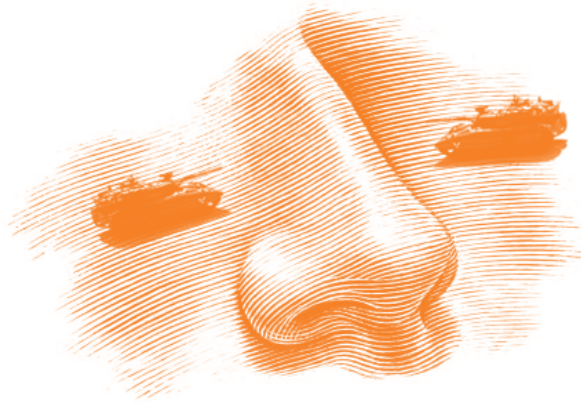




Serf City

New York Politics from a Libertarian Perspective

Volume 3 Issue 1



Battle for Your Nose

by Edward Hudgins

The elections are over. What a relief! Yes, the results made some difference. Nancy Pelosi and her crowd will be sending even bigger spending bills to big-government conservative George Bush as the few remaining Republicans figuratively grab him by the collar and insist that he start using one of those pens sitting on his desk to write the four-letter Latin word “veto” on all the stuff that flows into his office from Capitol Hill. The new New York Governor Eliot Spitzer will have even more opportunities to punish productive entrepreneurs for the sin of being productive entrepreneurs. But during the campaign and in the post-election autopsies, the real issue was barely discussed: The battle for your nose. So what’s my premise behind this weird-sounding symbolism?

Let’s start with those on the political left and—more and more—many on the “compassionate” right. What’s their view of you and your relationship to government? They believe that you can’t wipe your nose (or other parts of your body), tie your shoes or do much of anything for yourself without government help. Train for a job or educate yourself or your kids? You need federal loan guarantees and programs! Pay medical bills to treat your runny nose? Only with the help of Dr. D.C.! Save for your retirement? Washington will take care of this and your long list of other needs!

And while they’re that at it, they know you can’t deal with the uncertainties involved in actually producing goods and services with which to trade with your fellows in order to make a living. But not to worry! There are folks in Albany and every other state capital ready to step in—ultimately with guns—to regulate wages and business practices to your advantage. And they know you’re too clumsy to hold a hot cup of coffee without spilling it on yourself and too weak-willed to avoid too much trans-fat food. Don’t worry! Big Brother politicians like Elliot Spitzer will punish the evil boggy-men who burden you

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“Uncle Tom” Rangel Seeks To Reinstate Slavery

by Jim Lesczynski

“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”

- Amendment XIII to the U.S. Constitution

Notwithstanding the abolition of slavery 140 years ago, Harlem’s representative to Congress, Charles “Uncle Tom” Rangel, is seeking to re-legalize involuntary servitude in the form of military conscription. The irony of a reputed “civil rights leader” championing something as barbaric and antithetical to human freedom as a draft should not be lost on his constituents, nor should it come as much of a surprise.

In an all-too-fitting display of Catch-22 illogic, the whistkey-voiced congressman claims he only wants to have a draft to make it less likely that we will go to war.

“There’s no question in my mind that this president and this administration would never have invaded Iraq, especially on the flimsy evidence that was presented to the Congress, if indeed we had a draft and members of Congress and the administration thought that their kids from their communities would be placed in harm’s way,” Rangel said in a recent appearance on *Meet the Press*.

Two huge problems with Rangel’s rationalization are immediately apparent. First, he underestimates the bloodthirstiness and irrationality of Bush and his warmongering cronies. Does he honestly think that maniacs like Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld would have thought twice about sending their own children to die for the glory of the empire? Any mere mortal can produce offspring; to the neo-cons, the only legacies that count are conquest and tribute.

Second, flimsy evidence never stopped Congress from leading us into bloody, pointless wars before. Perhaps Rangel forgot—or more likely, hopes we have forgotten—the bogus Gulf of Tonkin incident. In 1964, it provided the justification for Congress to give the green light to Lyndon Johnson to introduce US troops into the Vietnam War. It only took 31 years for the National Security Administration to admit that the whole thing was an outright fabrication. Compared to Johnson’s whopper, Bush’s phantom weapons of mass destruction are rock-solid.

No, a draft today wouldn’t keep our young men (and women, as far as Rangel is concerned) out of harm’s way, any more than it did in the last century, the bloodiest in human history. Speaking of which, lest anyone think that ousting the Republicans from power gives us reason to let our guard down, keep in mind that a Democratic President or Congress started every single one of those awful 20th century wars.

This isn’t the first time New York’s senior congressman has attempted to bring back government-sponsored chattel slavery. In 2003, before the invasion of Iraq, Rangel introduced a draft bill covering citizens ages 18 to 26. In 2006, he upped the ante by proposing mandatory military service for men and women ages 18 to 42, but the bill died a merciful death. Rangel is promising to introduce yet another draft measure in the new Democratic-controlled Congress.

It would be reckless to assume that Rangel’s latest attempt will suffer the same defeat as his first two draft bills. The Democrats call the shots now, and with Rangel assuming the chairmanship of the all-powerful House Ways and Means Committee, many pork-loving politicians will be going out of their way to curry favor with him. Moreover, Rangel’s “national service” scheme has the support of none other than Rep. Rahm Emanuel, D-Ill., the celebrated chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee for the 2006 elections. As a reward for orchestrating the overwhelming defeat of the Republicans, Emanuel was elected chairman of the Democratic Caucus, making him the fourth highest-ranking Democrat in Congress. These are two enormously powerful members of the congressional majority who seek to claim ownership of your life, and it would be

foolish to dismiss their ability to control the agenda.

Even if you don’t believe the Democrats in Congress are every bit as warlike and venal as their Republican counterparts (despite overwhelming historical and contemporary evidence—e.g., New York’s two hawkish senators), you can’t deny the appeal of “universal service” to statist on both sides of the aisle.

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Serf City

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Letters

Power-Grabbing Government

In a recent issue of *Serf City*, Matt Lysiak lambastes the *NY Times* for leaking information about a “top secret” government surveillance program (“The New York Times Versus the Future”). I am rather surprised that Mr. Lysiak, presumably a person of libertarian bent, would condemn a whistle-blower, and align himself with a power-grabbing government, accustomed to covering its trespasses under a national security label.

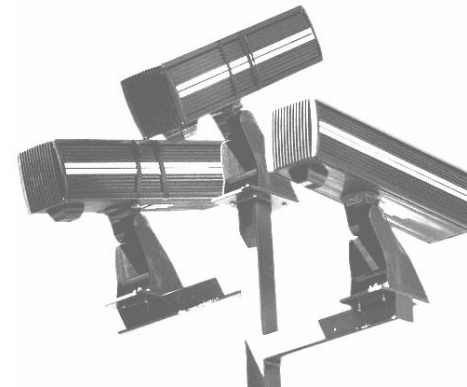
Clearly, we have an Administration that does not want the public to know it has authorized law-breaking surveillance, sanctioned torture, or misused intelligence to launch the Iraq War. Just stamp it all “top

secret” and get your legal eagles to prove the Leader stands above the law, with authority to arbitrarily arrest suspects, abrogate habeas corpus and, in essence, suspend all individual rights he deems awkward in an endless war.

It seems to me that, faced by this unsurpassed Big Brother challenge, we need more whistle blowers, not more defenders of cover-ups and liberty transgressions. There is, indeed, every reason for Libertarians to be in

the forefront of an increasingly urgent fight to defend our rights.

Irwin Shishko
Chesterfield, VA



Not All Fat Created Equal

This is in response to your piece, “Die, Health Nuts, Die!” in the most recent issue of *Serf City*.

