

Liberty

September 2000

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Ayn Rand's Strange Subjectivism

Let Freedom Honk!

by Rod Smith

Robbing Peter to Pay GM

by Ronald Powers

Revolution!

by Russell Means

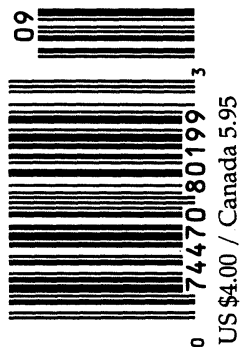
Jesus Christ: Family-Hating Communist?

by Bart Kosko

The Day the Israeli Army Left

by Bradley Monton

Also: *Jeff Rigenbach* exposes the myth that underlies the War on Drugs, *Len Brewster* witnesses the nightmare in Zimbabwe, *R. W. Bradford* and *Stephen Cox* party with Libertarians ... plus other articles, reviews & humor.



"Brethren, ye have been called into Liberty." —Galatians 13:50

Sighting in the Second Amendment

by Jacob G. Hornberger



We should not let the hoopla associated with the Million Mom March cause us to lose sight of the real purpose and meaning behind the Second Amendment: the ability to protect ourselves from the tyranny of our own government.

Virtually all the arguments in the gun-control debate have revolved around gun violence in American society. The proponents of registration, licensing, waiting periods, gun buy-backs, and even gun confiscation aim to rid our society of gun-related deaths.

But as their opponents have so ably pointed out, the means that the advocates of gun control are advocating are not likely to achieve their ends. People who violate laws against violence are not likely to feel constrained by gun-control laws. And people who do obey the gun-control laws are going to be less able to defend themselves against those who don't obey the laws.

Moreover, there is no

reason to believe that a war on guns will rid American society of guns any more than that a war on drugs has eradicated drugs from our society. Those who wish to purchase illegal guns will be able to do so on the black market as easily as they purchase drugs on the black market.

Thus, the ultimate consequence of gun control would be a society in which violent antisocial people are armed while peaceful, law-abiding people are disarmed. Of course, that's a prescription for disaster for those who are disarmed.

But despite its obvious importance, being able to protect oneself from murderers, rapists, robbers, burglars, and the like is not why the people of the United States enacted the Second Amendment to the Constitution in 1791. The true purpose of the amendment — one that modern-day Americans forget at their peril — was to protect us not from private thugs but rather from government ones.

Don't forget that revolutions are, by their very nature, wars against one's own government. Keep in mind that when George Washington and Thomas Jefferson revolted against England in 1776, they were British, not American, citizens. At various times throughout history, people

have taken up arms against their own government because of what they considered to be nasty and brutal acts that their own officials had committed against them.

Historically, the biggest threat to the freedom and well-being of a people has lain not with some foreign government but rather with one's own government. And as Thomas Jefferson pointed out in the Declaration of Independence, if a government "crosses the line" by engaging in overly tyrannical conduct against its own citizens, it is the right of the people to meet force with force, even to the point of violent revolution.

Resistance to tyranny and violent revolution, however, requires an essential ingredient — weapons. In the absence of weapons, there is only one course of action in the face of government brutality — obedience. A disarmed society is an obedient society, a society in which, at the extreme, people obey their own government's orders to follow the line into the gas chambers.

This point was recently reflected by what Fidel Castro said about the U.S. government's raid on the home of the Miami relatives of Elián González. He commented that his forces would not need to be armed to conduct a similar

raid in Cuba because Cuban citizens are not permitted to own guns. What he failed to say, of course, is that because of gun control, the Cuban people also lack the means to overthrow the gun-toting communist thugs who rule over them.

"But in America, our leaders are democratically elected. We are the government. There's nothing to fear here." But given the proper circumstances, a democratically elected government can be even more tyrannical than a totalitarian one. Remember: the very purpose of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights is to protect us from our own democratically elected government officials!

When citizens are well-armed, government officials must think twice before going too far down the road to tyranny against their own citizens. Thus, the right to bear arms protected by the Second Amendment is the best insurance policy that the American people could have against tyranny.

*Mr. Hornberger is president of The Future of Freedom Foundation in Fairfax, Va., (www.fff.org) and co-editor of *The Tyranny of Gun Control*.*

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September 2000
Volume 14, Number 9

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Letters

Fight Fire With Fire

The recent death of Peter McWilliams ("The Life and Death of Peter McWilliams," August) as the result of state persecution ought to be a wake-up call for libertarians. It is time to realize that libertarian objectives will never be achieved by endless debates over the Constitution, blind adherence to a party program, or via non-initiation of force. As the history of the United States demonstrates, every struggle for liberty has been won only by mass movements in which people get out in the streets and fight for freedom. Playing by the rules only leaves us vulnerable to increased statist attacks.

Libertarians have several major opportunities to get out in the streets in the year 2000. Two of them are at the upcoming Democratic and Republican conventions. A third is the annual day of protest against police brutality, October 22nd, in cities nationwide. A libertarian presence at these demonstrations would be a way of striking back at the state and establishing ourselves as a serious movement, as well as giving us media coverage.

I plan to be out there in the streets — what about you?

Joseph Miranda
Northridge, Calif.

Hate Thine Enemy

Peter McWilliams's inability or disinclination to loathe his murderers doesn't strike me as particularly noble. I think it's creepy. I'm a student of Marcus Aurelius myself, but I think Stoicism has physiological limits. If McWilliams had been able to work up some good seething malevolence he might be alive today. I know people who are still kicking just because of all the bile coursing through their veins.

And such a- or un- or anti-moralists, or whatever they call themselves — those who believe that the

State's depraved minions are not evil but merely stupid (more like Godzilla than Orwell's O'Brien) — would be wise to steer clear of the subject of morality lest they embarrass themselves. For example, I don't know why the libertarians McWilliams was addressing ("Why Liberty is as Much Fun as Medical Marijuana," August) would consider it much of a compliment for him to tell them how moral they are, since a few paragraphs before he was referring to DEA agents not only as "ordinary, decent Americans," but as heroes, thus rendering anything he might say about good or evil meaningless. Are we really supposed to admire such drivel? I suppose the Gestapo were just a bunch of good German boys who loved their country too.

I have been subjected to pap like that for years, and, frankly, have had a bellyful of it. "Government bureaucrats are fine, honorable citizens caught in a bad system." Bullshit. Those who enter a corrupt, rotten system either (a) know exactly what they're doing and want some of the power and loot or (b) are innocent greenhorns who find out almost immediately what they've gotten into. They then either get out, turn into (a) types, or delude themselves about it, corrupting their minds with a deliberate, willed stupidity that is just as bad as power-lust. Unless an anti-state movement is willing to acknowledge these unpleasant but elementary facts it hasn't a prayer and might as well close up shop at once.

Kyle Rothweiler
Bozeman, Mont.

Rest in Peace

I was absolutely stricken with grief when I read in the August *Liberty* about Peter McWilliams's death. It was only a few months ago that he wrote how he was coping without medical marijuana; I really hoped he'd beat the terrible tyranny that the government had heaped

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upon him.

What to do now? Somehow it seems so urgently vital that his terrible death not go quietly into the night. Yet, where is the outrage? I didn't hear a thing from the mainstream media on the occasion of his death. Yet, they still quote Barry McCaffrey's nonsensical pompous pronouncements without question. Are we to live in a world gone permanently mad?

Oh grief, thou hast thy grip upon me; can I ever be free of thee?

John deLaubenfels
Longmont, Colo.

Fact, Logic, and Elián

In "Hillary, Newt, and Little Elián" (June), Gene Healy wrote that "If Juan Miguel González honestly wants his son to grow up in communist Cuba, then he's a lousy parent and a poor excuse for a human being." One might therefore wonder why such a man's interests should weigh very heavily against his son's right to political freedom in any custody proceeding. His answer comes in a second, more extensive essay "Between a Rock and a Hard Case" (August), which offers two reasons for opposing the use of governmental power, especially judicial power, to invoke the political rights of children as a basis for defeating parental authority.

The first is that doing so "invites judicial tyranny." There is a social consensus in this country that harm to children includes physical abuse, and therefore we can rightly abridge parental authority to protect children's rights against such abuse. But once we move beyond this consensus, once we expand the concept of the "best interests of the child" to include something as ambiguous as the child's right to political freedom, then we encourage the "official do-gooders" among us to use that precedent as an excuse for employing state power in ways that libertarians will inevitably find deplorable and intrusive.

This is an argument from prudence rather than principle. There is no effort to show that children do not, in fact, have a right to political freedom, but rather a warning that the use of governmental power to affirm such a right is politically dangerous because it encourages misuse. Such an admonition seems to be the libertarian version of unilateral disarmament: So long as we

are good little boys and girls, and do not become too aggressive in advocating the use of state power to defend the rights we consider important, our political opponents will be equally restrained and life will go better for all of us. Frankly, I see little evidence for this. Conservatives and libertarians have been singing variations on the theme of judicial restraint for the better part of sixty years now, ever since Justice Frankfurter first set the melody in the early 1940s. But we're the only people restrained. The statist seem to be perfectly capable of dreaming up

new excuses for state intervention without relying upon rights advocated by libertarians. So if there is a principled case to be made for the use of governmental power to protect human freedom, let us make it. And if there is no principled way to do it — if mutual deterrence is all that is possible — perhaps the best demonstration of the double-edged nature of the sword of power comes through wielding it on occasion.

Healy's second argument against recognizing a child's right to political freedom as an exception to parental authority rests upon a kind of *reductio*

From the Editor . . .

It's summer, the time when Americans head for the beach with an enormous, succulent novel. May I suggest you take enormous, succulent issue of *Liberty* to the beach instead? There's so much happening in the world that we had to publish 16 extra pages this month, making this our biggest issue in years.

It's also one of the best. For one thing, the funniest political cartoonist in the world, John Bergstrom, is back with some of his most trenchant work ever. For another, we take you to the world's most exotic places.

We go to Zimbabwe to look at the aftermath of a violent and corrupt election. Then on to south Lebanon to join half the country for a party the day Israel's occupying army left. Next stop is darkest Tennessee, where ordinary citizens surround their state capitol and raise such a ruckus that they are saved from the income tax. On to Michigan, whose citizens aren't so lucky: their politicians give away millions in corporate welfare and get back . . . well, nothing at all. And on to Anaheim, permanent home of Disneyland and the temporary home of thousands of Libertarians, determined to have fun and change the world.

Of course, we haven't forgotten our old friend, Controversy: family-value conservatives will be in for a shock to learn that the historical Jesus Christ was a communist who hated families. (At least that's what Bart Kosko says. Next month, Stephen Cox will explain where Kosko went wrong.)

Our review section is full of hot stuff. Since the dog days of summer time to curl up with a good big novel, it's a good time to think of the author of some of the best and biggest novels ever written, Ayn Rand. David Brin, himself an extremely successful novelist, examines her just-published book on how to write fiction.

Don Boudreaux explodes some myths about how we got rich. Jeff Riggensbach exposes the lies that underlie the War on Drugs. And John Haywood goes to the movies to see about a real revolution.

As always, we let our readers take a shot at us first.

And our editors take a few shots at the world in *Reflections* — but only after our readers take a few shots at us, in the liveliest letters any magazine gets.

Have fun out there! Slather on the sunblock and enjoy this issue of *Liberty*.

R. W. Bradford

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ad absurdum. There is no principled way, he says, to distinguish Elián González's right to freedom from similar rights held by all the children of the world. Consequently, using Elián's right to freedom as an excuse for trumping parental rights will commit us to all sorts of absurd actions, such as kidnapping the children of visitors from totalitarian nations, or declaring war on regimes that fail to protect children's rights. And if we fail to pursue such obviously silly policies, this will reveal an embarrassing inconsistency on our part.

The trouble with this argument is that, if true, it applies with equal force to any exception to parental authority, including physical abuse. For if children have a right to protection from physical abuse doesn't that commit us to kidnapping the children of foreign visitors who may be guilty of it, or of launching attacks on regimes guilty of ignoring it? The answer, of course, is no, because there is a difference between recognizing a moral right and committing oneself to vindicate it in all circumstances regardless of the cost or consequence. This really is a case where political prudence is called for. One does what one can for human liberty, in the circumstances as they present themselves; but reluctance to embrace moral fanaticism is not a failure of principle.

The Elián González case is now over, and, if the polls are to be believed, his return to Cuba has the overwhelming approval of the American public. I imagine this includes a majority of libertarians as well, given their almost visceral suspicion of the use of state power to interfere with parental rights. But that only shows how far respect for human freedom has fallen in our culture and how difficult it will be to raise its status.

Tom Rekdal
Seattle, Wash.

Law, Legislation and Gene Healy

Gene Healy is trying to pull a fast one by basing his argument on the premise that Juan González has custo-

dial rights with Elián just as he has with his son by his current wife. ("Elián González and Dred Scott," July)

In the states where I've seen the custody laws in action, and one of those states is Florida, Juan González would have to fight all comers in court for custody of Elián. Healy's statement, "Under normal conditions, judges are not empowered to grant custody to a third party . . ." is a ludicrous attempt at misdirection or subliminal influence. There is no third party. There is no second party. Only *one* party had custody — Elián's mother. Custody of a child of divorced parents does not revert to the non-custodial parent after the death of the custodial parent any more than your ex-wife's bank account reverts to you if she hasn't remarried. Once custodial rights are abrogated by a court, only a court can restore them. Since this, of course, is meaningless in Cuba where the *state* has custody, we must examine past cases of Cuban refugees to find that had Elián arrived with his mother living she would have been recognized as his legal custodian.

The only conclusion one can make is that Elián was kidnapped by a non-custodial parent with the aid of Janet Reno or was declared a fugitive slave and shipped back to his master in the company of other slaves.

Healy tries to assume facts not in evidence with this stuff about "general rules." He is building a straw man with a rule book tucked under his arm and calling him Libertarian Man. This is a transparent obfuscation (so to speak). Libertarians have principles, not rules.

Since Healy is a lawyer I *expect* him to presume mass ignorance of the law in his audience enabling him to make a sophisticated argument. (Much like the Clinton administration when they display that look of blushing innocence, bemusement and superiority and proclaim — "It never occurred to me that was against the law.") However, I never like to read insulting statements, such as "González is *voluntarily* ceding parental dominion . . ." to have Elián raised as a Commie, or the equally

continued on page 20

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Greatest Hits

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What Libertarians Can Learn From Environmentalists • **Randal O'Toole** has worked with environmentalists for years, observing the strategies of one of the centuries most successful political movements. In this fascinating talk, he applies his insights to the battle for freedom. (audio: A152; video: V152)



Sexual Correctness • A new breed of feminist has declared war on individual liberty, in the process undermining women's autonomy — the very value they claim to uphold. **Wendy McElroy** runs down the latest illiberal court precedents and speaks up for the civil liberties of men and women alike. (audio: A155; video: V155)

Searching for Liberty Around the World • Whether you're fed up with encroachments on your liberty, or just interested in opportunities ranging from Nicaragua (!) to Hong Kong to Zambia, this is the tape for you. Hear **Doug Casey**, *Investment Biker* author **Jim Rogers**, international journalist **Bruce Ramsey**, and travelers **Scott Reid** and **Ron Lipp** — the men who've been there. Includes a special discussion of the problems of escaping the IRS. (audio: A103; video: V103)

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

Does the Libertarian Party Have a Future? • **R.W. Bradford** makes a powerful case that the LP is failing to

advance freedom, and suggests a controversial new approach that could lead to a political breakthrough. (audio: A408; video: V408)

Using the First Amendment to Smash the State • **Durk Pearson** and **Sandy Shaw** tell how they've used the First Amendment to wage total war against the FDA. (audio: A417)

Why the Great Depression Lasted So Long • **Robert Higgs** explains how government, not free markets, caused the Great Depression; how the New Deal prolonged it, instead of curing it; and why World War II didn't

bring the Depression to an end. (audio: A216; video: V216)

The Liberty Group • **R.W. Bradford**, **Tim Slagle**, **Fred Smith**, **Alan Bock**, and **Durk Pearson** look at the hottest topics of the day and presciently analyze the current political madhouse and slaughter sacred cows with abandon. You listen to conservative and liberal pundits on the radios and television. This is a fast paced journey of libertarian commentary. Find out how libertarian pundits measure up! (audio: A401; no video available)

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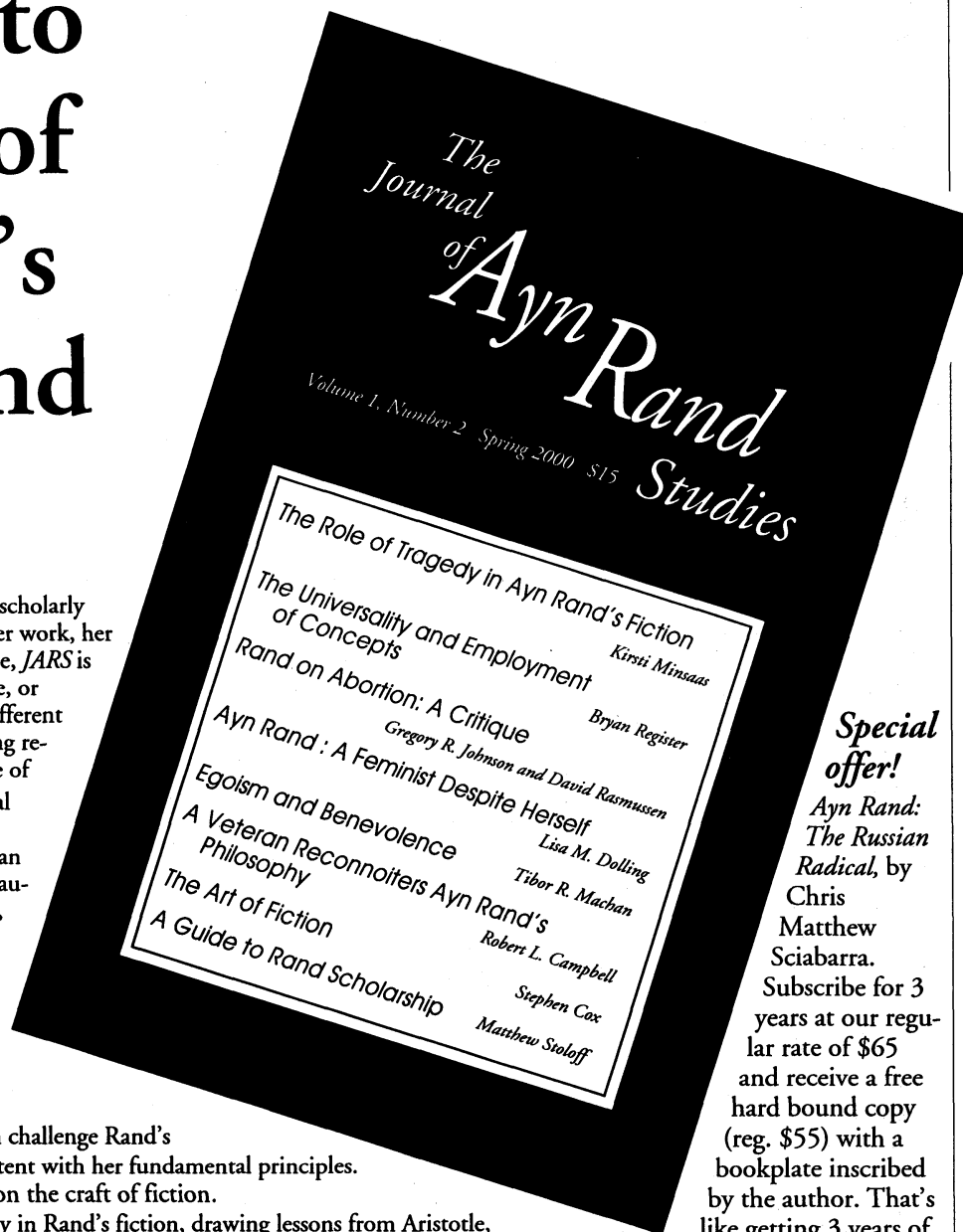
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Reflections

Got Gas? — Have you seen the price of a gallon of milk? Why isn't the government doing something to bring it down to the price of a gallon of gas? — Sheldon Richman

A is not A — Friends of liberty like to argue that many government policies, like plans to control prescription drug prices, are simply illogical. But this is wrong. Congress uses logic too, as we can see from the following syllogism:

Major Premise: A shortage of pharmaceuticals would be a public-health catastrophe that'd make the Ebola virus look like a mild bunion.

Minor Premise: Price controls cause shortages.

Conclusion: We need price controls on pharmaceuticals.

And we're all going to die. Q.E.D. — Andrew Chamberlain

Look what she's learned at college — So Chelsea Clinton was seen in a D.C. coffeehouse "smoking like a chimney." Who would have thought that even the first daughter had been victimized by tobacco advertisers? Hillary, the woman who wants to control our lives and let the government raise our children, is incapable of controlling the log in her own eye. I imagine there was probably quite a

maelstrom on the residential floor the night that story broke. You have to feel sorry for poor Chelsea though: for the first time she was witness to the wrath that is usually only reserved for her father. And I would bet the White House manifest indicates one less lamp. — Tim Slagle

Colonies sold separately — TV producer Norman Lear recently paid \$8,000,000 for a copy of the

Declaration of Independence printed on July 4, 1776. It's nice to see that some prominent person still values that document in some way. — John Haywood

Another Jewish conspiracy . . . — What should be made of the fact that four of the five most influential libertarians, as identified by *Liberty's* editors, came from a Jewish background (Mises, Rand, Rothbard, Friedman) and that, conversely, appreciations of the Great Five were all written by gentiles? Until recently, I used to think that Christianity and Marxism were the last Jewish conspiracies to con the heathen. — Richard Kostelanetz

Engarde, gringos! — My wife and I were driving around and the radio was NPR-ing about the Mexican election. We discussed, as we usually do in such cases, how odd

it is that we're always surprised to hear of a Mexican with a non-Spanish name, though we know very well that the country was settled by all kinds of people. My wife went on to say, "What would 'Fox' be in Spanish, anyway?" Then it hit me. For the first time in a lot of years, the Mexicans finally really, truly mean business.

They've elected "Zorro"!

— Rex F. May

Reality Gulf — Remember the Gulf War? It was fought to achieve two purposes. One was to remove from the scene a local despot who, according to then-president Bush, was "worse than Hitler." The second was to avert the sort of economic strangulation that would follow from soaring petroleum prices. Almost ten years on, Saddam is still in power and, indeed, with the recent death of Hafez al Assad now is indisputably the most vicious tyrant in the Middle East. As for the other, well, have you looked at a gas pump recently? — Loren Lomasky

Government 100, Accountability 0 —

Now let's see if I understand all of this: the U.S. government brings tanks, SWAT teams, armed helicopters, and machine-

gun toting thugs to Waco and wipes out 80 some men, women, and children, but are *not* responsible for such deaths. Tobacco companies sell cigarettes to people who make willing and informed choices to smoke — everyone knew cigarettes were unhealthy when I was a small kid — but the tobacco companies *are* responsible for the illnesses experienced by the smokers. Hmmmmmm!

Does this mean that, if people buy cars capable of driving upwards of 150 mph, auto

manufacturers are responsible for the deaths/injuries of those who get out on the freeway and drive at such speeds and get into accidents? And what about the meat packers who sell products that cause clogging of the arteries and, thus, heart attacks? And the distillers whose products cause cirrhosis of the liver? And, of course, the gun manufacturers whose products are used in the commission of crimes!

I have long maintained that the dread most people have is that of their own responsibility for their actions. Much better to project such "causation" onto scapegoats (e.g., tobacco companies, Branch Davidians, etc.) than bear our own sense of responsibility. Gosh, maybe the Nuremburg defendants weren't guilty after all: maybe the real culprits were the manufacturers of Zyklon-B and the barbed wire used to imprison



people! Maybe the tobacco companies can make use of this "anti-responsibility" theme: "we weren't responsible: what choices did we have to manufacture cigarettes?" And there are some people who still don't believe that modern civilization is in its final stages of collapse! When the decline and fall finally comes, just make sure you're not standing beneath an institution!

— Butler Shaffer

Cosmopolitan Redneck — John Rocker became one of the most reviled figures in the world last year when he carelessly opined to a *Sports Illustrated* reporter his dislike for New York City, its baseball fans and its now famous Number 7 subway passengers including, "some kid with purple hair next to some queer with AIDS right next to some dude who just got out of jail for the fourth time right next to some 20-year-old mom with four kids." Major League Baseball suspended him and subjected him to psychiatric "counseling." Just a couple of weeks ago, he required presidential level security to protect him from ravenous New York Mets fans when the Atlanta Braves returned there. It just goes to show how bigotry will not be tolerated in today's world. Some of the time.

A column in the Sunday, July 9th edition of the *Atlanta Journal & Constitution* featured bigotry every bit as virulent as that expressed by Rocker. This time the culprit was a New Yorker and his target was Southerners in general and rural East Tennesseans in particular. For some reason, John R. MacArthur, the publisher of *Harpers*, briefly abandoned the tony confines of Manhattan to visit Kingsport, Tennessee — a place he imagined to be inhabited by "scrawny dogs, fundamentalist preachers and scary, gun-toting adherents to the frontier 'patriotism' of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett." He appeared to qualify his prejudice: "I know my stereotypes about this part of the South to be unfair." But not really.

On arrival he was perturbed to find a gun show in this town he thought peopled by "resentful Bible thumpers whose commitment to the U.S. Constitution extended only to the Second Amendment and the establishment clause of the First." MacArthur was careful at all times to qualify his bigotry and strike an ironic pose. Actually all he was doing was peppering his prose with liberal use of the word "irony," a tactic that Rocker should adopt for his next interview: "Speaking ironically, I don't like foreigners and fags."

Shall we now send MacArthur in for psychiatric counseling? Suspend him from his position at *Harpers*? Alas, MacArthur's two-minute hate directed at rural Tennesseans has so far gone unpunished. Why the disparity in treatment between the Brave's relief pitcher and the publisher of

Harpers? They both expressed prejudice against people based on place of birth: Rocker, foreigners; MacArthur, Southerners. They both used offensive terms: Rocker, "queer"; MacArthur, "Bible thumper." The similarities end there, and the differences favor Rocker. He had at least the minimal excuse of provocation by battery-throwing New York Mets fans. But what did the good people of Kingsport, Tennessee ever do to MacArthur, other than peacefully put on a gun show in his presence and have the audacity to boast of the celebrity visits of Richard Petty and Tammy Wynette instead of Alec Baldwin and Barbara Streisand?

Rocker didn't dress up his statements as anything other than his own opinion. Nobody would even have known what he thinks had a reporter not asked him and then printed the results. MacArthur, on the other hand, published his thoughts as a column in a prominent newspaper, the purpose of which is to bring other people around to his way of thinking. Nor did Rocker blame New Yorkers for the problems people confront in Macon or Atlanta. The whole point of MacArthur's column was to suggest that it is the fault of recalcitrant gun-toting Southerners that New Yorkers go around shooting each other with reckless abandon.

He offered the South a grand compromise. He would graciously allow us to keep — along with our run-down double-wide trailers and Loretta Lynn eight-tracks — all the long guns (including assault rifles) we want and leave handguns only in the possession of trusted professionals like the New York City police.

This tripe would be easier to take coming from someone not representing our country's Cultural Capital. Let's face it. New York City has a thug for a mayor, cops whose tactics would embarrass Bull Connor and a populace that gleefully engages in one riot after another. One would think that the leading citizens of that town would have enough to worry about in their own backyard.

In the future, before risking the scary backwoods of East Tennessee and other benighted burghs, MacArthur should heed the advice on a bumper sticker I saw recently, ironically at a gun show. It said, "Happiness is a North Bound Yankee." Amen.

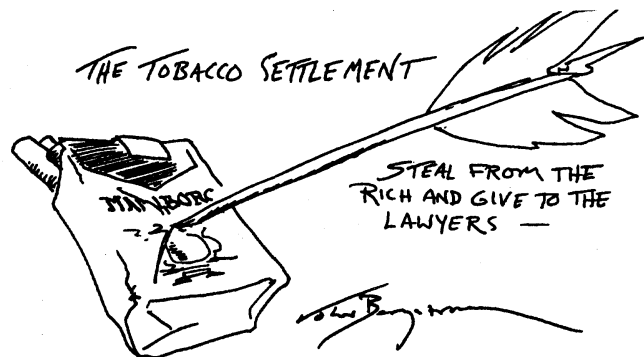
— Clark Stooksbury

Investigations — A special federal commission ruled that the federal government is not responsible for the deaths of 80 people at Waco, not responsible for the gay-bashing murder of a soldier in his Ft. Campbell barracks, and indeed not responsible for anything, ever.

— David Boaz

The Solo Concerto — Social isolation, captured by Robert Putnam's phrase "bowling alone," is the latest quality-of-life problem. Putnam is concerned that people just don't do things together the way they used to. There is something genuine to this concern, but the downside of doing things alone can be overstated.

I don't know much about bowling but I do enjoy listening to classical music. Not too long ago, if I wanted to hear genuinely beautiful music I had to stand in line for tickets (or pay extra-high Ticketmaster prices) in order to attend a concert on a day and time not of my choosing, in order to get a chance to hear several selections, some of which I might not care for. Once I arrived at the concert hall I might be tired and fidgety, my neighbors might be coughing, and the



orchestra might be having a mediocre night.

Today, however, I choose from hundreds of exquisitely rendered concert selections on my CDs — and I can run out and buy another CD at almost any time. I can sit and listen in comfort in my home, or in the acoustically friendly space of my automobile. Beethoven's Fifth while driving to work — what an alternative to NPR!

— Jane S. Shaw

May I take your spontaneous order, please?

— To Joseph Schumpeter, good economics was the art of “seeing the one in the many and the many in the one.” This is a simple enough insight, so it's remarkable that no one at *The Economist* has picked up on it.

Under the heading “Regulating the Internet,” a recent column explored the “myth” that the cause of the Internet's thriving dynamism is its anarchic, regulation-free environment. “In fact,” it explains, “cyberspace is highly organized and even regulated, and not just for technical standards.”

The “regulations” that *The Economist* is talking about are simply the social norms of the Internet community — standards set by private-sector bodies governing everything from domain-names to communication protocols. After presenting a laundry list of problems faced by these bodies, *The Economist* essentially concludes that it's just a matter of time before Congress shackles the Internet like a public utility.

The Economist has no trouble finding a role for state intervention on the Internet. But what's lost on them is the “many in the one”: the fact that the emerging privately-produced “law” of cyberspace is a well-functioning system of “private law,” something few mainstream economists talk about.

Just because Econ. 101 textbooks claim that government “defines the rules of the game” doesn't make it true. In fact, this government-as-the-source-of-law dogma makes it hard for otherwise good economists to escape their mental box long enough to appreciate informal law.

Repeated interactions and private property rights make “law and order” a good that markets can supply in some situations. The Internet happens to be one of these cases. The resulting law is a bottom-up spontaneous order that can't be captured by special interests or manipulated for political ends. Non-state legal systems are voluntary, dynamic and are consistent with individual rights and decentralized power — a pretty good mix of attributes.

Spontaneous orders make for good law, and good economics. Shouldn't someone explain this to *The Economist*?

— Andrew Chamberlain

Liberty in the court — It was a pretty good year for the Supreme Court. In several high-profile cases the Court continued its recent practice, begun in 1995 in the *Lopez* case, of striking down federal laws that exceed Congress' powers under the Constitution. Notably, in two cases in which the Cato Institute's Center for Constitutional Studies filed *amicus curiae* briefs, it struck down part of the Violence Against Women Act and a federal arson law, ruling in each case that Congress had intruded into areas of state authority. It wasn't simply a state's-rights Court, however; the Court unanimously struck down a Massachusetts law imposing sanctions on Burma, ruling that in that instance the state had unconstitutionally intruded into federal territory. In another crucial case in which Cato's center filed a brief,

the Court ruled 5–4 that the Boy Scouts of America could exclude gay scout leaders because opposition to homosexuality is part of the group's expressive message. The good news is that a private, voluntary, nonprofit organization was allowed to make its own rules; the bad news is that it was only allowed to do so *because* it is an organization with a strong moral message, and that four members of the Supreme Court of the United States thought that even that decision gave too much freedom to private organizations.

Some journalists had trouble understanding the Court's actions in 1999–2000; they wrote that the Court was mostly conservative, but with some striking exceptions on criminal justice and sexually explicit television. Such reporters would have done well to look at a report issued by the Institute for Justice on the last day of the term. The Institute found that “the Court has been quite reliable in protecting individual liberties. Out of 45 cases examined [from 1992 to 2000], 35 (or 78 percent) resulted in a pro-liberty decision. . . . The pro-liberty perspective of the Court applies to a wide range of issues. It has, for example, generally resisted attempts by government to abridge free speech, interfere with private property rights, and classify Americans on the basis of race.” The Institute found that Justice Clarence Thomas had the best record, voting for individual liberty 87 percent of the time. He was closely followed by Anthony Kennedy (who had ranked first in an earlier Institute analysis) and Antonin Scalia. Justices Stephen Breyer and John Paul Stevens brought up the rear, finding in favor of government power about two-thirds of the time. Many libertarians may argue that if individual liberty rests on a slim 5–4 majority in the Supreme Court, that is a strong case for voting for a Republican president. Indeed, recalling the infamous Louisiana gubernatorial battle between the ethically challenged Edwin Edwards and KKK leader David Duke, I'm tempted to print bumper stickers reading “Vote for the Pinhead; it's important.”

In the last few weeks, liberty seems to have fared less well in the lower courts. Various courts have recently ruled that a government shooter at Ruby Ridge couldn't even be tried (despite Judge Alex Kozinski's eloquent dissent printed in last month's *Liberty*), that federal agents were not responsible for 80 deaths at Waco, and that tobacco manufacturers must pay \$145 billion to adults who for years and years bought products containing warnings that “this product will kill you.” It's enough to make you pray for the health of the Supreme Court justices.

— David Boaz

Fireworks and Red Meat — The European Vegetarian group VIVA wants an anti-meat commercial to run prior to screenings of *Chicken Run*, a clay-animated feature about a group of chickens determined to escape the dinner table. Never before in the history of the earth has a species been so uncomfortable with their place on the food chain as the *Homo sapiens*. Self-consciousness has allowed our species to adapt to any environment and survive any adversity, but this gift of Nature is a curse to those who are uncomfortable with our dominance of the earth. Two and a half million years ago, the world entered into the last Ice Age, a time of great necessity, a spin of Darwin's roulette wheel. The species *Homo habilis* walked the earth. When the

weather got cold and food became scarce, they learned to make tools and hunt. They survived not because they were able to find a cache of canned beans abandoned by herbivores, but by consuming those animals less quick-witted than themselves. A couple million years later, *Homo sapiens* emerged.

