

---

# THE CONTINUING CRISIS

---

- The amateurism of the Carter administration continues to be the most delicious topic of conversation wherever pundits gather, and evidence of the White House's lack of professionalism mounts as week follows week. For instance, President Carter delivered his State of the Union address on January 19—more than two weeks before National Tell-A-Joke Week.

- The speech itself was a dizzy *mélange* of Calvin Coolidge's platitudes and Lyndon Johnson's statism. Who wrote the ludicrous document remains a mystery, but on the basis of internal evidence I hold that the thing was somehow confected by the late F. Scott Fitzgerald, who believed the mark of a fine intellect to be the ability to hold two contradictory ideas in the mind simultaneously. If my surmise is sound this would be the first time a State of the Union address was written by a dead writer—an exquisitely fitting touch, for abroad in the land is the suspicion that Jimmy Carter is already a dead president. His historic drop in the polls has only been matched by Presidents Nixon and Ford. The speech's delirium can best be captured by quoting two stupendously incompatible passages whose cohabitation in the same text seems not to have jarred our president at all, though it is my guess that when he uttered the second passage at least a dozen senators woke up. At one point Mr. Carter stated that for some Americans their country has become "almost like a foreign country, so strange and distant that often we have to deal with it through trained ambassadors who have sometimes become too powerful and influential—lawyers, accountants, and lobbyists...." Nonetheless, he magisterially concluded: "We have emerged from bitter experience chastened but proud, confident once again, ready to face challenges once again, united once again...." What a mind! No wonder on January 12 Mr. Carter could inform a press conference that the investigation of Rep. Joshua Eilberg was "never mentioned to me" though he had in point of fact been informed of the investigation minutes before. One of the remarkable strengths of Mr. Carter is his proven ability calmly and authoritatively to embrace blatant contradiction. Whether this is a virtue of his intellect or his character is a moot question.

- In Chicago, thousands of rush-hour motorists were freed when police ended Mr. Abraham Johnson, Jr.'s three-hour protest by towing him off to the slammer while he remained locked in his automobile, his ideals uncompromised. Mr. Johnson, a long-time activist, became distraught at the pace he and his fellows were making on the Dan Ryan Expressway; and in the hope of bringing all Chicagoans to their senses he simply stopped his vehicle, locked its doors, and ceased to communicate with the outside world, except for an occasional obscene—albeit insightful—note to inquiring police. I placed a telephone call to this remarkable individual, and, though I failed to reach him, some sense of the popularity of his stand can be grasped from a recorded message that greeted me: "The number you have reached, 477-4465, has been disconnected temporarily at

the customer's request." On January 17, Mrs. Mary Lou Tuttle of Seattle, Washington, was booked for making lewd telephone calls to a local mental-health clinic. In Cerritos, California, nonviolent protestors firebombed the childhood home of Mrs. Richard Nixon, and in Lauderdale, Florida, Dr. Nathan Chaset, founder of the vasectomy, passed on to his reward.

- In Milan, Italy, a gentleman identified only as Mr. Giovanni G. met with calamity as he lowered himself by rope down the outside of a building in hopes of catching his wife in the seraglio of a local bachelor. Alas, his wife was not in the apartment, but three other women were and in the ensuing pother Mr. G. plummeted earthward, breaking his right front leg. At the Ellwest Stereo Theater, Nashville, Tennessee's finest pornographic movie house, thirteen patrons, caught in the heat of their onanistic passion, were fleeced when a robber, posing as a plainclothes policeman, gathered them up, read them their constitutional rights, collected their wallets, and fled. And police in Radnor, Pennsylvania, have been given a very stern rebuke by Bucks County Judge Ira Garb for obtaining a confession from a suspect whom they attached to a Xerox machine programmed to reproduce a typed card saying "He's lying" whenever the police pressed the copy button. With a metal colander on his head and wires ominously trailing off into the copying machine, the unfortunate, and somewhat dim, suspect believed himself to be in the presence of a lie detector.

- The January 31 arrest of a United States Information Agency employee on charges of spying for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has caused many Americans of a dovish persuasion to rethink their long-standing prejudice against the USIA. Arrested along with 42-year-old Mr. Ronald L. Humphrey was a South Vietnamese peace activist, Mr. Truong Dinh Hung, an employee of the Washington-based Animal Health Institute. The Communist government of Poland has smartened up in its struggle against the Roman Catholic Church. According to reports received in America in early February, the agents of Papa Marx are now hoping to lure Catholics from their altars by introducing pornography into Poland. Hence Poland will become the first country on the progressive side of the Iron Curtain to legalize smut, though purely as an instrument of the glorious proletariat revolution. The Moscow intelligentsia is in a fever over publication of a brilliant new interpretive study of America, titled simply: *Imperialism: The Enemy of Humanity*. In this balanced and erudite discussion of Yankee infamies it is argued that the American ruling class and its militarist interests use comic books to drug innocent children into "bourgeois ideology," anti-Communism, and disrespect for science—a stupendous insight that, and it is suggestive of our comparative benightedness that no discussion of this interpretation has appeared on these shores other than in a few brief allusions on the pages of the *Nation*.

