Institute for Humane Studies have reached out to college students — and their professors — helping them as they question the prevailing paradigm of “let the government do it.”

Something about politics — the oratory, caucuses, power, rumor, uncertainty, wheeling and dealing — is apparently intoxicating to many people.

Indeed, as universities showed themselves to be more sinks than spawning grounds for new ideas, think tanks became the purveyors of new ideas. Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation was the architect of welfare reform, while the intellectual case for school vouchers comes from many groups, including an organization sponsored by long-time advocates for freedom Milton and Rose Friedman.

For Ed Crane, libertarian activism took the form of creating the Cato Institute, which he developed into a first-class organization, even in the belly of the beast. Crane made it acceptable to discuss the limits of foreign intervention and to argue in favor of a free market, as does the feisty Fred Smith and his Competitive Enterprise Institute.

The new economy spurred new media, including Fox News, which breaks the pro-Democratic Party mold of the other news channels. This, of course, followed the arrival of C-Span, which gave libertarian gatherings a chance to be heard nationally, and whose founder Brian Lamb introduces libertarian ideas through his even-handed “Book Notes.” All the while, *Liberty* magazine has provided a forum for libertarians and those who lean in that direction, helping them discover one another as well as share their ideas, and *Reason* has continued to reach for a broader audience.

There is much to be done by libertarians, and at least some doors are open. This list is suggestive, not exhaustive. Thus, I urge those who have been devoting time and resources to the Libertarian Party to consider applying them to other activities.

But I do not expect that to happen. Those resources may not be readily transferable.

Why? Because there is something appealing about political activity. I don't happen to share a taste for it, but others do. Something about politics — the oratory, caucuses, power, rumor, uncertainty, wheeling and dealing — is apparently intoxicating to many people. It's not easy to find a substitute. The behind-the-scenes work of think tanks or libertarian magazines can't hold a candle to it.

So, while many activities need the help of libertarians, if politics is your main game, I suggest you consider Bruce Ramsey's advice (January) to join the Republican Party. It needs libertarians desperately. No, it would not be as much fun as the Libertarian Party. You would have to rub shoulders with, and even endorse, conservative country clubbers

and moderate would-be regulators. You would be in the minority. You would have to compromise.

But you could have an impact on the course of this country's future. And if you look hard, you may find some libertarians there already. □

Going Local

by Ken Sturzenacher

The LP's most recent presidential campaign did more of what it did in 1996, and got worse results. For the next four years, let's do what works.

If libertarians and national Libertarian Party officials are willing to learn lessons from the post-election campaigns in Florida, they can start with this one: the LP is completely unable to contend at this level.

That sounds obvious, but the party's inability to compete nationally is far more basic than its inability to summon to its defense dozens of high-priced attorneys from anywhere in the nation to anywhere else in this nation on a day's notice. The LP does not have enough dedicated activists nationally to post one outside each of Pennsylvania's 9,000+ polling places on election day. The LP barely has enough dues-paying members to hand out election-day palm cards at all the polling places in the three West Coast states.

In short, after 28 years and eight presidential campaigns, the LP cannot even be certain all the votes cast for its candidates are counted in any given state.

For the past six years, LP members have been inundated with a deluge of propaganda promising stunning breakthroughs, if only some particular stratagem is undertaken. Every "if only" stratagem required demonstrating one's fealty to the latest vision by sending more and more money to LP HQ or the Harry Browne campaign. Reading through a series of fundraising entreaties from LP HQ since 1994, one might get the impression that the strategic plan was to cover the office walls with plaques bearing the engraved names of those successfully persuaded to part with yet another \$100 or more.

Many of these drives have been touted as having been highly successful, but comparisons solely against prior performances rather than against stated objectives can distort the picture. Consider Project Archimedes, for example. To some, including its spinmeisters, the increase in LP national membership from 21,500 at start of 1997 to a peak of more than 33,400 before the end of 1999 is a huge achievement. But the architects of Archimedes have not recently mentioned their formerly oft-repeated mantra that Archimedes would produce 200,000 dues-paying members for the national LP by the dawn of the (media's *vs.* the calendar's) new millennium.

As recently as the December 2000 issue of the *LP News*, David Bergland (1984 presidential nominee, 1996 Harry Browne for President chairman, and 1998-2000 LP national chairman) dragged out that propagandists' old stunt once again, with this phrase:

"We have substantially more members (about 10 times as many as when I ran in 1984 . . .)"

What an triumph of Orwellian language! Membership *before* Bergland ran in 1984 was a hundred times larger than when the party was founded in late 1971, a period of 12 years. So a party only ten times larger in all of 16 years since Bergland ran should, in Bergland's own terms, be considered a dismal failure.

Perhaps it was only space constraints at the end his recollections, but Bergland chose not to remind us that LP membership has been stuck for about a year at one-third of the number Bergland himself had promised it would be at the end of 1999.

Where the party's architects failed, the chief spinmeisters have succeeded. Too bad these individuals, some of whom play both roles, have been better at fooling some into believing that so little is enormous, and that what was not achieved is of no consequence.

In the wake of what the *LP News* editor William Winter called Harry Browne's "heartbreakingly, shockingly low" vote total of slightly more than 376,000 — "lower than anyone expected" — the party's board of directors, the Libertarian National Committee (LNC), is embarking on a new round of strategic planning. To the extent that there was a plan beyond Harry Browne's two presidential runs, the LNC supported a strategy of getting enough candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives to claim that American voters had the ability to elect a Libertarian majority to Congress.

Having started on that track since 1995, more than enough Libertarians were on the ballot in 2000 with the potential to make the so-called Republican Revolution of 1994 look small.

What the LNC neglected to do, however, was devise any means to support its 255 federal-level candidates. With very few exceptions, most LP candidates hoping to wake up as Congressmen-elect did not raise even \$10,000.

Oh, yes, the headquarters staff did try something. Late in the campaign — that is, after Labor Day — LP national director Steve Dasbach offered those federal-level candidates a challenge: raise a minimum of \$5,000 to buy TV airtime, and we at HQ will match you dollar for dollar. Fewer than ten candidates were able to respond to the challenge successfully; the first check of the roughly \$40,000 sent out by HQ was dropped into the mail in mid-October, just as the cres-

Four years ago, with relatively little effort, more than two dozen Libertarians won election as either Inspector or Judge of Elections.

cendo of TV advertising messages from a swarm of candidates for a multitude of offices was reaching its peak.

Dasbach has said this was a test of a plan to help candidates in the 2002 election. That may be true in hindsight, but the "test" grew out of an almost casual exchange among conversants during a conference call of the LNC's Executive Committee members. Without direction from the EC,

Dasbach was left to decide what to do.

In the four weeks after the election, the media relations staff at LP HQ did not mention the vote totals or percentages received by those few candidates who did receive matching funds for TV ads. The inescapable conclusion: if the ads did have any impact, it's too little to notice statistically.

Back to the drawing boards.

More precisely, back to the grassroots.

That starts inside the polling place, with the individuals generally known as Inspectors or Judges of Election. Whatever their titles, they are the individuals who check your name against the list of registered voters, check your signature against the signature on file, and mark that you have voted, so that, in theory, no one else can do so using your name. Four years ago, with relatively little effort, more

Not every victory is that easy, of course. But there is an important lesson: if Libertarians, especially county and local LP activists, look for these opportunities, they can and will find plenty of them.

than two dozen Libertarians won election as either Inspector or Judge of Elections. Two Pennsylvanians are actively involved in trying to build on that number in 2001. Ken Krawchuk has developed this campaign for the most local of local offices — your own precinct — into a series of a few handouts, most of which I believe are easily reproducible for inclusion in state and county LP newsletters. (Krawchuk was the LPP's 1998 candidate for governor, and a candidate for the v.p. slot on 2000). The other is new LNC rep and recently elected chairwoman of the LPP, Lois Kaneshiki, herself a veteran of a tough race in 1999 for county commission in Blair County.

On a larger scale, many states will be holding municipal elections during 2001: town, borough, township, city, up to county-level offices. Many of these are officially considered "non-partisan." Most have a couple of virtues Libertarians love: they are generally small-scale and low-key. Small-scale simply means no expenses for TV or even radio advertising, because the governmental unit is far too small to make broadcast — and often even newspaper — advertising necessary. Small-scale also means a candidate has a fair chance to meet personally most of those who are likely to vote, and hand that voter a campaign brochure. Candidates for New Hampshire state representative have small-scale campaigns, with one state representative for every 3,500 people, not all of whom are of voting age. For the sake of defining a line, let's define "small-scale" as 10,000 individuals, including those too young to vote.

Low-key may mean little more than going door-to-door, asking for votes. One might also want to try to register some of the non-voters, but only if time permits and the individuals are highly likely to vote for you or the candidate you're working for. Low-key campaigns usually rely most heavily

on name recognition within the community. Someone already active with civic or religious or sports or youth groups decides to run for office, for example.

Small-scale and low-key sometimes overlap, because in many communities, it is difficult to find individuals willing to run or serve. In many smaller communities, even the old parties sometimes find it difficult to fill a host of offices. It is sometimes possible to win easily simply because no one else is on the ballot. In one case, an LP candidate for state representative won his township's post as auditor in the following year, with a single vote — which he did not cast — simply because someone who liked him the previous year supported him for another job.

In another case, an LP member who was involved with a group acting as a "watchdog" on school board spending realized the night before the November 1993 municipal elections that no one in his ward was running for borough council. He called a friend in that group to ask for advice:

"Jack, we've got no one running here. You're on council; who should I vote for?"

"How 'bout you?"

"Jack, it's 7:30 at night. The polls open in less than 12 hours."

"So what? Do you want to do it, or not?"

After getting an answer to what the job involved, the LP member agreed. The two made a few phone calls, and the next day, the LP member was elected by a 16-1 landslide on a write-in for the four-year term.

Not every victory is that easy, of course. But there is an important lesson: if Libertarians, especially county and local LP activists, look for these opportunities, they can and will find plenty of them.

The LNC loves to tout even the minuscule, but growing, number of Libertarians in public office, but that's not what will be important over the next couple of years. Fully half of the LP's dues-paying members could probably get themselves elected, if they really wanted to. Most of those offices would be at the level of keeping elections honest. The rest could win in offices with genuine policy-making, budget-slashing ability. They're the ones who would make the news that would lay the foundations for campaigns for larger offices in 2004. □

A Strategy for Liberty

by David F. Nolan

As we enter the 21st century, it seems appropriate for those of us who place a high value on individual liberty to pause and evaluate the options we have for protecting, preserving — and hopefully increasing — that liberty in the days and years to come.

Looking specifically at the United States, it is clear that the idea of individual (as opposed to group, or collective) rights has been under attack for almost all of the past century. The people of this nation are demonstrably less free, in many ways, in the year 2000 than they were in 1900. The list of activities that are either forbidden or required has grown by orders of magnitude.

Fortunately, thanks to the advances made possible by a relatively free economy, we are still far from enslaved and are, in fact, *more* free in some ways than we were even 50 or 25 years ago. We have greater mobility, greater access to information, and more disposable wealth than ever before.

Yet there is little doubt that the values we hold dear are largely ignored in the political arena. In the recent presidential race, the two main contestants were both advocates of massive government spending, intrusion and controls. Gore is "Mr. Control" — the only man who, as a senator, received a perfect zero rating from longtime libertarian vote-watcher Don Ernsberger, and was rated "worst in the Senate" by the National Taxpayers Union. Bush gave occasional lip service to the idea of letting people run their own lives and keeping a bit more of their earnings. Yet, he responded to virtually every one of Gore's big-government proposals by saying that he supported the idea, but would spend less and would let the states administer the programs. Some difference!

So what's a freedom lover to do?

One strategy, advocated by numerous libertarians, is simply to arrange your life so as to circumvent the intrusions of the state as best you can. Earn a living in a way that requires minimal paperwork and compliance with the endless maze of laws and regulations. Pay as few taxes as you can. Assume a low profile: don't register to vote, be discreet in your personal habits, etc., etc. I find it hard to quarrel with this approach; as long as things don't go completely to hell, it's likely to get you more personal freedom than working assiduously for change.

