

been saying. Integration is a delusion, and the universal values in Naipaul's work, it follows, really are a sellout. As the self-appointed new master, Theroux is ordering Naipaul to his rightful place, inescapably classified with the shopkeepers and "nigrescents."

In common with the people Naipaul writes about with such concern, Theroux is trapped in unhappy and self-injuring fantasies. Friendship with Naipaul was a privilege, and should have been a liberation. Theroux is the victim only of himself. ❧

The Amway Way: Seeking the Profit of Many

An Enterprising Life: An Autobiography

Jay Van Andel

HarperBusiness / 234 pages / \$24

REVIEWED BY
John Corry

No matter how great its contribution to our general well-being, business has not always done well in the court of elite opinion. Calvin Coolidge was correct when he said the principal business of America was business, although a generation or so of presidential historians would later decide his sensible dictum was suspect, and possibly even immoral. Similarly a former head of General Motors once said that what's good for GM was good for America, and while no doubt that was true, he was pilloried in the press for saying it. But things do change, and the skepticism about business and businessmen has given way to at least a grudging respect. Elite opinion now has to recognize that an entrepreneur may make the world a better place than it was when he found it.

Consider as a principal example Jay Van Andel, who, with his life-long friend Rich DeVos, began Amway. The Michigan-based direct-sales giant started as a modest venture selling liquid soap, and is now a \$7-billion consumer-products company with some 3 million distributors in 80 countries. It also writes 14,000 paychecks every week. All this has made Van Andel

very rich, but as he writes in *An Enterprising Life*, his "greatest pleasure comes not from the endless acquisition of material things but from creating wealth and giving it away." It is a tribute to Van Andel here that you believe this. For years he has contributed to charities, hospitals, and schools, and, now at 74, he has funded what likely will be his most enduring legacy, the Van Andel Institute in Grand Rapids, one of the largest private philanthropic operations in the history of medical research.

Meanwhile Van Andel wants us to know that the "free-enterprise system and tradi-

tional morals are not at odds with one another—they're perfectly compatible, regardless of what some critics say." Indeed he says he and DeVos sought to run Amway "according to biblical principles of integrity, faithfulness and truthfulness," and that they knew they "were dependent on God for the ability to do what was right." Corporate meetings always opened with prayer, and the two founders "were quietly breathing prayers" all during the meetings. "Without God's grace," Van Andel writes, "Amway would never have been successful."

It is also a tribute to Van Andel that you believe him here, too. However fashionable (and politically expedient) it has now become to flaunt religious belief, the faith here lives and pulsates. Van Andel, the son of Dutch immigrants, was brought up in the Christian Reform Church, a relatively strict denomination that traces itself to John Calvin, and takes old-fashioned values seriously. As a child in Grand Rapids, Van Andel recalls, he once found a dime in an alley. His mother then told him to go door to door to ask if anyone had lost it. Apparently no one had, and so he was allowed to keep it. His mother, Van Andel writes, simply wanted to teach him to respect other people's property.

Perhaps it is almost redundant now to note that Van Andel is a conservative, and has scant use either for federal bureaucrats, or the political culture that spawns them. Although he never sounds shrill in his judgments, it is clear that bureaucrats often have made him, say, lose patience. They make the rules, he says, and business must follow them. "There is nothing voluntary, nothing beneficial," he writes, "about government regulation."

For years, for example, Amway sold vitamins in boxes. Then the Consumer Product Safety Commission ordered it to put childproof latches on the boxes. The latches cost 50 cents apiece, and since Amway sold millions of boxes each year, that meant millions of dollars in extra costs. Moreover, elderly Amway customers who suffered from crippling



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You deserve a factual look at...

The Golan Heights

To Whom Do They Belong? Can Israel Survive Without Them?

Now that Gaza and part of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") have been turned over to the Palestinians, the clamor for peace with Syria becomes ever more strident. Hafez Assad, Syria's president, has left no doubt, and it is generally understood that he will not make peace with Israel unless the Golan is returned to him in its entirety and without any conditions.