You wrote that “there is nothing intrinsically more fattening about McDonald’s cheeseburgers and fries than, say, PJ Clarke’s” or Peter Luger’s. In fact, fast food restaurants’ reliance on partially hydrogenated vegetable oils means that their food is more fattening than food prepared with undamaged fats like butter or beef fat. Any nutritionist or doctor will tell you that ingestion does not equal integration—butter may be high in fat, but it’s the kind our bodies can put to good use, through conversion to HDL (“good cholesterol”) for instance, but the same cannot be said for processed vegetable oils, which raise bad cholesterol, lead to weight gain, and have no positive nutritional impact.

Moreover, fast-food restaurants do, as you wrote, offer calories, but they don’t offer much nutrition. Numerous studies bare

out the negative impact that eating fast food has on a child’s development. Not to mention increased risk of obesity, diabetes, and heart failure later in life. This is not something to celebrate.

Working class people certainly can make choices about what they eat, but in many cases they’re hamstrung by budgets. This is something I know very well from my own experience—eating healthy ain’t cheap. Fast-food chains have essentially undercut grocery stores by offering the illusion of nutrition (not to mention the actuality of convenience) at a much lower price than purveyors of the real thing. But the low cost is also illusory, because working-class people will absorb the costs themselves through medical bills down the line. This is a detrimental situation, and I fully support Joel Rivera’s wise corrective proposition.

Ben Tausig



Send your letters or comments to
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The Crisco Crisis

by Becky Akers

Not content with making outlaws of people who smoke in their offices, New York City will soon criminalize chefs who cook with trans fat. Restaurants that persist in pleasing their customers rather than the City's food fascists will face fines of \$200 to \$2,000.

Trans fat, more familiar to home cooks as Crisco, makes pie crust just as flaky and fried foods just as crispy as Grandmother promised. "Hydrogenated vegetable shortening" finds extensive commercial use, too. Then a couple (literally) of scientists hypothesized that hydrogenated oils contribute to heart disease. That gave government yet another bugaboo with which to scare us, as though Al Qaeda weren't enough. No matter that the hypothesis is disputed, nor that freedom means folks decide for themselves what to ingest: politicians are making war on Crisco. And why not? It looks disgusting. It makes us fat. Best of all, it doesn't shoot back. It's an ideal enemy, and New York City is gleefully expanding its power under the guise of "protecting" diners from it.

Several phrases sprang to mind when I heard that the city wants to force cardboard cookies and spongy spring rolls on me. Among the printable ones is that architectural advice,

"Those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones." Let the city trim its own fat before cutting mine.

That will keep it busy for a very long time. The city gorges on a \$52.2 billion budget, an \$80 billion pension fund, and no less than 250,000 employees. Not only do we pay a mayor, we pay deputy mayors, too. And each of the city's five boroughs has a president on the dole as well. How do they earn their keep? "Borough presidents advise the Mayor on issues relating to each borough, comment on all land use items in their borough, advocate borough needs in the annual municipal budget process, administer a small discretionary budget for projects within each borough, appoint Community Boards, and chair the Borough Boards." Call me naïve, but I bet if they didn't show up for "work" one day, the city wouldn't crash to a halt.

The roll call continues through a comptroller, a public advocate, 51 council members and their staffs, 59 community boards with up to 50 small-fry politicians each, and the city's 101 agencies (everything from "Administrative Trials and Hearings, Office of" and "Anti-Graffiti Task Force, Mayor's" through the "Equal Employment Practices Commission" and the "Fund to Advance NYC" to the "United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol, Commission for the" and the "Workforce Investment Board").



Which brings us back to the lard at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). Unless we're living in an Orwell novel, why does this agency even exist? Here's the City's ambitious answer: "The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene [DOHMH] protects and promotes the health and mental well being of all New Yorkers." Quite a few folks might charge the Department with dereliction on the "mental well being," at least.

In 2006, DOHMH bureaucrats began hectoring restaurants to "voluntarily" eliminate trans fat from their menus. "Consumers want healthier choices," their propaganda insisted. "Clearing artificial trans fat out of your kitchen is an excellent way to attract customers and increase demand for your products." Oh, right. Some consumers want tofu and turnips; others seldom if ever ask the waiter, "Ryan, tell me, what've you got tonight without trans fat? I'm in the mood for healthier choices."

Restaurateurs recognized a Big Lie when they heard it. They know what their customers want: food that tastes good. Fast. At reasonable prices. Some may avoid trans fat, too, but preferences in food, like everything else, vary tremendously from person to person. It's the highest arrogance for bureaucrats to pretend they know what we want without the minute attention to our whims by which entrepreneurs live or die. And if bureaucrats can somehow magically discern that we'll order 58 slices of carrot cake most Monday evenings but only seven sides of steamed carrots, let them risk their own resources and open a restaurant instead of leeching off taxpayers.

New York's eateries were too savvy to heed the DOHMH's propaganda, as its website plaintively wails: "This proposal [to 'phase-out (sic) artificial trans fat in all NYC restaurants and other food service establishments'] follows a one-year education campaign to help"—love it!—"restaurants voluntarily reduce trans fat. Despite this effort, there was no

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Delivering Rescue

by Richard A. Cooper

Some heroes dodge bullets or brave fire to save lives or support a just cause. Abe Sommer was a postman. His heroism took the form of reading, writing and delivering letters to save lives and reunite families. Abe Sommer was a man of great rectitude who defied authority in order to do justice. He was my maternal grandfather. He is one of my heroes.

The route to heroism began in the university town of Buczacz (pronounced Buchach, "ch" as in "church") in the province of Galicia in southern Poland. In the closing days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Buczacz was a relatively prosperous town where Jews, Poles and Ukrainians lived together under the rule of the German-speaking Austrians. My grandfather

received a classical secondary school education. He ultimately learned to read, write and speak eight languages (English, Latin, Greek, German, Polish, Russian,

Yiddish and Hebrew).

When the First World War began, Abe Sommer was to begin medical studies at the University of Vienna. Instead, he was drafted into the Austro-Hungarian army where he became a non-commissioned officer. In 1916, he was captured at Lemberg by the Russians. After the Bolsheviks seized power, they almost shot him as a spy because he spoke Russian. For two years he was a prisoner in Siberia. Then it took two years to walk to Buczacz.

After Abe Sommer emigrated to the USA, he joined the Post Office as a letter carrier and eventually became a clerk. He married my grandmother Rose Wadler, who also came from Galicia, and they had two children, William and Lillie, my mother.

Abe Sommer devoted much time as the Secretary of a hometown association, the United Buczaczer Ladies Auxiliary to the Buczacz-American Benevolent, Sick and Aid Society. In the Thirties, the Jewish community of Buczacz was persecuted by the anti-Semitic Polish regime while the shadows of the Third Reich began to be felt in that corner of the former Austrian empire.

Sommer presented the discouraging news to the Buczaczers. They were dismayed with the current troubles besetting their hometown

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New York Boxing: Going Back Underground?

by Joseph Dobrian

So, now the New York State Legislature is set to restrict “white collar boxing”—that is, low-level prize-fighting as opposed to professional boxing—to the exclusive control of a company called United States White Collar Boxing, Inc (USWCB). Although the state government is passing the regulation of this sport to a private entity—which libertarians might applaud—they’re really just giving us more of the same. More regulation, more restriction, more control, more telling us what to do and how to live. No surprise. And probably nothing can be done about it. But this is just one more milestone in government’s long and proud tradition of doing its damndest to take the fun out of anything that’s worthwhile, interesting, or challenging.

“Prize fighting”—that is, fighting for a winner-take-all money prize—has been illegal in America and in most of Europe since 1750. Even professional boxing—a bout for which both principals are paid—was almost universally illegal until the late 19th century. Why? For our own good, of course. It wasn’t so much that anyone cared about the boxers getting hurt—although that may have been a minor consideration—as because the authorities wanted to suppress raffish behavior, loud partying, and above all gambling. The first anti-boxing laws were pushed through the British Parliament by the Duke of Cumberland—after he’d lost a huge bet on a fight between Jack Slack and Jack Broughton (“The Father Of Modern Boxing”). From then until the end of the 19th century, any fight more serious than an amateur

sparring match had to be held in secret. Here in New York, boxing fans sometimes evaded the law by staging fights on a barge on the Hudson River.