The downside, of course, is that if all the freedom lovers in America did this, the chances of things going to hell would increase significantly. All that is necessary for evil to triumph, and all that.

So, assuming that you want to do something to stem the tide of statism and restore greater individual liberty, the question is . . . what? Given that each of us has limited resources — time, money, and energy, to name but three — how do we best use those resources to work most effectively for individual liberty?

The choices are almost limitless. Among the pro-freedom organizations you can support are:

- "Educationist" organizations like the Advocates for Self-Government, the Foundation for Economic Education, and the Future of Freedom Foundation.
- Policy-studies outfits like Cato, the Reason Foundation, and the Manhattan Institute.
- Single-issue political action groups like the National Taxpayers Union, Gun Owners of America, and NORML.
- Tactical grassroots outfits like the Fully Informed Jury Association.

All of these organizations do good work and are worthy of support. But all of them fall short of "direct combat" on the political battlefield, where the society of the future is constantly being shaped. If we do not have people carrying our banner in the political arena, we are tacitly conceding that we expect others — liberals, conservatives, special-interest groups, or whomever — to implement our ideas for us. We are leaving the public policy decision-making process to people who owe us no loyalty and often do not share our values.

This, I submit, is a risky proposition. Direct involvement in the electoral process cannot be avoided if we want 21st century America to be more libertarian. If we refuse to play the game, then the game will be won by those whose vision we abhor.

The question then becomes, *how* do we participate? Realistically speaking, we have only two choices. We can try to work within one of the two major parties, or we can continue to raise our own banner, that of the Libertarian Party. (I reject the possibility of taking over another alternative party, as all of them have their own agendas, and none is demonstrably more viable than the LP.)

Of the two major parties, the Republicans are superficially the more appealing. GOP politicians, even Dubya, give occasional lip service to the notion of limited government

Direct involvement in the electoral process cannot be avoided if we want 21st-century America to be more libertarian. If we refuse to play the game, then the game will be won by those whose vision we abhor.

and individual liberty. But the Republican Party is not a coherent or dependable force for liberty. It is a "Big Tent" party made up of all kinds of people, some of whom agree with us, at least occasionally, on some issues. And its leaders routinely sell out on the issues we care most about: taxes, the right to own and carry firearms, and the War on Drugs, to name but three.

At the grassroots level, the GOP is controlled by social conservatives (largely the so-called "Christian Right") who share very few of our values. We could therefore expect any attempt to move into the GOP and change its direction to be met with fierce resistance. Thirty thousand libertarians (assuming we could muster that many) will have little influence in a party with upwards of three million active members.

I have great admiration and respect for those Republicans, like Ron Paul, who take a consistent and principled stand for liberty, but they are few and far between. The Republicans are no longer the party of Robert Taft and Barry Goldwater. In his survey of Congress, published in *Liberty* earlier this year, David Boaz found that Republican congressmen voted "pro-liberty" only 52% of the time, on average. And only five, out of 223, voted in favor of liberty as much as 80% of the time.

The Democrats, needless to say, are even worse. In Boaz's survey, the Democrats in Congress voted "pro-liberty" only 41% of the time, and not a single one voted favorably even 75% of the time. I know of nobody who seriously advocates working within the Democratic Party in hopes of turning it into a crypto-libertarian organization, so I will not waste anyone's time by discussing that as a plausible option.

Which brings us to our sole remaining option for electoral activism: the Libertarian Party.

National LP membership is currently 32,000, with about 225,000 voters registered as Libertarian in states where that is an option. These are not impressive figures, except perhaps in comparison with other third-party statistics. But that's not the whole story. The National LP staff has calculated that nearly 3.4 million people voted Libertarian at some level this past election. This is almost *nine times* the party's vote at the presidential level, and 20% more votes than celebrity candidate Ralph Nader received. And therein lies an important lesson: the presidential vote has consistently been the *weakest* indicator of Libertarian support, and should be ignored when evaluating the party's health and prospects.

I am convinced that an undue emphasis on the presidential contest has caused Libertarians to misallocate resources and efforts, and has led to chronic disappointment and "burnout" among activists. Let's look at some historical data to see why.

In the entire 20th century, out of hundreds of people who have run for president as independent or third-party candidates, only *six* were able to obtain as much as five percent of the popular vote. They were: Teddy Roosevelt (27.4%, 1912), Eugene Debs (6.0%, 1912), Robert LaFollette (16.6%, 1924), George Wallace (13.5%, 1968), John Anderson (6.6%, 1980) and Ross Perot (18.9%, 1992 and 8.4%, 1996).

Five of these men were "household names" long before they entered their respective contests. Roosevelt was a former president, LaFollette was a senator, Wallace was a state governor, and Debs was a prominent labor organizer and social activist. Perot had been in the public eye for years, and was seen by many people as a plain-spoken man of action . . . and he spent upwards of \$60 million of his own money on his first campaign. John Anderson was less well-known than any of the others, but still immensely more famous than any Libertarian candidate to date, thanks to constant and favorable media coverage.

These men attracted large numbers of voters because they had both visibility and political credibility going into their

The primary reason for focusing on Congress is that it allows us to address the big issues — national issues — in local venues.

campaigns. Four had held significant political office, while a fifth (Perot) had proven executive experience in the private sector. Debs had widespread support in the labor movement. Without these kinds of credentials, no third-party candidate for president is likely to break out of the doldrums. Even Ralph Nader, who began his 2000 campaign with decent name recognition and received at least 100 times as much media coverage as Harry Browne, couldn't muster three percent of the vote. This is less than the oft-cited "margin for error" in most national polls, and thus the first marker for political relevance.

There has been much spirited discussion since the November election about Harry Browne's disappointing

showing. While the national vote total for president went up about eight percent from 1996, Harry's vote dropped by about 19% in the 49 states where he was on the ballot both times. The Browne team attributes this largely to the closeness of the election, and they may have a point. An online survey of libertarians, conducted by FreeMarket.net shortly before the election, showed that only 68% of the participants planned to vote for Browne, with 17% defecting to Bush and most of the remaining 15% not planning to vote. So it's reasonable to conjecture that in a less closely contested race, Browne might well have received as many votes as he did in 1996, or even a few more.

But so what? Even if he had, the stark fact remains: as long as the LP runs virtually unknown candidates for president, they will continue to receive 250,000 to 500,000 votes. The argument that the LP would have received more votes if it had nominated Don Gorman or Bumper Hornberger or Barry Hess or L. Neil Smith is dubious, in my opinion. To become a factor in presidential elections, the LP must attract candidates as well-known and credible as LaFollette, Wallace, and Debs.

Can we do this? I suppose it's possible, but it's not likely. If the Libertarian Party can demonstrate a significant support base, someone like Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura or New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson might consent to run for president as a Libertarian. And how can we demonstrate that support? By doubling or tripling the number of votes for our congressional candidates.

Last year, the LP ran 256 candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives — the first time since 1920 that any alternative party contested a majority of the seats in that body. These candidates received almost 1.65 million votes among them. This was the largest vote total gained by any third-party Congressional slate, ever, and seven times the vote received by Harry Browne in those districts. And these results were achieved with a total budget, for all 256 candidates, of less than one-quarter what the Browne campaign spent!

A coordinated national congressional campaign in 2002 should be able to double or triple that vote total if it has the same amount of money behind it that the Browne team spent in 1996 and 2000. Three million to five million votes is not an unrealistic goal, given that more than three million people voted Libertarian in the election just past!

And while it would be nice to attract a credible candidate for the 2004 presidential contest, the primary reason for focusing on Congress is that it allows us to address the big issues — national issues — in local venues. Congress is actually more important than the presidency; it sets the budget, raises and lowers taxes, declares war (or refuses to!) and generally controls the national agenda. It is Congress that will decide how much longer the War on Drugs continues to destroy our lives and liberties. It is Congress that will restore, or further erode, our Second Amendment rights. And if Libertarians get five million votes in Congressional races, you can bet we will be taken seriously!

The Libertarian Party has a future. But in order to realize its potential, it must abandon its fascination with the presidential race, and move its focus to the congressional arena.

We may never see a truly libertarian America, because, contrary to what David Bergland likes to say, most people are *not* inherently libertarian in their beliefs. The recent Rasmussen poll showing that 16% of voters are attitudinal libertarians, in a broad sense, is probably close to the mark. And if we can get them to vote as a bloc, we can exert significant pressure on the Democrats and Republicans — far more than we could from within either major party.

Our best chance of doing this, in my opinion, is to focus on congressional races and to make opposition to the War on Drugs our lead issue. A substantial minority of the public is with us on this issue, while the politicians of both old-line parties are vying with one another to project the most hawkish image.

We have an opportunity. Let's make the most of it! □

Making Liberty Matter

by Bruce Bartlett

It is clear that the Libertarian Party has been a failure by any measure. Much of this has to do with the nature of the party itself, bad leadership choices, poor management, etc. But in my view, the fundamental problem of the Libertarian Party is that it is a third party in a political system which allows only two.

The Constitution essentially mandates a two-party system, because a presidential candidate must win 270 votes in the Electoral College — an absolute majority. He cannot win with a plurality of votes cast, as Jesse Ventura did in Minnesota. And the nature of the Electoral College means that a winning candidate must have broad geographic support throughout the United States. These facts have frustrated the creation of any viable third party in the U.S. since 1789, and will continue to do so unless the Constitution is changed. Given the debacle of the recent election, this is possible, but nevertheless unlikely. Abolition of the Electoral College will almost certainly be blocked by the small states, which benefit disproportionately from it. Thus, we must accept that for the foreseeable future, it is simply impossible to have a viable third party in this country, whether it is the Libertarian Party, the Reform Party, or any other.

If the U.S. had a parliamentary form of government, the situation would be quite different. In such systems, third, fourth, and fifth parties are not merely viable, but often hold the balance of power. The quasi-libertarian Free Democratic Party of Germany, for example, has frequently held the balance of power in governments dominated by both the leftist SPD Party and the conservative CDU Party during the post-war period. But the U.S. is not likely to adopt a parliamentary system any time soon. How, then, can libertarians advance their cause through party politics?

The most successful third party in American history, in terms of achieving its agenda, was the Socialist Party of Eugene Debs and Norman Thomas. As Milton Friedman has pointed out, virtually every item on the Socialist Party's platform ultimately was enacted into law. That is why the party went out of business.

A key reason for the Socialist Party success, however, was

that it had a respected and articulate leader who continually ran for president. Neither Debs nor Thomas ever pretended to have any hope of winning; however, they were not treated as cranks, but rather as elder statesmen. And because they ran so often, over time they became an accepted part of the political landscape, sought out by reporters as much for their historical perspective as their political views. It must also be noted that every other third party in American history that has achieved some modicum of success has essentially been a one-man party — Theodore Roosevelt in 1912, Robert LaFollette in 1924, Strom Thurmond and Henry Wallace in 1948, George Wallace in 1968, and Ross Perot in 1992 and 1996.

I believe that if the Libertarian Party wishes to continue operating as a distinct third party, it must find a leader of the caliber of Norman Thomas, who is prepared to run for president several times. This person should have intellectual and political stature sufficient to command attention for his or her views independently of the party. The Green Party seems to have found such a person in Ralph Nader. Libertarians need to find someone like him to be their standard bearer.

Libertarians should also work on doable electoral reforms. Abolishing the Electoral College or changing to a parliamentary form of government are not realistic. But other reforms would boost the influence of third parties generally. One approach would be to institute nationally a political system such as the one that exists in New York state. In addition to the Republicans and Democrats, the state has several competitive third parties, including the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, and the Right to Life Party. What makes these parties viable is the simple fact that votes cast on their lines are aggregated with any votes the same candidate receives on another line. Thus, if the same person were running on both the Republican and Conservative lines, all his votes on both lines would be added together to determine his total vote count. This system avoids the problem of wasted votes and enables third parties to play a pivotal role in elections. Republican candidates are seldom able to win without votes cast on the Conservative line, and Democrats similarly need

The model that the Libertarian Party has followed over the last 28 years has not and cannot work for constitutional reasons.

those on the Liberal line. For this reason, Conservatives and Liberals are able to exercise considerable influence on the programs of the major parties.

