

Inventing America ★ The Great Tax Myth ★ Our Constitutional Anchor ★ Youth in Our Future

April 14, 2008

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## Freedom's Call

THE NEW AMERICAN champions a return to constitutional principles to safeguard our rights and our way of life, but this is only part of the solution. A recommitment to traditional morality, family-centered ideals, and sound money are also needed to preserve liberty and prosperity. This issue tells why. (April 14, 2008, 48 pp; 1 copy, \$2.95; 10 copies, \$12.50; 25 copies, \$22.50) TNA080414



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This documentary produced by Phillip Day includes commentary from a member of the European Union (EU) Parliament and other EU analysts. It covers the history and goals of the EU, as well as the disturbing, irrevocable implications the EU continental government holds for every British citizen. With a similar process unfolding in America under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Americans are starting to ask themselves if their elected officials should be allowed to go down the same path and create a North American Union. (2008, 36min)

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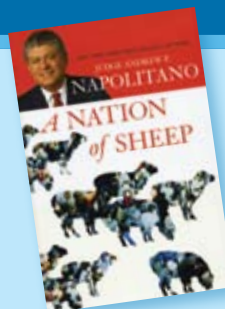
### Overview of America and A Case for Blocking the North American Union

Overview of America dynamically illustrates what makes America unique. A Case for Blocking the North American Union offers an updated, no-nonsense report on the dangers of the proposed North American Union. (2007, 40 total min; 1-3, \$4.00 ea; 4-6, \$3.00 ea; 7-9, \$2.50 ea; 10-20, \$2.00 ea; 21-50, \$1.75 ea; 51+, \$1.50 ea) DVDBDUO



## A Nation of Sheep

Judge Andrew Napolitano discusses how the federal government has circumvented the Constitution and is systematically dismantling the legal protections of our rights and freedoms. He challenges Americans to recognize that they are being led down a dangerous path and focuses on the consequences of complacency. (2007, 256pp, pb, \$22.95) BKNOS



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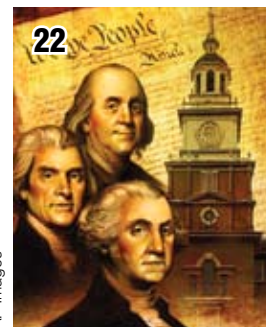
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## The Message of Freedom

The mission of this magazine is encapsulated by the slogan appearing on its cover every two weeks — “That freedom shall not perish.” On the surface, that slogan seems so uncontroversial that one might ask why a magazine defending freedom is even needed. After all, isn’t freedom popular? Don’t we all want to manage our own lives, as opposed to the government managing our lives for us? Don’t we want to decide ourselves where we go to church, how we raise our families, how we earn our livelihoods, and how we spend our money? Don’t we want the opportunity freedom provides for plotting our own course through life and achieving our objectives, whether our goals be buying our dream home or starting a business or converting an avocation into a vocation?

Yes, freedom is popular. Yet despite its popularity, most people throughout history have not enjoyed freedom. Even today, many of the peoples of the world are oppressed. The fact that people want to manage their own lives does not change the fact that some people want to manage the lives of others. They do so through government, and if the government is unaccountable and unrestrained, the consequences may be horrific. Consider Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia, where the regimes were all-powerful and the victims powerless.

The American experience is different, of course. Here in America, the Founding Fathers created a Constitution limiting the government — and consequently generations of Americans have enjoyed freedom to such an extent that it is almost impossible to think of America without thinking of freedom or to think of freedom without thinking of America.

Yet even here in America, freedom can be lost. Indeed, ominous signs are apparent in our everyday lives, from oppressive taxation to finance bloated government programs not authorized in the Constitution, to our currency’s depreciating value caused by the creation of fiat (unbacked) currency by the Fed-

eral Reserve, an entity given extraordinary extra-constitutional powers to control money and credit.

There are other storm clouds on the horizon, including the threat to civil liberties embodied in a “war on terrorism” that increasingly views everyone as suspect and increasingly infringes upon basic rights such as habeas corpus. Everyday Americans may not feel impacted by that, but that will change if dangerous precedents now being established are allowed to stand.

Freedom is popular, but it is not common. It is the birthright of every human being, but its endowment must be worked for. It is costly to attain, but even when it is attained, it can easily be lost — not just to invading armies but also through national suicide, such as when the German people, unaware and beguiled, voted Hitler’s National Socialist (Nazi) Party into power. America is not immune to such a tragic fate. It can happen here too — if we dare forget that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

That said, there is good reason for great optimism here in America. After all, we have a proud heritage of freedom unsurpassed in world history, and we have our matchless Constitution. And as already indicated, the freedom message is popular and it will be embraced when properly presented to people who care.

It is fitting that a magazine whose cover slogan is “That freedom shall not perish” would dedicate an entire issue to the very positive and powerful message of freedom. We invite you to read the contents that follow, from the opening article on page 8 underscoring the economic benefits of free enterprise to the closing article recommending involvement in the growing and vibrant freedom movement. Along the way, we make the case for what makes freedom possible, from limited government to strong families and morality.

Enjoy! And if you agree with us that freedom is worth fighting for, we encourage you to become involved if you have not already done so. ■

— GARY BENOIT



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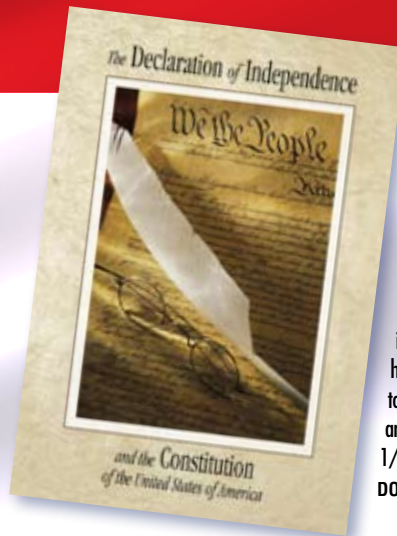
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# PATRIOTIC PRODUCTS

## Freedom's Call

THE NEW AMERICAN champions a return to constitutional principles to safeguard our rights and our way of life, but this is only part of the solution. A recommitment to traditional morality, family-centered ideals, and sound money are also needed to preserve liberty and prosperity. This issue tells why. (April 14, 2008, 48 pp; 1 copy, \$2.95; 10 copies, \$12.50; 25 copies, \$22.50) TNA080414



## The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution

Pocket-size edition! Contains the two most important documents in American political history. A great reference to have on hand to defend constitutional principles. Dimensions are approx. 3.5" x 5". (2007 ed, 48pp, pb, 1/\$2.00ea, 10+/\$1.75ea, 50+/\$1.50ea) DOIAC

## Overview of America

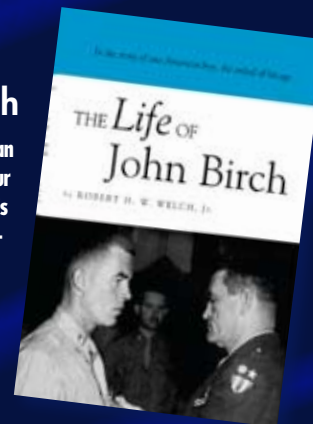
### Public Service Edition

What makes freedom and prosperity possible? Find out in this newly revised public service edition of *Overview of America*. Great for viewing in all venues. (2007, 29min., 1/\$1.00; 25/\$20.00; 50/\$37.50; 100/\$70.00) DVD00APS



## The Life of John Birch

This biography of a young American hero is an inspiration. Recharge your determination from the spark of his courage and rediscover spiritual values in the example of his life. (1960 ed, 135pp, pb, \$3.50) TLOJB



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### Editorialist Sums Up the Costs of the Iraq War

“Wasted dollars are just one of the costs. Nearly 4,000 U.S. troops and at least tens of thousands of Iraqis have lost their lives. The conflict has left Iraq divided along its religious and ethnic fault, strengthened the theocracy in Iran, and made Uncle Sam a pariah in much of the Islamic world.”

*Endorsing the view presented in the book The Three Trillion Dollar War by Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes, a Boston Globe editorial writer pointed to other than monetary costs.*

### Human-relations Agency Okays English-only Sign

“This Is America: When Ordering, Please Speak English.”

*When he posted the sign at his sandwich shop in 2005, Joe Vento received plenty of criticism from city officials and the minders of political correctness. But Philadelphia’s Commission on Human Relations finally got around to ruling that the message is not discriminatory and does not violate the city’s Fair Practices Ordinance.*

### Investment Counselor Wants the Federal Reserve Abolished

“I would abolish the Fed. [Without it] we don’t have anybody printing money, we don’t have inflation in the land, we don’t have a collapsing U.S. dollar.”

*Long a critic of Federal Reserve policy, CEO Jim Rogers of Rogers Holdings added that “no country has ever succeeded by debasing its currency.”*

### Hillary Cites Experience — But She Didn’t Always

“In the late ’60s, Clinton shouted along with the rest of us not to ‘trust anyone over 30.’ She never shouted, ‘Let’s rally around the person with 35 years of experience.’”

*Tufts University Professor Michael Goldman is not enamored by the claims of presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.*

### State Lawmakers Continue to Enact Their Own Laws to Curb Illegal Immigration

“They feel like they have to take it into their own hands because the federal government is doing nothing.”

*State lawmakers have proposed hundreds of bills and many have become law according to attorney Sharma Hammond of the Federation for American Immigration Reform.*

### Fuel Costs Seriously Impacting Truckers

“A few years ago, \$500 would have kept me rolling for two weeks. Now I’ll be lucky to make it for three days.”

*As the price of diesel fuel approaches a record-setting \$4.00 per gallon, Cleveland truck driver Ricardo Caraballo spent \$505 to fill his tank only halfway.*

### Cute Assessment of Abigail Adams

“I really admire her. She is the founding father of first ladies.”

*Actress Laura Linney, who plays the wife of John Adams in the television series John Adams, additionally thinks Martha Washington was “boring.”*



Laura Linney

AP Images

### Federal Reserve Angers Realists by Making \$200 Billion Available to Wall Street Banks

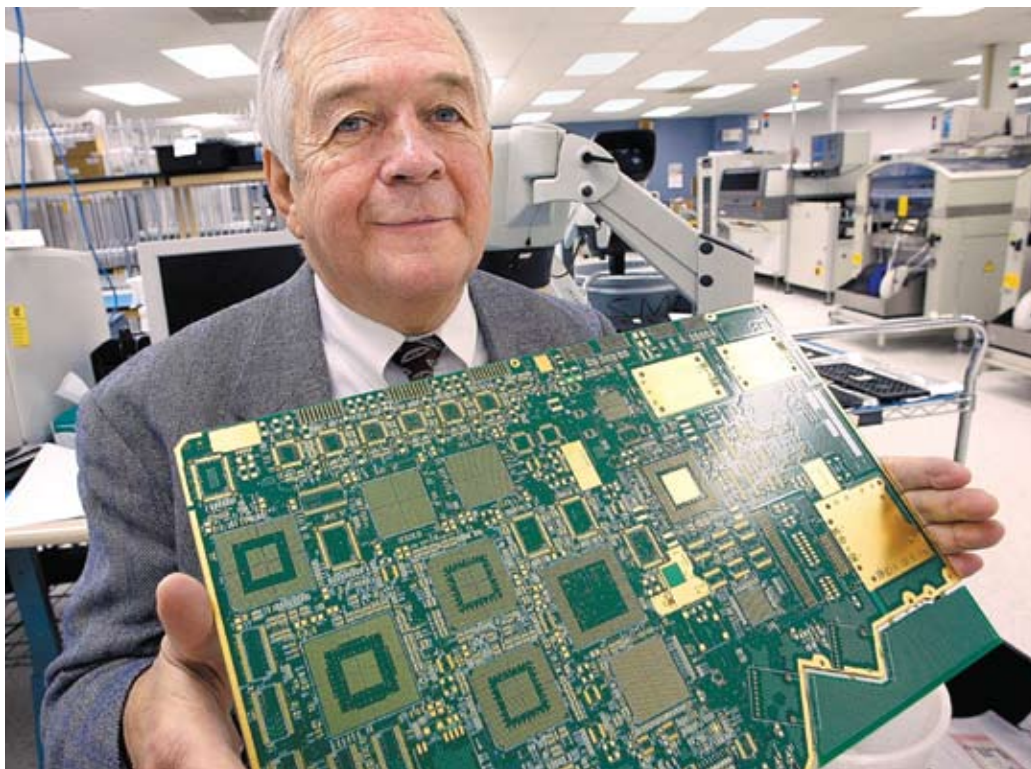
“The Fed is saying if you don’t want those mortgages, then give them to us. The Fed thinks that inflation is the way to solve our problems, but all this does is create bigger problems.”

*When the Fed responded to the glut of ill-conceived mortgages by creating new money now held by banks, Connecticut-based investment firm president Peter D. Schiff protested that taking such inflationary action would further weaken the dollar. ■*

— COMPILED BY JOHN F. MCMANUS

# Inventing America

The blessings that made America the most prosperous society in human history are freedom, free enterprise, and entrepreneurship.



AP Images

**Innovate and invent:** Joe T. May, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, also an engineer and inventor, is keeping alive an American heritage of entrepreneurship and invention. With over 22 inventions and innovations, the only other Virginia politician to hold as many patents as May is Thomas Jefferson.

by Alex Newman

America's Founding Fathers understood that a free citizenry would prosper. If people were simply allowed to keep the fruits of their labor and make their own decisions, they would inevitably produce everything needed, and much more.

During America's War for Independence, John Adams explained in a letter to his wife Abigail: "I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons must study mathematics and philosophy,

*Alex Newman is the president of Liberty Sentinel Media, Inc. and the executive editor of the Liberty Sentinel of North Central Florida.*

geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry and porcelain."

Adams could not have dreamed of what his sacrifices and the freedom he helped secure would eventually lead to. The birth of America with its unique Constitution unleashed human creativity like never before in history. Try to imagine life, just for a moment, without light bulbs. Try imagining it without refrigerators, toilet paper, air conditioning, microwaves, telephones, computers, assembly lines, and airplanes.

That list of luxuries represents but a fraction of the wonders that resulted from American entrepreneurship and the free-enterprise system that allowed it to thrive.

All these conveniences weren't just invented here; they were produced and distributed so efficiently that virtually all Americans now have access to them. As America prospered and citizens' basic needs were met, entrepreneurs had free time to invent new things. People in the fledgling Republic were now motivated not by a despot's sword, but by the promise of personal success.

