

Liberty

Red Team, Blue Team

July 2004

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by Robert Watts Lamon

The Conservative Case Against George Bush

by K. R. Mudgeon

Orwell's Weird Economics

by Robert Formaini

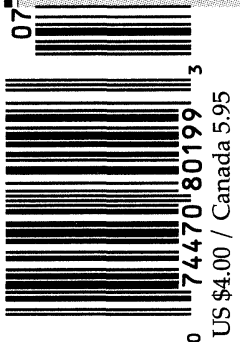
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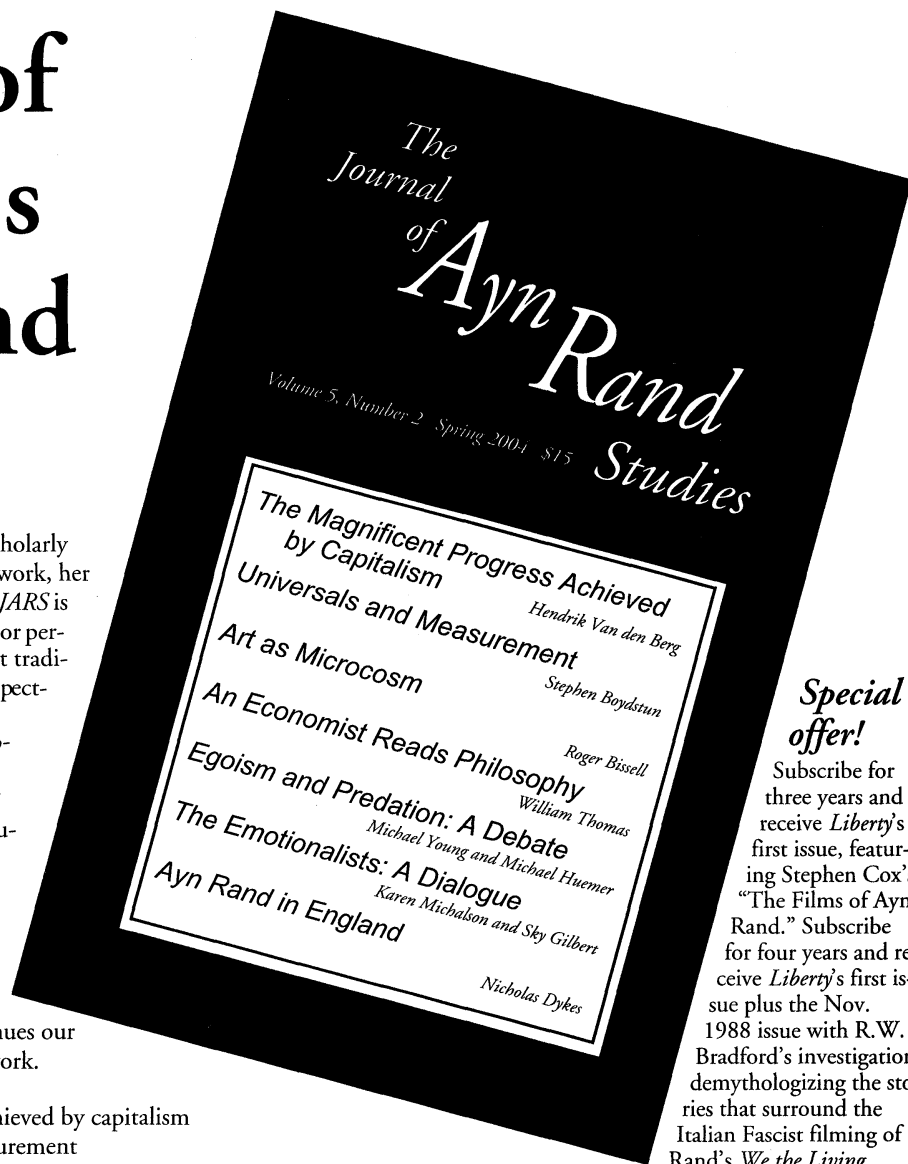
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Letters

The Free State Is a Little Cold

I wish the Free State Project (May) and the people involved with it all the best, but I seriously doubt that I will be joining them. New Hampshire certainly has its virtues, but I was disappointed that other states weren't included in the poll.

I have despised snow even longer than I have despised big government, and every state in the selection process has an intolerable winter. If you think cutting taxes is tough, try changing the weather.

Later this year, I am embarking on my own personal Free State Project. I am moving to the lovely city of Austin, Texas. Texas has some of the lowest taxes in the country and good laws on homeschooling, and I get much better weather along with it. It's also only about 250 miles from Mexico. This makes it possible to drop out of the American health-care system to some extent.

Chris Baker
Columbus, Ohio

Libertarian Ecumenism

It is no doubt my friend Jo Ann Skousen's Mormon background that prevents her from seeing the critical importance of the pain and suffering of Christ (*The Passion of Mel Gibson*, May 2004). Of course, the resurrection is of supreme importance, and without that, the passion would have been meaningless.

In the Catholic tradition, undertaking pain and suffering is by no means a denial of the worth of Christ's atonement; it is an attempt to relieve some of the human suffering. Just as each sin adds just a little pain to Christ's suffering, so too each good work, and each incident of willingly suffered pain for His sake, relieves it.

For Gibson to bankroll with his own millions a foreign-language film that most observers initially thought would flop — perhaps partially as a means of

atonement for his own past — can hardly be described as "hubris." It is a pious act of humility, albeit one that would prove to be hugely successful.

Adrian Day
Annapolis, Md.

Finding Truth in the White Pages

I don't know how the major Libertarian candidates for president found out the truth about the Federal Reserve System ("From the editor," June), but the Cleveland, Ohio telephone white pages (hardly a product of the "fever swamps of the extreme Right") lists the Federal Reserve Bank among private businesses, not the ever-growing list of government agencies. Why don't you check the phone books for the other eleven cities which have branches of the Federal Reserve Bank?

Otherwise, I enjoy *Liberty*, except for your LP bashing.

David Macko
Solon, Ohio

And God Slew Libertarianism

In recent years, I've come to the conclusion that libertarianism has turned into a lost cause. The libertarianism that I used to know was defined by Ayn Rand. She recognized that organized religion and government were allies with the same objective: to control the masses through thought control and force.

The common form of libertarianism that I see now is exemplified by Andrew W. Jones' "America's War on Religion" (May). Theists have taken over the movement and corrupted it into a religious cause to rescue their alliance. They were happy when the state was doing their missionary work for them. Now they are upset because they are losing their free ride.

Jones argues that the First Amendment was intended to prevent government interference with the freedom to worship. That's only half the story! The Founders knew how organized relig-

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ions incite the state to oppress heretics and unbelievers. This has been going on since Roman Empire days.

Jones withholds the circumstances under which the California Supreme Court ruled against Catholic Charities on contraceptive drugs, so I looked at the legal brief on the Web. It was Catholic Charities that challenged the Women's Contraception Equity Act on First Amendment grounds. The law allows religious employers to request exceptions to requirements that violate their tenets, but the court found that they do not fit the definition of a religious employer.

The plaintiff acknowledged that it doesn't fit the definition of a religious employer: it employs and serves persons of different faiths, and its corporate purpose is not directly related to inculcation; it is to serve the general public. The law does not compel any employer to offer prescription drug insurance, but Catholic Charities didn't like the option of not providing such insurance to any of its employees. This also explains why the Salvation Army was disallowed from using federal money to promote religion.

As the Catholic Charities case shows, the laws make a clear distinction between what is a religious organization and what is not. Jones obscures the difference when he raises the alarm that priests may someday be forced to marry gays and the Catholic Church accept women priests.

I'll defend their right to their nutty superstitions, but I'm fed up with having anal-retentive values forced on me. It's not just the lobbying and the court challenges. Theists grow up into adults who find their way into every level of government. Don't think for a minute that they can separate their religious values from policy. They proudly call this a Judeo-Christian nation because there are so damn many Judeo-Christian laws and regulations.

What theists have proved over and over again is that theirs are not voluntary spiritual movements; they are political causes. For all practical purposes, libertarianism is dead. It's dead because God killed it — Romans 13:1-7.

Raymond Hewitt
Parsippany, N.J.

Catholicism, Inc.

Catholic Charities of Sacramento, Inc. (CCSI) was not entitled to exemption from California's Women's

Contraceptive Equity Act (WCEA) because the WCEA isn't "an establishment of religion" ("America's War on Religion," May). Thus Catholic Charities had no protection under California Constitution Article 1, Section 4: "Free exercise and enjoyment of religion without discrimination or preference are guaranteed. This liberty of conscience does not excuse acts that are licentious or inconsistent with the peace and safety of the State. The Legislature shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. . . ." CCSI is a California corporation of which the stated purpose is "to offer social services to the general public," and WCEA religious exemptions do not extend to public service corporations.

CCSI's seeking protection under the First Amendment's Establishment

Clause was misplaced. It reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." It protects religion from federal law. Religion is "guaranteed," within limits, by state constitutions — as above.

Most of the confusion stems from believing the Establishment Clause is the source of the right, then reading "establishment" as a verb. From that perspective the clause seems to prevent Congress from establishing religion. And that in turn leads to the innocuous "separation of church and state," so avidly embraced by ACLU-types. That is then used to remove every smidgen of religion from government and, by extension, from everything government does.

But if Congress opens every session with Christian prayer, hangs the Ten

From the Editor . . .

The news from Iraq gets worse and worse: Americans bombing the hell out of weddings, sexually humiliating prisoners, beating other prisoners to death . . . Iraqi opposition growing. And whom do our political parties offer to deal with this? George W. Bush, the man who got us into the mess, and John Kerry, the man who used to think he committed atrocities while serving in Vietnam, but now thinks . . . well, that "atrocious" was a poor choice of words. Bush is fully committed to the war, while Kerry is committed to support the war as long as it's popular. It's time to remember the Libertarian Party's 1972 campaign slogan: "Say No to Both!"

But nearly all Americans who bother to vote will choose between Kerry and Bush. Their position in politics has devolved to partisanship for the sake of partisanship. Despite the fact that there are virtually no practical differences between Kerry's and Bush's positions, most Bush supporters seem to think the election of Kerry would be a disaster and most Kerry supporters think re-electing Bush would be the end of America as we know it.

Both are right. And both are wrong. A country as strong and vital as the United States can survive a lot of disaster. But one still feels sadness watching its decline.

The strange devolution of political partisans into something more akin to sports fans than thoughtful electors is the subject of our lead piece, "Red Team, Blue Team," by Clark Stooksbury. We follow with K. R. Mudgeon's exposé of George Bush's betrayal of conservative values in his domestic agenda. Then Lanny Ebenstein and I continue our debate on the war.

After that, *Liberty* leaves the depressing political situation and turns to more cheerful matters, with an exploration of George Orwell's puzzling economics, the rebirth of liberty during the 1940s, and a story about life in the interesting backwaters of Hawaii. Our review section looks at nine books, ranging in content from comic left-wing nonsense to the 1892 World's Fair to the decline of the English language.

So despite the machinations of idiot politicians, the world continues to spin on its axis. We can all be thankful for that.

R. W. Bradford

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Commandments on every wall, honors every Christian holiday, thumbs their noses at non-Christians, hires arsonists to torch every synagogue in the District of Columbia, and then methodically starts shooting anti-Christians, that doesn't violate the Establishment Clause or the First Amendment right of anyone. The only way that this provision can be violated is for Congress to make a law establishing religion. If they pass a law adding "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance, they have violated the Establishment Clause. Or stated otherwise, if the First Amendment were repealed, no religious law or right would be affected.

James Harrold, Sr.
Springdale, Ariz.

Pro-Liberty, Anti-Libertarian

When I first came across George Carlin's name in the "Reflections" section of your May issue, I perked up a little bit, as George is one of my favorites. Upon further reading, however, I became dismayed by the rantings of Stephen Cox as he critiqued a recent appearance by Carlin on Fox News. Cox was upset that Carlin did not take the opportunity to argue logically for the advancement of liberty, in light of the fact that the host asked Carlin to comment about the recent government assault on broadcasting of content perceived as indecent over "public airwaves."

First of all, George Carlin is not a self-proclaimed (or even a closet) libertarian. Rather the opposite is true; he has publicly written that he thinks libertarianism, as a political philosophy, is full of it. If anything, I would characterize him as something of an anarchist (he's a "big fan of entropy," waiting for the day that "your stupid, fucking economy collapses"), with some remaining "hippy-dippy" left leanings developed in his earlier years. And yet, he often is an eloquent defender of freedom, especially when taking on the empowered and self-important. But he does so in his own, inimitable style, with all the baggage and insight that comes with it. This is precisely what makes Carlin a great comedian and philosopher. He is not a "spokesman for liberty," whatever that means. He is an extremely clever and insightful individual who is true to himself, and that is what makes him, in my opinion, one of the great public figures of our time.

Secondly, anyone who has listened to a good bit of Carlin's material understands that he is obsessed when it comes to the two Rs: religion and Republicans. I can't say that these are the top two villains on my shit list, but the majority of his remarks on these subjects are funny, insightful, and on target. So, of course, when presented with the opportunity to comment about censorship on a right-leaning news channel, George chose to bad-mouth Republicans and the religious. Was this "drifting away from his topic (liberty)"? Not if you believe, as Carlin does, that these two groups are as anti-liberty as they come. Was it rude? Maybe, but I gotta admire a guy who is more concerned with the truth as he sees it, than with promoting his latest movie. (Without the movie to promote, would Fox have had him on at all?)

Finally, George Carlin has done more to promote individual freedom in his career than just about anyone in contemporary American society that comes to mind. Early in his career, he was able to maintain his artistic integrity while being pressured to become a more mainstream, less radical performer. He openly addressed drug usage in his comedy, at the risk of unwelcome scrutiny by certain government agencies. He risked jail time to utter the "seven words" over the airwaves. He fought censorship, not with logical arguments, but with a "try and stop me" attitude. By and large, this is exactly what is missing from the libertarian movement overall. Liberty needs a few more spokesmen with the "and if you don't like it, fuck you" attitude of George Carlin, much, much more than it needs a thousand Stephen Coxes logically arguing on its behalf. I believe that liberty isn't won by argument, but instead triumphs by force of will.

James S. Ferry
Morris, Ill.

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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Reflections

Add a little saki, and we've got a party!

— I was shocked to see those photos of Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Like any libertarian, I found the violations of civil rights abhorrent. I could not understand why a woman would handcuff a prisoner to a bed and put a leash on him and pull a pair of her dirty underpants over his head. Moreover, I am mystified by the sudden rush of Japanese businessmen trying to enlist in the Iraqi resistance.

— Tim Slagle

Harder than it sounds — The lefty national talk radio network Air America disappoints mostly because it is so belabored.

Didn't these professionals listen to talk radio to learn what distinguishes success from failure? The successful television and vaudeville performers that host Air America's programs apparently thought they could bluff their way through a medium that has its unique limitations and opportunities. The only "star" exploiting the medium successfully is a raucous-voiced woman named Randi. The others are hopeless. Even Al Franken is witless beyond his program's title: *The O'Franken Factor*. One clue to the producers' cluelessness is that the ads sound superior to the programming, because they are produced by people with more esthetic intelligence about radio.

Since some of the commentators come from National Public Radio, I get the impression that they are more skilled at getting donations from loyal listeners than winning new ones or attracting advertisers. Commercial talk radio is a different kind of business. This is *The Nation* or *National Review*, rather than, say, *Consumer Reports* or *Vanity Fair*.

Incidentally, the lefty generalizations about talk radio being wholly conservative ignore a broadcaster named Lionel, based in New York, who calls himself libertarian and is contemptuous of the conservative commentators with their dumb agendas. And he's funnier than Al Franken.

As much as I find Rush Limbaugh insufferable, I do credit him with inviting Walter Williams as a substitute, not only because Williams articulates the libertarian understanding of

economic issues, but because he sometimes telephones his old friend Thomas Sowell. Nowhere else on American radio can you hear the idiocies of African-American publicists and their white allies exposed in recognizable Black English.

— Richard Kostelanetz

What a difference a day makes — What happened to gun control? As the "assault" weapons ban is set to expire this fall with little or no protest, I am encouraged, perhaps prematurely, to let out a victory whoop. I think the attack on the World Trade Center is part of the reason the ban is being allowed to sunset. A lot of people who didn't understand the need for civilians to bear arms on Sept. 10 were pretty clear on the issue by Sept. 12.

— Tim Slagle

Homeland über alles

— The very name of the department President Bush created, Homeland Security, acknowledges there is a "homeland" and therefore, logically, that there is also an "outland," or at least overseas branches of the head office. In politics, that's the language of empire, embodied in the very name of a government agency, and most Americans haven't even noticed.

— Alan W. Bock

Refuge and sanctuary

— My nomination for the most memorable statement of the 2004 *Liberty* Editors' Conference was by panelist Charles Murray, who said he had come to realize that hundreds of millions of people

around the world were perfectly happy living under authoritarian governments, and were not about to be convinced otherwise. Forget a libertarian world. Think a libertarian *place*. "We need to have a place where we can live and we can function," he said. "Our task is to find refuge and sanctuary."

— Bruce Ramsey

Second annual Victory Declaration

— The presidential fortunes of Dubya seemed doomed by the continuing mess in Iraq. I predict that Karl Rove, his mastermind, will soon discover that the only way for his charge to win a renewal will be to declare victory (again!), purge the neocons from his cabinet, and bring all American troops



SHCHAMBERS

home before Labor Day. The United Nations, which never misses a chance to clean up the messes of the West (while ignoring those in Africa, among other less tractable places), will resolve the resulting chaos, probably by partitioning Iraq into three parts.

Dubya will have stolen the Democrats' thunder on the most important issue in the election. The Democrats made the tactical mistake of not supporting the only candidate who could have bested Bush on this issue, my man Dennis Kucinich.

May all future presidents learn the libertarian lesson against invading foreign countries, no matter how "evil" their leaders can be portrayed to be, and no matter how easily those who prosecute the war estimate in advance that victory will come.

— Richard Kostelanetz

More than one kind of abuse — The pictures of U.S. soldiers enjoying themselves as they abused Iraqi detainees are disturbing. The overtly sexual nature of the abuse and the obvious enjoyment of the guards make the individuals involved particularly reprehensible. That said, I have found the media's and politicians' responses to the scandal almost as disturbing, if in a different way. As the scandal has gained momentum, the threshold of abuse has been steadily lowered. In the last report I read, it had been "discovered" that Iraqi detainees had been deprived of a good night's sleep, put into stressful positions, and scared with dogs. Ted Kennedy had the nerve to assert: "Shamefully we now learn that Saddam's torture chambers reopened under new management, U.S. management." Such debasing of the word "torture" serves only to relieve true monsters from responsibility. From the way the story is developing, it seems that soon the only acceptable means of interrogation will be

to ask politely whether the prisoner has any information he may like to disclose.

Regardless of whether going to Iraq was prudent policy, we are currently engaged in a guerrilla war, and war is a hideous thing, which becomes even more disgusting when partisan critics and political squeamishness get in the way of rational prosecution. This is a lesson we should have learned from Vietnam. While, to our credit, we have determined that outright physical torture is below our dignity, to classify all serious attempts at interrogation as torture is to rob the military of an important means of getting information that can save American and Iraqi lives.

I do not like the idea of Americans harshly interrogating Iraqi prisoners any more than I like the idea of American planes dropping bombs on cities, or American soldiers gunning down insurgents in the streets. But this is war, and that's how wars are fought. Whoever sold Americans the notion that war can be pretty, sold them a bill of goods, and I fear it will be the American soldier in the streets of Baghdad that is going to pay the price.

— Andrew W. Jones

Bordering on terror — I sympathize with libertarians who harbor doubts about free immigration, mostly because I share their concern that, given the appeal of this country to Mexicans, the U.S. might eventually become a Spanish-speaking country if immigration were totally unrestricted, and this is something I think is undesirable. I hear this argument mostly from friends who live near the Mexican border, a part of the country where I have spent little time, and I have been reluctant to criticize it, out of respect for the first-hand empirical data they possess that I do not.

I live near the Canadian border, and the threat of the U.S. being overrun by Canadians isn't nearly as frightening: the threat of being inundated in Latino culture and the Spanish language seems a lot more worrisome than the threat of being overrun by people saying "eh?" at the end of every second sentence. And presumably, the Canadians who came here would be leaving for a reason, most likely their disgust with their weenie welfare-state culture. I myself am descended from Canadians, I confess. One line of my ancestors was, scandalously, Tory during the American Revolution and fled to the security of Empire at the war's conclusion, only to emigrate back three generations later.

Anyway, it's a lot easier for someone like me to argue for open immigration than for someone who lives near the Mexican border.

On the way to the *Liberty* Editors' Conference in Vegas, I purposely chose a roundabout route — I was in a rental car, where "all the miles are free" — taking me along the California-Mexico border, where I had a little opportunity to see the situation more closely. Once I got out of the San Diego metropolitan area, I was in some of the most inhospitable terrain I've ever experienced: mountainous desert, covered with boulders. It was mid-May, but the temperatures were scorching.

Not surprisingly, very few people live there. But apparently, a good number of Mexicans try to walk through this area to find work and lives in the U.S. I say "apparently" because nearly half the cars we passed were white-and-green U.S. Border Patrol cars, and presumably they were there for a reason. The thought of walking through this area, climbing the

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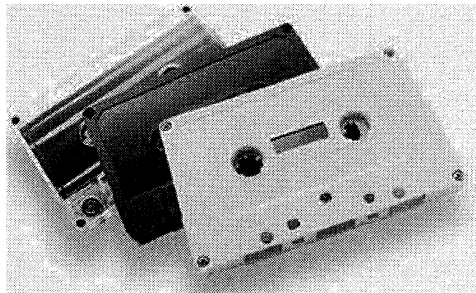
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mountains and clambering down the arroyos, in the heat of day or the darkness of night, with only the water you can carry, all the time hiding from the authorities . . . well, anyone who would do this obviously wants to get into this country very badly. The thought that despite the huge police presence, people would spend days trying to pass through this ultra-inhospitable desert left me thinking that anyone who wants to come to America that badly deserves my sympathy.

I was in America's Deconstitutionalized Zone, where the Border Patrol has police powers that transcend those of any other American police. These powers are seldom used against Americans whose skin is black or white, but they are heavily deployed against people with brown skin. In fact, it is impossible to leave the border area by car without being inspected for skin color by the Border Patrol. I've gone through this before, as has anyone who has driven from San Diego to Los Angeles. And every time it happens, I feel squeamish about it. I think of America as a place where skin color doesn't matter, at least insofar as the law is concerned. To me, the whole process, while brief and painless for white people like me, is an ugly reminder that America is not living up to its ideals.

When I got home, my mailbox held the latest issue of *Desert-Mountain Times*, my favorite small town newspaper, published in Alpine, Texas. It had a story about the village of Lajitas, just north of the Rio Grande, more or less in the middle of nowhere. Most of the residents on the U.S. side are Mexican-Americans and on the Mexican side Mexican-Mexicans. All that changed two years ago when the Border Patrol decided to close down its border crossing for budgetary reasons, making it illegal for anyone to cross here.

After the border shutdown, residents of Santa Elena on the Mexican side of the river have pretty much abandoned their town, and the Border Patrol has conducted what sounds a lot like a reign of terror on the American side. At the Cinco de Mayo celebration in Lajitas, Border Patrol personnel "separated children from their parents, children who had come to participate in a school program. Kids were crying," an eyewitness told the paper. The next day, "some children explained their absence [from school] by saying that agents had searched their house [the night before]. The children said that their parents were told that they would be arrested on the way to school the next day if they left. In other Friday night events, Border Patrol agents staked out an eighth grade dance at the Community Center and followed cars as they

left."

I was repelled by this story, just as I was repelled while being waved through the racial checkpoint on I-5. This is America, goddamn it. We're one country where stuff like this doesn't happen, at least not since the death of Jim Crow a half century ago.

Yes, I know, I've only discussed a few very small aspects of the immigration issue. Yes, I know that the welfare state provides artificial incentives for immigrants to move here. And, as I've said, I don't want America to become a Spanish-speaking country. But until someone shows me how we can have immigration control without the exercise of these outrageous police powers, it's going to be tough to convince me that immigration ought to be restricted.

— R. W. Bradford

"Leave us alone" updated — Grover Norquist defines his political goal as increasing individual liberty by limiting the size of government. He has tried to stitch together a "leave us alone coalition" consisting of investors, entrepreneurs, gun owners, and religious people.



SHCHAMBERS

"Here she comes: 'Our Lady of Perpetual Litigation.'"

How do you square that with support of George W. Bush? By ignoring the war.