The New York system also allows for interesting cross endorsements — Republicans with Liberal endorsements or Democrats with Conservative support. This can make Republicans with Liberal endorsements able to win in districts that would otherwise be solidly Democratic; and Democrats with Conservative endorsements competitive in Republican-dominated areas. Occasionally, candidates are even able to win offices solely on the Conservative or Liberal

line, as James Buckley did in 1970, running for the U.S. Senate as a Conservative against Republican and Democrat opponents.

Because this system can be adopted on a state-by-state basis, it would be far easier to enact than a major change such as abolition of the Electoral College. Furthermore, Libertarians would be able to join other third parties, creating a significant political force. It is a reform that would also appeal to good government types and even committed

One approach would be to institute nationally a political system such as the one that exists in New York, which has several viable third parties. Because it can be adopted on a state-by-state basis, it would be relatively easy to enact.

Republicans and Democrats who want to push their parties to the right or left, respectively. Cross endorsement would immediately make the Libertarian Party a force to be reckoned with. I can see Libertarian endorsement being valuable to both Republicans and Democrats at different times and in different places. No longer would a Libertarian vote be a total waste. This would attract more votes to the Libertarian Party and make the libertarian position one to be reckoned with in American politics.

My final suggestion is simply to abandon the Libertarian Party altogether, with libertarians instead working to establish caucuses or factions within the Republican and Democratic Parties. Especially during primaries, when turnout is low, it is possible that a committed libertarian bloc in Iowa or New Hampshire could exercise decisive influence.

The model that the Libertarian Party has followed over the last 28 years has not and cannot work for constitutional reasons. The result has been to diminish libertarian influence in national politics, to the detriment of freedom. The model must be rethought. The suggestions I have made certainly do not exhaust the possibilities. But one thing is certain: libertarians must change their strategy radically if the libertarian philosophy is to make headway in the American political system as it now exists. □

A Time for Boldness and Integrity

by Jacob G. Hornberger

Harry Browne received about 380,000 votes, which is 37% fewer than he received in 1996. Let's give his campaign the benefit of the doubt and assume that its efforts to promote him over the last four years produced 200,000 new votes. That would mean that 300,000 people who voted for Browne last time abandoned him this time. Consider also the many libertarians who have left the party during the past several years, who refuse even to get involved with the LP, or who

voted for non-LP candidates during the primary season. These are not the signs of a healthy organization.

There are those who feel that the primary reasons for the recent debacle are external to the LP. If only there wasn't a vast media conspiracy against the Libertarian Party and Harry Browne. If only Bush and Gore had agreed to debate Browne. If only Browne could have appeared on more television talk shows. If only Americans weren't so ignorant. If only people hadn't wasted their votes.

I contend that the primary reasons for failure are internal, not external.

There are two levels that call for analysis: the particular campaign strategy employed by Browne, and the particular paradigm of unethical conduct and pragmatic politics that has guided the LP national office for years.

Browne's mass-media strategy could not succeed in a small party. LP candidates should instead develop guerrilla-warfare tactics that optimize scarce resources. I doubt that a political strategy based on hotel fundraisers with attendance limited to people in "business attire" can succeed in attracting millions of ordinary people to a presidential campaign.

I don't believe, however, that the fundamental problem lies with campaign strategies. I've concluded that the insurmountable barrier to success at the national level lies with a lack of commitment to integrity and principle among party officials, highlighted by the failure to distinguish between the general interests of the Libertarian Party and the private interests of party members.

A post-election *Wall Street Journal* editorial stated that exit polls revealed that the two most important issues for voters were moral and ethical principles. Why would the American people get involved with a third party whose officials lack a firm commitment to these principles?

To achieve success at the national level, I recommend we commit to making the national Libertarian Party the party of both integrity and principle and begin now, not later.

Stop targeting white, middle class, business-attired, disgruntled Republicans with watered-down principles. Instead, engage in principled campaigns that primarily target the victims of government's domestic wars.

Both the LP National Committee and LP national office should be staffed only by officials who are absolutely and totally committed to advancing only the general interests of the Libertarian Party — not their own personal interests or the interests of friends, associates, or acquaintances, including official or unofficial candidates for the 2004 LP presidential nomination.

The LP National Committee should exercise its supervisory authority to ensure that presidential campaigns are run with the utmost financial integrity. In view of the questions that have been raised about Browne's campaign expenditures, the LP should commission a complete financial audit

of the campaign by an independent accounting firm in order to put all such questions to rest.

The LP national office should discard its emphasis on pragmatic politics and simplistic slogans and instead begin emphasizing our strongest political weapon — our principles. An independent committee should identify those LP congressional nominees who are most likely to run successful campaigns based on pure libertarian principles, and then recommend that LP members all over the nation donate to those campaigns.

We should reject “play-it-safe” strategies, and instead adopt bold maneuvers to reach out to new groups of Americans. Stop targeting white, middle class, business-attired, disgruntled Republicans with watered-down principles. Instead, engage in principled campaigns that primarily target the victims of government’s domestic wars.

The past, of course, is behind us. If we continue following the same road we’ve been following, the future will be no different. We have the opportunity to move the Libertarian Party in a different direction, one based on a firm and unequivocal commitment to integrity, ethics, principles, and boldness. We have nothing to lose by trying. We have everything to gain. □

All Politics Is Local

by John Thomas

It disturbs me to no end to hear complaints about the national LP and its lack of progress during its 30 year existence. No political party has ever made its mark on national politics, or grown itself, by using national elections or national policy. Expectations that the national LP can do something no other party has ever been able to do are plainly goofy. All political parties that have influenced the process or have become political contenders did it by building strong local organization first. It does no good for someone to join the party through Project Archimedes if there is no local organization for him to become involved in, and no Libertarians running locally to keep hammering the message home.

I’m from El Paso County, Colo., the birthplace of the Libertarian Party. Yeah, I know, the first decision to form a party was in David Nolan’s living room, but all the oldtimers here say that the first official meetings were held in Colorado Springs. So what was the state of the El Paso County Libertarian Party when I came here in 1998? There wasn’t one. There had been a party, but its organizers had to devote some of their time and energy to making a living, and it fell apart. An isolated case? I don’t think so. When I moved to Brevard County, Fla. in 1995, I discovered that it had once been a hotbed of Libertarian activity, but there was no longer a party.

Without a continuing Libertarian presence at the county level there is no Libertarian Party. If the national LP exists for 1,000 years and there is no El Paso County LP, nothing the national does will make any difference here. If local parties start and stop, little that the previous party gained will

be passed to the new party.

I realize that there are some county parties that have done well and have existed for almost as long as the national party. However, their efforts are limited if the surrounding counties lack the same type of organization. All historically significant parties had strong local organizations at the county level.

Why do local organizations have so much trouble staying alive? Assuming the case of my wife and me is common, it’s because those who start parties are left to do it on their own; there is only minimal guidance on how to run a party so it will grow.

If I were dictator of the national party, I would:

1) Coordinate input from local activists who have started parties to create a “how-to” guide and distribute it widely.

All political parties that have influenced the process or have become political contenders did it by building strong local organization first.

2) Have a team of trainers to target certain counties for start-up organizations, and actually go there to get things started. The LP’s Success Seminars are a step in the right direction, but don’t address start-up needs. They don’t give ideas on how to build from nothing.

3) In addition to compiling a start-up guide, there needs to be a “growth guide,” a guide that delineates levels of organizations, and how to get to the next level.

4) Update these guides routinely to make sure that faulty processes and ideas are weeded out before the same mistake is replicated nationwide.

Most local parties fail because of their own perceived lack of progress or by having a meltdown. Both of these revolve around local parties operating in isolation. I’m not talking about the national party directing local parties, I’m talking about cross-feeding lessons learned and strategies proven to work. Many local parties would advance much more quickly if they didn’t have to guess their way through running an organization. If there were a guide that showed three or four typical models for a party, new organizations could proceed quickly and with confidence.

Meltdowns can be avoided or mitigated. Primary causes for meltdowns are attempts at bad ideas that fail, massive use of resources that get less than expected results, desperation attempts at action, failing to perform actions that might have benefit, and unrealistic expectations for results. Part of a local party guide would contain a table of stupid ideas other parties tried that didn’t work, ideas that did work, expectations for results of actions, and realistic expectations for growth.

If I were to fault Libertarians for one thing, it would be looking to silver-bullet solutions to fix their problems. Building local organizations isn’t sexy, and doesn’t have that satisfactory feeling of a conclusion, but nothing makes more

sense politically.

Should we still run a national candidate? Yes. Should we think raising the boat will make the water level rise to meet it? No. □

Pedal to the Metal

by Dick Geyer

I am very determined to fight on, so here are my thoughts for the party and future elections:

- 1) Get emotional about what we believe. Our low-key approach does not make it into television or the newspapers.
- 2) Get out and demonstrate the way various interest groups did at the WTO meetings. That got the government's and the people's attention.
- 3) Run a presidential candidate who is newsworthy. Harry Browne projects an old feeling; low-key, and not interesting. (See Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan for the opposite.)
- 4) Attack the Supreme Court and other federal courts for their blatant disregard for the law and their politically motivated decisions. We know politicians are up to no good, so the courts have to be held to a higher standard.
- 5) At the local level, work with and support like-minded groups on guns, schools, drugs, fully informed juries, etc. By being with them, we should get their votes.
- 6) Attack state politicians, and particularly governors, for not sticking up for their rights under the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution. This is most important in the smaller states that have few representatives in Washington, D.C.
- 7) Attack the unfairness of the system as it is being mandated by the federal government and allowed to operate by the Supreme Court. The terrible effect of the War on Drugs on African-Americans is a good example of the sort of unfairness that we should decry.

We need to stop pontificating and get out in the streets. That's where news is made, that's how to get noticed, and that's how to make a difference. □

Tone Down the Message

by Josh Corn

For LP candidates to achieve higher vote totals, they need to moderate their message. This does not mean that they need to compromise their libertarian principles and start sounding like Republicans. They just need to stop sounding like anti-government anarchists. I had to defend the LP many times by people who agree with our position on ending the War on Drugs, but who didn't want to support the party because they think we want to abolish government completely. I could see how they would think that after listening to Harry Browne.

When Browne says, for example, that we need to "end all federal gun-control laws," he alienates moderates who might respond positively to the same point stated less abrasively: "I believe people have a right to self-defense, so I don't support gun-control laws that make it harder for law-abiding citizens to defend themselves against criminals."

Instead of saying that we believe in legalizing all drugs, making moderates think twice about voting Libertarian, we should concentrate on the terrible injustices perpetrated against medical-marijuana patients. Perhaps candidates should advocate legalizing marijuana to people over 21, but saying that Libertarians want to legalize drugs outright is not going to increase our vote totals.

Libertarian candidates need to emphasize the positive things that the government does, such as apprehending violent criminals and providing for a court system that (usually) protects property rights. By letting people know that Libertarians are not a bunch of anti-government extremists, we will increase our vote totals and be taken more seriously. □

Working Within the System

by Bob Johnston

If the LP is to be engaged in politics it has to become an actual political organization, not a philosophical organization trying to prove that it's possible for the world to adhere to the non-initiation of force pledge.

R. W. Bradford's article hit the nail on the head when he noted that both Bush and Gore were pushed toward the center in this campaign. It is not possible to engage in American politics without some compromise. This country changes slowly.

Harry Browne is a likable man and can talk to people without frightening them, but his plan is far too radical for American politics. The Hornberger criticism that we need more action, boldness, and integrity in our campaigns is without merit. What could be bolder than selling off huge amounts of national assets to fund Social Security? The voters sure didn't reject Harry because they were worried about his integrity or lack of a program.