Wealth earned by producing and trading goods and services began to accumulate as technology progressed and people had even more free time to devote to leisure and other non-essential activities. People had savings that they could invest. This continued to fuel the cycle of production, allowing ever more massive undertakings like railroads and skyscrapers. Voluntary associations were building a mighty civilization that no amount of dictators and well-trained central planners could have come close to imposing.

The system Americans were blessed with is unique in history. Instead of tyrants trampling the people's God-given rights and having an economy run by force and coercion, the Constitution created a government that was designed to *protect* the people's rights and property. Safe in the knowledge that the fruits of their labor were safe, Americans set out and created the wealthiest society that has ever existed. Profit and the ability to keep it continue to be the motivating forces driving America's producers, and contrary to modern dogma, it is a wonderful blessing. It's why America is presently as prosperous as it is.

While it took the colonists weeks to cross the treacherous Atlantic, the abundance provided by free enterprise allows Americans today to travel around the



world in a day. They can sky-dive out of airplanes or prepare tasty meals in minutes. They can control a room's temperature with the twist of a dial or drive down a highway at 75 miles an hour.

### One Man, One Business

Scuba diving is just one of the countless leisure activities that Americans can enjoy in their free time thanks to the free-enterprise system, and Lloyd Bailey is just one of countless entrepreneurs who have been able to make their living while enriching people's lives by providing them with goods and services they demand. His business sells everything from scuba tanks, dive knives, spear guns, masks, and fins, to firearms and ammo. Captain Lloyd Bailey, as in a ship's captain, also offers scuba lessons and tank-filling services.

After attending the University of Florida, Bailey took up his uncle's suggestion: he borrowed money to start a business. After borrowing the necessary funds, the young Bailey started off teaching scuba diving and selling equipment out of a warehouse. "It started in a very humble way and I really had to watch my spending," Bailey said before explaining his experiences learning about conservation of capital and keeping a low overhead. "I just stuck to the fundamentals of supply and demand, you know, finding out what the market wanted and always making sure I had it in stock." Gainesville is one of the largest and most important destinations for freshwater diving because of the unique springs and caves that saturate the landscape, and the store is now the largest scuba store in North Florida. Bailey owns it free and clear.

By 1995, the business had a website. Soon, 30 percent of Bailey's sales were online and 30 percent were interstate. Maybe there was some truth to his company's slogan: "Lowest prices in the world." He developed it after a particularly large competitor began using "Lowest prices in the nation." The competing store is no longer around. "They had a big chain with like seven stores so I wondered how I would be able to compete," he said of the former competitor. "But I told myself 'I will win,' and I worked at it and I did.... America is still free enough that anybody who wants to win can win." But Bailey's success was no accident. He put



**Building a business:** Lloyd Bailey, the owner of the largest scuba shop in North Florida, claims that all levels of government in this country are choking off business development with fees, taxes, and regulations.

in 100-hour weeks and 14-hour days for two years. His efforts certainly paid off.

Bailey is also one of the nation's many John Birch Society chapter leaders. "I always tell people that Birching is my first job and that if I fail at that, my second job doesn't matter," Bailey said with a smile on his face as he sat in his office. He isn't joking; half of his sign outside is dedicated to the John Birch Society Gainesville chapter. He also buys a full-page, center-fold ad in the *Liberty Sentinel of North-Central Florida* every month, where he promotes the JBS or one of its campaigns along with his business. He's been known to do the same thing on billboards.

Because of his Birch background, he understands that the well-being and prosperity of Americans and his own future depend upon limiting the size and control of our government. He understands the crucial role of America's free-enterprise system in the success of his

business. He also understands that the system is a product of the sacrifices made by the Founders who enshrined America's unique traditions and legal system in the Constitution — the one document most important to maintaining a free market in America, where people with dreams like Bailey can pursue them. He understands the importance of educating his fellow citizens for the future — after all, he was blessed with a son just this year. All of his scuba students get a free civics lesson. "I love the saying, 'Capitalism may not be perfect, it's just the best system that has

**The birth of America with its unique Constitution unleashed human creativity like never before in history. Try to imagine life, just for a moment, without light bulbs, refrigerators, toilet paper, air conditioning, microwaves, telephones, computers, assembly lines, and airplanes.**

Imagine the wonders that would result from allowing free enterprise to flourish once again. Imagine the suffering that could be lessened or abolished. To continue basking in the blessings showered upon a free people, citizens must always be on guard to protect their liberty.



**Waste not, want not:** David Ward won the History Channel's 2006 inventors competition. He invented Strawjet, a machine that is pulled behind a tractor that twists waste plant material into tubes that can be used in building products that replace wood and bricks.

existed in the history of the world.' If you look back, governments have never created wealth, but they certainly destroy it," Bailey noted. "It's important that people understand so we can pass the great nation that was handed to us on to our children in better condition."

Despite his positive attitude, Bailey is concerned that as government grows ever larger and consumes an ever greater budget, it is infringing on people's rights and interfering in the economy too much. "With all the obstacles that exist now to get into business, I'm sure glad I don't have to do it all over again," he remarked, citing the countless fees, taxes, and regulations that continue coming down from federal, state, and local governments. He is hopeful that as the economy worsens, more people will get involved and help restore sound money and limited government — two essential requirements of a healthy free-enterprise system.

Bailey pursued his dreams and made people's lives better through entrepreneurship. His accomplishments prove that hard and honest work is rewarding in a system based on private property. His success illustrates why a free-enterprise system that leaves people free to make their own decisions is desirable: it produces businesses like Bailey's that provide something that people want as well and efficiently as possible.

### The Difference Freedom Makes

The free-enterprise system has led to so much prosperity that until recently, less than two percent of the population grew the nation's entire food supply. For almost all of human history, people have toiled simply to avoid starvation. They have been ruled by despots who stole anything and everything that the people didn't need to survive and continue producing. European serfs lived as tenants on the land at the pleasure of the kings and aristocracies. If their crops didn't grow, they might not survive the winter. If the river dried up, they might not have water to drink. People around the world still struggle today just to access the basic necessities of life. People die of starvation and dehydration on almost every continent. But America is different.

Here, even people who are considered poor have food, water, shelter, electricity, education, television, healthcare, transportation, leisure, and more. Middle-class people enjoy a standard of living that is among the highest anywhere on Earth. The American economy is the largest of any single nation in the world, but the American people account for about five percent of the world population. Why is this? What is different about America?

Advocates of big government try to explain all of America's prosperity with several theories, including the abundance of natural resources, the fact that the United States has rarely had infrastructure destroyed during war, and the fact that the United States plunders resources from abroad. While there certainly may be a number of factors contributing to America's success and great wealth, one tradition and idea secured by the Constitution towers above the rest: freedom.

The free-enterprise system that has given entrepreneurs the freedom to dream, produce, and invent is not only tradition, it is the foundation of the nation's legal system. The idea that government exists to protect the life, liberty, and property of the people, endowed by their Creator, is enshrined in the Supreme Law of the Land thanks to the sacrifices of the Founding Fathers.

The facts show overwhelmingly and conclusively that property rights and economic freedom lead to prosperity. A joint study

AP Images



done by the *Wall Street Journal* and the Heritage Foundation in 2007 called the “Index of Economic Freedom” ranked 157 countries based on 10 economic indicators: property rights, freedom from government over-regulation and taxation, government corruption, trade restrictions, etc. Singapore, Hong Kong, and Australia placed ahead of America as having the fewest constraints on individuals and business, as the federal government here continues to expand beyond its constitutional limitation. But with America, Switzerland, Canada, and other rich nations in the top 10, the study’s results drew a clear link between economic prosperity and economic liberty. Ranking at the bottom of the list were countries with the least economic freedom. Communist North Korea and Cuba came in last.

“Some people claim that some countries are rich because of abundant natural resources,” writes economist and syndicated columnist Walter Williams. “That’s nonsense! Africa and South America are probably the richest continents in natural resources, but are home to some of the world’s poorest people.” He continued by dismissing the idea that those nations’ poverty resulted from their status as former European colonies, pointing to the United States and Australia as examples of success stories — citing economic freedom as the difference.

“The economic development lesson is clear: Have a system of economic freedom and grow rich. Extensive government control, weak property rights and government corruption almost guarantee poverty,” Williams wrote of the Index of Economic Freedom, suggesting it was like a map of world poverty.

In addition to creating far more prosperity, free enterprise also creates a middle class and distributes wealth more equitably. In repressed nations, the tendency is to have a rich elite ruling over the much larger, much poorer population. History and the modern world are replete with examples.

The Constitution and the freedom it secured for Americans created a nation of free people who claimed their rights from



**Freedom equals prosperity:** A study called the “Index of Economic Freedom” compared countries based upon government constraints on businesses and individuals and found that where government was least constraining, prosperity flourished.

a source higher than government — and free people become prosperous people.

“Free labor is incomparably more productive than slave labor. The slave has no interest in exerting himself fully. He works only as much and as zealously as is necessary to escape the punishment attaching to failure to perform the minimum,” noted renowned economist Ludwig von Mises. “The free worker, on the other hand, knows that the more his labor accomplishes, the more he will be paid.” In a free society, any given worker’s wages are more valuable to him than his labor or he would not make the exchange — he is making a profit, and the more he works, the more he profits. “Freedom for all workers warrants the greatest productivity of human labor and is therefore in the interest of all the inhabitants of the Earth,” Mises continued.

Free people have the inherent ability to exchange their goods and services for those of others, provided that all interested parties feel like they benefit from the transaction. Profit is why the baker wakes up every morning and bakes bread for the community. It is why companies and individuals figure out the most efficient ways to produce and distribute their products to as many people as possible. It is what makes the world go around.

A free market also happens to be the only moral and just way for people to collaborate with each other in a society. It is the right of every free individual to

keep the fruits of his labor. If somebody or something else lays claim to an individual’s property, that person is a slave by definition. Once again, John Adams put it best: “The moment the idea is admitted into society that property is not as sacred as the law of God, and that there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence.”

Free enterprise and private property also create the most humane society. Americans are by far the most generous people in the world; they give around a quarter of a trillion dollars to charity every year. According to a book called *Who Really Cares?* by Syracuse University professor Arthur Brooks, Americans give seven times more to charity than Germans and fourteen times more than Italians.

Even with all of the obstacles government has imposed on the free market — fiat money, over-regulation, over-taxation, wealth redistribution, etc. — the fundamental principles of free enterprise and American ingenuity still managed to build the most prosperous society that has ever existed. It also happens to be the most charitable. Imagine the wonders that would result from allowing free enterprise to flourish once again. Imagine the suffering that could be lessened or abolished.

To continue basking in the blessings showered upon a free people though, citizens must always be on guard to protect their liberty. Their prosperity is inextricably linked with it. ■



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# The Great Tax Myth



No good will come from replacing one tax with another. We will be free to keep what is ours only when a tax is abolished and replaced with nothing but reduced spending.

*by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.*

One of the bestselling books on economics today is *The Fair Tax Book* by Neal Boortz. The sole appeal of the book is that it promises to get rid of the IRS and the income tax. Of course, everyone hates the income-tax gatherers, and rightly so. The income tax is the root of all evil, just as Frank Chodorov said. What is not widely advertised is that Boortz's

*Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr. is president of the Ludwig von Mises Institute and editor of LewRockwell.com.*

suggested replacement, namely a national sales tax, is based on the government collecting as much in taxes as it does now. If you think you hate the IRS, I can promise you that you will hate whatever agency is charged with collecting the national sales tax. The solution to the excessive cost of extra-constitutional government is not to devise another oppressive scheme for coming up with the money but to get rid of the unconstitutional programs.

While some taxes are worse than others, there is no good tax. All taxes distort production, depress economic growth, and

punish producers and consumers. They all violate privacy and rob us of property. They all increase government power and reduce the scope of economic liberty. This is true of the income tax and also true of any tax that might be designed to replace it while raising just as much revenue.

It is also true that different kinds of taxes affect production and punish people in different ways. You can even use taxes to manipulate social and economic outcomes. A tax on children will discourage large families; large deductions will make children more affordable and hence more numerous. In the same way, a tax on egg production will cause producers to shift out of that market and into others.

Contrary to the textbooks, no tax is neutral with respect to its effects on the market economy. A tax on consumption will draw down on the profits of the producers and push firms out of the industry. A tax on production will diminish the number of viable competitors and thereby cause prices for the goods produced to be higher than they otherwise would be.

Many people are indifferent to taxes placed on goods that we ourselves don't produce or consume. That's why luxury taxes and inheritance taxes that affect only a small part of the population are ubiquitous, whereas there are many exceptions available for the consumption of food and drugs. Taxes on the production of things that don't affect us personally are more politically viable than those that do.

All that said, a major myth plagues many people in the antitax movement. It is that one kind of tax can be replaced with another with net gains for society. The most pernicious form of this myth advocates the creation of a brand new tax (always said to be fairer and less complex) to displace a

**A tax on consumption will draw down on the profits of the producers and push firms out of the industry. A tax on production will diminish the number of viable competitors and thereby cause prices for the goods produced to be higher than they otherwise would be.**

bad old tax (such as the income tax).

If we had the will, we could abolish the income tax today. Imagine that no one filed a tax return at all this year, and all withholdings were refunded. The government would still have enough revenue from other sources to spend the whole of the budget from 2000, with some left over.

In other words, if we cut back the federal budget to a level it was at only eight years ago, we could abolish the income tax right now and never feel it. Was the level of spending in 2000 so insufferably low that we were somehow denied “essential public services”? Of course not, so why not get rid of the income tax? The reason: once the politicians have their hands on the money, and are used to spending \$3 trillion

instead of \$2 trillion, it is quite difficult (but not impossible) to persuade them to relinquish the money.

That is why so many of the people and groups who want to scrap the income tax seek what they see as a politically viable solution. They want to replace the income tax with some other form of tax that would supposedly be more painless to pay. The favorite candidate here is the innocuously named national sales tax. We picture ourselves paying an extra few pennies on what we buy at the checkout counter and never again having to worry about income taxes.

In fact, the national sales tax would have to be 20 to 30 percent at the retail level in order to match the revenue generated by the income tax. If your computer cost \$1,000, you would pay an extra \$200 to \$300 to the government for the privilege of owning one. Sales would plummet in the official market, and a huge black market would emerge overnight.

The government response would be to initiate a vast crackdown on tax evaders, which means that no businessman in America could conduct a single sale with-

out thorough reports to the revenue agents. As in Europe, government would have to crack skulls. But because not everyone can be policed, enforcement would be even more politically corrupt than it is now.