In the March issue of *The American Spectator*, Norquist, the president of Americans for Tax Reform, makes his case that Bush should be re-elected. Tellingly, it is entirely domestic.

Norquist begins his essay by asking, "Has the Republican Party turned liberal?" Absolutely not, he says. And, of course, he can point to things that by current doctrine are Republican and not liberal — cutting taxes, rejecting the Anti-Ballistic Missile and Kyoto treaties, outlawing partial birth abortion. He concludes, "There isn't a liberal bone in this Republican administration."

Well, there is No Child Left Behind. That is a liberal bone, and not a finger bone, either. There is the Medicare bill, and the shameful business of how Congress was not told how much it was going to cost. That is a femur, or maybe a pelvis. There is the farm bill, which is a liberal fossil that dates back to Herbert Hoover. There is the money for AIDS in Africa. Bones, bones, bones. Lots of liberal bones.

Then there is the spending. Bush has cut our taxes, but he has also forced the U.S. Treasury to borrow a half-trillion dollars a year. The Democrats have raised the cry of "deficit!" — and what can the Republicans say to them? Norquist frames the question as "spending" rather than "deficits," to fix people's attention on "how much the government spends and

how much it takes by force." Fine, but it would be a lot easier to switch people's attention away from deficits if they weren't so big.

All this is prelude to his main argument, which is: "Bush's reelection is also the key to real reductions in government spending." That is a leap of faith, considering that government spending shrank from 21% to 19% of GDP under Clinton and has gone back to 21% under Bush.

Norquist acknowledges this, and does not like it, but he lists six Republican policies that will shrink government in the second term. These are his reasons to vote for Bush:

1. Efforts to increase the contracting out of federal work.
2. Efforts to close domestic military bases.
3. Efforts to allow private accounts in Social Security
4. Efforts for a WTO agreement restricting farm subsidies, including U.S. ones.
5. Efforts to expand and institutionalize health savings accounts.

6. Efforts for parental choice in education.

What to make of this? I am skeptical that private contracting is going to happen, and anyway, it doesn't shrink what the government does. I am in favor of it but not excited about it. Closing domestic bases is good, but I am more concerned about opening ones overseas. Partial privatization of Social Security is one of the reasons I voted for Bush in 2000. A tolerable WTO agreement is more likely under Bush than Kerry, but it would have to roll back the bad things Bush has already done. Health savings accounts already exist. School vouchers are not a federal matter except in the District of Columbia.

There is some substance there, but hardly an overwhelming case.

What is not on the list is Bush's "war on terror." And don't forget, war is a government program. Historically, war has swelled government spending, increased the debt, debased the currency, increased the prerogatives of the police, shut down dissent within the media, and generally worked to centralize state power, regiment the nation, and jeopardize those private rights that Norquist is so much in favor of. The Iraq war has done a bit of all these things. As wars go, it is relatively mild on the home front — no draft, no tax increase, no direct censorship, no mass internment of racial groups — but even this short little war gave us the Patriot Act, preventive detention on military bases, and other bits of nastiness. If America were defending against attack, all this might be worth bearing, but Iraq did not threaten us.

In his five-page article in *The American Spectator*, Norquist has *one sentence* on all this. "In the war on terror," it says, "the Taliban government of Afghanistan has been removed for supporting al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq is ended."

I saw Norquist at the 2004 *Liberty* Editors' Conference, and asked him why only one sentence on the war.

"Bush and Kerry are the same on the war," he said.

— Bruce Ramsey

A pension you can't refuse — Do a little math: Find out how much you pay in Social Security per year. Multiply it by two (which is how much you're really paying, because of the so-called "employer contribution"). Multiply that answer by the number of siblings and cousins you have,

and compare it to how much your grandmother gets in Social Security. Is it more? You bet it is. Imagine how well off your granny would be if all her grandchildren sent their payroll tax directly to her.

That illustrates a major problem with the system, and our culture in general: the youth no longer want to take care of their elders, so the elders have hired government thugs to shake us down for it, and allowed the IRS to take a generous cut for their services. I would rather they went to the Mafia. Not only would the Mafia skim a lot less off the top, they also have a code of ethics.

— Tim Slagle

Emptying the jails — May I suggest that the Libertarian Party promise to empty the jails as one of the principle planks in its platform? No statistic about America discredits our ideals more than the excessively high percentage of our population incarcerated, and nothing except our military activity abroad is a greater waste of taxpayers' money.

The first group to be sent home would be one-time young thugs now over the age of 45. No matter how menacing they might have been as youths, they aren't likely to intimidate, or care to intimidate, in middle age. The second group to be sent home would, of course, be those convicted of victimless crimes. Keeping them in jail doesn't do anyone any good. Finally, and most controversially, I would advocate the release of those prisoners who probably aren't going to commit their crime again, most radically those who murder their spouses, but more familiarly tax evaders and even Martha Stewart. Admittedly, some discretion about individual cases should function here, especially in acknowledging the rights and feelings of victims and their relatives.

— Richard Kostelanetz

Gays marry, sky doesn't fall — As I write this, it's been a week since gay couples started getting legally married in Massachusetts. As yet, the many predictions of

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catastrophe that would ensue if gays got married have not been vindicated.

Indeed, life has gone on pretty much as normal. Straight couples across the country are still going about their lives as before. They aren't getting depressed and breaking up because, shucks, now the gays can get hitched and it's no fun anymore! Priests aren't being made to marry gay couples at gunpoint. And there are no preliminary signs that the youth in Massachusetts are suddenly being sucked in by a vacuum of moral depravity created by the destruction of the sacred institution of marriage.

The only way life will be different now is that one fewer class of people will be treated unequally by the government, at least in Massachusetts. Much of America seems already to have forgotten about these gay marriages — or not even to have noticed.

Not quite the end-of-civilization-as-we-know-it scenario the radical Right warned us about.

Those who think letting gays in the military would demoralize and weaken our armed forces should take a cue from what happened here. The day will come when gay men and

women in America are finally allowed to serve their country in the armed forces. Twenty bucks says that enemy armies don't overrun our borders and destroy America the day the first openly gay person enlists. Any takers? — Patrick Quealy

Waiting for Antonio — The Department of Labor reviews an alien's labor certification application as the first step in the process of deciding whether to grant an employment-based visa. If a qualified citizen applies for the opening, the alien's application is denied. In theory, this makes a certain amount sense. In practice, like most "sensible" legal procedures, it only harms employers, consumers, and qualified aliens by making it illegal (or prohibitively expensive and time-consuming) to hire the best person for the job.

Consider the case of Chilitos, a Mexican restaurant that wanted to hire Antonio Cortes-Carlos as a foreign food specialty cook to prepare five specials from scratch each day, as well as regular menu items. The restaurant filed a labor certification application on Cortes-Carlos' behalf. The application justified the request to hire an alien by stating that Chilitos needed a cook with two years' experience.

The Night Someone Spiked Candidate Brown's Rubber Chicken with Sodium Pentothal

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen . . .

First of all, let me say that you and the loved ones accompanying you here tonight look, on the whole, rather bedraggled and distracted, in marked contrast to the beaming family unit that stands behind me on this podium. Clearly my image means a lot to me. And it should. I have spent a lifetime simulating its rigorous demands.

I'd like to use this moment — and all who are here with me tonight — to register my vociferous opposition to family values in all their permutations. It's time we faced squarely the growing scourge of attaching value to those who are attached to us merely by marriage, blood, or adoption. The nuclear family is a cancer eating at the heart of the body politic. I say, eat out America! We must rise up and expose families for the Rockwellian charade they are. America can do better! Should you support me in this cause, my devoted and comely legislative aide, Cindy Tandem, will be eternally in your debt. Cindy, why don't you stand up and wave to the crowd? Isn't she a looker, ladies and gentlemen?

Let me add that the Stepford wife and improbably happy teenagers who join me on this dais tonight owe their sunny dispositions largely to the wondrous effects of Valium and Ritalin, respectively. Yes, the pharmaceutical industry has been indispensable to this campaign, infusing my message with an eerie serenity that would not have been possible through organic means alone. So I attribute my success in no small measure to good, sound FDA-approved drugs.

As for the citizenry of this land, well, your trust never ceases to amaze me. I would laugh but I've been trained by some of the best media advisors in the business to maintain a posture of unflappable dignity except on those occasions when I'm beating my wife. In fact, it's my periodic bouts of spousal abuse that have left me rather ambivalent on the whole law and order thing. I swear there are some days you could tip me either way with a feather on that issue.

I am the first to concede that my dear wife Miriam is trapped in a loveless marriage. If truth be told — and strangely it seems to be this evening — my punishing schedule has rendered us virtual strangers for decades. Some of you may have noticed that my second-oldest son, Josh, bears little resemblance either to myself or to his mother. However he is a dead ringer for my long-time friend and campaign manager, Richard Gotlieb. Richard, perhaps you could stand up and let everyone make their own informed decision. There he is, ladies and gentlemen! He's been giving me the off-message signal all evening. Hey Rich, get off my wife first, okay? Hah! Just kidding. He's doing a great job, ladies and gentlemen.

Vote for me this November and I promise I will do everything in my power to enlarge my power, addressing you at all times in an unctuous, patronizing manner. I will also strive to maintain the facade that your inconsequential dreams hold a snowball's chance in this roiling furnace of ambition we call politics!

God Help America and good night! — Norman Ball

The Department of Labor denied the application. The official who issued the denial determined that only three to twelve months of experience were needed, and the appeal board that reviewed those findings added that Chilitos served "Mexican dishes of a limited level of complexity that would not require two years of experience to master." Department of Labor officials reached these conclusions, no doubt, on the basis of their extensive expertise in restaurant management and Mexican cuisine.

According to attorney Joel Stewart, the Board confused the issues of restaurant location and cooking skill. "Apparently the Board has interpolated the issues, so that the need for a skilled cook is defined by the type of restaurant (food court instead of candle-light and wine) and not by the duties required to prepare the dishes."

Interestingly, Chilitos said it had succeeded in three prior labor certifications with identical requirements for the same position. The appeal board replied weakly that previous decisions in matters of the same type are not binding on later decisions.

The case dragged on and on. On Feb. 22, 2001, Chilitos filed the application for labor certification. On Dec. 2, 2002, the Certifying Officer issued a Final Determination denying certification. On Jan. 8, 2003, Chilitos filed its Request for Review. And on April 7, 2004, the appeal board affirmed the Certifying Officer's decision.

Not only did the government prohibit a beneficial employment relationship, but when asked to make an exception, it took over three years to say "no." When notified that it had previously said "yes" three times, it replied not that it had been wrong before, but rather, in effect, "We feel like saying 'no' this time."

Rather than blaming tax cuts or corporate scandals for the economic downturn we're just starting to pull out of, might we not ask why the Department of Labor is making labor illegal?
— Martin Solomon

Green Tag, 2¢ . . . preventing environmental holocaust, priceless — I first learned about the Green Tag program while spending an uncomfortable month researching left-liberal talk radio. Sponsored by the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, this program lets global-warming alarmists put their money where their mouths are.

The BEF purchases electricity from non-traditional, environmentally friendly sources, such as wind farms and hydro-electric plants, then resells it to the grid. Because these alternative fuels are more expensive than conventional fuels, it loses money on every sale. That cost difference is sold to environmentalist electricity consumers anywhere in America in the form of a Green Tag. By simply mailing a check to the BEF, environmentalists can rest assured that all the electricity they get from the grid was replaced with clean, carbon-free energy. Right now the additional cost is approximately 2¢ per kilowatt hour, about 20% more than what they would otherwise pay.

This program benefits the public in many ways. It proves to everybody that alternative energy is not yet economically feasible. It encourages investment and research into renewable energy sources. And, it demonstrates the hypocrisy of glo-

bal-warming alarmists, the overwhelming majority of whom are unwilling to pay 20% more for their electricity in order to prevent a global holocaust.
— Tim Slagle

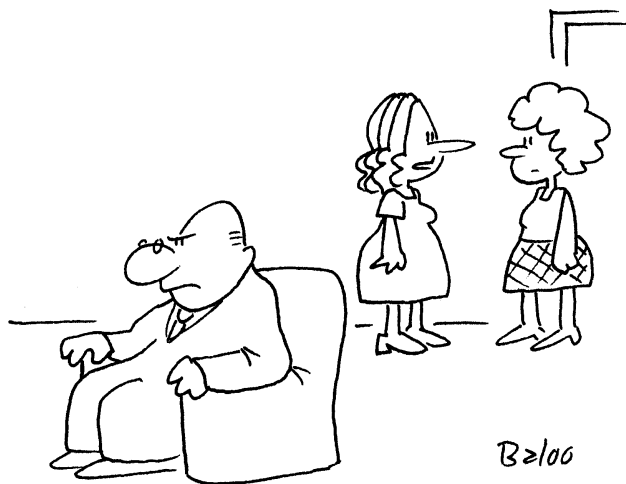
Moral philosophy at 7-Eleven — Like every other libertarian, I am intensely moralistic. I am moralistic even about being moralistic. This can lead to some confused thoughts.

The other day, I was walking into the parking lot of my neighborhood 7-Eleven when I was assaulted from behind by a car-borne audio system cranked to approximately 500 decibels. I knew it wasn't Beethoven he was blasting. What I wasn't able to decipher were the "lyrics" — mainly because I found it hard to believe that three-fifths of the words were either "shit" or "fuck." Whatever they were, the sensation of a 3,000-pound vehicle charging toward me preceded by a shockwave equal to two Hiroshima-size bombs elicited one clear thought: "That guy should be arrested."

And that's where my real problem began. As the driver skidded to a stop in two parking spaces and cranked his system 500 decibels higher, so he wouldn't miss anything while shopping inside, I stood in the lot and accused myself of intolerance, rigidity, a failure to appreciate the diversity of life, a nostalgia for Stalin's regime, and a general failure to embrace the individualist values on which a libertarian society must be based.

What harm, after all, had that young man done to me? None whatever. I was offended by the noise — so what? There shouldn't be laws against giving offense. And actually, I had learned something. His raucous music had acquainted me with the sound and feel of a different style of life from my own. I should be grateful to him for granting me a sudden insight into other forms of existence, for allowing me to taste the freedom that all Americans enjoy.

Well, I wasn't grateful. You can't feel any noble emotions when you're enveloped in a sonic hell. But I did at least feel guilty, guilty for wishing that the power of the state would appear in its old and by no means rights-respecting form, yank that young man in the baseball cap out of his vehicle (not to mention his self-assurance), fling him down on the asphalt, cuff his pizza-stained hands behind his back, and



"We live in a house, and it's by the side of the road, but he's still not a friend to man."

Word Watch

by Stephen Cox

In the greatest short story of Jorge Luis Borges, "The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim," the protagonist "crosses two sets of railroad tracks, or the same tracks twice." This redundancy of tracks opens the possibility that the man is either (A) going forward, making good progress, or (B) walking around in circles.

And so it is whenever redundancy or repetition appears in writing.

Right or wrong: "President Clinton was advised of the danger, but President Clinton did nothing to avert it." Right, if a double emphasis on the president's personal responsibility is what the writer wants. Wrong, if the writer has merely forgotten that there is such a thing as the pronoun "he."

Right or wrong: "I was very, very sorry to see that dreadful, dreadful man." The same logic applies: right, if the writer intends a fourfold emphasis on the horror of meeting that horrible person; wrong, if the writer is just too lazy to omit a redundant "very" or to think of other words for "dreadful."

There is, of course, a superstitious idea that one should never repeat a word within the same paragraph or page or some similar, arbitrarily chosen space. Like many superstitions, this one has a basis in fact. Unless you intend emphasis, you shouldn't keep using the same words all the time, if those words are at all distinctive. You can hardly dispense with "and" or "but." Nevertheless, one use of "however" per paragraph is usually enough; and Marianne Moore wasn't far from the truth when she said that one use of "incredible" per lifetime may be enough.

The problem with the superstition against repeating words is that it leads to the sin of "elegant variation," the use of parallel expressions that draw more unwelcome attention to themselves than any simple repetition of words would do. In *Modern English Usage*, H. W. Fowler, who may have originated the sarcastic phrase "elegant variation" (damn! I've repeated the phrase), provides some authentic, and authentically awful, examples:

The Bohemian Diet will be the second Parliament to elect women deputies, for Sweden already has several lady deputies.

Mr. John Redmond has just now a path to tread even more thorny than that which Mr. Asquith has to walk.

Apparently, women are just women in Bohemia, but they're real ladies in Sweden. And, as Fowler asks, "Can Mr. Asquith really have taught himself to walk without treading?" My favorite is:

Dr. Tulloch was for a time Dr. Boyd's assistant, and knew the popular preacher very intimately, and the picture he gives of the genial essayist is a very engaging one.

By a process of mental algebra, one is supposed to infer that "Dr. Boyd" was the same as "the popular preacher," and "the popular preacher" was the same as "the genial essayist," and Dr. Tulloch (remember him?) assisted all three of them.

If you want to put your readers through exercises like that, go ahead. You can always say things like, "The president was advised of the danger, but Bill Clinton did nothing to avert it." Admittedly, this one isn't much of an exercise to figure out, but why make anyone perform it?

You'll notice that in that last paragraph I went pretty quickly from "exercises" to "exercise," without suffering any ill effects from the repetition. Now, suppose I changed "exercise" to "task," just to avoid repeating anything. You would have stopped for a moment to go back and confirm that I was still talking about the same kind of mental effort. And why should I make you do that?

Of course, there are some repetitions that should never occur. I just noticed one in something else I've been writing. "In any event," I intone, "the events of human life . . ." We often write things like that because we don't notice that we're using the same word when we're giving it a different meaning. And unfortunately, the more we're focused on meanings, the less we're able to notice what words we're using to express them. Such demons as the one I just cited can be expelled only by putting the danged thing away for a day or two, so you can inspect it with fresh eyes.

Redundancies of meaning (as opposed to repetitions of words) may be harder to detect. You can find them only if you're trying to visualize what your words — *all* your words — literally mean. "We shared many things in common": if you're visualizing the meaning of every word you use, you'll see that "in common" simply repeats the meaning of "shared."

Now try "both of them got together." Can you visualize just one of them getting together? No. So the "both" is redundant. "They got together." Leave it at that.

Are you challenged by time? Does time seem more real to you when you say "it was at that period of time" or you ask "what's the time frame for that?" Visualize what the words literally mean, and you'll see that "it was at that time" and "when will that be?" will do very well. And you might try leaving it at "then" and "when?"

Are you challenged by sequence? Do you think that "and" and "both" won't keep it all together, unless you tack "as well" on, just for luck? Yes, I'm talking about you — you who keep saying things like, "The dog ate both the bone as well as the cat," and, "We're going to fight and we're going to win as well." I beg you — visualize the power and meaning of a simple "and."

My fellow Californians! Why do you insist on "hiking into the Sierras"? "Sierra" already means "a chain of mountains." Visualize your situation: you're not hiking into two or more such chains. Then go forth; hike into "the Sierra" — the singular noun will suffice.

But why do I bother to say these things? I'll just have to repeat them again for you.

cart him off to serve his 90 days for disturbing the peace. Ninety days on a chain gang, preferably. That's what I wished would happen, and I felt guilty for wishing it.

Then it came to me, as it has come to many another libertarian when faced with such crises of conscience: a perfect way of reconciling my visceral demand for vengeance with my lofty allegiance to individual rights. Suppose, I thought, some court wanted to punish me for violating a law. What would be the worst sentence they could make me serve? The worst might be to lock me in a metal vehicle, blast it with senseless, debasing, ear-shattering noise, and make me drive around in it, advertising my disgrace to everyone in town.

Well, that was the punishment to which the young culprit in the SUV, now exiting the store with a Big Gulp and a carton of Luckies, had already sentenced himself. He was already paying the price for his own bad taste. And far be it from me, I continued, leaping aside as he rumbled out of the lot, oblivious to anything but the giant noise of his vehicle, to interfere with the natural process of liberty, spontaneous order, and natural justice.

Only one question remained. Which is worse, the self-righteousness of wanting to call the cops, or the self-righteousness of congratulating yourself on having the right theory for every occasion?
— Stephen Cox

Allegiance vs. liberty — There's a case to be made that the tussle over the pledge of allegiance is misconceived, with the "under God" phrase something of a side issue. In a free society no citizen would face even tacit pressure to pledge allegiance to the nation-state. It is hardly surprising that the Pledge, so sacrosanct these days to "conservatives," was written by a socialist. In our country, founded as it was on the Constitution, informed by the Declaration of Independence, it should be the government pledging allegiance to the freedom and dignity of every human being and vowing to do nothing — including the demanding of allegiance to itself — to compromise that freedom.
— Alan W. Bock

The beam in our own eye — Allegations of abuse by prison guards. Stories of terrible sexual abuse, like the man who was raped 30 times over a four-month period and contracted HIV as a result, or the 17-year-old who committed suicide after being raped repeatedly. By now you've heard about the prison-abuse scandal.

After all, the abuses have been well-known for years. *Liberty* even published an article by Ralph Reiland in

November 2003 chronicling some of the abuses in the American prison system.

Oh — you're thinking of that whole Abu Ghraib affair? Well, yes, that's terrible, too. It's good that right-thinking people concerned with justice are crying foul.

But where are the Red Cross inspectors visiting American prisons? Where are the Senate hearings into why we're putting teenagers in jail and letting them get sodomized until they kill themselves or die of AIDS, whichever comes first? Why is no one decrying the horrid conditions of prisons run

by private contractors in America, even as they complain about the part that contractors may have played in abuses in Iraq? Where is the public outrage over terrible abuses of non-violent offenders perpetrated by American prison guards?

I never stop being amazed at what people will care about, and what they won't care about, when they've got their marching orders from the media.

— Patrick Quealy

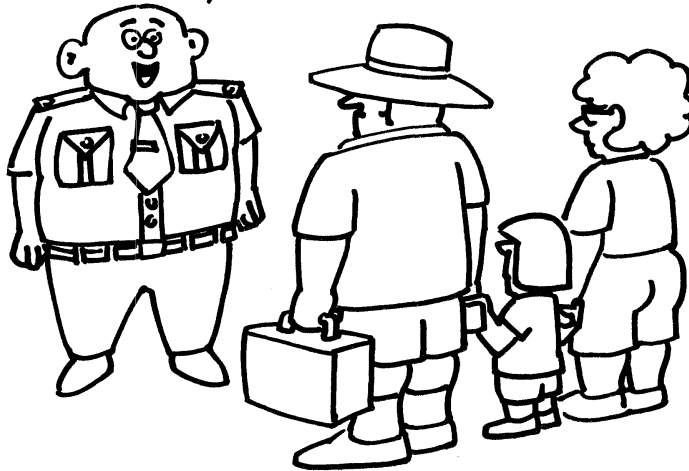
You'll burn for this! — To help solve its current fiscal crisis, the city of Berkeley is resorting to the favorite image of budgetary scaremongers every-

where: heroic firefighters who will no longer be there to save us unless we vote for the latest tax surcharge, license fee, etc.

"Our front line services, like police and fire, are now threatened," says Mayor Tom Bates in a recent *Berkeley Voice* story. The corresponding TV commercials are more dramatic, complete with smoke and flames soon to be spreading out of control. Try as I might to work up excitement over this looming Dark Age, as foreseen in *The Road Warrior*, a totally different set of images fills my mind when I ponder our city government.

I still recall the urgent-sounding letter we received last year, demanding the city be allowed to inspect a stair construction project that was approved for our building back in 1994, but never actually carried out. This was the first we had heard from the permit department since that time; naturally we wanted to avoid a misunderstanding that might result in some costly fine or penalty. Yet in half a dozen calls to their office, not only was our assigned contact person never there, his professional colleagues literally refused to take a message for him. Oh, and the voicemail system was down the whole time — here, where we pay the highest property taxes in the Bay Area thanks to numerous special surcharges already heaped on top of the base tax rate. As Mayor Bates explains in the aforementioned article, Berkeley has more employees per capita than any other city in the area, and it pays them better. We never did hear back from our friends who sent the

HELLO. MY NAME IS DOUGLAS
AND I'LL BE YOUR STRIP-SEARCHER
THIS AFTERNOON.



threatening letter.

Then there was the lady I called to find out when the city was coming around to collect leaves, for which they issue two (and no more) big paper bags at a time. I was sure I had the right number and office, but she didn't seem to know what I was talking about. Turns out I had used incorrect terminology to describe the materials in question, which I've since learned are known collectively as "plant debris."

No wonder they hire so many people and pay such good salaries, what with all the advanced terminology they have to use on a daily basis. But before Berkeley burns like Rome for lack of police and firefighters, I'm sure we can find more than enough dead wood in the impenetrable forest of city hall to clear up any phony budget crisis. — Michael Drew

Rise of the Beef Marshals — The USDA has announced that it will not permit businesses that sell beef to test their cattle for mad cow disease. That's right: they *want* to test the beef to make sure it's safe, and the government won't let them.