The North American continent was settled by *Homo sapiens* migrating down its western coast, consuming one endangered species after another. The settling of this hemisphere was precipitated by the prospect of an all-you-can-eat mammoth buffet. Many creatures like the sabertooth tiger and the giant sloth never saw the Ice Age end. It is no coincidence that every modern species has an innate fear of Man. When the glaciers receded and the carnage ceased, only two types of beasts were left: Humans and animals afraid of them.

I personally have much respect for the sacrifices of my ancestors, and I refuse to dishonor them by handing over our place in the food chain. So I encourage you to enjoy your meat without guilt. It is not only healthy and natural, but your birthright. It is more than proper to celebrate Independence Day grilling meat in the backyard. Not only are we paying tribute to those brave men that signed the Declaration of Independence, and delivered us from tyranny; we also celebrate our original founding fathers who fought an ancient war, a war of much greater consequence.

— Tim Slagle

And Speaking of Darwin — According to an AP article by Anna Dolgov, the scrap metal industry in poverty-stricken Russia has started a new crime wave. The infrastructure is often crippled by missing railroad parts and phone lines. In fact, 544 people were electrocuted last year trying to steal high-tension copper cable. What a marvelous study of Social Darwinism: an omnipotent Nanny State breeds people incapable of surviving outside of a totalitarian regime.

— Tim Slagle

National Missile Offense — The failure of the latest national missile defense (NMD) test has not dissuaded the GOP from continuing to tout the program. On July 13th, the Senate authorized \$1.9 billion in increased funding for NMD development.

On the surface, the idea of an NMD system is quite appealing. For one thing, it would begin to undercut the insane logic of Mutually Assured Destruction which has undergirded U.S. strategic policy for over 40 years. The only legitimate, constitutional rationale for the Pentagon is, as our national charter puts it, to "provide for the common defense." Surely shielding the American homeland from nuclear annihilation fits under that rubric. Even as reliable a noninterventionist as Harry Browne laments on his Web site that "we are still completely vulnerable to the whims of any two-bit dictator who can get his hands on a nuclear missile." (Though, as his 1996 book *Why Government Doesn't Work* makes clear, Browne does not support giving the Pentagon money to develop the system.) But as with any government enterprise, a closer look at NMD provides ample reasons for caution. NMD might end up at best an enormous, ineffectual boondoggle, or at worst, a dangerously destabilizing initiative.

First, despite the expenditure of over \$60 billion on the

development of NMD technology, it is far from clear that NMD is technologically feasible. Most recently, the Pentagon's chief weapons tester conceded that missile defense tests conducted thus far have "significant limitations" given that the Pentagon knows the type of rocket launching the target as well as the nature of the target; where the missile is coming from, and when it is being launched.

Second, given new developments in the technology of terror, even a functioning NMD system might be a sort of 21st century Maginot Line: providing a false sense of security, but easily bypassed. From the perspective of a "rogue state" or terrorist group, the ballistic missile is not the most logical delivery system for chemical, biological or nuclear weapons of mass destruction. An attack on the American homeland may be more likely to come by way of a destructive device smuggled in across the border. If that's the case, then, as David C. Morrison, former national security correspondent for the *National Journal* put it, "missile defense is a job for U.S. Customs, not the Pentagon."

But most disturbing of all is the fact that many of NMD's most vocal proponents view it as a sort of offensive weapon — a means of perpetuating America's role as global policeman. In a recent column, George Will argued that we desperately need a missile shield so that the U.S. can defend Taiwan, Kuwait and South Korea without risking nuclear retaliation. Robert Kagan of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and *The Weekly Standard* states the perceived danger plainly: "nothing is more likely to push the United States toward an isolationist foreign policy than our increasing vulnerability to missile attack."

But given that America's role as armed international busybody is a major source of terrorist and rogue state enmity toward the U.S., NMD may exacerbate the very problem it seeks to solve. If the existence of a missile shield further emboldens America's bellicose foreign policy establishment, Americans could reap the rewards in the form of chemical, biological or nuclear attacks on the homeland, whether by way of a ballistic missile that penetrates a porous NMD shield, or via a low-tech delivery system. For that reason alone, "whatever it is, I'm against it" remains the sensible policy as applied to missile defense.

— Gene Healy

Usurping legislation — The July 5, 2000 *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* gleefully reports that Medicare is now directed to cover routine care costs in clinical trials. After years of attempting to get legislation through Congress to accomplish that, Clinton has, with a stroke of the pen, written an executive order that does just that. Senator Jay Rockefeller, one of the congresscommies who worked to get the legislation passed, calls the executive order the victory of "an enormous legislative battle." Of course, that is exactly what it is not, since the executive order is not legislation at all.

— Sandy Shaw

Medicine and markets — Have you been to your local hospital lately? If it's like ours, the medical office building attached to it is looking more and more like a mall. The otolaryngologist has a growing cosmetic surgery business (he is board-certified in both fields) and has started up a skin care business across the hall that rivals an Elizabeth Arden spa. The ophthalmologist has teamed with the opti-

cian to provide trendy sunglasses and fashion-colored contact lenses. (No laser vision correction yet; for that you go to a clinic in Canada that offers \$1,000 specials with performance guarantees.) And if you can't find the orthopedic doctors, that's because they're marketing their services at places like Gold's Gym.

Entrepreneurial doctors, feeling squeezed by insurance companies and Medicare reimbursements, realize something that others may not have grasped: medical care as it is usually viewed (curing serious injuries and diseases) is only part of a broad continuum of goods and services. As our society grows wealthier (and older), Americans want more of these goods and services and are willing to pay for them. Doctors, who do not resemble sheep lining up to be shorn, are going to respond to that market. Whether those doctors will be around when we need resuscitation from a heart attack or surgery for cancer is another question. — Jane S. Shaw

Did they find the gene for government incompetence? —

The announcement that scientists have completed the first "rough map" of the human genetic material, decoding the 3 billion chemical "letters" in human DNA, is a major scientific milestone. Perhaps just as important, in a story many seem to have missed or downplayed, it might provide a model for future scientific projects or at least a reminder of how things get done in the real world. I'll reserve judgment on whether it's the biggest thing since the moon landing. But it will make a huge difference in health care when the genes that make people susceptible to cancer, AIDS, Parkinson's or Alzheimer's are more fully understood. The hidden lesson is the importance of the private sector in Big Science.

Competition works to spur achievement. And maybe it wouldn't be a bad idea to get government out of the way and let private-sector organizations compete to do the best job. The Human Genome Project began some ten years ago as a cooperative venture among government science centers and universities around the world with the then-ambitious goal of mapping the entire human genome by 2005. In 1998 one of the scientists, John Craig Venter of the Institute for Genomic Research in Maryland, proposed contracting some of the work to a private venture. He got mostly icy stares and barely veiled hostility. So he formed a joint venture with Perkin-Elmer, which made the equipment used to analyze DNA, and announced that the new company, Celera Genomics, would complete the entire mapping project in three years, at a total cost of \$200 to \$250 million (compared to \$200 million a year the government project cost). Government spokesmen downplayed the competition, but when it became clear that the private venture was going to finish the project quicker and cheaper than the government, it merged its efforts.

Maybe it would be better if they kept competing.

— Alan Bock

Hotel Mir — An extremely important story has received very little press coverage. MirCorp, an Amsterdam-based company, is planning to pay the Russian Space Agency to keep the Mir Space Station in orbit. Their intention is to turn it into a hotel for anyone who has the desire to go into space and the tens of millions of dollars needed to

pay for the trip. They already have at least one candidate lined up for the trip.

NASA has been critical of these efforts; they're concerned that Mir is too dangerous for tourists, and, more importantly, that the efforts to keep Mir aloft will distract the Russians from their participation in the International Space Station. NASA itself has done little in the past decade to advance space exploration and colonization — the International Space Station has a very vaguely defined mission, is billions of dollars overbudget and more than a decade late (I remember predictions that it would be complete by 1993). It's been thirty years since NASA sent anyone to the moon, and NASA hasn't even set a date for its manned Mars mission.

If NASA doesn't want to take the lead in space colonization, it should at least stay out of the way of someone who does.

— John Haywood

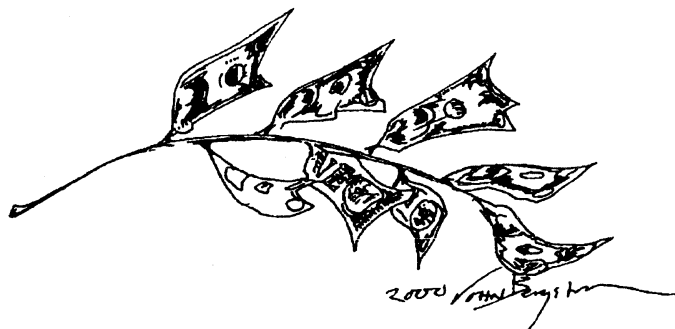
Disk error — Building on its triumph in the Microsoft antitrust suit, the administration has devised a comprehensive plan to restructure the entire U.S. computing industry so as to enhance yet further its efficiency and openness. Unfortunately, the files containing the plan are on two hard drives that unaccountably have been misplaced.

— Loren Lomasky

Million Mome March — Not even in the heyday of the Ku Klux Klan did demonstrations against civil rights enjoy so much enthusiastic and credulous media puffery as is currently enjoyed by the political operatives in charge of the "Million Mom March."

The media ignored the fact that the "Million Mom March" has all the genuine grassroots nature of a "spontaneous" demonstration in Havana in honor of Fidel Castro's birthday. Far from being a grassroots organization, the "Million Mom March" is merely a subsidiary of the Bell Campaign, a California gun prohibition organization funded mostly by George Soros.

The MMM's fraudulent claim to have 815,000 people in attendance at their rally was treated seriously by the Old Media, but quickly debunked in *Internet Time* by Web pictures showing that the crowd was about 75,000. The Old Media also ignored where the name "Million Mom March" had come from. The MMM organizers were apparently so inspired by Rev. Farrakhan's "Million Man March" that they decided to imitate the name of a rally organized by a racist, anti-Semitic hater who believes that he has traveled on a spaceship from Orion. The 2000 version of the MMM



OLIVE BRANCH —

was just as meanspirited, and as disconnected from reality, as was Farrakhan's original event. And, fortunately, neither rally came close to attracting a million people. Real mothers, like real men, aren't inspired by deluded bigots who hate the Constitution.

— David Kopel

Surviving gun hysteria — Following the Columbine High School murders, the nation's gun prohibition groups declared Colorado "ground zero" and set out to use Columbine as a pretext for the most widespread assault on Second Amendment rights in Colorado history. The gun ban groups received a considerable boost in the summer of 1999, when Republican Governor Bill Owens — whose 10,000 vote victory in 1998 never would have happened without major NRA support — announced his own anti-gun program. When the legislature convened in January 2000, Governor Owens began twisting arms very hard for his anti-gun package. Veteran lobbyists could not recall any governor making so many behind-the-scenes threats to members of his own party.

What was the result? When the legislature went home in mid-May, the Owens agenda was in ruins — except for items which had been endorsed by most gun rights groups. In addition, the two major new laws protecting Second Amendment rights were enacted.

Item one on the Governor's agenda was to have the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, rather than the FBI, do the instant background check on retail gun sales, which is required by federal law. This passed, as did a measure to open up juvenile records for background checks.

So did a bill to outlaw giving long guns to minors without parental consent. This was the one bill that was relevant to Columbine. The two murderers had obtained three long guns from Robyn Anderson, an 18-year-old student who acted as their gun moll.

Pro-rights groups also supported the successful enactment of a measure to prohibit "straw purchases" — when one person buys a firearm as a "strawman" for a person who is legally ineligible to possess a firearm.

Finally, most Second Amendment activists endorsed legislation to strengthen existing law against giving handguns to juveniles. (The law contains exceptions for sports, home defense, etc.)

That most of Colorado's Second Amendment community supported the above laws puts the lie to the claim that

Second Amendment defenders are totally opposed to any reasonable form of gun control. But the Second Amendment groups, including the NRA, the Colorado State Shooting Association, and the Firearms Coalition of Colorado remained strongly opposed to legislation to take rights away from law-abiding people.

Defeated were measures to ban handgun purchases or possession by people 18–20 years old, to ban people from carrying licensed concealed handguns on school property, to ban graduate students from possessing firearms in their school-owned apartments, to mandate "safe storage" (burglar protection); to restrict so-called "assault weapons."

The biggest battle was over Governor Owens' demand for government control, in the form of background checks, for gun sales by people who are not in the business of selling firearms, whenever those small-scale private sales take place at a gun show. The gun show bill passed the House Judiciary Committee by a single vote, and then was defeated by a single vote in the House Appropriations Committee.

After this Second Amendment victory, the Sunday edition of the *Rocky Mountain News* ran a color cartoon showing an NRA flag flying over the state capitol.

Legislation to prohibit most forms of city or county gun control, and legislation to set up a state-wide system of concealed handgun licensing had the votes to pass both the House and the Senate, but was stymied by being assigned to the one committee in the Senate that had a 4–4 deadlock on gun issues.

Three other reform measures did pass both houses, though, and ended up on the Governor's desk. The first bill is the strongest law in the country to outlaw frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers. Unlike the reform laws in approximately two dozen other states, the Colorado law prohibits private lawsuits, as well as government lawsuits.

The second bill guaranteed the right of automobile drivers to carry handguns for protection (no permit needed) on any trip which crosses a city or county border. This bill was aimed at Denver property confiscation law which had been used to seize cars and guns from people traveling through Denver. The final bill exempted the names of concealed handgun permit holders from the state's Open Records law.

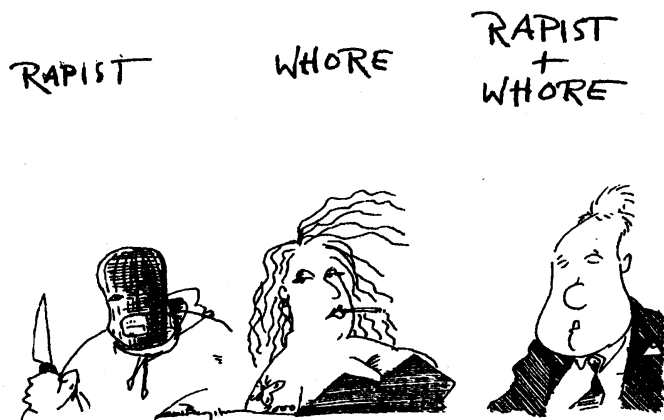
Governor Owens signed the tort reform and automobile bills, but vetoed the privacy bill.

Colorado really was ground zero. If anti-gun-rights bills had passed in Colorado, the Congressional anti-gun package which almost passed in the summer of 1999 would have become law.

The anti-gun lobbies are indignant that, the year after the Columbine murders, the Colorado legislature refused to pass anti-gun laws that had nothing to do with Columbine. Sometimes the good guys really do win.

— David Kopel

Slouching Towards Equality — On July 2nd, the Americans with Disabilities Act celebrated its 10th anniversary. In its ten years of existence, we've seen it applied to everything from professional sports to strip clubs. It has been abused by fat people to get first-class seats at coach prices and drunks that didn't want to get fired — and made the Federal Government appear petty and silly. In deference to those who claim the Libertarian Revolution will never start until things get a whole lot worse, I applaud the ADA for its



contributions to Liberty, Comedy and an Orwellian Society.

— Tim Slagle

Death tax, R.I.P. — More proof that good ideas really can win in the long run comes from the summer votes of both the U.S. House and Senate — with considerable Democratic support — to abolish the federal estate tax. For most of the 20th century, the estate tax was even more unchallengeable than Social Security. Confiscating over half the property of successful people, to prevent them from giving the property to their family, was regarded by both the right and the left as an important way of guaranteeing "fairness."

Even after the Reagan Revolution of 1980, the best that could be done was to reduce the estate tax rate. Now, the death tax is on its deathbed, saved only by a Clinton veto. Should George Bush win the Presidential election, the tax will almost certainly be abolished. Not lowered, abolished. The estate tax falls mostly on the wealthy, and so was protected throughout the twentieth century by the politics of envy. That even a large number of Congressional Democrats are now rejecting the mean-spirited politics of confiscation and jealousy is one reason to hope that politics in the 21st century are starting to return to the principles of America's founding.

— David Kopel

The age of consent — A *Washington Post* headline reads, "Shareholders Back AOL Pact/Time Warner Deal Needs Agency Consent." In the beginning we Americans declared that governments derive their powers — "their just powers," that is — "from the consent of the governed." Now some people seem to take it for granted that Americans need "agency consent" — that is, the approval of the unelected bureaucrats at the Federal Communications Commission, and the unelected bureaucrats at the Federal Trade Commission, and indeed the unelected bureaucrats of the European Union — before they can merge two businesses.

— David Boaz

The "cost" of lower taxes — I have a nit to pick — maybe it's more than just a nit — with most of my journalistic colleagues. Every news story I read about the repeal of the inheritance tax referred to how much the measure would "cost" the government. Not a single one referred to how much money would be "returned to taxpayers," or, even more accurately, "left in the hands of those who earned it." Even aside from the fact that with the federal government expected to run a "surplus" of \$220 billion this fiscal year — a term that might more accurately be rendered as "tax overpayment" — shedding tears over the 10-year phase-out of a tax expected to bring in a mere \$23 billion this year seems odd.

This terminology is far from neutral or objective. The word "cost" implies a loss to society at large, when in fact a tax cut is the prevention of a transfer from an earner to the government. Prattling on about the "cost" of a tax cut reflects the assumption that it is more socially beneficial for the government to have money than for private citizens to have it, that for the government not to seize some money some time in the future that it had expected to be able to seize exacts a price from society at large. This is not only an ideological position, it is a pernicious position. Most journalists, how-

ever, would not even recognize it as a position at all.

Why do journalists so routinely use words in purportedly objective news stories that bolster the cause of larger government? Twenty years in the business and I still don't know. — Alan Bock

Messing with Texas — Several years ago, the Smithsonian Institution took a lot of flack for its Enola Gay exhibit, which blamed the 1941–1945 War in the Pacific on American racism and imperialism.

While public outcry forced the Smithsonian to change the Enola Gay exhibition, the Smithsonian's hate-America-first work continues in a quieter way.

Consider the Smithsonian's two-CD set, *Moving West Songs* — a collection of American folk songs from the 19th century. The song selection itself is fine, and so are the performances. But the narration and the liner notes are not.

For example, my favorite song on the album is the *Texas War Cry*. It's an inspiring song of freedom — even for a Coloradan like me, for whom disliking Texans is one of the few legally-sanctioned forms of prejudice. The song is sung to the tune of the *Star Spangled Banner*:

Oh Texans rouse hill and dale with your cry.
No longer delay, for the bold foe advances.
The banners of Mexico tauntingly fly,
And the valleys are lit with the gleam of their lances.
With justice our shield, rush forth to the field.
And stand with your posts, till our foes fly or yield.
For the bright star of Texas shall never grow dim,
While her soil boasts a son to raise rifle or limb.
Rush forth to the lines, these hirelings to meet.
Our lives and our homes, we will yield unto no man.
But death on our free soil we'll willingly meet,
Ere our free-templed soil, by the feet of the foe men.
Grasp rifle and blade with hearts undismayed,

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And swear by the temple brave Houston has made,
That the bright star of Texas shall never be dim,
While her soil boasts a son to raise rifle or limb.

But the Smithsonian is so distressed by the lyrics that it precedes the song with narration which blames the Texan Revolution exclusively on the fact that many Texans "did not take their Mexican citizenship seriously." In fact, the primary cause of the Texan Revolution was that the Mexican dictatorship was systematically obliterating the right to self-government which the Mexican government had guaranteed to Texan settlers, as well as other rights guaranteed to all Mexicans by the 1824 Mexican Constitution. When Stephen F. Austin petitioned for redress of grievances, the Mexican government threw him into solitary confinement in a dungeon for fifteen months, and then kept him on a ball and chain for six more months.

On April 21, 1836, the Texan army won the decisive battle in Texas' war of independence against Mexico at San Jacinto. The Alamo siege, six weeks earlier, had delayed the Mexican dictator, General Santa Anna, and had provided crucial time for Sam Houston to rally the Texan people. Santa Anna's 1,500 men were "the flower of the Mexican army," according to historian William J. Jackman. The Texan army numbered only about half that. But the Texans launched a surprise evening attack on Santa Anna's fortified positions. As the Texans rushed into battle, they yelled "Remember the Alamo!" and "Remember Goliad!" (Goliad was a site where Santa Anna had murdered 280 American prisoners.) As the Texans advanced with their rifles and Bowie knives, a single

The death of Mexican soldiers in combat makes the Smithsonian cry, but they shed no tears for the Texas prisoners of war murdered in cold blood at Goliad, or for the brave defenders of the Alamo — who unlike the poor Mexican soldiers, were fighting for liberty.

fife and a single drum played the love song "Will You Come to the Bower?"

In the first hour of battle, the Texans killed 600 Mexicans and captured 200 more. Within a day, all the rest of the Mexican army, including Santa Anna himself, had been captured. Texan casualties were six dead and 30 wounded.

The Mexican standing army was crushed, and, although Mexico refused formally to recognize Texan independence, the dictatorship gave up trying to conquer Texas.

A wonderful day in the history of free men? The Smithsonian bemoans San Jacinto as "a tragic slaughter." The death of Mexican soldiers in combat makes the Smithsonian cry, but they shed no tears for the Texas prisoners of war murdered in cold blood at Goliad, or for the brave defenders of the Alamo — who unlike the poor Mexican soldiers, were fighting for liberty. The Battle of San Jacinto deserves a place of high honor among the greatest victories of freedom over tyranny, such as Normandy, Inchon and

Saratoga. And the Alamo deserves its own place of honor among great battles such as Thermopylae, where freedom warriors fought to last man, and by their ultimate sacrifice saved their people's liberty.

What a disgrace that our tax dollars are wasted to produce the anti-American, anti-freedom lies of the Smithsonian Institution.

— David Kopel

Come back soon (or else) — One of the evils of regulation is that regulated industries all eventually become arms of the Big Brother State. We've seen it happen in banking. Now it seems to be infecting airlines as well. Soon you won't be able to get there from here.

Heading home to Costa Rica recently at the end of a trip to the Land of the Free, I showed up at the American Airlines desk to pick up a boarding pass on my electronic ticket.

"That's funny," the agent said, "I can't seem to find the return segment of your flight."

"This is the return segment," I said helpfully. "I live in Costa Rica."

"You live in Costa Rica?" She read her computer terminal for a bit. "Do you have some document that shows you live in Costa Rica?"

"No," I said, but made a mental note to take a picture of my house sometime, and have it notarized by the Ministry of Jesus.

She read some more. "Do you have a visa?" she asked.

"Nope. Don't need one."

"I'm just going by what it says in the computer," she apologized. I shrugged.

She punched and probed, and after a while called over a supervisor. "He doesn't have a return ticket. He says he lives in Costa Rica." The supervisor didn't look at me. He also looked to see what it said in the computer.

"Do you have a tourist card?" they finally asked.

"No, don't need one."

"But you are only allowed to stay in Costa Rica for 90 days. So how can you be living there? You have to have a return ticket."

Now it was my turn to be puzzled. What business was all this of American Airlines? Who was to say I wasn't going on to Panama in another week? And if I was indeed returning to the U.S., who said I had to book my return flight through American Airlines? However, nice guy that I am, I skipped over these considerations and told them the simple truth:

"I'm too restless to stay anywhere for 90 days. So it's not a problem."

The supervisor whispered: "See if he has a security passport." They punched buttons in the computer for a while, and eventually satisfied themselves I didn't have a security passport (whatever that was).

They looked at me. "I don't care," I said. "Book me a return flight 90 days from now." While the agent did this I pointed out: "You realize why you're just wasting your own time, don't you? I'm simply going to change the reservation later."

Confession time on her part. "Well, if there is not a return flight booked, we get fined."

"You get fined by whom?" I asked.

"By the government." I pondered this. Did Costa Rica require a return ticket as a condition for landing rights, to

avoid being buried in an immigrant wave of gringos?

"By which government?" I asked. "The Costa Rican government or the U.S. government?"

"The U.S. government," she said.

So there you have it: American Airline administers a non-existent U.S. law that you can't go to Costa Rica without a return ticket. I didn't bother to further point out how idiotic this was, nor did I inquire as to the reasons for the new rule. I speculated that it had something to do with the lack of an extradition agreement between the U.S. and Costa Rica. After all, Janet Reno had come down recently and, when she was not sleeping or shaking in public, threatened all the expatriate Americans that she was going to get them.

So I flew home to Costa Rica, and promptly cancelled my "return" flight to the U.S. After all, I'll soon be out of here again, on my way to Brazil to investigate the national security implications of the demise of the thong bikini. And I won't be flying American Airlines.

—Orlin Grabbe

The curse of Reagan — Ronald Reagan's greatest failing as an executive was probably his personnel selection. As governor of California, when he had the opportunity to name a new lieutenant governor — a job that can put a politician on the road to the governorship, the Senate, or even the White House — he chose an undistinguished congressman whom he had met once at a reception. As president, he promised to abolish the federal Department of Education, then named a career educator as Secretary of Education. Even the secretary said he was surprised to get such an appointment. And most notoriously, of course, his poor decision in 1980 gave the country four years of President George Bush. One might even say it was Reagan's selection of Bush that gave us President Clinton. And now, in some real-life *Friday the 13th Part III*, Reagan's hurried decision in July of 1980 may well give us yet another George Bush presidency. (I trust no one thinks the pinhead, as *Atlantic Monthly* editor Michael Kelly calls him, would be a candidate for president if his father had not been president.) I do think we owe Reagan our thanks for many things, but twelve years and counting of disastrous presidents must be weighed in the Reagan balance sheet.

—David Boaz

Weakheart — In the climactic scene of the film *Braveheart*, Scottish warrior William Wallace (played by Mel Gibson), is being tortured to death by the English. The executioner asks if he has any last words, hoping that he will beg for mercy and acknowledge the sovereignty of King Edward of England. With his dying breath Wallace shouts, "Freedom!" *Braveheart* was a great commercial success. Of course, it's easy to cheer for a hero who lived far away and long ago. We don't necessarily identify with his heroic qualities, but we feel an emotional rush from the thrilling image.

But what if the story took place in present-day America? How would the screenplay be written, and how would the film be cast?

To start with, we would have to get rid of Mel Gibson. He is just too gritty, too muscular, and definitely too much of a rebel. He exudes an unashamed disrespect for authority and a blatant disregard for rules. If he were a swimmer, he would swim against the current. Such a person is not at all

suitable to portray a modern American.

Then, we would choose someone who's classically handsome, but has a softer, more gentle way about him. His face would be smooth, with none of the wrinkles that might suggest he'd ever suffered, struggled, or had a deep thought. He would have spent his days looking only at things nearby, so there would be no crow's-feet around the eyes from squinting to see into the far distance. His skin would show a uniform tan — tan arms and a pale chest from outdoor work would never do. The muscles would be well rounded from a fitness program, not stringy and lumpy from actual hard work. Of course, there would be no scars, which might suggest that this man believed in anything enough to fight for it.

The star would be smooth in dealing with others. He would have no strong beliefs, so there would be no reason for arguments — much less fights. In the unlikely event a dispute arose, he would not become upset, regardless of the reason; he had attended anger-management workshops. Without God at the center of his universe, he himself would be the center. Most people would not see this as narcissism, because they have a similar approach to life.

He would have many acquaintances and business associates but few close friends. He would have been married and divorced at least twice, and might have fathered children by other women. Lasting commitments were not his "thing." Besides, he knows that one does not advance his career by displeasing those in authority, or by sticking by friends who do so.

Having replaced the star, we would now update the screenplay. The story would be set in modern-day America, because studio executives would correctly suspect that most of the potential audience would have learned little of past times or other places in public school, and would therefore have difficulty relating to anyone unlike themselves. True, they might have had a smattering of "multicultural" curriculum, but it would probably not have included actual knowledge of other cultures.

The basic theme of an oppressive ruler might be retained, but in the guise of a ruthless corporate executive. Naturally, the relation of the hero to the executive would not be one of

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rebellion, which would be viewed as bad for his career and therefore, unbelievable. There could be friction, but in the end the conflict would be resolved amicably. The hero might

regain the favor of the executive by helping him stab associates in the back — figuratively, of course.

The story would end with the hero celebrating his

Left

Right

| <u>Far Left</u> | <u>Left</u> | <u>Left Liberal</u> | <u>Moderate Liberal</u> | <u>Libertarian</u> | <u>Moderate Conservative</u> | <u>Conservative</u> | <u>Right</u> | <u>Far Right</u> |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Noam Chomsky | Hillary Clinton | Al Gore | Bill Clinton | Gov. Gary Johnson | Bob Dole | Ronald Reagan | Pat Buchanan | David Duke |
| Jane Fonda Hayden | Jane Fonda Turner | Eleanor Clift | Jane Fonda Vadim | Jesse Ventura | Jane Fonda Fonda | Rush Limbaugh | G. Gordon Liddy | Jared Taylor |
| Rep. Bernie Sanders | Sen. Paul Wellstone | Sen. Ted Kennedy | Sen. Tom Daschle | Rep. Ron Paul | President George Bush | Newt Gingrich | Gary Bauer | Lou Sheldon |
| Catharine MacKinnon | Patricia Ireland | Donna Shalala | Geraldine Ferraro | Ayn Rand | Liddy Dole | Lynne Cheney | Phyllis Schlafly | Marge Schott |
| <i>Z Magazine</i> | <i>The Nation</i> | <i>New York Times</i> | <i>The New Republic</i> | <i>Reason</i> | <i>The Economist</i> | <i>National Review</i> | <i>Human Events</i> | <i>Middle Amer. News</i> |
| <i>Covert Action</i> | <i>The Village Voice</i> | <i>Washington Post</i> | <i>WSJ Features</i> | <i>Orange County Register</i> | <i>Readers' Digest</i> | <i>WSJ Editorials</i> | <i>Chronicles</i> | <i>American Renaissance</i> |
| Pacifica Radio | NPR | CNN | ABC, CBS, NBC | John Stossel | Fox | Firing Line | Most talk radio | Radio Free Idaho |
| Homer's mother | Lisa Simpson | Mayor Quimby | Marge Simpson | Apu | Homer Simpson | Mr. Burns | Ned Flanders | Sideshow Bob |
| Rev. Communist Party | Congr. Black Caucus | Democratic Party | Dem. Leadership Council | Libertarian Party | American Reform Party | GOP | U.S. Tax-payers Party | Freemen |
| Greenpeace | Both NEAs | Urban Institute | Brookings Institute | Cato Institute | Hoover Institution | Heritage Foundation | Rockford Institute | John Birch Society |
| Campus Org. Committee | MacArthur Genius Awards | Ford Foundation | Carnegie Endowment | Liberty Fund | Nixon Library | Bradley Foundation | Von Mises Institute | Liberty Lobby |
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| Order of Ché | National Book Award | Pulitzer Prize | Humanitas Awards | H.L. Mencken Award | 4H Club Badge | Templeton Prize | Edmund Burke Award | Burning Cross |
| Louis Farrakhan | Toni Morrison | Spike Lee | William Raspberry | Walter Williams | Shelby Steele | Ward Connerly | Reggie White | Louis Farrakhan |

Radicals of the center — Last year the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, headed by David Horowitz, launched a campaign to identify “the left” in American politics. The Center’s complaint was that the major media often identify conservatives, libertarians, archconservatives, right-wingers, and so on in discussing politicians and interest groups, but few people and organizations are ever identified as liberals or leftists. Horowitz set out to restore honesty in political labeling. The Center published ads in political-affairs magazines showing a spectrum of groups and individuals on both left and right.

Oddly, however, the ads omitted libertarians entirely. Recognizing this, the Center headlined its ad in *Reason* “Our Libertarian Friends Are Eccentric (so you don’t appear in the chart below).” Eccentric? Eccentric?? Libertarianism is the current manifestation of the political philosophy of John

Locke, Adam Smith, the American Founders, the abolitionists, the freetraders, the young John Stuart Mill, and such modern thinkers as Milton Friedman and F. A. Hayek. The philosophy of economic and political freedom is more consistent than that of modern conservatives who favor economic freedom and restrictions on free speech and personal freedom or that of modern liberals who favor free speech (well, except for campaign finance restrictions, college speech codes, etc.) and restrictions on economic freedom.

So to help the Center out, I’ve added the libertarian column to its list. And I’ve put libertarians in the middle, as we are at the heart of Western political thought; we can regard both left and right as unfortunate deviations from the main line of Western civilization: individualism, limited government and free markets. Now everyone can find a place on the political spectrum.

—David Boaz

promotion and large bonus in his new luxury townhouse with several scantily clad young women, who of course would be co-workers with equal salaries. Just as he was climaxing with one or more of these beauties, the hero would shout, "NASDAQ!"

This film might not be an artistic triumph, but it would depict characters and situations modern-day Americans could identify with. We live in a country where consumer spending and debt reach new highs and charitable contributions drop. We are a society in which an unpopular religious cult is besieged by heavily armed government agents and 84 human beings — including 26 children — are gassed and incinerated, with virtually no public protest. The President lies under oath, but it's just about sex. A six-year-old boy is found clinging to an inner tube after his mother drowns attempting to bring him to America, but most people believe he should be returned to the communist dictatorship in Cuba, so they can see new stories on TV. Both Republicans and Democrats propose new spending for more government programs, and most people approve, asking only how much they will benefit personally. Universities and businesses decree speech codes. The President proposes reducing the protections of the Fourth Amendment. The crime rate has fallen, but the government plans to disarm citizens while turning police into paramilitary units who point submachine guns at children while few object.

William Wallace shouting "Freedom!" with his last breath made for an exciting scene, but one we can no longer relate to. We just don't have the heart for it. — David C. Stolinsky

Waiting to Exhale — The Environmental Protection Agency has stated its intention to regulate emissions of carbon dioxide (or CO₂). According to a recent article in *Science*, the EPA will make this startling announcement within the next few weeks.

Until now, the EPA has been content to do what Congress authorized it to do: regulating emissions of toxic material into the environment. In response to a petition filed last October by the environmental organization International Center for Technology Assessment ("ICTA"), the EPA is expected to publish a Federal Register notice asking for comments on ICTA's argument that the EPA should regulate CO₂ by its current authority under the Clean Air Act as a pollutant that is "harmful to public health and welfare."

CO₂ is about as harmless as any substance known to man. It's the gas that plants breathe in and animals breathe out. That means, presumably, that the EPA wants to treat all animals as sources of pollution, subject to its regulation.