The government would face immense political pressure to reduce the tax at the retail level, and apply it not just to the retail level but to all levels of production, even when one business bought and sold to another. That would encourage vertical integration to reduce the costs. The antitrust police would be encouraged to crack down on integrations taking place for purposes of tax evasion. That would put the government in the full-time business of designing the structure of America's industries.

Another suggested replacement tax is the idea of moving away from Social Security taxes toward new “fees” for new “private retirement accounts.” Again, there are problems with this replacement tax. How would existing beneficiaries get paid if current payers diverted their taxes? How long would the transition last? Such a system would invite the politicians in to prop up the stock markets that people invest in with money they had no choice but to pay.

The answer to these riddles is that opponents of any tax need to forget trying to dream up comfy alternative taxation schemes. Typically, the replacement tax being proposed creates even more problems than the present system.

The only right way to call for an end or a cut in a tax is to demand that it be replaced with nothing. That also means making the case for dramatic spending cuts as well. That can be done simply by getting back to the Constitution.

That is not a hard case to make. Let us begin by eliminating all the new spending of the Bush years and abolishing the income tax. In my book, that would be a moderate step back to fiscal sanity. Then, as we further reduce federal spending, we can start hacking away at the payroll taxes that take an even larger bite from paychecks than income taxes. The rule: all taxes that are abolished should be replaced with nothing but the freedom to keep what is ours. ■





# Sound Money: Key to Prosperity



Because sound money is a key to having financial security and enjoying the benefits of liberty, it should never be taken for granted and never be allowed to disappear.

by John F. McManus

**I**n addition to many other praiseworthy features, our nation has always been known as a productive marvel. People don't come here to starve; they come to enjoy what could be called "the good life." One key reason why prosperity has always been found in America is the existence of sound money. Its importance should not only never be taken for granted; it should never be allowed to disappear.

More than 50 years ago, economist Dr. Murray Rothbard stated the following very important fact about money: "Money is not an abstract unit of account, divorceable from a concrete good; it is not a useless token only good for exchanging; it is not a 'claim on society'; it is not a guarantee of a fixed price level. It is simply a commodity. It differs from other com-

modities in being demanded mainly as a medium of exchange."

## Medium of Exchange

The important word here is commodity, something possessing recognizable value unto itself. When a commodity is chosen to be money, it is selected because of its universally accepted value. Experience also shows that whatever is chosen as money should be durable, divisible, transportable, and relatively scarce. As soon as a commodity becomes accepted as money, the cumbersome and frequently unworkable system known as barter loses favor. A medium for exchange now exists. Now, a person can exchange his labor for money and use that money to buy goods from someone who didn't need his labor. A farmer can sell his cattle and use the money to buy a carpenter's furniture, and

both are completely satisfied.

When money exists, commerce is no longer inhibited, as it is when barter prevails, by what Dr. Rothbard called "the need for a double coincidence of wants." Smith can use money to purchase goods from Jones when those goods had previously been unobtainable because Jones had been offered something he didn't want.

Immediately, we see that sound money spurs commerce, stimulates a wide diversity of labor, and helps mightily to advance civilization. Sound money is not the product of advancing civilization; it is a cause. John Birch Society founder Robert Welch made this point many years ago when he wrote:

When Tacitus said of the German aborigines nearly two thousand years ago, "we have taught them to accept money," he was boasting justifiably of this step towards bringing the benefits of civilization to some barbarian tribes.

Sound money makes it possible for some to study medicine, become teachers, create art, perform as clergymen, produce food, or undertake a wide array of professions. In a barter system, if a teacher needs shoes but a shoemaker has no desire to be taught, the hoped-for transaction doesn't occur. The teacher might then seek someone else who wants his lessons and will pay for them with something the shoemaker desires. The teacher will, therefore, accept that something for his lessons, not because he wants it, but because the shoemaker does. This is indirect exchange, a step on the way to having money.

When money is introduced into a system, the teacher who becomes employed and earns money for his efforts will find no problem using his money to transact business with the shoemaker or with anyone else. So too will a doctor, a musician, a painter, a clergyman, and many others who produce no goods but who receive money for their services and contribute to the advancement of civilization. As mentioned above, money acting as a medium for exchange allows for a wide diversification of

**Sound money spurs commerce, stimulates a wide diversity of labor, and helps mightily to advance civilization. Sound money is not the product of advancing civilization; it is a cause.**

labor, a great leap forward in any society. The claim that sound money is the cause of advancing civilization needs no further explanation.

History confirms the use of a wide variety of items for money. Valuable substances such as salt, sugar, cattle, tobacco, and shells acted as a medium for exchange in bygone cultures. But when the need for the money to be durable, divisible, transportable, and relatively scarce was recognized, experience showed that gold and silver were the best commodities to use for money. No government mandated this, nor did any economic guru make the decision. The wisdom of mankind operating in the marketplace settled on these precious metals as the best commodities to use for money.

Another important point about money is that once a commodity has been freely chosen to act as money, there is no need for government management. Gold and silver are commodities whose value and availability will be determined in the marketplace, just as will the value of any other commodity. Government management of the value, amount, and particulars of automobiles, shovels, gloves, refrigerators, etc. — all commodities — is never considered in a free and open society. In like manner, commodities such as gold and silver should never be encumbered by government decision making.

History also tells us that there are three basic kinds of money: 1. Commodity money (gold and silver) that we have already described; 2. Fiduciary or trustworthy money substitutes such as paper receipts, tokens, checks, and other financial instruments; and 3. Fiat money — money that is not backed

by any precious commodity — that is a valueless substitute for commodity money and is made to seem valuable only by government edict or “fiat.” While fiduciary money opens the door for counterfeiting, a constant concern that is relatively controllable, the third type of money — fiat money issued by government — invites mass production and distribution (inflation) and immense fraud.

## Our Own Nation's Experience

In the years before they separated from England, our colonial forefathers experimented with fiat money and paid dearly for doing so. With no limitation on the amount produced, they experienced lost credibility, a slowdown in productivity, civil disruption, and widespread personal animosity and hardship. Viewing this obvious destructiveness, the British Parliament outlawed irredeemable paper money for the colonies in 1764. Immediately, gold coins from Europe began circulating within the colonies. With economic stability restored, commerce again flourished and the other problems always accompanying fiat money faded away.

After the Declaration of Independence and the need to finance the ensuing struggle with Great Britain, the Continental Congress issued fiat money. Called “continentals,” the new currency was soon discovered to have no backing, but was given temporary credibility when the fledgling government enacted “legal tender laws” to enforce their use. Even though the war ended in triumph, the problems caused by fiat money — slowed commerce, unemployment, person-to-person animosity, fear of losing assets, and loss of confidence in government — threatened to tear the infant nation apart. Once the war ended and the Founders decided to revise the existing government, one of their main goals was to bar the

issuance of paper fiat money.

During the debates leading to the creation of the U.S. Constitution, Connecticut's Oliver Ellsworth declared that it was “a favorable time to shut and bar the door against paper money.” Pennsylvania's James Wilson agreed and stated that doing so “will have a most salutary influence on the credit of the United States.” New Hampshire's John Langdon said that he would rather reject the whole Constitution than allow the federal government the power to issue paper money.

The resulting Constitution incorporated the demand to avoid fiat money. Not only was the newly crafted federal government given no power to issue money, it was granted no authorization to manage it. The government was awarded authority to establish a mint to “coin money” and to establish standards for its size, weight, and purity. That's all. There was no authorization to issue money and, certainly, no authorization to delegate a non-existing power to some private entity such as the Federal Reserve. Even the states, jealous guardians of their own prerogatives, agreed to the Constitution's mandates never to “emit bills of credit” (paper money), or to “make any thing but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts.” And our infant nation prospered, becoming in a short time the world's greatest producer.

There were other factors that contributed to America becoming the envy of the world. But sound money, unencumbered by government meddling, was among the most important. For 150 years, the American dollar was “good as gold.” And being labeled “sound as a dollar” was a welcome compliment.

During the 20th century, however, the dollar suffered transformation from being trustworthy fiduciary money to government-mandated fiat money. The result has brought on all of fiat money's woeful consequences — slowed commerce, unemployment, person-to-person animosity, fear of losing assets, and loss of confidence in government. A return to sound money, the kind our nation once enjoyed and the kind our Founding Fathers mandated, must become one of the highest priorities for all who love America and cherish its freedom. ■

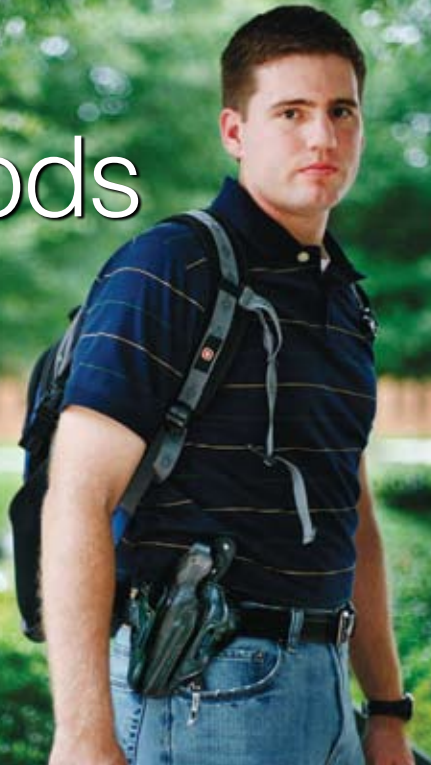




# Making Our Neighborhoods Safe

**Twisted tale about guns:** With 12 states considering bills to allow guns on college campuses, anti-gunners are vociferously defending the status quo by predicting mass carnage. The fault in the anti-gunners' logic is that the students and teachers who would be carrying guns on campus are already carrying them off campus.

AP Images



A fearful policy of zero tolerance for firearms does not provide safety or security; only an emphasis on personal responsibility over government dependence can do that.

by Larry Pratt

Facts are troublesome things. We are told by the enemies of private gun ownership that widespread availability of firearms can only lead to an increase in violence. For our safety, and “to protect the children,” we are told that the best bet is to limit access to guns.

The facts do not support the pro-disarmament view. Take for example Washington, D.C. Is this a place where families want to raise children? Only if they don't mind keeping the kids inside and putting bars over their windows in many neighborhoods. If gun control worked, Washington should be a model of tranquil neighborhoods.

After 32 years of a gun ban, all Washington has to show for its ban is the highest murder rate of any jurisdiction in the country almost every year. Yet in neighboring Fairfax County, Virginia (which is nearly twice the size of the District), the murder rate is less than one hundredth of the capi-

tal city. And this is in a jurisdiction where guns can be bought and sold privately and it is rather easy to get a concealed-handgun permit for carrying guns on the street. And, guns can be carried openly without any permit at all.

No wonder couples wanting to start a family move to Virginia or Maryland if they start out in Washington, D.C. But while the crime rate is much lower in neighboring jurisdictions, all is not well for the future. There is a systematic campaign against private ownership of firearms. The campaign against private gun ownership simply ignores the national data that consistently show that more guns mean less crime and safer neighborhoods.

Dr. John Lott and Dr. Gary Kleck are two of the country's pre-eminent researchers who have independently found that firearms are used some 2.5 million times a year in self-defense — and almost always without having to fire the gun. One of Kleck's other important findings was that those choosing not to resist an attacker are injured or killed two and a half times more than those resisting with a firearm.

Lott has found that cities, counties, and states become safer when they make it easier for citizens to have concealed-carry permits for handguns. His landmark research has been validated by some four dozen individual researchers or groups of researchers.

Gun restrictions end up harming families who are economically trapped in jurisdictions hostile to armed self-defense.

## The Schools

Unfortunately, however, even in areas where concealed-carry laws are in place, the schools are generally gun-free zones, and the schools are therefore less safe than they should be.

Most government schools, in fact, are in the vanguard of the campaign to disarm America. The most conspicuous component of this campaign is the fear-driven, fact-

free school program of Zero Tolerance. It has, and will, only lead to greater danger to the extent that Americans can be convinced that disarmament means safety.

Zero Tolerance is a phobic reaction to guns. In the recent past, it was not uncommon for kids to take guns to school. Rather than targeting people, they used them at the school target range, or for killing a squirrel or rabbit on the way home. Even in New York City, students involved in Junior ROTC would take their rifles to school — on the subway.

But such acceptance of guns and of personal responsibility is no longer the norm. Instead, for some time, students have been taught to depend on the government for solving their problems. One way of inculcating dependency is to punish kids who defend themselves against school bullies. They are taught that “violence never solved anything.”

Of course, those who intone the “violence never solved anything” mantra don't really believe what they are saying or they would never call 911. They would be the first ones to complain if the response to a 911 call

Larry Pratt, the executive director of Gun Owners of America, hosts the “Live Fire” radio talk show.

**If we agree to depend on the government for our very lives, knowing that they cannot protect us, then it is quite likely that we will be willing to depend on government for all of our less urgent needs.**

was a social worker rather than a cop with at least a .357 magnum on his hip.

In reality the Zero Tolerance mythology is preaching the doctrine that only a gun in the hands of a government agent is okay. Even the depiction of a gun by a non-government agent, especially by a student, is completely unacceptable, and kids who dare draw guns can look forward to time in a counselor's office or days kicked out of school.

But Zero Tolerance only affects law-abiding people, hence giving potential killers more wherewithal to commit their crimes. When the Virginia Tech murderer was calmly mowing down his legally disarmed victims last April, 911 calls were made. The police response was rather quick — about six minutes. After all, they were already on the campus investigating two earlier murders. Yet, 30 more victims died.

Similarly, at the New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado, 911 calls were made last December when a killer shot two sisters in the parking lot and then entered the church's large building. As at Virginia Tech, the police arrived in about six minutes. Unlike the tragedy at Virginia Tech, the folks at the church were not legally disarmed. In fact, 20 of the members had volunteered for the armed security team. That is why when the police arrived at the church, the murderer had been dead for about five and a half minutes.

In the United States during the last decade or so, there have been three murderers who began killing people at

schools who were stopped by armed staff or students.

Successful self-defense is not limited to America. When an Israeli seminary was attacked by a Muslim terrorist in February, a part-time student armed with a handgun killed the machine-gun-toting murderer.

His bullets did not endanger any innocent students. As in the case of the New Life Church, the police arrived after folks on the scene had taken care of business first.