If cases of Creutzfeldt-Jakob (the human version of mad cow disease) begin to surface in the U.S. in a few years, the solution will be the federal Beef Security Administration. This small army of dull wage slaves will be given shiny white uniforms and empowered to test cows randomly for mad cow disease. There'll be a massive, multi-million dollar database called CAPPs (Cattle Awareness and Prion Prevention System), which will falsely tag healthy cows as diseased and let diseased ones through. BSA agents will be instructed in ways to avoid the appearance of prejudice in their "randomly selected" test targets, so cows foaming at the mouth, bleeding from every orifice, and having convulsions will not be tested any more frequently than healthy-looking cows.

Politicians, of course, will criticize "greedy big business" for "not having taken measures early on to keep the food supply safe." — Patrick Quealy

Republican states are red. Coincidence?

— President Bush recently jumped onto the idea that the government has "got to make sure this country's on the leading edge of broadband technology," and set a goal of "universal, affordable access" to high-speed Internet technology like DSL and cable by 2007. Apparently, somebody in the Bush campaign thought it would be clever to steal this idea



"I don't read French — just bring me the most expensive thing you have."

from the Clinton-Gore days and pretend to be proactive on it. But when it was a bad idea in the first place, stealing it is not so much clever as a strong suggestion that you have no core principles of your own.

Not that long ago, the Clinton administration was enamored of apocalyptic Chicken Little rhetoric about the "Digital Divide" and how the poor (defined as broadly as possible) were being deprived of their inalienable right to taxpayer-subsidized Internet access. They never seemed to get embarrassed when, by the time they had done a couple feasibility studies, the private marketplace had surpassed their initial goals of access with no government programs at all.

Computers and the Internet have achieved significant penetration of American households faster than almost any previous technology. It was 71 years from the telephone's introduction before 50% of American homes had one, 52 years for electricity, and 28 years for radio. Personal computers were in 50% of American homes 19 years after their introduction, and the Internet got to the 50% mark in ten years.

The best thing government can do to facilitate the introduction of new technology is to get out of the way. Personal computers themselves, remember, were developed in garages when the stalwarts of both industry and government thought they would never be practical.

It might not be surprising that a Democrat would push for a government-led approach to spreading technology. But for a Republican president to do so suggests that the Soviet model might not have died with the Soviet Union. It seems to have resurfaced in the United States with a Republican mask.

— Alan W. Bock

The dangers of insomnia — I had trouble sleeping the other night, and as I lay there thinking, an unexpected thing happened: I became a Democrat. Believe me, this was a shocker. I have been a registered Republican for over 50 years. I usually vote Libertarian on principle, but as a practical matter, I root Republican.

I was thinking about the things which have endeared me to the Republican party for all these years: fiscal responsibility, smaller government, lower taxes, free trade policies, and reluctance to involve the nation in overseas wars, among other things. I admit, I have had concerns about the religious kooks who attached themselves to the GOP, and now seem to be a tail which wags the dog, but I good-naturedly put up with it. The important thing, it seemed to me, was good economic policy.

But, as I thought about the national debt, I asked: what fiscal responsibility? Bush is outspending even Clinton. What smaller government? Bush has expanded government to a level that even Clinton would decry. Free trade policies? Even the protectionist Europeans are complaining about Bush's tariffs.

There was a time in the recent past when the Republican party had some men of economic literacy, people like Phil Gramm, Dick Arney, and Jack Kemp. And it had some men of common sense: John Kasich and Fred Thompson come to mind. But these are gone.

It isn't as if this party has kept us out of wars. Lately we have virtually leaped into entanglements, and the present war may exceed any of them for its sheer stupidity.

I agree with Democrats on many issues. I favor civil liber-

ties. I am pro-choice. I support the separation of church and state. The Democratic obsessions with affirmative action and socialized medicine worry me, but so does the Patriot Act (only Libertarians oppose the Act, and they don't win elections). And isn't it heartwarming to hear the Democrats complaining about the growing national debt? There's no sense trying to distinguish between the two major parties on economic issues anymore. The Democrats rush towards socialism, while the Republicans caution, "Go there slowly."

This is what comes of insomnia. What's next? Will I finally fall asleep only to dream of Hillary?

— Frank Ricciardone

Pumping for safety — In Oregon, the price for a gallon of gas is the highest in the country, now averaging over \$2.30 per gallon. Oregon law forbids self-serve gasoline for safety reasons. Stations have to hire people to do it for you, which increases both the time it takes to buy gas and its cost. It amuses me that this law remains on the books, as untrained civilians elsewhere in the nation have somehow managed to pump their own gas without the holocaust that Oregon expects.

As gasoline prices soar, Democrats have suggested that Bush release 60 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. This is only a three-day supply, and over the course of the summer, such a minuscule bump in supply would have a negligible effect on prices. Of course, the most certain way to lower prices would be to lower the tax rates, which, in the average state, account for 23% of the cost of a gallon of gas.

Not only does lowering taxes run contrary to Democratic Party dogma, but lowering taxes on gas contradicts a popular leftist idea of the early 1990s: that a several-dollar tax on a gallon of gas would save the environment. Now that the price has crossed the \$2 threshold, and Americans are outraged, not many serious politicians talk about that tax anymore.

— Tim Slagel

Hermes, meet Gaia — Having written about environmental topics for more than twenty years, I remain frustrated by the vast gulf that exists between free-market writers and "the others." To visualize this gulf all you have to do is to look at the endnotes and reference lists of books on the nature shelves of a Barnes & Noble, books such as *Nature's Services*, edited by Gretchen C. Daily, or *Requiem for Nature*, by John Terborgh. Certain names recur frequently, names such as Paul Ehrlich, John Holdren, Thomas J. Lovejoy, and Norman Myers, to cite a few. These are scientists who have enthusiastically adopted environmental causes, often abandoning their grounding in science while doing so.

What you rarely see are the environmental writers that free marketeers know well, such as Terry Anderson, Richard Stroup, or Robert Nelson. Other writers are ignored, too — theorists such as Ronald Coase, James Buchanan, Robert Ellickson, Randy Barnett, and Richard Epstein, who have helped to bring back consideration of property rights and governance. Nobel prizes apparently don't count for much with the other side.

But we are guilty, too. We don't cite Ehrlich or Holdren — or any of scores of other scientists who comment on issues that we tackle as well — except to attack them. There are a

few crossovers — Garrett Hardin and perhaps E. O. Wilson. But by and large, writers on the "other side" aren't reading our books, and we aren't reading theirs.

The reason is simple: it's hard to stomach those books. Can we read statements like this one from *Requiem for Nature* without groaning? "An economic system that espouses unending growth, discounts the future, and undervalues natural resources is diametrically incompatible with sustainable development." You and I know that the growth that a free-market system makes possible allows us to value natural resources for other than commodity use and to preserve them for the future.

And thus it's a little ironic that over the past decade or so, some of these environmentalists have discovered markets. Books like Paul Hawken's *The Ecology of Commerce*, and *The New Economy of Nature* by Gretchen Daily and Katherine Ellison, argue that environmental protection can be good business. Of course, they want to use government channels to "perfect" markets, but at least they recognize that markets are the way that improvement comes about.

These authors desperately need the insights of property rights analysis, public choice theory, and Austrian economics. How to reach them is a hard question, but maybe we need to go halfway. I'm slogging through *Requiem for Nature* (which, it turns out, is often informative) and plan, at last, to put *The Ecology of Commerce* on my reading list.

— Jane S. Shaw

All the news that's fit to line the litter box — I don't often agree wholly with Dubya, but nearly everything he says about why he doesn't read newspapers is agreeable to me. When a newspaper falls into my hands, like the president, I turn first to the sports pages for important information new to me, and then to the obituaries, for "news" that wouldn't otherwise get to me.

Nowadays, when friends aware of my habits recommend one or another article in the morning *New York Times*, I customarily ask them to tell me *not* the page on which it appears, which is what pre-Internet minds want to do, but to provide me with enough keywords to permit me to find the article on the newspaper's website, which offers free access to articles for a week after they're published.

I buy the Sunday newspaper initially for the coming week's television schedule, customarily picking up the *Sunday News* for a dollar instead of the *Times* for three bucks. A smaller paper saves not only when I purchase it, but also on costly recycling. What I can't figure out is why newspapers still print stock prices, since most of us can get this information immediately and more efficiently through our computers. Don't newspaper publishers care about saving trees?

Our commander in chief complains that too much in newspapers is opinion, which he apparently finds disagreeable. I find insufficient opinion, and little novel content generally, in newspapers; many of the narrow columns repeat what is heard over the electronic media or, so newspaper addicts tell me, what was already printed in yesterday's paper. Trained in graduate school to read at speeds inversely proportionate to what I expect to get out of a text, I find that, when newspapers inadvertently fall under my eyes, I can

toss away a daily paper in a few minutes and the Sunday paper in 20 or so, while a publication such as *Liberty* takes no less than two hours.

Living as I do among thousands of books — a medium meant to last — may I suggest that the surest symptom of literary insanity, or is it insane literacy, is the keeping in one's house of any newspaper more than one week old. Indeed, anyone surrounded by newspapers more than a month old should be placed under psychiatric care; more than a year old, taken away for a loony bin. No questions need be asked.

To my mind, the sometime librarian's husband who serves as our president is a true model for contemporary literacy. Don't forget that as errant planes were hitting the World Trade Center, this bookman was reading to a class of children in Florida. Go to it, Dubya — show us how.

— Richard Kostelanetz

I'd kill for an ice-cold Pepsi — "All true believers of our time declaimed volubly on the decadence of the Western democracies," wrote Eric Hoffer in his first book, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements*, published in 1951. "The burden of their talk is that those in the democracies are too soft, too pleasure loving and too selfish to die for a nation, a God, or a holy cause. This lack of readiness to die, we are told, is indicative of an inner rot — a moral and biological decay."

Largely self-taught, Hoffer had picked up his insights on the human condition as a migrant farmhand, a lumberjack, a dishwasher, and a longshoreman, always lugging a load of books. By 1951, he had seen the attacks on Western democracies by Germany's Nazism, Italy's fascism, and Japanese nationalism. He had seen the immensity of the human losses produced by that assault, an estimated 56 million deaths, only to be followed by the announcement from Russian scientists in 1949, that the Soviet Union had detonated its first atomic bomb.

Now, Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir, the biographer of al Qaeda's No. 2 leader, Ayman al-Zawahri, has stated in an interview with Australian television that Osama bin Laden's terror network has acquired ready-made nuclear weapons. Mir reported that he said to al-Zawahri that it was hard to

believe that al Qaeda had nuclear weapons. "Dr. Ayman al-Zawahri laughed," said Mir, "and he said, 'Mr. Mir, if you have \$30 million, go to the black market in Asia, contact any disgruntled Soviet scientist, and a lot of smart briefcase bombs are available. They have contacted us, we sent our people to Moscow, to Tashkent, to other central Asian states, and they negotiated, and we purchased some suitcase bombs.'"

That news from Mir, along with reports of the sale of nuclear technology to Iran, Libya, and Korea by Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan, paints an unsettling picture.

Enemies to freedom keep coming, always primed to kill, always in a state of outrage over our "decadence." No sooner do we knock one down than another develops, like Jason in *Friday the 13th*. Hoffer offers some insight that is still helpful today. "All mass movements," he wrote, "generate in their adherents a readiness to die and a proclivity for united action; all of them, irrespective of the doctrine they preach and the program they project, breed fanaticism, enthusiasm, fervent hope, hatred, and intolerance; all of them demand blind faith and a single-hearted allegiance."

Here, for example, is an excerpt from the final instructions that the Sept. 11 terrorists received before their flights of death: "The love of this world is wrong. You should love the other world, and you should not be afraid to die."

Wrote Hoffer, some five decades earlier: "It is perhaps impossible to understand the nature of mass movements unless it is recognized that their chief preoccupation is to foster, perfect and perpetuate a facility for united action and self-sacrifice." The holy duty is to destroy one's individuality, to sacrifice oneself to the collective. "To ripen a person for self-sacrifice he must be stripped of his individual identity and distinctness," explained Hoffer. "The fully assimilated individual does not see himself and others as human beings. He has no purpose, worth or destiny apart from his collective body; and as long as that body lives he cannot really die."

In Jonestown, that meant the deaths of 638 adults and 276 children, when followers of Jim Jones drank grape Kool-Aid laced with cyanide. In San Diego, it took the form of 39 bodies in the Heaven's Gate cult, men and women, all with the same unisex buzz-cut hair and shapeless clothes. They took their own lives when Bo and Peep, the group's leaders, gave the word that there was a heavenly spaceship behind the Hale-Bopp comet coming to take them to the pie-in-the-sky place from which Bo and Peep had said they'd descended, in search of a harvest of Earthlings.

As with Mohammed Atta in Manhattan, "the love of this world" was deemed wrong by those whose minds were captive to Jim Jones or the Heaven's Gate cult. In the collectives of Jonestown and in San Diego, the true believers destroyed themselves in steps, first through obedience, then by rejecting personal possessions, then by compulsory celibacy. The Kool-Aid was just another phase.

The battle then, as now: individualism versus the sacrificial furnaces. The difference was well demonstrated when an Afghan in Peshawar told the *Guardian*, "The Americans love Pepsi but we love death."

— Ralph R. Reiland



"The beard helped some — now try letting your hair grow and combing it down over your face."

Red Team, Blue Team

by Clark Stooksbury

American politics is a sport, and being absolutely certain of the essential righteousness of your team simplifies life enormously.

How can Rush Limbaugh, in the face of massive deficits and rapidly growing government under the Bush Administration, proclaim with a straight face that a victory by the Democrats this fall will lead to a return of big government? The answer is that he believes in the GOP narrative with a religious fervor. Believing this narrative is different from simply being a conservative or a Republican. The GOP narrative is a Manichean worldview in which Republicans and conservatives are beacons of light and holiness, while Democrats and liberals are the essence of evil. In other words, their view of Bush is the inverse of the popular leftist view of Bush.

While it greatly simplifies life, believing in a political narrative makes one's political affiliation the equivalent of one's favorite sports team. I am from Knoxville, the home of the Vols (short for Volunteers), the football team of the University of Tennessee (UT). "Vol Fever," as it is sometimes called, saturates the air starting in late summer, as palpable as an August heat wave. The blistering heat and humidity of east Tennessee usually subside sometime in September, but Vol Fever lasts until January. As a UT fan, I "know" that when a Volunteer linebacker is flagged for a late hit, he is a the victim of a bad call — no, an egregious call. I also know that when a UT receiver bobbles the ball in the end zone, he definitely held it long enough to score a touchdown. The fans on the other side — cheering for a hated rival such as Florida or Alabama — are just as convinced of the opposite reality. I have come to believe the narrative of the Vols, and fans of rival teams have learned to believe their own teams' narratives, by cultural osmosis.

I used to be the same way in politics. In the 1980s I believed in the narrative of the Republican party. I "knew," before I even knew what the issue was, that President Reagan was right and the Democrats were wrong. My belief in this narrative began to erode after the revelations that the president was selling arms to the Iranian regime in order to secure the release of American hostages in the Middle East and to fund the Nicaraguan Contras. Former *New Republic* editor Michael Kinsley compared the plight of Reaganites to that of American Communists at the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact, when "a sudden policy reversal put devoted ideologues to such a severe test of their devotion. A party line of stark moral simplicity — no dealing with terrorist states — has suddenly gone all gooey and geopolitical. . . . As in 1939, many are falling off the train as it rounds this sharp bend. But a tenacious few hold on." I eventually fell off.

The release of Richard Clarke's *Against All Enemies* provides a textbook example of pundits approaching a political issue as if they were spin artists, as opposed to opinion journalists. There are legitimate questions about the credibility of some of Clarke's accusations such as his claims about the handling of the threat of terrorism in the Clinton years and some statements he made previously that appear to contradict what he is saying now. But his central charge that the Bush administration has been obsessed with Iraq should be

blindingly obvious, even and especially to neocon pundits who have been beating the drums for an invasion of Iraq for years.

With near unanimity, the right side of the punditocracy went into damage-control mode on the day *Against All Enemies* came out. Rush Limbaugh brought Vice President Cheney on for an interview, which was a little like Charlie McCarthy interviewing Edgar Bergen. Limbaugh's questions

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were far more revealing than the vice president's answers. One peculiar question was, "What do [the president's opponents] hope to achieve by continually attacking Condoleezza Rice?" Limbaugh felt no need to offer evidence for the bizarre belief that the national security advisor is being attacked to a greater extent than say, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, or Perle. He also brought up the recalcitrant Senators Hagel and McCain, whom he denigrated as "Republicans of a sort" who are "not totally on board that struggle [for the future of the country]." Cheney predictably praised Rice's ability to defend herself and absolved Hagel and McCain of the treasonous charges with which Limbaugh was saddling them. The vice president also stated that Clarke was "out of the loop" in the Bush Administration's discussions of terrorism. That claim is disputed not only by Clarke, but by Condoleezza Rice — but not by Limbaugh. At no point in the interview did either Limbaugh or Cheney feel compelled to act as if Clarke had any credibility.

That Rush Limbaugh follows the GOP narrative with a religious fervor should surprise nobody. The purpose of his program is to validate the prejudices of his audience in the same way so much of popular culture and the news media do for the Left. When his show began, there existed a much narrower media world. There was no Internet or Fox News. There wasn't even a *Weekly Standard*. The traditional big media had much less competition and much more power.

It is disturbing, however, that so much of the conservative movement, led by its intellectual flagships *National Review* and *The Weekly Standard*, appear to read from a script prepared by Karl Rove. They sometimes criticize the Bush administration's policies on the budget and immigration. But on fundamental matters, such as the president's character, they line up with absolute loyalty.

National Review editor Rich Lowry took up the burden of discrediting Clarke in a histrionic *New York Post* column inveighing against Clarke and his book. Lowry's primary tool was an anonymous press background briefing from 2002, which the White House gave Fox News permission to publicize, about the Bush administration's terrorism policy. Lowry said Clarke portrayed the president in the press briefing as an "antiterror stalwart."

I suppose "stalwartness" is in the eye of the beholder. In the briefing, Clarke said that the Bush administration had "decided to initiate a process to look at those issues which

had been on the table for a couple of years." To accomplish that, the "deputies then tasked the development of the implementation details. . . ." The briefing temporarily broke down because of semantic confusion over Clarke's statements that the Clinton administration had no "plan" for dealing with al Qaeda, but that it had a "strategy." Score one for Lowry's side for observing that Clarke should have discussed the vast increase in the CIA's budget that the Bush administration approved. One should keep in mind, however, that a pledge to spend more money — one of the few things Bush does really well — does not necessarily translate into a more effective policy.

In Lowry's zeal to establish that Richard Clarke is fit only to be a "Dishonesty Czar" in future administrations, he brought out several other areas of supposed inconsistency, including a peculiar statement about Clarke's view of the Clinton administration's priorities: "In his testimony yesterday, Clarke said that the Clinton administration had 'no higher priority' than fighting terror. No. *In his own book*, he says trying to force a Middle East peace agreement was more important to Clinton than retaliating for the attack against USS *Cole*" (emphasis in original). I have not read *Against All Enemies*, but it took about one minute of trolling through the index to discover that in Clarke's view, a Middle East peace would greatly reduce the risk of terror against the United States. Referring to the period shortly after the *Cole* bombing, he states:

Time was running out on the Clinton administration. There was going to be one last major national security initiative and it was going to be a final try to achieve an Israeli-Palestinian agreement. It really looked like that long-sought goal was possible. . . I would have liked to have tried both, Camp David and blowing up al Qaeda camps. Nonetheless, I understood. If we could achieve a Middle East peace *much of the popular support for al Qaeda and much of the hatred for America would evaporate overnight.* (emphasis added)

Below the loftier precincts of "Doctor of Democracy" Limbaugh and *National Review's* editor, pundits attached themselves to any perceived chink in Clarke's armor and slashed away. Radio talker Hugh Hewitt and columnist Cal Thomas noted Clarke's friendship with Rand Beers, a Kerry foreign policy advisor. In her column, Ann Coulter eschewed

In the 1980s I believed in the narrative of the Republican party. I "knew," before I even knew what the issue was, that President Reagan was right and the Democrats were wrong.

stodgy analysis and went straight to schoolyard insults. Clarke is "some loser no one has ever heard of" and a "chair-warmer" who thinks that the "black chick is a dummy." Likewise, Wesley Pruden of the *Washington Times* denounced Clarke as exhibiting a "public tantrum" of "foaming resentment," and as a "geek" with "nothing to offer but goofiness and a familiar face."

continued on page 22

Nowhere to Go

by K. R. Mudgeon

Under Bush's compassionate "conservatism," the federal government keeps trampling civil liberties and growing bigger and more expensive.

Throughout his tenure, the president has turned his back on his base, apparently assuming that spurning constitutional values and reversing his professed commitment to smaller and less intrusive government will have no significant political cost. This has resulted in an administration so radically authoritarian and profligate that those libertarians and conservatives more devoted to principles than to parties should deny him their votes for a second term.

The passage of the McCain-Feingold Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act is the most significant and startling development. It effectively prohibits citizens from criticizing candidates in the days leading up to an election. President Bush supported and signed this disastrous law. In our nation's history, there is only one precedent for such an abridgment of free speech: the 18th century's widely and justifiably reviled Alien and Sedition Acts.

That dismal forerunner to the current law prohibited the publication of false, scandalous, or malicious writings against the government, either house of Congress, or the president. Under the 1798 law, at least ten editors were fined or imprisoned, a member of Congress was jailed for publishing a pamphlet critical of the administration, and a New Jersey man was fined for remarking that he hoped the next presidential salute would result in the wadding of the cannon striking the Hon. John Adams.

While the Alien and Sedition Acts prohibited only false statements, the current law prohibits the broadcast of any and all critical political advertising, no matter how truthful, during a period of 60 days prior to an election — the time

when robust political discourse is most important.

The Bush administration again demonstrated its disregard for the Constitution after the Supreme Court partially upheld the University of Michigan's affirmative action policies. By waffling on the equal protection clause when the affirmative action cases were before the Supreme Court, the administration condoned a class-based ideology that runs counter to centuries of progress in the elevation of individual ability over station of birth. Bush's Department of Justice did not file a brief to clarify its opposition to the discriminatory practices engaged in by the university. Instead, it filed an equivocal brief that supported the ultimate decision, whereby the Supreme Court approved fuzzy, feel-good affirmative action programs that enable our public institutions to favor some individuals over others on the basis of race and encourage the institutions to dissemble about what they are doing.

The administration's posture in the case made it complicit in seeking reversal of an important aspect of the centuries-long societal shift from status to contract — ranking and rewarding individuals increasingly on the basis of what their own abilities and accomplishments enable them to negotiate and decreasingly on the basis of the status of the family or other group into which they are born. Anyone in the administration who is thinking beyond the next election would be

well advised to consider the dramatic negative impact on human progress in virtually every field that has occurred in societies that have interfered with the status-to-contract transformation.

Every minute of every day, this purportedly conservative government spends \$900,000 more than it takes in, indebting future generations for the costs of benefits we are

Every minute of every day, this purportedly conservative government spends \$900,000 more than it takes in.

receiving. This number doesn't even take into account all of the off-budget and off-book debt that the government is taking on. Taking advantage of the lack of transparency that enables it to play accounting shell games that would land a business executive in jail, the government's borrowing is actually vastly more than the \$900,000 per minute figure suggests.

This deficit is the result of legislation by our "conservative" Congress and administration that includes:

- a farm bill bloated with agribusiness benefits beyond all precedent and reason;
- steel tariffs that are very costly to American consumers, resulting in a net loss of American jobs and betrayal of our professed free trade principles;
- an ethanol program and energy boondoggle that boggles the mind;
- a highway bill laden with more pork than any in history;
- a huge increase in spending on education;
- an enormous new prescription drug entitlement that will entail costs that will invariably escalate to unimaginable levels.

Federal budgets adopted since 1994 should have warned us that supposedly conservative Republicans are as inclined as Democrats to spend other people's money to try to pick society's winners and losers and to buy constituencies. The three budgets enacted after the Republicans took control of Congress in 1994 increased spending by 11.5% even though defense spending was being reduced. The preceding three budgets, adopted by Democratic Congresses, increased spending by only 9.7%.

It is noteworthy that in 2004 the organization International Living, while still ranking the U.S. as the best

country to live in, dropped America's rating on its freedom scale below 100 for the first time. The U.S.'s level of freedom is now 76 — behind Denmark, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Austria, and Canada, all of which still rate 100, and Monaco, which rates 92. An affiliated organization describes America, in only slightly overwrought terms, as "rapidly becoming a police state, a land of Black Hawk helicopters over Las Vegas, snipers in Times Square and swarms of gun-toting police in black SWAT team uniforms kicking down doors in the night."