We have to move in a libertarian direction gradually. That is how we got to where we are now, and politically at least, that is how we have to move back. We have to offer plans and programs that allow for governmental solutions as well as market solutions.

In effect, we have to tell people that, if elected, we would do nothing radical, but, while the Democrats want government to grow by ten percent and the Republicans want it to grow by four percent, we will keep government about as it is for now.

I know that suggesting such compromise would probably drive the purists and radicals out of the LP, but unless we accept the American system of political change, we are doomed. □

Five Things the LP Should Do

by Will Murphy

- 1) Reduce infighting. When the Mujaheddin were opposing Soviet invasion and occupation, one of their biggest threats to success was not their enemies' morale, but fighting among themselves. In the Revolutionary War, lack of cooper-

ation among the colonies hampered patriot efforts to cast off British control. Only when they mustered at least a modicum of cooperation could they succeed. Friends of liberty should not expend their meager resources squabbling. Save the ammunition for the statists.

2) Build résumés and momentum. It is hard to imagine a Libertarian candidate making a decent showing in a campaign for president any time soon. If some LP members — and other friends of liberty — were to start demonstrating that libertarian ideas work as dog catchers, city commissioners, and even state legislators and local judges, they would advance the cause enormously. Furthermore, they would build their credibility and their political skills for use in more powerful posts in the future. We need to spot opportunities, pursue them aggressively, and walk the talk once we win.

3) Be practical. I was very frustrated to hear libertarians criticize school vouchers. We need to move in the right direction. If we demand a “pure” libertarian regime or nothing, you know what we will get. Statism has been most successful when it has been incremental. Let’s use that knowledge to reverse the trend. Leviathan was not built in a day, and it will not be unmade in a day.

4) Do no harm. Those who carry the banner of liberty must be circumspect in words and absolutely above reproach in conduct. We must expect more from ourselves than anyone else does. We must not give in to the temptation to be shocking in how we explain our beliefs. Let every contact we have with others make them think more of us.

5) Win the war, don’t focus on battles or skirmishes. We must remember that libertarianism is a long-term cultural conflict, much more than a political battle. If we manage to derail a piece of legislation designed to limit our right to keep and bear arms, but we do so in a way that makes us appear violent or out of touch, we have not advanced our cause. □

Guerrilla Libertarianism

by Dwayne Monroe Depew

Unfortunately, I found your reasoning in your articles, “Libertarian Party: The 2000 Election” and “Spinning and Unspinning” in the January 2001 edition of *Liberty*, without flaw. It is perhaps self-evident that it is not possible for the LP to reach national prominence and win elections at the national level, nor even to significant state-level offices. I do however, agree with one piece of LP spinmeistering: that there are a whole bunch of people out there who are actually libertarians, but don’t realize it.

I joined the LP in 1996 when I saw Harry Browne in a debate on cable television. Had I not been at home due to an injury, I probably would never have seen that debate, and quite possibly would never even heard of the Libertarian Party to this day. My values were already libertarian, I simply did not have a label to describe my political philosophy.

So what should we do? If a third party cannot break the grip of the two-party system, what can we do to win elected representation at all levels of government? We should use our “. . . strong, united . . . philosophy independent of personality, and . . . robust infrastructure . . .” to infiltrate both

parties. Rather than run as Libertarians and garnering perhaps one whole percent of the vote, we should run as Democrats or Republicans. Hasn’t Congressman Ron Paul already shown that this approach works?

What is more important to us? Is it more personal liberty for everyone? Or is it more personal liberty for everyone, plus getting credit for ourselves? □

Hit ‘em With the Invisible Hand

by Greg Johnson

In 1988, I dedicated two years of my life to winning an Idaho legislative seat as a Libertarian. All we needed was a breakthrough, an activist to show the electorate that there is another way. Principles, freedom, liberty. In 1990, the national LP gave my campaign a five-figure donation, the result of a fundraising effort to elect someone to a legislative seat. We spent over \$27,000, worked our hearts out, and got my ass kicked in a three-way race.

Who are we kidding? In the 2000 election, over 99% of the voting population marked a presidential ballot in favor of some degree of socialism. After 30 years of work, we cannot honestly say that libertarians control a single important elected body in any of the 50 states. Spin at will, no rational human being can say with any certainty that Libertarians will be running any political entity of import in the near future.

Take the energy wasted on political campaigns and create a market alternative to the state for the fire department or animal control or road maintenance. But, but, but . . . well, horse poop. I still believe that there are better alternatives to almost everything done by the state and that the alternatives can be implemented, even if only incrementally. If we all work on putting these ideas into effect rather than on trying to get elected, our communities will be far more libertarian places to live.

The time I spent rewriting animal control laws, establishing a humane society that accepts no tax dollars, forming a volunteer fire department (since disintegrated) and organizing an effort to secede from a highway district have had a far greater impact on the world than years spent in the political arena.

Ah, had I but won, the political would have been of greater importance? Perhaps. It comes back to the fact that, after 30 years of effort, libertarians control no governmental entity of any importance. I respectfully suggest that we can accomplish a great deal more by doing something, anything, on community-based issues rather than waste our time spouting forth what we will do when we are elected. □

The Critics Strike Back!

In the next issue of *Liberty*, Ed Crane, Steve Cox, Bill Bradford and others will offer their evaluations of the analysis, strategies, and tactics proposed in this issue.

Readers are invited to participate. Send your comments to ActivismProject@LibertySoft.com or mail to Activism Project, C/O Liberty.

'Twas a Night in December

by Daniel L. Schwarz



'Twas a night in December, and all through the house,
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The front door was locked, and the deadbolt was thrown,
All was safe and secure, in our castle of stone.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of Pokemon, danced in their heads.
And mom in her T-shirt, and me in my flannel,
Were watching intently, Discovery Channel.

When out on the lawn, there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window, I flew like a flash,
I fumbled as always, the vinyl-clad sash.

The moonlight was faint on my manicured lawn,
As I peered through the gloom, and I stifled a yawn.
When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a vanload of men in full military gear.

The young ninja-clad driver was lively, and quick.
He stepped out on the curb, with his door-bashing stick.
With the speed of a cobra, his agents, they came,
As he whistled and shouted, and called them by name.

Now Chalmers and Davidson, you take the back,
And when I give the signal, commence the attack.
To the top of the porch men, stay close to the wall,
Now BASH away! BASH away! BASH away all!

And then they gained entry, a matter of course.
The doorframe was splintered and shattered by force.
Then up to the housetop, his agents they flew,
In the steady advance, of a well-practiced crew.

And soon I heard men at the top of the stair,
That's when my thoughts turned to the kids sleeping there.

So I turned and jumped over my bed in a bound,
As the door was crashed in, I heard "down on the ground."

He was dressed all in black from his head to his toe,
And he wore a broad mask, so his face didn't show.
Then he lined up the sights of the gun he possessed,
Which was clearly a chore in that black-armored vest.

His eyes — how they twinkled, that's all I could tell,
Of the person who faced me and issued a yell.
"To the ground" he repeated, with hasty precision,
And the bead he had drawn, didn't leave for decision.

So silently raging, to carpet I fell,
From my wife there was issued a terrified yell.
While they tore up my bedroom, and left it a wreck,
And I scarcely could breathe for the boot on my neck.

From afar in the house I could hear their ransacking,
And as meek as a church mouse a "Daddy, what's happening."
And with that still small voice, and his cry of alarm,
I resolved a great price, should they bring him to harm.

It was then that they read from the warrant they held,
And I struggled to listen, I broke free and yelled.
You idiot bastards, the problem is plain,
This is Worthington Terrace, not Worthington Lane.

Well he spoke not a word, but reviewed paperwork.
Then he looked at his underling, called him a jerk.
And then quick as he came, his accomplices rose,
"My mistake," were his words "didn't mean to impose."

Then he sprang to his van, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew, like the down from a thistle.
And I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight,
"Get your glasses checked Bill, that's the third time tonight."

Our Enemies, The Statists

by Martin M. Solomon

"Man tends always to satisfy his needs and desires with the least possible exertion."

If Albert J. Nock, the idiosyncratic libertarian essayist of the early 20th century, were still alive and writing about American life today, would his thinking have changed? I suspect not: he would observe that we are all still subject to the iron law of fundamental economics, quotation above.

By itself, this law is merely a colorful way of summarizing economic truths so banal as to be common to proponents of the Austrian and Keynesian economic schools. People act to attain unlimited ends with limited means, must choose between the means, will choose the lowest cost means of satisfying a chosen end, and will often find labor unpleasant. True, but not new or particularly interesting.

It was Nock's application of this law that was radical. Viewing life through the lens of the economic and political means of satisfying needs and desires, he saw villains and villainesses who were invisible to most of his (and our) contemporaries.

Nock distinguished between the economic and political means of satisfying one's wants and needs: the economic means is "the production and exchange of wealth," while the political means is "the uncompensated appropriation of wealth produced by others." The actors and tools have changed since 1935; the roles in executing the iron law have not. The economic means is the method of producers, consumers and government officials. The political means is the way of state officials, state beneficiaries and private aggressors. (In order to follow Nock's arguments, it is necessary to understand his differentiation between state and government. The state is a corrupt criminal entity engaged in plunder, and the institution of officials who are aggressors. Government consists of officials doing the peaceful minimal tasks of defense, criminal justice, and civil dispute resolution.)

In regards to the economic and political means, every person plays one or more roles — peaceful one moment, an aggressor the next. Within the economic means, most producers and government officials are also consumers. Within the

political means, an extorting union leader (private criminal) is also a state beneficiary (under the National Labor Relations Act). Most important are economic-political combinations. Most producers and consumers are also state beneficiaries. In mixed economies such as the United States, almost all state beneficiaries, state officials, and private aggressors are also consumers.

Producers are voluntary private providers of goods or services for the use of others. "Their formula is: goods or services in return for goods or services. . . ." They supply land, labor, capital and entrepreneurship. Producers don't aggress in that role. Even 68 years after the New Deal began, many producers remain. Consumers are voluntary, private acquirers of goods or services for their own use. They act by the same exchange formula as the producer. Like producers, they are peaceful. Except for a few self-sufficers in the woods, deserts, and mountains, we are all consumers today. As did H.L. Mencken, Nock found many consumers and producers to be less than admirable. But the mediocrity of the herd was something to be borne as the price of freedom, and different in kind from the foul play of the political means.

Because the "iron" law is only a tendency, there are many reasons why a person might decide to live by the economic means. Libertarians are not exempt from the law, but they reason that it is generally better to live by the economic means. Nonlibertarians may choose the economic means based on custom or convenience, but libertarians choose on more abstract grounds, such as the ethical pain of aggressing, the belief that use of the economic means will make a more productive society which will benefit us individually, the belief that use of the political means will make a more

aggressive society which will damage us individually, and the belief that the transaction costs of participating in public or private aggression are too high.

Government officials are public providers of protection against aggression. "Teleologically, government implements the common desire of society, first, for freedom, and second, for security. Beyond this it does not go; it contemplates no

Viewing life through the lens of the economic and the political means of satisfying needs and desires, Nock saw villains that were invisible to his contemporaries.

positive intervention upon the individual, but only a negative intervention." These negative interventions include criminal justice, military defense, and the resolution of contract, property, and tort disputes. Government officials do not aggress, except to the limited extent of having the final word on the resolution of disputes. But obviously, only a minority of current federal, state, and local officials spend all or even part of their time performing these functions.

In contrast to government officials, state officials are aggressors. Their levels of aggressiveness vary, depending on the nature of their acts and means of financing. Pure

aggressors include the utility regulator, vice policeman, and military draft administrator. Partial aggressors perform tasks in which aggression is involved but largely administered by others. They include the postal clerk (because of the first class monopoly) and the elementary school teacher (based on the compulsory education law). The ultra vires group acts beyond the proper scope of official action with tacit aggression — public park keepers, water providers, and garbage collectors, for example. Minimal aggressors provide only the five abovementioned services of government — that is to say, they are government officials, but are paid from seizures. This includes the homicide detective and the judge in a contract interpretation dispute.