The Zero Tolerance phobia is reinforced by the fear that defenders will only make the situation worse. It is important to point out that the defenders at the schools — as well as at the New Life Church where lots of shots were exchanged — did not ever wound any bystanders. Of course, what has really made matters worse is the insistence by believers in Zero Tolerance that schools be gun-free zones. Zero Tolerance has resulted in disarming many people,

and this has only aided mass murderers.

If Zero Tolerance were an outcome-based policy (as government education is supposed to be), it would have been trashed a long time ago. But from the point of view of educators, Zero Tolerance is achieving the desired outcome — a dependency mentality. Arguably, this is the overall objective of government schooling — inclining Americans to depend on government.

This can be the only explanation of the desired outcome of Zero Tolerance. If safety were the sought-for outcome, the body counts of school slaughters would be unacceptable. Instead, the utilitarian assumption of Zero Tolerance requires toleration of the body counts that result. In other words, the greatest good for the greatest number is the utilitarian philosophy that justifies refusal to arm school staff and students (where they are old enough to acquire a concealed-carry permit).

Let me put this in bloody plain terms. Lots of dead kids (and adults, too) are believed to be an acceptable price for training Americans to be dependent on government.

If we agree to depend on the government for our very lives, knowing that they cannot protect us, then it is quite likely that we will be willing to depend on government for all of our less urgent needs.

Parents should adopt their own Zero Tolerance policy. Namely, they should have zero tolerance for any school that proclaims Zero Tolerance.

They should ask themselves, "Would this school punish a kid for drawing a picture of a gun or wearing a T-shirt with a pro-Second Amendment message?" If so, then don't put a kid in that school. His life may depend on it.

And ultimately, a kid's ability to function as a responsible individual in a constitutional republic requires parents to apply a *proper* version of Zero Tolerance — one which refuses indoctrination by the socialistic school system. ■



**Noticing nonsense:** Protests by Illinois gun owners have failed to bring relief from many stringent gun laws in that state because of a belief promoted by media that gun-control laws mean universal disarmament. Yet even the anti-gun Illinois Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence admits that over a 30-day period in 2005, five percent of Chicago high-school students committed felonies by carrying guns.

AP Images



# Protecting Family & Country



**Unconstitutional intervention:** Squandering materiel and lives in fruitless global police efforts has emerged as a recurring theme in American foreign policy. Elements of the Army's highly trained 10th Mountain Division disembark from Black Hawk helicopters in search of bandits during President Clinton's Somali misadventure.

AP Images

America can best protect her own people and their freedoms by embracing the noninterventionist foreign policy our Founding Fathers envisioned.

by Michael E. Telzrow

**N**owadays, anyone who calls for less U.S. intrusion into the affairs of other countries is labeled an isolationist, and isolationism has become a dirty word in today's foreign-policy parlance. Liberal and conservative internationalists who favor vigorous interference in global affairs have distorted the meaning and significance of a traditional policy that has successfully protected America's interests. In reality, for much of its history, America embraced not a literal isolationist approach, but an approach that offered the United States to the world as a universal trading partner and a model of virtue and liberty.

Beginning with the early years of the republic, America followed a foreign policy that was predicated upon its uniqueness.

This approach was not isolationist, but instead sought to avoid actions undertaken to influence other nations and their sovereign affairs; it was non-interventionist, or a reflection of neutrality. Rather than isolationist, this policy was vigorously nationalistic in that it sought to protect American ideals by avoiding what George Washington called "entangling alliances" that subjected the United States to the corrupt influences of the Old World regimes. The policy served the nation well as America expanded its borders in the Western Hemisphere and saw to its own interests at home, and it was defended by an array of presidents, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and John Quincy Adams. As late as 1899 at the First Hague Conference, an early internationalist peace conference, the U.S. delegation wrote:

Nothing contained in this Convention shall be so construed as to require the United States of America to depart from its traditional policy of not intruding upon, interfering with, or entangling itself in the political questions or policy of international administration of any foreign State.

That foreign policy, however, has largely been abandoned as our leaders now favor an approach that champions an interventionist mode in which we seek to bring our standards to all people everywhere — whether they like it or not. Liberal and conservative internationalists, depending upon their respective agendas, have argued that any threat to peace or prosperity anywhere in the world is a threat to American interests. Both seek a collective security blanket that guarantees the protection of all nations and states in order to strengthen the international community. Many internationalists will also argue that America has a moral duty to foster and protect justice abroad. President Woodrow Wilson was an early outspoken proponent of this

**Efforts to promote “democracy” and to give aid throughout the world have diverted needed resources and overtaxed U.S. citizens. The price for playing global savior includes higher taxes, bigger deficits, and a more intrusive government apparatus.**

idea. After being reelected by promising to keep America out of WWI, he proceeded to argue for an opposite course:

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion.... We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind.

The globalization of the American ideal is based upon the belief that our experience should be universal and that international justice can be achieved by erecting new governments based upon the same model that built American society. Interventionists see American principles as inherently virtuous. In Woodrow Wilson’s terms they “are the principles of forward-looking men everywhere.... They are principles of mankind and must prevail.” They may be, but nowhere in our Constitution does it say that they must be exported. Wilson’s theory laid the groundwork for subsequent presidents.

### Where Interventionism Has Taken Us

During the 1980s, President Reagan unveiled what became known as the “Reagan Doctrine.” Strongly interventionist, it posited that wherever there was a struggle between the Soviet Union and an opposing political or cultural entity, the United States must actively intervene to stop the spread

of communism. In Afghanistan, Reagan provided assistance to the Mujahadeen in a laudable effort to thwart Soviet expansionism. Two presidential administrations later, Bill Clinton ordered the bombing of Serbia in order to punish that state for its alleged crimes against Muslims in Bosnia. More recently, the emergence of a

global challenge to national security subsequent to the attack of September 11 has provided President George W. Bush with the justification to wage a war in Iraq. Even though Saddam Hussein’s Iraq was not connected with the 9/11 attacks or al-Qaeda, 9/11 gave Bush the leverage he needed to push the United States to deploy its power to impose international justice — in this case bringing democracy to an Iraqi dictatorship.

Each of these presidents had markedly different reasons for involving America in foreign military expeditions, but in each case it represented a break from the historical past in which America’s foreign policy was based upon security and prosperity at home — not chasing monsters to slay abroad. And what has been the result of these interventions? Reagan’s

Mujahadeen have morphed into the hated Taliban, Clinton’s illegal actions in Serbia have fostered the emergence of a potentially radical Islamic state in Europe, and Bush’s war in Iraq continues with no political or military end in sight. Not surprisingly, the Iraq War, too, promises to bring about an Islamic theocracy that could turn out to be worse than Saddam’s non-sectarian regime.

Other U.S. interventionism has fared even worse. Few remember that the U.S. State Department supported Fidel Castro’s efforts to unseat Cuba’s Fulgencio Batista or that we supported and helped arm Saddam Hussein or that, because we were allied to Russia during WWII (which incidentally was allied with Germany at the outbreak of the war), we ceded much of the world to communism at the Yalta Conference held by Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin. Let us also not forget the debacles in Somalia and Vietnam, amongst many others. Part of the problem lies in the fact that we continually try to force “democracy” onto unwilling peoples.

### The Correct Path

Because forceful U.S. interventionism usually fails so spectacularly, and often creates more enemies than it destroys, it would be wise to stick to a path of protecting our soil, rather than protecting the world — to follow the path Switzerland took to avoid being embroiled in WWII, the path of making America a fortress that is ready

**True charity** is an individual action grounded in free choice. Diverting tax revenue and resources from citizens to redistribute to the less fortunate is theft, not charity. American citizens are the most generous donors in the world. Organizations like Children International allow private citizens to exercise true charity as opposed to the false charity of state coercion.





to go to war and win if need be, but only go to war when we are attacked. While it can be argued that America's global commitment was responsible for the defeat of fascism and Nazism, it may also be argued that intervention is counterproductive, and in many cases ineffective.

Moreover, short of going to war, our interventions usually do little to sway our enemies. We have been "negotiating" with North Korea for years to no avail. The same with Cuba, Iran, and the pre-invasion Iraq. And in Iraq and Cuba, our European allies often have undermined our efforts. Remember France's illicit trading with Iraq as part of the UN Oil for Food program?

As part and parcel of the interventionist mentality, the United States also leads efforts for international foreign aid. The United States, in violation of its own Constitution, provides billions of dollars in assistance, often to countries and groups hostile to U.S. interests, such as Russia and the Palestinian Authority. The tangible benefits have been minimal, and in most cases such foreign aid fails to benefit those in need. It actually supports corrupt offi-

cials in the poor countries, officials who would often otherwise be overthrown by their unhappy constituents. Former French President Jacques Chirac acknowledged, "Only one third of international disbursements currently go to fighting poverty." And the aid that does make it to the developing countries doesn't necessarily go to the poor. It goes into the regimes' annual budgets. The *Christian Science Monitor* claimed that "around Africa, governments rely on foreign donors to supply big chunks — sometimes two-thirds or more — of their annual budgets." American largesse has failed to purchase global justice or peace, and it never will purchase such things, given the political nature of those countries that need it most.

This aid has not only hurt the poor in other countries, it has hurt Americans and even now threatens to help push the U.S. economy into a tailspin and lead to an almost valueless dollar as inflationary effects kick in. Such a predicament was forecast long ago. After the outbreak of the Spanish American War, Missouri Democrat Richard P. Bland warned: "You are

on the road to imperialism, with a large Navy and standing armies and oppressive taxation." Efforts to promote "democracy" and to give aid throughout the world have diverted needed resources and overtaxed U.S. citizens, many of whom have paid the ultimate price for global intervention. The price for playing global savior includes higher taxes, bigger deficits, and a more intrusive government apparatus.

U.S. greatness does not depend upon establishing a global hegemony or our ability to provide billions of dollars of foreign aid to countries where much of it is often squandered. Our Founding Fathers' conception was that greatness depended upon what our nation accomplished at home, not what we did on some distant shore, and so it does. Our democratic process, free-enterprise system, and the value we place upon individualism provide a wonderful example for the world to emulate. And that shining example would be much better safeguarded if we were to mind our own business and provide for our own security, rather than going abroad searching for monsters to destroy. ■

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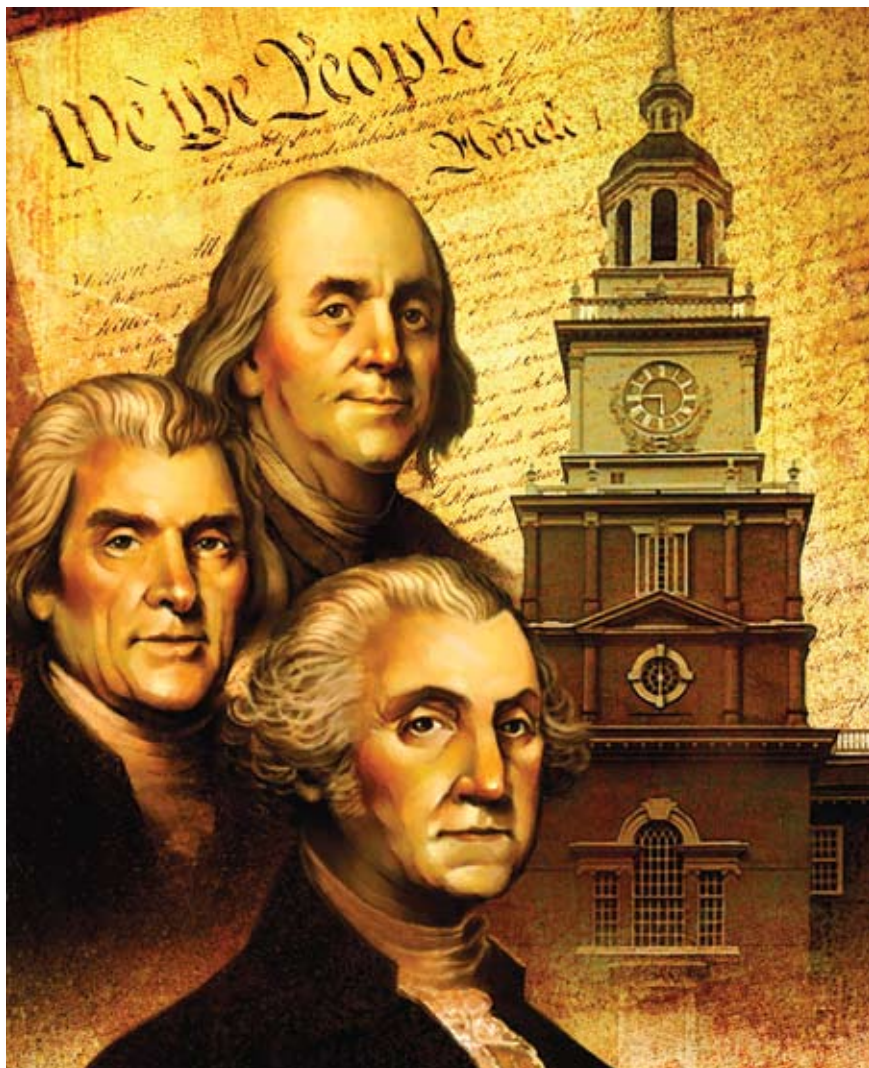
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# Our Constitutional Anchor



Our priceless Constitution secures our God-given rights by keeping America safely anchored within the rule of law. We must not drift from its timeless principles.

*by Gary Benoit*

“All men are endowed by their Creator with unalienable Rights” — among them “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” This self-evident truth, expressed so eloquently by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence, is the underlying principle behind our country’s great experiment in human liberty. “To secure these rights,” Jefferson explained, “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

Our Declaration of Independence provided the philosophical basis for a new

government based on the principle of securing God-given rights. It boldly proclaimed both the principle and our separation from Great Britain so that the principle could be put into practice. “Whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it; and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles,” Jefferson wrote in the Declaration.

When the American colonies made their historic break from the British crown, they became independent nations. During the War for Independence, the former colonies came together under the Articles of Confederation. Afterward, they formed a stronger national government under the Constitution. But the new government created by the Constitution, like the short-lived Confederation before it, was based on the principles in the Declaration.

More than two centuries have passed since the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were drafted, and over that time we have gone from a horse-and-buggy era to the space shuttle. But changing times do not change timeless truths, no matter how great our technological achievements or how “enlightened” our times.

Because of the violation of those timeless truths, oppressive government has been the lot of most people in most places throughout history. Because our Founding Fathers fashioned a new government based on self-evident truths, our country quickly blossomed from a wilderness nation to become the envy of the Old World we had separated from. Because our government in more recent times has increasingly drifted from the founding principles, stretching and even breaking the moors that tie it to its constitutional anchor, American liberty and prosperity are now waning, though not (yet) irreparably so.