David Theroux of the Independent Institute has observed, "Over the past three years, with inflation at record lows, U.S. government spending has increased by a massive 28.3% — with non-defense discretionary growth of 30.5%. . . ."

President Bush seems well on his way to becoming the first U.S. president in 150 years not to have vetoed a single bill.

U.S. government agencies have furthermore been given new powers to arrest and detain people indefinitely without charge, legal counsel, or trial, to search secretly anyone's property, and to intercept phone, Internet, and other communications, as well as access health, financial, and other private records.

The administration's political strategists apparently believe that the voters who brought it to power have no place else to go, and can be appeased by promises to limit

The Bush administration is so radically authoritarian and profligate that those libertarians and conservatives more devoted to principles than to parties should deny him their votes for a second term.

next year's discretionary spending increases to 4% over the current profligate and bloated levels.

This updated version of the Dick Morris and Bill Clinton triangulation strategy will probably work because Bush's base sees no viable alternative in the Democratic candidate. The Democrats are not making an issue of the administration's excesses because they favor unlimited authoritarian government and ever more public spending.

Given this bleak state of affairs, my plan for November 2nd is to do just what I did when President Bush's father ran for reelection. I expect to have another great day fishing. □

Red Team, Blue Team, *from page 20*

Being absolutely certain of President Bush's essential righteousness sure simplifies life for someone who regularly expresses opinions in print or over the airwaves. But thinking for oneself is better. Consider the case of Charlie Reese, a columnist who has been around long enough that no one would think it unseemly if his views were set in concrete, yet who still manages to think. Two columns he wrote, one in

late 2000 and the other just recently, illustrate this. In October of 2000, a Reese column stressed the importance of electing Bush and removing the Clinton crowd, for, among other reasons, Reese's disgust at the "lies, evasions, character assassination, extreme partisanship and outright corruption" of the Clinton years. In his recent column, the headline says it all: "Clinton Better." □

Can We “Liberate” Iraq?

Alan Ebenstein and R. W. Bradford have been debating the case for U.S. military action in Iraq by correspondence in the past few issues of *Liberty*. Last month, Bradford challenged Ebenstein to answer several substantive questions. Here, Ebenstein provides his answers, and Bradford responds.

*These seem to be
dark hours for
United States
military involvement
in Iraq, but
American military
involvement is
actually a positive
step in the direction
of continued world
peace.*

Santa Barbara
May 24, 2004

Dear Bill,

I apologize for not getting back to you sooner, and for not being able to discuss these issues with you at the *Liberty* Editors' Conference in Las Vegas.

I recognize that these seem dark hours for United States military involvement in Iraq, but my view remains that this military involvement is a positive step in the direction of continued world peace. Please allow me to respond to your three specific questions.

1) I do not consider Churchill, Roosevelt, and Truman war criminals for their actions during World War II, even though these included the development and use of weapons of mass destruction. In my previous correspondence, I attempted to differentiate the new circumstances in which humanity finds itself, where literally anyone in the world will be able to create WMDs in a few years or decades, from past circumstances. These new circumstances call for new rules. One of these rules is that leaders of nations who use WMDs should be removed.

I recognize that you may not find this answer convincing. It is also the case that Truman's use of the atomic bomb was different than Saddam Hussein's use of WMDs because, in Truman's case, it was to end a war in which the United States had been unprovokedly attacked. In Hussein's case, he used WMDs on his own people to prop up his regime. So I think the circumstances are different for this reason, too.

2) With respect to my claim that soon, "a few madmen, literally anywhere in the world, will be able to kill millions or even billions of people," I am surprised that you disagree with this assertion. It is merely the progress of technology. We have already seen that the ability to kill thousands through terrorist acts exists. With the continued development of biotechnology and chemical warfare, much less nuclear and conventional warfare, this capability will continue to increase.

This new technological development lies at the heart of my argument. It is a completely new situation in world history when an isolated person or a few people can kill not just a few others, but thousands, millions, or even, potentially,

billions.

This new circumstance justifies the doctrine of preemptive or preventive wars much more strongly than was the case in the past. The essential libertarian principle that individuals should not physically harm others except in self-defense does not mean that individuals cannot be preempted or prevented from harming others.

So, in this sense, I do not agree that the fundamental libertarian principle is not to initiate the use of force. Sometimes, if others are using or may use force, it is justified to use force first. When the stakes become higher because the damage people can do to others has increased because of technological development, then the principle of preemption or prevention comes more into play. Humanity has reached this point.

3) I think the world is a safer place for many reasons because the United States deposed Saddam Hussein and, together with the British and others, invaded Iraq. As I have previously argued, I think this was a major reason for Libya's decision to curtail its program of development of WMDs. I think this is having an influence on Iran in this respect, also.

Moreover, with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, Israel is far more likely to make territorial concessions that weaken its tactical military position if it believes it has an ally in the United States who would defend it if it were attacked. The Oslo accords were signed after the Gulf War. I do not think it is a coincidence that Israel is preparing to

depart from Gaza and parts of the West Bank after the United States and British military involvement in Iraq. These are only some of the ways that military involvement in Iraq is furthering world peace.

My view is that United States involvement in Iraq will go better in the next twelve months than it has in the past twelve. My view is that after potentially some initial instability of a few weeks to a few months after power is handed over to Iraqi authority on June 30 that conditions will markedly improve and U.S. forces will begin to leave the country.

What was one of the most despotic and potentially threatening regimes in the world will be replaced by a better, semi-democratic one. This will be a great step in the direction of world peace in one of the most volatile regions in the world.

There is little question that the costs of the Iraqi involvement have been great, both in terms of dollars and lives. But these costs will prove to have been worth it. Our dead will not have died in vain. Rather, they will have died in the cause of advancing world peace.

Best,

Port Townsend
May 24, 2004

*The problem is:
what sort of policy
will best retard the
spread of WMDs to
terrorist groups?
I don't think
invading countries
that possess no
deployable WMDs
is the best approach.*

Dear Lanny,

It's a pleasure to hear from you, and to receive from you responses to the arguments that I have made over the past few months. I am sorry that you weren't able to make it to our conference in Las Vegas as planned. It would have been a pleasure to see you there, and to wrangle over these issues in person.

Alas, your letter arrived only hours before we go to press, so my response will have to be hasty.

1. I argued that by your definition, Churchill, Roosevelt, and Truman were guilty of using WMDs against civilian populations, and, according to your logic, ought to have been removed from power even at the cost of war. I asked you whether you agreed. You disagreed, offering two distinct responses:

You argue that the "new circumstance" that "in a few years or decades" it will be possible for "anyone, anywhere in the world" to create WMDs, entails new rules, one of which is that "leaders of nations who use WMDs should be removed."

But wait. This logic fails on at least two grounds.

First, the spread of WMDs became inevitable as soon as the first WMD that depended upon published technology came into existence. This happened long ago. The only major weapon whose technology was kept secret for any length of time was Greek fire, which the Byzantines used very effectively in naval warfare for centuries before they were conquered by the invading Ottoman Turks in 1453. But Greek fire was used only in battles between warships, so it was hardly a WMD.

By the definition you provided of WMDs, their use goes back through the millennia. As I have pointed out, germ warfare in the form of poisoning wells with corpses and catapulting corpses into forts dates back to ancient times. The earliest reference to the use of a WMD is found in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, which tells of soldiers dipping the tips of their arrows in decomposed flesh and the venom of poisonous snakes, thus making a weapon that is both biological and chemical. And of course, from the moment the U.S. built the first atomic bomb and demonstrated its power as a tool of mass murder at Hiroshima in 1945, it was potentially available to terrorists, "in a few years or decades."

Your logic fails on another ground as well: all evidence indicates that Saddam Hussein *did not possess any deployable WMDs* at the time the U.S. invaded, and that the only ones he ever did possess were provided by the U.S. and our European allies for deployment in his war against Iran in the late 1980s. He later used them in a civil war. Curiously, one country undeniably possesses huge amounts of WMDs and has actually used them to kill hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians, and has provided them to other countries. I refer to the United States, which has remained unpunished.

Of course, you've claimed that the our uses of WMDs against civilians occurred primarily at a time when it was acceptable to use them, back before the rules changed. Certainly the U.S. used them in 1945, and Saddam used them on a much smaller scale in the 1980s. But Saddam hasn't used them since — he apparently used up his entire supply, was unable to make more — and had no deployable or effective WMDs to use in his war with the U.S.

You've argued that the use of WMDs to kill innocent civilians was an acceptable practice when the U.S. used them in World War II, but that actions of this sort were not acceptable by the 1980s when Saddam used U.S.-provided gas against Iran and the rebel Kurds. You justify this distinction by saying "the rules had changed," thanks to the potential use of WMDs by independent terrorists. This seems to imply that the potential for terrorist use of WMDs arrived somewhere between 1945 and 1980. As I've indicated, the potential use of WMDs by non-governmental terrorists has been with us for a long time. I have trouble identifying a discrete point when it became such a threat that the rules of war had to be radically revised. I have to say that your line of thinking seems like casuistry to me.

You also argue that Truman's mass murder of civilians in Japan was justified because "the United States had been unprovokedly attacked." Whether the U.S. provoked the attack is at the very least controversial, but it does not seem to me that this is the place to renew this debate. I am concerned about the plain implication of this claim that any country that is attacked is justified in responding by murdering huge numbers of innocent civilians. Do you really mean that?

2. I did not "disagree" with your claim that soon "a few madmen, literally anywhere in the world, will be able to kill millions or even billions of people." I asked you for evidence to support this claim, which you still have not pro-

vided. You merely observe that science and technology are progressing, and that they can be employed for the purpose of mass murder. This is undeniably correct. As I have suggested, the use of new technology for evil ends is virtually inevitable. But this does not demonstrate that it will happen in "a few years or decades."

The important issue here is what sort of policy will most successfully retard the spread of WMDs to terrorist groups and terrorist governments?

I suspect that we disagree about this. You apparently think that attacking a dictator who once used WMDs provided by the U.S. is the best way to retard their spread. I think trying to make the world a less violent place is a better idea. This means attacking other countries only if they have attacked us first. I think the classical liberal foreign policy of peaceful trade with all nations is much more likely to reduce the incentives for terrorism than conquering and occupying other countries. I will go so far as to suggest that attacking a secular Arab state stimulates Arab hostility toward the U.S., solidifying anti-American sentiments, and helps Islamic terrorists to get the kind of resources they need to develop or purchase, and then to deploy, WMDs against the U.S.

3. Has the world become a safer place? The only evidence you cite is Libya's partial disarmament, which we've already discussed. You'll recall that I doubted its being a consequence of Bush's conquest of Iraq. *The Wall Street Journal* reported that American negotiations with Libya, which resulted in Libya's disarming and taking a more peaceful approach to the West in exchange for America's dropping its economic sanctions, was virtually a done deal before the war began. Gaddafi, the *Journal* reported, was strongly motivated by his declining popularity, which was an effect Libyans' dissatisfaction with their economic situation.

Do Arabs feel less hostile to the U.S. after watching us conquer and occupy an Arab nation? Does the fact that American soldiers routinely shoot Iraqi civilians on the roadsides assuage anti-Americanism in the Arab world? Does the sexual humiliation of Iraqi prisoners of war make the world a safer place? Have the homicides by American prison guards of nine POWs, mostly beaten to death, but one strangled, as reported in today's *Wall Street Journal*, made the world more peaceful?

Or the American bombing of a Iraqi wedding party and killing of several celebrants, reported today by the Associated Press complete with video tapes, decreasing Arab hostility toward Americans?

As to your speculation about how things will go much better during the next 12 months . . . well, I hope you are right. But I fear you are wrong.

Regards,

Bell

Orwell's Economics

by Robert Formaini

For Orwell, capitalism offered only poverty and exploitation, while socialism ran the risk of turning totalitarian.

To understand George Orwell's economics, it is necessary to understand that Orwell was — all of his life — a man of the political Left. He had many intellectual battles along the way with others on that side of the political spectrum, and, of course, to his own left, but his basic approach to observation was always colored by what we here in the United States call "liberal guilt." For Orwell, it was "class guilt," mixed with a direct experience of, as he put it, "doing the dirty work of empire," but that is a rhetorical distinction without meaningful difference.* Also important to understanding Orwell's economics is that he was a lifelong, extreme pessimist.

That Orwell was intellectually honest and had a keen eye for social observation cannot be doubted. His writing is always lucid and to the point, and the best way to understand his powers of observation is to watch *How Green Was My Valley*, winner of the 1941 Oscar for best film, and then to read Orwell's 1937 essay *The Road to Wigan Pier*. The movie romanticizes its subject, while Orwell does not. This exercise

*Meyers, in his biography, sums up Orwell's early influences as regards his guilt: "He felt guilty about his family's colonial background — slave owners in Jamaica, exploiters in Burma, opium dealers in India — as well as his own too comfortable bourgeois family, his snobbish upbringing, which had taught him to despise the working class, and his education at Eton. Tormented by a social conscience, he felt uneasy (even when relatively poor) about having more money than anyone else. His colleagues in Burma made him feel guilty about being too young to serve in WW1, and this guilt was revived when he proved medically unfit to serve in WW2. He felt guilty about enjoying the oppressive power of his job as a policeman. Finally, his family made him feel guilty about giving up a promising career, for disappointing them and cadging off them instead of getting a proper job" (78).

has the same effect as being punched very hard in the stomach after just having consumed a very nice meal, and will give even the staunchest advocate of free markets some pause.

But the really fascinating thing about his 1937 book is not that it would have warmed Engels' heart, but that even though it was commissioned and published by something called the Left Book Club, that Club placed a reply to Orwell in his own book that argued *against* much of what he had to say in Part 2 of the work. Part 1 is a straightforward assessment of the harrowing, poverty-filled life of miners, one that Orwell wrote by living and working with them for many months. Part 2 is an unrelenting, trenchant critique of typical advocates of socialism, even though socialism is explicitly supported in the text. That caught Orwell's publishers entirely by surprise. It is a critique that was so on target that they felt it had to be answered and, essentially, disowned within the very book they themselves had commissioned.† This is classic Orwell: the iconoclast, the brutally honest observer who winds up, eventually, offending everyone, including even the

†One reader of this article denied that the Left Book Club commissioned *The Road to Wigan Pier* at all. Not being a historian, I take no position on that claim, and rely solely on the sources cited.

political sponsors who had funded his research.

One of the reasons that Orwell is always such a fascinating read is that he is so relentlessly politically incorrect that one senses he could never hope to find a publisher today, and that if he somehow did, widespread social opprobrium would surely follow. If Orwell were writing today, instead of

This is classic Orwell: the iconoclast, the brutally honest observer who winds up, eventually, offending everyone.

his output being claimed by both the Left and Right, he would be denounced, and quite vociferously, by both.

Like H.L. Mencken, Orwell wrote clearly, powerfully, and with seeming effortlessness. One reason for this impression is, in my view, that he didn't have to second guess his rhetoric. At the time Orwell was writing, an author could freely discuss any topic, and on its own terminological turf, provided he was willing to defend himself. This Orwell was fully prepared to do. Orwell appalls many modern readers, especially the current crop of self-anointed intellectuals. How else to account for Christopher Hitchens' quite defensive title for his recent book: *Why Orwell Matters*. Twenty-five years ago, such a title would have seemed a rather silly, if not incomprehensible way, to introduce a book about the justly famous author of *Animal Farm* and *1984*.

Orwell is one of a handful of people who called themselves socialists but nonetheless found favor with the political Right. (Sydney Hook comes to mind as well). He achieved this by walking a rather narrow road, balancing his hostility to totalitarian regimes against his almost equal hostility to free-market capitalism, which he thought always degenerated into monopoly and worker exploitation. He was also fortunate, in a strange way, that his *Homage to Catalonia*, suppressed during the 1940s by the Left in England, was not finally published in America until 1952. By that time, Stalin's initiatives and the attendant Korean crisis had made the aggressive character of Soviet communism much clearer than when Orwell had just returned to England after fighting on the republican side in Spain. Orwell's champions on the American Right quite naturally loved this part of his work.

In retrospect, his pro-socialist view was, though very clearly stated, as naive as that of today's college sophomore:

Indeed, from one point of view, Socialism is such elementary common sense that I am sometimes amazed that it has not established itself already. The world is a raft sailing through space with, potentially, plenty of provisions for everybody; the idea that we must all co-operate and see to it that everyone does his fair share of work and gets his fair share of provisions, seems so blatantly obvious that one would say that no one could possibly fail to accept it unless he had some corrupt motive for clinging to the present system (*The Road to Wigan Pier*, p. 171).

Though written in 1937, Orwell never really repudiated this worldview, although he certainly held no illusions about the policies that were often associated with states that described themselves as socialist. ("Ingsoc," that omnipresent

slogan in 1984's Oceania, stands for "English socialism.") But his guilt was too ingrained, and his remembered experiences too vivid, for him ever to repudiate the ideal of egalitarianism through income redistribution. Always obsessed about money, yet seldom having much of it compared to the rich he often dealt with, he lived simply, growing a good deal of his own food and making some of his own furniture. He was a sort of mid-20th-century Bill McKibben, trying to minimize his physical, if never his intellectual, footprint. Temperamentally, he was simply a lifelong leftist. And like many leftists, there was an element in Orwell that seemed to relish poverty and being, as the title of his first book put it, "down and out." He was a man, noted Cyril Connolly (Meyers, 167), who "could not blow his nose without moralizing on conditions in the handkerchief industry."

As late as 1941's *The Lion and Unicorn*, Orwell is still prescribing remedies for England's problems, complicated by the blitz and WWII, as being the application of rather pedestrian socialist policies such as nationalization of industry, income capping and redistribution, and of course that ubiquitous Holy Grail of all ideological dreamers, "education reform" (Meyers, 207). Although Orwell was a socialist, from a policy standpoint he was quite a pedestrian one. He was less in favor of centralized government power, and far more libertarian than the typical Labour Party stalwart of that time, which demonstrates just how far left some in England had drifted by the close of World War II.

Until he read Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* in 1944, he seems not to have turned his mental powers to a searching examination of whether the policies that he favored could actually work. Orwell was not unsympathetic to Hayek's suggestion that socialist policies might slowly, or perhaps not so slowly, degenerate into totalitarianism (Hitchens, 81-2). Nonetheless, Orwell remained critical of Hayek's proffered free-market alternative, never accepting that free markets ultimately led to, or maintained, political freedom and a permanently rising standard of living for laborers.

The pessimism, pain, and suffering that so infuse Orwell's novels were learned firsthand. He led a remarkable life, but one filled with personal isolation, loneliness, tuberculosis, lack of appropriate diet or access to health facilities that might have mattered, self-denial that bordered on the pathological, and intense physical pain. He was shot through the

When Orwell was writing, an author could freely discuss any topic, and on its own terminological turf, provided he was willing to defend himself.

throat and almost died in Spain, then lived the sort of existence in war-torn London, and thereafter in Scotland that parallels the wretched life of his hero Winston Smith in 1984. Much of this suffering was the product of self-destructive behavior, as if Orwell were always punishing himself for some imagined sins that we can only inadequately guess. Yet through it all, he wrote as if he knew he had little time to live,

always feeling guilty that, no matter how much he worked, he was not producing enough literary output, even though the definitive edition of his collected works runs to 20 volumes that fill over 8,500 pages (Meyers, 316).

Orwell's View of Socialism

Orwell was always fascinated by the sociology of socialism or, perhaps more accurately, the sociology of socialists. In *The Road to Wigan Pier* — which is, metaphorically, the road to nowhere — he explained why, in his view, socialism was losing ground in Britain. The reason, he believed, was not any fault in the “obviously correct” socialist ideology, but in those espousing it. Orwell was inclined to dislike people in general and the very people who were temperamentally most inclined to agree with the socialist agenda in particular. Here's a sample of Orwell's depiction of England's typical socialists:

One sometimes gets the impression that the mere words “Socialism” and “Communism” draw towards them with magnetic force every fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, “Nature Cure” quack, pacifist and feminist in England. (*Wigan Pier*, p. 174)

An almost perfect listing, even today, if we just add “vegetarians, vegans, multiculturalists, environmental fanatics, and Hollywood's many intellectual wannabes” to Orwell's grouping. He believed people such as these were off-putting, ultimately driving away potential converts by their personal appearance and rhetoric in favor of what they called socialism. Orwell is simply marvelous on the issue of the sociology of socialists. One has to read Mises on the same subject to find a comparably cogent discussion of this topic. Orwell is, in fact, more critical than Hayek is in his *Road to Serfdom*. (Unlike Hayek, however, Orwell was not attempting to win people over and start a dialogue.)

He led a remarkable life, but one filled with personal isolation, loneliness, tuberculosis, self-denial that bordered on the pathological, and intense physical pain.

Orwell's pessimistic summary of Hayek (and Zilliacus' book *The Mirror of the Past*, in the same review) was stated as follows:

Between them these two books sum up our present predicament. Capitalism leads to dole queues, the scramble for markets, and war. Collectivism leads to concentration camps, leader worship, and war. There is no way out of this unless a planned economy can be somehow combined with the freedom of the intellect, which can only happen if the concept of right and wrong is restored to politics. (“As I Please,” in the *Observer*, April 9, 1944)

There are at least two things that Orwell failed to learn from reading Hayek. The first was, obviously, better economic theory, along with the actual history of the development of capitalism with its generally salutary effects on average people. An unlikely ally for this view was Keynes, who wrote the following quite wonderful appreciation of Edwardian England in his *The Economic Consequences of the*

Peace:

What an extraordinary episode in the economic progress of man that age was which came to an end in August, 1914! The greater part of the population . . . worked hard and lived at a low standard of comfort, yet were to all appearances, reasonably contented with their lot. But escape was possible for any man of capacity or character exceeding the average, into the middle and upper classes, for whom life offered, at a low cost and with the least trouble, conveniences, comforts, and amenities beyond the compass of the richest and most powerful monarchs of other ages. The inhabitant of London could order by telephone, sipping his morning tea in bed, the various products of the whole earth, in such quantity as he might see fit, and reasonably expect their delivery upon his doorstep; he could at the same moment and by the same means adventure his wealth in the natural resources and new enterprises of any quarter of the world. . . . But, most important of all, he regarded this state of affairs as normal, certain, and permanent, except in the direction of further improvement. (Quoted by Ebenstein, 83)

The second thing that Orwell might have taken from reading Hayek was to add a bit of optimism about the possibility of avoiding the always-dark future that Orwell saw whenever he looked ahead. Hayek was hardly an optimist of the Rothbard sort, and in fact went through a deep period of depression later in his life; but while reading Hayek, one does not get the omnipresent sense of gloom that one perceives in almost every page of Orwell's work. In his lifetime, Orwell no doubt believed that his prognostications were coming true, and given the empirical record they witnessed, many others shared his unflinching pessimism. From their own experience, pessimism must have seemed perfectly rational.

More than once after his death, a few of America's political conservative intellectuals recommended preemptive strikes against the Soviet Union, believing that Soviet power would grow even as ours waned, and our relative position was, therefore, weakening daily. These thinkers also believed, implicitly, in the same superiority of planned economies that so many intellectuals — and so many economists, sad to say — also accepted as a decided matter in economic theory. When Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev claimed that the Soviet economic machine would soon outproduce America's, (or that “We will bury you!”), people all across the American political spectrum, for admittedly different reasons, seemed to believe him. Had Orwell lived long enough to hear these claims, it is doubtful that he would have believed them, but he might have believed that Russia would militarily bury the West. For Orwell, such was the essentially successful, always militaristic nature of totalitarian regimes.

Those who find Orwell persuasive, whether liberals for his trenchant observations concerning capitalist development and his brilliant criticisms of the British empire, or conservatives for his dissection of the ideology, motivations, and machinations of the total state and its enforcers, must also accept his dark pessimism. There are wonderful exceptions, of course, such as *Politics and the English Language*, as there would have to be with any writer as prolific as Orwell, but even there Orwell doubted that the future would see improvement and events have, quite sadly in my view, proved him right. Political discourse has continued to deteri-

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Two Days on Hana Coast

by Michael Freitas

Fifteen minutes into a job is very early for a beer break, even on the Hana Coast.