Yet it is through the actions of state officials that many beneficiaries are able to satisfy their needs and desires. A manager aided by the tariff and a tenant paying lower rent due to rent control are economic beneficiaries. A jingo thrilled by aggressive war and a do-gooder pleased by welfare programs are noneconomic beneficiaries.

Since intervention hurts more people than it helps (for many reasons accepted by libertarians), a method of showing state beneficiaries, private aggressors, and state officials that they are net losers under statism would be helpful in moving public opinion toward freedom. Not an easy task. Perhaps this application of Nock's analysis will be the way wherein we'll "catch the conscience of the king" (as Hamlet said). Well, conscience for those with a sense of right and wrong, and consciousness for the rest. □

Letters, from page 24

believe the polls, and I don't doubt that there were a few voters as mixed up as Armstrong's very confused friend. But I don't see how this relates to the evidence I cited. If a significant portion of voters are more susceptible to the "why-waste-your-vote" argument when they perceive the race as close, they would tend to shun fringe party candidates more in states where the race is close. Sure, a few voters will be sophisticated enough to be familiar with fringe party candidates like Harry Browne and to understand the "why-waste-your-vote-argument," but so unsophisticated as to not understand that the election is decided by the vote of the electoral college and to disbelieve the polls in their states. But unless this weird combination of sophistication and unsophistication is shared by many voters, the vote for fringe candidates would still be higher in states where the race was perceived as close than in states where it was not. In fact, as I pointed out in my analysis, the LP did significantly better in states where the race was perceived as close than in

states where the race was perceived as a runaway.

I focused primarily on the presidential election rather than races lower on the ticket for two reasons. To most voters, the presidential race is far more important. The fact that voters are more likely to "throw away" their vote on races whose outcome they don't

care about does not prove much.

Secondly, it was difficult to get accurate returns for lower races so soon after the election. Elsewhere in this issue, I analyze the LP's vote for the House of Representatives, which has been widely reported in the LP press as evidence of growing progress.

Coming in Liberty

"How to Make the World A Freer Place"

by Ed Clark, Stephen Cox, and R. W. Bradford

"Robbing Peter & Paul to Pay Mary"

by Samuel Silver

"Killahoale Day"

by Kirby Wright

"The Rise & Fall of the British Welfare State"

by Stephen Berry

How to Succeed With Women

by Robert Higgs

Sometimes, the answer to your wildest dreams appears
unsolicited in your mailbox.

My trip to the mailbox began just as all the others had. I slipped on the loose gravel and fell awkwardly, scraping the same spot I scraped when I fell yesterday, and the day before yesterday, and all the Mondays through Saturdays before that, except for federal holidays. Having once again endured the pain, I felt obliged to proceed to the box, but upon opening it my heart sank, just as it had sunk yesterday and all the days before that, except for Sundays and federal holidays. Nothing had been sent to me but junk mail and approximately 23 pounds of catalogs.

After making my way carefully back to the house over the treacherous gravel, I examined the mail and catalogs, paying special attention to the card with the question, "Have you seen us?" I studied the fuzzy photos for a long time before concluding that I had *not* seen the missing persons. Even after making meticulous mental allowance for how they might have changed since their disappearance from Macon, Georgia in 1995, I remained resolute in my conviction. No, strange as it seemed, I definitely had not seen them.

Then the discovery that would change my life appeared, tucked between the Neiman Marcus catalog and the Home & Fishtank catalog. I knew immediately that this was no ordinary epistle because written on the manila envelope, just above the see-thru address window, in large red letters, was the question:

Are you ready to capture the hearts and minds of the women you desire?

My hands were shaking as I tore open the envelope. My heart pounded, my knees wavered, sweat poured from my forehead and my armpits. Even before I had examined the contents of the envelope, I knew as well as I know my

name's not Gerald that the answer was "Yes!" God, was it ever yes. It had been yes for as long as I could remember. And I knew that if I should live to be a thousand years old, it would still be yes. My mental parliamentarian announced, "The ayes have it." I extracted the contents of the envelope and laid them out on the kitchen counter.

The first thing to catch my eye was a return card embedded in a larger card, adorned by a side-view photo of a very pretty girl, about 18 or 20 years old, smiling as she clutched her full skirt at waist level on the exposed side while the wind blew it away from her, revealing an excellent buttock. She seemed to be the kind of woman a man would like to get to know, to join for long walks on a moonlit beach, to linger with over Madeira, while teasing out the fine points of Kierkegaardian philosophy or recalling the discovery of the Rosetta Stone.

Opposite the image of this dreamy creature, in large red letters, was printed the very affirmation I had been aching to announce for longer than I cared to remember: "Yes, I'm ready to capture the hearts and minds of the women I desire." Yes, I am; yes, I have been; yes, I shall always be. From the time my juvenile juices first began to tumble down the hormonal cascades of my awakening anatomy, I have known — well, actually, at first I only sensed it, without being able to pin it down; but before long I knew for certain — that captivity of the hearts and minds of beautiful women was the lodestar that would guide me.

I carefully set aside the return card, to be filled out later, and examined the eight-page letter, which was embellished with red highlighted paragraphs, bold-font emphases, and little boxes containing titillating tidbits of information, such as "Meeting Women Was Simple . . . Once He Started Looking in All the Right Places." I was eager to absorb this information.

Immediately beneath a photo collage of seven beautiful women — these guys obviously knew what they were talking about, because they had the photos to prove it — the letter began, with perhaps unjustified familiarity, “Dear Friend.” Well, never one to stand on stuffy etiquette, I forgave the writers, one David Copeland and one Ron Louis, who had signed their names, in red, on page eight. They came directly to the point.

“A different woman every day of the week.” Well, that would certainly be a change, I had to admit. “Rewarding relationships with two . . . or three . . . or more attractive, devoted women” (ellipses in original). Now, what man doesn’t want a rewarding relationship? And if one is good, it would seem to require only elementary logic to deduce that two would be better, and three better still. “A lifelong love with the one true ‘woman of your dreams.’” Well, duh, I thought. Of course I would like that; it’s almost tautological, isn’t it? I was a bit worried at that point, however, because it seemed as though I would have to choose one of the options.

Then, as if my shadows of doubt had been dispelled by a burst of radiant light, came the revelation that raised goose bumps on all my appendages: “You can have them all . . . any way you want it . . . when you know the key to a woman’s heart. When you have insights into the innermost thoughts . . . the desires . . . the dreams . . . the secret sexual longings of every woman you desire” (ellipses in original). Hey, now they were talking! Somehow the writers had sensed the very thing that had frustrated me for far too long: I had been trying to decide between “a different woman every day of the week” and “rewarding relationships with two . . . or three . . . or more attractive, devoted women.” Like Buridan’s ass, I simply could not decide, and I had been paralyzed, unable to enter into the heaven on the right or the heaven on the left, living alone in a cold basement with only a tiny space heater to ward off the chill. From now on, by God, all that would be history. Because here, in my own hands, I held the source of “Insights you can use to capture their hearts and make them yours.” That sounded like appropriation to me, and I have always been a private property kind of guy. First, capture their hearts and minds; then make them mine. It was a wonderful plan.

Then came the most important part: “You’ll find these and other secrets of attracting the opposite sex in . . . HOW TO SUCCEED WITH WOMEN . . . and, for a very limited

time, you can discover them at NO RISK whatsoever to you. Order your copy of HOW TO SUCCEED WITH WOMEN today and deeply influence the thoughts and desires of every beautiful woman you meet — absolutely FREE for 30 days.” I was ready to order. Man, was I ready!

But you know my momma didn’t raise no fools, so I gave some thought to whether the offer could be all that it claimed to be. Fortunately, my doubts were immediately allayed by the following critical text: “These are the secrets that NO ONE — not your dad, your mentor, a trusted colleague, your

Army buddy, not even your best friend . . . would ever tell you.” Well, they damned sure HADN’T told me. If they had, my personal ship would have scooted out of the iceberg area and sailed into a balmy clime a long time ago. But, soon enough, I discovered why they hadn’t told me: “After all, why should they? When it comes to absolute power

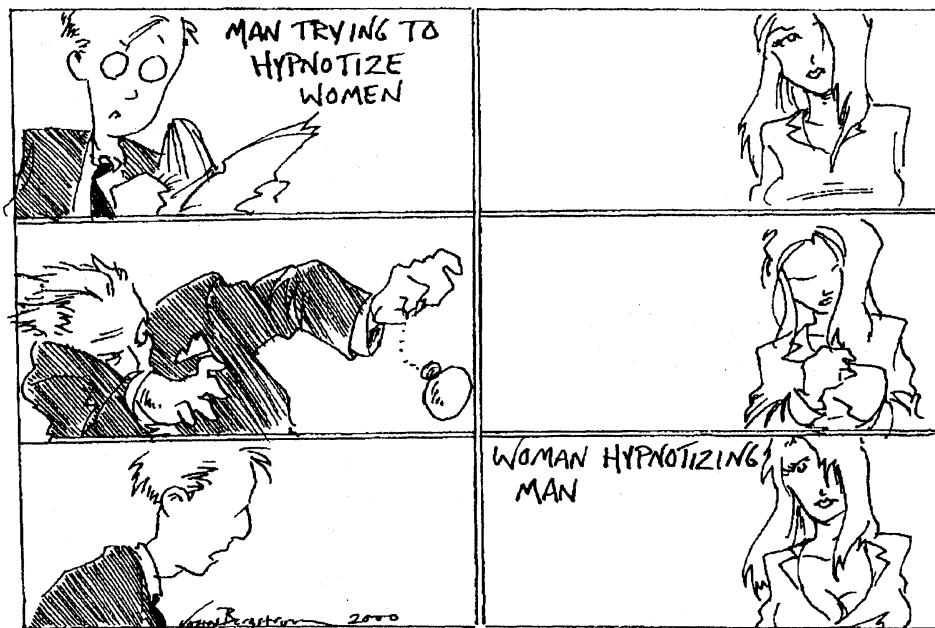
over women . . . who wants to share?” Well, yeah. I know I wouldn’t share if I had absolute control over women. Do I look like an idiot? (Answering the foregoing question is optional.)

Ironically, but in a way that left me deeply satisfied, the writers went on: “We do [want to share absolute control over

I was willing to forgive them for their repeated misuse of the ellipsis mark, because my mind was set on mesmerizing beautiful women. Christ, how I had always longed to mesmerize a beautiful woman.

women].” Was I ever glad! As much as I relish the invisible hand and the spontaneous order and the enlightened self-interest and all the rest of that lunatic-fringe doctrine, I have to admit that once in a while there is room for an altruist. And now, I, of all men, had been chosen by Copeland and Louis to be let in on their secret of absolute control of women, which entailed all those juicy options about a different woman every day of the week and so forth. The writers went on to explain that they “offer the most acclaimed workshops now available in this country on how to meet, attract,

Continued on page 61



Reviews

Voodoo Science, by Robert Park. Oxford University Press, 2000, 230 pages.

The Abuse of Science

Leland B. Yeager

In *Voodoo Science*, Robert Park identifies four types of voodoo: pathological science, pseudoscience, junk science, and fraudulent science. Park is both professor of physics at the University of Maryland and director of the Washington office of the American Physical Society, which gives him a prime vantage point for viewing the ways in which science is manipulated. In the first type, pathological science, scientists fool themselves. Like other people, they "are inclined to see what they expect to see." Even eminent scientists have tarnished their careers "by misinterpreting unremarkable events in a way that is so compelling that they are thereafter unable to free themselves of the conviction that they have made a great discovery." Park reviews the tragedy of Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann and their imagined "cold fusion." An earlier episode of what would have been fraud, if only J.B. Rhine had not been so sincere about his work, concerned extrasensory perception. (Rhine, a Duke University psychologist, conducted research from about 1930 onward on mind reading, foreseeing the future, and telekinesis.)