To get our great experiment in liberty back on track, we must bind our national government once again to its constitutional anchor. But that will not happen until there is more widespread understanding about constitutional principles, and that understanding then informs political action.

## Understanding the Constitution

More constitutional principles are involved, of course, than the self-evident truths that “men



are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights” and that the purpose of government is to secure those rights. How are rights secured? Put differently, what can be done to insure that government will be a protector of rights as opposed to a violator of rights? What did the Founding Fathers do and why did they do it?

The Founding Fathers understood that a minimal amount of government is necessary to secure rights, but they also recognized that government will exceed its proper authority and become tyrannical unless restrained. As James Madison, known to history as the Father of the U.S. Constitution, put it in *The Federalist Papers* (No. 51), the collection of essays arguing in favor of ratifying the Constitution: “If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls would be necessary.” Man’s nature is such that both external and internal controls are necessary. Madison continued: “In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.”

What are those auxiliary precautions? They include:

- **Specified powers:** The U.S. government cannot exercise whatever powers it chooses in the name of the people. It can only exercise those powers that are granted to it in the Constitution. Alexander Hamilton made this clear in *The Federalist Papers* (No. 78): “No legislative act ... contrary to the Constitution, can be valid. To deny this would be to affirm that the deputy is greater than his principal; that the servant is above his master; that the representatives of the people are superior to the people themselves; that men acting by virtue of powers may do not only what their powers do not authorize, but what they forbid.”

- **Separation of powers:**

The Founding Fathers did not put all governmental powers in one governmental entity but divided powers between the states and the federal government as well as among three branches of government — legislative, executive, and judicial. The legislative branch was further subdivided into two houses of Congress — the Senate and the House of Representatives. “The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny,” Madison warned in *The Federalist Papers* (No. 47).

The Founding Fathers believed in keeping government as close to the people as possible, transferring to the federal government those few powers such as national defense that could not be effectively administered by the states. In *The Federalist Papers* (No. 14), Madison explained: “The general government is not to be charged with the whole power of making and administering laws. Its jurisdiction is limited to certain enumerated objects, which concern all the members of the republic, but which are not to be attained by the separate provisions of any.”

- **Checks and balances:** The Founding Fathers also crafted a brilliant system of checks and balances into the Constitution

**As Thomas Jefferson warned in the Kentucky resolutions: “Confidence is everywhere the parent of despotism.... In questions of power then let no more be heard of confidence in man; but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution.”**

intended to prevent any of the branches from usurping its proper authority. For example, though the Constitution assigns “all legislative powers herein granted” to Congress, the president can veto laws passed by Congress (though Congress can override the veto by a two-thirds supermajority of both houses). The president is also commander in chief of the U.S. military, but the power to raise armies or to declare war belongs to Congress.

### **Restore the Constitution!**

The system of government created by the Founding Fathers was a republic, a government of law protecting basic rights; it was not a democracy, a system based on unrestrained majority rule. The nature of man is such that democracy will devour freedom. As Thomas Jefferson warned in the Kentucky resolutions: “Confidence is everywhere the parent of despotism.... In questions of power then let no more be heard of confidence in man; but bind him



down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution.”

The chains of the Constitution made our system of government the most nearly perfect ever created by man. Because of those chains, the government was restrained and the people were free. Our system of government made it possible for America to become a land of milk and honey, a place where those willing to work hard could pull themselves up by the bootstraps and convert their dreams into reality, and a shining example to the rest of the world of what can be achieved under freedom.

In America, the people were free to manage their own lives based on commonly and freely accepted moral standards. The government did not attempt to manage the people, the economy, or the world. It did safeguard our homeland and our rights — and America achieved true greatness as a result.

It is of course true that our government has drifted dangerously far from its constitutional anchor. Our leaders are now trying to navigate dangerous straits that threaten to tear our system apart — and will do so unless we reverse course. Those straits include a bloated welfare state, a warfare state based not on defending our country but going abroad for monsters to destroy, an oppressive income-tax system to help finance our increasingly extra-constitutional government, a Federal Reserve System that creates fiat (unbacked) money out of thin air, and the growing violation of civil liberties in the name of fighting terrorism. Yet, our constitutional anchor still exists, and the solution to the problems created by drifting from that anchor is simply to get back to it and to the timeless, rock-solid principles in which that anchor is firmly implanted.

However, as marvelous as our Constitution is, there is another principle that must not be overlooked, and that is the simple fact that freedom is impossible without morality. As Madison explained in *The Federalist Papers* (No. 55): “As there is a degree of depravity in mankind which requires a certain degree of circumspection and distrust, so there are other qualities in human nature which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence. Republican government presupposes the existence of these qualities in a higher degree than any other form.” The importance of morality is the subject of the next article. ■

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**Making a moral stand:** Unless parents raise their children to have morals — not to be confused with “social values” — anarchy will increasingly prevail because of a sentiment expressed by killer and cannibal Jeffrey Dahmer: “If there’s no God, why can’t I make up my own rules?”



# Written in the Eternal Constitution

The eternal constitution of man’s nature dictates that when we don’t apply morality to restrain our own impulses, government will step in with ever-increasing controls.

*by Selwyn Duke*

Sixty years before Christ’s birth, great orator and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero watched plaintively as his republic faded before his eyes and Julius Caesar became the first Roman emperor. As today, some felt betrayed by their leaders, but Cicero knew that the people themselves were ultimately responsible for Rome’s slide into empire, saying, “Do not blame Caesar, blame the people of Rome who have ... rejoiced in their loss of freedom ... who hail him when he speaks in the Forum of ... ‘more security, more liv-

*Selwyn Duke is a columnist and public speaker whose work has been published widely online and in print, on both the local and national levels.*

ing fatly at the expense of the industrious.’ Julius was always an ambitious villain, but he is only one man.”

One man can accomplish much, but only when aided by others. A leader is no more an island than is any citizen, and if he works ill, it’s only because of millions of enablers. Perhaps no one said this better than British statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke, who instructed, “Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon *will* and *appetite* be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.” (Emphasis added.) That is, if men assume that freedom is license, if they assume that they

can do whatever they want and abandon a freely accepted moral code in favor of the law of the jungle, the resulting moral anarchy will inevitably lead to the loss of freedom. Thus, if a people loses its virtue, it is doomed. It is beyond salvation by party, politician, or prophet. It is obvious to many why this is so, yet others don’t see the relationship between freedom and morality; they compartmentalize man’s existence. It is as if one can be a saint on Election Day and a sinner the other 364 days. So let’s examine Burke’s statement, “The less of it [control] there is within, the more there must be without.”

## **Outgrowing the Nanny State**

Think about the task of raising a child. We are born savages, acting on impulse,

screaming out when sad, striking out when angry. Left to his own devices, a child might drink detergent or put his hand on a hot stove, and he certainly wouldn't brush his teeth or clean his bottom. He is incapable of "self-government." So his parents must micromanage his life, watch his every move — hence baby monitors and the use of cribs or gates or harnesses to limit his movements — and do for him what he cannot do for himself, which is a lot. They must be his "nanny state."

As he grows, however, many rules and restrictions can be eliminated. His parents may still have to ensure he does his homework and takes a bath, but over time even this will be unnecessary. As he matures morally and increasingly starts to impose proper rules and standards on himself, the need for a parent to impose them diminishes proportionately. Then, finally, if his parents have succeeded, he can enjoy the full freedoms of adulthood. He will actually choose to eat his vegetables.

But what happens when his parents don't do a good job? Or when, despite their efforts, outside influences corrupt the child? He then will have weak internal governance. He may descend into vice, taking drugs or drinking in excess; or greed and envy may capture his soul, causing him to

covet. And, should his impulse control be poor enough, the overgrown savage beyond the crib may run afoul of the law, perhaps by driving drunk, buying illegal drugs, or stealing. Then, incapable of adequate self-government, he may find himself back in a crib. The authorities will lock him up, and he will once again be controlled from without. Thus, you might say that parents' job is to *civilize* their children, for people of intemperate minds will lose their freedom. Moreover, if there are enough such overgrown savages, they may bring civilization down with them.

*Civilize* is an interesting word. What is true civilization? One could say it is when a majority of people have become morally advanced enough to attain true adulthood. The goal of raising a *civilization* is only realized when enough people reach the goal of raising a child: to create citizens who may live beyond the crib. And remember that people aren't "good" or "bad"; rather, simply closer to perfection or further away, as it is a continuum. Thus, the more we can govern ourselves from within collectively, the less we will have to be governed from without.

And politicians reflect the character of the people who are governed. So you could say the people are the vessel and the government the water. Rulers tend to take

the shape of the people's collective moral compass, and as it is bent, so will they be. As to this, Edmund Burke also said, "Men are qualified for civil liberty ... in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding is above their vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are more disposed to listen to the counsel of the wise and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves."

## Ignorance Is No Excuse

"Ah, but politicians lie; they present one face when campaigning but another when governing," you say? Yes, sure, but why are some fooled when others are not? Ignorance? Alright, but why are they ignorant?

Leaving aside those saddled with "invincible ignorance" (a rare type that cannot be overcome), we all have the moral duty to inform ourselves. Thus, morality comes into play here as well. Many a time we will encounter someone who, upon being asked to consider new facts or reconsider old positions, will tell us that he just doesn't care. Thinking can sometimes be too much work. Yet, remember the old maxim: the opposite of love is not hate, but indifference. The indifferent do nothing and are guilty of the deadly sin of sloth — intellectual sloth. We are called to care.

*A guided journey...*





It once again boils down to attaining true adulthood. We might expect children to prefer frivolity to knowledge-seeking; we might have to look over their shoulders to ensure they do their homework. But wise parents look forward to a day when their children will achieve a maturity that brings a thirst for knowledge. For once individuals possess that knowledge of “good” called morality that breeds a yearning for the “good” called knowledge, they can navigate this world without fetters.

The lack of such virtue explains both why people choose bad leaders and why they are chained by them. Consider, for instance, the strategy of playing one group against another. Why does such a callow ploy work? Well, let’s take the race card; if both majority and minority populations are just and view members of other races and ethnicities as children of God, they will be united by that ultimate brotherhood. If prejudice occupies a large place in man’s heart, however, there will always be the perception of real or imagined persecution, either because the minority is actually being oppressed or because it views the majority through colored glasses. It is likewise with the class-warfare card. If greed and envy find no home in our souls, it’s to no avail. If it’s otherwise, though,

the rich will use their power to trample the modest, thereby abusing the system. Or the modest, in the grip of the green-eyed monster called avarice, will imagine they are being trampled. In any case, there is a division that can and will be exploited by demagogues.

#### **A Check on the Human Condition**

As for our chains, governments throughout the Western world are erecting surveillance cameras to thwart crime. London, for instance, has its “Ring of Steel,” a city-wide network of 500,000 electronic eyes. Yet if few were covetous, there would be no impetus for such intrusion. And this is just one example.

Lest I be misunderstood, I don’t mean to justify Big Brother remedies for racial problems, a lack of charity, or crime. I prefer a great measure of disorder to a small measure of domination; I prefer the everyday tyrannies of the many to the everyday tyranny of the few. Put differently, I know that, as ugly as it can be, it’s better to have some citizens transgressing against some others in this fallen world — some

**One could say true civilization is when a majority of people have become morally advanced enough to attain true adulthood. The goal of raising a civilization is only realized when enough people reach the goal of raising a child: to create citizens who may live beyond the crib.**

theft, domestic violence, child abuse, embezzlement, etc. — than to have that great transgression against the human spirit: a social services agent in every home, an electronic tap on every transmission, and a camera on every corner. But the rules governing man offer no choice; a people that will not willingly submit to morality will be oppressed with all-encompassing legality. Children can easily be played against each other, and when liberty and security cannot both be obtained, children will, like it or not, run to their nanny for protection every time.

So to improve the human condition, you must improve the human’s condition. We often deify the constitutional republic nowadays, but it is not a cure at all; it is

*from beginning to end.*



**We often deify the constitutional republic nowadays, but it is not a cure at all; it is a system suited to only those who have received *the cure* — and that cure is a good dose of moral understanding, without which freedom is impossible.**

a system suited to only those who have received *the cure* — and that cure is a good dose of moral understanding, without which freedom is impossible. But one may now note that the medicine of morality is easily dispensed but reluctantly taken. What is a moral crusader to do? A good start is understanding the prerequisite for moral development: the recognition of morality.

This may seem like a statement of the obvious, yet it eludes many of us, infected as we are with moral relativism. This idea that right and wrong are simply a function of consensus opinion, that there is no objective Truth, is *the* characteristic spiritual disease of our time and precludes moral development. After all, to develop is to progress toward a goal, and how likely is this to happen if we don't believe the goal

(morality) exists? We may as well suppose that people will move toward a healthy life-style while under the illusion that the principles governing health don't exist. So while moral relativists like to say that all "values" are equal, it is folly. If you tell people all dishes are equally healthful, they will sink their teeth into sin every time. It's the tastiest

fare on the menu.