I was taking my uncle to his annual visit to Charles Lindbergh's grave in Kipahulu, Hana, Maui, Hawaii. He had been a teenager when Lucky Lindy flew across the Atlantic and the flight had caught my uncle's imagination as it had people all over the world. Later, when Lindbergh had fallen in love with the Hana Coast, my uncle had helped build his house. When Lindbergh was dying, they snuck him on an airplane and flew him to Maui. He spent his last eight days in Kipahulu with his wife, Anne Morrow, planning his funeral and burial. My uncle helped dig the hole, lined it with rocks, made sure it drained properly and laid Lindbergh to rest. Anne Morrow had wanted Charles to tell her about the process of dying, but Lindbergh didn't talk at the end. She did find a note he had written on the nightstand, it said, "I know there is infinity beyond ourselves. I wonder if there is infinity within." My uncle has visited the grave each year to pay his respects.

I stop by more often. It's a beautiful place overlooking the ocean; its stark grounds and trees hide the church and the graveyard from the world. I have a soft spot in my heart for "The Lone Eagle," the old isolationist. He truly was a hero and lived a life of heroic dimensions.

As I drove my uncle from the graveyard in his truck — he's never gotten a driver's license, just using the truck to drive around his property — we were quiet. As we drove pass the pools of Kipahulu, he looked down at the cars and the people, and I knew he was thinking, "too many tourists," but he was silent and we drove back to Hana.

When we got to Hana, I took the lower road and drove by Hana Bay. We drove past Joe's Place, with rooms for about \$50 a night. My cousin Eddie, who runs the place, must have been working; he wasn't sitting out front. We drove out of Hana to my uncle's place in Nahiku on the Hana Highway about six miles west of Hana.

My uncle lives in a two-bedroom house with a raised foundation, wood siding, and a tin roof that he built himself. There is a large carport and patio to the west of the house that had been added later and is so filled with stuff that his truck was always parked in the driveway. The house is painted your standard barn red, with white trim, and if you've driven the road, you might have seen him sitting in his kitchen. On the windward side of the house is another door, with steps that he never uses. Over the years the wind and the

rain had destroyed the wood. Today was the day that I was going to rebuild the stairs. We had talked about it for years, and the Hawaiian, "bime-bye," had finally arrived.

My uncle hadn't said a word on the drive from Lindbergh's grave and we had probably set a new world record for two Portagees not talking. I parked his truck and he got out and went into the house. I got out my tools and walked to the side door and the steps. I looked at them. I pushed on them and watched them sway. I crawled underneath and yanked at rotten wood and saw the exposed nails. I thought that if I used my sawsall and cut a nail here and a board there, I might be able to knock it down with one push. I began cutting and when it appeared ready, I whispered timber and pushed. It came down in a satisfying heap and there was a smell of rotten wood and mildew in the air.

I stepped back and looked at my handy work. It looked like a piece of modern sculpture. I was thinking of a title — "The Wind and the Rain in Nahiku," maybe, or "The Futility of It All" — when my uncle came around the corner of the house. He had a can of beer in each hand and he gave me one. My uncle, at 75, has lost most of his lifelong-honored work ethic, and I wasn't getting paid big bucks for this job. In fact, we hadn't even talked about money, but 15 minutes into a job was early for a beer break, even on the Hana Coast. My uncle opened his beer and drank about half of it and out of respect for my elders, I drank half of mine. He looked at me and said, "The DEA, is going to come through here tomorrow and you know how much I hate them tramping all over my mountain."

My uncle opened his beer and drank about half of it and out of respect for my elders, I drank half of mine. He looked at me and said, "The DEA is going to come through here tomorrow and you know how much I hate them tramping all over my mountain."

He was serious, so serious he was asking for help. I had to say yes. I got up from the table and went to a kitchen cabinet. I got his bottle of tequila and two shot glasses. I poured us each a shot. We lifted the shot glasses, clinked them together, and downed them.

"I haven't done anything really stupid in quite a while. I think I'm past due," I said.

In Hawaii there's a thing called "Hui Land," in which a family can own a large section of land and in order to own a couple acres one member of the family has to claim it and build a house on it. Land was divided in Hawaii from stream to stream, from the ocean to the mountaintop. No one knows how much land my uncle owns, but it is his mountain. A lot of family members "own a piece" but haven't done anything with it, so we all own it, but no one really does. My uncle controls it, because no one else really cares. My uncle said, "Every year those bastards come around here looking for pakalolo and I'm tired of it."

It was a game played every year in Hana. DEA agents burn some crops, bust a few folks, and then go away. It keeps the price high and the cops pretend it matters. Pakalolo is the #1 cash crop in Hawaii and everyone complains, but not too much. I am not saying everyone grows dope on the Hana Coast, but there are a lot of \$30,000 cars on the Hana Highway owned by people who work very little and some retired folks who live a little better than Social Security provides for. "Uncle," I said, "have you been holding out all these years? Have you got a patch?"

"No. You know I don't. I don't smoke that shit and I wouldn't grow it. I'm just tired of those idiots running around like they own the place and I'm tired of the damn helicopters."

"What do you want to do? Shoot 'em?"

"No, scare them."

"How?"

"With a wild boar."

"You got any more beer?" I asked. I looked at my piece of modern sculpture and thought, bime-bye.

We walked into his house. He got two beers out of the icebox, and we sat at the

kitchen table.

"They always go up the same way," my uncle said. "It's an easy hike. They always find some pakalolo around there. I think someone plants it for them. They chop it down and claim they've destroyed and burned acres of the stuff. Up there on the mountain there's this old drainage culvert that the CCC guys put in during the '30s. It was a stupid idea and it never worked. Now, most of it is filled with mud. There's about ten feet left that is clear and I've slept in it a time or two, when I've been walking and hunting on the mountain."

He looked at his beer, drank the rest, crushed the can on the table, and got two more.

"I've made a cover for the entrance and we can put a wild pig in there and release him when the cops come through. Maybe that'll scare the shit out of them and they'll think twice about coming around here again."

"We?" I said.

"Yeah," he said. "I can't carry the pig by myself."

"Carry? How the hell are we going to get a 200 pound wild boar to let us carry him?"

"I have tranquilizer bullets. We'll shoot him and lock him in the culvert. By morning he'll be plenty pissed off and maybe he'll run right at the cops and scare the hell out of them."

"Where'd you get tranquilizer bullets from?"

"Ah, some haole scientist came through here a few years ago and they were doing a study on the pigs and they tagged some of them to help keep track of them. They hired me to find and shoot them and I kept the extras."

"What happened to the study?" I asked

"They ran out of money or interest, I don't know what and they never came back."

"Do you think this will work?"

He smiled for the first time that day and said, "Probably not. Too many things can go wrong, but I have to try something."

"You could write your congressman or join a legalization group or . . ."

"Courish, why waste a stamp and I don't join things. Will you help me?"

He was serious, so serious he was asking for help. I had to say yes. I got up from the table and went to a kitchen cabinet. I got his bottle of tequila and two shot glasses. I poured us each a shot. We lifted the shot glasses, clinked them together, and downed them.

"I haven't done anything really stupid in quite a while. I think I'm past due," I said.

He smiled again. He got up from the table and said, "Let's go."

We usually don't drink this much, but we have a lot more fun when we do.

He went outside and I followed. I stood on his porch and looked down into the bed of his pick-up truck. While I'd been working, he'd been loading the truck. I saw rifles, bullets, rope, back packs, sleeping bags, rubber boots, a cooler, and a round metal grate. My uncle was sitting in the passenger seat. I got in and we drove off to go hunt pig.

We drove a couple of miles past the place where the cops were supposed to enter and up a road that my uncle knew. It hadn't been raining as much as usual and we used the four-wheel drive, and it wasn't too bad. We parked the truck under a huge mango tree and got our gear.

My uncle was 75, but still in great shape. He'd been walking this mountain all his life and knew it like the back of his hand. He knew how to find pigs and he never used more than one bullet. He didn't walk fast, just steady, and his gait stayed the same walking on level ground or climbing. One had to work at keeping pace. It was getting near noon and the sun was high overhead, when we could see it through the

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trees. It was humid and soon we'd be soaked.

Every once in awhile my uncle would yell out, "Where's the pig? Come here, pig." Otherwise we walked on in silence.

As we walked through some vines and low-hanging branches, hacking them with our machetes, I was thinking about back in the day, back when I'd been humping the bonnies carrying a 90-pound pack with a steel helmet on my head, searching for Charlie, hoping not to find him, and sometimes hoping to, when I realized I hadn't been to Nam and I must have been flashing on a movie, maybe *Apocalypse Now*, which reminded me to keep an eye out for mangos. They'd taste on later.

I got back to reality, always a bitch, and watched my uncle's back. It took me a second to register that he had stopped moving and had raised his left arm out as a stop sign and lifted his rifle. I looked to where he was aiming, and I might have seen a flash of black or white through the brush, but perhaps not. I waited. My uncle shot. I heard a grunt and my uncle took off at a very fast pace. I jogged to keep up. When he got to the pig, I was a step behind.

"He's a big boy," my uncle said.

He looked to be about 200 pounds and was an ugly sucker, covered with coarse, long, spiky hair that was mainly black and white, with a powerful head and snout, bookended by two large tusks that looked impressive. The pig almost had a smile on

his face and he looked very relaxed. Good drugs. I gave my uncle the rope I was carrying and helped him tilt the pig onto its spine and my uncle began to tie his legs. I watched as he tied the rope and moved out of the way when he moved to the back legs. He looked like a cowboy at the rodeo tying up a calf. When he was done, I expected him to clap his hands and wave them for the judges to see. He pointed to a good size branch on a tree and told me to get it. I chopped it down and we slipped it through the pig's tied feet and got in position. We didn't know for sure how long he'd be out and we wanted him in the culvert as soon as we could get him there.

My uncle called one, two, three, and we lifted together, a hundred pounds each. It wasn't too bad, but we had a few miles to go before we reached the culvert. At least it was mainly down hill. I definitely was bringing up the rear. The thought of spending a couple of hours staring into a pig's private area wasn't that appealing and I sure hoped that the sedative also shut down his digestive tract. Pig flatulence I could do without.

With only two quick rest stops, we made it back to the culvert. The pig was still dead to the world. We lowered him, untied him from the pole, and dragged and stuffed him in the culvert. My uncle attached the pig hole cover, we made sure it worked, and then we secured it with a lock. The cover had two air holes and by keeping the pig in the dark we hoped to keep him calm. My uncle put a bucket of water in for the pig. The culvert had a bunch of ginger plants in front of it, thoughtfully planted by my uncle a month before. We slid down the other side of the embankment and rested.

"Well, Phase One is done," said my uncle.

"Phase my ass," I said. "That was a serious hike. That damn pig was heavy."

"I know. I couldn't have done it without you. Thanks for the help."

"Now what?" I asked.

"We'll eat, rest, sleep, and wait until morning and hope the cops show up."

"I'll go get the food from the truck. Did you pack any beer?"

"Always, always."

I knew that the pig had kicked my uncle's ass when he didn't come with me. The truck was about a quarter of a mile from the pig and when I got there I loaded up. I put his sleeping bag on my pack and took all the food he'd brought and the cooler with the beer. The load seemed very light after hauling the pig, and I made good time back to the camp. I found my uncle napping. I ate a couple of mangos, drank a couple of beers, and dozed off.

He looked to be about 200 hundred pounds and was an ugly sucker, covered with coarse, long, spiky hair that was mainly black and white, with a powerful head and snout, bookended by two large tusks that looked impressive.

When I awoke, it was about an hour before sunset and my uncle had been awake for a while and was eating and sipping a beer.

"Has the pig woken up yet?" I asked.

"No. He's making some noise, but I think he's still in lala land."

"How do you like the room service?"

"It's okay," said my uncle. "But I hope I get a mint on my pillow."

"You'll get two cracks up side the head if you're lucky," I said.

He looked at me, smiled, and gave me a beer.

We ate mangos, chips, Vienna sausages, oranges, some cheese and crackers, and washed it down with beer.

"You never told me why you stopped working for the government in the '50s and moved back to Nahiku," I said when we were done eating and were watching the night close in around us.

"Oh, I got tired of the stupid work. The thing that killed it was building homes for the people who had been living for years on Bikini Atoll. They moved them from some lovely islands so they could test atomic bombs. The people who lived there were happy and they had lived there for thousands of years and they moved them to some islands that weren't worth a damn and we built these dumb cheap wooden houses that they didn't want. It was so sad to watch those folks leave their homes. They were very sad, crying and wailing, and the soldiers were shoving them on the boats with rifles and threats. It took the heart out of me. I felt dirty and I decided I wasn't gonna work for people who would do that to people. I guess I should be grateful that they didn't just blow them up."

"Yeah, I remember reading something about those folks and that they want to go home. They've always wanted to go home. You lost your faith in government because of that?"

"There wasn't much to lose, but I began to look at things in a different way and I just learned to stay out of the government's way and I stopped seeing it as a force for good. Just force. Living here in Nahiku makes it pretty easy, but each year it gets closer and closer."

"You have no idea what it's like on the mainland," I said.

"I have an idea, and that's all I want to have. Let's go to sleep. We need to be up at daybreak."

"Yeah. Good night, Uncle."

"Good night, you pig hauler."

We both awoke at first light and the pig was awake too.

We were anxious and nervous. We didn't know what was going to happen. Would the cops show up? What would the pig do? Would he charge them, run away in the forest, or smell us, make a U-turn and come after us? If the pig charged the cops, would they try to shoot him or run? A few scared cops with 9mms could do a lot of damage and we had to keep our heads down. Would the pig go nuts and gore one of the cops? There was a lot that could go wrong. In the early morning light this seemed like a pretty dumb idea.

"You ready, Uncle?" I asked.

"How stupid does this seem to you?" he asked.

"Pretty stupid."

"Yeah. You can go back to the truck and wait for me. I can do what needs to be done. No sense in both of us getting in trouble."

"You're gonna do it?" I said.

"Yes. I have to."

"Well, I ain't going nowhere."

"Good," he said and we waited.

The pig sensed the cops before we did. He began grunting and ramming his head

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against the grate. We heard them before we saw them. We couldn't make out the words, but they seemed pretty loud. We saw the branches and bushes move as they made their way up the hill. Soon they were in the clearing before us. We watched them over the embankment. There were three of them, wearing cop windbreakers, and they stopped to catch their breath and drink some water at the edge of the clearing.

The leader was about 40, rather short, but lean and tough looking. The other two were in their mid-20s and soft looking, like they had spent a lot of time behind a desk.

The older one said, "I don't think we have too much more to go. There's always some shit in this area. Let's go. The quicker we find some stuff, the quicker we can get out of this hothouse."

The leader took off as the other two put the caps back on their water bottles and my uncle pulled the rope. The pig jumped out of the culvert and stopped before the ginger plants. He put his nose in the air. He ran through the plants and headed for the DEA agents.

The three cops didn't notice the pig until it was too late. They'd been walking up hill with their heads down. The pig hit the lead cop on a dead run and the cop went huli up about ten feet in the air and landed chest first and you could hear the woof as the air was knocked out of him.

I felt for him. It had happened to me once when I was playing high school football. I was playing fullback and they had called a draw play for me. It was the perfect play. When I got the ball and started running all I saw were the goal posts in front of me. I had gotten about 15 yards and was at a full head of steam when a skinny damn cornerback sneaked up from the side and hit me at the ankles and I went flying through the air. I had the football in my right arm clutched to my chest and when I hit the ground, the football was nestled in my solar plexus and my breath was gone. I went from dreams of football glory to rolling on the ground like a fish gasping for air. When I kind of got my breath back and was being helped off the field, my coach yelled at me, "What the hell are you doing? You're a fullback, not a half-back. You ain't got no moves. You're spozed to run through people, not try and fake them out." I kept that in mind as I looked down to see if my lungs were still inside my chest.

The cop went huli up about ten feet in the air and landed chest first and you could hear the woof as the air was knocked out of him.

My coach would have been proud of the pig. He'd run right through the cop. The cop was rolling on the ground trying to breathe. The other two stood and watched. The pig was about ten feet away and he began to back up toward the fallen cop. I looked at my uncle and he had raised his rifle and had the pig locked in. The pig backed up to the cop lifted his right leg and pissed in his face. Which was about the time that the cop got his breath back and he got a mouthful of pig piss as he gasped for air.

The pig stopped peeing and took off full speed through the brush and was gone. You could hear him, but he was gone.

I looked at my uncle and he had his hand over his mouth like a Japanese school girl and he was laughing so hard tears were coming out of his eyes. I was holding my side and trying to control my laughter and we both rolled down the embankment and landed in a heap together.

The cop was on his hands and knees, now, as I crawled back up the embankment and watched him breathing in big gasps and trying to spit at the same time. The other two cops were hovering near him trying to help, but they looked like they didn't want to touch him. They kept looking to where the pig had run, with their guns drawn, worried that maybe he was going to come back.

The cop finally got on his feet, inhaled deeply and shouted, "Holy fuck'n' shit!" Well spoken, I thought. My uncle whispered, "He's lucky it wasn't shit." I pushed him and he slid back down the slope, laughing soundlessly.

"Why didn't you idiots shoot that damn pig?" The lead cop yelled.

"He was too close," said one.

"Yeah, we didn't want to shoot you," said the other.

"Shit. You idiots couldn't hit anything anyway." The lead cop said. He ripped his windbreaker off, pulled his T-shirt over his head, and wiped his face with it. He spit a few more times and then drank from his water bottle and spit that out. He shook his head and wiped his face again. He bent down, lifted his pant leg and looked at his ankle. There was a large red bump there that seemed to get bigger as I watched.

"That's gonna bruise," said one of the idiots.

"If you don't shut up, I'm gonna bruise you, you son of a bitch. What the hell am I doing? Running around this damn tropical jungle looking for dope. I'm the damn dope. I gotta get a different job. I just got run over by a goddamn wild boar. I didn't even see him coming. I got knocked over by a wild boar and then he pissed on me. Holy shit. I got to retire. I can't do this shit anymore. This is fuck'n' nuts. I got to change my life. This is so stupid. So dumb. Shit."

He began to walk around gingerly using his right leg. One of the other cops went to give him a hand and he brushed it away.

"Let's get the hell out of here," he said.

"What about the search?"

"Fuck the search. You idiots are going to take me to Joe's Place and I'm going take me a hot, hot shower. And you're gonna go to Hasegawa's and buy a bottle — no two bottles — of Jack Daniel's, and a bottle of mouthwash. I'm going to get pass-out drunk, and maybe when I wake up, I'll have forgotten this whole day."

"What are we gonna do?"

"Do whatever you want. I drink alone."

They started back down the hill and you could hear them cursing, yelling, and whining for a while. Then the noise faded and only the branches moved. My uncle had come up next to me again and we looked at each other and smiled. He hit me on the shoulder and I rubbed his head. Our smiles got bigger and we started to laugh. We got louder and we rolled down the slope again and laughed and hit the ground and staggered to get to our feet and laughed some more. When we were exhausted, we just looked at each other and smiled.

"We need to get out of here," I said.

"The sooner, the better," he agreed.

We began to clean up our mess and to pack the backpack. My uncle went to get the pig cover and the rope. We tried to make the area look like we'd never been there and left.

"We have one thing on our side," said my uncle.

"They're too arrogant to believe that we could plan something like this. They think we're too stupid. Plus,

it's better to think you were just knocked over by a wild boar, than to think that someone had set a trap."

"Are we going back to your house?" I said.

"No, we'll go to Haiku and we'll tell people that we went there early in the morning to get some material to fix the steps."

"I could use a couple of things."

"Good, we'll buy them. We'll also buy some steaks, beer, and maybe some tequila; we need to celebrate tonight. We got to toast Billy, Billy the Boar. That son of a bitch really came through. I can't believe it worked. I can't believe it worked so good and like that."

He looked at me. Patted me on the shoulder and we hiked back to the truck. Some days are better than others. □

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Liberty at its Nadir

As totalitarian states battled quasi-socialist mega-democracies for world domination, the influence of libertarian thought was at a very low point. In this interview with John Blundell, Leonard Liggio recalls the publication and reception of the revolutionary libertarian books that formed the foundation of the renaissance of libertarian thought.

Liggio is a libertarian Professor of Law at George Mason University, Executive Vice President of the Atlas Economic Research Foundation, and President of the Mont Pelerin Society.

John Blundell (JB): Leonard, we're talking today about six great books that came out 60 years ago last year (2003) and this year (2004). The books are Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, Rose Wilder Lane's *The Discovery of Freedom: Man's Struggle Against Authority*, Isabel Paterson's *The God of the Machine*, Ludwig von Mises' *Omnipotent Government*, Friedrich von Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*, and John T. Flynn's *As We Go Marching*. These extraordinary books were very important at the time they were written, and have continued to exert tremendous influence in the decades since 1943–44. What is even more remarkable, though, is that they were all published within such a short period of time.

Although it would be impossible to discuss all six books in detail, I think it would be very interesting for us to talk about the period in which they were written, what was going on and what influence these books might have had on the great issues of that time.

You, of course, were still quite young at this time, but you became politically active not long after 1943–44. Do you remember these books coming out?

Leonard Liggio (LL): I would have been 11 or 12 and in elementary school, but I was already very alert and involved since about 1940, which would have been maybe the first grade.

I followed international affairs — my parents listened to the news and especially the news commentaries — and at that time the three or four national networks usually had 15 minutes of news at six followed by one and three quarter hours of different news commentators, H. V. Kaltenborn being one of the most famous, but there were a number of others, like Three Star Extra News with Felix Morley. They were of all shades and it was a very important development.

Then, by 1950 or so, the Left started organizing boycotts of sponsors of the people who were more on my side of the ledger and drove them off. At that point, the networks also tended to drop commentary because their newscasters suddenly were commentators; we still confront this issue in that the major networks are filled with left-wing people, who they claim are neutral. So this was a period of great conflict.

Adding to that tension was the fact that President Roosevelt had won an unprecedented third term in 1940 on the grounds that he had kept the United States out of war, in the same way Woodrow Wilson, in 1916, campaigned that he would keep the U.S. out of war. In both cases, we then went to war.

So this was a very contentious period, and in fact Alfred Regnery told me that he's about to publish a history of the America First Committee. His father had

authorized this book at the time the committee was being disbanded after November 1941, but it was never published. The book is by the woman who was the research director of the committee in Washington, and it is going to give us a lot of background.

The most frightening thing for the Democrats was that in the November 1942 elections, the Republicans came within five votes of regaining control of the House of Representatives. This created a huge worry for the Democrats, who then organized a hate campaign against Republicans for the '44 campaign. This involved allying with the communists and the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) Political Action Committee. Lyndon Johnson played a very key role in these elections in raising this PAC money, which he had initiated in the 1940 campaign.

So there was a lot going on, including the Administration throwing together a whole bunch of very unlikely characters into one sedition trial, people who wrote things in favor of Mussolini or whatever the case might be. These were people who had never met each other but who were said to conspire for sedition. They even made prominent people like Sen. Robert Taft "unindicted co-conspirators" in the trial. At first, the trial ended with a "no verdict." Then, as the war was ending, the trial was not continued, but these kinds of threats were still in the air. The communists continued to unleash, under cover of the Democratic Party, huge hate campaigns against conservative and free-market people.

JB: Tell us a bit more about the 1944 election.

LL: The 1944 election involved Gov. Thomas Dewey of New York against Franklin Roosevelt. Leading up to the Democratic nomination, Franklin Roosevelt agreed with the political leaders of the state parties not to renominate Vice President Henry Wallace. Wallace had been secretary of agriculture for eight years, his father had been a Republican secretary of agriculture, and they published the *Wallace Weekly* for farmers in Iowa. He was so left-wing the party leaders insisted he be dropped.

They would have put in Jimmy Byrnes, who was a former senator, a former Supreme Court justice, and former assistant to the president, and really ran the White House during the war. But there were issues that clouded that, so he was not nominated. Instead, Harry Truman was nominated, and when Truman became president he then appointed Jimmy Byrnes as his secretary of state.

The 1944 campaign was a very contentious one, and behind the scenes was another big issue: would Dewey reveal the fact that Roosevelt and the administration knew of the plans for a Japanese attack, and did nothing to warn people before Pearl Harbor? It was not clear whether they knew specifically that the attack would be on Pearl Harbor, but they certainly knew that something was about to occur on that weekend.

Ultimately, Dewey chose on the advice of military people not to reveal it. He made this decision because the only way the Administration knew of the attack was that we had already broken the Japanese codes by 1941. Revealing this would have cost the U.S. all of the military

information that came from knowing the Japanese codes. So this was a very difficult issue. Percy Greaves was actually involved in that issue for the Republican National Committee in 1944 and then did his own research on the topic in his later career.

JB: Right in the middle of all of this were published the six books that I mentioned before. I thought we might start by taking the three that are written by women, which all came out in 1943: Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, Rose Wilder Lane's *The Discovery of Freedom*, and Isabel

Leonard Peikoff ascertained that I was not a perfect Objectivist, so happily I didn't have continuing contact.