Of course, the EPA does not have statutory authority under the Clean Air Act. Congress never intended that the control of toxic emissions would include CO₂ which is not toxic at even the most imaginatively projected levels. (One can drown if submerged in pure CO₂ the same way one can drown if submerged in water. But it's no more toxic than water.) Nor is there any scientific evidence to support the view that CO₂ at current or projected levels is harmful to "public health and welfare" any more than water is.

There are also serious legal problems with this power grab. For one thing, regulating CO₂ emissions would entail regulation of energy consumption, the keeping of domestic animals, and ultimately even human life itself. (Every human

being exhales CO₂ in every breath.) So it would inevitably create a huge "takings" problem since large amounts of private property would be "taken" for a public purpose and would require just compensation under the Fifth Amendment. It would also cost more than \$100 billion to implement, so the EPA would have to do an immense impact study. Leaving aside these problems, the EPA's charter solely authorizes it to regulate toxic substances released into air and water, and CO₂ is certainly not toxic.

Remember that every animal on earth emits CO₂. If the EPA manages to establish its authority over CO₂ emissions, it could require a permit for you to breathe! One can assume reasonably that individual human beings would be exempted from the regulations, at least at first. But who knows what the EPA might try in the future. Remember that the federal government now regulates virtually all commerce in the United States, basing its authority on the argument that even the smallest of economic transactions, in aggregate, affect interstate commerce, the regulation of which is authorized by article 1, section 8, subsection 3 of the U.S. Constitution (which grants Congress the power to "regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States").

The theory that CO₂ is subject to EPA regulation is based on the notion that it causes global warming. Contrary to popular opinion, the evidence for this is weak. Scientific knowledge of the workings of the atmospheric CO₂ cycle is still very limited, but one fact is known for certain: all human activity — energy consumption, the keeping of domestic animals, breathing as well as anything else that emits CO₂ — accounts for a scant 2 percent of atmospheric CO₂ so regulation is unlikely to have a significant effect anyway. Centrally planning the atmosphere is far beyond the capability of any human being, let alone a ponderous, bureaucratic and idiotic government agency.

— Sandy Shaw & Durk Pearson



SCHAMBERS

Letters, from page 6

touching "González is permanently alienating Elián's rights by *deciding* to raise him in Cuba." Please.

Healy says, "when you start to invoke the concept of liberty as a rationale for state empowerment, you're asking for trouble." History demonstrates this is true, but he's still using his straw man to lay that on libertarians.

Given that defense of liberty is the *only* reason for state empowerment and given the historical record that the empowered state is the greatest enemy of liberty, Elián's plight being only the most recent confirmation, we can safely say that Healy has pointed out his own condition — "oblivious to the irony."

Mike Doege

Shelby Township, Mich.

Who Is Bill Gates?

John Galbraith's diatribe against Bill Gates ("Atlas Shrunk," Letters, April) misses the point: If one wishes to analogize between *Atlas Shrugged* and the current Microsoft drama, one must cast Gates solidly in the role of Hank Rearden. Both Gates and Rearden possess a product which the market has determined is superior to those of their competitors, rather than competing in the marketplace, turn to those who have a monopoly on force, the government bureaucrats, to reverse the market's decision. In both instances, the government, acting on behalf of those competitors alone, but claiming to act for the benefit of all persons, asserts that it is unfair for Gates/Rearden to enjoy the sole benefit of the success of his product.

Galbraith's misconception stems from his failure to recognize that it is the government, acting on behalf of Gates' competitors, not Microsoft, which is using force. As Mr. Galbraith states it: "Many manufacturers would have preferred to sell me the machine as I, their customer, wanted it. They were forced, by Microsoft, to sell me a product that I did not want to buy."

Did Microsoft force the kindly computer manufacturers to sell its products by posting armed agents at their facilities or by threatening to imprison their officers and employees? No. As

Galbraith himself states: "Because of Microsoft's dominance in the operating systems market, no PC manufacturer could hope to survive without selling most of their machines with Microsoft products installed."

In other words, all of Galbraith's innocent PC manufacturers made the economic determination that the business advantages and profits they obtained by agreeing to Microsoft's exclusivity requirements exceeded those to be gained by catering to customers, such as Galbraith, who wish to compute in a Microsoft-free environment. It is curious that Galbraith does not assert that the computer manufacturers "forced" him to purchase Microsoft products as a condition to the purchase of their computers.

I will accept Galbraith's invitation to think what I will of the government's assault on Microsoft. I think that it is an assault by those with a monopoly on the use of force against a company which has gained its power and prestige in the market.

Douglas Tyler

Lexington, Va.

Smash the Corporations!

One thing all the "free-marketeers" seem to forget when "boohooing" about Microsucks (Microsoft) being attacked by the Justice Department is that Microsucks is a corporation.

Corporations are "creatures of the state." Their status as persons (artificial persons as opposed to natural persons) is a privilege — not a right — granted by law.

As "creatures of the state," in contrast to individuals, sole proprietorships, partnerships, consortia, perhaps even trusts to some extent, they are subject to the state, even to what may seem arbitrary whims of the state. The state has the right to regulate them in any manner whatsoever that the state may choose.

The rise of the corporation in the twentieth century has been a major cause of problems and abuses.

As much as I hate government intrusion into and regulation of natural persons' (individuals') lives, I have no problem with government regulation of corporations. In fact, government regulates them far too little.

Just think how much better things would be if corporations were forbid-

den to contribute to political candidates, causes, and PACs; if they were forbidden to hire lobbyists; if they were forbidden to contribute to (mostly) "leftie-louie" foundations and charities; if they were forbidden to offer "benefits" packages to employees. . . .

(Note re "benefits" packages: Just look at how screwed up affordable medical care has become since it has been "third-partied" out through corporations to insurance companies and HMOs [themselves corporations]. Not to mention retirement plans. The "third-partying" of "benefits" has created a two-tiered society, where those working for privileged [large] corporations have affordable medical care and retirement plans, and those working for small companies or for themselves, mostly do not.)

Yes, as far as I'm concerned re Microsucks — chop, chop, chop. And all the rest of the mega-corporations, to start. By the way, same for unions.

David Bean

Santa Monica, Calif.

Empty Chairs, Empty Heart

I'm disturbed that Tim Slagle would find humor in the way that the Oklahoma City community chose to remember the victims of the Murrah building bombing. (Reflections, July) Each of the 168 chairs (made mostly of bronze and glass) is etched with the name of a victim. The empty chairs symbolize the void felt by their families and friends. I wonder whether Tim is also laughing at the 19 smaller chairs representing the 19 dead "bureaucrats" who were under the age of five — like little Baylee Almon, whose family had celebrated her first birthday the day before she was murdered.

Slagle's insensitivity is matched only by the poor judgment of *Liberty's* editors, who showed great courage by publishing a two-bit, throwaway comment that was, insensitivity aside, neither clever nor humorous.

Hank Newmark

Oklahoma City, Okla.

Inequality, Poverty and Pollution

In his July letter Scott A. Wilson wrote, "Libertarians as a matter of principle 'oppose the initiation of force.'" This may be an appealing principle, but history demonstrates that appealing

continued on page 22

Tax-Rebellion

Let Freedom Honk!

by Rod Smith

A lame-duck Republican governor decides to leave a very special legacy to the people of Tennessee: a state income tax. They are not properly grateful.

Lately, it seems that Tennesseans have been governed by Mr. Sundquist and Governor Hyde. After being reelected on the pledge of "no income tax," Governor Don Sundquist quickly turned the ship of state government toward the rocks. In his State of the State Address last spring, he vowed "to repeal the state sales tax on food, and work for meaningful tax reform," by which he meant saddling all Tennesseans with an income tax.

Over the past year, he has been barnstorming the state, in one public appearance after another, trying to sell citizens of the Volunteer State on his theory that they'd be better off with an income tax. But they're not buying it. His quest for fire has been doused with the cold reality that Tennesseans were not only unreceptive to the idea, but downright hostile. So hostile, in fact, that the governor was soundly booed during a speech given at the Tennessee Titan's conference championship celebration held at Nashville's Adelphia Coliseum by the crowd of over 50,000 otherwise elated fans.

This has put state legislators in an uncomfortable spot. They want to keep on good terms with the governor, but they don't want their constituents to boot them out of office. After dillydallying for weeks over the state budget for this fiscal year, they managed to agree on just one thing — self-preservation. Wary of any anti-income tax fallout in an election year, they sought instead to build a political firewall.

First, they moved the election-filing deadline to April 6 from May 16. This would allow lawmakers to know how strong a challenger they face during a reelection bid before deciding how to vote on the tax measure: presumably, those without serious opposition in the fall election could safely risk voting for the universally unpopular proposal. Not surprisingly, this measure quickly became known as the Incumbent Protection Act.

Then they voted to quadruple state-provided funds for "constituent communications," i.e., sending voters campaign propaganda at taxpayers' expense. The Constituent Communications Act provided each legislator with a \$8,316

slush fund for the year 2000, up from \$1,955 a year ago.

To sharpen the competitive edge for incumbents, lawmakers gutted "The Fair Ballot Access Act of 2000" intended to enable alternative parties to have a party label beside the names of their nominees on the ballot. Tennessee banned such a practice in 1961, which now gives the state's major parties a huge advantage in the ability to effectively use soft-money campaign spending.

All these shenanigans came to naught. The proposed measure remained so unpopular that the governor and his high-tax buddies in the legislature couldn't get the measure through. What to do?

Call a Saturday-morning, unannounced, closed-door special session of the legislature to enact the measure without any public scrutiny.

So on June 10, the doors to the Tennessee state legislature were locked for the House to consider the most important piece of legislation in Tennessee history. The legislature passed a measure that would create the state's first income tax out of a Conference Committee on a voice vote, without reporting which legislators voted for the measure.

The result? The evolution of the revolution began in earnest. The state capital came literally under siege. Day after day people from all walks of life came and sat in the sweltering 90-degree heat to let freedom honk. They came from all over the state to circle the station wagons 'round the capitol building, honking their horns in defiance of the state leaders. Talk show hosts Halorin Hill from Knoxville and Phil Valentine from Nashville spent several days broadcasting live from the Legislative Plaza, urging listeners to partici-

pate. Jim Coffer, Libertarian candidate for congress, laughed and said, "I blew out five fuses in my car, so for Father's Day my family got me an air horn."

Frank Cagle, the managing editor of *The Knoxville News Sentinel*, painted a vivid description of the state of Tennessee politics in a recent editorial, "I went to the circus this week. I didn't see any elephants, but there was a parade. Honking horns going around our state capitol. Inside there were various people performing high-wire balancing acts without a net. There was also a full contingent of clowns."

The battle had its casualties. Sen. Pete Springer died of a heart attack. Sen. Ben Atchley had a bypass. Sen. Gene Elsa

After dillydallying for weeks over the state budget for this fiscal year, the legislators managed to agree on just one concept — self-preservation.

had angioplasty. Sen. Curtis Person had a blood pressure attack. House members Kathryn Bowers and Raymond Walker collapsed on the house floor and were taken to the

hospital.

Outside the capitol, an unidentified man was fired from his job with a local home improvement chain because someone wrote down his license plate number and called the store to report he'd honked the horn on the store's delivery truck. Nine business owners offered him a job within 24 hours of his plight being broadcast on the radio.

With the mass of phone calls, E-mails and horn-honking subjects, the Legislature finally bowed to the will of an angry public. In order to avoid a government shutdown on July 1, the Legislature passed a budget without any new taxes. Sundquist became the first governor in Tennessee history to veto a state budget.

He also became the first governor to commit political suicide. The House voted to override the veto just two hours after the governor's move.

At last, all is quiet at Tennessee's Legislative Plaza. The station wagons that once circled the capital are now gathering groceries. Legislators have gone home to campaign. Reporters have gone back to reporting accidents on the freeway. The dragon of public opinion, spawned by the madness of the Sundquist administration and fed by legislative boondoggles, has gone back to sleep.

Philadelphia has the Liberty Bell, and now Nashville has the Liberty Horns. Reality bites, Elvis is dead, and politicians break promises. □

Letters, from page 20

principles can inspire appalling policies.

I have two questions about this libertarian cliché. What does this mean? And what would a society based on this principle look like?

If I trespass on Wilson's property without damaging anything and he beats me up, who has initiated force? Who has initiated force if an employer tells an employee that she must have sex with him in order to keep her job, and the government tells him that he cannot do that?

What I suspect is that libertarians use "the initiation of force" as a phrase to cover everything that violates their pro-business value system. I suspect that it includes efforts by labor unions to win better wages and working conditions for their members, but that it excludes violence fomented by business leaders to crush those unions.

Erratum

In the August *Liberty*, we misspelled the name of Federal Judge Alex Kozinski. Our apologies to our readers and, of course, Judge Kozinski.

I also suspect that "the initiation of force" includes efforts by democratically elected governments to curb pollution, save endangered animal species, and to require employers to behave more decently toward their more expendable employees than the law of supply and demand necessitates.

Finally, I suspect that a society based on libertarian principles would combine more economic inequality — hence more poverty — with a dirtier environment. Most Americans are opposed to such a society. That is why libertarianism is unlikely to become a majority persuasion.

John Engelman
Walnut Creek, Calif.

Official Cowardice

Judge Alex Kozinski's dissent ("In the Matter of the Killing of Vicki Weaver," August) is on the money. Horiuchi's evasions and lame excuses are nauseating: If he hadn't shot first, Weaver might have fled and taken up a defensive position? Well, so might any wanted man! Is the federal government now adopting a policy of just shooting down all suspects, rather than arresting them?

Weaver *might* have fled, and *might* have resisted, but we'll never know, because people like Horiuchi, with an

overwhelming preponderance of force on their side, were unwilling to give a suspect a chance to surrender peacefully. That sounds more like rank cowardice than anything else.

And when you add the fact that Weaver was entrapped by agents of the government — how wrong does something have to be before this administration will punish it?

Larry Eubank
Bloomington, Ind.

The Forgotten Generation?

I noted your article *The "Greatest" Generation* by Merrel Clubb (August). I have read BS before but this worthless piece of junk tops the list. I think that maybe I fought in a different war than this noble hero. I was there as a PFC in the U.S. Marine Corps and sure didn't see the atrocities pointed out by Clubb.

Two other things: First, Jap (I still use that word) teeth were worthless low-grade gold and those of us overseas for any length of time knew it and avoided them. Second, "take no prisoners" was a joke. We always tried to take prisoners; on three occasions I walked and guarded three different prisoners to a prison camp on Okinawa ten miles. By the way, it is hard to take a prisoner when they are shooting at you.

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Robbing Peter to Pay General Motors

by Ronald Powers

When Michigan competes to see who can attract businesses with tax breaks and subsidies, everyone loses but the politicians.

In recent months, Michigan has seen several instances of cities using corporate welfare to pick employers out of each other's pockets. This was not supposed to happen. The rationale behind the entire mercantilist empire presided over by the Michigan Jobs Commission (called by some the Department of Corporate Welfare) is that business subsidies are needed to compete with other Midwest states like Indiana and Ohio, not other cities within the Great Lakes state. Yet it is happening, seemingly at an accelerating rate.

In 1974 Michigan was an economic basket case. The energy crisis had made Detroit gas-guzzlers a drag on the market, and the state's economy was heavily dependent on auto production. Citizens were fleeing in droves from the Rust Belt to the oil patch; bumper stickers reading "Will the Last Person to Leave Michigan Please Turn out the Lights?" were a common sight. The legislature responded by creating a local property tax abatement option, which allows cities to give a twelve-year 50 percent tax cut to selected companies.

A generation later, Michigan's economy is booming, and has become much more diversified. But the old abatement law remains on the books, and not unreasonably, corporations have learned to use it very effectively to play one city off against another in search of lower property taxes.

Jousting for GM

There's one minor catch: The law requires approval by any city losing jobs before the new location can offer the corporate tax break. Last summer this "exit visa" clause created a comedy when Troy, which stood to lose 1,200 jobs, withheld an exit visa which would have let General Motors get a \$91-million-dollar tax break from the neighboring city of Warren on a billion-dollar Tech Center expansion.

Meanwhile, Troy's own economy is bursting at the seams. The suburban Detroit city of 80,000 residents and 108,000 jobs has become the corporate headquarters for a host of Fortune 500 companies, and boasts a negligible

unemployment rate. It is in the midst of a growth-induced traffic congestion crisis far more threatening than GM's move of a measly 1,200 jobs to the next town.

Troy elected officials postured that they do not give exit visas to communities not suffering economically. This is belied by numerous examples where they did just that. Some observers think Troy officials just got a kick out of sticking it in the eye of a \$43 billion corporation. But this could have brought about the opposite result of what state industrial planners had in mind when they adopted the abatement scheme: GM threatened to cancel expansion projects in several nearby towns, and promised further regional cutbacks.

The action shifted to the legislature, where the representative from Warren introduced a bill to repeal the exit visa clause. Naturally the legislature declined the opportunity simply to do away with an obsolete law. Instead they passed the bill, and along the way responded to several special interest groups by expanding the types of business that qualify for an abatement.

Combat Over Compuware

Another megabuck municipal hijacking involved Compuware, an \$11 billion business software company which suddenly announced it would move a few miles, from the suburb of Farmington Hills to downtown Detroit. The employer of 11,000 denied it had sought any tax exemption but, suspiciously, the Detroit council voted just days later to offer a break on the personal property tax applied to capital tools and equipment. (Yes, believe it or not: Michigan companies actually pay property tax on the capital assets used to create jobs.)

One might ask, why offer a tax break if the decision had already been made? That aside, the council had to act quickly, because there was rumbling in the legislature about repealing the 1998 law which gave Detroit and 50 other "depressed areas" the authority to abate personal, as opposed to real, property taxes. Democrats, mostly from Detroit, controlled the state House in 1998. In 1999 control shifted to Republicans under their new floor leader, the representative from Farmington Hills.

Once again in came the clowns. A measly \$5.9 million tax credit from the Jobs Commission's "Michigan Economic Growth Authority" was jeopardized by the move. This credit

Elected politicians are like country "rubes" in the hands of slick corporate operators; they will fall for almost any scheme to sucker taxpayers out of millions in tax expenditures.

was granted in 1996 as an incentive to expand the Farmington Hills facility. It was to apply against another economically destructive Michigan tax, the value added tax (the only VAT in the nation. This was small change next to the hundreds of millions of dollars at stake in the Detroit personal property tax abatement. Sorry, Farmington Hills. Are you starting to get the picture why the state's central-planning mandarins feel a need for corporate welfare to prop up the economy?

Fighting Over Ferries

The action shifts to the Lake Michigan shoreline with the latest installment of corporate welfare follies. In 1998 the legislature placed a \$675 million "environmental" bond issue on the ballot, mostly intended to redevelop abandoned industrial property (brownfields) and boost waterfront development. Environmentalists claimed that the so-called Clean Michigan Initiative was a sham, and simply provided cover for another form of corporate welfare to be directed at politically well-connected industrial corporations and developers of increasingly valuable shoreline property. The debt issue passed easily; everyone is for the environment, and times are good, right?

Last spring the legislature approved the first grants from the fund, including \$18.4 million for Muskegon to acquire and develop property for a new high-speed ferry service across the lake to Milwaukee. There is just one little complication: Since 1992 the Lake Michigan Carferry company has operated a similar service between Manitowoc, Wisconsin and Ludington, 60 miles up the coast from Muskegon, without the benefit of multi-million dollar state subsidies.

What really burns people up is that the subsidized competitor is not even a Michigan company — it is based in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. "I don't think it (the Clean Michigan Initiative) was meant to take jobs out of Michigan and place them in Wisconsin," said the owner of the Ludington ferry. But the state representative from the rival city had a different take: "This is great news for Muskegon."

The final case study is a new twist on what has become a commonplace extortion scheme, whereby billionaire sports team owners play on the emotions of hometown fans and the

gullibility of officeholders to wrest millions of taxpayer dollars for new stadium boondoggles. The twist here is that the interurban competition arose between two cities in the same metropolis.

In 1996 the Detroit Lions announced they wanted a better deal from economically depressed suburban Pontiac on their Silverdome stadium lease, or they would, yawn, move to another city. Unlike local politicians nationwide who ask how high when the big league franchise billionaire says jump, Pontiac said jump right back — jump in the lake, that is. Thus began the usual huffing and puffing about taking the Lions to Tennessee, or Toledo, or Timbuctu if the taxpayers didn't pay up.

Pontiac hung tough, but the City of Detroit stepped right up with an offer to help build a stadium next to the new baseball stadium, another state taxpayer-funded boondoggle. So the Lions and the Tigers both will benefit from a \$55 million infrastructure grant from yet another arm of the Jobs Commission, called the "Strategic Fund."

The \$55 million was a contentious issue in the legislature. After the Lions made their deal, one of the few principled conservatives in the House proposed holding up the funds until the team reimbursed taxpayers for \$14 million government spent on the Silverdome. The latter bill was DOA, of course.

What can we learn from these taxpayer shakedowns? One obvious point is that elected politicians are like country "rubes" in the hands of slick corporate operators; they will fall for almost any scheme to sucker taxpayers out of millions in tax expenditures. Corporations are not at fault here: In seeking to maximize shareholder value and returns, they are simply responding rationally to a perverse set of incentives put in place by governments.

GM is particularly adept at this form of gamesmanship. In 1992 Ypsilanti Township sued the automaker for \$13.5 million, claiming the decision to close its Willow Run plant violated promises made in connection with an earlier abatement. A state Appeals Court ruled that no contract existed requiring GM to keep the plant open; specifically, the "hyperbole and puffery" that might be expected of one seeking an abatement does not constitute a contract.

In 1998 Orion Township offered GM an abatement for a \$139 million assembly plant expansion, on condition the firm would retroactively pay the abated taxes if the plant were closed. GM refused, and two weeks later announced it would shelve another Orion plant upgrade, a \$250 million paint shop.

While GM has tremendous clout and skill in this game, its success is by no means unique. The record is rich with companies large and small in effect extorting tax breaks out of local communities, often with such flimsy threats that any experienced private sector manager would call their bluff.

Second, Michigan has some highly destructive taxes, but rather than address that fundamental problem, the state's political establishment has resorted to blatant mercantilism. The capital asset tax and value added tax seem almost deliberately intended to sabotage economic growth in the state. This year a bill was enacted to repeal the VAT — over 23 years! One middle-aged businessman quoted in news

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Dusk Comes to the Dark Continent

by Len Brewster

The rule of law is on hold in Zimbabwe.

Wildlife specials on The Discovery Channel have made the cheetah as familiar as your neighbor's Siamese. Detailed reports appear in almost every issue of *The Economist* about some aspect or other of the Dark Continent. But nowhere is there less access to public officials, so much mendacity, and less right of appeal against arbitrary arrest and government thuggery than Africa. Indeed, the tourists, the specials, the images are a darkness of their own, legitimizing the status quo by serving as a popular distraction.

Many in Europe and the U.S. believe that despite some preliminary ructions in which a few white farmers were killed, last month's parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe went off peacefully, and that the result (the ruling party winning 62 seats to 57 for the opposition) reflects the "will of the people." Some might even be persuaded that the election was centered around the legitimate desire of a majority for land reform.

This is all an illusion. Thirty people, mostly from the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), were killed just before the election, and hundreds more were tortured by members of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF, the party in power). Dr. Chenjerai Hunzvi, head of the War Veterans Association, donated his medical office to be used as a torture chamber. (Dr. Hunzvi's providential guerrilla nickname is "Hitler.") At least 10,000 MDC supporters had to flee their home areas because of the intimidation, and were thus denied access to voting. Sydney Sekeramayi, Minister for National Security, announced that he had means of knowing who had supported the opposition, and that they would be punished. The ruling party even let on that they had a huge computer showing how each person voted, and a magic telescope through which members of the government could watch them mark their ballots! This at least gives a new meaning to the term "transparency."

The most effective ZANU-PF electioneering device was a massive government-sponsored invasion of private prop-

erty. Twelve hundred white-owned farms were forcibly and illegally occupied by war veterans, common thugs and members of the secret police. Many farmers and farm workers were killed. Planting was disrupted, large areas were stripped of precious tree cover, and property of all kinds was vandalized.

President Mugabe publicly supported this, insisting that "the people" were only "demonstrating" against white farmers owning too much land. The occupations were, in fact, an attempt to undermine support for the MDC. This was obvious to those who live here, but was apparently obscure to some foreign observers harboring residual socialist sensibilities. Mugabe has milked the land issue for the twenty years he has been in power, leaving it to fester between elections and demagoguing it to crisis as they approach. I suspect that little will be heard of land reform until just before the Presidential contest in two years. The whole performance was reminiscent of Kristallnacht or the Cultural Revolution, on a smaller scale.

The actual voting was characterized by systematic fraud and intimidation, despite the swarms of observers, reporters, political scientists, shifty do-gooders, and murky consultants. In the Buhera-North constituency several ballot boxes disappeared only to turn up half-burnt. In Kariba a colorful war veteran and supporter of the government strutted about a polling station threatening anyone who voted MDC. An exit poll conducted by the Helen Suzman Foundation indicated that the MDC should have won 87, not 57 seats.

Nonetheless foreign observers bumbled approval. Perhaps they were so desperate to find signs of democracy in Africa

that they dismissed the widespread fraud and violence as unimportant. Perhaps some were motivated by that morbid benefit of the doubt, that psychic affirmative action, which seems to sweeten judgments of all things African.

The precise cause of their self-deception may not be known, but the effect of it is: it encourages further internal colonization as officials are held ever less responsible, and

The ruling party publicly announced that they had a computer showing how people voted, and a magic telescope so members of the government could watch them mark their ballots.

become wealthier and more powerful. The woolly good intentions, the condescending pats on the head, and the sickly sympathy endorse the darkness.

Following the election the army joined criminals and war veterans as they resumed their attacks on the farms, in defiance of two court decisions. (Mugabe has referred contemptuously to "the little law of trespass.") The government continues to do its best to blame the MDC for every misfortune including a stampede during a July soccer match which killed 13 people.

The President holds Roman Catholic Archbishop Pious Ncube responsible for ZANU-PF's defeat in Bulawayo and Matabeleland, the home area of the largest ethnic minority, the Ndebele. The clergyman has received death threats widely believed to originate in the President's office. The real problem for ZANU-PF is that in the early 1980s, it used the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade ZANU to slaughter about 6,000 people, ostensibly in an effort to suppress a threatened uprising, but really to break the back of Zimbabwe African People's Union, its main opposition party.

Despite all of this, the results of the election are mildly encouraging. For the first time in its history, Zimbabwe has a powerful, broadly-based opposition. The MDC's strength in parliament is just sufficient to block constitutional amendments, which require a two-thirds majority. Furthermore, the

party is protesting 28 of the electoral results. Should it win court actions in six or more, it would have a majority. In any case, ZANU-PF shows some signs of disintegration, and there have already been some minor defections to the MDC.



"A second opinion? — I wouldn't push my luck if I were you."

The opposition is in striking distance of the presidency in 2002, given some semblance of a fair contest. It is difficult to predict how they would differ from the present regime, though they have promised to lower the budget deficit (now at 10 percent of GDP), restrain the 60 percent rate of inflation, and do something about the 50 percent rate of unemployment. They also pledge to pull out of the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has cost Zimbabwe about \$3 billion.

However, the MDC is an odd political party. It developed out of the labor movement, and along the way attracted professionals, academics, and businessmen of all races. It is the first serious multi-racial party in Zimbabwe's history, and one of the few political organizations in the world that more or less equally represents business and labor. This is admirable in its own way, but it indicates a serious potential for instability. It will be interesting to see what the party's position will be on the minimum wage.

The MDC is currently campaigning to have Mugabe resign — thus bringing forward the presidential election, which is currently scheduled for 2002. The campaign will likely fail, giving Mugabe at least two years in which to do mischief to the opposition and the economy. He has already promised to re-establish price controls, and he will continue to squeeze the land issue until he feels that all the political juice is out of it. A fair number of farms will by then have been expropriated, and those he does not award to himself and his friends (several thousand acres have already met this fate) will be duly resettled by peasants hoping for a better life.

Unfortunately, they won't get it. They will not actually own the land, but will only have it on lease from the state

Several farmers and many farm workers were killed. Planting was disrupted, large areas were stripped of precious tree cover, and property of all kinds was vandalized.

until whoever is in power decides to redistribute it once again. Private banks will not loan money for seed and farm machinery under such conditions. Eventually, the farmers will have to turn to the government in hopes of borrowing money (which, by the way, it does not have) thus encumbering themselves with another layer of political dependence. Ironically, the result of fifty years of leftist vamping over land reform is feudalism.

The real tragedy, which the misfortunes of Zimbabwe so crudely illustrate, is how easily, even inevitably, the devices of enlightenment are made to serve the cause of darkness. Elections are manipulated to confirm what despots wanted in the first place. Parliaments are stuffed with praise-singers or those who oppose politely and always superficially. Courts pettifog to the decision favorable to the State of which they are a part. Observers patronize: "We must understand them, after all." And the country, eventually the world, reverts to bush. □

Travel

The Day Israel's Army Left

by Bradley Monton

In the wake of the Israeli withdrawal, South Lebanon throws one big party.

On May 24th, 2000, Israel ended 22 years of occupation of south Lebanon. May 25th was declared a Lebanese national holiday in celebration. Two friends and I went down to the formerly occupied zone to check things out. The roads in the south were packed with cars, most of them flying some flag or another. Most often we saw Hezbollah flags, then Lebanese flags, then Amal flags. (We were flying a Lebanese flag.) Despite the fact that one sees Syrian flags throughout Lebanon, we didn't see anyone with a Syrian flag in the formerly occupied zone.

We first went to the Beaufort Castle, a beautiful 1,000 year-old castle which has commanding views of south Lebanon and northern Israel. (We didn't yet realize that what we could see from the castle was northern Israel; like most everyone else, we had never been here before.) On the roads people kept stopping and asking each other for directions but no one knew the answers. I think we were one of the few cars that had a map (since foreigners carry such things), so we managed to navigate pretty efficiently.

There were hundreds of cars parked all along the roads up to the castle, and lots of people were walking all around the castle and among the ruins of the adjacent Israeli base. Everyone seemed both amazed and happy — lots of people were taking pictures and videotaping the whole scene. The Israelis had blown up a lot of the base they had constructed, but there were still parts of buildings standing that one could walk into. There was trash all around: we saw lots of empty packets of chips and water bottles with Hebrew writing. Poking through the ruins, we found an Israeli army jacket and took it as a souvenir.

The whole thing had the feeling of a festival, with no one in charge. Someone was collecting gasoline from a gas tank the Israelis left behind, and some kids were proudly displaying machine gun ammunition they had found. Lots of people were eating ice cream bought from one of the ice cream trucks parked next to the castle. (On the way we saw a Pepsi truck driving away with a sign in Arabic: "Free Pepsi in cele-

bration of the liberation of the South.") Everyone was very friendly and waving flags about. We got two young kids carrying a huge Hezbollah flag to pose for a picture amidst the rubble.

We didn't see any other foreigners on the whole trip, except for one news photographer. People were surprised to see us, and assumed we were journalists, but were happy to talk to us. I followed one person into a ruined concrete bunker, and he started talking to me in English: "What do you think of this? It's wonderful that the enemy has left. Hezbollah only did this!" On top of the castle, there were Hezbollah and Amal flags, but no Lebanese flag.

The Western media tends to portray Hezbollah in a negative light, but it's the Israelis who were the clear aggressors here. Hezbollah was fighting to stop the Israeli occupation of Lebanon, an immoral occupation that violated international law and a U.N. Security Council resolution. The Hezbollah fighters were nothing less than freedom fighters, and they deserve to be commended as such.

From the castle there are wonderful views of steep valleys and lush rolling hills. South Lebanon is truly beautiful, even more so because, as a result of the occupation, there hasn't been much development. Unfortunately, though, the area is land-mined, so we won't be able to go hiking any time soon.

After the castle we navigated the traffic jams and headed to the Israel-Lebanon border. On the way there we saw on a hillside what looked like a suburban American community: lots of small identical-looking evenly spaced houses, and sodium streetlights illuminating well-paved streets. We still

hadn't figured out exactly where the border was, but it suddenly occurred to me that such a community wouldn't have been built in the occupied zone. We had trouble believing that was Israel, though, because it was so close; we were still of the mind-set that in Lebanon one can't get close to the Israeli border. Sure enough, though, as we parked our car and walked to the border fence to avoid the traffic, we realized that that was Israel (or, as we made sure to call it when talking there, "occupied Palestine").

There were hundreds of people walking along the border fence on the Lebanese side, cheering and waving flags and taking pictures. There were various abandoned Israeli mili-

I followed one person into a ruined concrete bunker, and he started talking to me in English: "What do you think of this? It's wonderful that the enemy has left. Hezbollah only did this!"

tary buildings on the Lebanese side, one that was on fire, and others that were being searched through for valuables. (One of the buildings had a gate in front of it; the sign on the gate said "No Parking" in Hebrew and Arabic.) We didn't want to go in the buildings because we had heard that some of them were booby-trapped, but on the side of the road (in with more trash with Hebrew writing) we found two more Israeli army jackets. They smelled of gasoline, so perhaps the Israelis were planning to set them on fire but hadn't gotten around to it in their haste.

On the Israeli side, by contrast, nothing was happening. The closest houses to the border were about 100 meters away, but we didn't see anyone walking around. We did see a couple of cars driving through the town, Metulla, so people

were still out and about to a small extent. I don't know if the town was abandoned, or if the people were just in bomb shelters. (Hezbollah is threatening to retaliate for six Lebanese civilians who were killed by Israelis during the pullout, but I doubt they'll retaliate by firing into Israel because Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak has promised a massive retaliation on Lebanese infrastructure if they do that. So far, Hezbollah hasn't done anything.)

We didn't even see any Israeli military patrols driving along the border during the hour or so that we were there; with just a couple unsophisticated barbed-wire fences, it didn't look very well defended. (The area was probably heavily land-mined, which provided a sufficient deterrent to crossing.) After walking along the border for a while we came to the Fatima gate border crossing, also called "The Good Fence." (It's not yet clear whether good fences make good neighbors.) Here there were three Israeli soldiers on the second floor of a building about five meters from the border. There were about 100 Lebanese standing there, most of whom were just watching the Israeli soldiers (presumably in amazement that they were that close), though a few were chanting and waving flags. It was a surreal experience, with the building on fire just behind us and the smoke drifting toward the Israeli soldiers sitting impassively just beyond the fence in front of us. As it got dark the crowd dispersed. A few people started throwing rocks at the soldiers. Their whole two-story building was protected by a fence, so the rocks weren't going to do anything; people were just venting their anger regarding the fact that tens of thousands of Lebanese had been killed by Israelis since the occupation started in 1978.