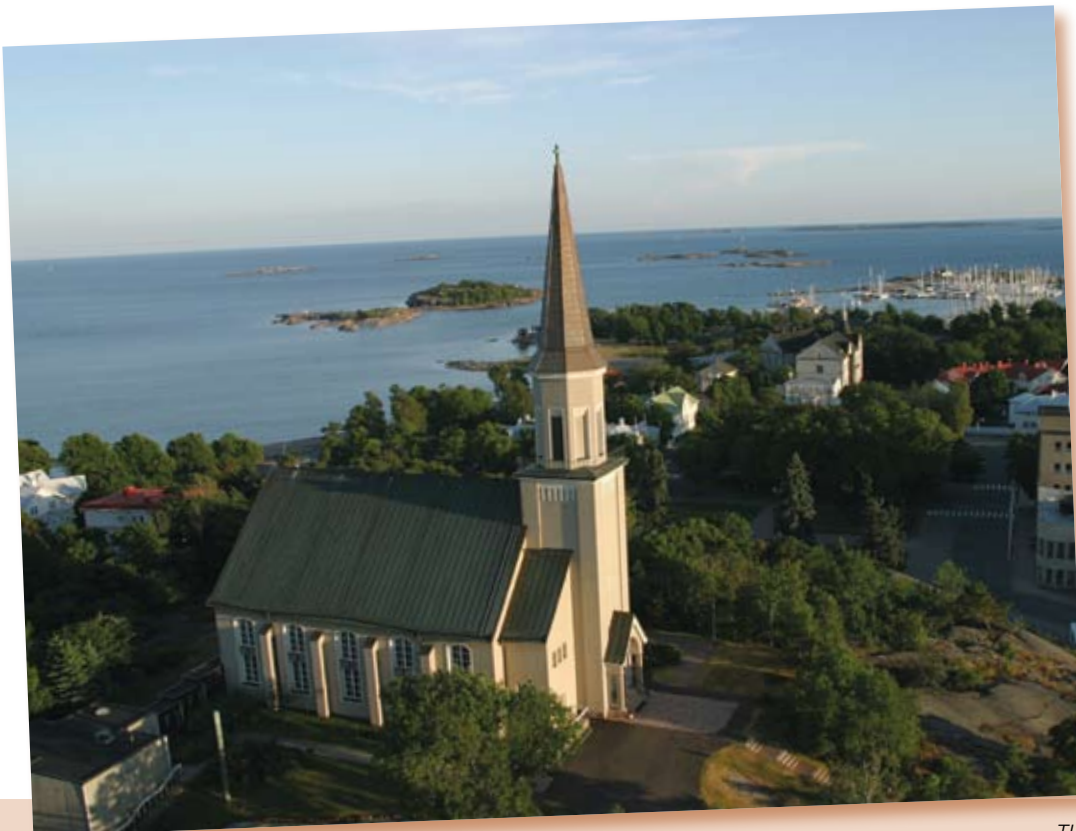
## Recognizing Truth

Let us now deepen our understanding of this matter. Truth implies God, as it refers to something outside of and above man that is the author of morality. Without God, the only source of what we call right and wrong would be man, in which case morality *would* merely be synonymous with consensus opinion and would not actually exist. Relativism would then be reality. This is why, as you might have noticed, secularists seldom use the word morality and instead speak of "values." They are right to do so, for they don't have morality in the true sense of the word — that is, a standard reflecting an accurate conception of God's will. They merely have "values," which is part of

the lexicon of the left and refers to man's will. And this places in perspective something George Washington once said: "Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion." If people believe that there is no God and, therefore, no morality — that right and wrong are merely opinion — they will be able to justify even the darkest urges. Rape, kill, steal — why not? Who is to say it's wrong? That now-common leftist refrain will then make sense; to wit, "Don't impose *your* values on me." For, being a product of mortal minds, not a higher one, they may really be *your* values and not *His* morals. The problem with this, however, is that while the jolly libertine can use this cop-out, so can the next Adolf Hitler or Saddam Hussein across the sea or the next serial murderer across the street. As to this, killer and cannibal Jeffrey Dahmer said to his parents as a teen, "If there's no God, why can't I make up my own rules?" There are many kinds of freedom, and not all are good.

While it may sound ironic, if we wish to enjoy freedom, we should stop giving ourselves pep talks about it, since without reference to morality, it rings hollow. Making this observation over 100 years ago, G.K. Chesterton wrote: "The modern man says, 'Let us leave all these arbitrary standards and embrace liberty....' He says, 'Away with your old moral formulae; I am for progress.' This, logically stated, means, 'Let us not settle what is good; but let us settle whether we are getting more of it.'" What do we want more of? If it is morality, liberty will take care of itself. If it is freedom from morality, the total state will end up taking care of us, and freedom from morality will result in no freedom at all. As precious as our U.S. Constitution is, man's inner nature, the eternal constitution, trumps parchment every time. ■

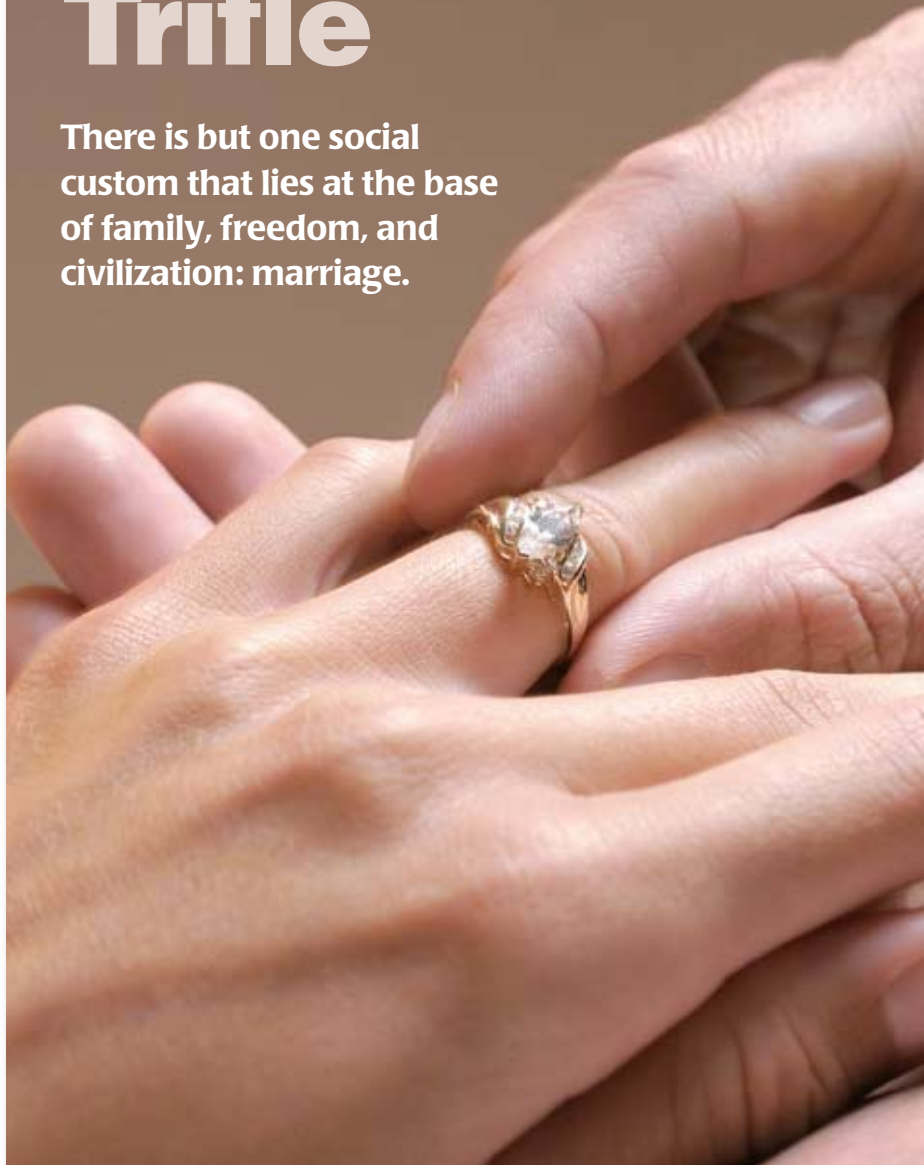
**Timeless truths:** Morals cannot be derived from a vote of the people or social acceptance of behaviors by a majority. In either case, eventually the main rule will be "anything goes." Morals must be derived from absolutes — from a conception of God's will.





# A Most Tremendous Trifle

There is but one social custom that lies at the base of family, freedom, and civilization: marriage.



by Dennis Behreandt

**T**he picture can be found in most homes in America. In it, a bride, resplendent in her flowing white gown, stands proudly next to a groom, standing straight and tall in the finest apparel, their respective attendants flanking them on either side. The central pair are

royalty for the day, king and queen of their own newly formed sovereign realm, facing a future of promise and sometimes peril with hopeful mien.

The picture is an artifact of an event uniquely celebrated in all human cultures, the wedding of a man and a woman. It is, in fact, a commonplace event, in that it occurs with certain regularity and reliability

as a part of life's natural rhythm and it does so in all places, as it has for as long as history recalls. There are, naturally, differences in some times and places in marriage customs, but the utterly remarkable fact is that marriage is as old as civilization. "God," as Martin Luther said, "has set the type of marriage everywhere throughout the creation. Every creature seeks its perfection in another. The very heavens and earth picture it to us."

To what might we owe the remarkable longevity and extent of this custom and celebration? It is easy to fall back on the simple answer that marriage is a natural state of affairs for the human species and that it is an important element of civilization. But both of these answers, if allowed to stand on their own, are unsatisfactory. Some question whether marriage between a man and a woman is natural at all, insisting that other arrangements are more in keeping with either evolutionary imperatives or with the free will of the libertine. Indeed, increasingly, marriage has come under attack from both quarters in the modern world.

Still, there remains the fact that marriage has been an accepted institution in human culture for about as long as there has been human culture. There is thus a conservative impulse, perhaps an even unconscious conservative impulse, that leads cultures, past and present and in America and elsewhere, to defend the institution and insist that it remain, if not sacred, then at least recognized as special by custom. The question, though, is just what is it about marriage that we feel so compelled to preserve it? The answer is subtle but no less important for its subtlety, for when examined carefully and systematically, it is found that marriage is not only a significant event in the individual lives of two people and their families, but that it is the central and fundamental generative act that lies at the base of civilization, precisely because it is paradoxically both a consequence of and then a progenitor of the most elemental and God-given rights, liberties, and freedoms of man. Indeed, it would not be going too far to state that absent marriage, freedom and liberty may be impossible.

## Human Rights Defined

In a valuable and weighty study entitled *Liberty and Freedom* published by Oxford



University Press in 2005, noted American historian David Hackett Fisher described a conversation that another scholar once had with Captain Levi Preston, a veteran of the American War for Independence, in 1843. The scholar wanted to know if Preston had fought in the war because he felt oppressed by the Stamp Act or if he was acting on things he had learned by reading “Harrington, Sidney, and Locke about the eternal principle of liberty.” The old veteran replied that he hadn’t thought of any of these things. “Young man,” he replied to the scholar, “what we meant in going for those Redcoats was this: we always had been free, and we meant to be free always. They didn’t mean we should.”

Recalling the observations of Alexis de Tocqueville, Fisher says Preston’s reply illustrates that, to Americans, liberty and freedom are not abstractions, but instead are “habits of the heart.” Indeed, Americans, to their credit, think and act as if they are free almost by instinct, and this persists even at times when other forces acting within society actively seek to restrain traditional rights and freedoms. By and large, this reflexive freedom response is an important bulwark against the encroachment of tyranny in America. Importantly, it starts at marriage.

Thomas Jefferson gave the idea that people have unalienable rights its most well-known expression in the words of

the Declaration of Independence, wherein he said: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” But even if his is the most eloquent statement of those rights, he was not the originator of the idea.

Robert Bellarmine, an influential theologian who lived from 1542 to 1621, expressed the idea of man’s fundamental freedom in *De Laicis*, his treatise on civil government. There he argued: “God created men free, and bondage was introduced by sin; therefore, since we are freed from sin by Christ, we should also be freed from bondage.” In this, he was following Augustine, who argued: “God, having made man a rational being in His own Image, was unwilling that he should dominate except over irrational beings, not man over man, but man over beasts; hence those who in the beginning were just were placed over flocks rather than made kings of men.”

What Bellarmine and Augustine refer to is the idea that God gave no man the right to rule others, or conversely, that because no individual has rights superior to those of others, then it must follow that all people share an equal apportionment of rights. This, famously, was further described by English philosopher John Locke, who described the unalienable rights of mankind as the rights to life, liberty, and property. It is these rights that are elemental components of, and are expressed most completely and sublimely through, marriage.

### Life and Liberty

In speaking of the right to life, we most commonly think in negative terms. That no person has the right to take the life of another person is generally understood, and is a fundamental tenet of the Judeo-Christian tradition. But, by virtue of the natural endowment of rights given by God to man, all individuals have the right to participate in the creation of new life. Without violating the right to life in other respects, this can only be done in partnership with another who freely consents both to participate in the creation of life and to undertake the responsibilities that follow necessarily from the genesis of



new life. This requires the exercise of one of the fundamental rights that falls under the general heading of liberty: the right to freely choose one's associations.

That right underlies our entire economic system. A farmer may consent to sell his produce to another person, to a distributor, or directly to a supermarket, or he may choose not to sell. But farmers need supplies that they cannot make on their own, so they consent to sell to a variety of clients in order to gain access to the goods that they themselves can't produce. When the farmer and a client agree on a purchase contract, they do so voluntarily. In other words, they are exercising their right to associate. Whether on Wall Street or Main Street or Rural Route 1, whenever two or more people or organizations agree to trade, they are exercising the right to associate.

When properly conducted and understood, a marriage is a potent symbol of a man and woman agreeing to associate, but they do so not simply for some transient material goal, but for the transcendent and sacred purpose of participating in God's creative plan for the world. Marriage, then, in the words of Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, "is in reality the wise and provident institution of God the Creator, whose purpose was to establish in man his loving design. As a consequence, husband and wife, through the mutual gift of themselves, which is specific and exclusive to them alone, develop that union of two persons in which they perfect one another, in order to co-operate with God in the generation and education of new lives."

### Property

As *Humanae Vitae* observed, with the generation of new life comes the moral responsibility to make provision for its growth and well-being. The parents must address these needs by the only mechanism available for them to do so: the acquisition of property and, subsequently, trade in property.

Nevertheless, it is fashionable to think of the acquisition of property as motivated by little more than greed. Like many fallacies that currently find favor, this one is prone to occur where deeper understanding of the natural law decreed by God is lacking. In fact, as the great G.K. Chesterton once bluntly observed, "Sex and Property" are "the two great powers that make the poetry of life."

In his essay on the subject, Chesterton argued that property, like the generative essence of marriage, was properly understood as a function of man freely participating in God's creative plan for the world. "The man who makes an orchard where there has been a field, who owns the orchard and decides to whom it shall descend, does also enjoy the taste of apples; and let us hope, also, the taste of cider," Chesterton wrote. "But he is doing something very much grander, and ultimately more gratifying, than merely eating an apple. He is imposing his will upon the world in the manner of the charter given him by the will of God; he is asserting that his soul is his own, and does not belong to the Orchard Survey Department, or the chief Trust in the Apple Trade."

**Marriage is the central and fundamental generative act that lies at the base of civilization, precisely because it is paradoxically both a consequence of and then a progenitor of the most elemental and God-given rights, liberties, and freedoms of man.**

Certainly, as with any good, there are those who may become addicted to property and in their attempts to satisfy their addiction pervert the good into evil. This is how the evil of greed begins. But, though greed is possible, using the perversion of greed as a basis for understanding property leads to error, as Chesterton explained: "Now the notion of narrowing property merely to money is exactly like the notion of narrowing love merely to sex. In both cases an incidental, isolated, servile and even secretive pleasure is substituted for participation in a great creative process; even in the everlasting Creation of the world."

