

# THE CONTINUING CRISIS



•A very mild winter underwent stupendous change late in January when two pitiless snowstorms hit the East Coast and the Midwest, causing many Americans to rethink their childish enthusiasm for skiing and reminding them of all the lovely islands in the Caribbean just waiting for our 82nd Airborne. In the media, a series of revelations about the Reagan Administration's dealings in the Middle East and Central America shed new darkness on current events, though the political cognoscenti seemed not to notice that by late January Americans knew nothing more than they knew in December, and then they only knew what Attorney General Edwin Meese and an obscure Beirut magazine had told them. The Gallup Poll reported that 80 percent of the citizenry was not even very interested in the revelations. Moreover newspapers, television, and Congress suffered declines in credibility of 9 percent, 21 percent, and 8 percent, respectively. The President's favorable rating increased to 61 percent.

•In overseas news a Ugandan voodoo priestess sent an army of rebels to their deaths against government forces at Corner Kilak. A woman in Sapporo, Japan, wrote a 280-page book by winking. A Zimbabwean nurse, who doused a colleague in gasoline after the latter bit off her ear and swallowed it, was sentenced to four years in prison. Chancellor Helmut Kohl's center-right coalition won the West German elections, and *Stars and Stripes* won the right to challenge *Kookaburra III* for the America's Cup.

•Tens of thousands of students marched through Shanghai and Peking shouting slogans of libertarian import. The Chinese Communist Party's upscale newspaper, the *Guangming Daily*, gave qualified approval of the bikini bathing suit, and back in the USA the Justice Department released the very satisfactory finding that three of every 100 adult American males by the end of 1985 were incarcerated or under some other correctional supervision such as probation or the Stanford University graduate degree program. The 100th Congress opened with ominous timpani growling off stage.

•More damaging evidence of the threat posed by the natural order against mankind turned up when a very brave

New Jersey health authority, Mr. Lester W. Jargowsky, divulged that the bacterial pollution that forced the closing of the beach near New Jersey's Kid's World Amusement Pier last summer was the lethal consequence of common bird excreta. Bird feathers, too, can be most unwholesome. Mr. Scott Thorson, 27, who until 1982 served as Mr. Liberace's full-time travel secretary, chauffeur, animal trainer, and poofter, has settled his palimony suit. Rather than the \$113 million that he had sought, he is settling for \$95,000 and the memories. According to Mr. Thorson's lawyer, the plaintiff had given up a promising career in dance for Mr. Liberace and had undergone painful surgery "to more closely conform his facial features to those of Liberace."

•After eight years of struggle in rural Petersburg, Indiana, Mr. Lloyd Thoren announced that he is closing his American Atheist Museum and moving it to environs more hospitable to a practicing atheist. In Petersburg "everyone got accustomed to us finally," Mr. Thoren assured the AP from his underground home behind the heavily fortified museum, for "I'm a very tolerant man." Mr. Thoren donated the museum's building and land to American Atheists, Inc., after Soviet officials failed to respond to his offer to donate the building to the Soviet Union. Mr. Thoren's next victim will be San Francisco. Mr. Dustin Hoffman is being sued over a death in his hot tub, and in Oveido, Spain, embarrassment ensued when surgeons intent on am-

putating a gangrenous leg discovered that they had removed the wrong one.

•West German authorities arrested Mohammed Ali Hamadi, one of the suspected murderers of U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem, causing Beirut kidnappers to go into a kidnapping frenzy that left many Westerners eager to see above-ground nuclear testing resumed, this time in downtown Beirut. On January 22 the disgraced state Treasurer of Pennsylvania, Mr. R. Budd Dwyer, made a dreadful mess of his final press conference by blowing his brains out as the cameras rolled. The Department of Labor reported that in 1986 prices rose at the lowest rate in twenty-five years, 1.1 percent. President Reagan's New Year's message to the Soviet citizenry was mysteriously jammed, and in Manila Western journalists went on the alert after the progressive government of President Corazon Aquino announced that it would bar journalists from the presidential palace who "smell bad." Western deodorants and scented soaps have been a source of disquiet in Manila, and during the Marcos regime journalists used them at their peril, for palace officials frequently found them sexually arousing.