Paterson's *The God of the Machine*. You knew Ayn Rand, but probably not as early as 1943. Do you remember *The Fountainhead* coming out?

LL: I don't remember it coming out. I became aware of it probably in 1950 or so, at the end of high school. I read it and was very favorably impressed and then was impressed by the movie. Then, when I was at Georgetown College, I became president and sole member of the film society in order to show films of our liking and I always showed *The Fountainhead* every year, along with others that we felt were favorable to our side in the culture wars.

JB: The movie came out in 1949 and starred Gary Cooper and Patricia Neal.

LL: Yes, and Raymond Massey, who was very important. His brother was Governor General of Canada, and he had played in a lot of English films and then moved to Hollywood in the '40s.

JB: You later met Rand. What was she like?

LL: Well, I met Ayn Rand because when *Atlas Shrugged* was published in 1957, *National Review* printed a review by Whittaker Chambers. Chambers was very idiosyncratic to say the least. He was viewed as sort of a brilliant person by *National Review*, and a kind of befuddled person by a lot of other people. He had fought hard against communists, and that was his heroism. As a key editor at *Time* magazine, he had convinced Henry Luce to get rid of the major communists who ran *Time* and the other Luce publications during that period.

But Ayn Rand's whole perspective was very different from Chambers, who was somewhat crotchety and did not view consistency as important. Rand's insistence on being rational and consistent led him to claim in his review that *Atlas Shrugged* represented a kind of authoritarian threat. He even claimed it was similar to the gulag or something like that, so it was really very confused.

Murray Rothbard wrote a letter to *National Review* criticizing Chambers' review, and this was followed by Ayn Rand writing to Rothbard. Murray and I had known each other since about seven years before, in 1950, when he,

George Koether, and Dick Cornuelle were members of the beginning of Ludwig Mises' seminar.

After this exchange of letters following the Chambers review, Rand invited Murray and his friends to come and visit her so Murray, Bob Hessen, Ralph Raico, George Reisman, and I went to see her. Those meetings continued, at her apartment and at Barbara Branden's apartment.

That was also when the Branden Institute was beginning. I was completing my doctoral studies, so I was in the library most days. The whole Branden Institute was a late evening kind of situation, so I never attended any of those meetings. Then at one point Leonard Peikoff and I had a meeting, where he ascertained that I did not fit the profile of a perfect Objectivist, so happily I didn't have continuing contact. When Murray wrote his famous essay "The Mantle of Science," Ayn Rand objected she was not made the central figure in Western intellectual history, and so they broke off as well.

JB: *The Fountainhead* had a huge impact. It was described in *The New York Times* as "the only novel of ideas written by an American woman that we can recall." With characters who are amazingly literate, romanticized, larger than life representatives of good and evil. In fact, it became a best seller from the '40s and into the '50s.

LL: Ayn Rand had worked for many years in the scripts department of, I think, Paramount Films. That was in New York, and the person who headed the department was Henry Hazlitt's wife, who always thought of Ayn Rand as her daughter or protégée. So Rand had a very rich background of visualizing characters who would stand out and make an impression. I believe her scriptwriting experience further enhanced her already existing narrative and fictional capacity. Her own films tended to fit the style of the 1930s and '40s, and were therefore very popular as films as well as being bestselling novels.

JB: Our second heroine, if you like, is Rose Wilder Lane, whose *The Discovery of Freedom: Man's Struggle Against Authority* also came out in this remarkable period in the

When Murray wrote "The Mantle of Science," Rand objected she was not made the central figure in Western intellectual history, so they broke off as well.

1940s. Do you remember *The Discovery of Freedom* coming out?

LL: Well, I was introduced to it through the Foundation for Economic Education. At the time, there were three publishing houses that published books of a free market or classical liberal dimension. One was Henry Regnery in Chicago — they had begun publishing in 1944. Their first works dealt with reconciliation between the U.S. and Germany, undercutting the idea of the Marshall Plan, and the Morgenthau plan to destroy the German economy,

and things of that sort. They had some important University of Chicago historians and political scientists writing for them. These books had a big impact and were frequently reviewed, including Charles Tansill's book, *Back Door to War*, dealing with what was known by the Roosevelt administration of the Japanese preparations for 1941.

The second publisher of free-market-oriented works was Devin-Adair, which was headed by Devin Garrity, a New York publisher. Devin-Adair was sustained by publishing gardening books for coffee tables and then was

At the time Mises wrote Omnipotent Government, there was pretty widespread control of the economy, and the question was what would happen subsequent to the war.

able to publish things on our side. John T. Flynn was one of their authors. Finally, there was Caxton Printers in Caldwell, Idaho. Caxton was a printer who decided to use his facilities to reprint things by Herbert Spencer and Albert J. Nock.

Those three were the only sources of free-market books, because all the other publishers and editors were actually communists, so they would not take any books that were not on that side of the line.

JB: It's interesting that while *The Fountainhead*, of course, sold hundreds of thousands, eventually millions of copies, *The Discovery of Freedom* sold just a mere thousand copies, until it was reprinted for a second time in 1971, and apparently circulated almost as an underground cult item passed from hand to hand. Of course, Rand and Rose Wilder Lane both shared an optimistic vision.

At the Cato Institute website there's a commentary about *The Discovery of Freedom*. It says, "perhaps most interesting to contemporary readers is Lane's chapter on the golden age of Islamic civilization. 'The Moslem world,' she writes, 'flourished under pluralistic laws. Trade was brisk and the best mathematical and scientific ideas of the ancient world were imported, preserved and improved upon by Moslem scholars.' She attributes the decline from that high point to a turn towards greater fatalism and rejection of the idea that individual striving was a key virtue." Do you remember that chapter?

LL: Yes, I do. On the one hand, it's a reflection of continuing 19th century romanticism by Americans, who discovered the beauty of Arabic cities in Spain like Cordova, Seville, and Granada, with their widespread use of fountains, developed water supplies, and so forth.

Of course, this compared very favorably to Europe at the time when these cities were built. Europe lacked many things that Islamic cultures enjoyed, such as the advanced medical knowledge that had been transferred to Baghdad by Greek Christians in the 7th and 8th centuries. So Islamic civilization was something that was very impressive.

But this view takes things in sort of a non-chronological way. The Arabic cultures were wonderful at the time they were founded, but then they spent 500 years under Ottoman rule. During this time, the legal system was suppressed — the competition of legal opinions and especially of interpretation. From 1500 on, Islamic law schools were forbidden to engage in interpretation and so were just locked in, which caused their societies and economies to decline. That's not included in *The Discovery of Freedom*. It's a correct picture of a particular time, and a very nice contribution, but it's not the last word on the subject because she doesn't put it in a chronological context. But it's important for people to read it.

JB: This same remarkable period that gave us *The Fountainhead* and *The Discovery of Freedom* gave us another important book by a woman, Isabel Paterson's *The God of the Machine*. Andrew Coulson has said that this book is really about why Athens gave us philosophy, mathematics, literature, and the natural sciences, whereas nearby Sparta gave us little more than the names of a few high school football teams. It is also about the preconditions for economic development. When did you first come across *The God of the Machine*?

LL: It would have been at the same time as Rose Wilder Lane's work. It was promoted by one of the publishers — I forget which one — but it was in a small catalogue or in the Foundation for Economic Education publications.

The issue that she's dealing with is very important. If we go back to the 18th century we find a heavy literature, including Rousseau, praising the Spartans as the exemplars of true humanity, unlike corrupted luxurious Athens. They saw, for instance, Western Hemisphere Native Americans as equivalent to the Spartans — which is true, the Spartans were exactly like the Iroquois or the

In terms of ideas, Atlas Shrugged in some ways paralleled the emergence of information technology. You had this new technology on the one hand and on the other hand a new sense of society separate from government regulations and control.

Cherokees. They were a warrior society, 100 percent engaged in preparation for war. Their food, for instance, was a black bean or lentil soup, called "black soup." And in order not to be luxurious to their children, they were taken away in early infancy and raised collectively.

Plato saw this as the great model — what should be. His was the model against the luxury and productivity and investment of the Athenian world, while Aristotle is a great antidote to Plato's love of the Spartans. This idea continues to surface in Western civilization — that it's necessary to have a career of preparation for war and not to engage in productive activity which creates more things

people want and therefore more productivity and investment. It was a very current issue when Isabel Paterson dealt with it, and it's even with us today. She was trying to confront the fact that this admiration of Sparta is often

MIT was always a center for the Objectivist movement, and other places with a technical education drew people into the Objectivist movement.

connected with trying to introduce national military service and universal conscription.

JB: It is claimed that Paterson was something of a mentor to Ayn Rand. To what extent would these three authors have known each other?

LL: They would probably have met through Mrs. Hazlitt, because Henry Hazlitt and his wife lived near Washington Square across from New York University, and they were a kind of center in this group of people. He had been economics editor of *The New York Times* until about 1945, and then he became a columnist for *Newsweek*. He had reviewed Mises' *Socialism* in the '30s, when it was published in England by Jonathan Cape, and he had access to a lot of other people, as did Mrs. Hazlitt through her connections with the film script department.

When Mises arrived in New York from Lisbon in July 1940 and had gotten a place to stay, he called Henry Hazlitt. Hazlitt recalls that when he answered the phone and a voice said "Mises here," it felt the same as someone saying "John Stuart Mill here," because he thought of Mises as much older even than Mises was at that time. But they quickly became very close.

Mises would have met Ayn Rand at the Hazlitts' and they would have been at various functions together. So that was the main social setting, I would say, for all these people to be in touch with each other. Rose Wilder Lane was more isolated, so she may not have been in New York and she was different — not in that social circle.

JB: Rose Wilder Lane is also known for her work as an editor on *The Little House on the Prairie* books, which were written by her mother, Laura Ingalls Wilder.

LL: One of the people I knew was Roger MacBride. He had published, quite early, a book about the Electoral College that was often on reading lists and recommended lists, so I knew his name and eventually met him. His father was an editor for *Reader's Digest*. Roger had worked on Rose Wilder Lane's essays and other writings, and they were close. He often visited her when she lived in the country, and later he was made her literary executor. Roger MacBride was the one who brought *The Little House on the Prairie* series to television.

In 1972, MacBride was a Republican elector in Virginia, but he did not vote for the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon — he voted for John Hospers, the

Libertarian Party candidate. In the next election cycle in 1976 MacBride ran for president as the Libertarian Party candidate.

JB: Moving on from these three influential books, all written by women, let's discuss the next two books on our anniversary list, both written by Austrians. You have already referred to Mises landing in New York from Lisbon in the summer of 1940, and by the summer of 1944 he's bringing out *Omnipotent Government*.

Here is how the Libertarian Press describes this book: "It is not only a history of the fall of Germany, but also a powerful critique of the political, social, and economic ideologies that have shaped Western history in the last two hundred years. The ordeal of two World Wars, according to Mises, was the inevitable result of ideologies that call upon government for the management of human affairs. People today hail every step toward more government as 'progress.' They call for more laws and regulations and their enforcement by courts and police. They are yearning for Caesar. They forget the consequences of total government. *Omnipotent Government* is a potent reminder."

This is perhaps not one of his best-known books, when you think of *Socialism*, his work on money and credit, and, of course, *Human Action*. At the time — in the mid-'40s — was *Omnipotent Government* an important book?

LL: Well, it was one of the books that introduced Mises to the American public. *Socialism* was published in English in 1937, but when Mises arrived in the U.S., he was working at the National Bureau of Economic Research. He wrote a book called *Bureaucracy* and another book called *Omnipotent Government*, which were published by Yale University Press, as were *Human Action*, *Theory and History*, and some of his other books.

The editor at Yale Press at the time was Eugene Davidson, who ensured that they published Mises' books. But when Davidson left, and they did a new edition of *Human Action*, they did a very bad job — ink running, thick on one page and thin on another. They just didn't care. Davidson went on to become editor of *Modern Age*, which he continued to edit for a long period of time.

Now, *Omnipotent Government* raised issues that were very contentious at the time, having to do with government control of the economy. The situation at the time of

its publication was different than, say, World War I, where government planning was mainly put aside after 1919. Of course, many of those same wartime planners came back again during the New Deal.

But at the time Mises wrote *Omnipotent Government*, there was pretty widespread control of the economy, and the question was what would happen subsequent to the war. In the summer of 1945, Congress passed the Unemployment Act of 1945, which wasn't just mandating some economic well-being, but carried a Keynesian plan to keep raising employment, "pump-prime" as it were, as a permanent policy. The Council of Economic Advisors was created to monitor these policies and give an annual report to Congress. So there were strong mechanisms of control.

Now it's in that context that you have attempts to challenge these controls. Leonard Read is very important in this respect, as is Virgil Jordan. Virgil Jordan was president of the National Industrial Conference Board. Leonard Read had been president of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce in the 1930s up until 1945. He had begun publishing pamphlets — called the "Pamphleteers" — which included things by Rose Wilder Lane, Henry Hazlitt, Mises, all those people. And right nearby was Mr. Hoiles Sr. at the *Orange County Register*, who republished the three volumes of Bastiat's writings. Then Leonard Read went to the National Industrial Conference Board for a year, in order to use that as a base to organize the Foundation for Economic Education, which was launched in 1946.

At the time, industrialists and businessmen in the country were very worried about the continuity of price controls, labor controls, and all these other measures that it looked like Congress was going to make permanent. So there was a great deal of discussion of these issues, and *Omnipotent Government* featured in that discussion.

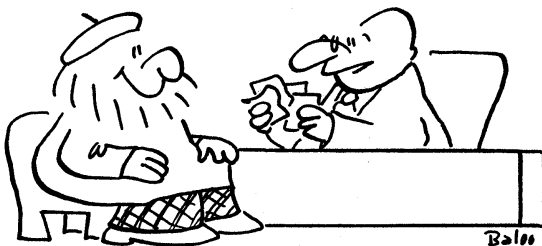
Then in the November 1946 elections, Republicans swept back into control of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Taft became chairman of the Labor Committee and wrote the Taft-Hartley Bill, and soon all of the price controls and other measures were repealed and the free market was reestablished in the United States. So it was a crucial election, and these activities and writings, including *Omnipotent Government*, were a very important preparation for it.

JB: While it was obviously important, I think it's fair to say that *Omnipotent Government* never quite had the impact that our next book had. Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* was published by Routledge in March of 1944 in the United Kingdom. With wartime paper shortages, publishers were only printing about a thousand copies at a time, and Hayek's book became famous as the book that no one could get, because as soon as a thousand were printed they vanished off the shelves.

Churchill thought *The Road to Serfdom* was so important that he devoted part of the Conservative Party's paper ration to a condensed version of it, which was prepared for him by Geoffrey Rippon, who later became Lord Rippon, and was a member of the Mount Pelerin Society.

The Road to Serfdom, of course, was condensed in the

ART
DEPARTMENT



"It's a very interesting résumé, but have you ever done anything other than bar napkins?"

Reader's Digest in April 1945 and became a worldwide phenomenon. Even now it probably sells more copies in a day than *Omnipotent Government* ever sold.

LL: I think the difference between *Omnipotent Government* and *The Road to Serfdom* is that *Omnipotent Government* is more like a political treatise — very dry. Hayek's book is criticized by some — I admire him for it — because it's a narrative more than an analytical treatment, which is what Mises wrote. Because *The Road to Serfdom* is more of a narrative treatment about political philosophy, the

After this exchange of letters following the Chambers review, Rand invited Murray and his friends to come and visit her so Murray, Bob Hessen, Ralph Raico, George Reisman, and I went to see her.

reader's attention can be kept to it better than a purely analytic work. But I also think *The Road to Serfdom* is of the highest academic quality. The more I've read it the more I've learned. I consider it a very, very important work.

There's so much in there that it's a whole guide to studying political philosophy. His analysis of political philosophers, of their influence, is extremely valuable. Some people say it's a popularization. I don't see it that way at all, I see it as a very accessible, high quality presentation of political philosophy.

JB: The last book on our list is John T. Flynn's *As We Go Marching*. Of the six books we've discussed, this is probably the least well known. Did you know Flynn?

LL: I think I met him briefly. He had been a famous economic journalist in the 1920s and '30s, and was one of the people who got purged; he was a columnist for *The New Republic*, and was purged in 1940 for not supporting the march to war by the Roosevelt administration and the communists. So then he became a well-known author in non-communist circles. He was a very competent journalist — he wrote very well, very clearly. For instance, he wrote a book called *The Country Squire in the White House*, which was a biography — not necessarily friendly — of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

As We Go Marching aimed to alert people that all of these wartime measures for "temporary" emergency carried a threat of becoming permanent — a permanent military and socialist society. This again is the whole Spartan concept of trying to make society not productive, not tuned to its consumer wants, but to constrain consumers, to block consumer choices by a militarization of the economy. It was bold of Flynn to say this at the time, to forward these ideas, and *As We Go Marching* was very widely read in anti-New Deal circles.

JB: I believe *Country Squire in the White House* so outraged the president that he wrote the *Yale Review* requesting

that Flynn be forever banned from the pages of respectable media. And, of course, in 1948, three years after FDR died, Flynn wrote *The Roosevelt Myth*.

It seems to me that the three men we are talking about, Hayek, Mises, and Flynn, were very much prompted by the war when they wrote these books. On the other hand, *The God of the Machine* and *The Discovery of Freedom* seem to be looking back at several thousand years of history. Do you think these books were prompted by the war?

LL: I think they were prompted by the wartime measures more than the war itself. The social effects of the war.

JB: So we have six books coming out in a very brief period, six books that are still available today, *The Fountainhead* and *The Road to Serfdom* still selling in huge numbers, and translated into many languages. The other four books we've talked about are extraordinary books in their own right, certainly very important at the time they were written, and well worth reading today. What is it in your mind that binds all these works, which came out within a space of two years?

LL: Well, I think all of the authors were aware that the collectivists saw the war as an emergency that could be prolonged, that Congress and the voters could be sold on permanent control of the economy. And, of course, they did sell this to the Democratic Congress, the ones elected in 1944 and before. That Congress was very left-wing, supported by the communists and the communist-run CIO Political Action Committee.

Luckily, the voters expelled that Democratic Congress in 1946. There was a big turnover, especially of the most extreme left-wing people. People were made aware of the dangers of collectivism by the shortages of sugar, gasoline, and other things that were caused by economic controls. They wanted to be liberated from this, and there

Ralph Raico and George Reisman asked Mises if as high school seniors they could attend his seminar. He asked them what languages they knew. They both knew German, so he told them they could come to his seminar if they each agreed to translate one of his books.

was a fear that when the war ended the government would try to keep these collectivist measures in place. All of the books we have discussed increased popular recognition of the collectivist policies that were already in place, and provoked the question of whether or not they should be kept in place.

JB: It strikes me that we could also talk a bit more about Ayn Rand's most famous book, *Atlas Shrugged*, which came out in 1957, a decade after the period we have been discussing. This book was probably ten or twelve years in

the making and, it seems to me, is redolent of many of the ideas of the mid-'40s. This makes sense, since Rand would probably have turned her attention to writing *Atlas Shrugged* after the publication of *The Fountainhead*, so many of the ideas being discussed in the mid-'40s would, of course, permeate *Atlas Shrugged*.

LL: Well, one of the reasons *Atlas Shrugged* has had a wide audience, both when it was published and since, is that there existed across the spectrum a kind of blandness and absence of ideas. The Left had been challenged in the late

When Mises arrived from Lisbon in July 1940, he called Henry Hazlitt. Hazlitt recalls that when he answered the phone and a voice said "Mises here," it felt the same as someone saying "John Stuart Mill here."

'40s, and had shifted gear and become sort of non-ideological, keeping to center-left politics as though it were neutral, and not wanting either communist or free-market ideas to come forward. This included dropping all those commentators from the airwaves.

The main publication from our side at that time was the *Freeman*, from 1950–54. Then the *Freeman* did not have enough circulation to keep it going, and it was bought by Leonard Read and became a monthly. Frank Chodorov was the editor for a while, and then Read decided to change it into less of a current affairs magazine.

Bill Buckley had a lot of respect for Frank Chodorov, but once Chodorov was not involved at the *Freeman* and FEE, and so was not someone to compete with, Buckley started *National Review*, which was first published in November 1955 to fill the gap left by the *Freeman*. It had more financial resources behind it and was able to grow, and it had more authors and lots of interesting contributions. Frank Meyer was the books and culture editor, and he added a great deal to it. So you had a good beginning, but there was also one side of *National Review* represented by Whittaker Chambers' pessimistic view and his clash with *Atlas Shrugged*, which I mentioned before.

So there was this period of hibernation imposed by the cultural establishment, and *Atlas Shrugged* sort of opened that door up, there were lots of young people reading it and becoming interested. In terms of ideas, I would say *Atlas Shrugged* in some ways paralleled the emerging IT technology. This was before miniaturization and so forth, but you had this new technology on the one hand and on the other hand a new sense of society separate from government regulations and control. Up until then, information on the radio and TV spectrum was controlled by the government, unlike other parts of the economy that had been deregulated. This was one of the most socialized parts of the economy, and even the major networks, which benefited from this socialization, were key

players in the suppression of free-market ideas and the dominance of the left-center established point of view. So the people attracted to *Atlas Shrugged* were often people who had some awareness of the possibilities of new technology. MIT was always a center for the Objectivist movement, and other places with a technical education drew people into the Objectivist movement.

JB: Tell me the story of your own first edition of *Atlas Shrugged*. I believe it is not just a first edition but that it literally came out of the *first box* that was delivered to New York.

LL: When *Atlas Shrugged* first appeared and was reviewed, we wanted copies, and at the time our friend Bob Hessen, who was a student at Queens College in New York, had a job in a bookstore at Idlewild Airport, which became JFK. That store got the first box of books from the publisher. We had already paid him to purchase whatever number each of us wanted of the book, so he immediately got them for us out of that box, which was the first of the first.

JB: This was really a great outpouring; six astonishing books in an era when people like Bob Hessen, Ralph Raico, George Reisman, Murray Rothbard, and yourself were all in your teens, were all in New York, all knew each other, and were going to Mises' seminars and meeting at Rand's apartment. It must have been very exiting.

LL: Well, I met Ralph Raico and George Reisman when we were members of Students for Taft, which would have been 1951–52. Then we became acquainted with the Foundation for Economic Education and went to visit there. They mentioned Mises' seminar, which took place on Thursdays. I was at Georgetown College, so I came a couple of months later during a vacation period to Mises' seminar at New York University Graduate School of Business. But Ralph and George went and met Mises in his office and asked if as high school seniors they could attend his seminar. He asked them what languages they knew, and they said they both knew German. So he told them they could come to his seminar if they each agreed to translate one of his books. Ralph translated *Liberalism* and George Reisman translated *The Ultimate Foundations of Economic Science*. Then later George also translated, under Mises' direction, Heinrich Rickert's book *Science and History*. That was how they gained entry to the seminar.

Mises was very accommodating; the seminar was made up of registered MBA students who were taking it because it was a Thursday night, or because they needed some other course or whatever, and had no idea or interest. Meanwhile there were all these people who attended for 30 years, who were not students but were very involved, very interested. People like Percy Greaves and Bettina Bien Greaves; Stan Evans was there when I was there, and all these other people that you know about. And it was really beneficial for Mises; it would have been a very boring seminar otherwise, because none of the registered students knew any economics, they were all accountants, and all the other people attending were very anxious to participate. So it all turned out very well.

JB: Leonard, thank you. □

Reviews

Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America, by Barbara Ehrenreich. Metropolitan Books, 2001, 221 pages.

A Dilletante Visits the Underclass

Robert Watts Lamon

Barbara Ehrenreich's recent contribution to social thought, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*, has reached book stardom. It is "impassioned, fascinating, profoundly significant, and wildly entertaining," according to Oprah's chronicle. "Captivating," adds *The New York Times*. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill urges all incoming freshmen to read it.

Nickel and Dimed is an account of Ehrenreich's adventures in the low-wage world in which she worked in hotel housekeeping and restaurants in Florida, at a maid service and a nursing home in Maine, and at a Wal-Mart in Minnesota, living more or less on what she earned. As a sort of right-wing beatnik, I spent many years in low-paying jobs and found her book remarkable for its defects. It's little more than a Marxist tract whose author had her mind made up before she entered the penny-pinching drama.