In fact, the vast majority undoubtedly pursue the acquisition of property not to satisfy a personal lust, but because to do so is to fulfill the obligations of the sacra-



**When properly conducted and understood, a marriage is a potent symbol of a man and woman agreeing to associate, but they do so not simply for some transient material goal, but for the transcendent and sacred purpose of participating in God's creative plan for the world.**

mental agreement made in the form of marriage. The family, created by marriage, requires shelter and sustenance of course, but beyond that the interests of love supply inducements needed for accumulation of further property that can be used to supply children with the advantages needed to start forward on their own. Ultimately, at the end of life, the property in the deceased's estate can then be conveyed to heirs, with the result that the efforts that began in marriage end, finally, by helping future generations.

### Family and Freedom

Through the generative embrace of life that is at the core of marriage and the expression of liberty and freedom that brings about and perpetuates that embrace, the resultant family acts as the nucleus of community. Take several such families together functioning freely and pursuing their own ends, and, gradually, an emergent, spontaneous order results. This is not an order imposed by an autocrat or by an oligarchic establishment from the top down, but is instead an order that emerges naturally from the individual functioning of free families.

That order is more difficult to recognize today with the layers of bureaucracy from all levels of government now superimposed on the emergent natural soci-

ety, but it is possible through history to find a time when the natural emergent order was closer to the surface.

Examining the historic roots of language, historian David Hackett Fisher notes the "English word free is related to the Norse *fri*, the German *frei*, the Dutch *vrij*, the Flemish *vrig*, the Celtic *rheidd*, and the Welsh *rhydd*."

These come, he notes, from Indo-European roots that "meant dear or beloved," an early linguistic relationship that points to the elemental relationship between the family and freedom.

In Medieval Europe, this linguistic relationship, based on real familial relationships, gave rise to emergent social and political order, ultimately resulting in the formation of early forms of parliamentary government and the rule of law. Fisher points to the Norse settlers of Iceland who, he says, were "free Norse families who ... were refugees from kingship and oppression." From their family relationships and traditions, these Icelandic Norse "understood ... a complex set of rights and responsibilities," many of which were ex-

pressed in a local assembly known as the *Thing*. In this assembly, free men voted on legislative and judicial matters, but the *Thing* had other functions related to the family as well.

Says Fisher: "The meetings of the *Al-thing* and local *Things* had other functions that tell us much about the meaning of freedom in northern Europe. They were also social events, marriage marts, and family reunions for free families. They admitted sons of freemen to the freedom of the community by a ritual gift of weapons and expelled freemen who broke the law."

Is there anything like this left in today's America? Actually, there are. In communities around the country, local "Things" in the form of city and county assemblies and school boards meet, and their alliances and activities are often related to local relationships in and among families. We haven't come so far at the beginning of the 21st century that we can't sense something of the Norse *Thing* functioning in our local legislative bodies or the essence of *Al-thing* still at work in the idea of Congress. All of this, and much else besides, grows out of the family, itself a consequence of marriage, the covenantal and sacramental foundation of civilization. ■





# Bedrock of Civilization



The family is the first natural society from which all other communities and nations spring, the very cornerstone of civilization.

by Ann Shiber

*The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world.*  
— William Ross Wallace

**W**illiam Ross Wallace was a poet, not an historian. Yet what historian would dare dismiss his famous dictum that “the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world”? Don’t the youth determine the future? And aren’t they deeply and permanently influenced by the hand that rocks the cradle?

Yet the history books say relatively little about the hand that rocks the cradle or about the family, compared to other subjects such as war and politics. There is a reason for this, and it does not have to do with child-rearing or family life being less important than the topics the historians do focus on. “We must remind ourselves again that history as usually written ... is quite different from history as usually lived,” historian Will Durant said in his study *The Lessons of History*. “The historian records the exceptional because it is interesting — because it is exceptional.” But the “interesting” and “exceptional” are not necessarily what ultimately determine the kind of world in which we live. Durant continued: “Behind the red façade of war and politics, misfortune and poverty, adultery and divorce, murder and suicide, were millions of orderly homes, devoted marriages, men and women kindly and affectionate, troubled and happy with children.”

As Durant suggests in his reference to adultery and divorce, not all homes were (or are) orderly. But there is no doubt that throughout history, the fundamental unit of civilization has been the family. In *The Mansions of Philosophy*, Durant wrote: “The family has been the ultimate foundation of every civilization known to history. It was the economic and productive unit of society, tilling the land together; it was the political unit of society, with parental authority as the supporting microcosm of the State. It was the cultural unit, transmitting letters and arts, rearing and teaching the young; and it was the moral unit, inculcating through cooperative work and discipline, those social dispositions which are the psychological basis and cement of civilized society.”

The family is not just “the supporting microcosm of the State,” but is also the precursor to the state, the first natural society from which all others spring. According to the Old Testament, the ancestry of all of us can be traced back to Noah and his family, and before that to Adam and Eve. Their families grew to extended families and eventually to communities and nations encompassing many communities. The purpose of a national government, therefore, is not merely to safeguard the individual citizens comprising the nation, but even more fundamentally than that, to safeguard the family — the vital cell of society, the bedrock of civilization.

Accepted through faith and reason by most, the family is not only the fundamental unit of society, but, through marriage, an institution created and ordained by God. The

In our own country and in our own times, the family is also under attack. But we should also recognize that the weakening of the family is due not only to outside influences but also from a shirking of parental responsibility.



family *is meant* to be that fundamental unit — the place where the parents perform the supernatural duty of child-rearing; the place where love and life are born, nurtured, and grow; and the place where values, faith, and traditions are passed on from one generation to the next.

Ultimately, the strength of a civilization is determined by the strength of its families and family values.

### Family Matters

The importance of the family as the place where children first receive training in speech, general knowledge, notions of God and religion, respect for the rights of others, and social duties cannot be overstated. Inside the home, it is the family that fosters and promotes lessons of fraternity, obedience, patience, self-sacrifice, self-control, duty, and responsibility. By suffering and rejoicing together, members learn pity, sympathy, gratitude, and faithfulness. It is in the family that the inalienable value of each human life is discovered and respected.

Good habits and work ethics accompanied by creativity and ingenuity contribute to a stable and self-supporting family, teaching self-sufficiency and productivity to its members. The family creates a legal order of its own with laws and proper authority that members must submit themselves to. But the family members do so willingly, based not only on the promise the married couple made to God but also on the strong bonds of love between the husband and the wife, and the parents and the children.

Endowed with a social nature, man tends toward associations with other men in every stage of life. Some pursuits, such as art, science, and philosophy, require means that are beyond familial initiative, thereby necessitating the existence of a larger civil society called the state. The larger association develops into a permanent body for the purpose of maintaining order and for the general welfare. Family members quite naturally separate themselves from their original small social order, and participate in the new civil society, bringing with them all they have learned and experienced inside the family. It is the virtues and good qualities and practices inculcated into family members that are brought into society through non-family interactions. It is through good families' morality that society is infused with proper sustenance and moral fiber.

By transmitting to his descendants the fruit of former generational experiences, particularly unity and stability, and his moral and intellectual heritage, man assures that society will also reflect these qualities so necessary within the family structure. Just as in the family where members work together to moderate the hardships of survival, cooperation with others in the community can and does achieve the greatest technological, intellectual, economic, and societal advancements.

The state, a natural extension of the family and the community, provides the framework and shelter for the material wealth and values of life, and is the guarantor of autonomous law, self-sufficiency, independence, and sovereignty. The same force that works within the family as a regulating and ethical principle — the same force that rocks the cradle — is transferred to the life of nations and ultimately rocks civilization.

It is understandable that the severe crisis of traditional family life is fueling our overall cultural breakdown. It is also understandable why revolutionaries who wage war against God and man, and who see the family as an obstacle in their path, would work to subvert and destroy the



family. Karl Marx, in his *Communist Manifesto*, explicitly called for the “abolition of the family.” Both before and after Karl Marx, from ancient Sparta where children were taken away from their parents and brought up communally, to Nazi Germany, where the young were forced into the Hitler Youth, totalitarians have tried to supplant the family with the Almighty State. But try as they might, the family, though weakened at times, has never been destroyed.

### Strengthening the Family

In our own country and in our own times, the family is also under attack. But we should also recognize that the weakening of the family is due not only to outside influences but also from a shirking of parental responsibility. On the other hand, if we concentrate on improving, promoting, and strengthening the traditional family, we would see a blessed change in our culture. Within the family true peace, true morality, and true hope are found, for the state and the world.

First and foremost the family, particularly its most vulnerable members, need to be guarded and protected from outside influences that are contrary to God’s laws and the beliefs of the family during their most influential and formative years. It is a sacred trust that parents have received from God, and with that comes the highest responsibility.

The transmission of values and knowledge is the main purpose of education, and that too is the responsibility of the parents, regardless if they provide the education directly at home (a very encouraging trend) or place their children in a structured classroom setting. If the latter, they still have the responsibility of bequeathing to their children all the morals, values, faith, and traditions of the family, while safeguard-

ing their children from contrary outside influences.

Of course, the nature and direction of government (public) schools is such that it is becoming more and more difficult for parents of public-school children to do this, and this is a major factor behind the explosive growth of the home-school movement, which now numbers well over a million and possibly approaching two million home-schooled children in this country. This more-involved interaction of parents and children assists the children in the transmission of family values and morals along with academic instruction; it’s an effective method to reproduce the family’s way of life. And this same interaction strengthens the bonds between all the family members to produce a more cohesive unit.

Another encouraging light on the horizon is the growing influence of traditional pro-family organizations — some secular, some religious-based — dedicated to preserving, defending, motivating, and equipping families with the knowledge and tools they need to remain strong. Consider, as just one example, the work of Don Wildmon’s American Family Association. This

very pro-active organization focuses primarily on challenging that influence that seeks to promote and glorify immorality and perversion that adversely affect traditional family values and morals. This organization works to hold accountable the media, companies, and sponsors that support or disseminate anything that would contribute to the decline of those values on which this country was founded, and which keep society and families strong and healthy.

The promotion of strong, healthy families is one of the best antidotes to the increasingly individualistic and pagan nature of our modern-day culture. It is not through consumption and self-indulgence that society will be reshaped and transformed, but the influence of responsible citizens created and nurtured in the home. Parents need to rededicate themselves immediately to the responsibilities of marriage and parenting. It takes time and self-sacrifice — love in action — in our overly ambitious and avaricious world to strengthen this most basic of institutions so utterly vital to the survival of nations. But it can be done, and in the end it will make the difference. ■



# Youth in Our Future



The children of the '60s and '70s rebels are growing up, and many do not like the Brave New World their parents' generation has foisted on them. They are our future hope.

*by Charles Scaliger*

**“Y**oung men are fitter to invent than to judge,” said Francis Bacon, “fitter for execution than for counsel; and fitter for new projects than for settled business.” In a world of “settled business” largely run by corrupt old men, where the status quo is at a premium in money as in politics, it is easy to lose sight of the value of youth, with its freshness, its optimism, and its innocent ambitions. Youth is the time when dreams are forged and nurtured, when newly minted minds struggle to make sense of the way things are, and dare to dream of how to make them better.

On those odd occasions when the stream of history is diverted, it is usually youth that dig the new channel. Jesus of Nazareth was 30 when he began his brief

ministry that ended under the iron heel of the Judaeo-Roman state, but transformed human civilization forever. Most of his apostolic followers were also young men, able to abide then-revolutionary doctrines and to endure the physical hardships of missionary labor and persecution. Siddhartha Gautama, who would become the Buddha, was roughly the same age when he grew dissatisfied with a life of princely dissipation, and sought enlightenment through austerity. Most religious reformers, heretics, and innovators throughout history have been young, restless souls dissatisfied with religious establishments that they regarded as ossified or otherwise in need of reform.

In the realm of military history, Alexander of Macedon was just 20 when he embarked upon his meteoric conquests that completely changed the map of Asia, and left in place a political and cultural legacy, from Asia Minor to the Indus River, that

endured for centuries. Joan of Arc was in her teens when the voice of God spoke to her and told her to liberate France from the English invader. “I am not afraid.... I was born to do this,” she told skeptics in the military and clergy. When they finally blessed her enterprise, she promptly led the French armies to miraculous victories at Orleans, Jargeau, Meung-sur-Loire, and several other cities, showing her countrymen before her own capture and eventual execution that victory over the entrenched English invaders was possible.

Because of our veneration for them, it is easy to forget that most of the American Founding Fathers, Washington, Franklin, and Adams excepted, were under 40 when the Revolutionary War broke out. Thomas Jefferson was a mere 33 when he penned the Declaration of Independence, and Alexander Hamilton was in his very early twenties when he became General Washington’s aide-de-camp. Subsequent

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generations of pioneers who moved the frontier westward — both saints and sinners — were generally young, restless individualists seeking fortunes that had eluded them in the settled, static east. And lest we forget, the overwhelming majority of those who fought in the great wars that, for better or worse, have shaped our history — the War Between the States, the two world wars, Korea, and Vietnam — were very young men, fighting and dying at an age when most youth are thinking of senior proms and college entrance exams.

Closer to our own time, it is youth who have given us the defining event of our era — the ongoing high-tech revolution that has transformed every aspect of our lives in ways that people only a few decades ago could scarcely have imagined. Everywhere that changes are underway, from politics to art to technology, the energies and imagination of youth are enlisted.

Where middle age desires predictability and old age craves security, youth, above all else, is hungry for freedom. This is the reason that youth are the backbone of the movement inaugurated by Congressman Ron Paul, which started as a quiet presidential campaign, mushroomed into an Internet and media phenomenon, and is now fueling a movement to elect other statesmen like Ron Paul to state and national office. College students in droves organized rallies of staggering proportions to receive Dr. Paul, while countless other innovators, many (though not all) of them young, peppered the Internet with imaginative and stirring Ron Paul video promotionals, clever slogans and logos, and even songs. Dr. Paul himself has been promoting freedom for decades; all of a sudden, America's youth are listening.