Leaving Fatima gate, we joined the thousands of other cars on the narrow roads snaking their way through the hills of the formerly occupied zone, and two and a half hours later we were back in Beirut. I turned on CNN to watch a report on the latest happenings; it's exciting enough to watch it all on TV but it's another thing altogether to actually be there. □

"Robbing Peter to Pay GM," from page 24

accounts said "I'll be dead before that tax goes away." Even young businessmen must wonder if future legislatures won't be tempted to stretch the phase-out, or stop it altogether.

The combination of these destructive taxes and the annual payout of hundreds of millions for state and local corporate welfare lends weight to arguments of free-market opponents of mercantilism: Replacing the targeted giveaways with across-the-board-tax cuts will do far more to promote growth than misguided attempts to pick winners and losers. Their case is bolstered by the fact that, despite the good times and the corporate welfare, Michigan's is 45th in the nation in job creation.

Congressman and economist Richard Armey has called the unintended consequences of state policies (often greater than the *intended* consequences) the "invisible foot of government." Using state taxpayer dollars to snatch businesses from one part of a state and move them to another is a classic case of the "invisible foot" — in this case inserted in some very high profile posteriors. □

Letters, from page 20

As for Brokaw's book, *The Greatest Generation*, my big objection was that his book is very stereotyped. Humble boy (or girl) goes into the service for WW II, becomes a hero, wins many medals, comes home and marries his childhood sweetheart, has six children, all of them highly successful, and he still won't talk about his tragic war experiences.

I don't give a damn about being the "greatest" generation; I just don't want to be the forgotten generation.

Grady Coker

Colorado Springs, Colo.

More on the Rating Game

On May 22, I had a chance to read J. Bishop Grewell's "The Pseudo-Science of Rating Congress" (June), an article which urged that Americans take Congressional voting ratings with a large grain of salt. Earlier that same day I watched as Senator Robert Bennett (R-UT) made the identical point during a thirty-minute diatribe on the Senate floor. When a practicing politician and a writer for *Liberty* take the same

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The Issues at Hand

Libertarian Party Agonistes

by R. W. Bradford

Twenty years ago the Libertarian Party got almost 1 percent of the nation's vote. And that's the best it ever did. As delegates went to the LP's national convention, they had to wonder: Will it ever get off the ground?

"Libertarian politics is to real politics as the Special Olympics is to the real Olympics." It was the night before the Libertarian Party convention and I was sitting in the bar at the Marriott in Anaheim shooting the breeze with a group of conventioners when a Libertarian activist made this observation. During the next few days, I had ample opportunity to test its truth.

Libertarians came to Anaheim ostensibly to choose a national ticket, write a platform, elect new officers and consider possible changes in their rules and by-laws. Unofficially, most were there to visit friends, to party and to have fun.

Yet there is a history behind the Party's big party. The Libertarian Party is nearly 29 years old and has already contested seven presidential elections. It's had two minor successes during those seven presidential campaigns: its first nominee, John Hospers, got a single electoral vote when a renegade Republican elector in Virginia cast his vote for the LP ticket; eight years later, its national ticket received nearly a million votes, or one percent of the total. No candidate since then has managed to get even half that total.

Officially, the party claims to be the nation's third largest party, but in fact it finished third in an election only three times and hasn't finished that high in more than a decade. Despite this, the LP continues to maintain that it is challenging the major party duopoly and will one day become a major party and actually win elections.

Only one party has ever managed to displace one of the two major parties, and its success came very quickly. The Republican party won its second race for the presidency, along with its third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh. When it was 29 years old, it had already won five presidential elections, started and won a Civil War, established a military occupation of nearly half the country, amended the Constitution to reflect its thinking, filled the Supreme Court

with its members, controlled both houses of Congress and most state legislatures. At the same point in its history, LP candidates can point to a total of four victories in races for the state legislature in Alaska, five in New Hampshire and one in Vermont.

One might think, therefore, that Libertarians meeting in Anaheim might be thinking about whether they should change their goals: perhaps abandon hope of taking over and focus instead on providing direction for the major parties, as the Populists and Socialists have done for the Democrats in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. If there was interest at the convention in such a refocusing, I didn't hear of it. Instead, everyone seemed to be operating under the delusion that the LP was about to emerge as a major party any minute now — or at least by the end of the decade for sure.

One might think that a party in the thrall of such a collective delusion might have little to contend about. If so, one would be wrong.

In fact, the race for the presidential nomination shaped up as the most interesting since 1988, when Indian activist Russell Means challenged former GOP congressman Ron Paul for the nomination. After getting less than half of one percent of the popular vote in 1996, Harry Browne didn't pause for a moment. He kept his campaign staff intact and began his quest for the nomination in 2000 immediately.

No previous LP nominee has sought a second nomination. With one exception, members were so disappointed with the vote totals that they wouldn't even consider picking the same candidate again. Roger MacBride's largely self-financed campaign in 1976 managed to obtain ballot status in

31 states and the District of Columbia — a much harder task then than now — and got 171,200 votes, but the election was barely over before activists were speaking darkly about how bad a campaign he had run. In 1984, candidate David Bergland ran an invisible campaign that got only 226,100 votes; no one wanted him to take a second shot. In 1988, Ron Paul got nearly twice as many votes as the LP had captured in 1984, but he was virtually read out of the party. In 1992, candidate Andre Marrou fell far short of the 1988 total and was never heard from again. Much of the reason why the LP fell so far short of expectations was that the candidates and their campaigns had, in an attempt to build enthusiasm among volunteers and financial supporters, generally raised their predicted vote totals as the campaigns progressed.

Furthermore, the campaigns had shown evidence of less than competent management and had never really bothered to explain how they had spent their money, leaving rank-and-file members to conclude the worst. In 1976 and 1980, the campaigns were financed mostly by the candidates (MacBride in 1976 and vice-presidential nominee David Koch in 1980), so it wasn't terribly surprising that their managers didn't feel a particular need to spell out to party members how the campaigns had been run. Even so, there were complaints and rumors of waste. The 1984 campaign was such a miserable affair that no one really cared how it was run. The 1988 campaign had promised a new level of professionalism and a return to television advertising, the tactic that had gotten the LP ticket nearly a million votes in 1980, but it never got around to buying any ads. In 1992, the campaign again promised extensive television advertising, but purchased only a handful of inexpensive ads on low-rated cable networks.

Ed Clark's 922,001 vote total was more than five times better than the previous nominee had managed. There was a fair amount of resentment against him for failing to get the 5 or 6 million votes that his supporters had thought possible, but he probably could have gotten the 1984 nomination if he'd sought it.

I suspect that with the exception of Clark and 1972 nominee John Hospers, the past nominees would have been happy to run again. But the level of hostility against them was such that none even tried.

The Browne campaign learned from this sad experience. Rather than raising supporters' expectations throughout the campaign, Browne began to lower expectations during the final weeks before election. And once the election was past, his campaign managers did two things to pave the way for his renomination:

1) They claimed that they had learned a great deal from the campaign and promised to publish a detailed report on

how the campaign had been conducted. This led members to believe that a second campaign would be more professional and more successful than the first.

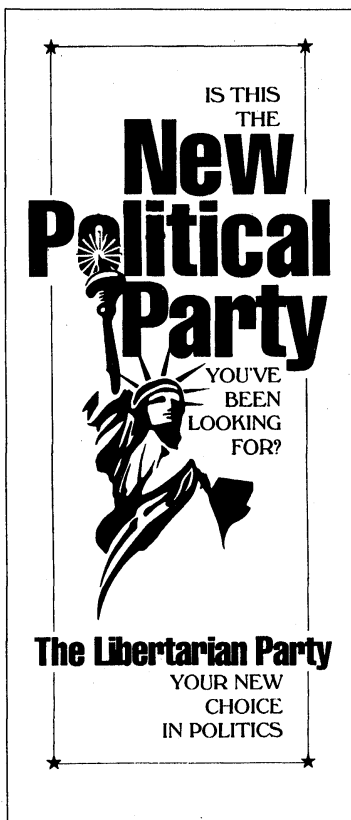
The campaign eventually released its report, which read more like an elaborate fundraising pitch than a business report. This wasn't really surprising, since it was written largely by Perry Willis, who wrote the campaign's direct mail fundraisers. Using large type and big margins to maximize its bulk, the report gushes over success after success in the campaign, occasionally stopping to explain important lessons learned.

The report included an elaborate list of advertising expenditures, presumably to dispel the traditional you-promised-to-spend-a-lot-on-advertising-but-never-did criticism that had dogged the 1988 and 1992 campaigns. In fact, the reported expenditures for advertising included large amounts spent by others as well as expenditures that simply never were made, if we are to believe the reports the campaign filed with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). It turns out the campaign spent less than \$9,000 to purchase advertising, out of \$1,430,000 spent. But so far as I can tell, not a single Browne supporter ever bothered to compare the figures in the report to the FEC figures until I did so earlier this year.*

The report had more than boastful summaries of campaign activities, optimistic lessons learned and inaccurate accountings of money spent on advertising. It also announced a new strategy, one that would enable the LP to have a major impact if it nominated Browne again.

2) Browne proposed taking a new approach. It wasn't his or his staff's fault that the campaign had done so poorly: the reason for its embarrassingly low vote total was the fault of the membership, which was way too small. Never again, Browne promised, would he run as the candidate of a small party like the LP.

Happily, Browne's staff had come up with a solution to that problem: the LP should implement "Project Archimedes," which would recruit more than 170,000 new members by the end of 1999 by using exotic new



The Libertarian Party:
still new at age 29?

* I would have done so earlier, but I was unaware that the report had actually been published. Both Browne and Perry Willis had promised me a copy of the report as soon as it was published and I had asked them both about it several times as its scheduled publication date came and went. They told me publication was delayed and eventually I concluded the report was not ever going to be published. About a year ago, I discovered it did indeed exist. I asked Willis for a copy; he told me that the campaign did not have a single copy left. Eventually, an LP activist heard of my problem and sent me a copy of the report, in time for the analysis of it that appeared in the July *Liberty*.

methods of direct-mail solicitation. Browne went so far as to promise that he would not run again unless Project Archimedes achieved its goal.

It very quickly became evident that Project Archimedes didn't have a ghost of a chance. By summer 1998, any attempt to pursue the goal had been abandoned, and Archimedes focused instead on getting lapsed members to rejoin and recruiting members from the same mailing lists that libertarians had long used.

This fact was kept secret from members and donors. Browne campaign manager Perry Willis, who also managed Project Archimedes, continued to claim that it was "on target" in its massive recruitment campaign and continued to raise funds for its implementation. The funds raised were not used for the scaled-back Archimedes, since it was self-financing. The LP has never revealed how the funds were spent; presumably they went into the LP's general fund.

Few within the Party paid much attention to this. Those who were active in the 1996 campaign continued to receive lots of optimistic fundraising letters and "progress reports," and many accepted them at face value. Some lost interest in the LP and dropped out, but only a tiny handful were inclined to examine what was going on and raised a cry of alarm. Leading among these were Gene Cisewski, John Famularo and Janice Presser, who decided to challenge Browne's control of the party at the 1998 convention. Cisewski challenged Browne's hand-picked candidate for National Chair, David Bergland, the husband of Sharon Ayres, who received nearly \$130,000 as campaign manager of Browne's 1996 debacle.*

The hard-fought battle for chair was won only after Browne directly intervened, telling delegates that it was imperative that Bergland be elected. In 1999, the LP learned that Cisewski's firm had used the LP mailing list without permission. Cisewski, who was in California working on the

of money for a small organization like the LP — and it recovered only \$1,000 from Cisewski, whose legal expenses had exhausted his entire life savings.

As 1999 began, it looked as if Browne would sail easily to a second nomination. But Jacob ("Bumper") Hornberger began to make noises like he might run. Hornberger's dynamic speaking style and no-compromise attitude had won him considerable following within the party, and the Browne forces were worried. When Hornberger decided not

Browne's campaign report read more like a fundraising pitch than a business report. The expenditures it claimed were spent on advertising included large sums spent by others as well as expenditures that simply never were made.

to run — ostensibly because he had figured out that doing so would mean leaving his Future of Freedom Foundation without a manager — the Browne campaign heaved a collective sigh of relief.

By this time, many of those who had been critical of Browne's performance and his control of the party had given up hope. But some remained. Late in 1999, E-mail messages began to circulate arguing that the LP should nominate someone who had actually been elected to office. This was an obvious call to disqualify Browne, and was widely suspected to be an oblique attempt to draft Don Gorman, a New Hampshire chimney sweep who had served two terms in the New Hampshire legislature as a Libertarian. Gorman eventually announced his candidacy and began to campaign. His campaign was managed by John Famularo, former Treasurer of the LP and long-time vocal critic of Browne's finances and ethics.

In March, Hornberger resurfaced. By now, it was obvious that Project Archimedes had failed ignominiously to achieve its goal of 170,000+ new members, and Hornberger had long been displeased with the way Browne had taken control of the party. Over the Internet, Hornberger published a series of criticisms of the Browne campaign, charging that it had engaged in conscious deception of its supporters and had suborned the loyalty of various employees of the Libertarian Party. Browne, Willis and Bergland responded with a series of personal attacks on Hornberger. Publicly, Gorman took the high road, focusing his campaign appearances on Browne's well-known aloofness from other Libertarian candidates. Privately, he made several attempts to talk to and meet with Hornberger for the purpose of coordinating their anti-Browne efforts. Hornberger rebuffed his approach. A couple other candidates entered the race, but none had any real support.

While Gorman was taking the high road in public, Hornberger was taking a shellacking in his battle with Browne, mostly because of a single action he had taken. He had asked the FEC what action it might take against donors

When the GOP was as old as the LP is today, it had elected five presidents, started and won a Civil War, amended the Constitution to reflect its thinking, filled the Supreme Court with its members, and controlled both houses of Congress and most state legislatures.

LP gubernatorial campaign at the time of the unauthorized use, admitted that his firm may have used the list without permission, apologized and offered to go to binding arbitration to make an appropriate settlement. The LP refused, sued him in federal court and forced him into bankruptcy and out of the party. It cost the LP more than \$40,000 to do so — a lot

* This figure comes from FEC reports filed by the Browne campaign and includes an unspecified amount of expense reimbursement. The Browne campaign has never revealed how much of Ayres was actually paid for services.

who break the law, an action that Browne partisans charged amounted to turning the Brown campaign in to federal law enforcement authorities. (See "Bumper Hornberger: Stool Pigeon," p. 34)

Liberty Investigates

For more than two years, *Liberty* had been conducting an independent investigation of Project Archimedes and an investigation of the conduct of Browne's 1996 campaign. Our focus was on the misrepresentation involved in Archimedes and the disparity between how the Browne campaign had promised to spend the money it raised and its actual expenditures, as reported to the FEC.

We expanded our investigation to cover two other charges Hornberger had leveled: that Browne had suborned the loyalty of employees of the Libertarian Party's national office by hiring them on a contract basis and that Browne's proposed protest against the FEC misrepresented the risk that Browne donors would be prosecuted by the FEC.

The *Liberty* report, written by Martin Solomon, Peter Gillen and me, ran 16 pages; not surprisingly, its conclusions were sometimes as complex as the charges.

In brief, it found:

1) There was no merit in Hornberger's claim that Archimedes had wasted more than \$1,000,000 in a failed attempt to recruit 170,000+ new members. But it hardly exonerated the architects of Archimedes. It also concluded that Archimedes had been misrepresented from the beginning. It had never actually been intended to recruit 170,000+ new members at all, but had been portrayed in this way to members for the purpose of getting donations that could be put to other uses. Long after there was absolutely conclusive evidence that Archimedes could not possibly achieve its purported goal of 170,000+ new members, its proponents claimed that it was in fact succeeding.

The Browne campaign solicited funds many times for the purpose of buying advertising, but in fact spent only \$8,840 of its \$1,412,368 war chest on the purchase of advertising. About 70 times as much — nearly \$600,000 went to pay "consultants."

2) There was some merit to Hornberger's charge of conflict of interest, but while the close relationship between the Browne campaign and the paid staff of the LP gave an appearance of partiality and favoritism, it fell short of actual conflict of interest as ethicists use the term.

3) There was also some merit to Hornberger's criticism of Browne's fundraising efforts relating to his proposed FEC protest. While Browne had knowingly misrepresented the risk faced by individuals who might make donations in excess of the legal limit, doing so did not legally constitute fraud because he had failed in a technical sense to "induce

reliance" on the false information he promulgated.

4) The Browne campaign in 1996 solicited funds on numerous occasions for the purpose of buying advertising, but in fact spent only \$8,840 of its \$1,412,368 war chest on the purchase of advertising. That amounted to 0.6 percent of its budget. About 70 times as much — nearly \$600,000 went to pay "consultants."

Neither the Browne campaign nor the LP had any public reaction to *Liberty's* investigation. In an interview after his

While Gorman was taking the high road in public, Hornberger was taking a shellacking in his battle with Browne, mostly because of a single action he had taken.

nomination Browne said that while he hadn't read any of the articles in *Liberty* "entirely," he had "skimmed through them to see what the gist of [them] was."* LP National Director Steve Dasbach told colleagues and later told me that he considered *Liberty's* investigation to be "factually accurate" but that he "disagreed with some of the interpretations."†

Three days before the convention, I got an E-mail from Gorman's campaign manager asking whether *Liberty* would give permission to reprint the report on its investigation of the Browne campaign and the LP. I granted permission to reprint for the usual reprint fee. I doubted that the report would have much impact at the convention: it's sixteen pages long and my experience is that most people come to conventions to socialize, not to read lengthy reports.

The presidential nomination was not the only race that looked interesting this year. Several of Browne's long-time critics — Hornberger was not among them — had launched the Clean Slate Action Program Committee, which proposed several reforms intended to make the national office more focused on supporting state and local campaigns, getting rid of the favoritism it had shown toward the presidential candidate, "open" management of its operations, without "favoritism," and full disclosure of payments made "to LNC members, staffers and their relatives." Its chairman, George Phillies, threw his hat into the race for National Chair, and other members ran for National Committee positions. □

* He added that "if anyone had bothered to ask us what was going on to get some clarification on any of these claims there might have been a different result." When I pointed out that I posed a series of questions to him, LP National Director Steve Dasbach, and campaign staffers Perry Willis and Stuart Reges, but got no answers, he responded "You cannot expect, number one, [that] at the last minute we will drop other things we consider more important than to come to answer your questions and secondly . . . I've come to feel that there are a lot of important things I can do in my life than to respond to your questions."

† Another LP staffer responded to the article, though rather obliquely, as I learned on the final day of the convention (see "Behind the Scenes in Anaheim," p. 33).

Convention Diary I

Behind the Scenes in Anaheim

by R. W. Bradford

Libertarians convene, caucus, nominate, elect . . . and party!

Thursday, June 29

I arrive in Anaheim along with most delegates the night before the convention begins. The big news is that Hornberger has declared his candidacy for the nomination. The other interesting development is LP founder David Nolan's quasi-announcement for National Chairman, on a platform of making the Chair a full-time paid position.

After picking up my press credentials, I immediately set about interviewing just about everyone I encounter. It doesn't take long to conclude that a substantial majority of delegates are supporters of Browne and that few of them had examined Hornberger's criticisms. I fail to find a single delegate who plans to vote for either of the other two announced candidates — Arizona businessman Barry Hess and California bus driver David Hollist — but Hornberger and Gorman each have support of about 20 percent of the delegates.

The sentiment on the Chair race is less clear: there's a lot of goodwill for David Nolan, but few like his idea of making the Chair a paid position. Most delegates have little idea of the issues in the race for chair.

Don Gorman tells me he's glad Hornberger has entered the race, since "any vote for Bumper is a vote against Browne." He tells me that if Browne fails to get the nomination on the first ballot, he'll fade quickly. It seems to me that splitting the anti-Browne vote would benefit Browne, though based on my own delegate-counting Browne really doesn't need the help. I point out to Gorman that every single delegate I spoke to who supported Hornberger had formerly supported Gorman and I hadn't seen any sign of declining support for Browne. He maintains his eternal optimism.

I also speak with individuals involved in the Gorman, Hornberger and Clean Slate campaigns to see how their dele-

gate counts are going. To my surprise, they all tell me that they haven't counted any delegates and do not intend to. None even has people working the floor. They pin their hopes on what they believe is the softness of Browne's support.

By the time I return to my room in the wee hours of the morning, I'm convinced that unless something really stunning transpires, Browne will walk to the nomination and status quo chair candidate Jim Lark will be elected National Chair. None of the insurgents is even bothering to track delegate support, an indication of outright incompetence, or at the very least a lack of serious purpose.

Friday, June 30

I get up far too early Friday as a favor to Bill Winter, who has a bank of talk shows doing remotes from the convention and not enough guests willing to go on early. The opening day agenda isn't terribly exciting, and I don't pay much attention to the official convention business at the podium, since I can watch it all later on videotapes of C-SPAN's coverage. But I hear a good part of Barbara Goushaw's excellent keynote speech. Goushaw is probably the best campaign manager within the LP and a terrific speaker as well.

Mostly I wander about the hall, interviewing delegates, LP bigshots, and people involved in the various campaigns. The big story of the day emerges: there are two delegations from the Arizona LP there, one recognized by the national LP (and loyal to Browne), the other the legal party recognized by Arizona (and hostile to Browne). The credentials committee seats the non-legal party, but rumors of a coming floor fight over the decision fly around. From time to time, I see members of the unrecognized delegation, dressed in kilts with their faces painted blue, as a homage to *Braveheart*. But

nothing happens.

Trying to escape the hothouse political atmosphere and — figuring there must be some interesting restaurants nearby — I leave the hotel for lunch. Bad mistake: after driving around for 15 minutes without finding a suitable restaurant, I end up eating at a Taco Bell.

When I return, Bill Masters is being introduced at the podium. He's sheriff of San Miguel County in Colorado and

Gorman tells me that if Browne fails to get the nomination on the first ballot, he'll fade quickly.

he's speaking on the War on Drugs. His talk is brilliant. Afterward I invite him to write something on the subject for *Liberty*. He agrees.

I run into financial writer Mark Skousen in the lobby. He's there to deliver a speech. I invite him to a dinner with

Liberty editors and other contributors that evening, but he has plans to go to Spago. Harry Browne, who'd been somewhat distant from me, comes over to say hello to Mark and to ask Mark's son how tall he is.

I wander about, chatting with old friends, interviewing delegates. I finally find a person who supports Hess; she turns out to be Hess's wife. I ask her why he would be such a good candidate. "Because he's such a wonderful speaker," she tells me. I run into Bumper Hornberger and ask him whether he would allow a reporter from *Liberty* to sit in on his campaign strategy meetings, with a promise not to reveal anything that went on there until after the nomination. Hornberger agrees.

Late in the afternoon, Steve Cox arrives and picks up his press credentials. He and I flip a coin to see who will attend Hornberger's 7:30 strategy meeting. Cox loses the flip so I'll get to sleep in. We find other *Liberty* editors and contributors and get together for dinner. It's a special pleasure to see Brien Bartels, who interned at *Liberty* and was briefly an assistant editor here; John Bergstrom, the best political cartoonist in the world; and Logan Brandt and Michael Freitas, both of whom have articles coming up in our pages. After my Taco Bell lunch, dinner at the hotel restaurant seems like

a gourmet treat; after a day of political chitchat, conversation with this group is scintillating beyond imagination.

That night I make the rounds of hospitality suites and parties, schmoozing and interviewing people until 3:00 a.m.

As I get to my room for a few hours sleep, I muse: nothing has happened to change my prognosis of another Browne nomination, and it's beginning to look as if nothing will.

Saturday, July 1

The first person I run into in the morning is Hornberger, who tells me that Cox hadn't shown at his meeting that morning. (I discover later that Cox could not find out where it was.) He suggests that we go to a private place and he'll brief me on his strategy, subject to the same conditions of secrecy. We go to the bar — pretty quiet at 9:00 a.m. — where he tells me that

Bumper Hornberger: Stool Pigeon? — In March, the Browne campaign announced that it was contemplating refusing to file reports with the FEC as a public protest. Hornberger was convinced that the real reason for the protest was that the campaign didn't want to make public how it has spent the \$1.25 million dollars it had raised during the previous two years and feared that Libertarians who donated money to Browne in excess of the legal limit might very well face legal action, a risk the Browne campaign had minimized. So on March 20, Hornberger wrote a letter to the FEC asking whether individual donors might be prosecuted.

Browne responded by charging that Hornberger had written the FEC "to call attention to the fact that we haven't filed reports yet and that we are in violation of the law." Browne's claim was outright false: Hornberger's letter to the FEC contained no such information. LP Chair David Bergland attacked Hornberger with a somewhat more nebulous charge: the letter was an "invitation to the FEC to hammer the Browne campaign and anyone who might participate in or support the effort to overthrow the unconstitutional FEC regime."

Most LP activists concluded that Hornberger had turned the Browne campaign in to a federal law enforcement agency and were understandably outraged. Over and over again at this year's convention, delegates told me that Hornberger's FEC letter was similar to someone coming to a party at your house where someone was smoking marijuana and calling the police.

The notion that Hornberger had turned in Browne was an absurd one for two reasons:

- 1) The Browne campaign had announced its plan to disobey the law as a public protest and issued press releases seeking publicity; it would be more accurate to say that it was turning itself in; and
- 2) News organizations had already contacted the FEC and reported the FEC's reaction by the time Hornberger wrote to it. One news organization, MSNBC.com, had reported the FEC's response to its own inquiries about Browne's planned protest.

But the charge stuck and Hornberger could never shake it. Part of the reason, I suspect, is that Hornberger's E-mail list is a lot smaller than Browne's, so Browne's attacks on Hornberger were received by a lot more people. More importantly, I think that most Libertarians' support for Browne prejudiced them in the matter. And the charge that Hornberger is a tattle-tale is a lot simpler than the somewhat complicated explanation Hornberger offered.

— R. W. Bradford

he has decided not to participate in the candidate's debate that afternoon. He has several reasons for this startling decision: he thinks it might take Browne by surprise and rattle him; it will impress the delegates as the kind of innovative campaign tactic they might expect from him if he wins the nomination; he figures that the debate would quickly degenerate into a series of attacks on him for "turning Harry in to the FEC"; and he believes that if the subject of Browne malfeasance comes up at the debate on C-SPAN, delegates will hold him responsible for washing the LP's dirty laundry in public.

To maximize the element of surprise, he plans to keep his decision secret until just prior to the debate, at which time he'll announce that he won't participate and invite delegates to hear him speak at length and answer their questions at an adjacent hotel. One possible fly in the ointment: if anyone from the LP asks whether he intends to participate in the debate, he will tell them the truth.

I spend the rest of the morning chatting with delegates and comparing notes with my colleagues, who were doing the same. None of us has encountered anything to get me to change my evaluation of the night before: Browne in a walk.

As the afternoon session began, Hornberger announced his non-participation in the debate by distributing a flyer to all concerned. Convention officials invited all candidates to a meeting to set ground rules for the debate. Hornberger figured that if a representative of his campaign attended, it would imply that he would participate in the debate.

"We had two options at that point," Hornberger explained to me later, "We could skip the meeting, which wouldn't work for long because they would likely come looking for us before starting the meeting, or affirmatively disclose to them that we weren't participating. Either way, the other campaigns would know. So we told them that I wouldn't participate in the debate, and got the fliers from my room and passed them out to the delegates."

The element of surprise was lost. But the convention was getting down to business.

An attempt to allow time on the agenda for a debate among candidates for National Chair had failed, so an impromptu debate was scheduled in a breakout room near the lobby at the same time Hornberger has planned his presentation. The race for Chair is a bit more open than the presidential race, if only because few people have strong opinions about the candidates, and the debate will offer interested delegates a chance to compare the candidates. (By now, David Nolan has "come to his senses," in his words, and dropped out of the race.)

If any of the challengers are to mount a real challenge to Browne, it would have to happen now, either in the debate

or at Hornberger's presentation immediately after the debate.

The Debate

Talk show host Gary Nolan introduces the debate with these words:

This is the part of the entire affair that I look forward to the most, finding out how these guys stand up under questioning, hearing all there is to know about their platforms, probably the most informative, undoubtedly, the best part of the discussion in the entire Convention. As a talk

show host, I want to point something out.

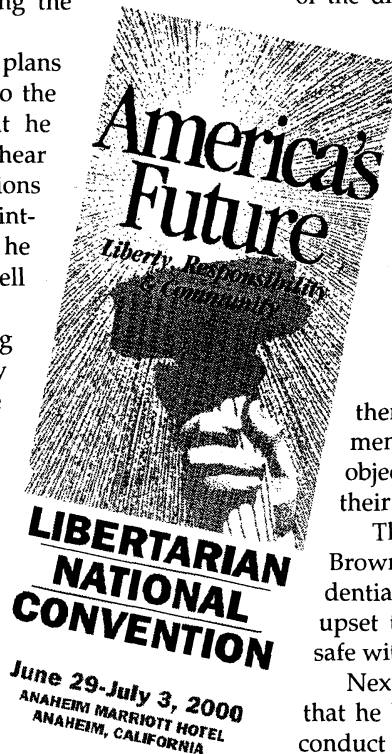
In the questions and answers that we're going to ask, we're not going to talk at all about drugs. An awful lot of people have the impression that the Libertarian Party only believes in legalizing drugs, which isn't of course the case. But as a talk show host I just want to — just an aside here — when you hear your favorite conservative/libertarian talk show host, and hopefully I'm him, and they start talking about legalizing drugs, if you're doing drugs, do me a favor. Don't call.

I believe this is intended as a joke. Nolan then asks the candidates their views on government subsidy of prescription drugs. Don Gorman objects that the candidates are supposed to get their opening statements, and Nolan apologizes.

The first opening statement is from Harry Browne. His strategy, obviously, is to act as "presidential" as he can and hope that nothing happens to upset the status quo. Not surprisingly, he plays it safe with a plain vanilla statement.

Next up is Don Gorman. He begins with a boast that he has promised to "take the high road, always conduct our affairs as gentlemen and with honor. I am happy to report today that we have done exactly that."

He proceeds to stitch together platitudes with an enthusiastic promise to campaign on behalf of Libertarian candidates for local offices. Plainly, this tepid approach is not



He and I flip a coin to see who will attend Hornberger's 7:30 strategy meeting. Cox loses the flip so I'll get to sleep in.

going to convince anyone who wasn't already convinced.

Hess, on the other hand, offers delegates a good reason to vote for him: if delegates will nominate him, he said, he can actually win the election. Dave Hollist uses his five minutes to make a pitch for financing government via "contract insurance."

Moderator Nolan follows by repeating the question he'd asked earlier. Each candidate gives variations of the standard libertarian response to this question. Nolan follows with four

more softball questions that can't possibly enable any candidate to differentiate himself from another. The candidates posture for the C-SPAN cameras.

Any doubt that the "debate" has turned into a lovefest is removed when each candidate is allowed to ask a question of another candidate. First up is Gorman, who directs his question to Browne: "This question goes to my good friend Mr. Harry Browne and it goes like this: when I win the nomination my good friend what are you going to do to help my

From time to time, I see members of the unrecognized Arizona delegation around, dressed in kilts with their faces painted blue, as a homage to Braveheart.

campaign so that we can move this party onward and upward and forward?" His good friend Harry Browne smiled with the confidence of a candidate with a huge lead and a good organization on the convention floor. "I will be your slave. . . ."

Browne is next. He coyly insists it won't be fair to direct his question to only one other candidate. As the moderator tries to invoke the debate rules, Browne poses this tough question: "This question is for all three of the other candidates, because otherwise I'd be playing favorites. The question is very simple: will you gentlemen join me for dinner tonight?"

No one bothers to answer, and the lovefest continues, with Hess asking the other candidates, "Will you join me behind my nomination to do exactly what you've promised

to do, so that we can have a four-pronged attack and we can take out the Republicans and Democrats not next time but here now in the year 2000?" and Hollist asking "I'd like to ask the gentlemen why they treat me so well. I'm a new member — a relatively new member and to a man they've treated me like long lost friends. I don't understand that. I was raised in a large family and there was physical violence going on."

The closing statements continues in the same vein. Insurgent Gorman, plainly winging it, says this:

Good morning Mr. Gore. Good morning Mr. Bush. I want to know if you're paying attention or if you're sound asleep at the switch. Because the Libertarian Party is those feet that you hear going thundering in your backsides. We are coming up to get you my friends because you are not serving the American people — the Libertarian Party is. (applause) I'm wondering if you're paying any attention Mr. "One Note" Nader. You've got a great note but we've got a great program — it's called freedom and liberty — we're coming out to get you. (applause)

I wonder if you're paying any attention Mr. Buchanan. This is what you don't get when you open the trap door and you only have one person at the top and there's nothing underneath it — any one of us can get knocked off and all of you are still out there working for freedom. (much applause)

For those of you who I've talked to both in your home state or out in the hall or up in the room or whatever, you know that I have made a pledge and a commitment that I will come to your state, I will campaign with your troops. I don't care if they're a water and sewer commissioner or the United States Senate. I will get out there and I will work with them. I will work with them in the malls. I will work with them in the air-

ports. We will visit your state houses. We will work with your chairs. I will get out there and lead and show and push and control — whatever it takes to get your people elected to office. Because the answer to the problems of all government is [that] we do not have enough elected Libertarians in public office. I intend to change that if you give me this goal. (applause, standing ovation)

And I am so serious about that statement that I have made a promise that if I get this nomination I will shave off my beard. (applause mixed with laughter, one voice shouts out "Keep the beard!")

Whatever the reason for



A lovefest instead of a debate — Why did the debate turn into a lovefest? It was plainly in Browne's interest to do so, and it's difficult to see how the hapless Hess or Hollist could have accomplished much of anything, given the paucity of their support. But why was Gorman such a pussycat? During the past two days, his campaign had distributed copies of *Liberty's* investigation of the Browne campaign in an obvious attempt to challenge the legitimacy of the Browne campaign, so why didn't he bring up any of those questions in the debate?

Two explanations seem plausible. One is that he was snookered by Browne, who had shamelessly flattered Gorman during much of the campaign, focusing his vitriol on Hornberger even before Hornberger jumped into the race. The other is that Gorman realized the campaign was lost and didn't want to rock the boat. My guess is that both factors played a role.

Incidentally, Gorman's distribution of the *Liberty* reprint at the convention had no apparent effect. Part of the reason, I suspect, was that so few copies were distributed. Part of the reason was that the document was longer than conventioners wanted to read. Browne campaign staffer Michael Cloud thoughtfully prepared a one-page report on Project Archimedes, citing the *Liberty* investigation as its source. Cloud's summary characterized Archimedes as "the most successful recruiting program in Libertarian Party history," and did not mention that it had been misrepresented to party members as part of a fraudulent fund-raising campaign. My guess is a lot more people read the summary than the report.

— R. W. Bradford

the non-debate debate, one thing is sure by the time it ends: the delegates will nominate Browne on the first ballot — unless Hornberger manages to perform a miracle in his rented room at the Hilton across the street.