Ehrenreich often demonstrates, perhaps unwittingly, that people's woes can spring from their own choices. She just didn't know how to live as a poor person. She chose to

stage her poverty experience in a resort area and two northern states with a lot of cold weather. Resort areas and the Cold Country are two places to avoid if you're actually going to live poor. Better to choose a place in the Sun Belt, away from the ocean, where a single wardrobe and minimal housing suffice to maintain body heat. And don't follow her example and get

As a sort of right-wing beatnik, I spent many years in low-paying jobs and found Nickel and Dimed remarkable for its defects.

stuck in one of those residential motels or rooming houses. They are often inhabited by criminals, drug addicts, and a corpse or two. Temporary employment agencies are useful for finding work in a hurry, and an unfurnished apartment is the best choice for living quarters. She could have furnished such an apartment, bit by bit, by visiting used furniture stores and, yes, by shopping at Wal-Mart. An apartment need only be functional. It doesn't need an interior decorator.

Women appear to make friends faster than men, and I don't see why Ehrenreich didn't end up renting a house with a few of her acquaintances. A thousand a month gets enough house for three, and with rent thus divided, she would have been pretty well off, at least financially. Perhaps such an arrangement might have proved awkward, given her role as covert agent for the left-wing literati.

One choice Ehrenreich and many of her co-workers made is bewildering. Cigarette smoking is especially bad for people in low paying jobs. A pack-a-day habit can cost \$1,000 or more every year. Think of what someone in a low-paying job could do with that kind of money — furnish an apartment, pay off a car, buy an air-conditioner or a computer, or even enroll in a modest health plan. Smoking lowers the energy levels, increases susceptibility to colds, and worsens allergy symptoms. It's a terrible habit for anyone who can't afford to lose a day's pay. Yet she justifies smoking with imbecilities about rebellion or easing of pain. "I don't know why," she writes, "the anti-smoking crusaders never grasped the element of self-nurturance that makes the habit so endearing to its victims [sic] — as if, in the American workplace, the only

thing people have to call their own is the tumors they are nourishing and the spare moments they devote to feeding them." In other worlds, the system makes people smoke. Come on — sometimes a cigarette is just a cigarette.

And a personality test is just a personality test, not a tool used by the employer to rob the perspective employee of his innermost self, demonstrating to him that he is possessed in his entirety, as she asserts. I felt awkward taking such tests and once flunked one given by an insurance company, whose hires, I later noticed, were palpable nitwits. Nevertheless,

She fails to observe what a blessing Wal-Mart has been for low-income people. Joe Sixpack can take the wife and kids to one of its stores and, for a song, outfit them from head to toe.

the tests represent an attempt to deal with real problems — they are attempts to avoid hiring determined criminals and others who may be hiding a troubled past.

So, too, with drug tests. Her experiences with them are amusing, but again, she ignores the valid reasons for requiring them. Thanks to the genius

Financial Counseling



"My revolving charge account bored itself right into the ground."

of our drug laws, people who work in low-paying jobs and are addicted to, say, cocaine or heroin may very likely steal to pay for their dope. Such people may take a job just for the chance it offers to do so.

She claims she never saw a drug addict, thief, or slacker on the job. I wonder whether that attests to the value of drug and personality tests. I worked in businesses where such tests weren't given and saw any number of slackers and drug users, and a few thieves as well. Drug users serve two masters, their employer and their criminal connection. Slackers encourage sloth in the people around them, and when people won't work, they tend to turn on one another. The weapon they use is gossip. Those who suffer the sting most often are the best, most industrious employees — the Confederacy of Dunces is real. Wal-Mart recognizes these human tendencies and, to its credit, formulates policies to deal with them.

Practices Ehrenreich bitches about are hardly unique to low level jobs. Interviewing for a job as, say, a research scientist at a mature company involves a lengthy process. People you speak with for any length of time will send a written evaluation up the chain of command — not exactly a personality test, but pretty close to one. And such companies require a complete physical examination for all professional hires. The physical includes a urinalysis and a blood test — not a supervised drug test, but close.

One thing most humble wage-earners know is that people seldom hate their bosses. At the very least, they respect the boss' position and understand his problems. This confounds Ehrenreich who, like any devoted Marxist, thinks the working class aches for the chance to arise and sweep away the capitalists.

But for the time being, she'll settle for sweeping away conse-

quences. Single parenthood, for example, she treats as if it were a congenital deformity, rather than the result of imprudent reproduction. Single mothers who get that way through ill-advised marriage or sex outside of marriage often suffer — especially if they have children before they acquire the marketable skills needed to support them. Prudence is a virtue, and virtue is the good reduced to practice. The absence of virtue leads to sorrow. Isn't this all elementary?

Ehrenreich wants a world without Wal-Mart. I find it remarkable that she fails to observe what a blessing Wal-Mart has been for low-income people. Joe Sixpack can take the wife and kids to one of its stores and, for a song, outfit them from head to toe. Lamps, tables, and microwaves can be had for little money — a big help in creating a comfortable place to live. There is a grand irony in her Wal-Mart critique — the customers she ridicules for throwing merchandise all over the store are, by and large, the same class of people she champions as exploited employees.

She worked mainly in big companies and national franchises, perhaps because she thought they were riper targets for her book. In smaller businesses, I found some very kind people to work for. One of my employers regularly loaned trucks to employees to help them move. Another worked in my place, while I went to run in a road race. I'm amazed that Ehrenreich found so little generosity among her employers. I wonder whether she looked for it as carefully as she might have. It's hard to imagine any employer who refuses to allow his employees to make a phone call when a pressing personal problem requires it. One of my employers provided phones specifically for the use of his employees. Yet Ehrenreich recognizes few virtues in her employers or their supervisors. Like her mentor, Karl Marx, she sees the workers as angelic victims and their employers as evil oppressors — and any generosity shown by the latter, as a device to hoodwink the former.

I had one experience she might find interesting because it involved voiding on the job — one of her favor-

ite concerns. I spent a number of years as a security guard. At one of my sites, a factory in Durham, the client locked the guard out of the building on week-

One day, while walking along a dirt road northeast of Munsan, I passed a farmer working in his small rice field. He had no ox, so he had hitched his wife to the plow. Together they were wading knee-deep in the water and muck.

ends, leaving us with only the ground for a toilet. Fortunately, in my 13 months at the site, I never suffered a crisis of the bowels. If I had, I would have considered making my deposit on the steps of the executive offices.

In any event, I persuaded the building engineer to leave a door open for us when the plant was closed — a risky thing in that neighborhood. All went well until one of the guards failed to show up for a weekend shift, leaving the plant unguarded. From then on, until I left the site, the factory doors remained locked, and we never did get a key. As Burke said, we forge our own chains.

Ehrenreich's solution to such problems — which many of the employees themselves view with amused forbearance — is to have a "work stoppage," start a union, make demands: "Arise ye prisoners of starvation! Arise ye wretched of the earth!" Never mind that unions hurt low-wage earners by stimulating unemployment and have helped drive one company after another overseas or into bankruptcy. The less affluent would benefit from a repeal of the wage-and-hour laws. Instead of working two jobs, as many of them do, they could work more hours at the same job and save travel time and gasoline.

*Nickel and Dime*d radiated a stream of carpings. Homeowners affluent while the maids have little? Those nice homes reflect the value of the owners' professional skills. Homeowners

spending more on houses? They want to live in a neighborhood that won't, as they say, fall into decline. That's why they form homeowner's associations and bite their nails when a neighbor gets a string of visitors at two in the morning. Feel lost or bounced around on a new job? It's a common problem at any income level — stick with it. Get reamed out by the manager? Doesn't Lewis Lapham ever ream anybody out? Khaki trousers cost \$30? Wal-Mart sells them for \$10. Watch battery costs \$11? Who needs a watch? The only timepiece a wage earner needs is a reliable alarm clock. As long as you get up and get to work on time, who cares what time it is? Security deposit too high? Security deposits for apartments were once trifling amounts. Today, the usual requirement is the equivalent of a month's rent. The reason is simple — to avoid paying extra rent, many people quit their apartments without notice. Again, Burke.


I suspect Ehrenreich entered Wal-Mart intent on addressing the "worldwide working class," the sweatshops






in Kukuland, all the foreign labels on the merchandise. Thus she writes, "Those exotic places aren't exotic anymore. . . . They've all been eaten up by the great blind profit-making global machine." She then lists some of these places, among them, South Korea.

Let me tell you about South Korea when it was exotic. In the late 1950s, after graduating from college, I spent a year with an infantry unit there. One day, while walking along a dirt road northeast of Munsan, I passed a farmer working in his small rice field. He had no ox, so he had hitched his wife to the plow. Together they were wading knee-deep in the water and muck that included their own excrement. Their children sat nearby, crying in pain, their abdomens distended by the parasitic worms that infested them.

Into this exotic world with its exotic diseases — hemorrhagic fever, schistosomiasis, hepatitis, malaria, tuberculosis — came the cruel capitalists. They created those awful sweatshops where people could work, sheltered from the cold and filth and

Calling All Jews!



Jolie, Barbra, even Sammy, Leo, and Liz

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

For *The Jewish Debt to the Right*,
see [Intellectually Incorrect](http://IntellectuallyIncorrect.atintinc.org) at intinc.org

contagion. The workers made more money than they had ever made in their respective crapholes. And strange things happened. The standard of living began to rise. People

Ehrenreich disdains everyone's materialism except her own.

exchanged their tatters for warm clothing and sound shoes, becoming healthier, happier, and far more comfortable. Concrete highways replaced the dirt roads I traveled, and modern houses replaced the shacks along the dirt roads. Funny thing — wherever that great, blind profit-making global machine touches down, similar miracles occur.

But Ehrenreich disdains everyone's materialism except her own. She judges the quality of Americans' lives by the proximity of their incomes to some invention called the poverty line. Perhaps her Marxism led her to do so. In any event, she encouraged her fellow workers to judge themselves and others by the number and quality of their possessions. How bourgeois!

Her book is just another volley in the Culture Wars. It may fool a few students at UNC, but the kids coming to school from farm and factory towns will pay it no mind. Meanwhile, reviewers and blurbists compare Ehrenreich to Orwell and Mencken. But I think of her as a modern Beatrice Webb in her opulent sitting room with its shrine to Lenin, complete with burning candle.

One small moment in *Nickel and Dimed* was genuinely moving. The author asked one of the other maids how she felt about the homeowners who had so much more than the maids had, and the maid replied: "All I can think of is like, wow, I'd like to have this stuff someday. It motivates

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me, and I don't feel the slightest resentment because, you know, it's my goal to get where they are."

How fine — that she lives without

rancor or envy, and that she has her own dreams. Ehrenreich likes to talk about dignity. Perhaps she should learn to recognize it when she sees it. □

In Defense of Global Capitalism, by Johan Norberg. Cato Institute, 2003, 331 pages.

¡Globalismo, Sí, Socialismo, No!

Alan Ebenstein

Johan Norberg's *In Defense of Global Capitalism* is perhaps the best defense of globalism, free trade, libertarianism, and capitalism published in recent years. Norberg's thesis is simple: capitalism delivers economic goods better than any other system the world has seen. Period. Norberg is a humanitarian. He writes passionately that the "existence from which globalization delivers people in the Third World really is intolerable" (p. 13). No one who really cares for the poor, he says, should oppose expansion of global capitalism.

In Defense of Global Capitalism is divided into seven parts with about six or seven bite-sized chapters in each. Each chapter is on a different topic demonstrating that, whatever the measure, global capitalism has delivered on the promises of socialism and the welfare state better than state-controlled or state-directed systems have done. If one favors the goals of the Left, he has no option but to adopt libertarianism.

Following in the footsteps of capitalist and free-market giants such as Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, Ayn Rand, and Milton Friedman, Norberg emphasizes that there can be no human betterment unless people

are allowed to follow their wishes where they may, as long as they do not impede others' ability to do the same. Capitalism and libertarianism are the freedom doctrines, the heirs of enlightenment rationalism, which seeks to free mankind from the shackles of superstition, poverty, ignorance, and oppression.

Norberg's book is not, however, a work of philosophy. Rather, it is a compendium of statistics demonstrating conclusively to all but the most ideological that free-market capitalism is by far the most beneficial and productive system the world has witnessed. He emphasizes the improvements that have occurred in the developing world during recent years as more free market systems have been implemented there.

Consider, for example, the 2 billion people — one-third of mankind — who live in China and India. There can be no question that the lives of hundreds of millions have been greatly improved by the introduction of market reforms in these countries: "More and more people have extricated themselves from poverty; the problem of hunger is steadily diminishing; the streets are cleaner. Mud huts have given way to brick buildings, wired up for electricity and sporting television aerials on their roofs" (21).

In areas ranging from poverty reduction to hunger to education to democratization, the story is the same. Norberg provides a compelling response to those who argue that globalization and capitalism are somehow negative forces on the world scene.

He notes that since 1965, the real income of the average person in the world has approximately doubled, and that the increase has been greater in the developing than in the developed world. Moreover, absolute poverty, the level of poverty at which basic needs such as food and shelter cannot be met, has been reduced to about one in five people in the world.

Coincident with the decline in poverty has come an increase in the average life expectancy of people throughout the world, from about 30 years in 1900 to 65 years in 2000. Do discrepancies and inequalities still exist? Of course. But the answer is not to condemn the system that has made the improvements possible. It is to continue to expand the capitalist system that has led to a better life for almost all.

Meanwhile, illiteracy in developing countries has declined from about 75% of individuals born in 1925 to 20% of

Capitalism and libertarianism are the freedom doctrines, which seek to free mankind from the shackles of superstition, poverty, ignorance, and oppression.

individuals born in 1970. With greater wealth and literacy has come more democracy. In 1950, about 30% of the world's population lived in democratic nations; twice that percentage do today. Moreover, the rights of women are more respected around the world than ever before.

Norberg notes that, contrary to the conventional wisdom, "inequality between countries has been continuously declining since the end of the 1970s. This decline was especially rapid between 1993 and 1998, when

globalization really gathered speed" (56). Where life is improving most is in the poorest regions of the world, which are awakening from centuries of somnolence.

Economic freedom brings prosperity and growth; it raises living standards and life expectancy; it increases education and medical care; it reduces child and infant mortality. Further, Norberg notes: "Contrary to popular suppositions . . . a higher degree of economic liberalism appears to mean

more economic equality" (88).

Those who argue against free trade and globalization literally do not know what they are talking about. Norberg's purpose is to educate them, so that they will not continue to oppose what brings about the ends they say they favor.

Buy two copies of *In Defense of Global Capitalism* — one for yourself, and one to give to a left-liberal friend. □

***The Terror Enigma: 9/11 and the Israeli Connection*, by Justin Raimondo. IUniverse, 2003, 79 pages.**

My Enemy, My Ally

Anthony Gregory

Declare that the interests of the Israeli government are not always the interests of America, and you may be called an anti-Semite. Advance the theory that in the months before Sept. 11, 2001 an extensive spy network from a non-Islamic country had infiltrated the highest government offices in the United States, and had knowledge of the terrorist attacks before they occurred, and you will probably be called a conspiracy-theory kook.

The use of the slur "anti-Semitic" to halt any meaningful discussion of foreign policy as it relates to Israel has been pervasive, even among libertarians and conservatives who for years accused the Left of invoking the politically-correct race card, typified by the lashing out at someone as a "racist" for his or her opposition to affirmative action, slave reparations, or welfare. It is particularly disturbing to hear this *ad hominem* coming from those who in one breath uphold the notion that

Americans should not be equated with their own government, and in the next suddenly insist that critiques of the Israeli government reduce to hatred of all Israelis, and of Jews in general. Most arguments against U.S. aid to and support of Israel boil down to the belief that a defense of Israel is not always a defense of America — a notion confirmed by a statement from 9/11 Commission Director Philip Zelikow, who said to an audience at the University of Virginia on Sept. 10, 2002, that there was no significant threat to the United States from Iraq: the "real threat" was "the threat against Israel," from its Arab neighbors.

As frequently as the term "anti-Semite" comes into play, so does the dismissive insult, "conspiracy nut." And the "anti-Semitic, paranoid" notion that the Israeli government had knowledge of Sept. 11 before it occurred is not even fit for serious contemplation — is it? Even though informed Americans acknowledge the

history of the U.S. government's deception about the causes of so many of its wars, most do not want to face the possibility that anyone outside al Qaeda and its allies had foreknowledge of the 9/11 attacks. After a half century of work by historians and journalists to demonstrate Franklin Roosevelt's advance knowledge of Pearl Harbor, culminating in Robert Stinnett's recent book, *Day of Deceit*, most of the Americans who accept the possibility of FDR's foreknowledge do so apathetically, and many others still deny the possibility altogether. That Israel is considered a unique ally of the United States guarantees that any "conspiracy theories" blaming Tel Aviv for complacency in terrorism against America are considered as seditious and ludicrous as attributing such blame to Washington, D.C.

Given today's political climate, anyone who attempts the argument that the Israeli government had spies in America who knew about the 9/11 attacks before they happened — and wants to be taken the least bit seriously in such a claim — must proceed cautiously, and back up the thesis with extensive research and sound reasoning. Justin Raimondo, with whom I am acquainted, has done just this in his succinct, powerful, and quite readable book, *The Terror Enigma*.

Raimondo presents compelling evidence from news reports and government documents that there existed a significant Israeli espionage operation within the United States in the months leading up to Sept. 11. These spies infiltrated government offices from the CIA to the Drug Enforcement Administration, and were even sus-

pected by some officials at the tail end of the Clinton Administration to have successfully bugged the Oval Office.

According to Raimondo's narrative, prior to Sept. 11, Israeli intelligence agents used the unconventional tactic of going into federal buildings, posing as art students, nosing around, and attempting to get as much information as they could. An investigative reporter from Houston, Anna Werner, made note of wanderers walking around suspiciously, sometimes with floor plans in hand, in 36 "sensitive Department of Defense sites" (p. 31). According to another reporter, a U.S. intelligence official theorized that the Israeli agents were monitoring al Qaeda, and engaged in the "art students" pretense to create a diversion for American intelligence, thereby allowing al Qaeda to succeed uninterrupted.

Shortly before Sept. 11, 140 Israeli nationals were rounded up, interrogated, and put into custody. After the attacks, 60 more were apprehended. Strangely enough, as Raimondo points out, these detentions neither received considerable media coverage nor met with much protest — an odd silence, when compared with reactions to the detentions of Arab Americans in the Sept. 11 aftermath.

The most chilling of these detentions was that of five Israelis who eyewitnesses said were watching the planes hit the World Trade Center and, far from appearing shocked, seemed to be celebrating. This suspicious behavior led a witness to call the authorities. They found the Israelis along with a van from Urban Moving Systems, a moving company owned by a man listed as a terrorist suspect by the U.S. government.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the possible Israeli spy network received very little attention in the mainstream press, with the somewhat ironic exception of Fox News, whose four-part series by Carl Cameron is one of the many pieces of evidence Raimondo cites that cannot be justifiably dismissed as being based

on a knee-jerk, anti-Israel bias. Other sources include a report from the Drug Enforcement Administration, detailing the pre-9/11 attempts of a spy network to gain access to government offices, and describing an alert sent out to DEA

The War on Terrorism has taken an interesting turn, wherein Iraq, Israel's main adversary, has become the main focus, even though it had no connection to 9/11.

agents to detain these spies. The report describes the interrogation and detention of several suspects, who turned out to be Israeli intelligence agents. A U.S. National Counterintelligence Center document also warned, in March 2001, of attempts by Israelis posing as "art students" to penetrate U.S. government facilities.

Aside from providing multiple sources testifying to his credibility, Raimondo is also cautious never to overstate his case. For example, he has bothered to research the claim that Hanan Serfati, the head of the Israeli agents, lived "next door to Mohammad Atta," as an article in *Die Zeit* reported. The article cited a French intelligence claim that Serfati had an apartment on the corner of 701st St. and 21st Ave., but Raimondo says: "There is just one problem with this: there is no 701st Street and 21st Avenue in Hollywood, Florida. Serfati's rental was at 701 South 21st Street, about half a mile from Atta's 1818 Jackson address" (45). Half a mile may not be a problematic distance for espionage work, but Raimondo does not want to exaggerate his claims.

Raimondo never for a second doubts the guilt of bin Laden and al Qaeda for the horrific crimes of Sept. 11, but he says that "it is useful to remember that there are degrees of blame, and that it must be apportioned out accordingly" (9). For precedent's sake, he gives some brief historical examples of elements in the Israeli government carrying out covert operations to deceive the United States. In the con-



text of his criticisms of the Israeli government, he resents the "redefinition of anti-Semitism to mean anyone and everyone who criticizes Israel," saying that "the policies of the Sharon government are no more representative of Jewish opinion worldwide than the rantings of Robert Mugabe are globally emblematic to blacks" (58).

The motivation for such deception from the Israeli government, Raimondo argues, is the strengthening of the alliance between the United States and Israel, which the "art students" predicted would occur after a successful terrorist attack on Americans. Raimondo notes that the War on Terrorism has taken an interesting turn, wherein Iraq, Israel's main adversary, has become the main focus, even though it had no connection to Sept. 11. Hawks have attempted to make such a connection, but it has always depended on far-fetched assertions from discredited sources that, when approached objectively, appear much more the makings of paranoid, baseless conspiracy theory than anything Raimondo is advancing.

In fact, Raimondo dismisses outright any theories that Bush knew about Sept. 11 before it happened, saying that "the loonier factions of the left are seizing the moment to demonstrate, to their own satisfaction if no one else's, that 'Bush knew,' and that the Americans, in effect, bombed themselves" (29-30).

The Terror Enigma is an important book. It challenges its readers to rethink their views on foreign policy, and, as an incidental benefit, it forces them to contemplate the artificial discursive barriers that keep us from openly discussing important issues out of fear of being labeled unpatriotic or racist. Americans should never be afraid to criticize government — any government — or to consider the possibility that a government would let thousands of innocents die for its purposes. These are governments we're talking about, after all, and not a single one is innocent of serious crimes. We should feel free to examine the evidence behind unpopular theories, and honestly come to our own conclusions.

Not everyone who reads *The Terror Enigma* will agree with all of Raimondo's conclusions. But readers

will have a hard time shrugging off the evidence he cites. The fact of an Israeli spy ring cannot be dismissed, based on the evidence. Readers will also have a hard time understanding why there has not been far more discussion of all this,

Raimondo forces readers to contemplate the artificial discursive barriers that keep us from openly discussing important issues out of fear of being labeled unpatriotic or racist.

especially now that everyone is pointing fingers over the passive culpability U.S. officials might share for 9/11. As Fox News correspondent Carl Cameron said (quoted by Raimondo), "The biggest story of our time, of Israel spying on all branches of the government, on all our intelligence agencies — in the CIA, the DEA and the White House itself, is not picked up by the leading newspapers like the *New York*

Times and the *Washington Post*" (14).

Some might automatically disagree with Cameron and Raimondo on the importance, let alone viability, of the story of the Israeli "art students." If so, they owe it to themselves to read *The Terror Enigma*, and see for themselves if the book fails in severely complicating their opinions on this matter. That Israeli operatives, in Cameron's words, "may have gathered intelligence about the [9/11] attacks in advance, and not shared it" (17) should fuel a major public controversy.

The entire truth, of course, is still an enigma. Sen. Bob Graham laments that a lot of evidence about which governments helped Sept. 11 to occur has been classified. The senator conjectures that "at some point when it's turned over to the archives," the public might know, "but that's 20 to 30 years from now" (64).

Twenty years from now the attacks against the World Trade Center may seem about as distant as Pearl Harbor, and by then, if the way Americans think about Franklin Roosevelt is any indication, I'm sad to say that most Americans probably won't care any more about the enigma of Sept. 11. □

Intellectually Incorrect: The Amateur Science of Economics and the Professional War Against It, by D. G. Lesvic. intinc.org, 2004.

The Perversity of Jewish Anti-Capitalism

Richard Kostelanetz

It took a trip to Israel two decades ago for me to realize something that should have been obvious to me before — that whoever sold Jews on the "ideal" of socialism should be disintegrated and quartered. It didn't work, not even in its "democratic" forms, because taxes were too high and wages

kept artificially modest. The Israelis I knew either borrowed over their heads (in part expecting to benefit from future inflation) or they lived off money from another country, usually the U.S., but sometimes South Africa or the Netherlands. Indeed, the ever-resented Israeli "privileged class" seemed to be defined by its dependence on international support.

The Israeli problem is that while

the Jews are a people who have historically benefited from open competition, not only against others but against one another, they are prevented from competing optimally under Zionist socialism. The principal virtue of D.G. Lesvic's self-published *Intellectually Incorrect: The Amateur Science of Economics and the Professional War Against It* is establishing that Jewish culture thrives under economic competition and that Jews should not be discouraged, let alone forbidden, from engaging in it.

Obviously reflecting passion, as most self-published books do, *Intel-*

lectually Incorrect is best for its provocative aphorisms:

"Anti-capitalism is inexorably anti-Semitism, hatred of the competitive system hatred of the best competitors."