But the same energies that prompt youth to become freedom-seekers are, unfortunately, easily misdirected. Sensing that all was not right with the domestic political turmoil and with a debilitating war being fought on the other side of the world, the youth of the '60s, the first wave of the Baby Boomer generation, rebelled in the name of freedom — and ended up wreaking havoc. In retrospect, all the youth-driven ferment of the '60s and '70s accomplished little more than legitimizing revolution of the wrong sort, degrading the cause of liberty into a sordid pageant of libertinism and, in the longer run, strengthening the very insti-

tutions of corrupt, outsized government that they had resisted.

The turmoil of the '60s and '70s left footprints that are still very visible today. The abandonment of sexual restraint and the degradation of modes of entertainment are still very much in evidence, as are the drug culture and the repudiation of parental authority. Moreover, the self-absorption of the Baby Boomer counterculture found expression in a welter of new federal programs designed to give Baby Boomers cradle-to-grave security at the expense of American taxpayers. As humorist (and Boomer) Dave Barry put it, "I care about our young people, and I wish them great success, because they are our Hope for the Future, and some day, when my generation retires, they will have to pay us trillions of dollars in Social Security."

In the last 10 years or so, however, something of a counter-revolution has begun to take hold, of which the Ron Paul phenomenon is but the latest manifestation. What is happening is not hard to diagnose: the children of the '60s and '70s rebels are growing up, and many of them do not like the Brave New World their parents' generation has foisted on them. Many of them correctly perceive the web of so-called entitlements, like Social Security, Medicare, and sundry other "safety nets," to be a vast pyramid scheme designed to enrich the old at the expense of the young. Many youth expect Social Security to be insolvent or drastically reduced by the time they reach retirement age, and resent being taxed heavily to support programs from which they are unlikely to benefit.

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The once-vaunted “sexual revolution” is also getting a second look, as today’s younger generation watch their parents, who never learned in their youth the restraint and commitment necessary to sustain long-term relationships, fail to hold marriages and families together. A pandemic of new venereal diseases like AIDS has also cast “the new morality” in a different light.

All of these things youth are seeing and discussing among themselves in their blogs, chat rooms, and websites. But although many are trying not to repeat their parents’ mistakes, many more continue to succumb to the cultural riptide of drugs, promiscuity, and aimlessness.

What is needed, if the energies of youth are to be properly directed, is education. The Founding Fathers had their preceptors, like George Wythe, who instilled in them the doctrines of liberty, and subsequent generations were the beneficiaries of a small-town, one-room-schoolhouse, family-centered culture that both furnished a proper education and instilled values that perpetuated and strengthened our civilization. Today’s youth will be no less susceptible to refinement and enlightenment if they are given proper educations in their formative years.

Fortunately, a revolution in education is already underway, and it has nothing to do (fortunately!) with outcome-based

education, federal grants, or the PTA. The home-schooling phenomenon, still accounting for the education of only a small minority of America’s youth, has already wrought tremendous changes on the cultural landscape. An entire generation of home-schooled children is being educated free of the socialist and secularist bias that taints the public-school curricula. Most home-schoolers are learning at their parents’ feet about limited government, our Western cultural heritage, and politically incorrect American history — topics that are forbidden, for the most part, in government schools. What victims of public education, like yours truly, had to learn painstakingly, as self-taught adults, home-schooled youth can learn when their minds are in the full flower of youth. Many of them go on to become productive, well-educated citizens with a proper perspective on freedom complementing high moral standards and firm religious convictions.

For those who were not home-schooled, the Internet is brimming with websites and organizations promoting liberty, decency, and character. Besides the aforementioned Ron Paul movement, organizations like the John Birch Society and the Von Mises Institute use the web to educate and inform, while myriads of churches use the Internet for outreach and inspiration.

In a word, the Internet has shattered the

controls the so-called “gatekeepers” used to exert on the dissemination of information, while legal reforms have broken the government-school education monopoly. The surprising success of the Ron Paul campaign and the rise of home schooling are only the beginning. The future, in this author’s opinion, will continue to see more and more movement away from subversive, collectivized public education. The religious awakening that has been underway since at least the ’80s will continue to gain momentum, posing an ever-stronger challenge to the militant secularism that, a generation ago, bid fair to tear our civilization apart.

A challenge is building to the bloated Beltway behemoth that, for far too long, has sought to overthrow limited government and reconfigure American culture into the bargain. As Congressman Ron Paul himself recently observed, “There’s something going on in this country, and it’s big.”

That something may well be our last, best hope for the future: America’s youth are waking up. ■







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# The Great Information Equalizer



**Power to the people:** Cafes such as this one in Tokyo, Japan, provide easy access to the Internet — enabling people to communicate, network, and organize. This is precisely why oppressive regimes like the one in China fear the technology.

The Internet enables people to easily exchange information, communicate in real time, and organize their efforts for change.

by Christopher S. Bentley

**T**ell him to take his earphones out of his ears,” the burly Baltimore police officer commanded several lanky teenage skateboarders who were apparently in violation of a local ordinance. One hadn’t noticed the officer’s presence yet. The unaware skater, upon seeing the policeman, removed his earphones, just as the officer asked, “Can you hear me now?”

The 14-year-old boy responded in a typical teenage smart-alecky way, referring to the officer as “dude” — which skaters, like surfers, happen to call *everybody* — saying that he had not heard the officer.

Officer Rivieri gave the boy a bellicose-toned lecture about respecting authority, shouting at the boy frequently. When Rivieri attempted to confiscate the boy’s skateboard, the boy did not immediately

respond. Rivieri then grabbed him around the neck and roughly pushed him down to the pavement, taking his skateboard.

After intimidating the teenagers with a show of brute force, Rivieri continued lecturing the boy about his lack of parental discipline, lack of respect, and so forth. He then agreed to let the boy call his mother.

As Rivieri headed back to his vehicle, he looked over at some of the other boys and realized that the entire time he might have been filmed. The officer demanded: “You got that camera on? If I find myself on...” The camera stopped at that point, cutting off Rivieri’s threat in mid-sentence.

We can only guess that Rivieri didn’t want to find himself on YouTube, which is exactly where the now-famous video was posted. It has been viewed some 2.3 million times.

Because of the attention YouTube drew to the officer’s actions, a second person

came forward and posted yet another video of Rivieri engaged in less-than-professional conduct. The local media reported on both stories. Officer Rivieri’s caught-on-camera conduct forced the Baltimore Police Department to conduct an internal-affairs investigation.

Media exposure, generated by a homemade video placed on YouTube, forced the Baltimore police department to police itself. Such is the power of the Internet.

## Bypassing the Major Media

In the United States, we can raise a stink at government injustice through public protest, the media, and the Internet. At present, it would be extremely difficult for our own government to commit violent acts against its own citizens to the degree that we witness elsewhere. People in more repressive nations do not have recourse or the ability to

hold their elected officials accountable.

It is useful, then, to consider what progress toward freedom could be initiated worldwide if there were even one mode whereby the repressed of the world could organize concerted action against their oppressors. For instance, what would worldwide exposure of the truly horrendous deeds of such regimes as China’s do for the millions there yearning for freedom — and the economic pressure which consumers throughout the world could leverage over China?

We need only imagine what would happen if Chinese citizens could post videos on YouTube exposing the actions of their leaders, and what the world’s response might be. The major media would be forced to report more frequently on China’s barbarous mistreatment of its people — like the recent police beatings of protestors in Tibet. And then pressure would be put on

the Chinese government. How many consumers around the world would continue to buy Chinese products after watching a few dozen videos of Chinese citizens being literally beaten to death? Remember the outcry after the video of the U.S. citizen being beheaded in Iraq?

Is Chinese repression as bad as that? Yes, but without video footage, the atrocities are lost in the written word of those who write about the evil deeds. Only a handful of journalists are willing to speak out without hesitation, such as Guy Sorman, a French economist, who has visited China regularly since 1967. In a spring 2007 article entitled "Empire of Lies," Sorman gave a view of China not found on the nightly news.

From extensive travel and interviewing many Chinese, Sorman described a nation whose success is largely "a mirage," in which one billion people "remain among the poorest and most exploited people in the world." He makes "no claim to know China fully," but wanted to "record the words and impressions of some exceptional Chinese men and women, who mostly suffer in silence, raising when they can the demand for a free nation — a 'normal' nation."

Sorman details Communist Party officials expending "extraordinary energy in suppressing Chinese freedoms," with the media operating "under suffocating censorship, and [where] political opposition can result in expulsion or prison." Because of such conditions, "popular discontent simmers, especially in the countryside, where it often flares into violent confrontation with Communist Party authorities."

The Chinese government concedes some 60,000 revolts occurring per year,

**We need only imagine what would happen if Chinese citizens could post videos on YouTube exposing the actions of their leaders, and what the world's response might be.**



**Smile, you're on ... YouTube:** With a camera and a little know-how, anybody can put video content on the Internet, even content "authority figures" may not want shown.

whereas Sorman claims the number could be as high as 150,000. If Sorman is correct, China squashes some 411 uprisings *per day*. By comparison, with the U.S. population being what it is, this would be 100 revolts per day in the United States.

"Peasant revolts in the Chinese countryside" are a particularly "worrisome" "sign of the desire for freedom," Sorman notes. With some 123 million Internet users, out of which there are 30 million bloggers, such worries could compound greatly if the Chinese could communicate more frequently with people in other nations. But those who seek to create associations to bring about change through dissent are relentlessly pursued by the Party and decreed "unauthorized," and routinely watch their expressions on the Internet get screened and deleted by the government.

China's impoverished masses are desperate to throw off the shackles which bind them to the Party's new socialist/"capitalist" overlords who use political control to amass billions in wealth. "China desperately needs international legitimacy. Were Western consumers and investors to turn away, the Chinese economy would collapse, leading in all probability to the fall of the Party," concludes Sorman.

If the communists didn't have the means to squash unencumbered use of the Internet, the Chinese could lever-

age technology to bring about real change from within. And organizations which stand for and teach the principles of freedom that made the United States great could educate millions of Chinese how to set up a similar system.

## Technology and Freedom

The Internet is arguably the last bastion of a free press. But more importantly, it provides a tremendous platform for organizing. That is why China's leaders work so hard to police it — because they fear its potential.

As our own nation's leaders fall ever further out of step with the principles that made America great, many patriotic Americans are awakening to the possibilities of organizing on the Internet in order to work together to restore good government. Social networking systems, such as Meetup.com, provide Americans with enormously effective tools to exert pressure over companies, expose public officials who engage in unethical and illegal conduct, and demand accountability.

There is a visible sea change taking place across the world, in many countries, especially among the younger generation. Many are yearning for the opportunities which we as Americans have been blessed with for generations — and which we too often take for granted.

Hundreds of thousands of Chinese risk their very lives seeking what we have. Wish we were as dedicated. ■



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# Reclaiming Our Country

**A**lthough our nation's Founders did not have the benefits of the Internet for communications between them, they certainly did extensively employ the "social networking" of their day to secure our rights and freedoms. Committees of Correspondence were established throughout the American colonies in the 1770s to provide a means for the widely scattered colonists to collaborate in preserving their historic freedoms from the increasingly tyrannical actions of the British government. Relying on handwritten letters carried by couriers on horseback or aboard ships, these committees served to rally the colonists in support of certain causes and to facilitate planning for collective action.

We have good news and bad news about the changes that have taken place in the two centuries since the Committees of Correspondence played a leading role in preserving our freedom. First the good news. Today we have the Internet to provide virtually instantaneous communication between individuals and groups throughout our nation and the world. Wonderful. Now for the bad news. Our historic freedoms are no longer threatened by a distant imperial government in London, but instead the problem is now the loss of freedom from the many unconstitutional actions of our federal government. This situation has come about due to the influence of powerful interest groups on Congress, the only branch of the U.S. government constitutionally authorized to make federal laws.

It is fairly easy to develop a vision for changing this situation by creating an even greater influence on Congress on behalf of preserving freedom by insisting that our congressmen adhere to the U.S. Constitution. However, even though the general vision is easy to come by, effectively implementing it has been a challenge.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of organizations that claim to be working on various aspects of this vision of freedom. They attempt to rally sufficient grass-roots influence on Congress and the states to prevail on their legislative agenda. However, on balance, the forces of freedom are not winning. Why not? Why are Americans with their great love for defending freedom and the Constitution losing their freedom through Congress' lack of adherence to the Constitution?

The obvious answer is that the organizations and individuals promoting freedom under the Constitution are too splintered to generate sufficient influence on Congress to prevail over



the many special interest groups that want what they want and don't care a bit whether or not it's constitutional. Or, stated another way, the obvious answer is that the organizations and individuals promoting freedom under the Constitution must become sufficiently united to prevail over special-interest groups in Congress on key legislation. It is also obvious that this alliance, or coalition, of organizations and groups promoting freedom under the Constitution must embrace the Internet as the key to its success.

Nonetheless, since all of this is so obvious, why isn't it happening? And, of course, the answer is that we've already seen

one such pro-freedom, pro-Constitution alliance formed right before our eyes — the Ron Paul campaign for president.

The surprisingly powerful Paul campaign provides us with an excellent example of the rapidly increasing importance of online communities for spurring innovation, growth, and success for political campaigns, commercial enterprises, advocacy organizations, and other enterprises requiring the involvement of large numbers of people. This phenomenon of the widespread success of online communities to create vast new and successful enterprises and to greatly enhance the performance of existing organizations has been described by Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams in *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything* (2006).

Based on the experience of the pioneers in creating online communities, there is one essential ingredient for building a sufficiently powerful online community to preserve freedom under the Constitution — trust. And, there is one preeminent organization that has earned that kind of trust by consistently upholding the Constitution for the past 50 years — the John Birch Society.

The members and staff of the John Birch Society invite you to join our growing "mass collaboration" effort online and through meetings to preserve our families and freedoms through creating an online community of education and action in accordance with constitutional and moral principles and based on trust. Start by visiting <http://jbs.meetup.com> and <http://meetupalliance.com/jbs> and join or organize a JBS.org Freedom Campaign Meetup group.

Without a doubt, we Americans have the abilities and resources to preserve our families and freedoms by forcing Congress to adhere to the Constitution. *Let's do it!* ■



# Connect with something big.

Be one of the many dedicated Americans working together to build a better world. Visit the JBS.org Freedom Campaign Meetup Alliance.



[www.meetupalliance.com/jbs](http://www.meetupalliance.com/jbs)  
The John Birch Society **JBS.org** 



“’Tis our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world....”

- *George Washington (1796)*

“Commerce with all nations, alliance with none, should be our motto.”

- *Thomas Jefferson (1799)*

“I deem (one of) the essential principles of our government (to be) peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none....”

- *Thomas Jefferson (1801)*

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