I hoof it over to the Hilton, leaving my colleagues to cover the debate for National Chair. But before I arrive at the room where Hornberger was scheduled to make his case, I run into delegates pouring out of the room and back toward the Marriott. "Hornberger's pushed back his talk for an hour so people can go to the debate for chair," one explains, so I reverse course and return to the Marriott.

The breakout rooms are packed, with nearly every seat full and people standing around. I manage to find a seat. By the time the debate starts, it's standing-room-only with people packed uncomfortably tight against one another.

The chair debate is dramatically different from the presidential debate: the candidates actually talk about substantive issues. All three candidates surprise me. Jim Lark sounds very competent and professional and not at all like Browne's candidate. George Phillies, who had seemed to be the Hollywood stereotype of the shy, socially-awkward college professor when I met him earlier at the convention, makes a very strong case for refocusing the national party's efforts and shows surprising wit. Gary Copeland argues for a more businesslike approach to managing the LP. He's founder of the Libertarian Wolf Pack and every time he mentions the phrase "wolf pack," its members howl like wolves. He is also the only candidate who has experience in business — Phillies

He celebrates the fact that Don Gorman has actually been elected to public office, as if the more successful third party candidates — Perot, Buchanan and Nader — owed their success in part to their winning such tiny local elections.

and Lark are college professors — and sounds like he could do an excellent job as CEO of the LP.

Part of the reason that the chair debate is actually a debate, I suspect, is that its outcome is not so certain. Another reason is that it's not on C-SPAN, so the candidates don't feel they have to put on a nice show for the neighbors.

As the appointed hour for Hornberger's talk approaches, I leave the packed breakout rooms and head over to the Hilton. This room is also standing-room-only. Hornberger has already started. He patiently goes over his charges against Browne. A good share of the audience is pro-Browne and very confrontational. Hornberger is patient and answers all questions. He does what Gorman had failed to do: give delegates a reason to support him rather than Browne. While his criticism of Browne is cogent, his campaign strategy seems preposterous: he promises a "guerilla" campaign, focusing on politically marginal groups, going to "swap

meets" to look for votes. But it doesn't really matter how well or poorly he makes his case: only about a quarter of the delegates are here, and most seem to have their minds made up.

Sunday, July 2

Today's agenda includes nominating speeches, a roll call vote and an acceptance speech. It's all over but the shouting, but there's a lot of shouting left to do.

Nominating speeches are limited to sixteen minutes. The first to be nominated is None of the Above, who always gets a smattering of sentimental votes. NOTA's nominating speeches mercifully last less than five minutes. The first human candidate to be nominated is Hess. Five delegates

Copeland is founder of the Libertarian Wolf Pack and every time he mentions the phrase "wolf pack," its members howl like wolves.

solemnly tell the audience that he can actually win the election. Hess himself takes the stage, repeating, to tepid applause, this obvious hallucination. "We may be deluded," one delegate tells me, "but we're not *that* deluded." The Hess nominators finish with more than six of their sixteen allotted minutes unused. Things are going fast.

Massachusetts Senate candidate Carla Howell takes the podium to nominate Harry Browne: he can do the most to "grow our Libertarian Party membership," he can get the "most radio and TV coverage," and he "stands the best chance of smashing through the one million vote ceiling." She concluded by getting "personal": he got her active in the Libertarian Party and inspired her with "his commitment, his organization and his effectiveness. . . . Thank you, Harry Browne for the 'Carla Howell for U.S. Senate' campaign!"

Fred Collins, an LP member who was elected to non-partisan office in his town in Michigan, seconds the nomination. He's there to counter the only argument Gorman has made in public: "what we don't need is a presidential candidate campaigning for city council races around the country. If we have candidates who cannot get out and run their own campaigns, form campaign teams such as I did and win the races, how can one man crisscrossing the country allowing a few minutes to each campaign, make a difference?"

There's another seconding speech, this time from a "talk show legend" who happens to be an African-American. Then the real stars are introduced: four sixty-second commercials, all of which are hits with the delegates. The final ad, in which Harry claims government programs are "Rosemary's Baby," is followed by tumultuous applause. His nominating speeches run just under 18 minutes and are followed by an organized demonstration.

Hornberger's nomination is next. After four eloquent but concise speeches, Hornberger takes the podium. He begins with a litany of outrages committed by the state and sup-

ported by the major parties, then proposes to do something about it:

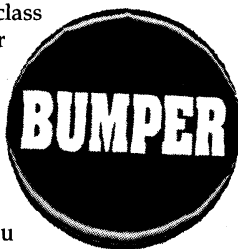
For almost 30 years Democrats and Republicans have insulted us, they have abused us, they have ridiculed us, they have censored us with their ridiculously high ballot access barriers, and perhaps worst of all, Democrats and Republicans and Reform Party people and Green Party people, presidential election after presidential election have ignored us.

They have destroyed the fabric of this society with their immoral and destructive War on Drugs. They have damaged the minds of countless children in their government-run schools. They have assaulted families and family values with Social Security and other anti-family welfare programs. They have attacked immigrants, repatriating them into Cuban communist tyranny and incarcerating them for committing the heinous crime of crossing a border in search of work. They have engendered class envy and class warfare in this society by waging war against tremendously successful companies who have done so much to raise the standard of living of people of the world, such as Microsoft. They have terrorized and brutalized and murdered through such agencies as the Internal Revenue Service and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. And now they have embarked on a program of total gun confiscation.

My fellow libertarians, this is not the time to play it safe. This is not the time to talk about four years from now, or eight years from now. This is not the time for timidity. This is not the time for caution. This is not the time to hold the dice in your hand and squeeze.

This is the time to roll the dice. This is the time for risk-taking. This is the time for boldness. Because the victims of all this tyranny cry out for that boldness. They will not wait for four more years.

The thirst that you have felt in your hearts and your minds for ever so long is the thirst to know what it's like to



It's the strangest nominating speech since 1987, when candidate Harry Glen proposed uniting the abortion and gun control issues by arming fetuses so they could shoot their abortionists.

live and die a free man or a free woman cries out for that boldness.

Now is the time to fight. Now is the time to take these people on directly. And it would be a tremendous honor to lead this fight on your behalf, not in the rear, but leading this fight directly from the front lines and to take what these people have done to the people of this country, the people of this party, the people of the world, and *cram it down their throats*.

It was powerful rhetoric, powerfully delivered. If it were possible to change the minds of delegates in 4 minutes and 46 seconds, this speech would have done it. You can see emotional conflict on the faces of many delegates: they are

angry with Hornberger for his criticism of the ethics of the Browne campaign and the LP... but this is the kind of red-meat rhetoric that inspires them, that explains why they are Libertarians in the first place.

Next up is Richard Boddie, nominating Don Gorman. On the surface, getting the former presidential hopeful and perennial LP candidate for lower offices to nominate Gorman seems like a good idea. But Boddie's speeches always focus more on himself than on his candidate. He begins by welcoming delegates "not to Disneyland but to Orange County" which seems to be distinguished primarily by being the home of Dick Boddie. He explains that he is here because he promised Gorman "in February" that he would nominate him. Well into his remarks by now, he still hasn't mentioned a single reason why a delegate might want to support Gorman. And he is not about to. He returns to his favorite subject, himself, observing that many delegates probably mistook him for Frederick Douglass or Ed Bradley. Then he reads the following original verse:

Friends and fellow libertarians,
come gather round people wherever you roam
and admit that the waters around you have grown
and expect that soon you will be drenched to the bone;
if your time to you is worth saving
you'd better start swimming
or you'll sink like a stone
for the times they are a-changing.

Having gotten this drivelt out of his system, he finally seems to be getting to the point: "it's time for a change." But then he digresses about how no Libertarian can be elected this year (a point agreed upon by all candidates but the hapless Hess) and undercuts his "time-for-a-change" theory by saying "we might be on the right track but my goodness if we don't move faster we're going to get run over." He briefly jumps to Gorman's theme ("Local is the difference! Bottom up is the difference! Not top down!"), but then he's back to denouncing the idea that a Libertarian can actually be elected. "I believe we need a change and with that I believe we must nominate Don Gorman as our presidential candidate for this year 2000. He's the only libertarian who has ever served as a party's leader as a Libertarian in an elective office." But he's off on a tangent again with a joke about nominating "Boddie and Sowell" for president in 2004. He continues to weave plugs for himself with celebrations of the fact that Don Gorman has actually been elected to public office, as if being elected to a state legislature whose average electoral constituency consists of fewer than 3,000 people constitutes evidence of ability to win votes at the presidential level and as if the more successful third party candidates — Perot, Buchanan and Nader — owed their success in part to their winning such tiny local elections. He concludes with another verse of doggerel, just as moronic as the first. The delegates give him a huge round of applause.

The seconders — Bonnie Flickinger, Lorenzo Gaztanaga, Nancy Lord Johnson — all stick to their subject better, returning to the twin themes of "Gorman-has-won-an-election" and "Gorman-will-work-with-local-candidates."

Finally there is the nomination of Dave Hollist by Don Kilmer. It's the strangest nominating speech since 1987, when candidate Harry Glen proposed uniting the abortion

and gun control issues by arming fetuses so they could shoot their abortionists.

Kilmer is a friend of Hollist, but he's not a member of the Libertarian Party, so he's grateful that the party is allowing him to speak. In the course of his speech, he explains his admiration for Hollist and lectures Libertarians on where they go wrong (they shouldn't be so critical of government). He concludes with these words: "Because I am not a member of your party, I don't know if it's permissible for me to actually nominate Mr. Hollist. If I am, I nominate him. If I'm not,

"We may be deluded," one delegate tells me, "but we're not that deluded."

I call for a nomination from the floor."

The chair asks for a second from the floor. There is an embarrassing pause. Not a single delegate steps forward. Finally a delegate steps up and points out that Hollist should not be considered to be a nominee, since in fact he has been neither nominated nor seconded. The chair overrules this, saying that the 30 delegates who signed Hollist's "nomination paper" are his actual nominators, news to most people here.

Another delegate takes the floor with a point of order: the nomination speech has run over the 16-minute limit imposed by the rules and he wants Hollist disqualified. The chair refuses to do so on grounds that in fact the speech for Hollist had run slightly under 15 minutes. He leaves the impression that if any candidate had exceeded the 16-minute limit he would have been disqualified from consideration. One wonders what would have happened if a delegate had asked to have Harry Browne disqualified because his nominating speeches had exceeded the limit by nearly two minutes.

Finally it's time to vote. The LP has chosen a very peculiar method of conducting the vote: the party has added a new procedure to the traditional way of nominating a candidate. As usual, the state delegations will caucus. But instead of following the caucus with a roll call of the states, each state will report its totals to the convention secretary, who will figure out who was nominated. But since television likes the drama of a roll call, the secretary will keep the vote secret and a roll call will be staged for the television camera.

The convention recesses for delegations to caucus. I wander into the lobby, where I say hello to Perry Willis, Browne's campaign manager. I ask him how many votes Browne will get, and he says he's done no polling, but that staffer Michael Cloud has done some and believes that Browne will get 62 percent on the first ballot. I tell Willis my own estimate is 57 percent, based on my unscientific survey and my vague memory that Harry's faction had gotten this percentage in a past convention.

Back in the hall, tedium reigns. It takes a lot of time for the state chairs to report all their vote totals to the secretary and there are several clerical problems. So instead of a five-

minute break followed by the dramatic rollcall, there's a break of more than an hour, punctuated by occasional announcements along the lines of "There's a problem with the votes recorded from North Dakota. Would someone from the North Dakota delegation come to the podium?"

Finally, an hour and a half after the delegates recessed to caucus and an hour and twenty minutes after they finished voting, the roll call begins. I wonder why a party that was so worried about looking bad on C-SPAN that its presidential candidates refrained from disagreeing with one another during their debates and which kept debates for National Chair and Vice President off the agenda would interrupt the most dramatic part of its proceedings with 90 minutes of utter tedium.

Problems persist. New Hampshire has four votes, and delegation chairman Don Gorman reports them as "three for Gorman and one for Browne." But he's called back to a microphone at the insistence of the secretary who spies some sort of discrepancy. He repeats that there are three votes for himself and one for Browne. The effect of the long delay and the miscues is to convert a dramatic ritual into a tedious one.

Browne wins the nomination with 56.2 percent of the vote. The chair recognizes Gorman, who pleads for a unified party, but doesn't call for making the nomination unanimous. The chair then recognizes Browne, who thanks Gorman and Hess for their "constructive" and "wonderful" and "positive" race, adding that "negativism" and "attacks . . . have no place in this party." Presumably, I suppose, he's talking about Hornberger's attacks on his campaign, not his and Bergland's attacks on Hornberger.

Delegates quickly adopt Browne's campaign platform, a platform prepared by the campaign to be distributed to the press and to inquirers to save the party the embarrassing problem of defending the rather exotic platform that the del-

As I leave the convention, I am accosted by a member of Browne's campaign team, who asks me not to allow anything critical of Browne to appear in Liberty until after the election.

egates themselves compose. Mercifully, it's time for lunch.

As the convention prepares to come to order after lunch, a movement is afoot to draft Gorman for the VP spot. Even the Browne people support the idea, since Gorman has assured one and all that he'll turn down the nomination because he thinks the party owes it to those who declare their candidacy and actively campaign for it. Party statesman Ed Clark moves to suspend the rules to allow the nomination of Gorman. The rules are suspended and Gorman is added to the list of candidates. When it comes time to place his name in nomination, he withdraws to the applause of the guests.

The convention recesses for the vice-presidential voting.

But there's no time to announce the results: Browne's acceptance speech is scheduled for now, and no one even thinks of delaying it, lest C-SPAN's viewers might change channels.

Browne delivers his well-rehearsed speech from memory, in front of the podium. His theme is "We believe in you." His speech focuses on how Libertarians want to let people make their own decisions, and focuses on the War on Drugs (he's against it) and government efforts to restrict gun ownership (ditto). It is the best speech I've ever heard him give.

Bill Winter tells me he cancelled Liberty's press credentials because he didn't like the investigation of the LP and the Browne campaign that we ran in our July issue.

(See "We Believe in You," p. 47.)

I retreat with friends and other *Liberty* editors to the Hilton for dinner. It's been a very long day, but I won't have an opportunity to talk with delegates again until the next convention, so I make the rounds of hospitality suites until 3:00 a.m.

Monday, July 3

I'm up at 7:45 a.m. so I can join Steve Cox in interviewing Harry Browne at 8:00 a.m. Harry is his usual charming self and the interview holds a few surprises. When Cox asks him what he thinks of Russell Means as a candidate for the 2004 nomination, he quickly changes the subject and praises Carla Howell, LP candidate for Ted Kennedy's Senate seat, at great length. When asked how this campaign will differ from his 1996 campaign, he says it will focus on wedge issues, an approach he eschewed in an interview with me only last November. (See "A New Harry Browne," p. 53.)

I've arranged for an interview with Steve Dasbach, the LP's national director. Dasbach immediately agrees, but he's busy handling minor emergencies, and it's lunchtime before he and I can sneak away for the interview. By then, the con-

vention has awarded its vice-presidential nomination to Art Olivier, former mayor of a Los Angeles suburb, on the second ballot. He seems like a good choice: he's intelligent and articulate and is willing to spend the time and money needed to campaign full time. Jim Lark, the status quo candidate, is elected National Chair.

Dasbach is affable and informative in our interview, leaving me convinced that the LP's national office is well-managed. As the interview winds down, my curiosity gets the best of me and I ask how the party decided to rescind the press credentials it has promised *Liberty*. He tells me the decision had been made by Bill Winter, the party's Communications Director.

It's getting late and Kathy and I have 1,300 miles to drive to get home, but I want to verify that Winter made the decision, so I return to the pressroom and ask to interview him. I ask him whether he had made the decision (in E-mail correspondence, his assistant told me the decision was made by the "media department"). He said that he had. I ask why. He says he cancelled our credentials because he didn't like the investigation of the LP and the Browne campaign that *Liberty* ran in our July issue. I am surprised: I hadn't expected him to be so frank. He explains that *Liberty* had long been hostile to the LP and he didn't see why it should make itself accessible. I suggest that no one who had read our coverage of past conventions could possibly think we'd been systematically hostile, and he admits that he had read our coverage of only one other convention. Eventually, he begrudgingly apologizes for his decision. I have trouble understanding why he would do such a thing in the first place; he's obviously a talented individual who's been a major asset to the LP. I hope he isn't making decisions like this about other news media.

The convention is over. Nearly a thousand delegates had come to Anaheim to choose a presidential ticket and to elect the officers and committeemen who will run the party until the next convention. They did a pretty good job — whatever Browne's ethical shortcomings, he's really the only plausible candidate. Art Olivier was obviously the best choice for the vice-presidential spot. And Jim Lark should give the party new energy that old warhorse David Bergland obviously lacks. Sooner or later, the party will have to face the issues raised by Hornberger and the Clean Slate people. But right now, it has an election to contest.

It is time to leave. As I walk into the lobby, I am accosted by a member of Browne's campaign team, who asks me not to allow anything critical of Browne to appear in *Liberty* until after the election. I explain to him, as I have explained to Browne himself and to others in the campaign, that *Liberty* is not the *LP News*: its function is to tell the truth as its editors and writers see it, and suggest that the libertarian movement needs a place where critical discussion can take place. I don't think I convinced him.

A few minutes later, I am on the road out of Anaheim. □

Gorman's post mortem — Since returning from Anaheim, I've done interviews by telephone and E-mails with several of the *dramatis personae*, mostly asking them to verify or disverify information that I got secondhand. But one interview turned out to be very interesting. I called Don Gorman to ask him to send me a political button we could photograph to use as an illustration. He agreed and we got to talking a bit about the convention. He spoke affectionately about Browne and expressed tremendous animosity toward Hornberger. He also told me that he would have won the nomination if Hornberger had not entered the race at the last moment, leaving me wondering what possible evidence he had for this amazing opinion, especially since he hadn't done any survey of delegates. He also said he planned to try to convince the LP to adopt a by-law making it illegal for a candidate who had earlier abandoned the presidential race, as Hornberger had done in 1999, to re-enter the race.

— R. W. Bradford

Convention Diary II

Up the Down Escalator

by Stephen Cox

All dressed up and nowhere to go but the Libertarian Party National Convention.

Friday, June 30

The Year 2000 Libertarian Party National Convention is being held today in the conference wing of the Anaheim Marriott Hotel, adjacent to the Anaheim Convention Center in sunny, sparkly, concrete Anaheim, California.

It is not being held in the Convention Center itself. Let us be very clear about that. The Republicans or the Democrats would fill the big building; Libertarians can fill only part of the little one. Will that situation ever change? The mission of this convention, and every other LP convention, is to find some way of making that happen. I'm here to see how the efforts are going.

As I park my car, I study the aforesaid Convention Center. At the moment, it's closed, empty, abandoned to the institutional emptiness of Fourth of July weekend. But just behind its immense curtain windows, I can see four escalators, endlessly spooling and slithering from one floor to another, oblivious to their cost of operation. It's both a disturbing and a reassuring sight.

Reassuring, because I, as a good American, relish every lavish and prodigal proof of my country's energy and power. "We've got it," those escalators are saying, "and we can afford to waste it."

Disturbing, because I, as (I hope) a good libertarian, understand that when Americans think they have enough of everything, they are, indeed, very likely to waste a great deal of it.

That's true about the major parties. When the stock market is up, there's no control on the way they spend. And it's also true, in a funny way, about the Libertarian Party, which is run by people so well supplied with optimism that they can afford to lavish energy on what other people regard as an obvious waste of time.

During all the years since its founding in 1971, the LP has operated pretty much like one of those escalators — dependably, predictably, reassuringly. And its vote total has never exceeded what it was able to get in the election of 1980.

Perhaps the party should continue to run in its predictable grooves, on the off-chance that some day a crowd of brand-new people (late at night, perhaps, on a giddily patriotic July Fourth weekend) will want to take a ride on it. To me, that seems an honorable employment for such a machine. But it's eerie to see those escalators running and running, with nobody on them.

Mulling this over, I pull my bags out of the car and go looking for the Party. Once I get inside the hotel, it all seems familiar: the littered carpets; the mercilessly cold A/C; the orange placards with blocky black lettering, eccentrically spaced; the stacks of campaign "literature" announcing the principles of caucuses unknown yesterday and never to be recalled tomorrow; people conferring with one another as seriously as if they weren't wearing Styrofoam hats adorned with plastic bumper stickers; suits and sandals, randomly distributed; pint-sized security guards protecting the doors of the auditorium, out of which delegates constantly rush as if they couldn't stand even one moment more of this. I've been to lots of conventions, but it's good to be back home.

The one place where I don't feel at home is the place that is meant to make me feel the most that way — the media room, where I go to pick up my credentials to enter the convention and report on this stuff. *Liberty's* management has had *issues*, major issues, with the media room, involving the party's limits on the number of credentials we can have. I feel like one lucky libertarian son of a gun when I leave that room with my little yellow pass — even though the pass has

to say *Journal of Ayn Rand Studies* so that *Liberty* won't exceed its quota

Liberty, by the way, is virtually the only independent journal that takes a serious and detailed interest in the Libertarian Party. Looking around me, I don't see crowds of reporters breaking down the door to cover the Libertarian National Convention. Basically, I just see me. Well, maybe the party is waiting for precisely the right people to show up.

As far as I'm concerned, the right people are already here, and I have no difficulty finding them: Bill and Kathy Bradford from *Liberty* HQ, and our California contingent, Carl Isackson, Carolina Beroza and Paul Beroza. We pick up Brien Bartels and several other *Liberty* writers and throw ourselves a banquet.

Whenever you go to a convention, I urge you to take these people along. Don't be caught without them. They are a convention in themselves. I'd even hang out with the Democrats if I thought that these people would be there. On second thought, maybe I wouldn't. It's nice to eat at least one dinner with folks who don't talk about the need to rescue "Sosh Scurty."

Saturday, July 1

The neighborhood's No. 1 sightseeing attraction (except for something called "Disneyland," but who would want to visit that?), is the world-famous Crystal Cathedral. Not wanting to reduce our lives to the political process, a most unlibertarian thing to do, the California contingent takes the morning off to tour this cultural monument. Bill and Kathy, sad victims of the electoral mentality, refuse to go.

The Cathedral (actually, it's not a cathedral at all, because to have a cathedral you have to have a bishop, and they don't have one here . . . but that's another story) was built by a televangelist who once operated a drive-in church. It was designed by architect Philip Johnson, long considered a *very* big deal in the World of Art. The building is a large, oddly shaped glass and metal structure containing theater seats instead of pews. Next to it is a "prayer tower" with a goofy

The Libertarian Party is run by people so well supplied with optimism that they can afford to lavish energy on what other people regard as an obvious waste of time.

little crystal thing in the base of it that Paul thinks is supposed to represent a cross. No, you can't go up in the tower, but at Christmas you can go into the main building and attend an enormous pageant with camels and sheep, and angels flying around on wires. All quite impressive, in a strictly nonreligious way.

Each Sunday, more people worship in the Crystal Cathedral than have ever gathered for any kind of libertarian event.

The Cathedral is surrounded by gardens most reminis-

cent of a miniature golf course — little paths and pools and cement streams — although Carl points out that they don't have a windmill or a swinging log. An *easy* miniature golf course, then. But the gardens do offer some amazing sights. Here you can see some of the very worst statuary in the world: lifesize "realistic" evocations of concepts like "the smiling Jesus," which Carolina initially mistakes for a werewolf, or "Moses at the burning bush" (a gas-powered burning bush). There is also a reflecting pool on which a large metal Christ appears to be walking. This morning, a pool-cleaner is walking around in it. "Must have lost his faith," Paul says.

Back at the convention, we discover that this is one place in Southern California where faith has not been lost. A man is running frantically around the halls and lobbies passing out signs advocating the presidential nomination (in 2004 — can't start too early!) of Russell Means, losing candidate for the party's nomination in 1988. Means's only apparent qualification (the only one that's apparent to me, anyhow) is the fact that he is an American Indian and sometimes appears in movies. I remember Russell saying, in one of his inspirational chats at the convention of 1987, that he had never read Ayn Rand. He said it with some complacency. It's hard for me to think of a book, even Marx's *Capital*, that could be considered a recommendation for a person *not* to have read. But now, after 12 years of dormancy, Russell's campaign for the presidency is growing like a Chia Pet. While I'm reading the Means-for-President handout, I hear roars from the auditorium and see people running in. I run in too, just in time for the peroration of Russell's speech, which is modestly entitled "Revolution!" When I arrive, he's castigating "consumerism," which, he claims, is "the ultimate melting pot" that has "caged" and "colonized" the American people. Then, after some kind of transition in which he appears to be calling for an increase in party activism, he proclaims his respect for the "libertarians" at "Waco." (See "Revolution!", p. 52)

The audience shouts and puts its hands together mightily. I can only stand there wondering, *what* libertarians of Waco? What is this man talking about? And why is anyone applauding? I go looking for someone who might be able to tell me. No one can, but a number of prominent party people who evidently were *not* applauding let me know that in their opinion Russell's speech was "preposterous" and "ridiculous" and that it was "obviously" just "a collection of meaningless phrases." How can libertarians, of all people, whoop for a candidate who's running against "consumerism" — one of the meanest, angriest bees in the anticapitalist bonnet?

I ponder that question as I wander through the exhibition rooms where the people who so recently cheered for Russell Means are buying and selling and taking no heed of the spectre of consumerism. Maybe they just don't recognize consumerism in its homely libertarian form.

Admittedly, the rooms are much less funky than their equivalents among the Republicans and Democrats. The exhibitors are woefully short on big Styrofoam elephants and cute little plastic donkeys. As far as I'm concerned, a party without animal icons has come way too far from our Stone-Age origins. But I can't resist indulging in the best kind of consumerism, the consumerism that libertarian meetings

always offer you the chance to indulge. I buy an armful of books, whether I need them or not. Take that, Russell Means! I even visit the Laissez Faire Books table and ask the nice guy who runs it to put my own book in a more prominent place. He flatters me by requesting my autograph on the two remaining copies. Ah, celebrity. I hope that he came with 50 copies, but it could have been more like three.

Leaving the marketplace while I still have money, I discover a true celebrity — John Hospers. John was the party's first presidential nominee, and by some standards the most successful; he obtained its one actual electoral vote. He

How can libertarians, of all people, whoop for a candidate who's running against "consumerism" — one of the meanest, angriest bees in the anticapitalist bonnet?

deserved that vote. He is a philosopher by profession, but he has the strange and unprecedented ability to make complicated issues clear and accessible for anyone who listens to him. *Liberty* is honored to have him as a senior editor. Today he's in particularly good form, commenting on the convention and discussing articles he plans to write for *Liberty*.

VP candidate Art Olivier spies John in the crowd and comes over to pay his respects. Art is a former mayor of Bellflower, California, so I get to ask a question that I've always wanted to put to somebody: How did his town get its beautiful name? He brightens. Oh, he says, people used to grow the belle-fleur apple there, and some settlers came along who mistook the name and called the place Bellflower. We all start talking about immigrants and languages, and when the conversation turns to Olivier's Dutch forebears, John surprises me by saying that his own first language was Dutch. "Do you ever dream in Dutch?" I ask. "Yes," he says, "I do."

I'll take that as a metaphor for this political party, and this convention. We all dream in a number of languages, some of which turn out to be incomprehensible when we try to relate our dreams to others. Even when we think we're using the same language, your "belle-fleur" becomes my "bellflower." Sometimes it works out beautifully. Sometimes it doesn't work out at all. Ask Jacob G. (Bumper) Hornberger, head of the Future of Freedom Foundation. Bumper is running for president, and he's the odd man out, at least at the moment. He doesn't seem to speak the other candidates' languages at all, the others being chiefly Barry Hess, a businessman from Arizona, Don Gorman, a former New Hampshire legislator, and Harry Browne, the LP's candidate in 1996. Barry, Don, and Harry pose together in a chummy photo on the front page of the omnipresent convention issue of *LP News*. Bumper's not in the picture. And today he announces that he's not going to appear at the candidates' debate. He invites people to go over to the Hilton afterwards to hear him talk about his "ethics fight with Browne and the national party office" and about the neces-

sity for the party to "take some risks" rather than continue to "play it safe."

The party is certainly playing it safe at the "debate." The whole thing has obviously been arranged for the C-SPAN cameras. This convention is so C-SPAN-conscious that when my colleagues from *Liberty* appear with C-SPAN tote bags, delegates continually accost them to express thanks for the great job that C-SPAN does. Even Bumper declined to join the debate because he thought his "disagreements" should not "be nationally televised on C-SPAN."

The debating candidates denounce the Republicans and Democrats, not one another, they pick up and expand on one another's comments, and they are happy to offer their services to whoever in their group is fortunate enough to get the convention's nod.

Only one non-C-SPANable candidate appears — Dave Hollist, a guy from Alta Loma, California. ("Where's Alta Loma?" I ask someone, and he replies, "Just above Baja Loma." A California joke; ignore it.) Hollist has no discernible following, but he does have a big idea, and his idea is this: you can finance the government without taxes if you just convert it to the principle of "contract insurance." Here is a person who has read Ayn Rand. In her essay "Government Financing in a Free Society," she speculates that people who wanted their contracts to be enforced (and who doesn't?) could pay money to the government when they made those contracts, and those fees would be enough to fund the legitimate functions of government.

Dave appears to be devoting his life to the contract insurance cause. "With this system," his leaflets say, "for the first time in history, people could live in peace." I'm sure they could. But how do you make them peaceful enough to buy the system in the first place? I guess you could start by getting them to vote for Dave.

The audience is tolerant of Dave and his program, but it loves the other candidates. It especially loves Don Gorman, a

One of the good things about libertarians is that even the leadership never surrounds itself with guards or milling fans.

little terrier of a man with a sharp New England accent (no r's, please, and easy on the l's), and Harry Browne, who is by far the most effective, publicly accessible speaker. Harry is so tall, compared to the other candidates, that he seems to be standing up while they're sitting down.

Don and Harry disagree — very amicably, of course — about campaign strategy. Don says he would travel anywhere and everywhere in the country, speaking on behalf of any local candidate who wanted his help. Harry says he would raise the "name recognition" of the party on the national level, and that, in itself, would help the local candidates. Harry is obviously right. When Don turns up in Anytown, USA, to campaign for the LP candidate for city

council, he'll be lucky to get an item in the *Anytown Shopper*, let alone make a splash on the 6 o'clock news.

The big division in this convention is between the Pros, the LP professionals like Harry, and the Others, the people like . . . well, the people like me. I sympathize with Don. I sympathize with Bumper. But Harry has the best chance to make a dent in the national psychology. He's a very bright and able guy, and there's something more. He looks like a presidential candidate. He talks like a presidential candidate. He acts like a presidential candidate. If you don't want somebody like that, don't run a presidential candidate.

The Libertarian Party is (perhaps necessarily) made in the image of the two major parties. It spends most of its time on ballot access and campaigns for public office — almost entirely unsuccessful campaigns, but never mind that now. It shapes its conventions for television, and it bends the truth for televisual effect. Facing C-SPAN's glassy, all-distorting lens, Harry claims that under Ronald Reagan "government grew by two-thirds," and Barry Hess comes out with the standard Libertarian line that "there's no difference between the Republicans and the Democrats."

Question: How many Clintonistas will the Libertarian Party succeed in electing, by taking votes away from Republicans? And how will you feel if the LP really does throw the election to Al Gore? If you want to see what government looks like when it grows by two-thirds, that will be your chance.

No, I'm not a fan of the Grand Old Party, but I do know that Libertarian ideology can't account for all the libertarian things that happen in this world. It was Richard Nixon, of all people, who freed us from conscription, at a time when the Democrats wanted to make the draft fairer by drafting everyone. And it was the tax-and-spend Democrats who were favorable to gay rights when the Republicans were still chatting about "faggots." Most libertarian ideas that get some-

The LP has a natural following among Hispanic voters. But that's not because of the immigration issue; it's because of the Hispanic tradition of hard work and economic ambition.

where in politics get there because they've filtered into one of the two major parties.

After the conclusion of the "debate," that feast of intellect and flow of soul, I proceed to the Hilton, expecting some kind of fireworks from Bumper's address. Hundreds of people pack into the room, and there is strong feeling from the start. Mostly, it's grief aroused by Bumper's "divisiveness." Some people seem to have shown up for his remarks only for the purpose of stomping out on them, and when he opens the meeting up for questions, there are several impassioned verbal challenges.

But the event is inconclusive. Bumper's account of his

quarrel with the LP powers-that-be is both too long and too short to have much effect, and his proposal for a presidential campaign of "guerilla war" strikes me as unlikely to generate more than a few votes for his nomination.

Bumper wants to make open immigration a major LP priority and to focus the presidential campaign on Hispanic voters and people too politically disaffected to vote. He proposes to campaign in such hangouts of the disaffected as swapmeets and trailer parks. I think he's right about one thing: the LP has a natural following among Hispanic voters. But that's not because of the immigration issue; it's because of the Hispanic tradition of hard work and economic ambition. I think that most Hispanic Americans would agree with me that open immigration would be fine, if we first got rid of the welfare state. As for campaigning for the votes of non-voters, all I can say is, good luck.

If anybody can get those votes, Bumper can, but it isn't the right strategy for a party that has only one chance, every four years, to make a statistical impact on the nation's political life. If there wasn't a Libertarian Party, or a Libertarian Party that was structured mainly to make such an impact, a thousand flowers like Bumper's might bloom. But C-SPAN is not going to follow Bumper to more than one swapmeet.

After Bumper's presentation, the *Liberty* mob gathers for a prandial debriefing. John Hospers arrives for the dessert course and some discussion of the philosophical problems of libertarianism. Again, a different language makes itself heard. John never talks "politics." His thoughtfulness and inwardness, his true courtesy toward variant ideas, his ability to focus on the main issue of individual freedom, without regard to electoral strategy — without this, libertarianism is nothing. The problem is how to speak in all our languages, and still carry a message to the public. Perhaps the Libertarian Party is not the best way to do that. Yet John's campaign for the presidency was indispensable to everything that the party has later been able to do.

Bill and I go looking for parties and find a pretty lively one in the quarters of the Texas delegation. Here I meet John's running mate from 1972, Tonie Nathan. Tonie is tiny, vivid, electrically energetic; she shocks me with the casual revelation that she is 77 years old. I ask her how she felt in 1972 when she realized that she had won a vote in the Electoral College. After the November election, Roger McBride, a Virginia elector, called her out of the blue to say that he was planning to vote for her. That was Tonie's turn to be shocked. "Oh," she said, "does Virginia vote at a different time?" "It's the Electoral College," he explained, "and I'm an elector"; and he informed her that she was about to become the first woman in history to receive an electoral vote.