•In Orange Park, Florida, Miss Cheryl Hendry, an Orange Park High School Latin teacher, resigned her position to protest a school fund-raising event wherein a disgusting football coach aggressively kissed a helpless young pig. "My original concern was that the excitement of so much noise and so much movement would alarm the animal,"

explained Miss Hendry, an animal-rights rigorist and reader of the *New Republic*. In Raleigh, North Carolina, an unemployed construction worker, Mr. Robert Raymond Proulx, was charged with shooting a United Airlines jet during a hunting expedition near the wilds of Raleigh-Durham Airport. Health authorities are distributing 15,000 free prophylactics to teenagers in romantic Iceland to thwart the AIDS virus; and Miss Rumi Kume, a 23-year-old Japanese office worker with no prior political experience, won Tokyo's sixth annual Loud Voice contest.

•In the Hague the Dutch Parliament will cough up only \$44,000 toward construction of a pink marble monument to commemorate the many valorous deeds effected by Dutch gays in their struggle against oppression, and in Rhyolite, Nevada, the hopes and dreams of transforming this ghost town into a model gay community were dashed when the community's Founding Fairies fell short of raising the necessary \$2.5 million to buy it. They raised \$100.

•Taking these setbacks into account along with bleak news of homosexual disease, the time has come to acknowledge that as a designation for homosexuality the word gay is a crass misnomer. It should be discarded by all thinking Americans of whatever sexual proclivity if they have any regard whatsoever for language and meaning. Etymologically, to use gay as a designation for homosexuality is, if you will pardon the expression, bull treacle; for as applied to sexual laxity the word originally designated heterosexual liaisons only. Not until heterosexuals abandoned the word for racier, trendier formulations could homosexuals grasp the tattered epithet as their own. Thus it is a hand-me-down.

•As a matter of pride, if not of terminological exactitude, the homosexual community should have a fresh designation, unsullied by the past and emblematic of some genuine characteristic of homosexual life. Homosexuals need not endure slur terms but should be given an attractive appellation that pleases them and represents them as they are. I think we can all agree that the word squash is such a word. Cephalic indices and empirical obser-



vations of homosexuals at public demonstrations and on Halloween night in San Francisco have established that many homosexuals develop heads shaped very much like squash (*Curubita maxima*). Youthful, nicely-muscled

homosexuals often have heads shaped like the well-known butternut squash, best served plain or with butter. Homosexuals less favored by nature frequently have heads reminiscent of the squat acorn squash, which is even

tastier than the butternut, particularly when braised in brown sugar. Squash is native to the New World, and was a staple in the Native American's diet. It is 100 percent American and unlike the adjective gay can be embroidered on

clothes and banners. Let us henceforth speak of our homosexuals as squashes. Let the universities hold their Squash Rights Week. And let us accord proper respect to the Squash Community.

—RET

## C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

### Acid Rain Perspectives

I surely hope that Dixy Lee Ray's "The Great Acid Rain Debate" (*TAS*, January 1987) has finally put man's participation in the picture in proper perspective. To think that the Government has spent billions without coming to any conclusion worth considering should make taxpayers like me furious.

—E. B. Lyon

Port Orange, Florida

Hooray for Dixy Lee Ray—an excellent response to the acid rain hysteria. Of particular interest is her reference to the reduction of alkaline particulate "from industrial smoke." Starting in the 1920s, both industry and utilities in the U.S. switched from lump coal to pulverized coal. Pulverized coal at an average particle size of 70 microns resulted in 60 percent of the ash passing out the stack as fly ash. It is estimated that during the period from 1920 to 1960 some 5 to 10 million tons per year of alkaline fly ash passed into the atmosphere. There were no reports of acid rain during this period.

In addition to the billions spent on eliminating fly ash and acid gases, let's determine the cost-benefit of the effect of fly ash on the levels of *acid rain*, *smog*, *ozone*, and on the formation of *fertilizers* instead of acid rain.

—Allan E. Hokanson

Vice President

American Process Design, Inc.

Cincinnati, Ohio

### Hope Not Soap

Considerably off-base were George Jean Nathan's comments regarding Jesse Jackson's failure to wash his hands after urinating ("The Washington Spectator," *TAS*, January 1987). Ritual hand-washing, akin to the morning-after-coitus female douching to "clean" the vagina, went out of style more than a generation ago.

Inside the underpants of the male is almost exclusively the colon bacillus, a mild pathogen at worst, found almost everywhere. . . .

It is during the interurination contacts that the hands become contaminated with all sorts of germs, some of which may be lethal. For self-protection the prudent male will wash his hands before entering the urinal stall.

Mr. Nathan makes no mention of whether Jesse did that. . . .

—William Hazlett, M.D.

Kingston, Pennsylvania

I was shocked at your reporting of Jesse Jackson's personal habits.

Need you stoop so to fill space?