Gradually, the popularity of professional glove-fighting (bare-knuckle fighting was always illegal) caused it to become legal or quasi-legal in much of the Western U.S., or at any rate the authorities often declined to enforce laws against it. The first totally legal bout for the Heavyweight Championship of the World took place in 1892, at New Orleans, when “Gentleman Jim” Corbett took the title from an aging John L. Sullivan. At the time, the decision by the town fathers to allow the bout to go on was considered extraordinarily liberal, almost licentious, by much of the rest of the country.

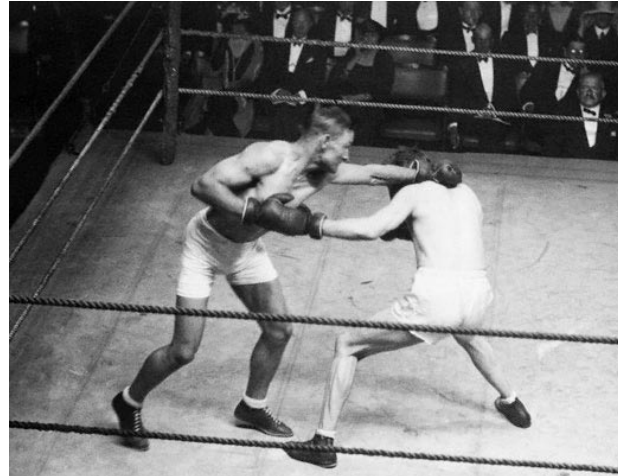
To be sure, in many jurisdictions it remained one thing to promote a fight, and another to actually have it come off. The much-anticipated 1896 bout between Bob Fitzsimmons and Peter Maher, scheduled to take place in Langtry, Texas, was blocked by state authorities—even overruling the local Justice of the Peace, the notorious Roy Bean, who wanted the bout to go on. No matter, said Bean, and instructed the two fighters to walk across a dry creek bed, across the border into Mexico. In photos of that fight, you’ll

observe that the bulk of the audience is sitting on a hillside, watching the fight just a few yards away from them. They’re in Texas, the fighters in Mexico.

Boxing only gained a partially legal status in the State of New York under a clever bit of hypocrisy: A bout could legally be held, in New York, if it were billed as an “exhibition.” That is, according to polite fiction, the two principals were merely showing the fans a little bit of sparring action. Jim Jeffries and Bob Fitzsimmons met in the first Heavyweight Championship bout to be held in New York, at Coney Island in 1899, but even that bout was allowed to go on only on the understanding that it was an exhibition.

“The first knockdown blow,” warned Police Commissioner Bill Devery, “will result in the termination of the bout and the arrest of both principals.” Devery himself showed up for the bout, but he remained seated—except perhaps to cheer—as Jeffries put Fitzsimmons on the deck five times on the way to winning the title via an 11th-round knockout.

Over the next few years, though, politicians began taking



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pokin’ a finger in the eye of the oppressor...



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Kicking the Elephant While He's Down

by Jim Lesczynski

In his new book *The Elephant in the Room*, *New York Post* columnist Ryan Sager argues that the long-time alignment of libertarian conservatives and social conservatives in the Republican Party is splintering. Furthermore, he cautioned that the Republican Party's abandonment of small-government principles would cost it not just its soul, but something more valuable to politicians—power. Ryan's warning turned out to be prescient, as the GOP took a beating statewide and nationally in November. Serf City recently caught up with Sager for a round of questions and answers.

SERF CITY: With the Republicans getting their clocks cleaned in the mid-term elections, *The Elephant in the Room* certainly proved prophetic. But what happens next? Will the GOP get it in time for 2000, or will it take another smack upside the head at the polls for the lesson to sink in?

RYAN SAGER: The early signs since the election certainly haven't been encouraging. The recent leadership elections saw House Republicans keep on the team that just led them to their stunning defeat. There were two solid, reformist candidates—Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) for minority leader and Rep. John Shadegg (R-Ariz.) for whip—but they were passed over in favor of status quo, big-government conserva-

tives. And, of course, Trent Lott was brought back from the dead like some sort of racially insensitive Frankenstein's monster.

I think the real test, however, is going to be whom the party chooses as its standard bearer in 2008. Luckily, the worst of the lot, Sen. George Allen, is unlikely to run after his pathetic campaign down in Virginia this year. Rudy Giuliani or John McCain would be a

If libertarians do want influence, however, they need to help steer one of the two major parties.

move in the right direction. But watch Mitt Romney. He's making his play for the Religious Right/National Review/anti-gay bigot crowd. And he's taken Massachusetts a big step down the road to socialized medicine. He's the candidate of big-government, big-religion Republicanism, and he'll be a force to be reckoned with in the primaries.

SC: Blogger Markos Moulitsas at the Daily Kos has been making a lot of noise about the notion of Libertarian Democrats. Between the war and civil liberties issues and the Republicans not offering much on economic issues, why shouldn't libertarians feel equally at home in the Democratic Party as in the GOP?

RS: Kos is onto something. And he's also been making a lot of noise about western Democrats—which is an idea I broke wide open in

The Elephant in the Room. The interior West is the new swing region in American politics. It's been pretty solidly Republican in the past. But Democrats have gone from holding zero of the eight governorships in the interior West in 2000 to holding five of eight after 2006. The GOP also saw House losses in Arizona and Colorado, and a big Senate loss in Montana, just in this election cycle. This is a sea change.

The GOP's electoral math simply doesn't work without the West. It was bad enough losing California. But 70,000 votes in New Mexico, Nevada and Colorado would have thrown the 2004 election to John Kerry.

The main danger for the GOP right now is that it turns into a regional party of the South—where social conservatism is strongest and where plenty of relatively new GOP voters are exceedingly comfortable with the welfare state.

SC: For many Libertarian Party activists, the real "elephant in the room" is the question, why not us? Isn't the obvious home for libertarian voters the Libertarian Party? Do you see any practical role for third parties?

RS: I consider myself a libertarian. Or, more precisely, a classical liberal. However (and I know how popular this will make me with a Libertarian Party audience): The Libertarian Party

shouldn't exist. It does not serve to advance the cause of liberty, for the simple reason that we have a two-party system, and that's not about to change. Libertarians' efforts would be better spent acting as an organized—yes, organized libertarians—faction within one of the

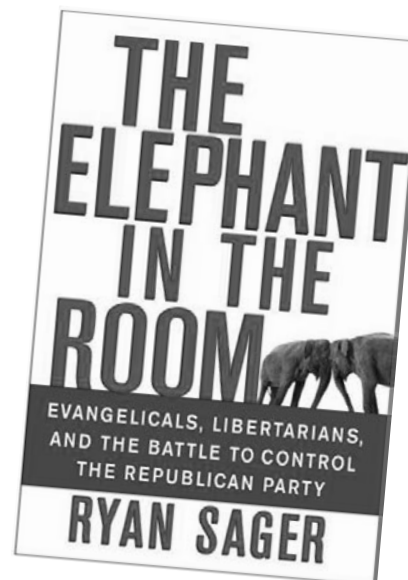
two major parties. The Christian Right runs the GOP because their people get out to party meetings, run for party offices, man the phone banks, and provide the foot soldiers. Libertarians can't shun all of this and then complain when George W. Bush is nominated and (accidentally) elected.

What's more, when a Republican candidate loses because of a third-party Libertarian candidate, the GOP doesn't say, "What did we do wrong? How do we get the Libertarians back?" They say, "We hope the Libertarians die slow, painful deaths." This isn't how you make friends and influence people. Some libertarians might not care to influence the political process. But, in that case, my advice is to form a debating society and stay off the ballot. If libertarians do want influence, however, they need to help steer one of the two major parties. I'd argue there's a more natural alliance to be had with the Republicans—though Bush and Rove have certainly done their damndest to change that math.