- In Charleston, West Virginia, Mrs. Della Brent, an unusually plump woman, spent four

days, including New Year's Eve, in her bathtub where she became helplessly lodged during one of her infrequent attempts at bathing. Mrs. Brent was helped from the tub on January 3 when police were alerted by concerned neighbors. Her condition was "surprisingly good," though according to Patrolman R.L. Backus, "she was real hungry." And throughout the world liberals let out a yell when Mr. Francisco Franco Martinez Bordiu, grandson of the late Generalissimo Francisco Franco, was sentenced in Tortosa, Spain, for illegally shooting a goat.

- That Baltimore, Maryland, disc jockey who claims to have sent a specimen of Billy Beer to an independent laboratory for analysis now insists that he has been notified: "We are sorry to have to inform you that your horse has diabetes." A Cuban diplomat's attaché case exploded in the lobby of a New York apartment house, and in Paramus, New Jersey, antiquarians and their allies became enraged when local firefighters inadvertently incinerated a 225-year-old house, the most precious in Bergen County. The federal government had laid aside \$200,000 to save the relic, but through some mysterious mix-up fifty eager firemen intent on improving their technique poured gasoline on the old beauty and pffft. Mr. Frederick Gittes, representing a man who threw a banana cream pie at Ohio Governor James A. Rhodes, is defending his client's act on First Amendment grounds.

- And in Charlotte, North Carolina, a 68-year-old woman suffered a fatal heart attack at a faith-healing service. Mrs. Minnie Brown, a native of Concord, North Carolina, had just undergone the laying on of hands in a local auditorium when she looked ceilingward, hollered "Oh, I'm so happy," and croaked. The contretemps raises important questions over the separation of church and state, for when one of Charlotte's specially-trained fire inspectors, Mr. Jim Ray, tried to treat Mrs. Brown, he was driven off by an usher shouting "Leave her alone, she's in the spirit." By the time Mr. Ray got to Mrs. Brown she was an angel, and all he could do was report: "I hadn't worked at one of those shows before, and I didn't know if the dude knew what he was talking about." American culture suffered two tragic losses when 30-year-old Mr. Gregory Herbert, the saxophonist with Blood, Sweat and Tears, expired, and when 32-year-old Mr. Terry Kath, lead singer for the jazz-rock group Chicago, apparently mistook an automatic pistol for one of the numerous beer bottles he had emptied at a Hollywood party.

- Finally, medical science has come to the aid of a 21-year-old Clemson University student whose most private part was amputated last fall when an enraged husband discovered the youth *flagrante delicto*. The student and his severed member were brought together again in an Atlanta hospital and after a series of delicate operations the young man, Mr. Milton Cronheim, is crowing once again: "I feel great," he informed the UPI, and his father was just as enthusiastic, saying "It's really a miracle."

—RET

# THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR

5	China, Taiwan, and American Credibility.....	Robert A. Scalapino	5
9	Will the Kremlin Win the French Elections? .....	Roger Kaplan	9
11	When Love Is Soon Hot, Soon Cold .....	John P. Sisk	11
15	In the Season of Our Roone.....	Vic Gold	15
16	Torcello, Isle of Refuge.....	F.S. Manor	16
18	Under the Condor—Part Three.....	Whit Stillman	18
22	The "Gauze Curtain" at Harvard Medical School.....	William R. Havender	22
24	Gibbon's Silent Partner .....	John Nollson	24

## Departments

2	The Continuing Crisis .....		2
4	Editorial / Encomiums for Califano .....	R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.	4
25	The Nation's Pulse / Towards a Middle East Peace? .....	Peter J. Rusthoven	25
26	The Public Policy / Deflating Unemployment Statistics.....	Kenneth W. Clarkson & Roger E. Meiners	26
28	The Talkies / <i>Close Encounters</i> and <i>High Anxiety</i> .....	David Everitt	28
38	Current Wisdom .....	Assorted Jackasses	38