When the votes were counted in the Senate, Vice President Agnew heard the name "Theodora Nathan" and assumed, in the simplicity of his mind, that this was some guy named "Theodore." He had to be told that the mysterious individual wasn't a guy at all.

Sunday, July 2

I find Paul and Carl and Carolina standing anxiously in line for breakfast, inspired by the false impression that balloting for the presidential nomination will occur on schedule.

Despite its besetting concern with the multitudes of people out in C-SPAN Land, the convention management has hit on an ingenious method of wasting time. Every state delegation is supposed to assemble, count its votes for the various candidates, and then deliver them to the convention secretary. Most delegations do this, but some don't, and those who don't have to be begged from the rostrum to go ahead and *do it*, for God's sake. This merely clears the decks, however, for a second vote, conducted in a traditional roll call of the states, during which there are opportunities to stop and try to reconcile discrepancies between the votes already delivered and the votes now being announced. Nice job.

I don't mind the roll call, of course. Why would you go to a national convention of anybody's party if it wasn't going to have a roll call? And as roll calls go, this is a pretty good one.

The great state of *Superior*, home of the Leaping Lemurs, 1997 champions of the Northern Great Lakes Indoor Soccer League [sporadic applause], and *also* home, to our dismay, of Republican Governor Jerome T. ("T" for Taxation) Frink [chorus of boos], who has raised sales taxes three times in the past seven years [louder chorus of boos and hisses]; the state which last year elected Libertarian Party candidate Carol Kennicott as Eleventh District Commissioner of the Alcohol, Cosmetics, and Library Board [applause and rebel yells], the state whose Libertarian Party registration now stands at the highest in its history, with nearly *seven hundred* eligible voters [pause for effect, followed by politely diminishing applause], *proudly* casts two votes for Bumper Hornberger; two votes for Harry Browne; one vote for Don Gorman; and two votes for None of the Above. [loud cheers from the Gorman caucus]

What a magnificent place America is.

Near the end of the roll call, Harry wins the nomination. He scores 57 percent of the vote, a percentage that is precisely what Bill Bradford predicted before the start of the balloting. Bill, who is sitting next to me enjoying the festivities, looks solemn for a moment, then makes the strategic decision not to become insufferable.

A few minutes later, I see Harry out in the lobby, conferring with a couple of other people. One of the good things about libertarians is that even the leadership never surrounds itself with guards or milling fans. Harry has also made a decision not to become insufferable.

Later in the afternoon, I call Jim Babka, Harry's excellent assistant, to arrange an interview. Jim puts me through to the candidate, who graciously explains that he'd like to meet with me now, but he has only an hour to work on his acceptance speech, so he'd prefer to see me tomorrow morning. I wonder whether Al Gore ever says things like that. I suspect he doesn't.

Unwilling to return to whatever is going on Inside the Hall, I wander through the lobby and discover a quaint little footnote to intellectual history. It's a leaflet setting forth a proposed amendment to the Libertarian Party platform. Subject: "The Right to Property." It all harks back to the origins of classical liberalism.

John Locke (stay with me now) said that people established property rights in land by "mixing" the land with

their labor. During the ensuing 310 years, many other liberals, and libertarians, too, by the score and by the bushel, have presented their own answers to the question of what do we mean by "property," and how did it ever get that way. The Thomas Paine Caucus, submitter of the "Right to Property" amendment, considers it essential that this matter be cleared up, once and for all.

The Painites agree with Locke that "property is produced when labor is applied to land," but they are certain that land "is different from human-made products, because land was not produced by any person." Individuals should be able to "claim some land," but how much? That's the issue on which the fate of the Libertarian Party hangs.

The answer, according to the Caucus, is to allow everyone (a) to claim land equal to the total rental value of *all* land,

I try to calculate how much I would pay not to have to fly around the country eating horrible meals and showing up at TV stations to argue with morons about "healthcare" and "education" and "Sosh Scurty." Poor Harry.

divided by the number of persons who might be available to claim that land; and (b) to acquire additional land, subject to the requirement that the acquirer render compensation "based on the annual market rental value of that additional land (not the buildings on that land)," such compensation to be paid either (i) "directly to any individuals whose freedom of movement and self-sovereignty were restricted due to that person's additional land claims," or (ii) to "a person or agency that has a record of accurate assessments and reliable allocation of land rent compensation."

If the Painites get their way, all of this (and more) will be incorporated into the party platform. Should the party not take a position on the matter, "it risks continuous strife and confusion."

What's especially quaint about this is the fact that although the Caucus acknowledges intellectual debts to Locke, Jefferson, Smith, and (naturally) Paine, its major creditor is obviously dear old Henry George, author of *Progress and Poverty* (1879), one of the most popular books ever published in America and the source of the most ingenious theory in America's long history of crackpot political theories. The Painite caucus has now added its own considerable ingenuity to that of Henry George. The tradition lives on. *Mes compliments aux chefs.*

It's a shame that the Painite proposal doesn't seem to have been taken seriously. I can remember a libertarian conference where people spent all afternoon vigorously debating whether a certain document ought to declare that "you can't resist reality." What, they worried, does "reality" really mean? Isn't resistance to "reality" part of reality? Does "can't" mean that it's impossible for you to *start* resisting, or only that you can start, but you won't *succeed*? What did

Immanuel Kant have to say about these things? And was Kant a libertarian, or an anti-libertarian? Those were the days. Libertarians today don't seem to have the stamina for real intellectual labor.

But, returning to my old topic of wasted energy, I wonder how much the party wastes on activities even less momentous than the cause of contract insurance and land rent compensation. Wouldn't more be accomplished if the LP stopped spending centuries of man-hours seeking ballot access, holding nominating conventions, and running roll calls of the states (however delightful those may be to every true American), and just did something else with its time?

One option might be to convert the LP from a party like the Republicans and Democrats into a giant grass-roots organization devoted to exposing the errors of government and fighting them wherever likely targets came to light. There could be as much national togetherness and esprit de corps as there is now; there could be just as many national conventions and national leaders; but good people could stop pouring their energy into electoral contests that are almost always hopeless, even as educational campaigns.

Dinner tonight with Bumper Hornberger. Just for fun, I try to talk him out of his swapmeet strategy, but of course I can't. You've gotta love him. He can take as much criticism as you can give, but he comes back undismayed to his own ideas, and his eyes still darken with intensity as he lays them out. He says he's determined to stay with the party — which is a good thing for the party. The LP would be a whole lot poorer if people like Bumper decided to leave. And you can see why these quarrels within the party make everyone so edgy. It's an embattled little family, and no one is really replaceable.

At the moment, I'm voting for All of the Above.

Monday, July 3

I wake up an hour before my interview with Harry and turn on the television, only to find that Harry is already there on the screen, being interviewed by our friends at C-SPAN.

How will you feel if the LP really does throw the election to Al Gore? If you want to see what government looks like when it grows by two-thirds, that will be your chance.

While he repeats his (effective) lines from the presidential "debate," I try to calculate how much I would pay *not* to have to fly around the country eating horrible meals and showing up at TV stations (at 6:30 a.m., in this case) to argue with morons about "health care" and "education" and "Sosh Scurty." Poor Harry.

Last night, when the *Liberty* gang gathered for a dose of champagne, Bill and Paul seized the occasion to discuss all the places in the Rocky Mountains that you can get to at the risk of your neck. Just take route 79 for about 60 miles past

that place where the guardrails are down, then turn left — no, right, left is where we got stranded two years ago when the transmission gave out — and when you see that creek with the broken-down bridge. . . . Gradually it dawned on me that these people were talking about having *fun*. They think it's *fun* to drive 400 miles out of your way and break an axle or two so you can finally get to see a bunch of rocks and trees and if you're lucky a big sow bear who doesn't like the way you're looking at her cubs. When we got out of that den of machismo, Carl and I, whose notion of a good vacation is hunkering down in a comfortable hotel, conferred in secret and agreed that Reagan was right when he said that once you've seen one tree, you've seen them all. We'd say the same about rocks, and much the same about bears.

Now think of a politician spending every waking hour rushing from one media venue to another, and you grasp the similarity. Think about it long enough, and you may even start to pity Al Gore. No, I refuse to do that, but I do pity the fate of Harry Browne.

When Bill and I arrive at the media room, Harry confesses that he got only three or four hours of sleep last night — though he seems not to need much more. He's vigorous and articulate and appears to be happy. I'd be in a terrible mood. Apparently, however, even Harry has his limits. When I inquire about the possibility of his running again in 2004, he rates the chances at "one in a thousand."

Asked about the prospective candidacy of Russell Means, Harry answers, "I know very little about Russell Means, so I can't say." Then he notes that there are a lot of other good people who might be nominated in 2004, and he comments, very accurately, that Libertarians are always "dying for celebrities" but that celebrities may not represent us well. (Among Libertarians, Russell qualifies as a celebrity.) Asked whether he plans to request Bumper Hornberger to help out in the current campaign, Harry answers sharply, "No." He goes on to deplore "personal attack[s]" from one libertarian on another, and he stipulates that "nothing like what Hornberger has done is necessary."

Harry is equally sharp in responding to a question about his reaction to *Liberty's* July issue, which reviewed various criticisms of the LP leadership. He says that he hasn't "read any of the articles in their entirety" but confesses a "deep skepticism" he has long felt about *Liberty's* coverage. On a more positive note, as they say on television, he says that his goal in the current campaign is the shattering of the "one-million vote barrier" that leads people to regard the LP as a fringe party.

It's a modest goal, I reflect, as Harry is escorted away for his next interview. In 1920, Debs, the Socialist candidate, got just over 900,000 votes out of an electorate much smaller than the current one. His portion of the total vote was about three and a half percent. But in 1996, when Clinton's reelection was assured and votes for Harry Browne could be cast with complete political impunity, he received less than half a million votes — half of one percent. The election of 2000 is much more important than the election of 1996, and much more in doubt. People who normally vote Republican will be much less likely to "throw away" their vote this year.

So can Harry get his million? And if *he* doesn't, who

could? Harry is an attractive candidate, a guy who knows his business. If he doesn't get a million, after trying so hard for it, how much will the party be damaged?

My guess is that the party will be substantially benefited by a "win," but that it won't be fatally damaged by a "loss." People work for the Libertarian Party because they want their views to be heard, not because they insist on seeing a certain total of votes. They work for the party because they enjoy being libertarians.

As the convention winds down, it's increasingly easy for me to understand that motivation. I spend the rest of the day haunting the lobbies, chatting with Kathy (the best person in the world for a leisurely chat) and with whoever else comes by, comparing political notes and making political forecasts, enjoying the courtesy and the friendliness of everyone I talk with, and I begin to notice that I'm finding it difficult to

leave.

Outside is a world where people actually believe that guns cause crime, that prison is the cure for smoking marijuana, and that taxes really aren't that high, so long as they're used for good purposes. Outside is a world of political discourse that makes anything that happens in a Libertarian Party convention look like a dialogue among philosopher kings. So maybe the party won't get its million votes, and maybe it will get them and still not have much effect. There remains something about the Libertarian Party that you can't find anywhere else.

As I shoulder my bag and go out to find my car, I consider making a little detour past the Convention Center to find out whether those escalators are still running, so wastefully, all day long.

Nah, I think. Let it alone. □

In His Own Words

We Believe In You

by Harry Browne

Harry Browne's remarks to the Libertarian Party National Convention,
upon receiving its presidential nomination.

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. This is a proud day in my life and I have to say that aside from the day that Pamela gave me her hand in marriage, this is probably the proudest day of my life. I thank you and I am honored by your nomination.

And I will end the suspense right now. Yes, I do accept your nomination for President.

I am running for President because it is obvious that no Democrat or Republican is ever going to stop the relentless growth of the federal government.

Only a Libertarian is going to free you from the income tax. Only a Libertarian is going to unlock the door and let you out of Social Security. Only a Libertarian is going to end the insane War on Drugs. Only a Libertarian is going to end the reckless foreign policy that puts your children at risk of fighting and dying in a foreign

war, and targets your city by terrorists. Only a Libertarian is going to return us to constitutional government.

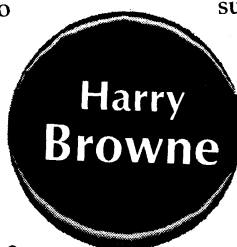
Only a Libertarian is going to set you free.

Who are we, these Libertarians that you've been watching on television — who are these Libertarians who presume to challenge the Republicans and Democrats?

It's very simple. We could talk philosophy, we could talk economics, we could talk morality, we could talk a lot of things. But it all boils down to one thing: We are the people who want you to be free — free to live your life as you want to live it, not as Al Gore or George Bush thinks is best for you.

We are the ones who want you to be free to raise your children by your values, not the values of some bureaucrat who's trying to create a Brave New World.

We are the ones who want you to be able to keep every



dollar you earn — to spend it, save it, give it away as you think best, not as the politicians are going to allow you to do.

As this election season goes along, you're going to see Al Gore, George Bush Pat Buchanan, Ralph Nader talking about the issues — the issues of the environment, education, health care, foreign policy, foreign trade, jobs, all of these things. And yet they're only going to be talking about one thing. The one issue in this campaign as far as they are concerned and the press is concerned and the political pundits are concerned is simply this: Which one of those men is best capable of running your life for you? That's all they're talking about.

Which one is best able to decide exactly what kind of school your children should go to, and every other child in America should have to go to? Which one of them is best able to decide what kind of a health care system you should encounter when you go to the doctor's office or to the hospital? Which one is best able to decide how to run your life?

Well, do you know what makes Libertarians different? Now this is going to be an earth-shaking conclusion — it's going to be a revelation, an epiphany perhaps — but we think *you* should run your life. (ovation)

In short, we believe in you. We believe you are a responsible individual — that you can take care of yourself, that you know what is best for your children, that you know what is best for you, that you know what is best for your family, that you know how to live your life. And whether you make mistakes, whether you do the right thing or the wrong thing, you will find your way through life a lot better than Al Gore can run it for you — or George Bush or Bill Clinton or Newt Gingrich or Pat Buchanan or Ralph Nader or any of these people who presume to know best what you should do in your life. We believe in you.

Now do you want to know how we stand on the issues? It's very simple. Whatever the issue, we come down on the side of you your running your own life, making your own decisions, keeping your own money — spending it, saving it,

We are the people who want you to be free — free to live your life as you want to live it, not as Al Gore or George Bush thinks is best for you.

giving it away as you think best. It always comes down on your side — and taking the government out of your life.

We're talking about Social Security. We want to unlock the door and let you out — let *you* decide how much you should put aside for your retirement, let *you* decide where to put it. Of course, the Republicans and Democrats have some wonderful ideas. Al Gore is going to be your investment advisor. George Bush (though, you remember, he's the one who believes in smaller government) thinks you ought to be able to keep 2 percent of the 15 percent Social Security tax. And he thinks you ought to be able to invest it on your own

— as long as you do it within the government's guidelines, of course. Now Al Gore, predictably, says, "That's a risky scheme." I disagree with Al Gore. I don't think it's risky. I think it's puny.

Now, let me just ask a simple question: Who earned that money? Who went to work every day? Who got up at the crack of dawn? Who went to work, put in 8 hours, 10 hours, 12 hours and earn that money? You did. So who died and made Al Gore your investment advisor? Who died and made George W. Bush your nanny? We believe in *you*.

What other issues? We believe in — how do we stand on other issues? On foreign policy, foreign trade, whatever it is, we believe you should be able to make the decisions. We don't think anybody should tell you where you can buy things, what countries you're allowed to buy from, what you're allowed to buy, how much of it you can be allowed to buy.

We don't believe that, in health care, somebody should design a health care system for you. We want the kind of health-care system that existed before the federal government moved in, where a hospital stay cost a few days' pay instead of a year's pay; where a doctor's waiting room doesn't look like a Grand Central Station; where they weren't a thousand people sitting around waiting to see the doctor; where doctors, in fact, made house calls; where low-cost insurance was available to everybody in a price of some kind; where nobody was left out of the stream.

All of that existed before the federal government moved in. And if that wasn't the right kind of assistance for you, you could choose another system and then you could choose another system. We didn't want something designed in Washington. And it doesn't make any difference to us whether it was designed by Republicans or Democrats.

If it's not designed by you, it is not right for you. You should make the choice, because we believe in you.

Now, we could go through a lot of issues. We could talk about a lot of things. But there are a couple of issues that I want to stress particularly, particularly today, because you don't hear as much about them as you should.

What are the gun laws in this country?

Every time there is a problem, a gun incident of some kind, the Democrats are right there to say, "We need new gun laws. We need to do something about this" — even if 25 laws were broken in the incident that created the event. The Republicans of course, get right on the defensive and say, "Oh no no no, we don't need any new gun laws, that would offend the NRA. What we want to do is to enforce the gun laws that exist. We want to prosecute the people breaking those gun laws."

Ladies and gentlemen, those gun laws are the primary source of gun violence in America today.

Armed criminals, *armed criminals* do not worry about gun laws. Armed criminals do not buy guns in ways that involve gun registration or waiting periods or any of these great panaceas that are going to bring peace to American cities. So these laws do nothing but intrude upon your privacy and your ability to defend yourself. Like so many well-meaning laws in this country, they wind up injuring the innocent

while the guilty continue to slip through the net. And in the case of gun laws, in the case of gun laws, it is particularly tragic, because it results in so many deaths. If just one person, *one person* at Columbine High School had had access to a gun, there might be eight or ten teenagers alive today who, instead, are buried there under a mountain of America's gun laws. If we care about making our schools safe, if we care about making our neighborhood safe, if we care about making our cities safe, we will stop disarming innocent citizens to the advantage of armed criminals.

The other issue I'd like to discuss with you is the insane War on Drugs.

You've heard a lot about this, if you've been watching C-SPAN, and our convention. You've heard people referring to it. Some people say that Libertarians are a party full of druggies. I look around this room and I find it hard to believe that. The fact of the matter is we are violently opposed to the drug laws, not because drugs are so important to us personally — but because our lives, our safety, our family, our children are important to us. The War on Drugs is probably the greatest domestic catastrophe that has ever hit the American Republic.

It has spawned violence in our cities; it has spawned law-enforcement corruption; it has spawned overcrowded prisons that have allowed murderers, rapists and child molesters to get out on early release; it has spawned the greatest destruction of our own personal liberties in the history of this country. And I'm not talking about the liberty to take drugs. I'm talking about the liberty to have your bank account safe from prying eyes. I'm talking about the liberty to know that your E-mail is safe from prying bureaucratic eyes. In the last 30 years, nine out of every ten intrusions on our personal liberty has been done in the name of the War on Drugs.

And who gets hurt? The drug dealers? Of course not. Innocent people like you and me are the ones who have our privacy destroyed. Innocent people like you and me are the ones who have our cars torn apart. Innocent people like you and me are the ones who are strip-searched at airports. Innocent people like you and me are the ones whose bank accounts are rifled through by Treasury agents looking for suspicious transactions.

This has got to stop and it has got to stop soon.

Now, all of this seems so far away. I mean, who does this really affect? Just some people who want to smoke marijuana, or what is it all about? I'd like to tell you three short stories, if I may.

The first one is about somebody who you've been hearing about here, Peter McWilliams, who in 1996 was diagnosed as having AIDS and cancer both and who was given a regimen of an enormous number of pills that he had to swallow and put down in his stomach everyday. It was so overwhelming to his system that he immediately just vomited them back up again. There was no way to keep this medicine in his stomach until he turned to marijuana. I believe he told me that he had not smoked marijuana in something like 25 years — since he was a hippie kid in the '60s or whatever. But he found that marijuana kept him alive, that kept the

medicines down in his stomach.

That wasn't good enough for the federal government, though, because imagine the message this sends to our children — that we're letting people save their own lives by smoking marijuana. So as a result the Feds moved in on him, took his marijuana away from him, and to make the story short, a couple of weeks ago Peter McWilliams died. You've heard a lot about him here. Of course, Democrats and Republicans love it when somebody dies because they can tell maudlin stories about it and the need for new laws and all these other things at their conventions. The reason people here have said so much about Peter McWilliams is because

We don't think anybody should tell you where you can buy things, what countries you're allowed to buy from, what you're allowed to buy, how much of it you can be allowed to buy.

he was a friend to all of us, because he was an inspiration to all of us.

Peter McWilliams, despite all of his travails, always said that his enemies were not human beings but really his main enemy was ignorance. He showed a dignity and a benevolence in his travails that was beyond the limits of a saint as far as I'm concerned, and it truly was a sad experience when he died two weeks ago. As Steve Kubby pointed out, he was a victim of an overdose of government.

Yes, yes, we want it possible for people who are sick, people who have glaucoma, people who have cancer, people who have AIDS, to be free to smoke marijuana to relieve their pain, to relieve their nausea, to be able to live like human beings in dignity. But it's more than that. That isn't enough. The Drug War itself is an abomination.

Let me tell you the second story. A woman by the name of Debbie Vineyard had never touched drugs in her life. But one day she received a phone call from some man she barely knew. The fact that she accepted the call and acknowledged the fact that she knew this man was good enough for the Feds. It confirmed the man's story that she was his drug dealer. He had been arrested and, because of these insane laws that we have today, the only way he could reduce his sentence was to point the finger at three or four other people. It didn't matter whether they were guilty or innocent, because it isn't necessary to produce drugs at trial. It isn't necessary to produce money at trial. All you need is the testimony of somebody who has already confessed to the crime and you can put anybody you want in jail.

And so Debbie Vineyard, who was pregnant with her second child, was sent to prison for ten years, was separated from her family, was taken in shackles to a prison hospital to deliver her second baby.

This is the face of the War on Drugs. This is what hap-

pens not to drug users, not to drug dealers, but to innocent people like you and me. We are the ones who are in jeopardy because of the War on Drugs.

Finally, let me tell you a third story, the story of Lonnie Lundy — a 33-year-old businessman who had never smoked in his entire life, never touched alcohol in his entire life, never done drugs of any kind in his entire life. An employee of his got into trouble with the law for dealing drugs. The employee was faced with a 20- to 30-year term and his only hope was to put the finger on other people. So he identified Lonnie Lundy as his supplier, as the kingpin drug dealer and the case went to court. Again, no drugs were produced, no money was produced. Nothing was produced except the testimony of this convicted drug dealer.

Lonnie Lundy received a sentence of life imprisonment without parole.

There's more to the story. Lonnie's father, Jerry Lundy, obviously very concerned about his son and his wife's (Lonnie's mother's) grief over this, wrote to his Senator — Senator Richard Shelby of Alabama, a Republican Drug Warrior. He pleaded with Senator Shelby for help. Senator Shelby wrote back, "I understand how you feel. I sympathize with you. But I believe very very strongly in the drug laws that we have and I believe these punitive sentences are necessary if we are ever to rid America of the scourge of drugs." One year later Senator Shelby's son, flying back from London and arriving at the Atlanta airport, was found to possess 12 ounces of hashish on his person. *Senator Shelby's son*. Senator Shelby's son received an administrative fine of \$500 and has never served a day in jail. Senator Shelby is still a prime Drug Warrior in Washington — as is Senator Gramm and Representative Cunningham and all the others whose families have gotten into trouble with drugs — and who never served the sentences that you or I would have to serve if somebody were to put the finger on us. Now,

People are coming to recognize, if nothing else, that this Drug War is an enormous failure, that it is an enormous tragedy, that it is an enormous disaster.

Senator Shelby still believes, and all these other people still believe, that somehow, if we put these young people in prison for 10, 20, 30 years without parole they will somehow be better people — as though Al Gore and George Bush would be better people today if, for their "youthful indiscretions," they had served ten years in prison.

I said earlier that the War on Drugs is the worst scourge that has ever descended upon the American Republic. That's the bad news.

The good news is that it is turning. The good news is that public opinion has switched tremendously over during just the last five years. People are coming to recognize, if nothing

else, that this Drug War is an enormous failure, that it is an enormous tragedy, that it is an enormous disaster. They may not understand fully yet what the solution is. They may not understand that the complete absence of drug laws would be the greatest thing that happened to this country just like the complete absence of alcohol laws at the end of Prohibition ended the crime, ended the drive-by shootings, ended the police corruption, and ended all the other ills that were plaguing the American society.

They may not realize yet what the solution is, but they know now what the problem is. The problem is not so much drugs as the War on Drugs. And so, today, to all those people whose lives have been harmed, injured, or even destroyed by the War on Drugs; I would like to say to those families who have loved ones in prison; to those people who have lost property to government through the ridiculous asset forfeiture laws which were spawned by the War on Drugs; to people who have been searched and harassed and had their doors beaten down; to the people whose families have been broken up; to those people who are suffering and who cannot use medical marijuana; to all these people we say to you:

Lift up your hearts.

We will not forget you. We will not forsake you.

We know what has happened to you. We care what has happened to you.

We are Libertarians, and we will not rest until your lives are made whole again.

Well, I said that the War on Drugs is living on borrowed time and I do believe it. I freely admit that I'm an optimist. As a matter of fact, confide in you that I went for my physical a few weeks ago and I was diagnosed with chronic euphoria, with Pollyanna syndrome. But as I look ahead, I see an America that gets better and better and better, whereas throughout my entire lifetime I have seen government getting bigger and bigger and more intrusive and more expensive and more oppressive. But I can look ahead and see what is coming.

People ask me, "Why are you running for President? Do you think you can win?" I get asked that question in almost every interview. But the real issue is not whether I can win this year. The real issue is that we will not have a free country again until we do have a Libertarian President — whether that's in the year 2000, 2004 or 2008. And every vote we get this year puts us one step closer to that day when we do have a Libertarian President.

So I say to the people at home, because I'm pretty sure of your vote [in the audience], that if you are sick and tired of the Drug War, if you are sick and tired of the government taking your income and doling a little of it back to you like a child on an allowance, if you're sick and tired of seeing the Constitution shredded, if you're sick and tired of seeing more and more and more of your liberty taken away from you, you really have only one choice. Maybe we will win this year, maybe we won't win this year, that's not the issue. But if you want people to know what you believe, if you want to get government out of your life, if you want control of your life back, then the only choice you have, the only possible

way to make that known is to vote Libertarian.

And you need to send that same message all up and down the ticket. You need to send it to your local government, to your state government and to the federal government. That means voting Libertarian for President, for Governor, for Senator, for Congressman, for Assemblywoman, for whatever it may be. This is the only way you can tell them how you feel. Or you may say, "Yuck! I can't stand Al Gore; I've got to vote for George W. Bush." Do you think that when George W. Bush gets your vote he's going to say "Well, they voted for me because they don't like Gore." No, he's going to say "They voted for me in order to put my voucher plan in effect," — which is going to help take over the private schools and make them wards of the State. Or "No, they voted for me in order to put my health-care plan instead of Al Gore's plan. They voted for me because they liked my record in Texas where I made government bigger and bigger and bigger. They voted for me for all the things I've done in my political career so I'm going to continue doing that." And if you vote for Al Gore because you don't like George W. Bush or you're afraid of the Religious Right or whatever your reason is, I can guarantee Al Gore isn't interested in your reason. He's only going to use your vote as an endorsement to make government bigger, bigger, bigger, more expensive, more intrusive. The only possible way to cast an unmistakable vote to get government out of your life, to get control back to your life, is to vote Libertarian. And if that doesn't result in a victory this year, it will put you closer to a victory. And victory is what you want in the end — not the lesser of two evils.

Now, I said I was an optimist. I've got to be an optimist. But I truly am here for one reason only. Because I can see into the future, not to foresee, not to predict, not to promise, not to guarantee anything, but I can look into the future and see how things can unfold in a way that by the end of this decade we could have a Libertarian America, a Libertarian America in which you pay no income tax because a government limited to its constitutional functions would not need an income tax.

An America in which nobody roped you into a bankrupt retirement scheme like Social Security; an America in which there is no Drug War; an America in which we have a foreign policy that is focused totally on national defense, and completely scraps this enormous national offense that we have now that butts into everybody's affairs around the world.

I can see *that* at the end of the decade and only Libertarians can bring that about. Only Libertarians can do it because only Libertarians believe in you. Only Libertarians recognize that you are the rightful owner of your life — not Al Gore or George W. Bush.

And beyond all the obvious benefits of that Libertarian America is an America that's at peace with itself — an America in which blacks are no longer so afraid of whites, and whites not afraid of blacks — where gays are not afraid of Christians and Christians not afraid of gays — and old people are not in competition with young people because the government is no longer the instrument of imposing one group's values upon another.

And because of that, nobody has to be afraid of anyone else. If you want power, if you want respect, if you want benevolence, if you want diversity, there is a simple answer: get the government out of it and set people free.

That is the kind of America we want to see — an America that's at peace with itself; an America that believes in you.

And that is the kind of America that we once had. That was the promise of America — an America that continually moved towards greater personal responsibility, greater individual liberty, greater personal sense of sovereignty. It was an America that was able to overcome slavery, an America that was able to get rid of laws that made men and women unequal before the law. It was an America full of promise that got derailed in the 20th century and became just like all

The War on Drugs has spawned violence in our cities; it has spawned law-enforcement corruption; it has spawned the greatest destructions of our own personal liberties in the history of this country.

the Old World countries of Europe — so that now you can hardly distinguish America from Germany, Sweden, or any other country in which the politicians know best how to run your life, and in which they have the power to impose their way upon you.

We Libertarians want to return to the America that promised every individual the freedom to pursue his own dreams. That was an America that said to people: It doesn't matter who you are or where you come from or what you were there. You might have been the king of your country or the lowest member of society. But once in America you will be a free, responsible, sovereign individual.

No one will ask for your papers. No one will stick a number on you. No one will extort a percentage of your income as the price of getting a job. You will be free to pursue the life you've always dreamed of.

And I believe that's the meaning of the Statue of Liberty — holding aloft that great lamp beside the Golden Door. I believe that's what Emma Lazarus meant when she wrote those wonderful words inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore;
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me.
I lift my lamp beside the Golden Door.

That is the America we once had.

That is the America we *should* have — the beacon of liberty providing light and hope and inspiration to the entire world.

And, by God, I am determined that this is the America we *will* have. □

In His Own Words

Revolution!

by Russell Means

Russell Means, the frontrunner for the Libertarian Party's presidential nomination in 2004, gave this short speech that electrified the assembled delegates.

Hello my relatives. I am an ally and I come from Yellow Thunder Village in a very sacred holy land: the Black Hills.

I want to talk about revolution from my perspective. To me, a revolution is going back where you began and, of course, the United States of America, which got its concept for individual liberty through representative government from American Indian people, is where I'd like to return. Individual liberty through representative government.

When over 90 percent of the laws of this country are passed by the administration every year, and *not* by the representatives in Congress, we're faced with totalitarianism. Because — as you know — the rules and regulations passed by the bureaucracy of the civil servants — civil service servants — have the force and effect of law. Just read the Supreme Court decisions. And so, when Americans think that they are living in the greatest democracy in the world, they're holering upwind. They don't realize that they're actually swimming upstream in rapids, and they continually lose their ground.

And when you live in a country that's ruled by mob rule — fifty percent plus one — and those that lose have to accept what the victors have, that's mob rule. Sorry. I want to see revolution. You know, the Constitution of the United States of America represents only approximately one-third of the Iroquois Great Law of Peace, and that's of course from whence it came, as recognized by Congress itself in 1988 when they passed a unanimous resolution thanking the Iroquois Confederacy for its input into the formation of United States of America and the formation of its Constitution.

You know, it's a relief standing up here in the year 2000 before you all, because in 1987 I had to visit about 46 states to try to convince you all I was a Libertarian. And I damn near did it. Three votes!

That was an exciting time and a lovely time in my life, a great time, as I've stated so in my book, my autobiography, *Where White Men Fear To Tread*, and they fear to tread with those of us who believe in freedom.

You see, the one thing I've always maintained is that I'm an American Indian. I'm not a Native American. I'm not politically correct. Everyone who's born in the Western Hemisphere is a Native American. We are all Native Americans. And if you notice, I put "American" before my ethnicity. I'm not a hyphenated African-American or Irish-American or Jewish-American or Mexican-American.

I am an American Indian, and that's what we have to get back to.

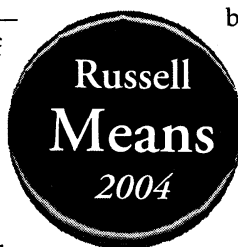
We are Americans first, and if once we accept that fact then these political divisions, the "Demopublicans," will not be able to exist; special interests will disappear because we're going to be Americans first.

Look at this government and its census. They tell each ethnic group "You've got to respond to the census because you'll get money."

Talk about a dependency status. Everyone that answers the census, to me, is a dependent Irish-American or African-American or Native American. I want this country to know what it's like to be American. I know what it's like to be American.

I love this land. I love it with every fiber of my being. It is the land of my ancestors. It is the land of my future generations. And the only way we can ever come together as Americans is that we have to *feel* this, and we've also got to feel and walk our talk.

The Libertarians have the message for every individual in America and in the world. And I'm tired of the Libertarian Party being stuck in a rut and spinning its wheels. I'm here to try to get behind that — I don't care if I get splattered with



mud — but I want to push that out of the rut.

We need to *feel* what our message is. We need some passion! We're the only ones using the word "free." And you know what happens in this country now if you talk about being free and freedom. The United States Government surrounds you with its military might. They immediately start surrounding you. I don't care if you're from Montana, Idaho or Texas.

Or South Dakota.

We have the right to be free. That is the basic right of every living thing. You know, if you cage an animal, a free animal, it will always try to escape that cage. But if that ani-

Everyone who's born in the Western Hemisphere is a Native American. We are all Native Americans.

mal has offspring that's born in the cage, those animals that are born in the cage will cease to want to leave that cage. And as I look across America, and I see my own people's children — my own children — being caught up in consumerism, the ultimate melting pot — consumerism. And that's the way

they're being caged. And they're happy. You know what colonization means to me — and the American people *are* colonized — it means you're perfectly happy to be miserable.

Thomas Jefferson said it best. You know, he said: "A revolution should happen in America every 20 years." It's overdue! But first, *feel* being American and *feel* about individual liberty, and *feel* like you are right — because that's how we're going to put passion into the movement. That's how we're going to grab a hold of those voters. That's how we're going to get new voters and new members. I am proud to find out that the Libertarian Party is continuing to grow.

There are 33,000 members and you're shooting for 100,000 by the year 2004. Well, you better do it with some passion. You'd better do because you're right! You have the right message!

America has been coerced into believing that politics is compromise. Well, we know better because politics is principle — the art of principle — and you have it!

It's amazing to me why we're not marching in the streets.

It's amazing to me that the only time we see my fellow Libertarians risking anything was at Waco. I want to see it all the time. I want to see us active and proactive, and damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!