SC: You've indicated that Rudy Giuliani might be a worthy candidate for libertarians to support for President in 2008. That might come as a surprise, to put it mildly, to many New Yorkers who consider Giuliani to be closer to totalitarian than libertarian. The former president of the libertarian Foundation for Economic Education lost his job for having the audacity to hire Giuliani as a conference speaker. So what's the libertarian case for Giuliani 2008?

RS: Rudy Giuliani is the only candidate currently on the horizon who even approaches the status of "small-government conservative." John McCain talks a good game on pork, but his sole legacy on domestic policy is campaign-finance reform. Mitt Romney, as mentioned

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The Faux Freedoms

by Bob Armstrong

Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1941 State of the Union address, which became known as his "Four Freedoms" speech, "enumerated four points as fundamental freedoms humans 'everywhere in the world' ought to enjoy"^[1] The two he copped from the First Amendment of our Bill of Rights, are fine; the two he came up with himself are illogical elitist socialist invitations to tyranny, i.e.: typical political BS. Here are his four freedoms as quoted by Wikipedia :

1. Freedom of speech and expression
2. Freedom of every person to worship God in his own way
3. Freedom from want
4. Freedom from fear

The distinction in nature between the first pair and the second should be apparent. The first two are freedoms of individuals from interference by the state or other citizens. Roosevelt's pair are nebulous wishes that are impossible for any human power to guarantee.

In 1948 Franklin's faux freedoms were expanded upon in the creation of the United Nations' "Universal Declaration of Human Rights"(UDHR)^[2] coauthored by his widow Eleanor. In her address on its adoption,^[3] Eleanor averred that "this is a good document—even a great document—" and "may well become the international Magna Carta of all men everywhere."

Well, I don't think so. While a few of the articles are excellent restatements of the concepts of the founding documents of the US, particularly our Bill of Rights, the overall decline in intellectual rigor over the 160 years between those and this founding document of global government is disturbing. The thirty articles in this "declaration of basic principles"^[3], explicitly not a treaty or legal obligation, could easily be cut in half with increased import.

But the Declaration really goes off the deep end around Article 22 when the general

thrust of the rights goes from so-called "negative" to "positive." These terms are kind of inverse to their meanings like the labeling of "negative" (a surplus of electrons) and "positive" (an absence of electrons) due to a wrong guess by that other Franklin, Ben.

As defined in the first *Logic of Liberty*^[4], "a right is a freedom to choose"; a "power is a right to use force." States are geographical monopolies of power. If they are to be anything other than empty wishes, so-called positive rights are powers to force one citizen to provide something to another.^{[5][6]}

So what are some of these faux freedoms? Perhaps the most amusing one in the UDHR is "Article 24: Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay." Gee, that's a nice idea—if you can afford it. I won't bother citing the rest of these BS

rights, read them yourself by following the link to the UN in ^[3]. I leave the discerning of why they are BS as an exercise to the reader. The

late Jeanne Kirkpatrick appropriately called the Declaration "a letter to Santa Claus."

What's wrong with letters to Santa Claus? Consider the minimum wage^[7]. This would fall under the UDHR's Article 23(3): "Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity." Problem is, not everybody is educated or productive enough to make (literally) very much. If a person does not make more than they cost, they cannot be hired. If the minimum cost is set by "Carnac the State" at a level above their worth, they will join the unemployed. The references list-



ed present various historical cases and data. With the various state initiatives just passed, and a \$7.25 federal minimum being promised, economists should be able to collect some definitive data over the next year and really quantify the function between unemployment and minimum wage. An interesting comparison to look at is France, which has a minimum wage of about \$1700 per month, which, given their enforced 35 hour work week, is about \$11.50 per hour. Overall unemployment is about 10%, twice ours, and is 25% for those under 26. The GDP per capita is about 30% less than ours and growing at about a third ours. A full one quarter of the employed population makes just that minimum wage.^[8]

These economic faux freedoms, which inevitably impinge against the true freedoms of individuals to make business with each other, do great pervasive harm to the general welfare of countries. This damage is quantified at www.freetheworld.com. The top quartile on their measures of economic freedom have GDPs per capita more than eight times the lowest quartile with the respective poorest 10% of the populations of the freest earning six times the poorest of the least free. Several of the countries that have increased their freedom scores the most in recent years are in Africa. A very consequential finding of their studies is that governmental foreign aid has no positive impact on economic growth of the poorest countries; economic freedom does.

Incidentally, the US freedom score peaked in 2000 and has declined some since, although we are still in a three-way tie for third behind Hong Kong and Singapore.

The US still remains relatively free compared to the rest of the world on these economic measures. But in terms of personal freedoms, we have fallen a very long way and continue in a nosedive. According to www.internationalliving.com,^[9] the US has fallen from its perennial #1 ranking to #7 on their overall Quality of Life index. This is largely because we have now fallen out of the top category for personal freedom, knocking us out of the top 40 on that measure. And that was before we lost habeas corpus, much less the extension of the substance wars to Crisco (trans-

fats), the sorts of "Freedoms From" that make us the #1 in prison population and energize cops into emptying, reloading and emptying 16 round clips into partying bridegrooms and home-alone 90-year-old women.

I will discuss our faux "Freedoms From" and why I am looking for a truly free country to move to (resume at www.CoSy.com) in my next column.

[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Freedoms

[2] <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/eleanorrooseveltdeclarationhumanrights.htm>

[3] <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html> ; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Declaration_of_Human_Rights

[4] http://manhattanlp.org/SerfCity/serfcity_vol2_iss1.pdf

[5] Walter Williams, <http://www.capmag.com/article.asp?ID=2005>

[6] FDR's "freedom from fear" is in a special category. While he expanded on it as a call for universal disarmament after the World War, virtually the entire preceding address to Congress was a call for no-holds-barred expansion of military spending in preparation for entering the War, which, of course, we did after Pearl Harbor the following December. Operationally, if you think about it, the closest guarantee to freedom from fear is the 2nd amendment.

[7] Minimum Wages, Hans F. Sennholz: <http://www.fee.org/publications/the-freeman/article.asp?aid=948>; Unemployment by Legal Decree, Bettina Bien: <http://www.fee.org/publications/the-freeman/article.asp?aid=224>; Sense and Nonsense on the Minimum Wage, Donald Deere, Kevin M. Murphy, and Finis Welch: <http://www.cato.org/pubs/regulation/reg18n1c.html>

[8] What Is Going on in France?, Pierre Garello: <http://www.fee.org/publications/the-freeman/article.asp?aid=5790>; <https://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/fr.html>; <https://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/us.html>. See also <http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/865> for a rather bleak assessment for Europe, given the structural parallels between the EU and the old Soviet system.

[9] <http://www.internationalliving.com/qol06>

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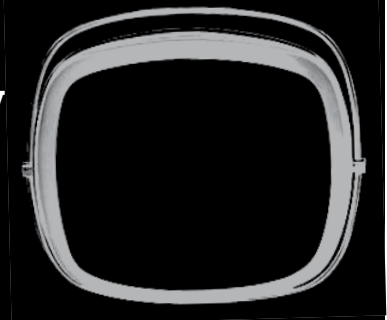
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Good Intentions Versus Good Policy

by Rick Miller

I've been thinking about how there's an assumption out there that certain views are the ones you hold if you are a decent, concerned person. My main interest is economic policy, so I have noticed it more on the liberal side of things.

One example came from my daughter's high school days. President Bush was beginning his first term and he nominated someone for a cabinet position who had opposed increases in the minimum wage. The nominee toned down this sound position during her confirmation process, to my chagrin. Her nomination was eventually withdrawn for other reasons.