## Book Reviews

29	<i>Once to Every Man</i> , by William Sloane Coffin, Jr. ....	Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.	29
31	<i>Farewell, Israel!</i> , by Ephraim Sevela .....	Hillel Fradkin	31
32	<i>Chinese Shadows</i> , by Simon Leys & <i>In the People's Republic</i> , by Orville Schell .....	Wendell N. Calkins	32
34	<i>Conflict and Crisis</i> , by Robert J. Donovan.....	Richard Kirkendall	34

**Publisher:** Baron Von Kannon of the Saturday Evening Club; **Assistant Publisher:** Ronald E. Burr; **Managing Editor:** Steven C. Munson; **Assistant Managing Editor:** Erich Eichman; **Production Manager:** K.J. Gooderham; **Circulation Manager:** Janet M. Novey; **Executive Secretary:** Deborah S. Grubb; **Subscription Manager:** William B. Head; **Senior Editors:** A. Lawrence Chickering, Adam Meyerson, Karl

**R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.**  
**Editor-in-Chief**

**O'Lessker;** **Art Advisor:** Elliott Banfield; **Americana Editor:** Joseph P. Duggan; **Associates:** Robert Asahina, Jameson G. Campaigne, Jr., John R. Coyne, Jr., Alan Reynolds; **Contributors:** Aram Bakshian, Jr., Christopher C. DeMuth, Terry East-

land, Jerry Gerde, K.E. Grubbs, Jr., Neil Howe, Roger Kaplan, Terry Krieger, William Kristol, Leslie Lenkowsky, A. James McAdams III, Robert McTiernan, Judy Mathews, Rev. George Nathan, William H. Nolte, Terry O'Rourke, Marc F. Plattner, G.W. Plunkitt, Peter J. Rusthoven, Benjamin Stein, Whit Stillman; **Legal Counsel:** Solitary, Poor, Nasty, Brutish & Short; Cover art by Warren Linn.

The American Spectator was founded in 1924 by George Nathan and Truman Newberry over a cheap domestic ale in McSorley's Old Ale House. In 1967 the Saturday Evening Club took it over, rechristening it The Alternative: An American Spectator; but by November 1977 the word "alternative" had acquired such an esoteric fragrance that in order to discourage unsolicited manuscripts from florists, beauticians, and other creative types the Club reverted to the magazine's original name. The

American Spectator is now published monthly except July and September at 102 West Sixth Street, Bloomington, Indiana. Second class postage paid at Bloomington, Indiana, and additional mailing offices.

A one-year subscription (ten issues) costs \$10, outside the United States \$11. All correspondence (manuscripts, subscription's, threatening letters, federal grants, etc.) should be sent to The American Spectator, P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, Indiana 47401; (812) 334-2715.

Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes.

Microfilm editions of The American Spectator are available from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. ISSN 0148-8414.

Published remarkably without regard to sex, life-style, race, color, creed, or (most redundantly of all) national origin.

Copyright The American Spectator 1978. Volume 11, Number 5, March 1978.

## Encomiums for Califano

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

That not one notable in all of Washington rejoiced at the incongruity of raising up a hustler to preside over the largest governmental department of dogoodery in Christendom I take to be exquisite evidence attesting to one of my most dearly held convictions, to wit: that we live under a near-tyranny of humorless minds. Think of it. On December 23, 1976, just plain ole Jimmy tapped Mr. Joseph A. Califano, Jr., to head the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and no one in Washington saw anything amiss. Califano—a Washington operator of unsmiteable energy and acquisitiveness—departs Georgetown to take over the Nation's loaves and fishes operation; yet there is no serenade of guffaws, no general outburst of facetiae. One may expect ha-ha's all the days of Joe's tenure, but the news commentators reported his appointment with strenuous sobriety, and then became his faithful PR agents. I believe that America is afflicted by humorless minds whose influence towers out of all proportion to their number. I believe that these rascals are not only blind to preposterousness but intent on intimidating into gloom all those with a proclivity for cheer. And I believe that the day will come when it will be either us or them.

Witness the arrival of Joe Califano at HEW: Poverty bureaucrats by the hundreds peer down from their windows as up the drive he comes, encased in his limousine, followed by a gorgeous retinue—there can be seen his \$78,225-per-year bodyguard, there his \$12,763-per-year cook, there a former vice president of Harvard University, and others follow. How can one view such a spectacle and not break up? I am sure that Joe saw the humor in it, and that is why he fetches my approbation. He is absolutely shameless. He has all the rhetoric of the constituency-of-conscience crowd down pat, and he still maintains his table at Sans Souci. He weeps with them, he roars on their behalf, he navigates every blind turn in their zig-zagging public philosophy—he prospers. I have never seen a picture of him that there was not a twinkle in his brown eyes. His ample cheeks fairly glow with bonhomie. Is he arrogant? To be sure. And secretive? Naturally. Does he work 18-hour days, bullying his employees, and incessantly expanding his influence? *Mais bien sûr*. All this is true, but it does not gainsay my claim that Joe is, deep within, a clever and jolly soul. He sees greater Washington for the farce that it is, and he enjoys the act. He knows that the bureaucrats over which he rules are born mules to be goaded and manipulated. He senses the vacuity of