—Linda De Sterfano

Fairfield, Connecticut

### Modest Proposals

Yes, AIDS is a horror. Before this epidemic is over, its effects may bring the Holocaust to mind. But to impose lifelong quarantine upon everyone that has been exposed to the virus, as Christopher Monckton proposes ("AIDS: A British View," *TAS*, January 1987), would be to allow AIDS not only to rob countless Americans of their lives but also to rob us all of our fundamental liberties—thus perfecting the resemblance to the Holocaust. Granted, Monckton acknowledges that (at present anyway) his proposal is too extreme to be acceptable to most Americans; but he is plainly more dismayed than cheered by this fact.

Ever since the time of Patrick Henry, Americans have claimed to prize liberty as dearly as life. I'm afraid that in the coming years the spread of AIDS will sorely test this claim. But we must stand firm. We must, as Andrew Ferguson implies, maintain our dedication to "limited government, prudence, and individual responsibility." And we must hold before ourselves the words of Benjamin Franklin: "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

—Bruce Bawer

New York, New York

Christopher Monckton's article was like a breath of fresh air compared to much of the tripe that has appeared in the media on this disease. Dr. Ward Cates of the Centers for Disease Control has said that AIDS has the potential to be "much worse than anything mankind has seen before." And yet, the complete paralysis of the public health authorities in the face of the AIDS epidemic is in sharp contrast to the vigorous action they took only a few decades ago whenever an occasional

case of smallpox or bubonic plague was found to have entered the U.S.

Monckton attributes this paralysis to public agencies being "over-anxious to avoid offending high-risk groups or arousing unreasonable discrimination against known carriers of the disease." I think an additional factor is the widespread feeling of hopelessness in the face of many problems confronting us today, particularly in view of the dismal failure of liberal attempts to solve them. For example, our bull-in-the-china-shop efforts in Cuba helped Castro impose the Marxist-Leninist dictatorship whose barbarism is so eloquently described in Armando Valladares's book, *Against All Hope*. Similar unwise efforts by the liberals overthrew the Shah of Iran and gave us Khomeini. The counterproductive results of the welfare state are well documented by Charles Murray in *Losing Ground*.

One could go on and on listing liberal failures. But perhaps the situation could be summed up by saying that the widespread notion that Communism is dead (at least among Lenin's idiots; of course, it was never alive among conservatives) should be expanded to cover liberalism as well. If liberalism is indeed dead, then it is up to conservatives to take the lead in dealing with problems like 1) AIDS (advocating vigorous action to stop this burgeoning plague); 2) poverty (advocating approaches designed to build a dynamic free enterprise economy, perhaps learning lessons from Japan's extraordinary success); and 3) the spreading red tide of the Soviet evil empire (advocating actions to curb Soviet aggression in all its forms: for example, aiding freedom fighters everywhere in the world).

If conservatives won't tackle these problems, and liberals can't, who will?

—Edward Darmohray

Alexandria, Virginia

Christopher Monckton proposed universal testing and then isolation of victims. Before we throw up our hands and plunge our craniums into the oven of despair over inability to do anything about promiscuous sexual transmission of AIDS, we should apply the Wonders of Modern Technology to the special

human needs of every sexual person facing the AIDS abyss. Common existing components can be assembled in an array which can assist the promiscuous to have non-fatal sex.

Picture this: Lovers who have reached a point of mutual romantic inclination (and before the point-of-no-return is passed), produce and exchange their special ID cards. The cards would consist of an attractive background in tasteful colors with a design fully expressing the owner's being and personality. The picture would show the owner in a suitably expressive and alluring pose. Across the bottom would be the owner's personal Universal Product Code. Each takes the other's card and runs a light pen across the UPC. The light pen is attached to a special paging device which transmits the owner's UPC and the "guest" UPC to a central computer. There, the current coupling of UPCs is stored in the permanent memory bank, and each "guest's" past liaison history is screened. Finding no AIDS infection or contact in the pedigree, the computer picks a Morse Code letter at random and broadcasts it to the two paging devices. They both blink and beep the code simultaneously, signaling that love, or whatever, may begin.

If love wilts for some reason and the mucous membranes fail to meet, then the participant must telephone the computer's 800-number and tell the person at the desk, who writes a brief delete-linkage note for the paper files and activates the delete linkage capability on the system so the computer can talk to the beeper over the telephone. With this system, whenever love begins whatever things would then be exchanged would not include AIDS.

And of course there would be a need for small businesspeople to furnish and service all related software and hardware.

—Darryl Davis

Seattle, Washington

### Joint Employment Clarified

Rael Jean Isaac's "Legal Services and the Farmer" in the November edition is a Jim Dandy. It is thoroughly researched and very well written, except for one point that I would like to clarify.

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