We are Libertarians! We want to be free! Let's move! □

Inquiry

A New Harry Browne?

by R. W. Bradford

Did the Libertarian nominee learn anything from his disastrous loss in 1996?

After Harry Browne got fewer than 500,000 votes in 1996, he told the California Libertarian Party convention, "I won't run again, if it has to be the same kind of campaign we ran in 1996." The way the party could run a better campaign was to recruit a huge number of new members. "When it [membership] reaches 200,000," he wrote in this magazine, "it will have the fundamental base that can support a \$50 million presidential campaign; it will have the troops who can carry the message door-to-door if necessary; and it will have the resources to run advertising that will get rid of the income tax, free them from the Social Security hoax, and restore safety to their neighborhood by ending the insane War on

Drugs . . . the vote total [in the 1996 election] suggests that the LP has a marketing budget far too small to reach a significant number of Americans. With 200,000 members it would have at least \$50 million to spend on the 2000 presidential campaign. . . . If the LP has no chance to grow substantially, if it has no chance to raise the money needed to run a first-class campaign, then why does it even exist?"

Once it became evident that Browne's plan to get those 200,000 members had failed miserably, Browne was forced to abandon this plan, but contrary to what he had promised, he didn't drop out of the race. Instead, he went ahead with the same campaign plan that had failed so miserably in 1996: a

campaign book, lots of talk radio, and what he calls "The Great Libertarian Offer," namely asking people whether they'd give up their favorite government program if they never had to pay income tax again. Curiously, none of the other contenders for the nomination brought up the fact that the strategy he pursued in 2000 was a proven failure.

In the meantime, three other strategic approaches had been suggested:

1) Build the movement by winning local elections. Local elections are cheaper to run and easier to win than national elections, and you have to begin somewhere. Winning local elections can provide a foundation on which success higher

"I won't run again," he told the California LP, "if it has to be the same kind of campaign we ran in 1996."

on the ticket can be built. This approach has long had a following within the party: it was the centerpiece of Gene Cisewski's campaign for chair in 1998, of George Phillies' campaign for chair this year, and of Don Gorman's campaign for the presidential nomination.

2) Try guerilla campaigning among America's dispossessed. The poor and minorities are constantly victimized by the state, with minimum wage laws, social security taxes, lax police protection and immigration laws. Yet libertarians have approached them seldom, if ever. This approach was advocated by Bumper Hornberger's campaign for the presidential nomination.

3) Exploit a "wedge" issue — an issue which has enthusiastic support among a substantial number of voters and that neither the Republicans nor Democrats will address. Campaigning on such a wedge issue is the only way you can get people to jump to a radical third party candidate.

The only such issue today is legalizing drugs. So the LP presidential campaign should focus on drugs. This approach won't likely win an election, but it could conceivably get a Libertarian candidate 5 percent of the vote — which is ten times Browne's vote total in 1996. This approach has been advocated by me at Libertarian Party conventions and in *Liberty's* pages.

Last November, after my argument for this third approach was published in *Liberty*, several people asked me to approach Browne about it. So I called him for an interview and asked him what he thought of the argument for using drug legalization as a wedge issue. He agreed that opposing "the insane War on Drugs" — Harry always seems to speak in sound bites — was a fine idea. In fact, it was one of the themes he intended to use in his coming campaign. No, no, I explained. The theory isn't to make it one of many themes, like you did last time. The idea is to focus on it, so that people will vote for you in order to make an unequivocal statement in favor of drug legalization. Harry rejected this approach altogether, arguing that the campaign should focus on a wide variety of issues.

In an interview with *Liberty* the morning after his nomi-

nation, we asked him about his campaign and the possible use of the drug issue. He responded:

What we have to find are the people who have very compelling interests to vote for us. In the last election, for instance, I could go to a gun rights group and speak and everybody would think it was just wonderful because I just said all the right things but when the time came they wouldn't vote for me because they thought "well, Dole would, you know, be a little better than Clinton or whatever," so there's no point to the whole thing. What you have to find are groups that get no satisfaction whatsoever from either the Republicans or Democrats and the only way they can state their dissatisfaction is by voting Libertarian. Now this year, the gun rights groups are better than — they should be better than — they were last time because the Republicans have taken this "enforce the gun laws" stand and that leaves them wide open for me to walk in and say "No, no, you don't understand. It's the gun laws that are causing the problems, so we need to repeal them all." Now this is not going to appeal to all gun rights advocates but it is playing very well with some of them and I think we should be able to do better. The drug war is the quintessential example of a compelling interest target group because there is just absolutely nothing of any satisfaction that they will get from the Republicans or Democrats so there's no point in saying which one — Bush or Gore — will be better on this issue.

So it appears that he is at least looking at possible wedge issues.

That's not the only hint that his strategy may be different from 1996. His acceptance speech was noticeably free of "The Great Libertarian Offer." Instead of trying to appeal to the narrow self-interest of voters, his theme was that "we believe in you," i.e., that Libertarians believe that people should be able to make their own decisions about how to live their lives. He expanded his point by attacking the government's War on Drugs and efforts to restrict gun ownership.

So maybe the 2000 campaign will not be a rerun of the 1996 campaign. Maybe Browne will not center his campaign on "The Great Libertarian Offer." Maybe he'll focus on the drug issue, or identify some other wedge issue.

Maybe. But I'm not holding my breath. For one thing, none of his TV commercials focus on any wedge issue. And all conclude with a pitch for a videotape entitled, you guessed it, "The Great Libertarian Offer." And Browne's E-mails since the campaign have mostly consisted of lists of his

Instead of trying to appeal to the narrow self-interest of voters, his theme was that "we believe in you," i.e., that Libertarians believe that people should be able to make their own decisions about how to live their lives.

appearances on talk radio. Still, he is actually buying television commercials. And I'm not about to become part of the cottage industry that gets its jollies e-mailing each other snippy remarks on everything Browne does. □

Jesus Christ: Family Hating Communist

by Bart Kosko

The fatal inconsistencies of the Christian Right.

Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush said that the philosopher he most closely identifies with is Jesus Christ. Both he and his former-president father say they are “born again” Christians. Even William F. Buckley publicly proclaims his “commitment to Christian truths.”¹ These statements of faith reflect an odd statistical fact: Most conservatives are Christians. The fact is odd because Christian conservatism involves a stark logical problem even if Christian conservatives seldom address it: They are pro-family capitalists while Jesus Christ was an anti-family communist.

Consider first whether Jesus was a communist. Just what does it mean to be a communist?

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels gave a decisive answer in their *Communist Manifesto*: “The theory of the communists may be summed up in a single sentence: Abolition of private property.”

Formal definitions of communism use the same property criterion. The *Columbia Encyclopedia* defines it as “the system of social organization in which property (especially real property and the means of production) is held in common.”² Communists clearly need not be atheists or agnostics. Nor need they call for the violent overthrow of the “capitalist” order. So-called “big C” Communism is the Soviet-style species that is both atheistic and violent. So Jesus was plainly not a big-C communist. But the question remains whether he was a little-C voluntary communist.

Did Jesus want to abolish private property?

We know from the New Testament that Jesus had only contempt for wealth and the wealthy while he promised the poor the kingdom of heaven. He knocked over the tables of the moneylenders and uttered what may be the most famous anti-capitalist metaphor: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:25 and again at Matthew 19:24). Some have tried to argue that this statement is not the anti-capitalist slogan that most people see it as being.³

Jesus repeatedly tells his followers in the Gospels to give their property to the poor and follow him. Luke gives a typical example: “if you are not prepared to leave all your possessions behind, you cannot be my disciples” (Luke 14:33). The Acts of the Apostles describes how believers practiced voluntary communism: “And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to the men, as every man had need” (Acts 2:44–45).

We also know from the *Dead Sea Scrolls* and other sources that the communistic order of the Essenes likely influenced the teachings of Jesus or at least his early followers and biographers.⁴ The Essenes’ “community rule” required that each full-fledged member give up all his private property to the commune. Such a ban on private property is common among ascetics. Hindu and Buddhist holy men predate Jesus in this regard by at least a half millennium. And modern Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox priests still practice it. That extreme and continuing practice is itself evidence of the “pure” Christian view of property.

So there is good reason to believe that Jesus wanted to abolish private property. The Religious Left has had little trouble with this view. That is the gist of Harvard theologian Paul Tillich’s famous remark that “Every serious Christian must be a socialist.”

But those in the Christian Right often deny this anti-property bias. American Enterprise Institute scholar Michael Novak finds capitalist solace in Pope John Paul’s 1991 *Centerimus Annus* even though that document’s Section 34 “demands that the market be appropriately controlled by the

forces of society and by the state so as to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole of society are satisfied.”⁵ Pope John Paul II has also made clear that the Roman Catholic Church has not adopted the “spirit of capitalism” but has adopted the labor-protest spirit of communism: “What we refer to as Communism has its own history. It is the history of protest in the face of injustice, as I recalled in the encyclical *Laborem Exercens* — a protest on the part of the great world of workers, which then became an ideology. But *this protest has also become part of the teaching of the Church.*”⁶ (emphasis in the original)

Some fundamentalists even claim that Jesus somehow favored capitalism and the accumulation of property despite

Jesus thought that the apocalypse was imminent. So Jesus' radical path to salvation trumped matters of family or law or private property.

his clear words to the contrary. Pat Robertson bases his “theology of capitalism” on the golden rule and a parable in Matthew.⁷ These strained efforts simply do not square with the anti-property language of Jesus and his apostles. And they find little or no published support from Biblical scholars.

Consider next whether Jesus was anti-family. Both the Religious Left and Right hold overwhelmingly that Jesus was pro-family. Many Christians cite the New Testament as the very basis of “family values.” The Christian Coalition’s Web site even lists its “pro-family” agenda ahead of its “pro-life” agenda. But Jesus himself had as much contempt for the family (including his own) as he did for the rich and for property.

Indeed Jesus seems to *hate* the family: “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26). Other parts of the New Testament echo this anti-family message as does the Coptic Gospel of Thomas (discovered in Egypt in 1945): “The one who does not hate his father and mother will not be worthy to be my disciple” (Thomas 55). Note that Jesus does not here or elsewhere divide his followers into disciples and non-disciples. His followers are his disciples.

Perhaps the closest parallel to Jesus’ extreme anti-family creed comes again from Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*: “Abolish the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the communists.” Yet abolishing the family is just what Jesus preached. At times he sounds almost like a Marxist radical: “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s foes *shall be* they of his own household” (Matthew 10:34–36). (The author of this passage deliberately exaggerated a similar but prior statement from the Old Testament prophet Micah who described

the coming savior of Israel (Micah 7:6).)

The question is not whether Jesus was anti-family but why. Biblical scholar Bart Ehrman gives an answer based on the New Testament record: Jesus thought (as did the Essenes per Dead Sea Scroll 4Q521 — the “resurrection fragment”) that the apocalypse was imminent. So Jesus’ radical path to salvation trumped matters of family or law or private property:

The common sense shared by modern proponents of ‘family values’ notwithstanding, Jesus was quite unambiguous that even parents, siblings, spouses and children were to be of no importance in comparison with the coming Kingdom. . . . These ‘anti-family’ traditions are too widely attested in our sources to be ignored (they are found in Mark, Q, and Thomas, for example), and show that Jesus did not support what we today might think of as family values. But why not? Evidently because, as I’ve already emphasized, he wasn’t teaching about the good society and about how to maintain it. The end was coming soon and the present social order was being called radically into question. What mattered was not ultimately the strong family ties and social institutions of this world. What mattered was the new thing that was coming, the future Kingdom.⁸

Other Biblical scholars have also called out Jesus’ clear anti-family stance.⁹

A related but simpler answer is that Jesus acted as a typical sect or cult leader.¹⁰ Charismatic cult leaders often try to sever their members’ family ties and replace such ties with fanatical veneration of the leader.¹¹

The Inconsistency of Conservative Christians

The Biblical record is clear: Jesus told his followers to give up their property and their families. That logically places him in the communist region of the political landscape. And his anti-capitalist and anti-family message does not depend on a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible as the literal word of God.

But there are good secular reasons to support capitalism and the family. The evidence on capitalism from the 20th century is plainly positive: Economic freedom promotes wealth for all even if it does not do so equally. Countries with the most economic freedom tend to have citizens with the longest life spans. Those countries also tend to have the cleanest environments. These findings have long since passed from controversial to common place.

Communism can make sense for small bands or tribes who live in harsh environments if they face uncertain food supplies.¹² This still holds today for the hunter-gatherer !Kung tribe in Africa but not for their Gana neighbors who practice primitive agriculture. But it makes no sense for modern societies with their vast populations of strangers and their stable and complex food supplies.

Holding property in common creates the “tragedy of the commons” where each member has no incentive to maintain the common property or to see that those who use it match their costs to their benefits. Each member has instead an incentive to hitch a free ride on the efforts of others. The social cost of this “tragedy” scales directly with the size of the population. This tragedy applies with the same force to today’s “common” waters of the ocean as it would to Jesus’ proposed social order based on voluntary communism.

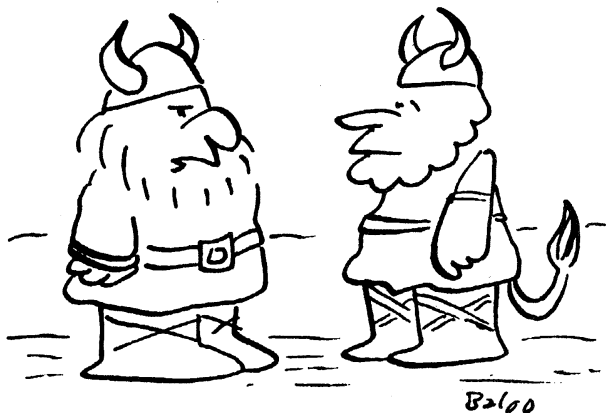
And the data on families is clearly positive. Stable families tend to raise children who are less likely to drop out of

school or commit crime or get pregnant as teenagers. Experts debate the reasons and the extent to which single-parent (or no-parent) families tend to harm children but not the tendency itself.¹³

The facts on markets and families simply do not support the radical message of Jesus. Yet most conservatives accept these facts and at the same time say they support the teachings of Jesus. This is not just denial or cognitive dissonance on a staggering social scale. It is a textbook logical contradiction that calls into question the very foundations of much of the modern conservative movement. □

Notes

1. Buckley proclaims his Roman Catholicism to a convention of Baptists as follows: "You should know that I was raised in the faith, that I live comfortably in it however uneven my compliance with its higher demands, and that I hold my commitment to Christian truths to be the singular blessing in my life," Buckley, W. F., Jr., *Nearer, My God: An Autobiography of Faith*, p. 224, Harcourt Brace, 1997.
2. "The Neoplatonists revived the idea of common property, which was also strong in some religious groups such as the Jewish Essenes and certain early Christian communities. These opponents of private property held that property holding was evil and irreligious and that God had created the world for the use of all mankind. The first of these ideas was particularly strong among Manichaeism and Gnostic heretics, such as the Cathari, but these concepts were also found in some orthodox Christian groups (e.g., the Franciscans)," from "Communism," *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 5th edition, p. 612, Columbia University Press, 1993.
3. "Jesus did not mean that there was something wrong with being rich. Jesus said these words to explain what God expects of a person in order to gain admission to heaven — and the special, even higher, obligation to help others that God expects of those who have achieved economic success," Pilzer, P. Z., *God Wants You to be Rich: The Theology of Economics*, p. 17, Simon & Schuster, 1995. But Jesus plainly said there was something wrong with being rich — it rules out going to Heaven.
4. "Turning to the relationship between the Scrolls and the New Testament . . . more specific features, such as monarchic administration (i.e., single leaders, overseers at Qumran, bishops in Christian communities) and the practice of religious communism in the strict discipline of the sect and at least in the early days in the Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 2:44-45) would suggest a direct causal connection. If so, it is likely that the young and inexperienced church modeled itself on the by then well-tried Essene society," Vermes, G., *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, p. 22, Penguin, 1997.
5. Novak does acknowledge that many Roman Catholics are anti-capitalist: "Even today, one needs to confront the rather common Latin Catholic bias against capitalism," Novak, M., *The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, p. 13, The Free Press, 1993.
6. John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, p. 130-131, Knopf, 1995.



"Just the horns, Gustafson!"

7. "Robertson's 'theology of capitalism' is founded on the parable (Matthew 25:14-30) in which a servant who puts his master's money into a business and makes a profit is praised, while a servant who buries the master's gold in the ground is rebuked," Bawer, B., *Stealing Jesus: How Fundamentalism Betrays Christianity*, p. 168, Three Rivers Press, 1997.
8. Ehrman, B. D., *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium*, p. 170-171, Oxford University Press, 1999.
9. Biblical scholar John Dominic Crossan sees Jesus as "tearing the family apart": "There is, first of all, an almost savage attack on family values, and it happens very, very often. . . . It is the last aphorism [Matthew 10:34-36] that the point of Jesus' attack on the family becomes most clear. . . . The family is society in miniature, the place where we first and most deeply learn how to love and be loved, hate and be hated, help and be helped, abuse and be abused. It is not just a center of domestic serenity; since it involves power, it invites the abuse of power, and it is at that precise point that Jesus attacks it. His ideal group is, contrary to Mediterranean and indeed most human familial reality, an open one equally accessible to all under God," Crossan, J. D., *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, p. 59-60, Harper Collins, 1995. Scholar Marcus Borg makes a similar point: "Jesus was no champion of family values. People are invited to leave their families, indeed to hate father and mother. Christians (scholars as well as ordinary folk) have often been perplexed by the negative attitude toward family and have sought ways of reconciling family life with taking Jesus seriously, most commonly by suggesting that Jesus basically meant that God must come first and family second. But such an approach abstracts the family sayings from their social contexts," M. J. Borg, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship*, p. 107, Trinity Press International, 1994.
10. Biblical scholars point out that Jesus created a sect of Judaism but his followers turned it into a cult with their allegation of the Resurrection: "During his ministry, Jesus seems to have been the leader of a sect movement within Judaism. Indeed, even in the immediate aftermath of the Crucifixion, there was little to separate the disciples from their fellow Jews. However, on the morning of the third day something happened that turned the Christian sect into a cult movement. Christians believe that on that day Jesus arose from the dead and during the next forty days appeared repeatedly to various groups of his followers. . . . Christians were participants in a new religion, one that added far too much new culture to Judaism to be any longer an internal sect movement. Of course, the complete break between church and synagogue took centuries, but it seems clear that Jewish authorities in Jerusalem quickly labeled Christians as heretics beyond the boundaries of the community in the same way that Moonies are today excluded from Christian association," Stark, R., *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History*, p. 44-45, Princeton University Press, 1996.
11. "A cult is characterized by Veneration of the leader . . . Inerrancy of the leader . . . Omniscience of the leader . . . Persuasive techniques . . . Hidden agendas . . . Deceit . . . Financial and/or sexual exploitation . . . Absolute truth . . . Absolute morality," Shermer, M., *Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience, Superstition, and Other Confusions of our Time*, p. 119-120, W. H. Freeman, 1997. Michael Shermer heads the Skeptics Society and illustrates these cult properties in his book with what he calls in a chapter title the "Unlikeliest Cult: Ayn Rand, Objectivism, and the Cult of Personality."
12. "Foraging peoples, to be sure, really do share with nonrelatives, but not out of indiscriminate largesse or commitment to socialist principles. The data from anthropology show that the sharing is driven by cost-benefit analyses and a careful mental ledger for reciprocity. People share when it would be suicidal not to. In general, species are driven to share when the variance of success in gathering food is high. . . . The !Kung San of the Kalahari Desert are perhaps the closest thing the world has to primitive communists. . . . In both the Ache and the San, high-variance foods are shared, low-variance foods are hoarded," Pinker, S., *How the Mind Works*, p. 505, W. W. Norton & Company, 1997.
13. Conservative political scientist James Q. Wilson sums up the findings on the family this way: "The importance of the family will remain beyond dispute no matter how the debate on day care turns out. Not even the scholars most convinced by the studies that claim to find no harmful effects in group care doubt that nurturant and controlling families are important to the well-being of the child," Wilson, J. Q., *The Moral Sense*, p. 161, The Free Press, 1993.

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position, attention must be paid.

Since 1990, Gun Owners of America has produced a rating of Congress. I like to think we have not wasted our time.

Mr. Grewell says that bills are messy, that people may vote "wrong" for all kinds of reasons, that votes are complicated and that scorecards based on all this messy data produce unreliable results. As he puts it: "the basic problem with scorecards is that they give a false impression of accuracy and precision."

The problem with Mr. Grewell's analysis is that he may well have sought to impose more precision than required on the data he attempted to analyze. An inexact measurement is still quite useful, as America learned after its first successful test of the atomic bomb in 1945.

One of the scientists present supposedly complained that the blast was so powerful, it had overwhelmed his calibration instruments. A general is said to have replied that if the blast broke the scientist's instruments, that meant the blast was a big one and that, after all, was what the military wished to know.

Similarly, candidate scorecards are incapable of precise calibration of the gradation of each Congressman's ideological standing on some absolute scale. But if you seek to know where your elected representative stands on an issue you care about deeply, scorecards are ideal.

Actually, the secret to an accurate rating of Congress is quite simple: wrong votes are wrong votes, no matter what good reasons (or excuses) are offered for these votes. The GOA rating, like other good ratings, judges actions, not hearts.

Identifying a key vote is relatively easy. *The key votes are cast long before final passage of a bill.* Many Congressmen voted for final passage of the McClure-Volkmer Firearms Owners Protection Act. For GOA to have only rated that particular vote without also considering the previous votes on weakening amendments would have conveyed a false impression. It turns out that the closest vote on that particular bill was on an

amendment relating to interstate sales of handguns. There were several Congressmen who voted for both the weakening amendment and for the bill.

In addition, a number of Representatives refused to sign the discharge petition to even get the McClure-Volkmer bill onto the House floor in the first place. When that discharge petition ultimately succeeded, these folks voted for the bill — but each refusal to sign the petition was akin to a "no" vote.

Our elected officials in Washington are all too aware that people are watching their every move. They don't like it.

Allow me to quote a bit from Senator Bennett:

We have roll call votes around here on everything. We will have a resolution to memorialize Mother's Day, and someone will ask for the yeas and nays, and we will spend a half hour voting, 100-0, and it slows everything down. Why do we do that? . . . it is something that never would have been done 30 years ago. We do it to build a record for campaign purposes, not for legislative purposes. . . .

When I ran in 1998, my opponent stood up before the crowds, on television, whatever, and said, "Senator Bennett is pro-tobacco" [an incendiary charge in heavily Mormon Utah]. . . . I didn't remember voting with the tobacco interests once. "No, he is lying about his record. Here it is."

Then we go into the web site where he has all of this listed under the fetching title, "What Senator Bennett Doesn't Want You To Know," and here is the list of all of my "pro-tobacco" votes. What were they? They were procedural votes, votes on motions to table, votes in support of the leader moving legislation forward. On the one tobacco vote that counted, which was a cloture vote on Senator McCain's bill, I was in the antitobacco forces. . . . All of the people who were involved in the tobacco fight knew I was on their side. They knew the process around here well enough to know these 12 votes about which my opponent was talking were meaningless as far as the real issue was concerned.

I have yet to see GOA issue a scorecard on gun rights and not hear similar arguments from incumbents who disagree with their scores. They want me to remember only the good things they think they have done and forget the bad. Or they urge me to look at their bad votes "in context." Or they remind

me how bad their opponent is and to urge me to stop picking on them because, by comparison, they are relatively better on the Second Amendment. (I have raised four children. These pre-Election Day excuses for bad behavior bring back memories.)

The boundless talent of the political class for muddling the record is the main reason why the GOA rating of Congress deals with actual votes, not other things such as cosponsorships of pro-gun bills.

There is another good reason why we rely on the objective data of a voting record, rather than to attempt to analyze other factors. Many times a legislator who has been indifferent or worse on the issue of Second Amendment rights can be transformed by the mere prospect of facing a close race in his district.

Such folks suddenly add their name to every pro-gun bill floating around the Congress. Then when confronted with an actual anti-gun vote, they can point to "all the good bills my name is on." Or they give a pro-gun speech that makes Charlton Heston sound like Bambi by comparison and send copies of that speech to citizens who write in about the gun issue. Or they stage a photo-op at a trap range or duck blind. Or they take out a membership in a pro-gun rights group and wave their membership card in the air when asked pointed questions.

Most successful politicians are rather good at convincing their constituents that they agree on virtually everything. As someone who has not only seen the process as a lobbyist, but as an elected official, I have seen how legislators actually think closeup.

One day while I was serving in the Virginia legislature, one of my colleagues voted for a non-binding resolution on an issue even though he was well known as an opponent of that particular cause. I asked him why he cast that unexpected vote. He informed me that by casting that single, meaningless vote, he could keep the activists on that issue at bay for the rest of the legislative session.

As the years have passed, politicians in both parties have learned how to manipulate the process to avoid controversial roll call votes whenever pos-

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Reviews

The Art of Fiction, by Ayn Rand, edited by Tore Boeckmann. Peguin Press, 2000, 180 pages.

A Subjective Manifesto

David Brin

There is something deeply appealing about the notion of recovering a "lost classic" — a work of human innovation that has been missing and longed after for generations. Imagine discovering the intact statue of Athena Nike, buried under the Parthenon, or a stash of scrolls rescued from the burned Great Library at Alexandria. The news would be as electrifying as any new discovery of science — say that of fossil life on Mars.

All right, that may be hyperbole. But it only barely overstates the glad cries I hear from many libertarian pals, eager to finally acquire *The Art of Fiction* by Ayn Rand. Why has this legendary work been missing for so long? Because it's a book that Rand never wrote! Not exactly. Rather, its sole existence for four decades was in rare tape recordings of a series of lectures that she gave just once in her own living room, shortly after the publication of *Atlas Shrugged* in 1957. Using just a few written notes, Rand offered her course to about twenty friends and acquaintances across twelve sessions, each lasting approximately four hours.

Now, at last, the tapes have been transcribed and edited by Tore Boeckmann, with an introduction by

the eternal Rand hagiographer Leonard Peikoff, consolidating everything into a volume that clearly and eloquently expresses Rand's strong beliefs about her life work — at least the part of it that involved writing fiction. The part that reached millions and paid the bills.

Indeed, this delineation is noteworthy. One of the first things that a reader of *The Art of Fiction* cannot help noticing is Rand's renowned sense of discipline as she strives to keep on topic. Known best for hard driven polemic, she actually speaks very little about political philosophy, as such, in *The Art of Fiction*. Instead, this work is a meta-commentary on the methodology of conveying persuasive drama and ideas, with much less emphasis on re-expressing her own particular ideas. After all, those ideas get full attention elsewhere. But here at last we are treated to exposition about *how* she imparted them well enough to join the polemical icons of our age.

Before reviewing Rand's book, I will honor her honesty by admitting in advance my own biases. As an avowed libertarian, I am nevertheless very much a heretic — one who believes that a future of fully emancipated individualism will be far better achieved through pragmatic evolution — by

continuing the Periclean-Galilean traditions that were exemplified and expanded upon by the Scottish-English Enlightenment — as opposed to the far more common prescription of idealistic revolution touted by French, German and Russian philosophers. In novels such as *Earth* and *The Postman*, as well as nonfiction (*The Transparent Society*), I tend to frown on the broadbrushed Platonic essences that enthrall Ayn Rand's most ardent followers. Moreover, as a novelist I find much to disagree with in her polemic oriented technique.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt at all that Rand was a figure of great substance. She had a truly fertile mind, vivid and eager, with an infectious enthusiasm that positively leaps out of the page. Even when her novels culminate in grinding passages of notorious speechifying, one feels somehow compelled by her intensity and passion. This is an author who never coasted on momentum. She did nothing by rote.

The Art of Fiction is Ayn Rand in true form. With her famed prim logicity, she divides fiction writing into four essential elements — theme, plot, characterization and style — then proceeds to show how each element can be dissected, deconstructed and the pieces assembled rationally... *objectively*... into novels that combine deep structural soundness with aesthetic infallibility. In other words, she would be to authorship what her most famous character — Howard Roark — would be to architecture. "In regard to precision of language," she writes, "I think I myself am the best writer today."

Peikoff extends this claim in his introduction. "*The Art of Fiction* serves as an extended concretization of the Objectivist esthetics, and thus an invaluable supplement to the *Manifesto*."

We do need a brief aside about Objectivism, which begins by proposing that reality exists independent of its perception. This contrasts refreshingly against the subjective-relativism

offered by today's fashionable neo-leftist philosophers, who claim (in blithe and total ignorance of science) that "truth" can always be textually redefined by any observer — a truly pitiable, easily disproved, and essentially impotent way of looking at the world.

So far, so good. Unfortunately, any fledgling alliance between Rand's doctrine and actual science breaks down soon after that. For she further holds that objective reality is readily accessible by solitary individuals using words and logic alone. This proposition — rejected by nearly all modern scientists — is essentially a restatement of the Platonic worldview, a fundamental axiom of which is that the universe is made up of ideal essences or "values" (the term Rand preferred) that can be discovered, dispassionately examined, and *objectively* analyzed by those few bold minds who are able to finally free themselves from hoary assumptions of the past. Once freed, any truly rational individual must, by simply applying verbal reasoning, independently reach the same set of fundamental conclusions about life, justice and the universe. (Naturally, any mind that fails to do so must, by definition, not yet be free.)

These conclusions, perfected in Objectivist tracts, represent a reification of human wisdom. Metaphorically, imagine Plato wedded to both Descartes and Henry Ford... with some lively bits of Hegel and Sigmund Freud mixed in.

Freud? Oh yes.

"All writers rely on their subconscious," writes Ayn Rand in *The Art of Fiction*, readily conceding that there is a mental realm deeper than the rational

mind, from which much of our creativity arises. Only then she asserts that this realm can be pierced, diagramed and harnessed by logical volition alone. "(Y)ou have to know how to work with your own subconscious.... A rational writer can stoke his subconscious just as one puts fuel in a machine."

This belief — that objective truth is directly accessible to rational, word based analysis by solitary individuals, that all levels of human mind and motivation can likewise be accessed and understood with low levels of

The Art of Fiction is filled with advice that any would-be author should ponder with respectful seriousness.

error or self-deception, and that this understanding can be put to immediate use by lone individuals — consummates in a statement that is simultaneously both bold and chilling:

If to any extent you hold the premise of nonobjectivity, then by your own choice, you do not belong in literature, or in any human activity, or on this earth.

Phew! This is why we pragmatists find polemicists — even those with whom we share some political beliefs — rather scary at times. But in time you learn to take such statements with a few truckloads of salt. In this case, I am pretty sure that Ayn Rand was exaggerating for instructional effect. By example, she was showing us *how* to be scary, a useful authorial tool!

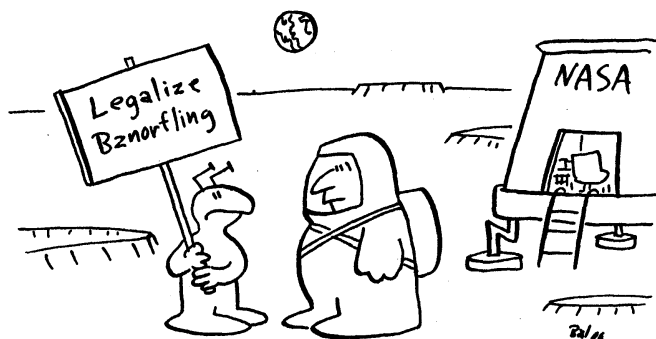
Indeed, it is in the range and richness of her examples — and their logical presentation — that Rand truly shines, presenting theme, plot, characterization and style with the same pure clarity and certainty that Aristotelians once invested in air,

earth, water and fire. *The Art of Fiction* is filled with advice that any would-be author should ponder with respectful seriousness.

For instance, she sagely counsels that writers should always *show* character traits with concrete behaviors, rather than *tell* the reader that someone is "strong" or "jealous." Her comments on the nature of suspense offer excellent insights. And in dishing out justifiably scathing criticism of the naturalist school of literature, she demonstrates that coincidence and happenstance are simply crutches used by bad writers. An honest person in *any* profession — especially one that involves creating new worlds — must keep track of causal relationships. Plot is about actions and their effects, not a meaningless series of "colorful" events.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that when Rand talks about "character" she extols *purposefulness* as a primary trait. Even a villain should be shown (via concrete, exemplifying behaviors) to have a vivid internal compass — a clearcut mental map of the universe with a path already laid out, showing how and where he or she plans to take the world. And yes, Rand means *the world*. Her greatest respect is devoted to world changers... to those hyper-alphas who set the tenor of an age, piping the tune that makes a multitude dance. To those who see clear values, who have agendas and pursue important goals. According to Rand, plot is about strong opposing wills, actively and knowingly grappling with each other over nothing less than destiny.

It's heady stuff, all right. Rand doesn't talk very much about reader-character identification in *The Art of Fiction* — a distinct flaw in the book — but if she did, I'm sure Rand would admit and avow that giving her customers the opportunity to identify with hyper-alphas like John Galt goes a long way toward explaining the pleasure that so many derive from her novels, allowing even the timid, confused and ineffectual to imagine themselves wearing such shoes... if only a few bureaucratic impediments were taken out of the way. Elsewhere I talk about the macro-tradition this is part of, an *ubermenschen* or superman ethos that originated before Homer and contin-



ues thriving to this day, in comix and much of science fiction. It helps explain why Rand devotees make up a wing of the libertarian movement that is notably disinclined to compromise with the gammas, betas and mere alphas who comprise most of today's voting electorate! It's a key element to her work and one could wish that Ayn Rand had discussed it openly in *The Art of Fiction*.

Rand does use a wonderful technique to demonstrate several points about what she considers key elements of writing. Throughout *The Art of Fiction*, she offers passages from other famous works of literature — e.g. Victor Hugo's *les Miserables*, Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* — as well as her own works, in order to demonstrate crucial differences in style and substance. She even writes variations on some of her own most famous scenes, explicating in detail why she chose specific character interactions or turns of phrase. As you might expect, she portrays her own craft as having the precision of a science.

Of course, it doesn't. It never did and no work of fiction or polemic ever will. Alas, like nearly all the great

Her High Priestess status and self-imposed isolation from peers ensured that she would never, ever get an opportunity to correct those mistakes by learning from others.

minds of her era — (a time of ideology fixation that turned the middle of the Twentieth Century into a hellish pit) — her worst affliction was that of temporal chauvinism... a belief that all of history and philosophy climaxed precisely with her. That those who preceded her, and nearly all of her contemporaries, were fools unable see Truths that (to her) seemed clear as day. In saying this, I do not condemn. Temporal chauvinism is insidiously attractive — many large minds fall for it, I know I have at times.