"Attacking employers is attacking employment; and the real message of employee lawsuits: don't be an employer in the United States. But, after they've been driven out, who will employ us, the lawyers?"

"Families create life, mobs destroy it. The authority of mobs over families is not 'family values' but mob values, and not of life but death. Life depends upon self-governing, not self-

destructive families, and families on good parents, not do-gooders, on freedom for the family, not for moral mobsters and mushheads."

"I don't give a damn about getting into the Gentiles' clubs. I can't think of anything duller. I just want to stay out of their concentration camps. I don't want any right to force myself on them because I don't want them to have any right to force themselves on me. They can discriminate against me all they want so long as they leave me alone."

"There was perfect Gun Control in the concentration camps. No inmate ever shot another."

"'Soak the rich' and 'save the environment' really meant to get rid of the poor and the nasty industries that support them, and reserve an environmentally pure playground for the rich and famous."

"If the politicians could really be trusted to invest our tax dollars for us they wouldn't have to tax the money away from us, for the capital market would lavish it upon them. The only reason their 'investments' depend upon tax dollars is that no investor in his right mind would entrust his funds to them."

"It is not mean-spirited to consider the actual consequences of our actions; and not compassionate but simply irresponsible not to."

Otherwise, I regret to say that this book is a mess. Lesvic writes discrete paragraphs in the tradition of great aphorists, but his ordering of them often strikes me as arbitrary. An omnivorous reader, he frequently includes whole paragraphs written by others, sometimes insufficiently separated from his own. (Some of the strongest quotations come from Franz Neumann's *Behemoth*, which was among my favorite books of modern political analysis four decades ago.) Much of the later sections of Lesvic's book are devoted to picky economic criticism (pro-Mises, anti-Friedman) which I found tough-going. In the age of stylish desktop publishing programs, Lesvic favors a prosaic design that reminds me of IBM Compositors favored by small publishers three decades ago. Given the truth of his message, I wish this book were better, much better. Finally, I suggest that the epithet "free enterprise" is preferable to "capitalism" as a label for the free-

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market process.

Reading *Intellectually Incorrect* made me realize once again the implicit Jewish intelligence of libertarian thinking, having noted before in these pages that, of the five most influential libertarians (according to a poll of *Liberty* editors), four were Jewish in origins (though all would probably be horrified to be identified as such in print): Ayn Rand (nee Alice Rosenbaum, don't forget), Milton Friedman, Ludwig von Mises (whose surname derives from Moses), and Murray Rothbard. My

own libertarian pantheon includes such cradle Jews as Emma Goldman and Paul Goodman.

As Lesvic writes in one of his signature statements, "Almost every Jew in America owes his life to laissez faire capitalism. It was relatively laissez faire America that welcomed Jews in unlimited numbers and 'progressive' New Deal America that turned them away by the boatload, and back to Auschwitz."

True, too true. □

Booknotes

One for the Gipper — *Reagan: A Life in Letters* (Free Press, 2003, 934 pages) is the latest volume in an ongoing effort by Martin Anderson, Annelise Anderson, and Kiron Skinner to demonstrate that the former president was simply not, as Clark Clifford once put it, an "amiable dunce," who had a few simple ideas and a certain likableness and happened to have a gift for communication.

As scholars at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, where the former president's papers are stored, they have previously mined the original, handwritten drafts of the radio commentaries Reagan delivered in the 1970s. They showed, in the book *Reagan, In His Own Hand*, that he had a lively interest in a variety of political-related subjects and a strong grasp of current events. Now they have assembled a collection of the letters he wrote, from the age of 11 until the year 1994, covering an astonishing range of subjects.

Reagan grew up in an era when personal correspondence was far more important, and more carefully composed, than it is in America today. Remarkably candid and warm, these letters enhance our understanding of Ronald Reagan's life and his place in American history, perhaps better than a full-blown biography can. Agree or disagree with him, this man was far from being a dunce, amiable or otherwise. They also demonstrate that unlike our current president, he had a lifelong

interest in politics, freedom, and governance. — Alan W. Bock

Darkness and Light at the World's Fair — In 1890, the United States was barely 100 years old, a mere teenager of a nation, ready to flex its muscle and establish its place among the nations of the world. In *The Devil in the White City* (Random House, 2003, 464 pages), historian Erik Larson tells the story of Frank Burnham's determination to create a World's Fair that would not only rival but surpass the Parisian Exposition of 1889.

Timing the Fair to coincide with the 400th anniversary of Columbus' voyage to the New World, the committee would have just two years to plan, design, build, populate, and advertise the Fair. Burnham assembled a committee of the foremost architects of the age, including landscape artist Frederick Olmsted, who designed Central Park. Burnham himself would later design the Flatiron Building in New York City. The Fair would have imposing exhibit halls, whimsical gardens and lagoons, exotic Midway booths, and a symbol to rival the Eiffel Tower.

Juxtaposed against this monumental task, Larson interweaves the equally fascinating tale of another creatively ambitious Chicagoan, Dr. H.H. Holmes, a charmingly evil man who built the World's Fair Hotel just a few blocks from the Fair. Holmes included secret soundproof rooms and ovens in the design of his hotel, and oversaw the

construction himself so that no one worker knew what the building housed. To paraphrase an old commercial, young women visiting the Fair checked in, but they didn't check out. Larson's book is as much a detective story as it is a history of the World's Fair, as he recreates the trail of murders associated with this dark man and his hotel.

Larson's meticulous research is evident throughout the book, which includes 30 pages of footnotes and a bibliography that runs five full pages. Yet he writes like a novelist, teasing the reader with dramatic foreshadowing, artfully delayed details, and deadpan name dropping. (For example, he tells the story of a junior architect who was fired for designing houses in his free time and then notes wryly, "The junior man was Frank Lloyd Wright.") He identifies numerous products and cultural icons that we now take for granted that were introduced at the Fair, including shredded wheat, Cracker Jack, the Pledge of Allegiance, and even the tune every school child learns that begins, "There's a place in France . . ."

Interestingly, though not surprisingly to those who understand the free market, the exhibits that saved the Fair from financial ruin were the ones that were initially rejected by the committee. The Ferris wheel that became the Fair's symbol took so long to approve that it wasn't finished until the Fair was half over. Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was rejected by the committee, so he just set it up in a separate theater outside the Fair and started raking in the dough before the Fair even opened. Young Sol Bloom, a teenaged entrepreneur who was hired to design the Midway, ignored the committee and brought an element of fun to the otherwise staid exhibits, providing a place for visitors to spend their money. One young boy whose father worked as a carpenter building the "magical realm beside the lake" would, more than 50 years later, recreate a more permanent amusement park based on the Fair's

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design. His name? Walt Disney.

The Devil in the White City is a story of vision, ambition, and persistence. Burnham's charismatic ambition drove him to create a visual masterpiece that was designed for obsolescence; within six months of its opening, it was closed and dismantled. Yet its monumental Greek revival style would influence architecture, landscaping, and entertainment for a century to come. Meanwhile, Holmes' charismatic ambition drove him to destroy dozens of families who would never know what happened to their daughters. It is indeed a book of darkness and light, utterly engrossing on many different levels.

— JoAnn Skousen

Islam and Church and State

— I have some disagreements with the way the conservative English philosopher Roger Scruton describes the unique qualities and political genius of the West in *The West and the Rest: Globalization and the Terrorist Threat* (ISI Books, 2003, 187 pages). He overplays the importance of territory, political and pre-political loyalties, and the willingness of citizen-soldiers to go to war, and he underplays the importance of freedom and a sense of the uniqueness and dignity of the self, and of cultural predispositions toward welcoming the sojourner and immigrant. But this book includes the best short discussion I have run across of Islam and how it developed into what it is today. This is not a hostile commentary; much of what Scruton has to say reflects admiration for the dedication and sincerity of Muslims. But he understands that Islam and Christianity have distinctly

different value systems, and that any effort to live together in an increasingly shrinking world will have to accept this reality.

Here's the nub of Scruton's comments: "The students of Muslim thought will be struck by how narrowly the classical thinkers pondered the problems of political order and how sparse and theological are their theories of institutions."

As both a religious and political leader, Mohammed had little conception of a separation of religious institutions and the state, a notion that was key to Western development. Of the early Muslim thinkers, only Ibn Khaldun saw the strictly political as distinct from other aspects of social organization, but even he had a generally bleak view of the political and the urban being divorced from tribal and religious loyalties.

This has profound implications for Islam as it encounters other ways of organizing human society. Muslims tend to view Western society not just as different, fascinating, and undeservedly rich, but as unrighteous, because it is guided (or claims to be guided) by reason and the vagaries of public opinion rather than timeless revelation. Scruton's prescriptions for the West are cursory and more wrong than constructive. But his description of the challenge we face in our encounter with Islam is worth pondering.

— Alan W. Bock

Totalitarian Grandeur — Like many libertarians, I daydream about totalitarian regimes. They are, I suppose, my way of indulging the science fiction instinct.

Preposterous, scary, romantic, they offer the perspective of an alternative universe, ripe for speculation. My imagination is especially engaged by their own daydreams.

Facing each other on opposite pages of Igor Golomstock's *Totalitarian Art* (HarperCollins, 1990, 416 pages), a review of twentieth-

century totalitarian art, I find two of the greatest such daydreams, or nightmares: Hitler's and Albert Speer's architectural plan for postwar Berlin, centered on the repulsively oversized dome of the great hall of *Grossdeutschland*, the House of the People; and Stalin's and Boris Iofan's very similar plan for an urban-renewed Moscow, centered on the tallest building in the world, a Palace of Soviets capped by a 300-foot statue of Lenin.

Of this building, Golomstock says, "An entire large institute worked on the project for many years, until the beginning of the fifties. A vast foundation pit was dug . . . and the press never tired of describing the future grandeur of a construction which was to contain 17,500 square metres of oil painting, 12,000 of frescoes, 4,000 of mosaics, 20,000 of bas-reliefs, 12 group sculptures up to 12 metres high, 170 sculptures up to 6 metres high, and so on. . . . Nothing of either the Palace of Soviets or the House of the People was ever constructed." The site of the Palace of Soviets is now a swimming pool.

Golomstock's book is one of those standard works whose publisher stupidly allowed to go out of print. Everyone should know about it and seek it in the used-book market (it's not hard to find).

It has some flaws. Most of its many illustrations are black and white. Many are too small. (Aleksandr Gerasimov's "Stalin and Voroshilov in the Kremlin" is a ravishing work of art, but only when it's big, and only when you can see the colors.) I have a lot of questions about Golomstock's distinction between the totalitarian style and the period styles that prevailed under democratic as well as totalitarian regimes, styles that make the old post office in Jackson, Mich. look exactly like a building of similar function in Hitler's Germany or Stalin's Russia. But Golomstock knows more than I do, and he may be right.

The virtues of his book include his wide erudition, his sense of humor, his exemplification of many styles and genres of art and architecture within the general field, his alertness to the many exact and bizarre similarities of fascist and Bolshevik art, and his inclusion of many examples of totalitarian art that is actually good. Most of it isn't, of



"What you need is a refrigerator with speed bumps."

course; but all of it is interesting, much of it is clever, and some of it is actually beautiful.

— Stephen Cox

The Decline and Fall of the English Language

— There is seldom a shortage of books deploring the decline of the proper use of English. Some are excessively fussy, earnestly holding the line against inexorable change. They defend grammatical constructions that they deem sacrosanct, but which are really quite arbitrary, or the products of earlier language mavens' wars against what they viewed as dangerous and degrading neologisms. John McWhorter's new book, *Doing Our Own Thing: The Degradation of Language and Music and Why We Should, Like, Care* (Gotham Books, 2003, 276 pages), is not one of these books. It is more subtle and, while sometimes wistful, less alarmist.

McWhorter is a linguistics professor at Berkeley and one of the growing number of black academics who has doubts about the marriage of the civil rights movement to affirmative action and identity politics. Through looking

at the changing ways in which we use the English language, McWhorter says a great deal about modern American culture, literature, and politics, some of it reassuring and some of it rather upsetting.

McWhorter's thesis is that "to be a modern American is to lack a love of one's native language that is atypical of most humans worldwide." While "one often hears foreigners praising the beauty, the majesty, the richness of expression of their native languages," he contends that "Americans are an exception. We do not love English. We do not celebrate it overtly, nor do we even have anything to say about it if pressed on the point."

It was not always thus. A century ago Americans expressed pride in their language, which is a remarkably flexible means for expressing thoughts, moods, emotions, and complex ideas.

Booker T. Washington, who was awarded an honorary degree by Harvard, wrote in his autobiography that "President Eliot, in beautiful and strong English, conferred on me the degree of Master of Arts." Can you

imagine anyone today commenting on somebody's "beautiful and strong English," or taking note of a college president's facility with the language at all? These days, McWhorter observes, we tend to view colloquial speech as authentic and distrust more carefully wrought oral expression as "high-flown" and even phony.

McWhorter doesn't attribute this to a decline in educational standards or lousy schools. He contends that we are moving from a written to an oral culture. Rather than offering a prescription to "fix" it (which he believes would probably be impossible anyway, given the trends), McWhorter is content to describe it. He suggests that while the effects are not all deplorable — it reflects democratization and a decline in oppressive elitism, and often facilitates clearer communication — something is lost along the way. The book is full of surprising insights and graceful (although, as he admits, modern and colloquial) writing. *Doing Our Own Thing* is a bittersweet pleasure for a stubborn lover of the high-flown and eloquent.

— Alan W. Bock

Orwell's Economics, from page 28

orate. And the class guilt that so permeates his worldview and writing that, to go along with him, we have to become reverse snobs always ready to see the worst in others, always suspecting the worst, never accepting progress as possible.

For Orwell, the world was a hellish place that was getting worse. What would the immediate future in the post-World War II world look like? He said: "Think of a jackboot endlessly stomping on a human face." His horror at events was an equal opportunity kind, a "plague on all your houses" view that turned many people away from his ideas even as they marveled at his writing ability. That ability was always appreciated best by his political enemies, especially Stalinist sympathizers in England. They almost succeeded in suppressing *Animal Farm*, the communists sensing instantly that it would be very bad publicity for Stalin and for the Soviet Union. As for America, when Orwell submitted *Animal Farm* to Dial Press, a telegram was returned to him from New York saying that "children's books" were not selling well in the United States. This rather incredible error cost Dial millions, as well it should have. Whether the editor who read the work and rejected it was incredibly naive, or a clever political opponent, I do not know.

Was Orwell wrong about the future? I'm not so sure. The verdict is still out, even though we have no shortage of Pollyannaish predictions about it from writers such as George Gilder, Virginia Postrel, and Peter Huber. I personally hope they are right and he wrong. But I confess to having what I call a streak of realism, or what Orwell would simply have called "common sense." That streak tells me clearly that the

future is an unsettled issue, and that it might not resemble very much what I would want.

I probably won't see all that much of it anyway, and that's fine too because, at least in the present, Orwell's future has not happened, at least not in the place where I live. This is not to say that there are no disturbing signs, for there are, and there is no shortage of such signs either. It is to say that I am relatively free and that I can speak my mind without facing the prospect of being imprisoned or shot. And that's enough for me, at least for now.

As for Orwell's dark future, which he surely did not mean to say was going to occur by — or in — 1984 (despite that book's title), only more time will reveal the extent of his prescience. But if, as he claimed, the only path away from that future lies in returning the concepts "right" and "wrong" to our politics, then I confess that I am not particularly sanguine about our chances. □

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Miami

Attorney General John Ashcroft gets tough on crime, from a report in the *Washington Times*:

After environmental activists from Greenpeace boarded a container ship without permission in protest of illegal logging, the Department of Justice charged them with "sailor mongering," the criminal act of luring sailors with promises of prostitution and liquor off of ships and into port.

Berlin

Speech codes cross the species barrier, from a dispatch by the BBC:

A man who trained his dog to give a Nazi salute has been handed a suspended sentence for shouting "Sieg Heil" in public and wearing a Hitler T-shirt.

San Francisco

Another tax loophole closed, from the omnipresent *USA Today*:

A police officer whom the voters authorized to patrol with a 10-pound wooden partner can't deduct the campaign costs as a business expense, a court said. Robert Geary spent nearly \$11,500 of his own money to get the measure on the 1993 ballot, a move designed to counter a superior's order that the ventriloquist's dummy remain in a locker because, the superior said, it made the department look silly. San Francisco voters, though, approved of the Howdy Doody look-alike.

Geary must pay the IRS \$3,500 in back taxes.

Berlin

Further evidence that government agencies are competent self-regulators, from an Associated Press report:

A German postal worker admitted to putting packages up for auction over the Internet after a search of his apartment turned up a hoard of missing deliveries. In all, more than 100 went missing, estimated at \$23,700. The German post office noticed that packages frequently went missing on his round, but was unable to prove anything.

Washington, D.C.

Further evidence of presidential hopeful John Kerry's commitment to working people, from Fox News:

Democrats failed by a single vote to attach an amendment to a tax that would have offered additional emergency federal unemployment benefits. Mass. Sen. John Kerry, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, was the only senator who missed the vote.

Louisville, Kentucky

Democracy in action, from a dispatch in the Pulitzer-Prize-winning *Courier-Journal*:

Local Republican Party activists John Lowler and Peter Hayes feuded recently over their status at the upcoming state convention. Lowler accused Hayes of smearing him by suggesting that he had recently had gay sex. Hayes said it was Lowler who started it by denigrating Hayes' religion, the

Unification Church (headed by Rev. Sun Myung Moon), saying that Lowler had taunted him by saying, "Moonie, Moonie, Moonie, Moonie, Moonie, Moonie."

Lowler claimed that he had said only, "Moonie, Moonie, Moonie, Moonie."

Phoenix

The wheels of justice grind on in the 48th state, from a report in the estimable *Arizona Republic*:

Haskell Wexler, 73, is in his twelfth year of contesting three \$31 parking tickets, a dispute that has taken him through twelve so-far unsuccessful lawsuits. In addition, Wexler telephones the city almost every day seeking a refund of his \$93.

Arlington, Virginia

Evidence of the tight security that prevails in the Pentagon in the wake of 9/11, from an article in *Time*:

An email to Pentagon staff marked "URGENT IT (Information Technology) BULLETIN: Taguba Report" orders employees not to read or download the Taguba report at Fox News, on the grounds that the document is classified.

Ketchikan, Alaska

FDR would be proud, from a dispatch of the *New York Times*:

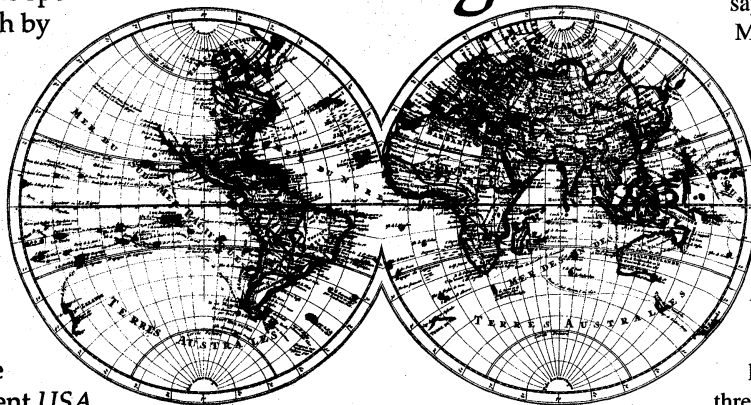
The House of Representatives has authorized construction of a bridge in Ketchikan, Alaska, that would be among the biggest in the United States: a mile long, with a top clearance of 200 feet — 80 feet higher than the Brooklyn Bridge and just 20 feet lower than the Golden Gate Bridge. It will connect this economically depressed town of 7,845 people to an island that has about 50 residents, at a cost of about \$200 million. It also authorized a bridge that would span an inlet for nearly two miles to tie Anchorage to a port that has a single regular tenant and almost no homes or businesses, for \$2 billion.

Grant County, Washington

Using a novel legal defense in rural Ecotopia, from a dispatch in the *Seattle Times*:

In a rape case in Grant County, public defender Guillermo Romero filed a motion seeking "D and A testing."

Terra Incognita



Special thanks to Bryce Buchanan, William Walker, and William Brickey for contributions to Terra Incognita.

(Readers are invited to forward news clippings or other items for publication in *Terra Incognita*, or email to libertyterra@yahoo.com.)

Why do the worst get to the top?

In 1947, Friedrich von Hayek posed this question. While he explained the economics, he omitted the psychology of those driven to wield power. Shortly after, Ayn Rand suggested that producers stop playing host to parasites, but also missed identifying the motive force behind the parasitic need to control.

The psychology can be explained by a megalomania usually rooted in alcohol or other drug addiction. Stalin, Hitler, Mao Zedong, Saddam Hussein and Kim Jong Il have all been such addicts. Coincidence? Hardly.

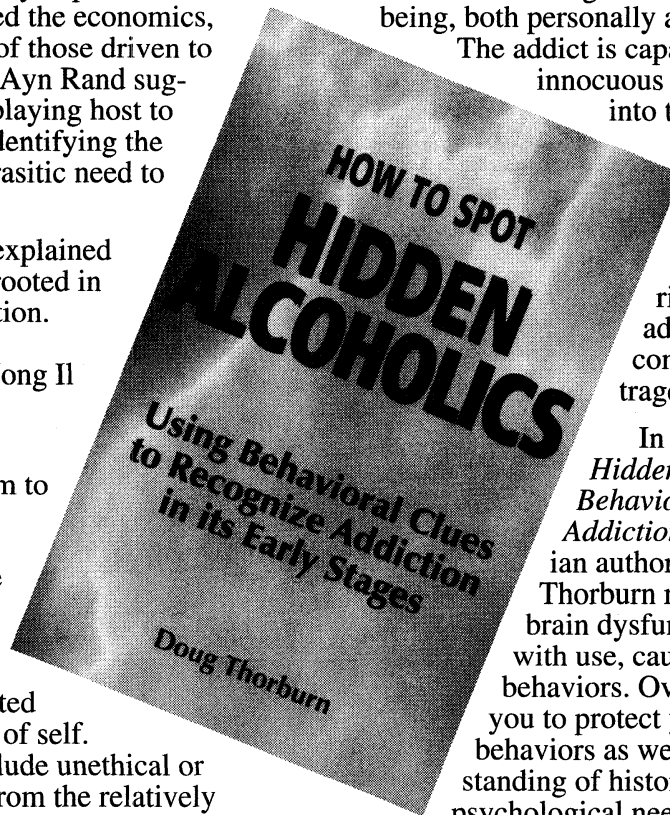
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— Shawn Steel, former Chairman,
California Republican Party

"*How to Spot Hidden Alcoholics* is an immensely useful guidebook for navigating the difficult areas of everyday life, as well as understanding the motives of, and dealing with, the worst politicians and despots. It gives a revolutionary panoramic view of misbehaviors — private and public — and how we can best deal with them."

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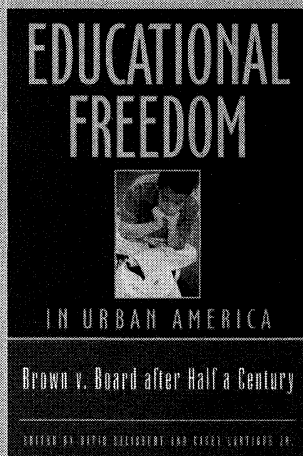
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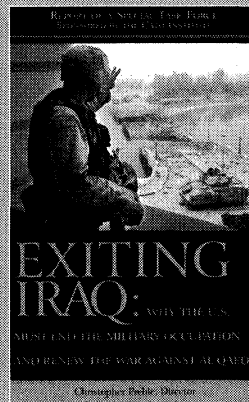
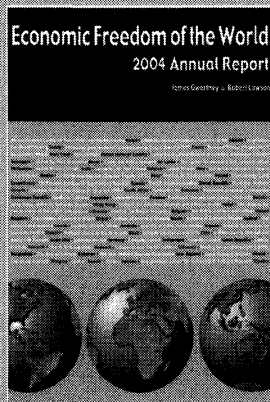
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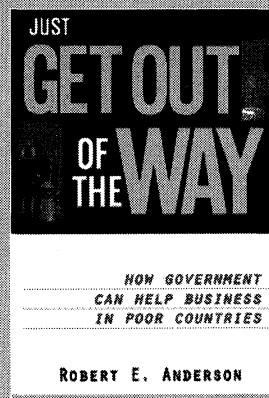
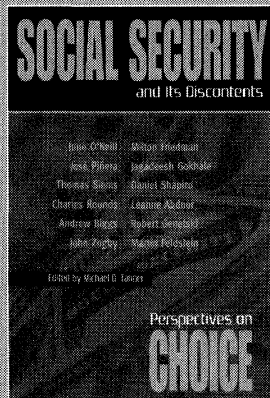


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