My daughter pronounced her "crazy lady" in no uncertain terms. I thought I knew why she had that view, but asked to be sure. She said, "She's against an increase in the minimum wage." Now here is a position that seems so intuitively obvious until you have some economic lessons, which she surely was not getting in her public (government) school. Had she received decent instruction, she might still have favored an increase, but she would have understood that there is a decent argument against it.

I told her that I hoped she didn't think I was crazy, because I opposed an increase. She asked why, because she's a bright kid with an open mind. I said that it increases costs for employers, thus reducing available new jobs. The people most harmed are unskilled young people who need a first job, with the result that unemployment for

unskilled young people skyrockets when the minimum wage is increased, I sagely added.

Another example comes indirectly from young people too. Not only my daughter but many of the young people with whom I work watch the television show "West Wing." I heard that it was a fast-paced series about a liberal President, and not being interested in liberal economics, I avoided it. Then I watched about five minutes of it on two different evenings.

During the first few minutes of the first episode I learned that well-intentioned people support an increase in the minimum wage. During the second episode I learned that good

people for the minimum wage because they are concerned about the less fortunate, and those who oppose it are callous? I've already suggested that I am just as passionately opposed to the minimum wage as those who are for it for the same reason—concern for those most in need. It causes unemployment among the most desperate. When there are plentiful jobs, those who start out with a low wage promptly move up to better, higher paying positions. They do so within a short time, less than two years for 90% of them. In addition, over 70% of minimum wage earners come from middle-class families that are doing just fine. Plentiful jobs come about partly because of the absence of a minimum wage, or, as now, one that is so low that it is really below the market wage anyway.

Can a person oppose so-called universal medical care and still be well-intentioned? Yes. There's a very simple principle from economics at work here—namely, you and I use something quite differently when we pay for it ourselves as opposed to when it's paid for by someone else. Have you ever noticed how people treat things at work, assuming you work for someone else? Not as well as they treat their own things, that is certain. Similarly, people who are not paying for their own medical care tend to overuse it. We see this painfully with Medicare, where many elderly overuse the medical care provided to them. I say that as a person soon to be eligible for Medicare.

So what would I do: throw the elderly to the wolves? No, I'd have those who are able to pay for their own medical care do so themselves. Ideally, we would provide help in some form for those unable to pay for themselves, but only for them.

I've devised two multiple-choice questions about the



people support "universal" healthcare (meaning government-funded) and that our nation is backward because we don't have it. That was enough for me.

So what are we to learn from the positions people take? Are

(continued on page 9)

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Listen to your Fathers!!

Pedophilia, the Internet and the Law

by Richard Kostelanetz

Internet pedophilia has become the new hot button for the pious searching for a cause to which they can be wholly opposed. Anyone lacking kids hesitates to comment, reminded of jokes about the inadvisability of priests commenting on sex and marriage. Nonetheless, one reason not to protest three abortions was my discovery, alas early, that all parents are crazy, which is to say that they regarded their kids more peculiarly than their friends or lovers. On the other hand, I was once a teenager, albeit long ago in the last century, and, like other teenagers, certainly thought a lot about sex with others and now realize that others probably fantasized sexually about me. So what? (A hardworking middle-aged friend of mine told me recently that as much time as he once spent thinking about sex he now devotes to daydreaming about sleep.)

As an anarchist-libertarian, I deplore exploiting power for sexual favors, whether by bosses over employees, priests over worshippers, or teachers over students. Though I don't have students, I do have interns and can gladly boast that I never made a pass at any of them, though more than one was surely attractive (and one I dated after she ceased interning). Indeed, I've never exploited power in my life, at least not consciously; but then as a writer/artist surviving apart from institutions, I've never had much power to exploit. Are third parties sure that they can always tell the difference between rape and consensual sex?

The real more general problem is the excessive power that parents have over their children, beginning with their desire to mold them in a certain image (generally narcissistic) and then in controlling their wayward behavior. Stepparents can be even more problematic with children still residing at home. The anarchist writer Paul Goodman once suggested that every residential

complex, beginning with a housing project, should have rooms where kids could go to get away from their parents. Likewise should every school have bunks where kids who fear going home could spend the night. One unfortunate result of modern technologies is that disgruntled teenagers can't "run away from home" as successfully as they did in the past. Nothing is more obvious to me, though repeatedly surprising to parents, when a young adult "grows up" to criticize their parents' exploitation of such power.

Empowering younger people should be a libertarian issue. More than once I've argued that the Libertarian Party should advocate extending the vote to twelve-year olds (if only to get their political attention and perhaps loyalty before others do). It follows that anyone old enough to vote should be old enough to purchase alcohol and decide about sex.

I also know from my own experience as a single person that ageism is the last stupid prejudice of those who feel emancipated from racism and sexism. The most pleasantly enlightening sexual relationship to come my way in the past few years was with a woman ten years older than I and thus in her seventies. To an ageist, such fortunate surprises never happen. Haven't we learned from biographies that sexual initiation happens to everyone, the younger the better, because it is a learning experience?

When is intergenerational sex unacceptable? I remember not too long ago hearing protests when the filmmaker Woody Allen took up with his sometime companion Mia Farrow's adopted daughter. Nonetheless, they married, had kids, and remain married. Does anyone still think their relationship objectionable? I don't. Psychotherapists tell me that some patients recall intergenerational sex, even incest, as an affront and others as a loving culmination. Whoever declares it is always objectionable is simply imposing his or her will illegitimately. Getting the state to enforce such "morality" is unacceptable.

What is the "age of consent?" I don't know and doubt anybody who does. My

full sexual initiation came nearly a half-century ago at seventeen by a suburban Jewish princess who was fifteen, who seemed more experienced than I. At the time I remember wondering whether she had done likewise by anyone before me, but lacked the courage. Were either of us damaged irreparably by starting so young? I doubt it. American teenage women around 1970 went all the way to a degree never before or since. Now around fifty, they don't complain, not at least publicly, about their wayward youth. In many cultures, women commence child-bearing at fourteen. In Brooklyn public school populated by Arabs, girls don't matriculate into high school, because they are whisked back to their parents' countries for a bountiful marriage. Is this acceptable to cultural relativists disapproving of Jewish Woody Allen?

Most of the Internet pedophilia exposed by Kurt Eichenwald in his quickly legendary New York Times exposé last December involved voyeurism through web-cam-

eras—not touching or rape. One issue thus becomes what you think of voyeurism, especially second-hand voyeurism (in print or on a screen), and by extension, what you think of fantasies? The latter, we'd agree, cannot be policed. The former? Can you imagine the street police adding tickets for under-curtained windows to their list of daily street-level responsibilities?

Eichenwald had previously earned his credibility as an investigative reporter exposing the Enron disaster. The economic

difference is that here kids were earning bit money exploiting the fantasies of adults. Consider this a kind of economic retaliation against adults for more customarily exploiting the fantasies of kids—a practice universally regarded as acceptable. In the crimes of Enron, adults always robbed other adults of much larger sums. I heard Eichenwald describe on a radio how he monitors his son's computer usage by checking his sent mail every week without considering that the bright son of a New York Times staffer might have figured out a route around such monitoring.

Since the North American Man/Boy Love Associations (NAMBLA) has been portrayed as particularly objectionable, I feel compelled to remind Libertarians especially that among its activists has been Charles Shively, long a tenured professor of American Studies at the University of Massachusetts in Boston. As a founding editor of the Boston periodical *Fag Rag*, he would attend small-press festivals where I would meet him—a plump avuncular guy usually dressed in overalls, with all the sexual charisma of a randied hippo.

Nonetheless, among Shively's publications are informative books about Walt Whitman's homosexual loves, a reprint of a Stephen Pearl Andrews book, an edition of the complete writings of Lysander Spooner in six hardback volumes. Need I add that all of these men were proto-libertarian Americans. (If any reader of this critique so objects to Shively's advocacies that he wants to trash books edited by him, please send them to me at PO Box 444, New York, NY 10012-0008, who will gladly reimburse for postage. The complete Spooner goes for a few hundred bucks used.)