Practitioners of pseudoscience also genuinely believe in what they say. They exploit the language of science

without understanding its substance. Examples are belief in spiritual or faith healing grounded in quantum physics or supported by supernatural powers, belief that earth is being visited by aliens who have learned to travel faster than light, belief that magnets worn in shoes can draw energy from the earth, and views on some environmental fears, such as those about electrical power lines. Pseudoscience often involves filling in scientific uncertainty with political or religious convictions. Sometimes it enjoys protection from official secrecy imposed in the name of national security, as did the increasingly embroidered-upon and financially exploited belief that space aliens had landed and died at Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947. (Actually, Park reports, the supposed evidence was the debris of a balloon launched in a bizarre attempt to "hear" Soviet nuclear tests.)

Junk science is more sinister because of its more deliberate unconcern with truth. Its practitioners include "experts," often with impressive credentials, hired by tort lawyers to win large awards or settlements from companies with deep pockets. Seeking to befuddle juries, plaintiffs' teams enlist implausible interpretations supported not by scientific evidence, but often by heart-tugging anecdotes of

sufferers from disease. Electric power lines, silicone breast implants, and various medicines have figured in notable cases. Numerous factors can confound the presence or absence of a postulated cause-and-effect relation. Epidemiology is often abused by "dredging for results in the statistical noise" by what economists call "data-mining."

To the question of whether electromagnetic fields might be a possible carcinogen, Richard Wilson, a Harvard physicist who had researched the issue, gave an apt answer: it depends on what one means by "possible." A dog reportedly running down the middle of Fifth Avenue would be unusual but is indeed possible. A report of a lion doing the same could still be correct: the animal might have escaped from the Bronx Zoo. But a report of a stegosaurus running down Fifth Avenue is not worth checking out, even though the event might still be "possible," in a strained sense of the word. Citing recent Supreme Court decisions that encourage judges to appoint genuine scientists as advisors to help them exclude junk science, Park sees some hope: "at least shark repellent is now available."

Fraudulent science, the final type of "voodoo" science that Park explores, includes deliberately bamboozling investors and consumers such as sick people seeking cures. Sometimes foolishness slides across the line into fraud, as when mistaken scientists persist in their public claims even after becoming no longer able to fool themselves. Pons and Fleischmann, the cold-fusion researchers, provide an example, at least in the diagnosis of some observers. Deliberate fraud sometimes enjoys the (temporary) protection of official secrecy, as in the late 1970s, when the French government tried to suppress the politically embarrassing truth about a "sniffer plane" supposedly able to detect petroleum deposits from the air.

Park offers some explanations of

why voodoo science flourishes. Many people have a "belief organ" and an "appetite for the 'spooky' part of science." The media pander to these, disguising entertainment as news or as TV documentaries. "In time, the distinction between fact and speculation faded" from discussion of the affair at Roswell. A string of profitable books did provoke skeptical responses from aerospace writer Philip Klass. "It is an axiom in the publishing business, however, that pseudoscience will always

Apparently without so realizing, Park provides ammunition for libertarians when he offers insight into the mindset of politicians.

sell more books than the real science that debunks it." Furthermore, "confronting pseudoscience has a way of seeming to take a dispute between superstition and science and elevate it to a simple disagreement between scientists. The more famous the challengers, the more stature they seem to lend to the pseudoscience." An example is how criticism by Nobel laureate chemist Irving Langmuir brought favorable attention to Rhine's experiments on paranormal phenomena.

Park observes bad and good science entering into debates over public policy. As far as I can tell, he relies on his scientific judgment and does not push any political line. He is skeptical of technologies such as the X-ray laser that supposedly justify the Star Wars program. Especially, but not only in connection with that program, he challenges the great public reputation enjoyed by Dr. Edward Teller (reputed father of the hydrogen bomb, whose "charisma defies analysis"). Park is

skeptical about the scientific value, especially in relation to cost, of the manned space station. On global warming, he takes a nuanced position but inclines to the tentative judgment that there is indeed some cause for concern.

Apparently without so realizing, Park provides ammunition for libertarians when he offers insight into the mindset of politicians. Besides being eager to perceive social problems and devise governmental solutions, politicians want to show their personal alertness to promising developments on the supposed frontiers of science and technology. Various kinds of "alternative medicine" enter into the story, as does cold fusion. Politicians have shown sympathy, in legislative hearing and in bills, for various perpetual-motion schemes. The Hydrogen Futures Act proposed in 1995 envisioned obtaining energy from the unlimited supply of hydrogen in the oceans. The bill's author evidently did not see the obvious flaw in his idea. The Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, which might have spared him embarrassment, was abolished in the same year. Many members of Congress had complained that the OTA was too slow for a rapidly changing world. But the real problem was a clash between scientific reality and political goals. "Indeed, there was a tendency to simply avoid seeking advice from OTA on controversial or partisan issues — which are generally the issues on which objective advice is most needed."

"Science has a way of getting us to the future without consulting the futurists and visionaries," Park writes. It keeps offering new possibilities and dismissing old ones. "Politicians, by contrast, want to agree on a future and establish policies that will get us there." As with questions of space exploration, "an ever-widening disconnect" separates "scientists and politicians as they pursue fundamentally different objectives."

Park's examples of how politicians abuse or disregard natural science help us understand why economics gets treated similarly

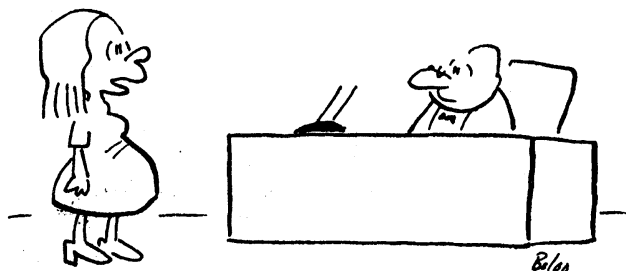
(although Park does not himself draw the parallel). Politics often overrides economics in making policy concerning general business conditions, inflation, the minimum wage, and international trade. Even the basic fact of scarcity often gets ignored. The term "voodoo economics" has wider scope than George Bush gave to it during the presidential primaries of 1980.

Voodoo Science is one of the relatively few books that I have found to be an actual page-turner. Park is a skillful expositor. He has a knack for felicitous analogies. (Analogies cannot convey actual understanding of abstruse theories, but they can help the lay reader sense what is at issue.) The idea that gravitational attraction results from deformation of spacetime bears an analogy with how leaves floating on a still pond gradually come together in "rafts." Park illuminates Heisenberg's uncertainty principle by considering how one might clock the speed of a car passing two pylons set a known distance apart. The greater this distance, the more accurate the measured (average) speed. But concern with just *where* the car was when traveling at that speed would recommend positioning the pylons close together. "This trade-off is the classic dilemma of measurement." Along with an "ulti-

Besides being eager to perceive social problems and devise governmental solutions, politicians want to show their personal alertness to promising developments on the supposed frontiers of science and technology.

mate graininess of nature," it enters into the fundamental limit on how accurately one can simultaneously know both the position and motion of a subatomic particle. And similar trade-offs occur in many aspects of life, as in the tension between the safety and the likely yield of an investment security.

Even in sentence structure and choice of words, Park writes in an admirably simple way. He has much to teach about style as well as substance. □



"It happened during that hostile takeover attempt last summer."

Our Vietnam, by A.J. Langguth. Simon and Schuster, 2000, 766 pages.

Understanding the Vietnam War

Timothy Sandefur

In his journalism class at the University of Southern California, A.J. Langguth handed out a quiz on the history of the Vietnam War. He was dismayed at the poor results. "It struck me then that our students might be graduating with a better grasp of journalism history than of a critical event in America's recent past," he said. Langguth, who toured Vietnam as a reporter in the 1960s, wrote *Our Vietnam*, so that, as the Greek historian Herodotus put it, he could "preserve the memory of the past by putting on record the astonishing achievements both of our own and other peoples, and more particularly, to show how they came into conflict."

Langguth has a lot in common with Herodotus. Both wrote eminently readable, highly compelling histories which bring the past and its personalities to life. In his previous books, Langguth displayed a powerful talent for putting historical conflicts into clear and dramatic prose, to a degree that perhaps only William Manchester can equal. His *A Noise of War* (1994) details the conflicts which turned Rome from a republic to an empire, and his *Patriots* (1988) is simply the best book ever written about the American Revolution. Now, in *Our Vietnam*, he tells the story of the conflict that tore America apart for two decades, the legacy of which is still profoundly with us.

Ironically, Langguth's greatest strength is that he is not really a historian of war. He is a historian of personalities. He portrays people, in

sentences crafted with deceptive simplicity — the sure sign of master skill — and the result is a feeling of on-the-scene relevance. Langguth's concern is with telling the story, not with advancing an historiographical thesis, which with many historians takes away from the action and leads off into speculation and obscurity. Langguth is never obscure, and always subtle. Take the opening lines of *A Noise of War*: "Gaius Julius Caesar stood before Sulla, the dictator of Rome, and weighed a decision that could cost him his life. To ensure the loyalty of Rome's young aristocrats, he had ordered several of them to leave their wives and marry women he had selected. Most had obeyed." In three sentences he has set the scene, provided the striking background of conflict, and delved into the hearts of two men whose lives affect western civilization to this day.

He repeats the performance, though with a bit less energy, in *Our Vietnam*. Although that war has been the subject of dozens of books which argue that America's mistake was this or that or the other thing, few authors have simply sat down to tell the story of the war that began as an awful farce, and ended up a pathetic tragedy. Beginning with France's attempts to keep Vietnam under its imperial control after World War II, Langguth relates the stirring of conflict, the rising casualty rates, and the slow realization among world leaders that they had locked themselves into a war with no escape.

Actually, *Our Vietnam* is less overtly dramatic than Langguth's other books (mostly because there are so many more characters involved), but that is the point: where other wars had been

forthright hostilities, the Vietnam War, like the jungle it was set in, seethed under the surface. Flippant decisions controlled the fate of a whole generation like some weird marionette, each string attached to dozens of real lives. Bureaucrats wrote memos in well-appointed offices while on the other side of the world, men died horrible deaths. That juxtaposition between the business tie and the napalm bomb was one reason why America's resolve collapsed, and one senses it around the edge of every sentence in this book. Langguth describes a 1965 conversation between Lyndon Johnson and his generals:

The president was the only one in the room to raise the question of civilian casualties. "Are we killing civilians along with the V.C.?"

General Wheeler granted that some were dying. They were "accompanying the V.C.," he explained. "It can't be helped."

But Johnson had obtained more precise figures. "The Vietcong dead is running at a rate of 25,000 a year," he said somberly. "At least 15,000 have been killed by air — half of these are not part of what we call Vietcong. Since 1961, a total of 89,000 have been killed. The South Vietnamese are being killed at a rate of 12,000 a year."

Stanley Resor, secretary of the army, strove to focus the discussion on the president's options.

And the conversation turns away from the impolite matter of death. The bland tone of political conversation in the 1960s was thickened by buzzwords, as William Zinsser writes, because "clutter is the language of the Pentagon throwing dust in the eyes of the populace by calling an invasion a 'reinforced protective reaction strike.'"

Reinforcing this sublimated barbarism was the attitude of policy wonks convinced that the management mechanisms and statistical models, which had worked so well in forecasting industrial output at Ford or the RAND Corporation, could predict the mindset of organized terrorists in an Asian jungle. Langguth describes John F. Kennedy's assistant for national security affairs, McGeorge Bundy:

Bundy's practical approach to issues appealed to Kennedy, who was usually ill at ease with abstractions. Both men took a mechanic's approach to the engine of government: find out what was broken, fix it, and keep the

ship of state aloft. Leave to others the mysteries of aerodynamics.

Robert McNamara, convinced that he could quantify the unquantifiable, faced little opposition.

[George] Ball found McNamara's reliance on statistical arguments both intriguing and suspect. Once, after McNamara had rattled off the odds for the success of various military operations — 65 percent for this one, 30 for that — Ball had joked that perhaps the figures were actually 64 percent and 29 percent. He saw that such teasing did not amuse the

defense secretary.