the average pol, he turns it to his own account, and he does it with gusto. My guess is that he takes especial pleasure exploiting Washington's lobbyists of uplift. They are the most humorless hinds of all, and nothing could be more entertaining and profitable than using their own canards to enslave them.

*Hustling the Good Life*

In the late 1950s Joe spent a couple of sad years practicing law on Wall Street, which was quite enough for him. His wife, the former Gertrude Zawacki, apprised him of the amusing grandeur of the New Frontier, whereupon he shook his barristerial chains. He sought out the Kennedy promise, namely: the good life via humbug and the taxing power. Joe has never left Washington. During the Kennedy years when names like Sorenson and Salinger graced the top of the marquee, Joe selflessly and quietly put himself to the task of learning the angles. Practically all the celebrated New Frontiersmen came a cropper, but Joe matured. He kept his nose to the *Zeitgeist*. Today he must be considered Kennedyism's most accomplished and enduring practitioner, always feverishly throwing himself into noble causes, always flattering the *popolo minuto* with heroic guff, and never missing an opportunity to snatch a bit more of their freedom and their loot. Contradictions between his past promises and present posturings never slow him down, and no one seems to mind. Was he not one of those LBJ aides responsible for domestic intelligence operations against civil-rights activists, black militants, and anti-war protestors? The April 17, 1971, *New York Times* confirms it. Did he not shriek and wail with affecting fury over Nixon's hellish intrigues? He did it on the op-ed page of the very *Times*; there and anywhere else he could get a foot in the door.

His has been a life of inconsistencies brazenly and cheerfully ignored. In 1976 our populist president summoned him to redistribute the wealth, regulate the Rockefeller impulse that throbs in us all, and clamp down hard on those robber barons then in league with the devious American Medical Association. During that year Joe had earned \$561,215, nearly \$500,000 of it from one pharmaceutical company. "We need desperately in this country to redistribute more wealth," Joe has notified the *Christian Science Monitor*, and he knows whereof he remonstrates. In his last year of private practice this interesting man earned more than General Motors chairman Thomas Murphy, the

fifteenth highest paid business executive in America. In the eighteen years from 1960 to 1978 he spent scarcely seven practicing law, and then he had but four clients. Nonetheless he amassed a personal fortune in the neighborhood of one million dollars. Still, our president asked him to patrol the provinces of excess profits, exploitative health care, and man's inhumanity to man. These matters he now ponders from his box at Washington Redskins football games with Mr. Art Buchwald, Herblock, and other members of the Washington intelligentsia. This the ancients would call *hilaritas*!

One of Joe's favorite areas for reform is health care, and for years he has bedeviled the health-care tycoons. In 1976 he handed one pharmaceutical company the largest bill for services rendered that company had ever received. Six months later he walloped the health-care crowd once again, declaring to an uneasy assemblage of the American Medical Association: "There is virtually no competition among doctors or among hospitals....there is precious little competition among pharmaceutical companies or among laboratories [whose] research has become big business, with patent monopoly pots of gold at the end of the research rainbow"—pots of gold demanding the professional services of sharp Washington lawyers, let us hasten to add. The docs were discomfited, but they were not surprised. A month earlier Joe had struck at the hospital moguls, urging that it become *malum prohibitum* for hospitals to raise rates by more than nine percent annually. If his suggestion were made law would the consequent loss in hospital services affect Joe? HEW provides. In fact its chief has access to a whole stable of specialists on 24-hour call lest the chief stagger. In 1977 an HEW physician en route to his summer vacation was actually ordered back to Washington to attend to his ailing boss. Joe had been felled by the tragedy of tennis wrist. Hospital costs may indeed be barred from rising more than nine percent annually, but one can be sure that no loss of service will be suffered at Bethesda Naval Hospital or at any other hospitals reserved for government's elite. Our pols and top bureaucrats must be kept in the pink and with minimum delay. Cost can be no object lest they be distracted from improving our condition.

Joe has had to hustle all his days, yet he has shown that the thing can be carried off with *joie de vivre* and brass. No wizened idolater of the Protestant ethic is

(continued on page 36)