Consult the entry on NAMBLA in Wikipedia, and you'll notice that, "an undercover FBI investigation in 1995 discovered that there were 1,100 people on the rolls." Are you going to tell me that so few horny guys, notwithstanding the FBI's predilection to over-count our Enemies, constitute a Monstrous Public Menace? What have you been smoking, as we used to say?

(continued on page 11)

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Old Enough to Vote, Old Enough to Smoke

by Audrey Silk

City Council members are pushing two proposals on teen smoking. One would raise the legal age for buying tobacco from 18 to 19 and the other would raise it all the way to 21. To justify the necessity of such law, they recite all sorts of statistics on the dangers of youth smoking.



ing. But none of those assertions are relevant to this debate. Because in the end, we're talking about the actions of adults—and the unconscionable way these laws are designed to strip them of their adulthood.

The rationale offered for raising the age to 19 to prevent younger teens from obtaining cigarettes from their high school classmates is well-intentioned—but the ends do not justify the means. How far should government be allowed to restrict the rights and privileges of adults in order to control the behavior of children? Suddenly revoking the legal choices of one group

Good Intentions Versus Good Policy (continued from page 7)

minimum wage to get at something about viewpoints and intentions. You could substitute New York City's rent controls, "universal" healthcare or other "entitlement" programs for this question:

What can you tell about a person's goodwill if the person is in favor of a higher minimum wage?

1. The person has concern about people less fortunate.
2. The person has selfish reasons for taking this position.

What can you tell about a person's goodwill if the person is against the minimum wage?

1. The person has concern about people less fortunate.
2. The person has selfish reasons for taking this position.

The answer is "all of the above"—that is, for either position a person might have altruistic or selfish motivations. Therefore, you cannot tell if a person is good by his or her political opinions.

I don't by any means limit this point to the liberal assumption that they are more concerned about the less fortunate. Conservatives have their own versions. For example, "You're not supporting our troops if you oppose this war." A person against a given war has just as much claim to supporting the troops as one who supports it.

traditionally defined as adult in order to achieve this is unacceptable. You don't punish one to influence another.

The rationale behind raising the age to 21 has absolutely no legitimate basis. It's government paternalism at its worst. Those having the legal power to redefine adulthood will do so if that's what it takes to impose their will on others. The unique intolerance for anyone smoking is the anti-smokers' excuse to reduce adults to the status of children.

Cigarettes are legal. Responsibility, not risk, is the issue at hand. At 18, one is deemed adult enough to make all kinds of important choices—to marry, to serve in the military (an immediate risk to health these days), and to vote for the very people who think they're not smart enough to make an informed decision.

Commit a crime at age 16 and you're charged as an adult! Why? Apparently that is already an age at which government believes they should know better.

One bill sponsor claims risk trumps all. But life is full of risks. If risk is the measure, then at what age are we safe from the politicians' tyranny?

For the record, my organization (Citizens Lobbying Against Smoker Harassment) is not in the business of encouraging anyone to smoke, and we believe that minors shouldn't smoke. But there is a law already on the books that covers this. Sales to minors are illegal. Enforce it and leave the adults alone.

This article originally appeared in the New York Daily News.

WHERE DO YOU STAND POLITICALLY?

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World's Smallest Political Quiz

For years, politics has been represented as a choice between left (or liberal) and right (or conservative). Growing numbers of thinkers agree this is far too narrow a view — and excludes millions of people. The political map on the Quiz gives a much

more accurate representation of the true, diverse political world. **The Quiz measures tendencies, not absolutes.** Your score shows who most agrees with you in politics, and where you agree and disagree with other political philosophies.

—Scoring: For each statement, circle A if you Agree, M for Maybe (or don't know), or D if you Disagree.—

How do you stand on PERSONAL ISSUES?

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| ◆ Government should not censor speech, press, media or Internet. | A | M | D |
| ◆ Military service should be voluntary. There should be no draft. | A | M | D |
| ◆ There should be no laws regarding sex between consenting adults. | A | M | D |
| ◆ Repeal laws prohibiting adult possession and use of drugs. | A | M | D |
| ◆ There should be no National ID card. | A | M | D |

SCORING 20 for every A, 10 for every M, and 0 for every D: _____

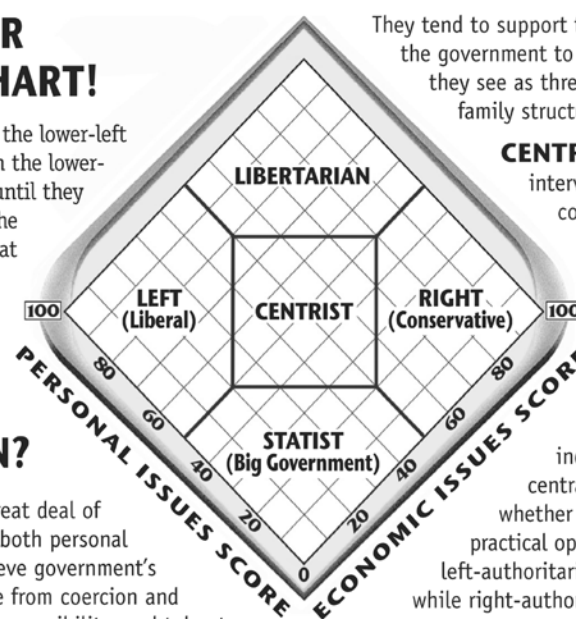
How do you stand on ECONOMIC ISSUES?

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ◆ End "corporate welfare." No government handouts to business. | A | M | D |
| ◆ End government barriers to international free trade. | A | M | D |
| ◆ Let people control their own retirement: privatize Social Security. | A | M | D |
| ◆ Replace government welfare with private charity. | A | M | D |
| ◆ Cut taxes and government spending by 50% or more. | A | M | D |

SCORING 20 for every A, 10 for every M, and 0 for every D: _____

► NOW FIND YOUR PLACE ON THE CHART!

Mark your **PERSONAL** score on the lower-left scale; your **ECONOMIC** score on the lower-right. Then follow the grid lines until they meet at your political position. The Chart shows the political group that agrees with you most.



They tend to support the free market, but frequently want the government to defend the community from what they see as threats to morality or to the traditional family structure.

CENTRISTS favor selective government intervention and emphasize what they commonly describe as "practical solutions" to current problems. They tend to keep an open mind on political issues. Many centrists feel that government serves as a check on excessive liberty.

STATISTS want government to have a great deal of control over individuals and society. They support centralized planning, and often doubt whether liberty and freedom of choice are practical options. At the very bottom of the chart, left-authoritarians are usually called socialists, while right-authoritarians are generally called fascists.

► WHAT DOES YOUR SCORE ON THE CHART MEAN?

LIBERTARIANS support a great deal of liberty and freedom of choice in both personal and economic matters. They believe government's only purpose is to protect people from coercion and violence. They value individual responsibility, and tolerate economic and social diversity.

LEFT-LIBERALS generally embrace freedom of choice in personal matters, but support central decision-making in economics. They want the government to help the disadvantaged in the name of fairness. Leftists tolerate social diversity, but work for what they might describe as "economic equality."

RIGHT-CONSERVATIVES favor freedom of choice on economic issues, but want official standards in personal matters.

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Battle for Your Nose (continued from page 1)

with too many choices and temptations.

So what about the political right? Many on that side want to force you to keep your nose clean. Like your parents they'll stick their noses into your bedrooms or personal lives to make sure you're not doing anything that they consider naughty. Want to put some illicit substance up your nasal openings? Forget it! They'll tell you what you can put into your bodily openings—principally those below the belt and above the knees—and what you can and cannot do with each of your body parts. (I personally think you're an idiot if you stick stuff up your schnoz other than the occasional Vicks inhaler, but it's your nose, not mine.)