What are the facts?

Historical Background—The Golan was always part of the Jewish homeland. The Syrian claim to the Golan is tenuous. Syria, as a political entity, did not exist at all until after the first World War.

Even before the establishment of Israel in 1948, the Syrians subjected the villages in northern Israel to almost daily shellings, making normal life impossible. In the 1967 Six-Day War, Syria attacked Israel and was defeated. Israel occupied the Golan Heights and in 1981, for all

practical purposes annexed the area.

Syria and its President—Syria is the most destabilizing influence in the Middle East. It is classified by the U.S. State Department as a narcotics-dealing and terrorist state. Its main fury is directed at Israel, which is

perceived as a bulwark of Western influence and civilization, both of which Syria totally rejects.

Syria's President, Hafez Assad, is a tyrant, every bit as ruthless as his Iraqi counterpart, Saddam Hussein. Syria is a world center for terrorism. It still harbors Nazi bigwigs, who found welcome there after the World War. Few doubt that Assad was the mastermind in the suicide attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut in which 241 Americans died, and in the explosion of Pan Am flight #103 in which 270 people lost their lives. He oversees one of the largest narcotics operations in the world.

Military Security—The Golan is about the size of Queens, NY. If it were part of Syria it would be less than 1% of its territory. But it is of a supreme strategic importance to Israel. Its high ground provides early-warning capability, without which Israel would be subject to surprise attack by the Syrians. Its loss would obligate Israel to maintain a state of mobilization that would be economically and socially untenable. On the Golan itself, there are only two natural bottlenecks through which tanks can advance. Those choke points

are defensible and made possible the repulse of 1400 Syrian tanks that attacked Israel in the 1973 war. But with the Golan in Syrian hands, and without the radar installations that would give Israel warning of any military movements, thousands of tanks—backed up by missiles and airplanes—could overrun Israel in a matter of hours. The Golan does not make for perfect defense, but it gives Israel a small breathing space for mobilization.

"With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction."

The Golan is the source of over one-third of Israel's fresh water. In 1964, with the Golan in Syrian hands, Syria attempted to divert these headwaters and to cripple Israel's water supply. It is more than likely that, given another opportunity, Syria would once again attempt to destroy Israel's water supply.

In its keen desire to bring peace to its people, after more than fifty years of war and bloodshed, Israel had been prepared to make far-reaching concessions to Syria on the Golan, in exchange for real peace. But Benjamin Netanyahu, who has promised his people *shalom batuach* (peace with security) is not prepared to give up all of the Golan and to return to the "death trap" borders of 1967 or anything close to them. In order to survive within such borders, Israel would have to rely on the goodwill of the Arab states, most of which—with the recent exception of Jordan and of the cold peace with Egypt—are still in a declared state of war with Israel. An aggressor will attack only if confident of victory. With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat, and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction.

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A Bill Weld Even Jesse Helms Could Love

Mackerel by Moonlight

William Weld

Simon & Schuster / 238 pages / \$23

REVIEWED BY

Geoffrey Norman

There are politicians who like to moonlight as writers of fat, commercial novels; their sights set squarely on the best seller lists, not the admiration of book critics. Newt Gingrich, William Cohen, and Gary Hart have all written books of this sort and they have all been pretty bad. Especially when it comes to characterizations. Politicians do not do well with individuals since they tend to regard people as votes and not much more. And they also tend to be humorless, especially about what they do for a living. So their novels tend to be full of cardboard characters making wooden speeches to advance plots in which the fate of the world hangs, not very convincingly, in the balance. They also tend to go unread.