It might be amusing, if it weren't so awful. Statistic-obsessed superbureaucrats pulled numbers out of their gut instincts, hoping to manipulate a culture and setting which they did not really comprehend. The clever ploys and political maneuvers they devised had none of the effects they anticipated, nor were the Vietnamese any better at predicting the reactions of Americans. Time after time, Vietcong assaults calculated to break American resolve only aroused more American stubbornness. It is a great historical

myth that America opposed the Vietnam War; in fact, throughout most of its history, American public opinion supported the war. Sadly, American resolve was stronger than that of the government it was supposedly protecting. The leadership of the Army of the

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Langguth's strength is that he is not really a historian of war. He is a historian of personalities. He portrays people, in sentences crafted with deceptive simplicity — the sure sign of master skill — and the result is a feeling of on-the-scene relevance.

Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) was often more concerned with looking good to its politicians than with preventing invasion by the North:

Diem was promoting his most cautious colonels, replacing overly zealous officers and threatening the promotions of those commanders who did not hold down their losses. [Military "advisor" Paul] Harkins had heard the same story twice, he began, once in Saigon, once in Bac Lieu: an ARVN battalion commander had taken up a position along a riverbank. When his American advisor pointed out that across the stream seemed a better place to camp, the officer had said that the area was already occupied by the V.C. The advisor asked, "Why don't you go after them?" "As long as we don't bother them," the ARVN commander replied, "they won't bother us."

America didn't just find itself propping up a halfhearted military. Vietnam exemplified one of the worst elements of the Cold War: to prevent the spread of communism, America often felt it had to support regimes which were no less brutal than those of the communists. Just as with the Shah of Iran, or Haiti in the age of Clinton, America in the Vietnam War found that its support for authoritarian regimes simply played into the hands of a Communist party which viewed capitalism as imperialistic, and Americans as eager to enslave the third world under puppet dictators. Thus, as

Johnson and Nixon shipped more Americans to Asia, the government which we were allegedly defending fell into successive coups, each suppressing dissent and robbing their citizens of what one South Vietnamese leader called "your crazy freedoms." This betrayal of capitalism's true message of independence and opportunity

Flippant decisions controlled the fate of a whole generation like some weird marionette, each string attached to dozens of real lives

was just a part of the overall undermining of American institutions which Ayn Rand so often complained was the legacy of conservatism. And it pushed a generation of bright students into believing that the communists must be right after all. Langguth describes the beginning of the student protests:

"I do not believe," [SDS President Paul] Potter cried, "That the President or Mr. Rusk or Mr. McNamara or even McGeorge Bundy are particularly evil men. But their decisions have led to the mutilation and death of thousands and thousands of people. What kind of system is it that allows good men to make those kinds of decisions?" Potter then set out the challenge facing the SDS: "We must name that system. We must name it, describe it, analyze it, understand it, and change it." In the audience, red-diaper babies — students whose parents had been members of the American Communist Party — knew that the system's name was Capitalism. But that was the tired bogeyman invoked by their families in the 1930s. For now, the young would rebel simply against "the system."

As the story progresses, the fury among those student protesters grows; the horror of the war breaks through the absurd gentility; Langguth's laconic descriptions become increasingly forceful. By the end of 1965, the barren fact of war can no longer be disguised. President Johnson is increasingly attacked by his own party, a war protester sets himself on fire outside McNamara's Pentagon office,

American prisoners of war are tortured beyond endurance, a battle at Ia Drang turns into a Vietcong ambush so violent that it turns the stomach to read. Again the words of Herodotus come to mind: "In peace, children bury their parents. War perverts the order of nature, and causes parents to bury their children."

The "lesson" of Vietnam is still hotly debated; probably the only thing all can agree on is that we have not learned it. But one thing comes

through clearly: from the beginning to the end, America lacked any actual plan. What was America fighting for? In the complex swirl of motives — John Kennedy's chauvinistic overconfidence, Lyndon Johnson's paranoia toward the Kennedys, Ho Chi Minh's facade of humility covering his sanguinary national socialism, communists openly dedicated to the "liberation" of the world, and "realists" like Henry Kissinger refusing to take them at their word — American leaders lost track of

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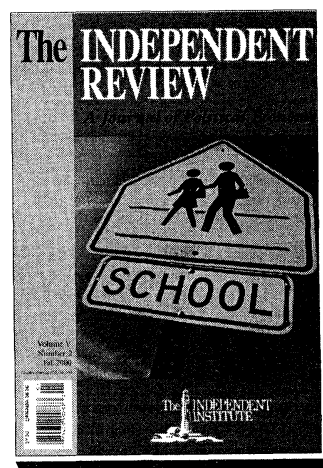
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the simple fact that an American victory was impossible. As Clark Clifford pointed out in a meeting in 1965, "If, against the odds, the United States did prevail, America would face a long

It might be amusing, if it weren't so awful. Statistic-obsessed superbureaucrats pulled numbers out of their gut instincts, hoping to manipulate a culture and setting which they did not really comprehend.

occupation with constant harassment. And if we don't win, after a big buildup, it will be a huge catastrophe. We could lose more than 50,000 men in Vietnam. It will ruin us. Five years, 50,000 men, hundreds of billions of dollars — it is just not for us. I can't see anything but catastrophe for my country."

That catastrophe came, and it left some 58,000 Americans dead, and American credibility severely weakened. Still, there are no easy answers. It is easy to say that America should never have become involved in Vietnam, but only because those who say it were not born there, were not threatened with the savagery of communism, did not stand on the roof of the American embassy waiting for helicopters that never returned, or flee shooting soldiers so that they could to sail to California in leaky rafts. It is also easy to say America should have stayed until we won, but only if we ignore the daily and futile wasting of life, both military and civilian; the constant, ineffectual bombing; the cruelties of South Vietnam's own rulers; the prospect of a permanent American occupation of the South. As Langguth sums up, "On April 30, 1975, one judgment was possible about the war just ended: North Vietnam's leaders had deserved to win. South Vietnam's leaders had deserved to lose. And America's leaders, for thirty years, had failed the people of the North, the people of the South, and the people of the United States." □

The Nature of Economies, by Jane Jacobs. The Modern Library: Random House, 2000, 190 pages.

A "Natural" Economy?

Pierre Desrochers

The idea of learning from the workings of the natural world how to reform our unsustainable economic system is increasingly fashionable in some circles. One such perspective, known as "industrial ecology," has been vigorously promoted by both the National Academy of Engineering and the Environmental Protection Agency. Paul Hawken, the author of the 1993 best seller *The Ecology of Commerce*, recently teamed up with Hunter and Amory Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute to write *Natural Capitalism* and argue along similar lines that if we could only learn from nature how the waste of one species becomes the valuable input of another, we could dramatically reduce humankind's impact upon the environment.

The truth is, however, that economists belonging to virtually every school of thought have discussed similarities between biological evolution and economic development at least since Adam Smith. For many 19th century authors, a laissez-faire economic system was already behaving like nature in the way it recycled its waste. Perhaps the thinker who explored this metaphor in more depth was Peter Lund Simmonds. As he put it: "Utilisation is the great law of Nature, and we are only following her teaching. . . . She, true to herself, is never at a loss what to do with any of her elements. Man, in an artificial state of society, and in an enlightened age, also provides for converting all the material he uses into useful purposes. There must be no loss of anything once

within his grasp."

One of the latest authors to draw a parallel between nature's and economies' workings is social theorist Jane Jacobs. Best known for her work on cities, Jacobs here goes beyond the rediscovery of a metaphor. Her book is better understood as a search for universal principles characterizing both "natural" and "human made" complex systems. Written, like her 1992 book *Systems of Survival*, in the form of a Platonic dialogue among a cast of five New Yorkers, *The Nature of Economies* sets out to prove that economic life obeys the same rules as those governing the systems of nature.

Jacobs' characters discover in the course of their inquiry that development, whether in nature or in economies, is best viewed as an open-ended process by which differentiations emerge from generalities, which then become other generalities from which further differentiations emerge. Such development depends, however, on numerous, various, and intricate co-development relationships. For example, tool making began with four existing generalities: sticks, stones, bones, and fire. Our ancestors then differentiated those found generalities into many things from hammers to scrapers to bags, innovations that required the fusion of previously unrelated innovations.

Expansion, whether natural or economic, then depends on capturing and using transient energy. The more different means a system possesses for recapturing, using, and passing around energy before its discharge from the system, the larger the cumulative consequences of the energy it

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receives will be. The end result is that diverse ensembles expand in a rich environment created by the diverse use and reuse of received energy. For example, a diversified city will generate much more local expansion from a new business venture than a small town, much as a well-developed forest ecosystem converts more sunlight into biomass than a desert.

According to Jacobs' characters, growing economies, like complex ecosystems, are "dynamically stable" inasmuch as they can evade collapse by self-correction through the grace of four processes: bifurcations, positive-feedback loops, negative-feedback controls, and emergency adaptations. The collapse of advanced human economies is further held in check by human

Of course, human beings, animals and plants have a lot in common, but they differ in terms of intentionality and their capacity to create new combinations.

traits such as such as aesthetic appreciation, fear of retribution, awe expressed as veneration, persuasiveness, and corrective tinkering and contriving. Jacobs concludes her dialogue by pointing out that systems that make themselves up as they go along aren't predictable.

The idea that evolutionary biology should prove a more fruitful source of inspiration than classical mechanics has long been understood by individuals who have observed that in both the "natural" and "man-made" realms the most significant processes characteristically exhibit increasing complexity, acceleration through time, and irreversibility.

Two serious drawbacks, however, have always constrained the rigid application of biological metaphors to the study of economic development. For most people, evolution involves no intentionality toward a specific goal, whereas economic development is driven by the satisfaction of human wants. And with the exception of the smallest levels of complexity such as

microbes, different biological species generally do not interbreed, while human beings produce new things by relentlessly combining artifacts, skills and ideas — including the genes of two different animal species. I don't think that Jacobs has managed to overcome these pitfalls.

Jacobs argues that human beings exist wholly within nature as part of the natural order in every respect. By doing so, she tries to distance herself

According to Jacobs, growing economies, like complex ecosystems, are "dynamically stable" inasmuch as they can evade collapse by self-correction.

from both "misanthropic ecologists" who consider human beings as somehow not part of nature and economists and industrialists who believe that it is

possible to circumvent and outdo the natural order.

The Nature of Economics doesn't deliver on its promise of finding a third way because Jacobs isn't able to reconcile her description of human creativity and inventiveness with her attempt to cast economic processes in the same light as natural processes. Indeed, one sometimes gets the impression that Jacobs doesn't see much difference between the development processes of plants and animals, on the one hand, and human beings on the other.

Of course, human beings, animals and plants have a lot in common, but they differ in terms of intentionality and their capacity to create new combinations. While some animal and plant species are interdependent, this doesn't imply cooperation. Besides, can we truly speak of intentionality when most species exhibit only one kind of interdependent behavior? One of Jacobs' characters refers to the mitochondria that power our cells by combining sugar and oxygen to illustrate the universality of the principle of combinations. But as far as I know, this is about

all that mitochondria combine. Similarly, beavers mix mud and logs to create dams, but not much else.

I don't think that Jacobs addresses these issues successfully. One of her characters points out after a discussion of these issues: "Of course, development still embodies mystery. Why should there be a force driving the universe toward intricacy and away from simplicity? But if the *why* of development is impenetrable, at least the *how* of development is discernible (p. 23)." What's so impenetrable about the *why* of development? People want to make their lives better.

Jacobs' discussion of the environmental benefits of accumulating human capital is puzzling. In this context, she refers to economists Robert Lucas and Paul Romer, whose work is highly theoretical and has little obvious relevance to environmental issues, but she does not write a single word about the work of Julian Simon and his collaborators, who have done much more on the issue. Maybe Jacobs' characters' attack on urban sprawl would have been less stringent if they had known that innovations in agricultural technologies have reduced farmland requirement to such an extent that suburban growth has had virtually no impact on the availability of wildlife areas.