See the common thread here? Across the political spectrum most elected officials see you as a snotty-nosed child and see themselves as your mommy and daddy. But let me rub your noses in this for a moment more. You should get your nose bent out of shape when these pandering paternalists take you by the hand and say, "There, there, little boys and girls, we'll take care of you." And you should be embarrassed if you allow yourself in a moment of weakness to be so treated.

Here's the serious point. Adults—as opposed to children—take responsibility for their actions and take pride in taking responsibility. You should welcome the chance to run your own life and make your own way because only achievements that come from your own thoughts, will and actions can allow you to look in the mirror and say, "I did well!"

We should appreciate that at the deepest level we're not simply pathetic, spiritual infants who are victims of our environment. We can stop our urges and stupid thoughts and ask, "Is this right? Is this part of happiness and flourishing?" And as adults—and unlike children—we shouldn't blame others when we screw up. We should own up to our mistakes and determine not to make the same mess in the future.

What happens when we allow ourselves to be tempted by abusive politicians offering us free candy? We get abused! All those government handouts don't come from

The Crisco Crisis (continued from page 3)

decline in the proportion of restaurants using oils and spreads with trans fat." Busybodies who waxed frantic over such trivia were once dismissed as cranks. Now we give them badges and whistles and authority over their betters. Alas, empowered cranks won't be ignored. They started the War on Crisco.

Right now, that war is confined to restaurants. But the DOHMH has also "requested" supermarkets to "expand your supply and promotion of products that are free of artificial trans fat, and phase out products containing artificial trans fat." The city isn't quashing anything other than sales at this point. But it will

some secret treasure chest. They come out of our own pocket and the pockets of our neighbors, with the millions of government bureaucrats and those politicians taking their cut. The cumulative result is that the average family pays over one-third of their income in taxes. Add to that the purchasing power taken by regulations—import restrictions, for example, drive up the costs of consumer products—and half of peoples' incomes are no longer under their control.

So why can't we pay for our own education, medical bills and retirement? Because by giving into our moral weakness for the cheater's way, by taking those handouts or demanding them like petulant brats, we perpetuate a system that allows politicians to impoverish us and rob us of our autonomy. They're like a doctor who breaks our legs and charges us a very high price for a couple of aspirin.

In the long run, instead of a country of productive, innovative achievers, we have a country in which too many individuals are weak, sniveling, servile dependents of pandering ruling elites. Talk about a punch in the nose!

"What can I do?" you ask. First, if you're struggling against this system, congratulations and thanks! Keep up the good work. Second, if you have been seduced by it, like in all those twelve-step programs you must admit that the country and perhaps you as an individual have a problem. Third, look to the principles that will allow you to guide both your own life to greater autonomy and thus greater pride and happiness, a philosophy of rational, responsible, principled individualism.

Such a philosophy does not result in a dog-eat-dog world. That's what we have now as everyone sticks their noses in everyone else's business. Ayn Rand put it well in her novel *The Fountainhead* when she wrote, "The choice is not self-sacrifice or domination. The choice is independence or dependence." It's only when we each live in accordance with the best within us with our own happiness as our goal that we and everyone else can live in a society worth preserving.

Hudgins is executive director of The Atlas Society and its Objectivist Center, which can be found at www.atlassociety.com.

expand to possession and consumption, just as the War on Drug Users did. Lest you shrug this off as more New York nonsense, cities like Chicago are avidly watching with the intention of starting their own war.

The DOHMH is in cahoots with the Board of Health and its chief crank, Dr. Thomas Frieden. He apparently knows as little about cooking as he does about freedom: "Like lead paint," he told the *New York Times*, "artificial trans fat in food is invisible and dangerous, and it can be replaced. No one will miss it when it is gone."

Poor Tom's confused Crisco with cranks.

This article originally appeared at LewRockwell.com.

New York Boxing, Going Back Underground?

(continued from page 4)

up the famous cry of, "Let's legalize—so we can tax and regulate!" In New York, laws pertaining to boxing remained vague and muddled. It had to be legalized—so that the government could tax the receipts and the fighters' purses—and it had to be regulated so as to reduce or eliminate betting. Thus, an historical phenomenon peculiar to New York, for a period of less than a decade.

In the 1910s, New York boxing entered a curious limbo known as "the no-decision era." It's been said, truthfully, that a pretty good-sized book could be written about that brief period and its place in the history of boxing overall.

Ordinarily, if a fighter doesn't knock out his opponent within a pre-set number of rounds, the winner is chosen "by decision." That is, the referee and/or a panel of judges decide which man fought better. Under the "Frawley Law," passed in New York in 1911, if a fight didn't end with a knockout, no decision could be rendered. The idea was that the no-decision rule would result in fewer fixed fights and less gambling.

Of course, as is almost always the case when a prohibition is attempted, people found a way around it. Newspaper reporters

would publish their opinions of who won the fight, if there had been no knockout, and it would be said that "Billy X won a 'newspaper decision' over Jimmy Y." If you wanted to bet, you could agree to abide by the opinion of a certain reporter, or a consensus of several reporters. Gambling went on as usual, and of course fixed fights became more common than before, not less. Indeed there was probably no time or place in boxing history that was more corrupt than New York in the no-decision era.

In 1920 the "Walker Law," sponsored by a future Mayor of New York City, legalized decisions and thus made New York City the world's capital of boxing, until Las Vegas eclipsed it in the 1970s. And why did Las Vegas win out? Less regulation. Less effort to restrict gambling. Less emphasis



on taking the fun out of it.

As it currently appears, the regulation of white-collar boxing doesn't appear too onerous. And as I suggested, regulation by a private entity sounds not so bad on its face. But consider this: USWCB acts on the sufferance of the state government. It will have to do the government's bidding, or lose the contract. I predict tighter and tighter—and less and less sensible—restrictions on white-collar boxing in the next few years.

But maybe that's a blessing in disguise. Barge-fighting sounds rather fun.

Kicking The Elephant (continued from page 5)

above, is running to be the anti-gay, pro-government candidate. Newt Gingrich? He may provide some fireworks, but he isn't a serious candidate. That leaves us with Rudy. He has a record of cutting government in New York City, cutting welfare rolls, bringing crime under control, and advocating passionately for school choice. No other candidate is going to be willing to seriously take on the problems in our public school system, but Rudy's already out there speaking passionately about scholarships and vouchers.

There are plenty of things to worry about as a libertarian when it comes to Rudy. But if you want to see the GOP move back toward being the party of Reagan and Goldwater, and away from the South, Giuliani cur-

rently looks like the most logical candidate. All of that said, it's still early. It'd be a tough field to break into, but maybe somebody surprising will make a run.

SC: While New York Republicans aren't dominated by southern evangelicals, their standard-bearer in the recent gubernatorial election was a relatively hardcore cultural conservative. Yet aside from John Faso, there doesn't seem to be anyone in the New York GOP making a strong case for cutting taxes and regulations. Is there anyone in city hall or Albany (Republican, Democrat or other) who you would consider a potential friend to libertarians?

RS: At the risk of being a downer: No.

SC: Which candidates did you vote in the 2006 election and why?

RS: I voted a straight Democratic ticket. It was time to end, not mend, the GOP majority. I don't regret it for a second.

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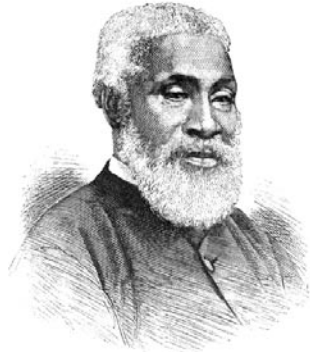
140 Second Avenue, between 9th St. and St. Mark's Pl.

“Uncle Tom” Rangel Seeks To Reinstat e Slavery (continued from page 1)

Rangel’s newest proposal isn’t merely about military duty; it would include the “option” of several years of non-military servitude to the state.