Ayn Rand called her worldview *Objectivism*, implying that all other phi-

losophies were merely subjective, muddled by illogic, impulse and wishful thinking. But today, college sophomores do a devastatingly simple experiment; they survey classmates, relatives, people on the street, and find the same pattern recurring over and over again — an apparent constant of human nature.

"Whatever we and our friends believe, we attribute to logical appraisal of the evidence. Whatever others — and especially our opponents — believe can nearly always be attributed to flaws in their intelligence, morals or character." This phenomenon is seen in every culture and every political faction. It is the reason why rivals so often scream *past* each other at simplistic caricatures they create in their own minds, instead of negotiating with the real people standing opposite them.

It is the same reason that Freud and Marx and so many others — including Rand — surrounded themselves with worshipful sycophants, instead of the rambunctious graduate students, rivals and critics who swarm around *true* scientists, even the most revered Nobel laureates. Rand demonstrates this in *The Art of Fiction* through a nearly total lack of reference to any contemporary authors worthy of her own respect, and by a nearly complete absence of *falsifiable* propositions — opinions that might be tested by independent experiment. Instead, the litany of bold statements that fill *The Art of Fiction* are offered to readers as facts, declared *ex cathedra* by an unquestionable font of wisdom.

While I think any eager and talented writer can learn much by reading *The Art of Fiction* — by weighing Rand's arguments, examples and metaphors and learning from the fecundity of her brilliant mind — there are some areas in which I must say flat-out that she was positively clueless and occasionally crafted wretchedly amateurish prose. Moreover, her High Priestess status and self-imposed isolation from peers ensured that she would never, ever, get an opportunity to correct those mistakes by learning from others. One example of such a literary blind spot is *point of view* — an author's careful control over what the reader knows about the story, as compared to what the characters know, and above

all the art of governing through whose eyes the story will unfold. Rand hardly addressed point-of-view in her *Art of Fiction* lectures because she clearly thought it unimportant, and this shows in her novels. In several of them, point-of-view bounces all over the place without rhyme, reason, pattern or anything approaching consistency. Perhaps there is some cleverly hidden paradigm, but if so I'm sure she would have elucidated in *The Art of Fiction*.

No, I do not expect to win friends

As you might expect, Rand portrays her own craft as having the precision of science.

by saying any of this in a libertarian magazine! Nor do I claim to be perfect in my own writing. (I fully expect to receive my own varied appraisals by those who follow.) My aim in pointing out these faults is not to disparage a notable and effective writer of the past, but to comment on what Ayn Rand left out of *The Art of Fiction*: specific issues like point-of-view and more general ones, like the role that criticism plays in real life as the sole known antidote to error. No novel of mine sees press without circulating to about fifty of the harshest pre-readers I know, lively and independent souls who are always eager to pounce on any sign of illogic or (horrors!) the slowing olf pace that might actually let someone put the book down.

To me this is simply professionalism — a pragmatic habit that spilled over from my years in science. But to Ayn Rand, critique seeking manifests nothing less than self-betrayal. *The Fountainhead's* Howard Roark expresses this by advising that a creative person must *never* ask anyone about his work.

This difference in creative approach is not one of style, or even philosophy since Rand professed to believe in science, which thrives on criticism. No, the root difference plunges much deeper, to the level of *personality*. Whatever values they may share, across all spectra of politics and ideas,

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there will always remain a vast gulf between pragmatists and idealist-polemicists, over what words like "subjective" and "objective" ultimately mean.

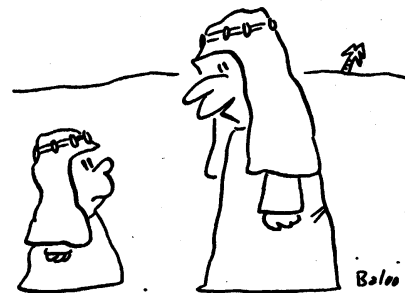
"I always reproduce human awareness as it is experienced in reality," Rand states in this book. She further adds that "... language is an objective instrument."

To which I can only reply: "You gotta be kidding, right?" No scientist would ever say such things.

Certainly you can always *improve* your view and description of reality, through combinations of experiment and reason. That's what scientific progress is all about, and science is no temporal chauvinist. Nevertheless, human awareness and language are the two most *subjective* things ever invented. They are the very essence of subjectiveness. It's a matter of basic definition, and if we disagree over this, the very disagreement proves I'm right.

If women are from Venus and men from Mars, then what far apart planets do pragmatists and idealists come from? If those gritty pragmatists Galileo and Ben Franklin collaborated on a sci-fi novel, would they benefit by first reading the prim prescriptions contained in idealist Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Poetics*? Maybe, in the same way that an ambitious young writer today will gain some advantage by perusing Ayn Rand's *The Art of Fiction* ... picking and choosing among her brilliant examples and metaphors, while taking absolutely nothing "on authority."

After all is said and done, there is one irreducible, fundamental requisite for any fiction or nonfiction that deals with matters of human liberty. Any true individual must always rediscover for himself or herself how to create new realities in prose. □



"I don't know, son — ask one of your mothers."

Myths of Rich & Poor, by W. Michael Cox and Richard Alm. Basic Books, 1998, 256 pages.

Triumph of the Stuff

Donald J. Boudreaux

PBS's recent series, "1900 House," provides a striking look at life in a typical London household of a century ago. A modern family's daily goings-on were filmed as they lived for several weeks in a house retrofitted to be just like a typical middle-class house in 1900. The routine inconveniences and drudgery that each member of this family suffered are almost unimaginable to us today. Indeed, that's the appeal of the program. We cannot really imagine how hard life was just 100 years ago unless we are shown the actual experience of life back then.

It wasn't pretty. Simply doing laundry required an incredible amount of time. What is done today in a single forty-minute cycle by a modern washing machine took 12 hours of human labor in 1900!

Anyone today who romanticizes the late Victorian past — anyone who regrets not living in those "simpler" times — should watch this program. Such a romantic yearning will be promptly destroyed. To compare forthrightly our present to the past of 100 years ago is to appreciate the truly astounding prosperity that capitalism has brought to us all during the 20th century — automatic washers and dryers, hot-water heaters, electric and gas ranges, refrigerators and freezers, central heat and air conditioning, television, and on and on and on.

Of course, "1900 House" remains a grand anecdote: one particular family living in one particular house in one particular city at one particular point in time. To see just how prodigious and reliable capitalism is at continually

raising the living standards of ordinary men and women requires historical comparisons of today with many points in the past, both distant and recent. Further, these comparisons are more revealing and trustworthy the more they are based on quantifiable measures drawn from readily available data.

Such comparisons are the specialty of W. Michael Cox and Richard Alm. Since the early 1990s, Cox (Chief Economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas) and Alm (a reporter for the *Dallas Morning News*) have written ingenious and illuminating reports on Americans' living standards. These reports have now been gathered into a remarkable book, *Myths of Rich & Poor*. The result is one of the most important books of the past decade. Using readily available government data, Cox and Alm document compellingly the remarkable and continuing increase in prosperity enjoyed by Americans during the 20th century.

Each of the nine chapters puts to rest several widely held misconceptions about American economic performance. For instance, Cox and Alm refute the popular belief that the living standards of ordinary Americans are today no higher, and perhaps even lower, than they were in 1973.

For example, in his recent book, *Illusions of Prosperity* (Oxford University Press, 1999) Joel Blau asserts that the real wages of ordinary American workers have "stagnated":

Indeed, in 1967, at the height of the [post WW II] boom, *Fortune* magazine predicted wages would rise another 150 percent by the year 2000. Just five years later, however, income began to decline. The opti-

mism faded quickly; by the mid-1980s, Wall Street economists were predicting that wages in the United States would erode for another quarter century. This time, unfortunately, their prediction was right.... The Census Bureau first determined median household income in 1967. From 1973 to 1994, it dropped 2.2 percent.

According to Blau, it was in 1973 that Americans reached "the height of U.S. economic prosperity." It's been downhill ever since, at least for ordinary workers.

Blau's reading of recent economic history is as common as it is mistaken — and it is mistaken to a fare-thee-well, as Cox and Alm show.

Cox and Alm concede that the official average hourly real wage in the United States is lower today than it was in 1973. But Cox and Alm's one-two punch on this fact renders it almost meaningless.

Their first punch reveals just how unrevealing is the reported trend in real hourly wages. These wages do not include employer-provided fringe benefits (which have increased dramatically in value over the past quarter century). Nor are economists happy with the measure of inflation that has been used to translate actual wages into real wages — that is, wages adjusted for inflation. Not only do economists now widely agree that the Consumer Price Index overestimated the rate of inflation during recent decades — thus causing an excessive adjustment downward in actual hourly wages to estimate *real* hourly wages — but this index also doesn't account for changes in product quality. The real price of a 2000 Chevrolet Malibu might well be higher than was the real price of a 1973 Malibu, but the two products are so different that to compare the price of one to the price of the other is far more misleading than enlightening.

But these are easy punches to land. It's Cox and Alm's second punch that is most impressive. Here, they directly measure ordinary Americans' ability to acquire goods and services for consumption.

Cox and Alm's method is brilliantly straightforward. Avoiding any need to adjust for inflation, it measures directly what is ultimately of most concern to those who debate Americans' standard

of living, namely, how long must the average American worker work to earn enough money to purchase the goods and services that he desires.

To answer this question, Cox and Alm first gathered information, for a number of different years, on the actual hourly wage earned by the typical American who worked (to use the U.S. Department of Labor's term) in a "production and non-supervisory" capacity. Cox and Alm then compared this wage for each of several different years in the past to the actual prices of goods and services during each of those same years. Dividing prices by wages, Cox and Alm calculated the amount of time it took the average production and non-supervisory worker, during any year, to earn enough money to purchase each of a wide variety of goods and services.

For example, because the average production and non-supervisory worker in 1973 earned about \$4.00 per hour, and because the average pocket calculator in 1973 was priced at about \$100, this worker in 1973 had to work twenty-five hours to buy a pocket calculator. Comparing, then, the time that it took this typical American worker in 1973 to earn enough money to purchase a pocket calculator to the time

To compare forthrightly our present to the past of 100 years ago is to appreciate the truly astounding prosperity that capitalism has brought to us all during the 20th century.

that it takes his counterpart today to earn enough to buy a calculator — about 40 minutes — we get a measure of the price of calculators in terms of work effort. When done for a wide array of goods and services, a clear and meaningful picture emerges of changes over the years in Americans' material prosperity. This picture is a pretty one:

Over the past quarter century, consumers benefited from declines in the work-time cost of at least 80 percent for kitchen stoves, 60 percent for dishwashers, 64 percent for clothes washers, 56 percent for vacuum cleaners, 54 percent for clothes

dryers, 40 percent for refrigerators, and 39 percent for lawn mowers (42).

A partial list of other consumer items that today require less work time to acquire than in the early 1970s includes milk, bread, ground beef, chicken, oranges, kilowatt hours of electricity, television sets, movie tickets, long-distance telephone calls, air travel, and most types of automobiles.

The consequences of this reduction in the cost of almost all goods and services are predictable — people today have lots more stuff. Especially interesting is Cox and Alm's Table 1.2 which shows that, in 1994, the percentage of poor American households that owned most basic household appliances was greater than was the percentage of all American households in 1971 who owned these appliances. For example, in 1971 83.3 percent of all American households owned a refrigerator; in 1994, 97.9 percent of poor American households owned one. The rich might be getting richer, but so are the poor.

Speaking of which, Cox and Alm masterfully explain that modern American capitalism does not promote increasing material inequality. Chapter Four, "By Our Own Bootstraps" offers the most accessible analysis of the dynamics of income earning and wealth accumulation that I've ever read. Among Cox and Alm's many achievements in this chapter is their documentation of how fluidly Americans move from one income quintile to another. Even if it's true that the income earned by Americans in the top fifth of income "distribution" is growing increasingly larger than the income earned by Americans in the bottom fifth, the Americans who today are in the bottom fifth aren't likely to remain there long:

Only 5 percent of those in the bottom fifth in 1975 were still there in 1991. . . . [A]lmost 3 out of 10 of the low-income earners from 1975 had risen to the uppermost 20 percent by 1991. More than three-quarters found their way into the two highest tiers of income earners for at least one year by 1999 (73).

Most revealingly, "the poor made the most dramatic gains when one looks at income distribution. Those who started in the bottom 20 percent in 1975 had an inflation-adjusted gain of

\$27,745 in average income by 1991. Among workers who began in the top fifth, the increase was just \$4,354" (73).

How's that for puncturing myths?!

Myths of Rich & Poor is indeed a book that does just that. In addition to putting to rest the myth that income has stagnated since the early 1970s, as well as the myth that the poor are hopelessly mired in poverty, Cox and

The poor made the most dramatic gains when one looks at income distribution.

Alm refute other myths, including the following:

- The myth that American economic performance compares unfavorably with that of Europe and the industrialized nations of Asia (Chapter 5).
- The myth that corporate downsizing results in a net loss of jobs or a general reduction in workers' wages (Chapter 6).
- The myth that large firm size, or large market share, immunizes firms from competition (Chapter 6).
- The myth that service-sector jobs pay less than manufacturing jobs (Chapter 7).
- The myth that whatever economic growth America has enjoyed during the second half of the 20th century is unlikely to continue into the 21st (Chapter 8).

I admit to a bubbly enthusiasm for this book. Cox and Alm gather the germane facts, explain those facts clearly, interpret their meaning in a way that debunks a whole raft of popular economic fallacies — and do all this in a way that is fun and eminently readable. This isn't a book of deep theory — it's not meant to be — but it paints a detailed and fascinating picture of the American economy and of the welfare of the American worker.

I don't mean to say that the book is perfect. Near its end, for example, Cox and Alm inexplicably endorse antitrust laws. But missteps like this are few and minor. The relevance and accessibility of *Myths of Rich & Poor* make it truly one of the most important works on recent economic history. □

Addiction Is a Choice, by Jeffrey A. Schaler, Ph.D. Open Court, 2000, 179 pages.

Hooked on Addiction

Jeff Rikkenbach

Most people who oppose the War on Drugs — including, alas, most libertarians — never question the propaganda that is used to justify it. “Yes,” they say, “it’s true: drug use destroys the user’s health and, not infrequently, his entire life. We stipulate to that. But, after all, people have a right to destroy themselves.” Or, alternately, they say, “But, after all, the results of attempting to prohibit these drugs are even worse than the (undeniably horrible) effects of the drugs themselves.”

The question is whether the effects of drugs like marijuana, cocaine, or heroin really *are* all that horrible. And the answer is *no*, they aren’t. The history of the War on Drugs, which goes back more than a hundred years to the first drug prohibition laws adopted in San Francisco and other localities in the late 19th century, is overgrown with the exaggerations, oversimplifications, and outright lies of anti-drug propagandists. The result is a tangled thicket of mostly baseless myths. Anyone interested in the truth about “dangerous drugs” and the American war to stamp them out must hack his way through the thicket in order to find the truth. There’s the myth of “addiction,” the myth of the “heroin overdose death,” the myth that “drugs cause crime,” the myth that “drugs cause poverty and ill health,” and the myth of “drug treatment,” to name just a few of the more pernicious.

Jeffrey Schaler, a psychologist in private practice who counts teaching posts at American University and Johns Hopkins among his academic credits, explodes two of these myths:

“addiction” and “drug treatment.” Anyone who labors under the delusion that drug addicts are helpless to control or change their bad habits without “drug treatment” desperately needs to read his new book, *Addiction Is a Choice*.

Schaler begins his line of inquiry by asking the fundamental question, “What is addiction?” He answers that until about two hundred years ago, the word “addiction” was universally understood in English-speaking countries to mean “commitment, dedication, devotion, inclination, bent, or attachment.” He begins his Introduction and eleven of his thirteen chapters with quotations, many of them charming, from writers of the 16th through 19th centuries. In each quotation, the word “addiction” is used in its original sense. Thus we read of addiction to virginity, to melancholy, to the dance, to hot countries, to sports, to other people’s money (written, not surprisingly, of members of the ruling class), and, inevitably, to vice.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Schaler explains, activists and writers in the Temperance Movement (and certain medical doctors too — the American Benjamin Rush and the Scot Thomas Trotter among them) began speaking of addiction as something quite different. Now, suddenly, one was addicted, not to, say, drunkenness, but to alcohol itself. And this addiction was to be looked upon as a disease, from which the addict was suffering.

Schaler writes:

Neither Rush nor Trotter offered scientific evidence to support this new claim, but Rush was a powerful rhetorician and exerted an influence

on public opinion. The newly invented medical language grew to be accepted as fact.

Schaler examines this new theory, which he calls the “disease model,” in detail. “If addiction is a disease,” he writes, “it’s either a bodily or a mental disease.” There is a problem with regarding addiction as a physical disease, however. It doesn’t have the right characteristics. As Schaler puts it, “pathology . . . requires an identifiable alteration in bodily tissue, a change in the cells of the body, for disease classification.” This is the reason that “a simple test of a true physical disease is whether it can be shown to exist in a corpse. There are no bodily signs of addiction itself (as opposed to its effects) that can be identified in a dead body. Addiction is therefore not listed in standard pathology textbooks.”

Schaler acknowledges that “a doctor might conclude that someone with cirrhosis of the liver and other bodily signs had partaken of alcoholic beverages heavily over a long period, and might infer that the patient was an ‘alcoholic,’” but this does not show that there are bodily signs of addiction. As he observes a few pages later:

. . . diseases are medical conditions. They can be discovered on the basis of bodily signs. They are something people have. They are involuntary. For example, the disease of syphilis was discovered. It is identified by specific signs. It is not a form of activity and is not based in human values. While certain behaviors increase the likelihood of acquiring syphilis, and while the acquisition of syphilis has consequences for subsequent social interaction, the behavior and the disease are separate phenomena. Syphilis meets the nosological criteria for disease classification in a pathology textbook. Unlike addiction, syphilis is a disease that can be diagnosed in a corpse.

Well, then, is addiction a mental disease, a “mental illness”? The American Psychiatric Association, Schaler tells us, does not list addiction in its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV*. The Association does list certain “substance-related disorders” in the manual, but, as Schaler comments, “they would not fit the category of organic disorders because they are described in terms of behavior only. They would conceivably fit the

functional disorder category but probably would be subordinated to one of the established [functional] disorders such as discouragement or anxiety." These "functional disorders," Schaler writes, "are mental in the sense that they involve mental activities." But, "as [Thomas] Szasz has pointed out, they are diseases only in a metaphorical sense."

Perhaps the most telling comment Schaler makes on the "disease model" comes during his first references to Alcoholics Anonymous, whose Twelve Step Program is the basis for almost all of the "drug treatment" programs into which local, state and federal governments in this country pour taxpayers' money. Alcoholics Anonymous, he

drugs? "People use legal and illegal drugs like Prozac and heroin," Schaler answers, "to avoid coping with their lives. The reasons people avoid coping with their lives may be judged good or bad. Addiction is the expression of a person's values. Therefore, whenever we talk or write about addiction we are dealing with an ethical issue, not a medical one. Addiction is not a disease, nor is addiction a public health problem. Addiction is a choice."

The myth of addiction has made

ignominious contributions to public issues other than the War on Drugs, of course. It is, after all, the nonsensical concept of the addictiveness of tobacco that has been used to justify the recent financial assault on cigarette manufacturers by larcenous state governments and unscrupulous personal injury lawyers. Jeffrey Schaler's crusading little book is poised to do a whole world of good, if only it can reach and persuade a broad enough public. Let us fervently hope that it does so. □

The Patriot, Directed by Roland Emmerich. Columbia Pictures, 2000, 164 minutes.

The Conflicted Patriot

The question is whether the effects of drugs like marijuana, cocaine, and heroin really are all that horrible. And the answer is no, they aren't.

maintains, is nothing more nor less than a "religious cult."

To say that Alcoholics Anonymous is a religious cult is not, of course, to say that it is ineffective. But, in fact, it is. As Schaler puts it, •

treatment generally doesn't work. I'll repeat that: *addiction treatments do not work*. This doesn't mean that individuals never give up their addiction after treatment. It's simply that they don't seem to do so at any higher rate than without treatment. One treatment tends to be just about as effective as any other treatment, which is just about as effective as no treatment at all.

In Schaler's view, addiction is not a "disease" that requires "treatment"; it is a choice that requires individual responsibility. "Drugs don't cause addiction," he writes. "No thing can 'addict' any person. Moreover, addiction doesn't mean you can't control your behavior. You can always control your own behavior. Drugs are inanimate objects. They have no will or power of their own."

Why, then, do people choose to use

John Haywood

Roland Emmerich is one director whose films don't reflexively spout the politically correct line. *Universal Soldier* centers around a small group of soldiers who, after being killed in Vietnam, were turned into zombie-like cyborgs by the government. *Stargate* is the story of a small group of soldiers, guided by a nonconformist archeologist, fighting to free slaves held on another planet by an alien posing as the Egyptian god Ra. *Independence Day* depicts a world almost destroyed by an alien invasion; after government officials badly bungle many aspects of Earth's defense, a war hero manages to turn things around. Skepticism of power and respect for war heroes are common themes in Emmerich's work.

The Patriot shares these themes, though Emmerich chooses a very different backdrop from his earlier films. It opens in 1776. Ben Martin (played by Mel Gibson) is a plantation owner who is troubled by his past. Many people see his actions in the French and Indian War as heroic, but others (including himself) see them as bar-

baric. His main challenge is building a rocking chair that won't collapse under his weight. The Revolutionary War soon disrupts his comfortable, pastoral life.

As a member of the South Carolina colonial legislature, he is summoned to Charleston to vote on a levy to support the Continental Army. He hates the taxes imposed by Britain and believes that America will one day be independent, but he opposes the measure because he does not yet believe the time has come to fight. His desire to keep his seven children out of the war also weighs heavily on his mind. The same day that the measure passes despite his opposition, his eldest son Gabriel (Heath Ledger) joins the Continental Army. Two years later, the British advance brings the war literally to the doorstep of the Martin Plantation, and Ben is soon embroiled in the conflict.

Dozens of well done battle sequences depict the war in all its horror. The depiction of war as brutal and bloody clarifies why Ben Martin is reluctant to fight. Beyond the battles, the construction of the film's sets shows great care: if there were any

anachronistic props, I couldn't spot them in four viewings.

The Patriot is that rare action film where a major character has an internal conflict. Martin doesn't want to fight: besides the reasons he states in the legislature, he believes that American General Horatio Gates's preference for traditional firing line tactics will not be effective against the better trained and disciplined British. But it's clear the real reason for his reluctance is his fear of his own vicious side.

Beyond Martin's personal struggle, the film also tells a good adventure story. The movie has more than its share of exciting moments. There is also a wonderful wit about the movie. An example of all three is the episode where Martin raids the British party carrying Cornwallis' personal baggage. Near the end of the brief but exciting raid, Ben Martin and a number of other troops shoot a couple of surrendering British soldiers. Gabriel and Reverend Oliver (another member of Martin's militia played by Rene Auberjonois) complain that it's murder; though some in the militia have no qualms about this, Martin realizes Oliver is

"Why should I trade one tyrant 3,000 miles away for 3,000 tyrants one mile away?"

right and responds by ordering the militia to give full quarter to wounded and surrendering troops in the future. Then another member of the militia, John Billings (Leon Rippey) makes a suggestion regarding the contents of the wagon train: "I say we drink the wine, eat the dogs, and use the paper as wadding." The Reverend is not quite ready to eat the dogs.

Despite the historic accuracy of many details (e.g., its depiction of colonials picking off easy targets like the British officers' copious personal baggage), many reviews of *The Patriot* focus on how it handles history. There seem to be three main complaints: "The British weren't that brutal," "*The Patriot* ignores slavery," and "Francis Marion, who some say Gibson's char-

acter was based on, was no hero."

There seems to be little doubt that the British generally behaved worse than the Americans in the Revolution. At the start of the war, a third of the colonists were for independence, a third were loyalists, and a third were undecided or ambivalent; by the end of the war, the majority clearly favored independence. Opinion changed partly because some loyalists fled to Canada, Florida, or England. But mostly it was the result of the brutality of the British

Army. Washington would not allow his troops to raid the surrounding countryside and for the most part, they didn't, while the British soldiers frequently took anything and everything of value they could. In *The Patriot*, the British frequently burn the homes of those who oppose them, shoot wounded Continentals and civilians, and even, in one scene, lock dozens of people in a church and burn it to the ground. This episode may never have happened, but the destruction of prop-

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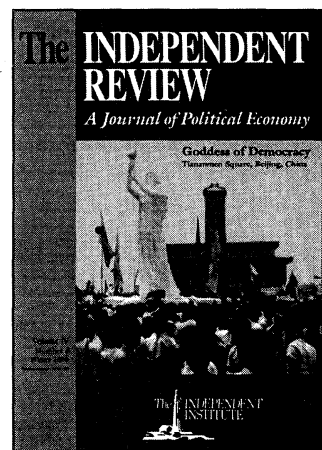
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erty and lack of quarter for wounded and surrendering soldiers wasn't unheard of. American misdeeds aren't completely ignored in *The Patriot*; Americans also shoot surrendering British soldiers. Nor are the British completely reprehensible. Cornwallis (Tom Wilkinson) tries to rein in the brutal Colonel Tavington (Jason Isaacs) on many occasions. While there is no doubt that the Americans are heroes and the British are villains in *The Patriot*, they aren't perfect heroes or perfect villains. Allowing for some artistic license, the film is plausible.

Nor does the film completely gloss over slavery. Probably what upsets most critics on this point is the scene where, in response to Tavington's offer of freedom to any slave who fights for the British, one of the black workers on Martin's plantation replies that they're freed men. It's possible that he lied in order to avoid having to serve in the British Army. (It didn't work: Tavington forced them into service anyway.) It's also possible that they really were freed men. Elsewhere in the film, Gabriel hopes that slavery will end with British rule. The more interesting character on this subject is Occam (Jay Arlen Jones), a slave who is signed up by his ailing master to fight in his stead. Though originally reluctant, he is spurred on by Washington's promise to free and pay any slave who serves a year in the Continental Army, and even passes up two opportunities to desert and escape.

Slavery figures in a subplot, but the movie doesn't spend much time on it. Nor does *The Patriot* deal much with the politics of the Revolution, beyond the vote for the levy, several references to taxation, and Martin's skepticism about the future American government. In one of the movie's most mem-

orable lines, he asks "Why should I trade one tyrant 3,000 miles away for 3,000 tyrants one mile away?" The reason for this is appallingly obvious: *The Patriot* isn't about taxation or slavery, but rather is about Martin's conflicts both with his own pacifist leanings and with Col. Tavington.

The criticism regarding Francis Marion is particularly baffling not only for those who only see the movie, but for those who look closer as well. The Internet Movie DataBase's "Studio Briefing" quotes Christopher Hibbert, described as a British expert on the American Revolution, as saying that Marion "was a wily and elusive character, very active in the persecution of

There is no doubt that the Americans are heroes and the British are villains in The Patriot, but they aren't perfect heroes or perfect villains.

Cherokee Indians and not at all the sort of chap who should be celebrated as a hero. . . . The truth is that people like Marion committed atrocities as bad if not worse than those perpetrated by the British." Francis Marion reportedly shot Indians for sport and raped his slaves.

Whatever good or bad Marion did is irrelevant, however. There's no good reason to believe that Martin is supposed to represent Marion. Perhaps the filmmakers didn't like Francis Marion once they took a close look at his biography, or they simply wanted more flexibility in how the characters would interact. Either way, they went beyond just changing the name.

Marion didn't serve in the South Carolina Senate until after the war, whereas Martin was a legislator in 1776. Neither was married during the war, but while Marion didn't marry until after the war, Martin's wife passed away before the war. Most significantly,

Martin is reluctant to join the fighting, but Marion joined the Continentals in 1775. While they did keep some similarities between Martin and Marion — a brutally violent past, familiarity with rural South Carolina, and a willingness to use guerrilla tactics — Martin clearly *isn't* Marion.

Nor is Martin the only fictional character in the film. His comrade in arms, Col. Burwell (Chris Cooper), doesn't seem based on anyone. The movie's official Web site says he was "suggested by Virginia's Lt. Colonel Henry 'Light-Horse Harry' Lee," though, aside from being from Virginia, it's hard to see much similarity. Martin's advisor Major Villeneuve (Tchéky Karyo) is a cross between Lafayette and von Steuben. Tavington is clearly based on Banastre Tarleton whose brutality led to the term "Tarleton's quarter" being applied to any instance when wounded or surrendering soldiers were shot. There are some historic figures depicted in the movie. George Washington rides past Gabriel Martin in one very brief scene. Nathanael Greene even has a couple of lines. But the only major character who was a real person is the British General Cornwallis.

Despite all the attention to detail, there are two glaring historical errors. *The Patriot* claims that the British captured Charleston in 1778, but British forces didn't take the city until 1780. Worse, the climactic battle — a large engagement several months before Yorktown where Greene and Cornwallis go head to head — simply never happened. Neither of these gross inaccuracies were needed. Martin's activities against the British could just as easily have started in 1780 instead of 1778. The story turns on what happens between Tavington and Martin; their armies' actions and Greene's presence in that battle are not crucial.

I suspect the reason why many critics seem to hate *The Patriot* is that it spits in the face of the political correctness movement. *The Patriot* is strongly pro-militia and is pro-gun to such an extent that it portrays children with guns as a good thing. It depicts its hero as brave, pious and honorable, in the War for Independence, not racist or thuggish.

In the year 2000, that's downright daring. □



"Hey! — You know darn well the rules say gruel only!"

Letters, from page 58

sible and to muddy the water when such votes become unavoidable. It is for this reason that identifying a critical vote often involves analyzing such procedural nightmares as "voting against cloture on the motion to proceed" (an important vote, if it keeps a bad bill which is likely to pass from even reaching the floor), voting to waive a point of order or voting for a motion to substitute.

Grewell notes, correctly, that on votes of this nature, "the average U.S. citizen would have a difficult time deciphering what legislators were actually voting on." That is *precisely* what the legislators want to accomplish — confuse everybody, then run for reelection on issues of their choosing.

One last quotation from Senator Bennett:

Let's stop using the rules of the Senate that can allow votes and that can call up amendments solely for the purpose of creating campaign records. Let's recognize that the purpose of the Senate is for legislation, not campaigning.

Readers of *Liberty* know all too well that most legislation is about campaigning for somebody's vote. If it wasn't for scorecards and ratings, you and I would have to take the politicians at their word.

I think that eliminating Congressional ratings would be a grave mistake. I encourage Mr. Grewell to take a second look at the process.

Larry Pratt
Executive Director
Gun Owners of America
Springfield, Va.

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Golant, U.K.

A village defends its heritage, reported by *Reuters*:

A proposal to rename Cowshit Lane was defeated in the village of Golant. "I live there and I have no objection to the name," said a local councilman.

Nova Scotia, Canada

The latest victory in the fight for cleaner air, disclosed in the *London Observer*:

Nova Scotia has outlawed perfume in public places. The ban includes all fragrances, including hair spray and gel, mouth-wash and deodorants.

Seattle, Wash.

As reported from the *Seattle Weekly*, there is a marketplace for art:

Four paintings by Karen Liebowitz were stolen from a gallery. The pieces were studies of a larger piece called "Chaos Bound," featuring a "naked woman lying on her stomach on a seder table with her hands tied with rope and her mouth gagged with a golden apple." Liebowitz explains that the woman is Eris, the Roman goddess of chaos and discord, and urged police to look for "someone who worships Eris."

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Advance in the administration of justice, in the Southern Hemisphere's largest country, reported by *Reuters*:

"Most courtrooms are battlefields, but with aromatherapy, music, diffused lighting and a little light-green paint, we've turned it into a place of peace," said Judge Portugal. "I sit down with these people, serve coffee and cookies, and we talk in a calm environment," Portugal said.

Oakville, Ontario

Progressive move to eliminate gun violence in the Dominion of Canada, reported by the *Toronto Globe and Mail*:

Peel Regional Police called a news conference to display what they had seized from an Oakville toy store: 3,200 air pistols, each a "disaster waiting to happen," according to Chief Noel Catney. No charges have been filed. Member of Provincial Parliament Michael Bryant commented, "Good for the police. Now what they need is legislation to back them up."

Milwaukee, Wisc.

Creative accounting practices, as reported from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*:

Milwaukee Public Schools recently spent \$2,600 to pay for 200 parents to lobby the legislature for more money. The money was from a federal fund to help needy students.

Washington, D.C.

Bill Clinton's innovative method of promoting peace, described by journalist Randall Mikkelsen of *Reuters*:

"The president is trying to wrap up the marathon talks, after rescuing them from failure last Wednesday by asking both sides to work through his absence."

The United States of America

A member of the new, modern army explains an important aspect of military science, from *Soldier of Fortune*:

"In the instructor's training course, we were taught that the proper way to erase a chalkboard is with vertical strokes, not horizontal strokes. Horizontal strokes may cause a woman's breasts to jiggle."

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Latest consumer protection measure in the progressive Socialist Republic of Vietnam, reported by *Reuters*:

The government has begun to require licenses to sing and dance, in the wake of a government investigation that determined that many musical performances have been "low quality."

Portland, Ore.

Crime wave in America's Rose City, reported by the estimable *Statesman-Journal*:

A 24-year-old man has been arrested and charged with two felonies and three misdemeanors for tricking elderly women into spanking him while wearing women's clothing. The women were called by the man claiming to be an officer in charge of a juvenile who had been ordered to undergo an unusual punishment and asked for their assistance in this manner. The women agreed and the man, claiming to be the juvenile in question, would show up at their homes and told the women "Please help me. I need to be spanked." The women complied. Apparently the women believed him to be the troubled youth and didn't question his attire nor form of punishment.

Mexico City

Bold ambition of the new president of Mexico, reported by *Reuters*:

In a packed meeting with foreign correspondents, Vicente Fox of the National Action Party said the one firm commitment of his government would be to reduce corruption in the government "to normal levels" within six years.

Bogota, Colombia

Strange bureaucratic snafu, reported by *Reuters*:

An 87-year-old Colombian man died of a heart attack waiting in line to obtain a government certificate to prove he was alive.

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

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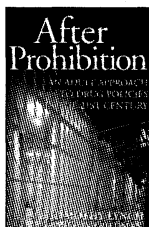
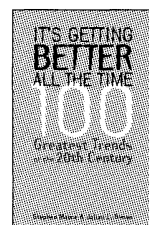
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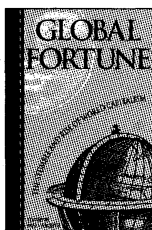
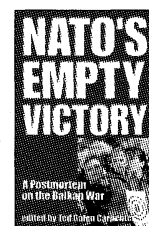


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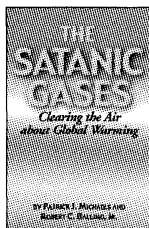


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