Now comes a new novel by another politician. The book is *Mackerel by Moonlight* and the author is the former two-term governor of Massachusetts, William Weld. To say that it is a good book for one that was written by a politician would be to damn it with faint praise (one thinks of Dr. Johnson's crack about women preachers and dogs that walk on their hind legs) and unfair. This is a very good book; "a good read," in publishing parlance. And more. Weld has followed the ancient wisdom and written about what he knows. Politics, that is. More precisely: Boston politics. So he starts with good material. Boston makes the best setting in America for a novel about politics, except for Louisiana, which is in a class, mercifully, by itself. (Chicago would be third, by the way.)

Boston politics are corrupt, parochial, tough, cynical, and humorous. It is this

last quality that sets them apart. A good Boston pol must possess the ability not merely to function in a sea of corruption and human failure but to relish it and laugh about it. Terry Mullally, Jr. is blessed with the gift. His tale opens when he moves to Boston from New York, where he has worked as a federal prosecutor. Having learned to put criminals away, he now turns that experience to the more remunerative task of getting them off. He has no illusions, especially not about himself, and he tells his story tartly and without cant:

If I do say so myself, I was a good slime-ball defense lawyer....As soon as I saw that the government housing inspector had criminal exposure...I took my guys straight to the feds. The best advice I could ever give a client is if you're going to break the law, make sure you do it in partnership with somebody more important and famous than you. Someone you can roll over on, at the first sign of rain, in exchange for immunity for yourself. Follow this simple rule, and you will never go to jail. I never had a client go to jail, though I had sent plenty of guys there.

Mullally's sense of impiety does not desert him when he is approached to be a candidate for district attorney. "How are you on the death penalty?" he is asked.

"I'm all in favor of the death penalty," he answers, "three chairs no waiting, pull the switch myself, lots of walking advertisements out there for capital punishment. Okay?"

He passes this initial test and runs.

The campaign is full of moments that are pure Boston politics and which the author loves like Wordsworth loved daffodils and Fitzgerald loved Daisy. Weld captures the ritual of an early morning political breakfast and roast, fueled by gin and malice, exquisitely. The point of one of these exercises is to cut your opponent to ribbons while you—and he—are both still smiling and trying to hold your guts in your stomach with both hands. Nobody does this better than a Boston Irish pol.

"And it's great to see the lieutenant governor, too," O'Reilly went on, hitting the adjective so hard everyone forgot this was the second-ranking office in all of state government. "I saw him greet a voter at the door, and he said, 'How do you do? I'm the lieutenant governor.' And the fellow said, 'Well, nice to meet you. What do you do?' And the lieutenant governor replied, 'I just did it.'"

Weld never lapses into solemnity. This is, typically, the curse of the politician turned fiction writer. A perfectly adequate assassination attempt is followed by a sermon on the importance of the balance of powers, say, or an explanation of the Taft-Hartley act, or a sermon on how the quest for ratings and sensationalism is poisoning political coverage, especially on television.

Weld, who has been in the pit, knows something about this and no doubt has opinions. But he lets one of his characters—a streetwise consultant—do his pontificating for him:

Larry stubbed out his cigarette and exhaled slowly. "Terry, let me break this down. The question for us is not what is true. The courts will sort that out in the fullness of time, through criminal trials and procedures too numberless for me even to contemplate, not that I would want to. If I had wanted to, I would have gone to law school. The question for us is what are Channels Four, Five, and Seven going to show on the noon news? And the answer is, whatever you say, as long as you back up their version of events."

When Weld does lecture, he does it with fetching cynicism and merciful brevity:

In the fall of '97, I was invited on every TV talk show in the country, not once, not twice, but as often as I'd come. National columnists, not high school kids, wanted to shadow me for a day. Publishers wanted to fly me to conference centers to talk to their advertisers. I will admit, it didn't take much getting used to. When you don't have to pay to fly first class, it gets harder to see the argument against it. I wasn't watching out, and I began accepting too many invitations from an uncharacteristically fawning media corps.

Someone should have read that passage to William Ginsberg, early in his stint as counselor to Ms. Monica Lewinsky.