“Young people would commit themselves to a couple of years in service to this great republic, whether it’s our seaports, our airports, in schools, in hospitals,” Rangel explained to *Meet the Press*. That’s all very noble sounding, except for the fact that this selfless commitment by our young people would be coerced at gunpoint. To Rangel and his ilk, there is nothing wrong with slavery—and make no mistake, mandatory universal service is slavery by definition—as long as it is government bureaucrats who crack the bullwhip. In fact, if we are talking about every 18-year-old male and female in the country, the number of legal slaves would be an order of magnitude larger than anything the United States experienced prior to the Civil War.

Not only is Rangel’s draft proposal morally reprehensible, it’s stupid policy as a practical matter. Rangel claims that we need a draft because our military recruiters continue to have trouble meeting their annual quota of 80,000 new recruits. (Good cannon fodder is so hard to find these days.) But one thing even the



generals understand is that slaves make lousy soldiers. The Roman Empire learned that the hard way.

Rangel also tries to persuade his race-baiting and class-warring lapdogs in the press that a draft would level the playing field by requiring citizens from all levels of society to do their fair share. Yet, quite the opposite is true. During the Vietnam era, we had a military that was largely comprised of young men who were too poor or lacking in connections to avoid

the draft. Just ask all the chicken hawks currently roosting in the West Wing. Today—contrary to the misconceptions spewed by John Kerry—it isn’t just the poor and uneducated who get stuck in Iraq. According to Department of Defense statistics (which I grant should be taken with a grain of salt), whites make up 75.8% of today’s volunteers and 77.4% of the nation’s population; 98% of recruits join the military

with a high school education or better, compared to 75% of the general population who meet that standard.

If you want to see poorer and darker-skinned men and women arriving home in body bags, just resurrect the draft. It is beyond naïveté to imagine that rich college kids won’t find a way out of it. I would bet heavily that we’d see a lot more draftees coming from old Charlie Rangel’s neighborhood than from Rep. Caroline Maloney’s silk-stocking district a few blocks south.

Delivering Rescue (continued from page 3)

community, and the rising threat to the west. A solution had to be found. Despite their own troubles in America gripped by the Great Depression, the Buczaczers continued to aid charities for their brethren in Buczac, Vienna and New York. But now with Hitler, the Buczaczer Jews needed more than a helping hand. They needed rescue.

Sommer extended himself to bring Buczaczers to America. Some had relatives here, some had none. But America’s immigration law required the would-be immigrant to have a sponsor who could prove that they had enough resources to prevent the immigrant from becoming a public charge. My grandfather was a letter carrier. Sometimes he would have to walk from the General Post Office to the Bronx because he lacked the nickel subway fare. Fortunately, one of the Buczaczers was both a rich and generous man. His name was Phil Silvershein, the owner of the Phil Silvershein Corp., wholesale confectioners on Delancey Street in Manhattan.

Silvershein gave my grandfather \$10,000, an enormous sum in those days. Abe Sommer would deposit it in his bank account and obtain the bank’s certificate to show that he had the means to support the immigrant

he was sponsoring. After the need passed Abe Sommer returned the money to Mr. Silvershein. They repeated the process when needed. What Sommer and Silvershein did then was deceptive but it was righteous and just. It saved lives from destruction.

In the postwar years Grandpa rescued the Buczac Holocaust survivors from the displaced person camps and resettled them in free countries. For many more Buczaczers,



he served as a post office central, writing into the wee hours in his beautiful handwriting in German, Polish, Russian, Hebrew, Yiddish and English.

Abraham Sommer evaded the politician’s law to save those who were in mortal peril. With the crucial help of Phil Silvershein, he made a difference of life or death. Abraham Sommer was the postman as hero. He delivered rescue.

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1. Buy a gun. Be patriotic and civic-minded! Owning a gun is part of our American heritage and our freedoms. It can be a rifle, shotgun, or pistol, preferably unregistered. You already have a license and right to own and carry it, it’s called being a citizen and a human being, which give you the absolute right to defend yourself and your loved ones.

2. Guns are much safer than knives, whistles, or pepper spray. Don’t listen to the propaganda from our politicians. The most effective way for all people, weak or strong, to defend themselves, is with a gun. (that’s why policemen and women give their family members guns—because they know this is true). And fighting back with a gun is much safer than surrendering to a criminal, which often leads to death or serious injury.

3. When you enter the gun-owning class, you are joining a growing movement to recognize and honor the true intent of our Founding Fathers when they formed the Republic: to vest power in each individual citizen, preserving our freedom, individual rights and security, guarding against tyranny or intimidation by the government and police, and providing a deterrence against terrorism, invasion, civil unrest and criminals.

4. Gun ownership is not just for rich people, celebrities or white people. Everyone has a right to own and carry a gun; black, white, Latino, Asian, Arab, Haitian, Native American, Muslim, Jewish, disabled/handicapped, Sikh, elderly, straight/gay/bisexual/transgender, mentally-challenged, hookers, the homeless. Anyone who’s peaceful, doesn’t interfere with others, wants to be safe and secure, has a right to own and carry a gun.

5. Don’t be afraid of guns. Guns are a tool. Like any tool, they should be owned and used responsibly. Learn to use the tool, understand how it works and be confident handling it. Attend a low-cost beginner’s Gun Introduction Course at one of the local gun ranges in the city. Don’t dismiss, vilify, or condemn anything before you try it. (Don’t be close-minded, elitist and arrogant like left-wingers and socialists. Don’t pre-judge, first learn the facts. Try shooting a gun at least once and then decide for yourself!).

6. Owning and Carrying a Gun is a Human Right. Don’t let our politicians and media fool you—owning a gun makes you safer, and as a human being, you have a human right to be safe and fight off anyone who attacks you. Owning and carrying a gun is a [choose one] God-given/moral/ethical/civil/Constitutional/human right. Not only that, but defending yourself and your loved ones is a moral obligation. Learn the lesson of Hurricane Katrina—don’t depend on Nanny Government. “Be like the Boy Scout.” Be prepared..

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Pedophilia

(continued from page 8)

I’m also old enough to recall when adult homosexuality was regarded as universally despised—even among putatively enlightened people, much as pedophilia is now, and been libertarian long enough to recall that an early presidential candidate of the Libertarian Party was gay. That historical perspective makes me wonder whether general attitudes about intergenerational sex might change as well. Remember that general libertarian principle that no voluntary sexual act between consenting adults is objectionable. This gets us back to the question for which there is no firm numerical answer—what is the age of consent? Beyond puberty, which is medically measurable, only individuals can decide.

The real threat here is finally not pedophilia, which is an acceptable banner for instilling fear of something else. Nor is it complaints that middle-class kids sexually become adults sooner than before, which probably isn’t true. What is different is that young people nowadays develop a computer moxie enabling them to generate, not out on the streets, where mischief was traditionally made by kids, but literally in their own bedrooms, independent moves beyond their parents’ understanding and imagination. Is the measure of consent the ability to access one’s own account on the Internet?

Because the independence party in Puerto

Rico never gets more than a few percent in any election, it must find other seductive platform front, so to speak, for its agenda. The most recent was their leadership in agitating for getting American military bases out of the island of Vieques. The fact that the departure of the military would escalate unemployment in Vieques interested not one whit; nor did the wishes of the people residing there. Objecting to US military presence became for independentistas an agreeable platform for publicizing their advocacy of an ideology less agreeable. Similarly, the anti-pedophiles are exploiting a negligible fear for comprehensive agendas that are Luddite and authoritarian.

Eichenwald vividly describes how teenagers navigate the Internet and its tools with a facility that that their parents envy, as would I (who probably couldn’t write this critique otherwise), reminded of immigrant homes where kids have the social advantage of speaking English, even though the parents, vainly preserving their authoritarian prerogatives, would reply in their native languages. Need I say that had the kids failed to learn English, they would have been under-prepared for the adult American world?

Are anti-pedophilia activists going to campaign to get the state to forbid American teens the access to the Internet? I think that is finally the motive behind their criticisms. Can you imagine anything more economically and culturally subversive? Anything more likely to incite unnecessary generational revolution?

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