Jacobs' fondness for biomimicry is equally troubling. Biomimicry is a movement that promotes the development of biodegradable products based on imitating the chemistry of nature at life-friendly temperatures. Its basic principle is nothing more than the rediscovery of a very old metaphor, for as the Greek philosopher Democritus wrote a couple of millennia ago, "arts such as weaving, building houses, and singing were discovered as humans imitated and became the pupils of animals." It would be nice if, like spiders, we could make silk as strong as Kevlar from digested crickets and flies without needing boiling sulfuric acid and high-temperature extruders. But the truth is that without the freedom and incentive structure of a market economy, we cannot learn.

Despite these problems, *The Nature of Economics* is well worth reading. Like all of Jacobs' previous books, it is superbly written (although the dialogue format doesn't work as well as it did in *Systems of Survival*) and reflects

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"Mail Order Love," *continued from page 52*

date, and make love to women." You have to admit, Copeland and Louis certainly offered a dynamite package. Like the saintly altruists that they undoubtedly are, they promised: "Now we'd like to show YOU how easy it can be . . . to meet desirable women . . . charm

Here, in my own hands, I held the source of "Insights you can use to capture their hearts and make them yours." That sounded like appropriation to me, and I have always been a private property kind of guy.

them . . . mesmerize them . . . captivate them . . . and make them yours!"

I was willing to forgive them for their repeated misuse of the ellipsis mark, because my mind was set on mesmerizing beautiful women. Christ, how I had always longed to mesmerize a beautiful woman — you know, like those entertaining hypnotists who make prim little ladies chosen at random from the audience take off all their clothes and run around the stage dancing lewdly to the music of some vile heavy-metal band. In my younger days, I persuaded a few girls to do some pretty nasty things, but I'll be honest: what I'd wanted all along was to mesmerize them. By God, those sugar-plum fantasies were dancing in my fevered brain now. Mesmerization, here I come. Ladies, get in line!

The letter presented a lot of other neat stuff, but I like to think that the essence of its message was largely contained in two of the red-lettered highlights: First, "You'll find many more

Jacobs is once again at her best describing in an accessible way complex dynamic processes and extolling the virtues of human creativity and adaptation. *The Nature of Economies* contains genuine insights that are likely to challenge, and probably in time reverse, some economic dogmas. □

ingenious tips for turning ANY chance meeting with a beautiful woman into a romantic encounter!" (This was eerie, because recently I had had several encounters with beautiful women and, just as Copeland and Louis must have sensed, I totally missed my opportunity to turn those chance meetings into romantic encounters.) And, second, "Meeting, dating, and inspiring desire in women is NOT difficult. You already have what it takes. All you need now is the right attitude . . . and the secrets in HOW TO SUCCEED WITH WOMEN!" Words cannot describe how relieved I was by that information, because for six pages I had worried myself sick about whether it would be difficult to mesmerize those beauties. But, hell, it was going to be a cold cinch. I, even I, of all men, actually had — or soon would have, once I'd absorbed the secrets detailed in the book — what it would take to SUCCEED WITH WOMEN.

As if to put the proverbial icing on the cake of their altruism, Copeland and Louis offered a "100% NO-RISK offer." Man, when you have nothing to lose, there's just no excuse to wait. With shaky hands but hopeful heart, I filled out the reply card and, unwilling to wait for tomorrow's mail pickup at the box, I drove to the post office and put the card through the "Urgent Mail" slot (the one that is rumored, falsely I am sure, to have a trash bin on the other side). Now, in just a matter of days, I will have sloughed off my "doubts and insecurities about your prowess with women getting the better of you." I await my no-risk "lifetime of romantic adventure to gain." Beyond the appropriation and all that nifty variety, the part I'm anticipating most keenly is the mesmerization. God, I love that idea. I don't think I'll ever tire of mesmerizing those beautiful babe. □

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Terra Incognita

Anchorage, Alaska

Dispatch from the war against unsafe work practices, as reported in *OSHA Up-To-Date*:

The FAA recently received a total of ten citations from OSHA for a variety of workplace hazards discovered during an inspection of an air-traffic control center in Anchorage. Hazards ranged from employee exposure to electrical equipment to a lack of safety retraining following job changes. Since the center is not a private employer it is not subject to the usual \$105,500 penalty.

Martin, Fla.

Curious report from *Prison Legal News*:

Steven Whitsett was captured after he escaped from the Martin Treatment Center for sex offenders. In preparation for his escape he shipped all of his belongings home, told everybody that he was going to court to be released and finally got a farewell haircut on the morning of the escape.

Rotorua, New Zealand

Fighting back against animal cruelty, as reported on *ananova.com*:

Pedro the parrot was a regular fixture of the Kiwi Spirit bar located in Rotorua. But local animal-rights activists claimed the loud atmosphere and late hours would harm Pedro and forced the bar's owners to relocate his cage to a quieter room. Shortly afterwards Pedro died of unknown causes.

McNeil Island, Wash.

Enlightened approach to psychiatry in the Evergreen State, from the *Seattle Times*:

A psychiatrist whose license has been restricted because he had sex with two patients is now employed to treat "violent sexual predators" at the Special Commitment Center on McNeil Island. The correctional system administration boasts another psychiatrist who did the same at the adjoining prison as well as a convicted rapist working as a social worker.

Somalia

Advance of peace in the Third World, from a dispatch in the *Akron Beacon Journal*:

Somalia president Abdikassim Salad announced that Somalians "are fed up with wars, violence, [and] killing." He was accompanied by more than 1,000 militiamen armed with rifles, rocket launchers, and anti-aircraft guns.

Milwaukee

Innovation in "getting out the vote" as reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*:

Authorities are considering pressing charges against the Democratic Party and Al Gore's campaign for having bribed homeless people with packs of cigarettes into voting for Gore. Democrats claim that the people in question acted on their own.

The High Seas

Evidence that the Cold War is not yet over, as reported by *The Wall Street Journal*:

Two Russian aircraft buzzed the United States aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* and then proceeded to e-mail pictures of the incident to the crew.

Milwaukee

Curious method of fighting crime in America's great Middle West, reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*:

Police Chief Art Jones recently changed the way his officers receive incoming arrestees. Previously, they were detained in a secure area while waiting to be searched for drugs and weapons, whereas now they wait in an adjacent garage area. As a consequence, two men escaped from the garage as the electronic door was opening to receive more arrestees.

Switzerland

The importance of securing all automotive passengers, reported by the *Associated Press*:

After a driver crashed into a bus after being bitten by a tortoise lying on her passenger seat, police have reminded motorists that correct restraining practices apply to passengers "of every size and shape."

Topeka, Kan.

Advance in EMT efficiency, reported by the *Associated Press*:

An attempted suicide called 911, completed the call, and then passed out. Paramedics arrived and, without taking a pulse, assumed she was dead and went outside to protect the area as a crime scene. The victim called 911 again, prompting the paramedics to provide medical care.

Wisconsin

Expansive views of the natural environment, reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*:

A recent Sierra Club ad in the *Journal Sentinel* implored readers to tell George W. Bush and Dick Cheney to keep Lake Michigan a natural haven. The advertisement was illustrated with a photograph of Lake Superior.

USA

Good news about the U.S. trade deficit, reported by ABC News:

The United States is the number one exporter of human sperm in the world, a business worth "between \$50 million and \$100 million."

South Africa

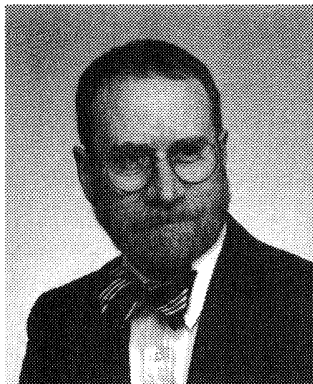
Rising self-confidence in the new South Africa, reported by the *Cape Times*:

When government officials asked Veronica Germann to remove her nail polish, she responded: "Why should I take my nail polish off? It's part of who I am. It's my identity."

Special thanks to Michael Holasek, Russell Garrard, Susan Lindgren, and Ivan Santana for contributions to *Terra Incognita*.
(Readers are invited to forward news clippings or other items for publication in *Terra Incognita*, or e-mail to terraincognita@libertysoft.com.)

Your Vote Doesn't Count

by Sheldon Richman



I have followed the presidential election returns pretty closely, and for the life of me, I cannot find a single state where George W. Bush and Al Gore were tied or where the margin victory was one vote.

This is important because everyone from President Clinton to the most obscure news anchorperson has repeated incessantly that this election proves once and for all that "every vote counts." In particular, they had Florida in mind.

My question is this: how does a 537-vote margin in Florida demonstrate that every vote counts? I know that the government's schools aren't terribly good at teaching our children arithmetic, but this is a little absurd. Bush won Florida by 537 votes. Should someone who would have voted for

Gore but stayed home kick himself for letting Bush win? The answer is yes — *if he could have cast 538 votes*. But it's one man *one* vote, remember? Had this person exercised his "civic duty" and voted, Bush's margin would have been 536. Conclusion: that person's vote did not count, if by "count" we mean "determine the outcome." The same is true for every other person's vote. We can say that in Florida, every block of 537 votes counted, but that is far different from saying *each* vote counted.

So enough of this "every vote counts" nonsense. Aggregate votes count. If millions of Bush's or Gore's voters had stayed home, the outcome might have been different. But no one controls millions of votes. When we wake up in the morning — election day is no exception — we each ask ourselves, "What shall I do today?" Almost automatically we separate our possible choices into two categories: those that in our best judgment have a chance of bringing about a desired result and those that do not. We routinely discard those in the second category. If I have to go to work that day, I do not flap my arms

or twitch my nose to get there. I also do not make a wish that I will find a million dollars in my wallet, obviating the need for me to go to work at all. Why? Because I know it will have no effect on the desired outcome.

On election day, voting is one of the actions I can take. But I submit that course of conduct to the same test: will it contribute to bringing about a desired outcome? That raises the question, what is the desired outcome? If it is to feel good about giving my sanction to a candidate I admire and to join in the community of like-minded citizens, then voting will bring that about. Thus that may be a good reason to vote.

But if the desired outcome is the election of a particular person, then my voting is most unlikely to bring that about. Indeed, I have a better chance of being hit by lightning while driving to the polls than of breaking a tie in the election. In other words, determining the winner is a bad reason to vote.

When I argue this to people, they invariably say, "What if everyone thought that way?" Obviously, my decision not to vote is based on what I think other people will do.

That's true of many actions. When a young person announces that he wishes to become a doctor, do we say, "What if everyone thought that way? If everyone becomes a doctor, there will be no businessmen or lawyers or shopkeepers." If I thought no one was going to vote on election day, I might vote, because in that case my vote would be decisive. My reason for not voting is precisely that by any rational estimate, my vote will *not* be decisive.

Finally, what about the plea that we should vote because it is our most precious right, which people have died for? First, voting is not the most precious right. The most precious rights are life, liberty, and property. If America's servicemen died for anything, it was the right to live their lives and raise their families as they see fit. As any number of examples demonstrate, the right to vote is no guarantee of that.

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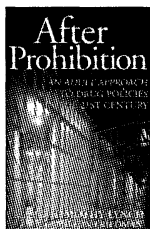
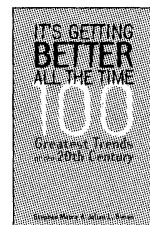
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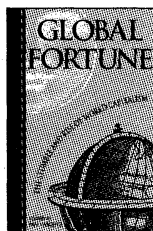
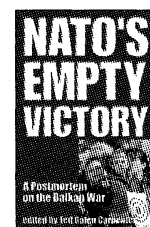


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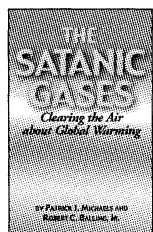
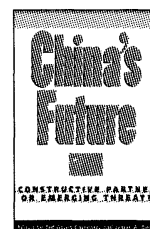


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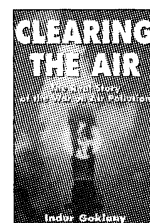


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